

## Chapter 3

# The Role of Education in Women's Career Life in Emerging Economies: A Case of Turkey

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter aimed to explain the role of education on women's career in emerging countries. In this context, this study investigated the importance of education factor for working women in Turkey as a sample of emerging economy. For data collection, survey method was used. The survey was implemented via face-to-face method to working women in the Thracian region of Turkey. Three hundred forty-nine survey forms were conducted and analyzed. As a result, education factor was determined as an alternative tool to create greater career for women. It was indicated that education had a significant and positive effect on women's career life. In addition, it was found that educated women had a greater career, higher income, and greater promotion opportunity. This study supports that women can have a greater career and career development with higher education, and educated women can get greater and more equal work conditions in emerging economies such as Turkey.*

## INTRODUCTION

Last decades have shown that the most important aim should be achieving sustainable development level for the world. Without sustainability, most economies know that economic development is not enough and the future of the next generation will have troubles to keep living at the welfare level. For a sustainable economy, there are three basic issues such as economic, environmental and social that economies should take care of these issues (Harris,2003). The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN) which is an organization for gender equality and women empowerment summarizes some findings of economic empowerment and especially it is determined that working women will contribute the economic growth and this will be an important issue for sustainable development in the long term. Accordingly, it can be said that environmental precautions and implementation are insufficient for sustainable development when we look at the big picture. In this point, education is determined as an effective factor for economic growth and economic development that every kind of area is influenced by education (Erdogan, Yildirim & Tosuner,2012).

On the other side, the degree of employment is almost seen as one of the most important indicators for sustainable development (Yildirim, Acaray & Sevik,2015). Most countries having healthy employment and equal standards will reach sustainable development in the long term (United Nations,2007; The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development,2008; International Labour Office,2010). As it is expected in 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (2030 SDGs), equal education rights should be improved and gender differences in education and employment should be reduced immediately. 2030 SDGs also forces countries to provide more equal work conditions and employment areas for women (Yildirim & Bostancı,2018). When Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 5 (Gender Equity) are achieved, women can reach more equal life standards in the future. According to being an important driver of growth and development, the female labor force should be supported in emerging countries. Especially, higher education women should be involved in business life and educated women should be supported in higher career levels of business in emerging countries. (Verick,2014). Female labor force participation is still inadequate. The gap between men and women employment participation has declined since the 1990s but most of the regions in the world should be work harder. For example, the Middle East and North Africa have the highest gap according to the World Bank (2014) (Kochhar,Jain-Chandra &Newiak,2016). While the participation rate has reached 80% among the Scandinavian countries, it remains at the level of 20% in the Middle East and North African countries. On the other hand, there have been significant increases in female labor force participation in many developing countries over the last 25 years. Increasing the education level of women in increases, global economic integration and it is clear that changing social values have an important share. In this point, empirical research indicates that the education factor is an explanatory variable in the female labor force participation decision. (Akgeyik,n.d.,p.48)

The World Economic Forum (WEF), under the title of women's economic participation and opportunities, according to the 2016 report evaluates countries Turkey is located between 130 next 144 countries. This difference is expected to increase if women continue to earn less than men (the lack of equal pay for equal work, the glass ceiling and so on) (Ustaş & Fındıklı,2017,p.439). Verick (2014) explained female labor force participation for developing countries such as Brazil, India, Indonesia and Turkey. He determined that education levels of women were higher and educated women were employed in developing countries much more than past decades. England, Gornick, Schafer & Fitzgibbons (2012) explained the importance of education for working women and they analyzed 17 high and middle-income countries like Austria, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland,

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