

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FORMATIONS OF TRADE UNION
CONSCIOUSNESS AND WORKER IDENTITY IN TURKEY: A CASE
STUDY OF THE TÜVASAŞ RAILCAR FACTORY

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN THE PROGRAM OF
SOCIAL POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2010

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences



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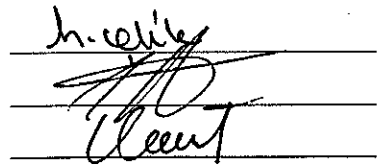
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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF THE FORMATIONS OF TRADE UNION CONSCIOUSNESS AND WORKER IDENTITY IN TURKEY: A CASE STUDY OF THE TÜVASAŞ RAILCAR FACTORY

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September 2010, 150 Pages

The thesis attempts to provide an analysis of the role of trade union membership in the formations of trade union consciousness and worker identity and the assumption that the trade union membership is influential in the formation of worker identity is tested in this study. It is mainly based upon a field study conducted in Railcar Factory of TÜVASAŞ in Sakarya, makes a comparison between union member workers and non-union member subcontractors in terms of the formation of trade union consciousness and worker identity. It will also be possible to point out concretely that the formations of trade consciousness and worker identity are analysed through perceptions, consciousness and attitudes by taking the social, economic and political dimensions into consideration. It is analysed that the trade union membership has not a significant influence on the formation of worker identity and there are no big differences among the union member workers and subcontractors in terms of the approaches towards trade unionism, working class consciousness and worker identity.

Keywords: Trade union consciousness, worker identity, subcontracting,
trade union, social policy

ÖZ

TÜRKİYE’DE SENDİKAL BİLİNCİN VE İŞÇİ KİMLİĞİNİN OLUŞUMUNUN ANALİZİ: TÜVASAŞ VAGON FABRİKASI ÖRNEK VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

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Yüksek Lisans, Sosyal Politika Programı

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Sencer Ayata

Eylül 2010, 150 sayfa

Bu tez sendika üyeliğinin sendikal bilinç ve işçi kimliğinin oluşumlarındaki rolünü analiz etmeye teşebbüs ederek sendika üyeliğinin işçi kimliğinin oluşumunda etkili olduğu varsayımını sınamaktadır. Bu çalışma esas olarak Sakarya’daki TÜVASAŞ Vagon Fabrikası’nda yürütülmüş olan alan araştırmasına dayanmakta olup, sendikal işçilerle sendika üyesi olmayan taşeron işçileri arasında sendikal bilinç ve işçi kimliği bakımından kıyaslama yapmaktadır. Sendikal bilinç ve işçi kimliğinin oluşumlarının algı, bilinç ve tavırlar bakımından analizi için konu toplumsal, siyasi ve ekonomik boyutlarıyla birlikte ele alınmıştır. Sendika üyeliğinin işçi kimliğinin oluşumunda önemli bir etkisinin bulunmadığı, sendikal işçiler ile taşeron işçileri arasında işçi gruplarının sendikacılığa, işçi sınıfı bilincine ve işçi kimliğine dair yaklaşımları bakımından büyük bir fark bulunmadığı tahlil edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sendikal Bilinç, İşçi Kimliği, Taşeronlaşma,
Sendika, Sosyal Politika

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Sencer Ayata for his great influence upon me throughout my undergraduate and graduate studies on the way to becoming a social scientist.

I would like to thank Assist. Prof. Dr. Kezban Çelik for her guidance, advice, criticism, encouragement and insight during the research. I would also like to thank Dr. Umut Beşpınar for her valuable suggestions and comments.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is analysing the role of the union-membership in the formation worker identity and similarly, the influence of the formation of worker identity on the trade union consciousness. There is an assumption in the literature of sociology and social policy that the trade union membership is crucial for the formation of working class consciousness and working class identity. This research is about the formations of trade union consciousness and worker identity, including the theoretical discussions and the implementation of field study in Railcar Factory of TÜVASAŞ, in Sakarya. During the research, the assumption of the trade union membership causes big differences in gaining the working class identity and consciousness has been tested.

The testing of the assumption about the role of the trade union membership in the formation of trade union consciousness and worker identity is composed of the comparison of two different groups of workers, working together in the same workplace: Union member workers of the state enterprise and the subcontractors who are not union members. This comparison enlightens the role of union membership in the formations of these. Before going further into the stage of the testing of the assumptions, it would be appropriate to introduce the conceptual development of the trade unionism and working class.

Nineteenth century industrial society was characterized by the emergence of social class and class relations in which workers achieved a collective identity and consciousness of class structure in society. This consciousness led workers to devise new institutions, such as trade unions. Marx underlines the importance of unions for workers: “Unions are ramparts for workers in their struggle for social revolution against employers.”¹ Industrial

¹ Cohen & Moody cited in: Marx 1973, p.150

society and its class structure have been through profound changes since the 19th century. These changes have influenced the transformation of the trade unions.

Trade unions are one of the most important institutions of modern society, for industrial relations in modern societies require the instrumental role of trade unions. Besides the modern system, trade unions are needed for the labour movement and the workers. Yet, the trade unions' social roles and the consciousness of workers for trade unions vary in different societies and in different times. After the industrial revolution, workers needed an organisation that represented them in order to protect their rights and interests. This type of collective workers movement was vital for working class identity formation. In other words, trade union consciousness was the first step toward class-consciousness.

In addition to economic policies, the consciousness of workers for trade unions depends on class formations and cultural background such as values, the process of labour, and the tradition of labour movements. It has been largely noted that unions offer only limited support of the workers due to weaknesses and/or challenges that unions endure. Hence, "during union-building campaigns, labor activists sometimes get demoralized because so many of their co-workers are unresponsive."² This phrase mainly refers to the lack of interest of the workers in unionism. Is this the fault of the worker or the union? Is it so easy for a worker to join in a union? A broader perspective, including the structural problems, the political and ideological influence, the practices of unionism and the trade union consciousness or the perceptions of the workers is needed.

It would be wrong to claim that the workers all participated in the unions without any hesitation or concern. Surely, they had some questions in their minds. But the utility and power that originated from the unions' organisation of the collective struggle made membership more popular and acceptable among workers.

The commodification of labour is the start of being a worker. Yet, having class identity is about being aware of one's collective existence and

² Krehbiel, 2006,

positioning this collective existence against an opposing side of another existence. It is about the context of the duality of the social relations in the mode of production. In this process, the main dynamic of gaining awareness of the collective existence and the positioning of workers is one of the important functions of unions.

Especially in last few decades, the debates about the crisis of the labour movement and trade unionism have been loudly sounded. The industrial age and the social welfare states had paid attention to the rise of social rights to labour, Fordist production involving the concentration of workers in high-density industrial areas and the partnership of the trade unions in policy making processes. With the shift to the post-industrial age and flexible organisation of work, the emergence of the dynamics of globalisation, withdrawal of Keynesian economic policies and both the decrease in union membership rates and decreasing power of unions in terms of social, political and ideological power, all cause the debates about the crisis of trade unionism.

The problems of unionisation have several dimensions. First, there is a structural dimension, referring to the situation of the markets of commodities and labour. Second, there is a dimension of the political and ideological atmosphere. Finally, there is the aspect of the administrations and the strategies of unionism. “The working class is not only exploited economically and dominated politically, it is also dominated ideologically.”³

In this study, trade union consciousness in Turkey and its relationship with the worker identity is explored and analysed. In order to conduct such an analysis, the history, development, practices of labour movements and trade unionism; the political and ideological change both in Turkey and beyond; the structural issues of the labour process, organisation of work, economic competition and efficiency and the factor of globalisation are all taken into account for understanding the formation of trade union consciousness and worker identity and their relationship. By conducting this research, the

³ Poulantzas, 1975, p.238. Poulantzas defines social classes through economic, political and ideological relations.

perspectives of the workers form a basis that is parallel to the theoretical discussions. The distinctive characteristic of this study is the description of the consciousness and perception of the workers in terms of trade union and worker identity by using combining the two groups of workers in the same context for comparison.

This research is a combination of the literature review, theoretical assumptions, observations in a factory setting and quantitative analysis of questionnaires/surveys. The questionnaires and the evaluation of the results are the main basis and original contribution of this research. The questionnaires, composed of several parts, include socio-demographic questions and income questions to investigate the working class consciousness, the political standpoint of the workers' rights and the perspectives and the perception of trade unions.

One of the most important segments of the research is the comparison of the union member workers and the subcontracting workers (also referred to in this study as subcontractors) who are not union members, in terms of union-consciousness and worker identities. These two groups of workers working in the same workplace are involved in the same labour process and have no differences in terms of educational or skill profiles. The major strength of this research is that of studying union member workers and non-union member workers at the same time in the same work location.

The decision for choosing this issue as the subject of the thesis was made under the influence of two factors. Firstly, there have been claims about the 'great depression' of the trade unions in Turkey. For years, the literature of labour and trade unionism has created pessimistic descriptions. The decreasing rates of the membership in unions; the issues about the democracy inside the unions; the wealth of the union leaders; minimum interest of the workers in the unions; the concepts of class, class consciousness, and class struggle becoming 'unfashionable'; changing political tendencies of the workers, the disintegration within the working class; the competition among workers; and the hegemonic discourse of neo-liberalism have been all mentioned frequently in last few years.

Secondly, while all the pessimistic arguments had been mentioned, suddenly, a very surprising incident happened in the last months of 2009. Thousands of Turkish workers launched labour activism to preserve their social rights that they had lost because of the privatisation of the state enterprise for which they work - TEKEL. TEKEL was a state enterprise that produces cigarettes and alcoholic drinks for long years and one of the major state enterprises with its production, role in economy and big capacity for employment. Since the labour activism in the spring of 1989, Turkey encountered the biggest labour movement in 20 years time with the 2009 TEKEL incident.

The labour activism of the TEKEL workers immediately changed the completely negative view of unionized labour to a very positive one. The representatives of the working class, unionists, left wing politicians, government opposition and the media all discussed this phenomenon for weeks. Some labeled this activism as ‘the wake up of the working class,’ some called it ‘the revival of trade unionism’ and a few called this process the start of ‘class conflict’ and ‘the rise of left wing politics.’ Were these phrases and the immediate change of public opinion about the working class and labour so realistic? Was this revival limited to a certain group of workers for a certain amount of time? What about workers other than the TEKEL workers? These questions prompted me to explore and investigate the formation of trade union consciousness and worker identity in another sector.

The research was implemented in Adapazarı TÜVASAŞ railcar factory. The first reason for choosing this factory was because it is the core of heavy industrial workplaces where worker identity and trade union consciousness is easily fostered. Secondly, the factory includes the union-member public workers and non-union member subcontractors in the same place in the same labour process. This enables the meaningful comparison of two different statuses of workers. Thirdly, the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory is on the list of institutions that will be privatised in the future. Thus, it would be

appropriate to conduct fieldwork in this workplace after the TEKEL workers activism incident that gained widespread public attention.

This study consists of seven chapters. Following this introductory chapter, the 2nd chapter draws upon the theoretical background for the key concepts and basis for the development of ideas extracted from the literature review and the field study. In this chapter, there is a select history of trade unionism. Then the theoretical background offers a discussion of the working class and unionism, including the most seminal theories. Afterwards, sociological approaches toward unions, the differences between the past and the present of unionism are discussed.

In Chapter 3, the history of trade unionism in Turkey and the labour tradition in TÜVASAŞ is explained. The characteristics of the union tradition are explored from the Ottoman era to the present. The issues related to class formations, democracy and state-society relations, and labour activism in history are analysed in this chapter. Specifically, the railway sector and the TÜVASAŞ workers are briefly discussed in order to easily grasp the background of the field study.

Chapter 4 is the methodology chapter that explains the methods of data collection for the field study. This chapter provides the details about the research; the research sample data is especially significant for the evaluation of this study. This chapter offers an account of the research from the decisive stages through the pilot study, selection of the research setting, difficulties in the field and the data analysis technique.

Chapter 5 combines the structural factor of society and economics with the issues of trade union consciousness and worker identity as a requirement of the socio-economic approach of the analysis of the field study. The economic policies, problems about social structure, and new policies all affect trade unionism in many ways. Unemployment, gender, subcontracting are just some of the important dimensions of trade unionism and working class studies.

In Chapter 6, the main issue of the thesis, the formation of trade union consciousness and worker identity is discussed and the main assumption that the

trade union membership has an important role in the formation working class identity and trade union consciousness is tested. The theoretical debates are mentioned in order to provide a substructure for the analysis of the data. These theoretical debates have an instrumental role for explaining the correlations between the variables. This chapter is formed of three parts. The first part pertains to trade union consciousness and worker identity formations and practices; the second part is about the influence of the political and ideological atmosphere on the trade union consciousness and worker identity. The last part is an evaluation of the field study in terms of the comparison of the two worker groups: union member workers and subcontractors, which is a very important aspect of this research in order to understand whether there is a differentiation within working class in terms of the formation of class identity and trade union consciousness.

Lastly, chapter 7 is the conclusion part of the study in which some of the conclusion remarks are mentioned about whole the study. These conclusion remarks include some recommendations for unionism.

In all sections of this study, the theoretical background of each subject will be mentioned as a framework and this will be synthesized with the findings of the field study. This makes it easier to understand the relationship between the theory and practice, reason and the result.

CHAPTER 2

A HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONISM FROM PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

2.1. A History of Trade Unions

Since waged-labour can not be widespread in agricultural societies, trade unions can be interpreted as being modern and industrial institutions that are also involved in the rise of nation-states especially with development of the concept social citizenship. Trade unions could be founded and developed in the context of nation-states, for they finalized their institutionalisation in nation-states by being one of the three partite, with the other two being those of employers and government. The history of the union movement in the world can be understood as parallel to the change and development processes of industrialisation. Thus, the union movement and industrialisation share a relationship of dualistic interaction.

Trade unions are associations of organized working class members that have existed for more than 200 years. With the emergence of the Industrial Revolution in England, in nineteenth century, a distinct class, the working class, emerged for the first time in history. The difference of owning the means of production and not owning any commodity other than the labour power caused this differentiation and stratification in society. As a modern institution, contemporary trade unions are the products of modern industrial society. Yet, it should be noted that the first labour movements existed even before the manufacture production in England. Initially, the Industrial Revolution caused unemployment because of the mechanization of production and there was an incident that unemployed masses started a labour movement under the leadership of Ned Ludd, who was previously a weaver, and broke the machines

in 1811.⁴ This is known as the first significant labour movement in history. The Luddite Movement was not only the breaking of machines; it was the first organized labour movement supporting English trade unionism.⁵

In 1830, attempts were made to establish national general unions; most significantly, Robert Owen's (a social reformer and one of the founders of socialism) Grand National Consolidated Trade Unions, which brought the representatives of 1.2 million of workers together, consolidated significant enough power so as to get 16 workers elected to parliament in England. In 1909, that number increased to 29 members and this strengthening trend of workers led to the foundation of Labour Party in England.⁶ Similarly, in France, the number of union members increased from 600 thousand in 1914 to 2 million in 1920.⁷

Trade unionism in the U.S. was first present in the 19th century with the rise of industrialisation. The Mechanics' Union Trade Association was the first U.S. labour organization that brought together workers of divergent occupations in 1827. This was "the first city-wide federation of American workers, which recognized that all labour, regardless of trades, had common problems that could be solved only by united effort as a class."⁸ Due to being organized "regardless of trades," this federation caused a historical conceptual difference between the United States and Europe. The trade unions were termed 'labour unions' in the U.S. The situation changed in the 1830s and trade unions started to be institutionalized. National labour unions were then founded on the basis of members having the same occupation.⁹

⁴ Akkaya, 2007, p.214

⁵ Thompson, 1980, p.33

⁶ Thompson, p.45

⁷ Akın & Baştuğ & Yazıcı, 1995, p.43

⁸ Foner, 1972, p.56

⁹ A Curriculum of United States Labor History for Teachers

Over time, there was great demand for labour that was supplied by the peasants who had migrated from rural to urban areas. This demand for and employment of labour by the transfer of the population was the mechanism of proletarianisation. Yet, this process was not providing satisfactory living conditions for workers. Since the beginning of the industrial age, the workers had faced long working hours, poor working conditions, low wages and serious occupational health risks. The harshness of classical liberalism, in terms of economics and politics, forced workers to be organized and struggle for their rights. Thus, this was the basis of unionism.

After the end of World War II, the paradigm had changed for social policy, labour and trade unions as well. The new economic policies of Keynesianism and the 'threat' of the Soviet invasion strengthened the power of the trade unionism in Europe. After the Great Depression and the chaos of World War II, Keynesian economic policies were instituted that advocated the distribution of wealth in favor of labour as a way to exit from recession. The workers' wages increased in this period and the processes of collective bargaining were implemented.

The period after World War II was the golden age of trade unionism. The trade union was the pioneering social institution that had significant political power as well as social power. In this period, the trade unions had a strong influence and control over labour parties and socialist parties. The elections of the executive committee of these parties were under the impact of the union in this period. For example, until the leadership of Tony Blair in 1990s of the Labour Party in England, this influence had continued.

Structural changes, such as in production models, by the end of the 1970s were witnessed. The great progress in technology also made an important impact upon the processes of production and labour. The mobility of capital increased and the borders of the nation-states started to become more porous for capital. Despite the increasing mobility of capital, the labour mobility remained at similar level and this led to the strengthening of capital against labour because capital had been able to increase the options for finding labour in a more

globalized world. The social division of labour transformed into international division of labour. The capital could flow to where the wages of labour were cheaper. These changes that weakened the “national borders” also consequently weakened the welfare states as well. The concept of “competitiveness” became the major reason for this weakening.

The collapse of the Fordism in the 1970s, the hegemony of neo-liberal economical policies, the expansion of flexibility and deregulation at work, the declining role of the state in the economy and the changing structure of labour all contributed to the impoverishment of trade unions since the 1980s. Besides these structural changes, the ideological and political hegemony of neo-liberalism, issues related to the administration of the unions and negative examples that influence the perceptions of unions all weakened the trade unions. The rates of unionization have fallen in most of the countries in recent decades. The political power of the unions fell as well as the social power. The control over Labour Parties or Socialist Parties has weakened also. The introduction of ‘new labour’ or ‘new left’ policies and changing structure of these parties in the relations with the trade unions are remarkable that will be discussed in related parts of this study.

2.2. Theoretical Background

The world has faced new phenomena named ‘working classes’ for the first time in history along with the industrial revolution for last few centuries. The concepts of class consciousness, proletariat, class conflict were now one of the core concepts of the social sciences. “In the years between 1780 and 1832 most English working people came to feel an identity of interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs.”¹⁰ Karl Marx defined the workers as a class and classified them as working class or proletariat as people selling their labour for

¹⁰ Thompson, 1980, p.11

wages. This class does not own the means of production, which is a distinctive feature.

To discuss the issues of trade unionism, the concepts of class, class-consciousness, proletariat, class conflict are needed to be understood in their historical framework and their development and change needed to be grasped. The 19th century Marxist thinking is at the root of and enlightens contemporary debates about the working class and trade unions.

Marx argued that the class exists when its members own class-consciousness. It is a process of being aware of shared interests and a collective identity. This awareness is about the exploitation by another class. In the age of capitalism, this type of antagonistic conflict happens between the proletariat and bourgeoisie, according to Marx. The bourgeoisie, by owning the means of production, can alienate the workers from their nature in the mode of production, creating competition among them and de-skilling them with the help of technology.

As argued by Marx, trade unions serve as important institutions in avoiding this competition among workers and alienation. Namely, the unionism is combining workers rather than competition among them. Trade unions are the first step for class-consciousness, which is about progressing from ‘class in itself’ toward ‘class for itself.’

According to Marx, abolishing the capitalist system should be the aim of the working class that is based on the exploitation of labour power of the workers. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx argued the communist revolution is the ultimate goal of the working class, which can establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.¹¹ Marx claims that this stage is end of the class system and exploitation:

Thereupon, the workers begin to form combinations (trade unions) against the bourgeois; they club together in order to keep up the rate of wages; they found permanent associations in order to make provision beforehand for these occasional revolts. Here and there, the contest breaks out into riots. Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lie not in the immediate

¹¹ Marx & Engels, 1848

result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by Modern Industry, and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes. But every class struggle is a political struggle.¹²

The working class is attributed a revolutionary role by Marx in a social and historical sense:

Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a genuinely revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.¹³

Marx's idea of class conflict had not been realized in most of the European countries, especially the developed ones. In Marxist tradition, the ideas of Bernstein have been debated for long years and he was regarded as a reformism in Marxism and in the politics of working class. Eduard Bernstein points out this tendency of integration. Bernstein is an important figure for the working class thinking and politics because of his influence on both thoughts and politics as a founder of social democracy. Bernstein criticizes Marx in many ways; the situation of workers is developing and becoming better, he claims. In the beginning of the 19th century, for example, in Germany, the wealth of all society had increased and so the workers were part of the increase in wealth. This is in contrast with the Marxist prediction advocating the future of workers would be worse. Furthermore, in Germany, the number of workers in industry at the beginning of the 20th century was about 7 million, but the numbers of the union-member workers were only 500 thousand and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) received only about 3 million votes in all Germany in the elections.¹⁴ As a result of these percentages presenting weakening collectivity among workers and issues

¹² Marx & Engels, 1848

¹³ Marx & Engels, 1848

¹⁴ Bernstein, 1961, p.131,

about class identity, Bernstein became a pioneering figure of a paradigm representing the shift from revolutionary thoughts toward evolutionary thoughts, or, in other words, from socialism to social democracy:

Social conditions have not developed to such an acute opposition of things and classes as is depicted in the Manifesto. It is not only useless; it is the greatest folly to attempt to conceal this from ourselves. The number of members of the possessing classes is to-day not smaller but larger. The enormous increase of social wealth is not accompanied by a decreasing number of large capitalists but by an increasing number of capitalists of all degrees. The middle classes change their character but they do not disappear from the social scale.¹⁵

Bernstein asserts that the working class needs to be in alliance with other social groups. “Socialism inside capitalism” is the slogan of this shift, emphasizing the importance of democratic institutions of a ‘bourgeoisie society.’¹⁶ The labour parties, the trade unions, the democratic struggle in the parliament are all part of the opportunities of bourgeoisie democracy, according to Bernstein. These need to be utilized for safeguarding the working class interests in order “to organize the working classes politically and develop them as a democracy and to fight for all reforms in the State which are adapted to raise the working classes and transform the State in the direction of democracy.”¹⁷ Bernstein maintains that trade unions are the democratic element in industrial society. Their function is to destroy absolutism and the suppressing tendency of capital, and to be a part of the management of the industry in favour of workers.¹⁸

Like Bernstein, Ralf Dahrendorf criticizes traditional Marxism for ignoring the consensus and integration within modern society. Marx’s term of class conflict is narrow and history-specific according to him.¹⁹ Undoubtedly,

¹⁵ Bernstein, 1961, p.1

¹⁶ Bernstein, p.103

¹⁷ Bernstein, 1961, p.6

¹⁸ Bernstein, p.8

¹⁹ Dahrendorf, Ralf, 1959, p.34

there were serious changes since Marx developed his theory on class conflict. These changes are the diversified class structure, more complex formation of inequality and power relations in the system. He calls this new system post-capitalism.²⁰ Dahrendorf has a pluralistic view of the class structure in society, including the dimensions of income, race, status and life chances:

Industrial progress and economic development generally, also led to the massive growth of a 'new middle class' of private and public office workers. Clearly, the growing new middle class - as well as the stubborn survival of 'old middle class' of self-employed craftsmen, small shopkeepers, farmers - made nonsense of the assumption that sooner or later the overwhelming majority of all people would be drawn into a largely undifferentiated proletarian existence. True, the working class was still growing; in many advanced countries it comprises about 50 per cent of the population. But other strata were growing more rapidly, and their social position was by no means clear.²¹

Dahrendorf argues that social conflict has new dimensions and has changed. The trade unions, collective bargaining and political institutions have been functional for the habituation of class conflict. Dahrendorf puts forth that class conflict could have beneficial consequences for society, such as progressive change. Bernstein's thoughts about the increase in the wealth and political power of working class can be evaluated in this view. The conflicts cause the progressive changes and achieve agreements. In line with Dahrendorf, Lewis Coser states that there are positive functions of conflict and that in the management of conflict both parties come out stronger.²²

Social stratification is not as simple as the 19th century's industrial society. The rise of 'the new middle class,' the diversification within the working-class and the new social positions that blur the defining of terms of stratification change the perception of social stratification and social change. The conceptualization of 'contradictory class locations' can be a key for grasping the diversification within the working-class.²³ According to Erik Olin

²⁰ Dahrendorf, p.45

²¹ Dahrendorf, p.77

²² Hyman, 1971, pp.23-24

²³ Wright, E. O., 1978

Wright, the bourgeoisie, proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie are the main classes and high and middle level executives, self-dependent workers, petty employers, managers, technocrats, and journeymen can be considered as the group of workers of the 'contradictory class locations.'²⁴

Yet this new type of social stratification should not mean the disappearance of working-class; instead, it is a type of 'redefinition' and an analysis of the opportunities and obstacles in the new social structure. Wright explains the 'power' of the working class by making a distinction between the associational power and structural power. The role and function of trade unions are clarified by this distinction in the new type of stratified society by this distinction:

Working class "associational" power—the various forms of power that result from the formation of collective organizations of workers. This includes such things as unions and parties but may also include a variety of other forms, such as works councils or forms of institutional representation of workers on boards of directors in schemes of worker codetermination, or even, in certain circumstances, community organizations. Associational power is to be contrasted with what can be termed "structural power"—power that results simply from the location of workers within the economic system. The power of workers as individuals that results directly from tight labor markets or from the strategic location of a particular group of workers within a key industrial sector would constitute instances of structural power.²⁵

It is important to mention that the concepts of associational power and structural power are not independent from each other; instead, they are interdependent. Wright is against the idea of class conflict that is a Marxist thought of a perception of 19th century industrial society. He analyses the statistics of economic growth of countries and the increases or decreases in national incomes from a historical perspective. He reaches the conclusion that the greatest growth in national income has occurred in two time periods. The first period of highest economic growth is when wages and the working

²⁴ Celik cited: Wright, p. 956

²⁵ Wright, 2000, p.962

conditions of the workers are at the lowest levels. The second period is when workers' wages and working conditions are at the highest levels. Interestingly, in the middle levels, the economic growth of the nations slow down or even decrease. The rate of the economic growth at both levels are at similar levels (when the price of labour is lowest and when it is highest). Wrights questions that if these two levels are similar, then why do the wages of workers or the working conditions (such as working hours) stay at lower levels? Finally, he uses a new concept of 'class compromise' as a solution for the new social system. Similarly with Bernstein, Wright emphasizes the role of integration with the other classes in social and political terms by underlying the association power of the working class. It should be noted that trade unions are the pioneering institutions of this associational power:

The maximally productive use of advanced technologies often requires higher levels of information coordination, problem solving, and adaptability than in traditional mass production. To the extent that strong working-class associational power within the sphere of production enhances the levels of trust between employees and managers, and such trust is necessary for such new forms of work organization, the positive effect of workers' power on capitalists' interests may be strengthened. On the other hand, if the technological conditions of production foster weak interdependencies among workers within highly atomized labour processes, increased globalization and competitive pressures would probably not enhance the positive effects of workers' associations within production. This suggests that there are probably strong interactive effects (rather than merely additive effects) of globalization and technological change on the conditions for class compromise within production.²⁶

Although many scholars emphasise the functions of the 'progressive result of conflict' and 'the class compromise,' it can be argued that all these ideas emerged under the influence of the period of the rise of the social welfare states. Until the late 1970s, it was the golden age of the welfare states and especially for the labour. The social rights, wages, working conditions have had welfare provisions granted by the state with Keynesian economic policies. Many changes have been seen both in political-ideological and economic-structural terms. But after 1970, the neoliberalism and the globasation undermines the emphasis on the social rights, labour, full

²⁶ Wright, 2000, p.998

employment and the trade unionism. Also massive changes occurred in the organization of production and the labour processes. Flexibility is the basis of this transformation that is mentioned in detail in relative parts of this study. Lash and Urry identify contemporary capitalism as “disorganized capitalism” and also welfare capitalism as “organized capitalism.”²⁷ As a result, there can be a necessity to evaluate these ideas with considering these changes.

Besides the changes in the labour process, political and ideological hegemony has intensified under neo-liberalism. The governments of Thatcher in England and Reagan in the U.S. were the pioneers of this political change. Along with the political leaders, the ideological change formed a kind of ideological hegemony in Gramsci’s terms. Not only the state or the capitalists, but also the labour movement and the trade unions lost their motivation and commitment to the class struggle rather they become more compromised like showing the consent to the new situation. Their opposition towards privatisations, sub-contracting or any other trends harming labour movement, seems weakened. This situation can be perceived as a consent to the neoliberal policies and power of the cultural, ideological hegemony in Gramsci’s terms.

In order to understand the hegemonic structure of the neoliberal ideology and politics, this should be understood well. According to Milton Friedman who is the pioneering figure of neoliberal thought, the trade unions cause a monopolistic structure for the labour market and cause an inefficiency in the market. This is against the competitiveness principle:

To see the function of these practices and the associated closed shop, let us suppose that the wage rate can be fixed above its competitive level by direct means, for example, by legal enactment of a minimum wage rate. This will necessarily mean that fewer jobs will be available than otherwise and fewer jobs than seeking other jobs. This excess supply of labour must be disposed of somehow – the jobs must be rationed among the seekers for jobs.²⁸

²⁷ Lash & Urry, 1994

²⁸ Friedman, 2007, p.164

Furthermore, according to Hayek, the impact of trade unionism in affecting pricing is already very damaging, causing the market system to be inefficient. Since the price of labour is raised over the market rate,²⁹ “there can be little doubt that union activities lead to continuous and progressive inflation.” These thoughts become hegemonic both in political parties and governments and in ideological debates. Even the Labour parties ‘re-evaluate’ their relationship with the trade unions and become moderate in relation to neo-liberal economic policies. Adam Przeworski summarizes this hegemonic system as: “a hegemonic system is, for Gramsci, a capitalist society in which capitalists exploit with consent of the exploited.”³⁰ The control over the labour by the capitalists is important. “If a labor movement is sufficiently disciplined, particularly when it is articulated to a sympathetic state, it can positively contribute to the realization of capitalists’ interests by helping to solve macroeconomic problems.”³¹ The arguments of neo-liberalism have been perceived by most of the society as ‘natural’ facts and this is the indication of its hegemonic power.

The new structure of labour and production is also characterized by structural unemployment. Unemployment is a tool for the weakening of the working class because the result is that of causing competition among workers, which infringes upon the solidarity and class identity:

Big industry constantly requires a reserve army of unemployed workers for times of overproduction. The main purpose of the bourgeois in relation to the worker is, of course, to have the commodity labour as cheaply as possible, which is only possible when the supply of this commodity is as large as possible in relation to the demand for it, i.e., when the overpopulation is the greatest.³²

²⁹ Hayek, 1960, p.24

³⁰ Przeworski, 1985, p.136

³¹ Wright, 1999, p.968

³² Marx, 1847

The issue of unemployment should be also considered with sub-contracting, part time labour and any other types of precarious employment mechanism. Because these cause short-time labour which is candidates of being unemployed so their wages become lower.

General rise in unemployment, combined with the trend toward using part-time labour and sub-contracting, which create a labour pool that is paid significantly less and feels more vulnerable to being displaced, gives the employers more of a 'reserve army of labour' that is used to control the working class through wage cuts and the threat of unemployment.³³

Besides the structural issues like changes in the production system, labour process and the political-ideological transformation, unionism faces important socio-cultural issues such as clientelism, especially in Third World countries:

In very basic terms, political clientelism describes the distribution of selective benefits to individuals or clearly defined groups in exchange for political support. This definition reflects the origins of the concept as a descriptor of hierarchical patron-client relationships in traditional rural societies. In this new, 'mass party' clientelism, patrons have to 'buy' votes by distributing concrete excludable benefits and favours to individual voters or groups of voters. Such selective benefits include help in the labour market, for instance allocation of public sector jobs, help acceding to welfare benefits, or favouritism in administrative decisions (exemption from military services, building permits etc).³⁴

For societies having strong state traditions and weak social movements, paternalism is also an important issue facing the labour movement because having issues of relations between the state and society can shadow class structure and class relations (conflict or compromise). The Turkish case is a prime example for this, as this situation reflects a paternalistic system between the state and the unions besides clientelistic relations. The difficulty of adapting the Western literature of the working class and working class politics is obvious because of the authentic character. Because the countries that this literature

³³ Spector, 1995, p.329,

³⁴ Piattoni 2001, p.9

stems from are the ones having a history of strong class structure, class identities and stratification in terms of the proletariat and bourgeoisie. Neither social and political nor civil rights have been gained as a result of the social movements such as the labour movements in these countries. The social or political changes or reforms are the results of the changes of political governments. “These benefits had derived from a process of top down bureaucratic reform however; and what the state gives, the state can take away.”³⁵ This is why the unions and labour movement are weak against the state. This authenticity is important to remember for conceptualizing the working class identity and trade unionism in Turkey.

2.3. Sociological Understandings of Trade Unionisms and Different Paradigmatic Approaches to Trade Union Consciousness

There are different approaches toward the functions of trade unions and the formation of trade union consciousness. Firstly, the Marxist tradition focuses on trade unions in terms of the social and economic roles as well as the trade union consciousness among workers. In the theoretical sphere, Marxist literature has highlighted the role of trade unions for workers: “Unions are ramparts for workers in their struggle for social revolution against employers”³⁶; “Unions are a military school for class war.”³⁷ According to the Marxist approach, unions are the first step for the transition from a class in itself to a class for itself.

Yet, the experiences of trade unionism brought about criticism and later reservations. Issues related to labour aristocracy; corrupt leaders and embourgeoisment based on imperialism were observed in the case of British unionism.³⁸ Labour aristocracy refers to the inequality among workers because

³⁵ Nichols, 2000, p.10

³⁶ Cohen & Moody cited in: Marx. Marx 1973 , p. 150

³⁷ Engels, p. 173

³⁸ Hyman, 1971, p.9

only some segment of workers was organized in unions, which are skilled, privileged and moderate. Corrupt leaders equates to the union leadership that was corrupt in a material and ideological sense.³⁹ Embourgeoisment refers to the unequal position of British workers coming from the social wealth derived from the imperialist structure of Britain. The major emphasis on the existence of trade unionism and trade union consciousness by Marx and Engels was the function of combining workers instead of causing a competition among them.

Wright's distinction between 'association power' and 'structural power' is significant. These two powers are interdependent in the struggle of the working class. By associational power, the labour parties or the trade unions are meant. Political institutions and political activism are mainly determined by the structure of the working class; however, it should be stated that political activism is a tool for the formation and reproduction of class identity besides being serving the rights and interests of the working class.

The most important dimension about trade unionism and trade union consciousness is the concrete relationship of the theory, ideology and practice of the working-class. The concepts of class-consciousness, class struggle, worker identity, class conflict are all embodied with trade unionism. The basic level of class-consciousness is the trade union consciousness. According to Lenin, trade union consciousness is "the conviction that it is necessary to combine in unions, fight the employers, and strive to compel the government to pass necessary labour legislation, etc."⁴⁰ But Lenin is also critical of trade unionism. According to him, trade union politics is bourgeois politics. On the contrary, Marx underlines the importance of unions because of unions being an indication of political class struggle.⁴¹

There is yet a different approach, which is put forth by C. Wright Mills. He claims that the disciplining role of the trade unions for industry and capital:

³⁹ Hyman, p.9

⁴⁰ Lenin, 1902,

⁴¹ Hyman, p.1

“The union takes over much of the company's personnel work, becoming the disciplining agent.”⁴² Furthermore, the “union derives union security, higher wages for its members; in return, the company receives peace and stability in its plants and higher productivity.”⁴³ Mills defines this as joint bureaucratic discipline. This view points out the trade union consciousness among the capital and employers, not only among workers. However, this view was more valid in the large industrial plants having a lot of workers because of the high level of bureaucratisation and division of labour. But the contemporary organisation of work mostly depends on flexibility. Besides the change in the organisation of work, there was a paradigm shift against the labour movement and social rights that are discussed in certain parts of this study.

2.4. The Past and Present of Trade Unions

The relationship between the classes and unions is important for analyzing trade unionism. Trade unions are the prerequisites for class identity formation and vice versa. As the most legitimate institution, membership within trade unions is the phase of commitment to class belonging. The change in class identity would inevitably change the character of trade unionism as well as its strength. For last few decades, there was been debate that the working class will weaken: “Working class demands have turned into consumerist mass demands.”⁴⁴ Within the context of the weakness of the trade unions, it would not be totally wrong to reject this idea and the situation of trade unions reflects the situation of workers.

Secondly, the relationship between trade unions and political parties supported by the working class is very significant. Until the end of the welfare state, the trade unions had a strong influence and control over labour parties or

⁴² Mills, 1948, p.21,

⁴³ Hyman, p.21

⁴⁴ Gorz, 1997, p.40

socialist parties. The elections of the executive committee of these parties were under the impact of the union in this period. For example, until the leadership of Tony Blair of Labour Party in England, this influence had been continued. German unionism was a prime example for the role of trade unions in politics. It is also a relevant example for showing the social and political strength of the trade unions:

At the Social Democratic Party Congress in Mannheim in September 1906, the trade union leaders demanded, and obtained, from the SPD passage of a resolution that established the principle of "equality" between the trade unions and the party. This meant that on all issues touching on matters that were of direct concern to the trade unions, the party had to work out a position that was acceptable to them. Over strenuous objections, party leaders collaborated with trade union officials to bureaucratically shut down discussion and ram through the resolution.

From this point on, the SPD was effectively ruled by the general commission of the trade unions. The relation of the trade unions to the party was, as Luxemburg noted, like that of the shrew peasant wife, who told her husband: "Whenever questions arise between us, we shall use the following procedure When we agree, you will decide. When we disagree, I will decide."⁴⁵

Thirdly, the relationship between the political parties of the working class and the state is important. The close relationship between the political parties and the unions strengthened the relationships between the states and the unions. Against the 'threat' of Soviet invasion or any revolutionary movements, the Keynesian economic policies also prompted governments to take seriously the demands of the trade unions as a new social actor. The labour parties prepared this basis for the relations between the states for unions. The tradition of strong social movements is important for these relations instead of paternalistic relations.

Trade unions should not be regarded as the centers for "selling labour at best price." In Western Europe, unions are the social unions that can function and suggest policies not only for the working class but also for all of society, for unions are an important part of society that can suggest policies such as for

⁴⁵ North, 1998,

democratization, privatization, unemployment, European Union cooperation, etc. These can be considered as irrelevant for the interests of workers, but, in fact, all these greatly affect the working class in long term. Focusing on wages can cause the weakening of the unions as social actors; instead, taking initiatives in economic, political and social fields can strengthen the unions and unions can have more in terms of wages.

CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE UNIONISM IN TURKEY AND THE LABOUR IN TÜVASAŞ

3.1. The History of Trade Unions in Turkey

The history of trade unionism has different characteristics from the Western European countries. The working-class formation is relatively later for instance. The relations with the state and the society are unique in many ways that are mentioned in relative parts. The issues of democratization, the militarist interventions, banning of trade unions, lack of strong 'labour parties' can be mentioned as some these unique characteristics. As a result, the history of trade unionism is important to understand the social and political background of the development of trade unionism in Turkey. Since the roots in the Ottoman period, the trade unionism has important turning points and changes.

3.1.1. The Unions in Ottoman Period

As a result of having a weak industry and lack of high numbers of wage earners, the existence of a working-class and labour movement remained too limited in the Ottoman period in Turkey. In 1915, there were only 14,060 workers who worked at 282 industrial establishments.⁴⁶ With this very low rate of industrialisation, its fair to say that to have an active, strong labour movement was too difficult. There is little historical evidence of Turkish labour movements before 1909. Except for the very short experience of the Istanbul Workmen Society (*İstanbul Ameleperver Cemiyeti*), Ottoman Workmen Society (*Osmanlı Amele Cemiyeti*) and the strike of shipyard workers in 1872 in Salonica, there had been no widespread labour movements until the Second Constitution of

⁴⁶ Gülmez, 1983, p.157

1908.⁴⁷ Both workmen societies were unlikely to be identified as unions because they were mainly intellectual-worker coalitions that were against the government of Abdühamit II.⁴⁸ The oppressing absolutism is the main reason of these oppositions.

Apart from limited industrialisation, there were some other factors contributing to the weakness of the labour movement and lack of unions in this period: The single handed authoritarianism of the monarch that ruled out any type of freedom of association or speech and the reluctance of the emerging Young Turks movement to support workers' causes.⁴⁹

The organisation of unions started with the strikes in 1908 after the declaration of the Second Constitution, which recognized the right of association. The Unity and Progress Party (*İttihat ve Terakki Fırkası*) government reacted by suppressing these work stoppages and by promulgating the Work Stoppage Act of 1909 (*Tatıl-I Eşgal*), which disbanded already existing unions and prohibited the formation of new ones in public services and in utilities, sectors largely under foreign control.⁵⁰ The immaturity of the concepts of democracy and rights prompted the Ottoman government to choose solutions that included banning associations of any social groups, not only trade unions, which might threaten the government's ruling power. The rising labour movements and socialism could have increased this "sense of threat" for the government. Anti-democratic policies of even harsher types were also carried out later on in Turkish history.

The most important dimension of unionisation in the Ottoman period is not leaving a legacy to later periods in history of Turkish unionism. The lack of established industry, an anti-democratic atmosphere and the conquest of the land such as Salonica by neighbouring countries that previously had witnessed

⁴⁷ Akkaya, 2002, p.3; Yazıcı, 1996, pp.89-90

⁴⁸ Yazıcı, pp.90-91

⁴⁹ Dereli, 1992, p.464

⁵⁰ Dereli, p.464

unique labor movements in Ottoman history are the main reasons for this lack of inheritance of unionisation to the new Turkish Republic.

3.1.2. The Single-Party Republican Period

The Turkish Republic was founded in 1923 after the War of Liberation, which was the last part of World War I. Turkish society was mostly comprised of a rural population that dealt with agriculture in that period. The urban population was a minority of 24% in the first census and it remained at almost the same level (25%) until 1950s.⁵¹ There is a strong relationship between urbanization and industrialization and there is also a solid link between industrialization and the formation of the working-class. Thus, there is an obvious relationship between level of urbanization and the size of the working class. In Turkey, the rate of industrial employment in total employment was 8.9% in 1927 and 11.7% in 1935.⁵² Besides freedom, the lack of investment in heavy industry was another obstacle for strong labour movements; most members of Turkish society were still peasants. In 1927, there were only 150,000 workers that worked in a workplace in which more than four workers were employed.⁵³ The reason for not having an increase in the urban population can be explained by the lack of high levels of investment in industry and consequently the lack of migration from rural to urban areas. As such, the process of the proleterianisation of the peasants could not be seen in these years.

Besides the insufficient level of industrialization, the lack of democracy and freedom of speech and freedom of association were significant obstacles confronting unionisation in the young Republic of Turkey. The Restoration of Peace Act (*Takrir-i Sükun*), passed in 1925 to facilitate the launching of Atatürk's reforms, was unsympathetic to the creation of class-based

⁵¹ Koç, 1996

⁵² Tezel, 1982, p.129

⁵³ Akın & Baştuğ & Yazıcı, 1995, p.41

organizations, although, under the 1909 act, it remained at least theoretically permissible to establish unions outside the public services.⁵⁴ With the act of 1925, not only the unions and associations, but political parties also were banned.

Private entrepreneurship was largely absent in this era of the republic and the state was the largest and nearly the only entrepreneur and economic actor in the country. This was the era of import substitution. The major practical expression of the etatist ideology was the five-year plan of 1934-1938, which created Turkey's well-known state economic enterprises (SEEs), including Etibank and Sumerbank. No labor unions emerged in this era since the Penal Code passed in 1933, which specifically prohibited strikes and specified punishment for strikes carried out.⁵⁵ Recep Peker's government prepared the Turkish Penal Code, which was inspired by the Italian Penal Code.

The rationale for banning unions and strikes under the 1936 act was the populist philosophy of the ruling Republican Peoples' Party, which insisted that labor's interests were well protected by the classless, paternalistic state.⁵⁶ The main objective of the new republic was to form a society, which was "a well-integrated, classless mass."⁵⁷ The labor movement was not the only target that should have been banned or pressed; instead, there were many social groups or political movements that faced similar obstacles or mechanisms of control by the regime. On the other hand, the situation in terms of freedom, democracy and rights, was not unique for Turkey; at the time, this was the case for many countries in Europe also, especially for Germany, Italy and Spain.

⁵⁴ Dereli, p.465, 1992

⁵⁵ Dereli, p.465

⁵⁶ Dereli, p.465

⁵⁷ Akkaya, p.5

3.1.3. Labor Unionism without Right to Strike in Turkey (1947-1960)

The period after World War II marks the beginning of the focus upon rights, freedoms and liberalization after the defeat of fascism in Europe. In 1944, the International Labor Organization (ILO) announced the Declaration of Philadelphia, which states that human labour should not be a commodity; there should be a fight against poverty and an agreement upon the principle of equal wages for equal work, a minimum wage, and freedom for association and suggestions for forming social security systems. Similarly, the Universal Declaration of the United Nations in 1948 that advocates the rights of employment, social security and unionization for any individual was another significant aspect of the development of social rights in the world.⁵⁸ Unsurprisingly, this conjuncture of the world, which underlines citizenship rights composed of civil, political and social rights, had an important influence upon Turkey. Turkey made the transition to multiparty democracy in 1946 and also the freedom of association was guaranteed with the Trade Union Act in 1947.

The Trade Union Act of 1947 was an important step forward for the labour movement in Turkey. Trade unions began to be founded immediately. However, there were some restrictions upon the trade unions. There was a ban on strikes and lock-outs and the unions could not join international organizations without government consent, nor could they engage in political activities.⁵⁹ The two mainstream parties of that period, the Republican Peoples' Party and the Democrat Party, attempted to obtain the unions' support and the unions tried to use these attempts to gain more for the workers and labor movement.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Kalaycıođlu, Rittersberger-Tılıç, Çelik, 2008, p.81

⁵⁹ Dereli, p.467

⁶⁰ Akkaya, 2002, p.6

The foundation of the Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (Türk-İş) had a significant place in terms of the history of trade unions in Turkey. Türk-İş was the first trade union confederation of Turkey. Before Türk-İş, the dominant organizational form came from the local and regional groups that could affiliate with industry-level federations, yet there still was a lack of confederation.⁶¹ Since Türk-İş had had a close relationship and cooperation with U.S. trade unions, Türk-İş followed the principle of “wage-based” unionism without representing an “ideological” basis and the major policy was having “good relations” with the Turkish governments.⁶² The relation between Türk-İş and U.S. trade unionism was also very effective for the establishment of Türk-İş.

3.1.4. Labour Unionism in Turkey (1960 – 1980)

After the military coup on 27 May of 1960, there was a new constitution prepared in 1961. Interestingly, the constitution under military “influence” emphasises rights, especially for social rights. The 1961 Constitution gave some rights to trade unions that were not available previously. The 1961 Constitution guaranteed union freedoms, the right of employees to bargain collectively with employers, and the right to strike.⁶³ These rights covered white-collar workers for the first time in Turkish history. Yet, the white-collar unions had managed to survive for only 10 years until they were banned in 1971 after the military intervention in that year. Rather than the results of the strength, struggle or pressure of the working class, these developments were the “top-down” policies of the state and its constitution.

Türk-İş had adhered to a policy of supra-party unionism whose aim was to permit the union movement to act as a pressure group, regardless of which political party was in power because this neutrality was encouraged by the

⁶¹ Dereli, p.467

⁶² Kalaycıoğlu, Rittersberger-Tılıç, Çelik, 2008, p.81

⁶³ Dereli, p.468

desire of public authorities and most union leaders to maintain the unity of the labour movement.⁶⁴ “It is sometimes regarded as an American form of union. This is not without reason: between 1960 and 1970 US financial aid constituted a sum equal to the income that came to Türk-İş from its membership dues.”⁶⁵ This supra-party unionism was far from satisfying the wishes of some political groups within Türk-İş. Other trade union confederations such as DİSK, Hak-İş and MİSK eventually formed. DİSK (Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions) was formed in 1967 under the decisive role of Turkish Labour Party (TİP).⁶⁶ DİSK is a left-wing confederation that holds the concept of class as the basis of the unionism and labour movement. Class-consciousness has been the keyword for the discourse of DİSK. Contrary to Türk-İş, DİSK had declared their support for political parties in terms of voting for the elections; first, they supported TİP and then CHP until 1980.⁶⁷ Other confederations were MİSK (Confederation of Nationalist Trade Unions) that was formed under the active role of MHP (Nationalist Movement Party) in 1970 and Hak-İş (Confederation of Righteous Trade Unions of Turkey) that was founded in 1976 under the control of MSP (National Welfare Party). These right-wing confederations were not as active as Türk-İş and DİSK in terms of power, size and influence among labour movement, although MİSK and Hak-İş had had over 200 thousand members. Especially MİSK presented a successful development by organizing 150 thousands of workers, combining the perspective of social rights and nationalism.

Competition arose between the confederations after the ‘inflation’ of trade unions. Since the law permitted membership in more than one union for one person, the numbers of the members of the confederations and the number of the total Turkish union confederation members became highly overstated.

⁶⁴ Dereli, p.469

⁶⁵ Nicols, p.4

⁶⁶ Retrieved from www.disk.org.tr in 25 February 2010

⁶⁷ Akkaya, pp. 12-13

Furthermore, the confederation had not declared the correct numbers of the members and they declared the number to be higher.⁶⁸ In 1980, the number of the unionized workers was 5,721,074, which was more than twice of the total number registered for social security insurance system.⁶⁹ The legal gap for the true number of membership to unions is still a problem in Turkey that is discussed in related parts of this study.

Even if there were problems regarding the membership numbers of the unions and divisions within the confederation, the years between 1961 and 1980 witnessed the most powerful era of their development. The “golden age” of unions was identified with the strengthening of the “social justification” and the important acquisitions of the labour movement by the tools of trade unions.⁷⁰ Most of the “older” union members are still full of the memories of those days of the “golden age,” such as the activism on 1 May in the late 1970s of the millions of workers. These memories make them more committed and motivated than the younger workers.

3.1.5. The Labor Unionism after 1980

After the political and social instability in the 1970s, 1980 became a tragic turning point within the history of Turkish democracy. Political parties and their leaders were banned from politics for many years as a result of the decision of the military courts. The National Security Council suspended the activities of DİSK, MİSK and Hak-İş; Türk-İş had remained the only confederation for at least a few years. Also strikes and lockouts were banned. Perhaps one of the most important aspects about the approaches of unions toward the 1980 military coup was the approach of Türk-İş, which declared its support for the military coup, stated that the military coup created confidence

⁶⁸ Koç, 1996, p.60

⁶⁹ Tokol, 1994, p.64

⁷⁰ Kalaycıoğlu, Rittersberger-Tılıç, Çelik, 2008, p.83

and trust among the society, and that Türk-İş hoped the military government would be good for the country.⁷¹ Hence, the largest and oldest trade union confederation of Turkey welcomed the military coup with the declaration of the goodness of the militarism with their best wishes. This was a complete scandal in the history of the Turkish labour movement and the history of democracy in Turkey.

The military coup had an instrumental role for the consolidation of neo-liberal politics so faster because of facing no social opposition with the help of the oppression on the society. With few exceptions, the legislation of 1988 covered all manual and white-collar workers in both the public and private sectors; however, civil servants and certain public employee groups, including the newly created “contract worker” category in the SEE’s (state economic enterprises), were denied the right to unionize and bargain collectively.⁷²

By 1990, the 750 unions in existence a decade earlier had been reduced to 69 unions; of these, only 41 appeared to meet the minimum requirement of 10% representation in industry and more than half of the workers in the plant or company requirement to gain bargaining status, which was the rule that was likely the most instrumental factor in reducing the number of unions.⁷³

Banning the trade unions and confederations and not recognizing the rights to strike weakened the labour movement in many respects. Perhaps one of the most important aspects of this weakening was the dramatic decrease in workers’ real wages. This decrease was nearly 50%.

After 1980, labour activism in the spring of 1989 played a very important role in the resurrection of the Turkish labour movement. This was the first activism that had a high level of participation amongst the masses of workers after the military coup. As a result of the disagreement in the process of collective bargaining of 600,000 workers in the public sector, there were several

⁷¹ Akkaya, p.8

⁷² Dereli, p.471

⁷³ Dereli, p.472

types of protests and activism including not eating lunch, participation in protest meetings that had no ideological or political basis.⁷⁴

In 1990, 300,000 workers decided to hold a strike. This activism brought about strong criticism by the media, which affected the social and economic life negatively and reduced public support for the unions.⁷⁵ Thus, the image of the unions was damaged due to the media's portrayal of unions as agents of the military and capitalist groups.

The major characteristic of the labour movement activism between 1983-1995 was being organised from the grassroots level upward, meaning rather than organisations led by leading figures of the confederations or trade unions, these were the results of the workers' own initiative.⁷⁶ Workers' taking the initiative themselves was a result of "non-political" unions that cooperated with the military governments.

The year 1980 was also the turning point not only because of the military coup, but also due to the shift toward neo-liberalism in Turkey and in most of the western world. On 24 January, there was a declaration of new economic policies supportive of neo-liberalism by the government in Turkey. And this policies were implemented by the militarist governments. One of the most important dimensions of neo-liberalism was the discourse and policies of privatization of state enterprises. This caused the weakening of the labour movement, especially Türk-İş because it had been organised in state enterprises that were beginning to be privatized.

By the end of 1990, despite the reduction of the number of unions through forced mergers, total union membership had reached its pre-1980 level of just over 2 million.⁷⁷ But the main issue was about the drop in the size of the potentially unionisable work force from about 5 million in the pre-1980 period

⁷⁴ Yazıcı, p.153

⁷⁵ Yazıcı, p.155

⁷⁶ Yazıcı, p.157

⁷⁷ Dereli, p.473

to 3.5 million, which was due, among other things, to legal restrictions on union membership, the creation of the contract workers status that forbid union membership, and the increase in the number of civil servants who were not permitted to join unions.

3.1.6. The Importance of Railway Workers in the Labour History of Turkey

The railway sector was one of the earliest industrial sectors in Turkish history. Starting as a foreign, private investment and transforming into a state economic enterprise, both the numbers and the density of railway workers have been always higher than other sectors in Turkish labour history. While considering the low percentage of workers in society as a major problem for the emergence of the working-class, the existence of tens of thousands of railway workers is worth focusing for this research on labour.

The railway workers construct railways, a vital part of the transportation system, and produce locomotives and railcars, also in the parking fields. The railway workers work in an industrial setting that serves to promote the formation of group solidarity and a group consciousness. This is a sort of communal identity, causing a collective identity and an emergence of a sub-culture, in theory at least, because the class-consciousness and the worker identity is mostly about shared life-styles and values, common interests and the mechanism of solidarity. The railway sector is one of the most vital atmospheres for the emergence of these sentiments in Turkey when taking the long history and tradition of labour into account.

3.2. Turkish Railway Industry Joint-Stock Company (TÜVASAŞ)

The Turkish Railway Industry Joint-Stock Company (TÜVASAŞ) was one of the most important industrial investments in Turkey. TÜVASAŞ is the

producer of wagons (or railcars), local trains, tramways and subway trains. The production includes the export products abroad. Railcar factory is the pioneering heavy industry facility of Turkey.

3.2.1. The History of Turkish Railways

The railway transportation system was first established in 1866 during the era of the Ottoman Empire. The railway line between Izmir-Aydin was one of the first railway lines in Turkey. The Rumelia, Ankara-Eskişehir, Anatolia-Baghdad and Istanbul-Hejaz railway lines were the result of long and committed efforts of the empire, which became the basis of the railway system of the Turkish Republic. A total of 4000 kilometers in length of the railway was the heritage of the empire to the republic.⁷⁸ The Turkish Republic, especially under the leadership of Kemal Atatürk, the importance of the railways was emphasized and about the 3000 kilometers length of railways was constructed until 1950.

From the 1950s onward, the investments earmarked for the railways had shifted to the highways. But instead of the construction of railway routes, the industry of railways began to be developed or constructed in this period. The railcar and locomotive factories were built in this period, which had a positive effect for the industrialisation of the entire country while being under-developed in transportation of the passengers and the goods. These two trends created a great controversy for Turkey in terms of railway policies.

3.2.2. The Importance of Turkish Railways as a State Economic Enterprise

The railways initially were the apparatus for the development in the age of capitalism. One of the most important criteria for the rise of the industrialization is the connection between the production and the market. The goods need to be transported from the production zone to the market to be sold

⁷⁸ General Directory of Turkish State Railways Web Site, retrieved from www.tcdd.gov.tr

in the minimum time and with minimum effort. This is important for the competitiveness of the good, its producer and the market forces in terms of the determination of the price in the market.

This close relationship between the railway system and the economic development was noticed by the state for more than a century. Besides the railway investments made in the Ottoman era, the republic encouraged the construction of railways through the rents involving private construction firms to support and create a 'national industrial capital.' The 'Tenth Year March' of the republic mentions the "knitting the country with iron nets." This was certainly a part of the developmentalist policies.

3.2.3. The Role of Turkish Railway Industry Joint-Stock Company (TÜVASAŞ) for Turkish Industry

With the developments after World War II., with the aim of carrying out repairs of freight and public transportation inside the country, the first workshops of today's TÜVASAŞ complex were founded in Adapazari; on 25 October 1951, they were put into service. The Railcar Repair Workshop served for 10 years in concordance with its business basis.⁷⁹ In 1962, the first wagon production was achieved in the complex that continued as the Adapazari Railway Factory since 1961. After that, the construction of public railcars with compartments and salon railcars were constructed and at the same time railcar repair services continued.⁸⁰

TÜVASAŞ is crucial not only for Turkish industry; it is the heart of Adapazari's economy in terms of employment and the dynamics of consumption and the market. Because of the factory's existence, Adapazari is a city that has a migrant population instead of losing its residents to large cities, which is what most cities in Turkey encounter.

⁷⁹ History of TÜVASAŞ, website of TÜVASAŞ

⁸⁰ Ibid., TÜVASAŞ website.

3.2.4. The General Features of Workers in TÜVASAŞ

Approximately 80% of the workers in the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory are public workers while the remaining approximate 20 % are subcontractors. There are approximately 1,200 workers working together in the factory. There are several workshops in the same factory divided into certain specializations.

Most of the public workers have worked in this factory for many years. There have been very few newly hired workers in the factory, which reflects the general situation in many public workplaces. The need for the labour is supplied by subcontracting firms. These firms employ subcontracting workers (termed subcontractors for the purposes of this study). As a result, instead of hiring new workers, the private firms try to supply the needs for labour.

In the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory, all subcontractors are non-union members and all the public workers are union-members. There is no exception for this. Even if they work in same workplace together, there are serious differences of status, working-conditions, wages, etc., all of which is mentioned in the related parts of this study.

CHAPTER 4

THE METHOD OF THE STUDY

4.1. Justification for Choosing the Research Settings

In research on trade unions and worker identity, any industrial facility may be object of analysis. Being implemented in an industrial zone is important because the history of the labour and labour movements have mostly taken place in industry. Even if there is an enlargement in the service sector and the percentage of industrial workers decrease in many countries, still, worker identity and labour movements are identified with industrialism. Industrial workers in the development of industrial capitalism tend to be the most class-conscious segments of the working-class due to their alienating working and living conditions. They pioneered the labour movements in most of the countries against capital. Turkey's late industrialisation partially explains the relatively weak industrial working-class when compared to European examples; however, the industrial working-class is still the most organized and politically mobile component of the working-class in Turkey.

The railway sector in general and TÜVASAŞ in particular are the foci of this research for the following reasons:

1- The railway sector is one of the oldest industrial sectors (older than 150 years) that has a significant history and tradition of labour movements and unionization. The first railway strikes occurred in 1908, in 1923 and 1927 in Turkey.

2- Railway workers tend to be the part of organised collective movements. The railways and railway factories are high-density workplaces having many workers working together. This is important because high-density industrial workplaces with many workers tend to promote the formation of group solidarity, a group identity and collective consciousness. To understand

the relationship between the union-consciousness and the worker identity, the railway workers can offer a relevant sample.

3- TÜVASAŞ is a railcar factory and the industrial workplaces are historically the core of the development of class-consciousness, unionization, collective solidarity and worker identity. There are more than 1,000 workers in the same factory who possess the necessary qualities for seeking the union-consciousness and its relation with worker identity.

4- In TÜVASAŞ, two status groups of workers work together in the same workplace: union member workers of the factory and non-union member workers of the subcontracting firms. Almost 200 workers work in this factory for sub-contracting firms, and this number is relatively higher in relation to most of the other public enterprises that include union-member workers and non-union-member workers together.

In this research, a comparison of the union-member workers and the non-union-member workers in terms of worker identity formation is one the most significant and original components. Understand the diversification within the working class in term of the social stratification, class consciousness, trade union consciousness, worker identity and political tendencies. Thus, it is important to select a field that includes both types of workers in meaningfully high numbers who work together in the same workplace. In this research, since all the subcontractors are non-union members and the all public workers are union members, being a union member can be conceptually mentioned instead of being a public worker or subcontractor.

Comparing these two types or statuses of worker groups is important to grasp the differentiation of the union-consciousness and worker-identity amongst these two groups. Because there are significant numbers of subcontractors in Turkey, it is important to study them in research about union-consciousness and worker-identity.

4.2. Methods of Data Collection

The fieldwork was carried out over a period of 10 days at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory in Sakarya in May 2010. The author of this research conducted all surveys in order to make further observations directly within the social sphere, which is the main subject of the research. All of the questionnaires were filled in at the workplace during the working hours or during the breaks. The evaluation of the survey was done through the SPSS program. The major selective criterion was whether the worker in the factory was a public worker or subcontractor. The officers or the white-collar employees were not included in the research sample.

One of the most important segments of the research is the comparison of the public workers and the subcontractors in terms of the union-consciousness and worker identities. While it was planned to conduct surveys with two groups of workers in equal numbers, the number and the accessibility to subcontractors were so limited that 50 people from each group of workers were selected. Thus, 100 workers were included in the survey. The author of this research filled in all the questionnaires after asking the question to respondent. It was important to fill in all the questionnaires by the researcher because during the field studies the respondents can fill the questionnaires without taking them seriously or even they can copy the others' responds. The questionnaires were filled in using the one-to-one asking and responding technique.

The research is the combination of the literature review, theoretical assumptions, observations in the factory and quantitative analysis of the surveys. The questionnaires and the evaluation of the results are the main basis and original contribution of this research. The questionnaires were composed of several parts that include socio-demographic questions, income questions, and investigation of the working-class consciousness, political standpoint in the workers' rights and the perspectives and the perceptions of trade unions. This analysis also utilizes the secondary analysis of the results of other related research.

Although a sample size prior to the fieldwork was not determined, the completed questionnaires revealed certain patterns and were used to make particular categorizations while selecting the respondents. First of all, contacting and persuading subcontractors were not easy because of their numbers being much less than those of the public workers and the difficulty in gaining their trust about the survey. The sample of unionized workers was selected from different ages and different departments within the workplace to the best of the researcher's ability.

4.3 Pilot Study

Before the survey in the Sakarya TÜVASAŞ railcar factory, the author conducted a pilot study at the Etimesgut Sugar Factory in Ankara. This study took 3 days in the factory to complete. The questionnaire was filled by the researcher after asking the questions and receiving the answers. Some of the questions or the answers were changed or were transformed in order to obtain the best response in the context of the research. Thirty workers participated in this research: 15 union member workers and 15 subcontractors. However, since the number of the subcontractors were fewer and they were not part of the main job and not working in the production areas, this factory was not selected as the field location for the main research. After evaluating the process of the pilot study, the questionnaires were revised and put into their final format.

4.4. Limitations and Difficulties of the Fieldwork

The major limitation of the fieldwork was obtaining accurate views or answers to the questions. It was essential to assure the respondents that the researcher had no connection with the union, subcontracting firm, political parties or any state institution. Persuading the respondent workers to accept that the only aim of the research was scientific inquiry and not recording the names was largely successful. Especially the subcontractors were worried about the

researcher's connections and feared being stigmatized. They claimed that there are close relationships between the trade union, sub-contracting firm and the general directory of TÜVASAŞ. They frequently repeated the danger of getting fired as a result of these connections.

Another difficulty of this research was that of the very limited number of female workers in the factory. There are female subcontractors only in the cleaning unit, so there were only 2 female respondents in the survey. But it is clear that this sample of gender absolutely represents the population of the workplace.

The last difficulty and limitation of the research was contacting the workers of subcontracting firms because the concept of 'trade union' obviously had frightened some of the subcontractors. Yet, it was possible to reach most of the subcontractors without disturbing them. In a few cases, the some of the union member workers helped to persuade the subcontractors that this project was only research for a master's degree thesis and responding was totally 'harmless' for them. Sometimes, the subcontractors were afraid to respond because of the fear of being fired by the firm. This was not case for the public workers who are members of the union and feel secure in their positions of employment.

4.5 General Characteristics of the Research Settings and the Sample Group

The sample group of the workers in this research of "worker identity and union consciousness" consisted of 100 workers. Fifty workers of this 100 work for the state enterprise TÜVASAŞ; the other 50 workers are the workers of the subcontracting firms working within the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory. The distinct feature of the subcontractors is that of being non-union member workers. Because of the comparison of two groups of workers, the equality of these groups was given importance.

It is important to remember that in this study some of the concepts of the worker status or worker groups are interchangeably used. Firstly, for the union member workers, in some places they are named as ‘public workers’ or ‘workers of the state enterprise’. Secondly the sub-contracting workers are named as subcontractors in some sentences or as non-union member workers. All these two differentiations for naming the worker groups have same meanings with each other. Such as ‘union-member’ is equal to ‘public worker’ or ‘worker of TÜVASAŞ’ in categorizations. Similarly the ‘sub-contracting’ worker is equal to ‘subcontractor’ that both used in literature of labour.

The sample of the worker groups reflects the general medium of the entire factory labor force. Since there have been no newly hired public workers for years at this public enterprise, there is no union-member worker below the age of 30. Subcontracting firms supplied the need for labour; subcontractors are mostly young as can be seen on Table 4.1

Table 4.1

| | | | Worker Status | | Total |
|-------|-------|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Age | 18-30 | N | 0 | 27 | 27 |
| | | Column % | ,0 | 57,4 | 29,0 |
| | 30-50 | N | 37 | 19 | 56 |
| | | Column % | 80,4 | 40,4 | 60,2 |
| | 50+ | N | 9 | 1 | 10 |
| | | Column % | 19,6 | 2,1 | 10,8 |
| Total | | N | 46 | 47 | 93 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 39,1795; df = 2; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

As can be seen on Table 4.2, a major issue of the sample can be the gender dimension because there are only a few female workers in the factory who are all subcontractors working in the cleaning section. In the sample, there

are only 2 female workers. Although this research can be inadequate for describing the issues of female workers and the gender dimension of the labour movement and unionism, the sample is suitable for the sampling of the population of the factory in terms of the gender.

Table 4.2

| | | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--------|--------|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Gender | Female | N | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | | Column % | ,0 | 4,0 | 2,0 |
| | Male | N | 50 | 48 | 98 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 96,0 | 98,0 |
| Total | | N | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 2,0408; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

In the sample of this research, the educational levels of the workers are shown in Table 4.3. The highest proportion of the workers of the two status groups is that of high school graduates, at a rate of 52.5% for the total sample. In the sample, it is remarkable that the number of the university graduates is higher among subcontractors.

Table 4.3

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|-------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Educational Level | Primary School | N | 9 | 9 | 18 |
| | | Column % | 18,0 | 18,0 | 18,0 |
| | Secondary School | N | 12 | 6 | 18 |
| | | Column % | 24,0 | 12,0 | 18,0 |
| | Lycee | N | 27 | 25 | 52 |
| | | Column % | 54,0 | 50,0 | 52,0 |
| | Vocational High School | N | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| | | Column % | 2,0 | 12,0 | 7,0 |
| | University | N | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| | | Column % | 2,0 | 8,0 | 5,0 |
| Total | | N | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 7,4484; df = 4; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

As seen in Table 4.4., the number of unmarried workers is higher among subcontractors. The major reason can be the younger ages of the subcontractors than the union member workers.

Table 4.4

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|----------------|---------|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Marital Status | Single | N | 1 | 19 | 20 |
| | | Column % | 2,0 | 38,8 | 20,2 |
| | Married | N | 49 | 30 | 79 |
| | | Column % | 98,0 | 61,2 | 79,8 |
| Total | | N | 50 | 49 | 99 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 20,7616; df = 1; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

The subcontractors comprise an important segment of workers below the age of 30. This causes a great difference of the years one spends working over a lifetime, shown in Table 4.5

Table 4.5

| How long have you worked in your entire life? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|---|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| 0-10 | N | 0 | 31 | 31 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 63,3 | 31,6 |
| 11-20 | N | 7 | 12 | 19 |
| | Column % | 14,3 | 24,5 | 19,4 |
| 20+ | N | 42 | 6 | 48 |
| | Column % | 85,7 | 12,2 | 49,0 |
| Total | N | 49 | 49 | 98 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 59,3158; df = 2; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

The public enterprise workers have worked in the factory for many years. The employment rate of new workers with the status of ‘public worker’ was very low in recent years. On the contrary, the sub-contracting firms hire the workers per year and the workers were dismissed at the end of the year because the contract of the sub-contracting firm and TÜVASAŞ has a duration of only one year. Since the firm’s contract is for one year, the workers are hired for the same duration. This is the part of the principle of flexibility in production.

Table 4.6

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|---|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| How long have you worked in this workplace? | 0-10 | N | 2 | 49 | 51 |
| | | Column % | 4,0 | 98,0 | 51,0 |
| 11-20 | N | 21 | 1 | 22 | |
| | Column % | 42,0 | 2,0 | 22,0 | |
| 20+ | N | 27 | 0 | 27 | |
| | Column % | 54,0 | ,0 | 27,0 | |
| Total | N | 50 | 50 | 100 | |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

Khi-square = 88,4955; df = 2; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

The percentage of the workers whose wives are not working is 90.2 %, which is remarkably high. It would not be wrong to say ‘wives’ because only 2 female workers were included in the research sample and their husbands are working in a job. This can be explained with both the high rate of unemployment in the country and with the patriarchal culture not sympathizing with the participation of women in employment outside of the home.

Table 4.7

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|-------------------------------|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|-----|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Does your wife/ husband work? | Yes | N | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| | | Column % | 6,0 | 15,6 | 9,8 |
| No | N | 47 | 27 | 74 | |
| | Column % | 94,0 | 84,4 | 90,2 | |
| Total | N | 50 | 32 | 82 | |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

Khi-square = 2,0531; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

The percentage of workers having a child or children is 91.1%. Even if the subcontractors are younger, 79.3 % of them have a child or children.

Table 4.8

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Do you have a child/ children? | Yes | N | 49 | 23 | 72 |
| | | Column % | 98,0 | 79,3 | 91,1 |
| No | N | 1 | 6 | 7 | |
| | Column % | 2,0 | 20,7 | 8,9 | |
| Total | N | 50 | 29 | 79 | |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

Khi-square = 7,939; df = 1; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

Almost half of the workers live in their own home. Interestingly, although the subcontractors are younger and have a minimum wages income, 42% of them report that they live in their own home. Yet, the workers reported this even if they lived in their parents' home. Because of not having such a distinction in Turkish culture between parents and children being the homeowner, this high rate can be explained by this cultural factor.

Table 4.9

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|--|--|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Is your house owned by you or your wife/ husband? | It is our property. | N | 32 | 21 | 53 |
| | | Column % | 64,0 | 42,0 | 53,0 |
| | It is not our property. | N | 8 | 13 | 21 |
| | | Column % | 16,0 | 26,0 | 21,0 |
| | State property for workers (lojman) | N | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Column % | 2,0 | 4,0 | 3,0 |
| | Family property (parents' or children's house) | N | 9 | 14 | 23 |
| | | Column % | 18,0 | 28,0 | 23,0 |
| Total | | N | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 4,8938; df = 3; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

The difference of the automobile ownership between the two groups of workers is so obvious that can be seen in Table 4.10 While 58.4% of the union member workers own a car, only 18.4% of the sub-contractors have a car.

Table 4.11

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|---------------------------|--|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Do you have a car? | Yes, I have a car. | N | 28 | 9 | 37 |
| | | Column % | 58,3 | 18,4 | 38,1 |
| | My wife/ husband has a car | N | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | | Column % | 2,1 | ,0 | 1,0 |
| | We do not have a car. | N | 19 | 33 | 52 |
| | | Column % | 39,6 | 67,3 | 53,6 |
| | I drive my family's car (parents' or children's car) | N | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| | | Column % | ,0 | 14,3 | 7,2 |
| Total | | N | 48 | 49 | 97 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 21,518; df = 3; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

The differences among workers can be seen easily in Table 4.11. The ownership of cars varies among worker groups. This difference is the result of the great difference in wages. Also this can be the consequence of the differences in ages of the two worker groups. Because the union members are older and being older is the positive effect for the ownership of the cars since it makes possible to accumulate the money needed for buying cars.

CHAPTER 5

THE INFLUENCE OF STRUCTURAL PROBLEMS OF LABOUR AND THE LABOUR MOVEMENT UPON THE UNIONISATION AND TRADE UNION CONSCIOUSNESS

5.1. The Structural Reasons and Neo-Liberal Effects

5.1.1 De-Unionisation

Compared with the golden age of unionism, from the end of World War II to the late 1970s, the rate of unionisation has fallen dramatically in the last few decades. A union density ranging between 99% and 75% was achieved in general services, food and related sectors, communications, energy, textiles, banking and insurance, mining, metalworking, petroleum, chemicals and rubber, and railways in some western countries.⁸¹

However, this high level of unionization changed in important percentages of decline significantly. The rising number of white-collar employees, particularly in the services sector since these workers are generally reluctant to organize, adversely affected union membership.⁸² Changes in labour processes, the influence of politics of neo-liberalism and globalisation are listed in the debates about the falling union membership rates. As can be seen in Table 5.1., in the countries having the most developed industries such as England, France, Germany, Italy and Holland, the rate of unionization decreased significantly.

⁸¹ Dereli, p.473

⁸² Dereli, pp. 474-475

Table 5.1 The Rates of De-Unionization in Europe⁸³

| | 1980 | 2002 | Coverage for Collective Bargaining |
|-------------------|------|------|---------------------------------------|
| Germany | 34.9 | 23.2 | 67% |
| Austria | 58.4 | 35.4 | 98% |
| Belgium | 53.4 | 55.8 | 100% |
| Czech Rep. | - | 25.1 | 25–30% |
| Denmark | 78.6 | 73.8 | 85% |
| Estonia | - | 16.6 | 29% |
| Finland | 69.4 | 71.2 | 90% |
| France | 17.1 | 9.7 | 90% |
| Holland | 34.8 | 22.1 | 78% |
| England | 55.1 | 30.4 | 36% |
| Ireland | 57.4 | 35.9 | - |
| Spain | 8.3 | - | 81% |
| Sweden | 78.2 | 78.0 | 94% |
| Italy | 54.5 | 34.0 | |
| Cyprus (South) | - | 70.0 | 65–70% |
| Latvia | - | 20.0 | 20% |
| Lithuania | - | - | 10–15% |
| Luxembourg | - | 33.5 | 60% |
| Hungary | - | 19.9 | 34% |
| Malta | 54.4 | 27.0 | - |
| Poland | - | 14.7 | 40% |
| Portugal | - | - | 62% |
| Slovakia | - | 35.4 | 48% |
| Slovenia | - | 41.0 | 100% |
| Greece | - | 26.7 | - |
| EU 25 | - | 26,4 | - |
| EU 15 | - | 27.3 | - |
| EU 10 | - | 20.4 | - |
| USA | - | 12.8 | - |

¹ Celik cited in 2007, p.28: Jeremy Waddington (2005), p.19;

For the past few decades, the concept of globalisation has been at the centre of discussions of labour and has generated a wide literature. The changes in the division of labour internationally and flow of capital across national borders are the major segments of these discussions. Against the claims of Marxism about the ‘internationalisation’ of labour, the internationalisation of capital has been witnessed. Even if nation-states were the perfect environments for the rise of capitalism, with the emergence of ‘globalising’ tendencies of capital, national borders can become obstacles for free flowing capital in the long-term. Because of the importance of foreign investment, the nation-states compete with each other to attract the capital flows and they agree upon making ‘national obstacles’ weaker and encouraging capital investment.⁸⁴

While the capital is expanding throughout the global sphere, labour remains at the national level. Globalisation of the capital strengthens the capital, especially with the help of international division of labour. But this has negative effects for labour movements. Being limited by national borders as well as international competition of attracting capital among the national working classes causes the weakening of the working-class against the capital.

The role of capital movement as a threat is a popular debate because employers use the threat of ‘escape of the capital abroad’ as a tool to decrease workers’ wages. “By moving (or just threatening to move) production claimed Jay Mazur, multinational corporations have brought the competitive pressure of an ‘enormous mass of unorganized workers’ to bear on ‘the international labour movement.’⁸⁵ The capital movement from the American and the Western European countries to the east is usually argued to be an example of this pressure. International division of labour is the key concept here to understand these flows. Beverly Silver opposes this idea and asserts that there is a capital flow of 276 billion dollars while there is a total flow of 226 billion dollars to South America, Asia, Africa, Middle and Eastern Europe. But it would be fair to state that Silver’s argument of these numbers seems irrelevant to falsify the

⁸⁴ Celik, 2007, p.21

⁸⁵ Silver cites: Mazur, J., 2000, p.89

capital investments from West to East where the labour prices are lower because the numbers Silver gives is about financial-capital, not the investments for production or services.

The internationalisation of the labour movement is another central point of debate. A widely used phrase amongst the debaters of labour is, “while there is a trans-nationalisation of capital, no internationalisation of labour has been seen.” Is this the case? Silver’s approach seems positive but cautious. Silver asserts that the international bourgeoisie class is forming the conditions of the international working-class, but there is a problem of high rates of inequality among countries which is higher than the inequality within countries.⁸⁶ A calculation based on World Bank data shows that GNP per capita of Third World countries was only 4.5% in 1960, 4.3% in 1980 and 4.6% in 1999 of the First World countries.⁸⁷ This high inequality makes internationalisation more difficult because internationalisation finally leads somehow to the decrease among the working classes and the richer worker-classes can oppose this trend. There can be major obstacles for internationalisation. As they oppose the imports from the semi-periphery of periphery countries with the excuse of “decent work.” This is mainly a protectionist policy that is supported by the First World countries’ working classes.

Table 5.2 presents a general view of the reasons for workers not being union members. They are not members of unions because they can not be. Only three people (unions do not function well plus do not believe in unionism) in the sample did not want to belong to a union. A total of 40 workers in the sample declare to be union members but they can not be because of the ‘fear of getting fired’ (68%) and the similar reasons originated from the employers (totally 12%). The reason for the existence of 3 similar choices (fear of getting fired, employer, employer’s pressure) in this question in the questionnaire is the result of the observations during the pilot study. The choices of ‘fear of getting fired’

⁸⁶ Silver; p.21

⁸⁷ Silver, Arrighi & Brewer, 2001, p.23

and ‘employer’s pressure’ could sometimes make the respondents scared and not answer the question.

These rates show the desperation of the workers having no protection from the employers’ threats. These rates also show that although there are criticisms of the practices of unionism, the major reason for ‘de-unionization’ is the ‘structural’ reasons of the production system and the weakness of the state in protecting labour.

Table 5.2

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|---|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| If no, what is the reason for not being member? | n/a | N | 50 | 7 | 57 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 14,0 | 57,0 |
| employer's pressure | N | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 0 | 2,0 | 1,0 |
| don't believe in unionism | N | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 0 | 4,0 | 2,0 |
| employer | N | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 0 | 10,0 | 5,0 |
| fear of getting fired | N | 0 | 0 | 34 | 34 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 0 | 68,0 | 34,0 |
| unions do not function well | N | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 0 | 2,0 | 1,0 |
| Total | N | 50 | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 75,4386; df = 5; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

5.1.2 Unemployment

Until the economic crisis in the late 1970s, unemployment had not been a significant problem as a consequence of Keynesian economic policies and the

principle of full employment. “But Keynes is dead.”⁸⁸ The Keynesianism in economical policies was abandoned after the crisis in 1970s. In last few decades, unemployment has caused the weakening of the unions and labour movement. The issue of unemployment has two important effects on unionisation. Firstly, the decline in the numbers of the workers leads to the decline of the members of the unions. Secondly, since unemployment creates “a reserve army” in Marxian terms, the competition rises between the workers, weakening the sense of collectivity. This competition results in the consent for lower wages, worse working conditions and lack of social security in order not lose the job.

Unions fail to overcome the issue of unemployment. The major reason is ‘wage unionism’ ignoring the political and macro-economic visions. It should be recalled that economic progress in terms of the rights of workers can not be gained only in economic struggles with employers because the economic crisis retakes what was gained by the workers. The main base of the struggle should be political.⁸⁹ The wages or any other simple social rights can be gained in short term by the workers but they would be easy to be lost again in the next crisis of economy. Instead, the political unionism can have a long-term influence over political parties or governments that can not be eliminated easily.

From 1980 to 2004, the working age population grew by 23 million, but only 6 million net jobs were created. As a result, in Turkey, the employment rate (the percentage of working age population that is employed) in 2004, at 43.7%, is one of the lowest in the world.⁹⁰

Slow employment generation in Turkey reflects the interaction of demographic and economic factors. A rapid increase in the working age population coincided with a structural transformation away from labor-intensive agriculture toward industry and services.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Gorz, 1997, p.3

⁸⁹ Müftüoğlu cited: Marx, 1992: 130

⁹⁰ World Labour Market Study, 2006

⁹¹ World Bank Labour Market Study, 2006,

Besides the factor of competition with the ‘reserve army’ of workers, the fear of getting fired is one of the most important reasons for the weakness of the unions. In the research of “The New Developments in Working Life and the Changing Role of Unions in Turkey,” the first reason cited by workers for not being a member of a union is the fear of getting fired.⁹²In the same research, 73% of the workers claimed, “if they lost their jobs, they could not find a new one in the next three months.”⁹³ Understandably, workers are desperate in their relations with employers owing to the situation of unemployment, competition among workers and the insecurity of losing their jobs.

Table 5.3

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|---|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| How worried are you for getting unemployed? | I am so worried | N | 6 | 35 | 41 |
| | | Column % | 12,0 | 70,0 | 41,0 |
| | I am a little worried | N | 17 | 12 | 29 |
| | | Column % | 34,0 | 24,0 | 29,0 |
| | I am not worried | N | 27 | 3 | 30 |
| | | Column % | 54,0 | 6,0 | 30,0 |
| Total | | N | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 40,5743; df = 2; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

In the survey conducted with the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory workers, as can be seen in Table 5.3., 41% of the workers are very worried about being unemployed. This means that they are afraid of losing their jobs. Feelings of

⁹² Insel and others, 2004, p.13

⁹³ Insel, p.15

insecurity and weakness are absolutely obvious and this also reflects the weakness of the labour movement and unionism at the factory.

The most remarkable result in Table 5.3. is the difference between the union members and the sub-contractors in terms of the level of worrying about being unemployed. While 12% of the union members are very concerned about being unemployed, 70% of the subcontractors are very worried about being unemployed. This difference is striking for the debates on the Turkish working class and on unionism. Since the subcontractors do not have the social rights and security as do the union member public workers of the factory, the possibility of getting fired is much higher.

There is a significant difference between being a worker of a public enterprise and being a worker of a sub-contracting firm or being a unionized worker and being a worker having no union membership. The union member workers have the security of their jobs until their retirements. On contrary, the subcontractors do not have such a guarantee. Their working contracts terminate at the end of the year and they are dismissed or their contracts are renewed. Since the duration of their contracts is limited to only one year, yet they depend on the renewal of their contracts, they have no guarantee in securing their positions of employment for the long-term. This situation creates an immense difference between the unionized workers of the public enterprise and the subcontracting workers.

Also, there become auctions every year among the candidate sub-contracting firms to implement the tasks in several departments like cleaning, security, cafeteria and certain departments which are directly related to the production in the factory. The winner firm of the auction usually changes at least some of the workers or hires totally new workers for the jobs in the factory. This is another aspect of the sense of insecurity among sub-contracting workers.

5.1.3 Changes in the Labour Process

The crisis of the labour movement tends to be explained by the changes in the labour process. What is meant by ‘changes in the labour process’ is the transformation of the organisation of production and the workplace. The traditional Fordist production was renewed as the Post-Fordist system, which depends on the principle of flexibility. The work that is implemented in the same workplace with a high density of workers was perfectly appropriate for the collective movement of workers and unionism. But this has changed with flexibility:

As a result of these transformations, once-stable working class has been replaced by “networks of temporary and cursory relationships with subcontractors and temporary help agencies.” The result is a structurally desegregated and disorganized working class, prone more to “a politics of resentment” than to traditional working-class unions and leftist politics⁹⁴

According to Silver, the changes in the labour process should not be so discouraging for the labour movement. At the beginning of the 20th century, the same hopelessness was witnessed because of the great changes in the labour process, with the introduction of Fordism.⁹⁵ The decrease in the number of unionized craft workers caused a similar discouragement almost a century ago; however, later the situation changed in favour of labour. But Gorz thinks differently: “In the first place, the worker’s labour no longer involves any power. A class whose social activity yields no power does not have the means to take power, nor does it feel called upon to do so. In the second place, work is no longer the worker’s own activity.”⁹⁶ For the last few decades, the change in the labour process seems to be weakening the labour movements, but this does not necessarily mean it will be an ongoing trend for decades to come.

⁹⁴ Silver, B., p.16

⁹⁵ Silver, B., p.18

⁹⁶ Gorz, 1997; p.67

The change in the labour process has affected the structure of work and worker identity. This affecting caused ‘abolishment of work’ what Gorz states as: “Thus their major concern will be to resist automation..., protecting jobs and skills, rather than seeking to control and benefit from the way in which work is abolished, will remain the major concern of traditional trade unionism.”⁹⁷ It is obvious that the unions should generate new approaches toward new labour processes.

5.1.4 Subcontracting

In the Turkish context, the subcontracting system is becoming more and more of a key issue in the debates on labour, especially with the incidents of accidents in mines and in the Tuzla Shipyard, which is a prime example of the system or chain of the sub-contracting system. Even if the thousands of the total numbers of workers work in the shipyard, the ship-constructing firms mostly have few workers. There is a hierarchical chain of subcontracting agencies and each subcontracting firms has a few workers. The major reason for this system is saving the expenditures for the legal restrictions being valid for above the numbers of certain numbers of workers determined by the law.

The subcontracting workers have relatively worse conditions than the workers of the workplace. The workers of the subcontracting agencies are sometimes called ‘orange-collared workers to identify their different status.’⁹⁸ In the research of “The New Developments in Working Life and the Changing Role of the Unions,” 67% of the union member workers mention that there is subcontracting in the workplace that had no subcontracting previously. The question of “is your employing firm providing servicing as a subcontractor to another firm? is answered as ‘yes’ by 31% of the non-unionized workers without any social insurance, 26% of the non-unionized workers with insurance

⁹⁷ Gorz, 1997; p.7

⁹⁸ Celik, p.54

and 16% of the union-member workers.⁹⁹ As seen in the positive relation with the decline of the union members and the rise of the rate of subcontracting, the workers, consequentially, see subcontracting as the main reason for ‘de-unionisation.’

There is a legal issue that the Law of Security of Work is applied to only the workplaces having more than 30 employees. In some conditions of having more employees than 30 in the same workplace, then the firms sometimes have been divided into several distinct firms in the same workplaces. There are a lot of examples in which there are employees of legally different firms working in the same room of the same workplace. This shows how the sub-contracting system is spreading and endangers the social security and the unionisation of workers.

5.1.5 Privatisation

For last few decades, the public services of health, education, shelter, and social security have been argued to be inefficient in the market economy because of the high taxes decreasing the ‘competitiveness’ of capital. This is the main argument of neo-liberalism while advocating the commercialization of these services and implementation by the private sector.¹⁰⁰

Traditionally, unionism is stronger in the public sector. For instance, in England, the rate of unionization in the public sector of 69% in 1980 became 60% in 1999. The decrease in the private sector has been much higher; the rate of unionisation in the private sector decreased from 45% to 19% in the same time period.¹⁰¹

Privatisation does not necessarily imply the total selling of the public facility or association; it also includes the outsourcing of some services.

⁹⁹ Insel, et al., 2004, p.20

¹⁰⁰ Müftüoğlu, p.139

¹⁰¹ Celik, A. cited: World Bank 2002, Unions and Collective Bargaining

Outsourcing and subcontracting mechanisms cause the decrease in unionisation percentages. This creates a group of workers without the right to be unionised working alongside the union member workers of the public entity.

The unions can not try to react to the expansion of the private sector. For example, the largest Turkish confederation, Türk-İş, does not have any executive originating from the workers working in the private sector. The lack of a regulating role of the state affects unionism negatively. It is seen in the research of “Public Employment as a Social Protection Mechanism,” that in a privatised workplace that was formerly a public institution; almost all the workers had no job security or unions.¹⁰²

The resistance of unions against privatisation has mostly failed:

...Privatization did not lead to a major resistance of the workers. The only action was organised by the union after the sale of the enterprise was completed. The workers gathered in front of the administration building and shouted slogans against privatization.¹⁰³

The case of Sumerbank Ereğli Cotton Plant’s privatisation and the resistance of the workers and the unions against this is underscored by the above quote. The workers complained much in the case of the privatisation of Sumerbank Ereğli Cotton Plant; the workers complain much about the unionists but interestingly the same leadership of the union is still in the same position in the union. Another interesting note in the case study is the claim that the majority of workers did not oppose the privatizations for several reasons during the process of privatisation.¹⁰⁴ The case of the privatisation of Sumerbank Ereğli Cotton Plant shows the different approaches among unions themselves. The former unionists from the Revolutionary Trade Union Confederation (DİSK) expressed their opposition against privatization while the Textile, Knitting and Clothing Industry Workers’ Union of Turkey (TEKSİF) was neutral, planning to soften and make little changes for the favour of workers in the process of

¹⁰² Tansel, A., pp.695 -714

¹⁰³ Nurol, B., p.60

¹⁰⁴ Nurol., pp.60-61

privatisation.¹⁰⁵ The disintegration between the labourers shows the absence of a common working class identity, and instead reveals a powerful sense of pragmatism.

Table 5.5 reflects the approaches of both groups of workers about privatisation. The results are very interesting for the literature of the theories on the working class. The first interesting aspect of the results is the percentage of 'being against privatisation' is totally 74.5% but only 24.5% of the workers are against privatizations because of the weakening of social rights. Fifty-one percent of the workers are against privatisation because the privatised state enterprises are bought by foreigners or by the supporters of the government. This result is related to the lack of the consciousness of social rights and class-consciousness in Marx's terms as discussed in the Theoretical Background section of Chapter 2 of this study. Seemingly, the workers give priority to their nationalist tendencies or being in opposition to the government; class interests are shadowed by these factors. The second interesting aspect of the results of the research is the differentiation of the thoughts of workers among the two worker groups: Union member workers are more against privatisation at the rate of 86.8% while the subcontractors have a rate of 59%. Yet the reason for the opposition to the privatisation among union members is again mostly that the state enterprises are sold to foreigners or the supporters of the government. This shows the failure of the union to make the workers conscious and sensitive to the issues of social rights and class identity. This gives an idea about the 'story of success' of unionism in the factory. The third important result in Table 5.5 is interesting as well as controversial. The subcontractors are paid one-third the pay of public workers, work in harsher conditions, have no security for being dismissed, yet they are more sympathetic toward the privatisation. This is appears to be a contradiction because the poor working conditions fully stem from working in the private firm. In this particular research context, there is an important influence of neo-liberal discourse, which is successfully hegemonic in

¹⁰⁵ Nurol., p.29

Gramsci's terms, discussed in the Theoretical Background section of Chapter 2. The discourse about corruption and favouritism that is based on the facts causes people to support privatisation. They assume that by privatisation, the state can be saved from corruption and favouritism so the economy would be better. This discourse seems effective among the workers.

Table 5.5

| | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| What is your point of view about the privatizations? | | | | |
| I do not care. | N | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 2,0 | 1,0 |
| I am against the privatizations because the state enterprises are bought by foreigners or bought by the supporters of the government | N | 27 | 23 | 50 |
| | Column % | 55,1 | 46,9 | 51,0 |
| I am against privatizations because it weakens the social rights | N | 18 | 6 | 24 |
| | Column % | 36,7 | 12,2 | 24,5 |
| I support privatizations because I believe the private sector | N | 1 | 8 | 9 |
| | Column % | 2,0 | 16,3 | 9,2 |
| I support privatizations for decreasing the cost of the state | N | 3 | 11 | 14 |
| | Column % | 6,1 | 22,4 | 14,3 |
| Total | N | 49 | 49 | 98 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 17,3359; df = 4; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

5.2 The Influence of the Issues of Social Structure in Turkey and Problems of Class-Consciousness

Turkey arrived late to participate in the major dynamics of modernisation processes: late industrialisation, late urbanisation, late democratisation and late emergence of social classes in terms of the bourgeoisie and working class. Modernization was understood mostly at a cultural level, not in a structural sense, especially at the beginning of the modernisation process.

The Turkish state, rather than the social classes, had a unique autonomy or power. The state was so strong that it had control over the bourgeoisie, itself created by the state. Since the bourgeoisie could not gain its autonomy and power in the same way as in western contexts, the existence of the working class become complicated and problematic. Social rights were gained mostly due to them being granted by the government, rather than as a result of the struggle of the labour movement. Since these rights were not the result of the success of the labour movement, they could be withdrawn by the state easily.

One of the important aspects of the weakness of the labour movement is directly related to class-consciousness. Social classes are the division of society in terms of social inequalities, such as the ownership of the means of production being the major determinant of the inequality and the classes. Class-consciousness is not only about the sense of belonging, but also it is being aware of this economic inequality.

The research that took place at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory yielded the finding that 85% of all workers think that there is inequality among people in Turkey.

Table 5.6

| Do you agree with the idea that there is an inequality among people in Turkey? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Yes | N | 41 | 44 | 85 |
| | Column % | 82,0 | 88,0 | 85,0 |
| No | N | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| | Column % | 18,0 | 12,0 | 15,0 |
| Total | N | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = ,7059; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

In the research at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory, there are very interesting results related to the thoughts of the workers about social inequalities in Turkish society. The Table 5.7 represents that 59.1% of the workers in the sample view as the major contradiction that creates inequality is between “the people with influential people supporting them” and “the people having no one supporting them.” Inequality remains at 28.4% between the “rich and poor.” Another crucial aspect of this result is that both union member public workers and the non-union member subcontractors share this view.

Table 5.7

| If yes, which inequality is the best for defining the case in Turkey? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| No idea | N | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | Column % | 2,3 | 6,7 | 4,5 |
| Person with influential people supporting them - person having no supporting people helping them | N | 26 | 26 | 52 |
| | Column % | 60,5 | 57,8 | 59,1 |
| Rich - Poor | N | 13 | 12 | 25 |
| | Column % | 30,2 | 26,7 | 28,4 |
| Educated - Uneducated | N | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | Column % | 2,3 | 6,7 | 4,5 |
| Urban - Rural | N | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| | Column % | 4,7 | 2,2 | 3,4 |
| Total | N | 43 | 45 | 88 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 2,3291; df = 4; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

There is other research yielding the same results. In the research of “The New Developments in Working Life and the Changing Role of the Unions,” 44% of the workers claim that the major source of the inequality is between the people with influential people behind them and the people having no one supporting them. This result should not be taken to mean the false consciousness

of the workers in Marxian terms. The high percentages and the common view of the different groups of the workers verify this. However, there can be important assumptions about the social structure and class-consciousness of the workers.

First of all, worker identity is not only shaped by the working life within the workplace. The job finding process and the ways of promotion within the workplace is directly related with these answers given by respondent workers. The struggle in this process reflects the major determinants of the inequalities in the society. Secondly, the cultural aspects are important. Kinship ties, having origins of the same town or city (hemşeri) networks and political connections are very significant not only for the job finding process or promotion, but also for activities of trade outside the factory because, like the other social groups, many workers prefer trading rather than being a worker, and these connections are important for realizing these ‘dreams.’

Table 5.8

| Which one of your identities do you firstly prefer for identifying yourself? | | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|--|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Other | N | | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | Column % | | 2,0 | 6,5 | 4,2 |
| Occupation | N | | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Column % | | ,0 | 2,2 | 1,1 |
| Gender | N | | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| | Column % | | 4,1 | 6,5 | 5,3 |
| Place of Birth | N | | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| | Column % | | 6,1 | 6,5 | 6,3 |
| Social Class | N | | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Column % | | 2,0 | ,0 | 1,1 |
| Religion | N | | 32 | 29 | 61 |
| | Column % | | 65,3 | 63,0 | 64,2 |
| Nationality | N | | 10 | 7 | 17 |
| | Column % | | 20,4 | 15,2 | 17,9 |
| Total | N | | 49 | 46 | 95 |
| | Column % | | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 3,786; df = 6; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

This research endeavor found that the primary identity that workers prefer to identify themselves with is religion. As seen in Table 5.8, 64.2% of the workers firstly identify themselves with their religions. Moreover, the differentiation of the workers status does not have an effect on this fact. Both unionized workers and subcontractors emphasise the role of religion as an identity marker at similar levels. There is a tendency among workers towards the religion in Turkey.¹⁰⁶

Trade unions are first step for class-consciousness, which is about a progression from ‘class in itself’ towards ‘class for itself’ as discussed in the Theoretical Background in Chapter 2 of this study. Undoubtedly, there have been significant changes since Marx developed his theory on class conflict. These changes are the diversified class structure, more complex formation of inequality and power relations in the system. Dahrendorf has a pluralistic view of class structure of society, including the dimensions of income, race, status and life chances.¹⁰⁷

Secondly, the survey results indicate that the second identity the workers chose to define their identity is nationality -17.9% of the workers selected nationality as their first and most important identity. As with the religion identity marker, both worker groups made this choice with similar percentages.

Thirdly, and perhaps the most interesting aspect of this research, is the finding related to the lowest level of social class as an identity marker claimed by the workers. Only one worker made this choice out of 100 workers in the sample. This is a shocking result for the literature of the working class and for this researcher. It is obvious that there are some serious issues in the axis of working-class, class-consciousness and worker identity but this result seems totally unexpected. This is the so-called declaration of the absence of class-consciousness among workers in factory. Also another

¹⁰⁶ Ayata, September 10, 2008

¹⁰⁷ Dahrendorf, p.45

stunning figure about the choices of the identities of the workers is that only one worker chose the identity of occupation. Not only the social class, but also the occupation is less important in the lives of workers.

There are some explanatory reasons for the little importance given to the concept and the identity of social class for the workers in Turkey. The class formation, hegemonic domination of the state in social life, cultural motives, absence of a strong tradition of labour movements, new exit from the rural sphere to urban-industrial zones can be posited as some of the reasons for this situation.

The role of the industrialisation and urbanisation processes is important for understanding this result. The modernisation of Turkey reached the level of industrialisation and urbanisation in last few decades, which is relatively very late to the western, modern countries. The latency in these processes caused the latency in the shift from rural culture into urban culture. Urbanisation is involved in the occupational division of labour and the formation of social classes. Both practically and culturally, the formation of classes and also the emergence of class-consciousness become problematic because of the strength of the dynamics of the rural societies. Class-consciousness “begins with workers’ awareness of the responsibility of capital for their problems.”¹⁰⁸ How can an individual become aware of this in the perception of rural culture? There can be a consolidation of the class identity for the workers that parallel the process of modernisation and the emergence of “new middle classes” because the formation of middle classes can motivate the consolidation of class identity and class consciousness among different groups of people including the workers to gain the working class consciousness.

5.3. Job Finding Process

The personal links, neighbourhood or ‘hemşeri’ relations, political identities, religious communities or any other type of network relations are

¹⁰⁸ Koç, p.158

very important in the process of ‘job seeking’ and then ‘job finding.’ “The crisis of the unions refers to a crisis of ‘certain type of unions’ that have organized in certain industrial workplaces, having strong hierarchical structures, including a bureaucracy and specialists within themselves.”¹⁰⁹ The crisis of ‘this type’ should not be understood as the crisis of any type of unionism being reformed in today’s world.

“The Research of Worker Profile: The Case of Eskişehir,” in 2008, shows the role of network relations such as relatives and friends affects the union memberships: 34.5% of the workers report that they found their job through their relatives and 25.6% of the workers say their friends helped them to find the job. These two groups of workers added that it would be a ‘shame’ to their relatives or friends to join the union¹¹⁰ because they think that this membership would damage the relationship of his relative/friend with the employer.

Table 5.9

| Which one did you get help most for finding your this job? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Turkish Association of Work | N | 11 | 2 | 13 |
| | Column % | 22,4 | 4,0 | 13,1 |
| Kinship, friendship, being from same city/town or village | N | 14 | 28 | 42 |
| | Column % | 28,6 | 56,0 | 42,4 |
| Ethnic, tribal or sectarian relations. | N | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 2,0 | 1,0 |
| I found myself without help or support | N | 21 | 17 | 38 |
| | Column % | 42,9 | 34,0 | 38,4 |
| Similar political thoughts | N | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | Column % | 4,1 | 4,0 | 4,0 |
| Recommendation of the Union. | N | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | Column % | 2,0 | ,0 | 1,0 |
| Total | N | 49 | 50 | 99 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 13,3097; df = 5; p < 0.05 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

¹⁰⁹ Beşeli, M., 2007, p.261

¹¹⁰ Uçkan, B. & Kağncıoğlu, M., 2009, p.44

Table 5.9 reflects the methods of job-finding of the workers working at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory. The results show that a significant amount of workers found their jobs by the ties of kinship, friendship, or being from the same town or city. However, this rate varies corresponding to the worker status. Fifty-six percent of the subcontractors found their job in this way while fewer union-member public workers utilized these ties to find their job. The data show the difference in the level of institutionalisations of the state enterprise and the subcontracting firm as employers. Another remarkable result is the factor of the Turkish Association of Work to help public workers in finding their jobs. For subcontracting workers, this is not the case.

According to the Table 5.9, almost half of the union-member public workers found their job themselves without a support of anyone. In my research in the railcar factory, most of the union-member workers who claim they “found their job themselves” are the graduates of the vocational school belonging to TÜVASAŞ. Having a vocational school and employing its graduates present some of the skills of the workers and also present the institutionalization level of TÜVASAŞ. Ayata mentions that the most important ‘worker finding’ method that the employers use is the vocational schools. These are employed in higher wages and appointed as journeymen in the factory that a higher position than the rest of the workers. Other workers are mostly the workers having the previous experiences of working in small-scale industry.¹¹¹

Despite the differences between the two groups of workers in the factory, it would be correct to highlight the importance of clientelism in the labour market. ‘The similar political thoughts’ may be little influential in the job-seeking process; however, it would not be wrong to claim that the kinship ties, friendship or being from the same city or town are usually being evaluated with similar political tendencies and these ties become meaningful through these connections. In other words, the people having kinship, friendship or ‘hemşeri’

¹¹¹ Ayata, 1991, p.193

ties usually have similar political tendencies. Thus, this can be regarded as a part of political clientelism:

In this new, 'mass party' clientelism, patrons have to 'buy' votes by distributing concrete excludable benefits and favours to individual voters or groups of voters. Such selective benefits include help in the labour market, for instance allocation of public sector jobs, help acceding to welfare benefits, or favouritism in administrative decisions¹¹²

According to Ayata, the executives of the union or the political party in the government can offer employers to hire close people to the union executives or the influential people in the political party. The employers usually use this offers because they intend to use these offers as to make feel them owed to the employers.¹¹³ In the clientelistic culture, if one person help or support anyone for example to find a job, it would be expected, the helped one will eventually help the other one too in a certain way.

5.4. The Change in Meaning of Work

The concept of work is defined by Andre Gorz as: "It (work) means an activity carried out: for someone else; in return for a wage; according to forms and time schedules laid down by the person paying the wage; and for a purpose not chosen by the worker."¹¹⁴ The inclusion of this concept has transformed the notion of work as being every activity that is done for wages. The terms of 'work' and 'job' have become interchangeable. Work is not what someone does any more, but something someone has.¹¹⁵ "One works 'at Peugeot's or at Boussac's' rather than to make cars or textiles."¹¹⁶ All these are related with the

¹¹² Piattoni 2001: 9

¹¹³ Ayata, 1991, 194

¹¹⁴ Gorz, 1997: p.1.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p.1

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p.1

issues of the changes in the labour process, organization of work and unemployment.

Work is a major aspect of a person's life, determining his/her status, personality, and all aspects of one's identity. But in recent decades, 'the right for unemployment' or 'unemployment wage' has been sounded loudly. This is, of course, a result of a high rate of unemployment; however, the emphasis here is for the 'right' to be unemployed. The structure of employment consists of permanently unemployed people, a minority of skilled workers and the employees of short-term jobs in the service sector.

The results of the survey in the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory context related to the reasons of working shows the perception of work among the workers. As it is seen in Table 5.10, the workers in the sample work to supply subsistence for themselves and their families. In other words, they have to work to live.

Table 5.10

| | | Worker Status | | Total |
|---------------------------------------|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| To fill the free time. | N | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 2,0 | 1,0 |
| To have a better life | N | 11 | 5 | 16 |
| | Column % | 22,0 | 10,0 | 16,0 |
| To attain a status in the society | N | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Column % | 2,0 | 2,0 | 2,0 |
| Because of the pressure of the family | N | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| | Column % | 4,0 | 2,0 | 3,0 |
| Family or self subsistence | N | 36 | 42 | 78 |
| | Column % | 72,0 | 84,0 | 78,0 |
| Total | N | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 4,0449; df = 4; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

5.5 Issues about Gender

The unions are defined mostly as organisations of uneducated, middle-aged, male workers; the educated employees, women and young workers were not usually involved in unionism.¹¹⁷ There are some reasons for the absence of women in the unions. Firstly, female workers are concentrated mostly in the informal sector. The informality is a very important obstacle. Secondly, Because women had a clear productive role in the petty commodity production of family farms in agriculture, they can not participate in industry or services as employees easily after the migration to the cities. “The most important reason is the extremely low participation of women. This development is closely tied to the structural change in the economy from agriculture to industry and services.”¹¹⁸ Thirdly, the male concentration and traditional, patriarchal atmosphere is common in the unions, especially in the dimensions of decision-making and leadership. Fourthly, the women can not join some important meetings of the unions because of their domestic work, such as child care and cooking at home.

There were no female unionists at the confederation and national union levels. “The only woman union leader was the president of the Central Anatolian Branch of the Union of Banking and Insurance Workers (BASISEN), Yaşar Saymen, elected in 1992.”¹¹⁹ There are no valid, legal statistics about the rates of the genders in terms of membership to unions. In the survey by Banu Uçkan and Metin Kağancıoğlu applied in different sectors of workplaces in Eskişehir, only 1.8 of the respondents was women.¹²⁰

Similarly, in the present study conducted at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory in Adapazarı, only 2 female workers were found to be respondents.

¹¹⁷ Uçkan, B., & Kağancıoğlu, M., 2009, p.39

¹¹⁸ World Bank Labour Market Study, 2006, p.59

¹¹⁹ Dereli, p.473

¹²⁰ Uçkan, B., & Kağancıoğlu, M., 2009, p.39

There are only two female workers serving as subcontractors in the cleaning firm, so there are only two female respondents in the survey. Yet it is clear that this sample of gender represents the population of the workplace.

CHAPTER-6

TRADE UNION CONSCIOUSNESS AND WORKER IDENTITY

6.1. The Problems in the Trade Union Consciousness Which Are Directly Related With the Unions

6.1.1. Trade Union Consciousness among Union Members

Trade unions are one of the most important institutions of modern society. The tradition of tripartite in modern societies requires the instrumental role of trade unions because of the relations with the labour. Other than the economic policies, the consciousness of workers for trade unions depends on class formations, cultural background such as values, structure of labour, and the tradition of labour movements. Turkey largely has been recognized for the weakness of its unions in terms of the lack of support for the workers and few numbers of union members in addition to the scant coverage of memberships of workers in the country. There become serious problems about the relationships between the trade unions and workers. Declining interest of the workers in unionism or the failure of successful unionism, issues about democracy in unions, and the fragmented nature of unions can be given as examples of the problems encountered. Also the workers' participation in unionism is part of the issue. They become disappointed when they see that their co-workers do not care much about unionism.

There are different approaches toward the functions of trade unions and the formation of trade union consciousness. The Marxist school approaches unionism as a first step for class-consciousness. But the experiences of trade unionism caused some criticisms and later reservations. The issues of labour aristocracy, corrupt leaders and embourgeoisement based on imperialism were

observed in British unionism.¹²¹ C. Wright Mills argues that trade unions are a utility for the administration of the capitalists because of being tool of the control of workers. All these issues are observed and discussed in the Turkish.

In Table 6.1., the percentages reflect the ideas of the respondents about the role of becoming union members in the lives of workers, specifically,, the advantages of unionising themselves. This question examines the image of the union in the eyes of union member workers extracted from their experiences with unionisation. Most of the union member workers (79.6%) agree with the idea that membership to the unions can bring important advantages in terms of social rights. This is a positive aspect of unionism that is thought to be functional by workers, despite all the issues.

Table 6.1

| "Becoming a member to a union can bring many advantages" Do you agree or not? | | Worker Status | Total |
|---|----------|---------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | |
| I agree | N | 39 | 39 |
| | Column % | 79,6 | 79,6 |
| I am not sure | N | 5 | 5 |
| | Column % | 10,2 | 10,2 |
| I do not agree | N | 5 | 5 |
| | Column % | 10,2 | 10,2 |
| Total | N | 49 | 49 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Table 6.2 also gives an idea about the importance of unions for the union member workers because most of the workers (72.9%) do not want to end their membership, even if they are offered to be paid more in wages. This also points out the distinction of wages and the social rights or security in the

¹²¹ Hyman, 1971,

perception of the workers. A sense of job security is significant here because of working with the subcontractors who have no future guarantee at work, they notice how it is to be a non-union member who feels insecure and lives with the fear of being unemployed. This is the main reason for preferring security to higher wages.

Table 6.2

| If you will be offered higher wage with same working conditions, would you admit to be de-unionized worker? | | Worker Status | Total |
|---|----------|---------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | |
| I agree | N | 10 | 10 |
| | Column % | 20,8 | 20,8 |
| I am not sure | N | 3 | 3 |
| | Column % | 6,3 | 6,3 |
| I do not agree | N | 35 | 35 |
| | Column % | 72,9 | 72,9 |
| Total | N | 48 | 48 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 |

6.1.2. The Problems in the Perception of Unions

The weakening of unions in political and social terms is generally claimed as the consequence of the conjuncture changes and its problems. This is not an inaccurate comment, but the analysis about the issues of the unions should include the arguments within the unions. Beside the conjuncture, inserting the situation and issues of the unions within themselves is significant. The discourses of the unionists show the tendencies of seeing unions as the objects of the issues of unionisation. They blame the conjuncture for the problems and they do not see the unions as the subjects of this system. Unions are objects, in other words, in their views. Consequently, the unions do not tend to take initiatives for struggling against the employers or state. One of the major

reasons for the passivity of the union policies is this.¹²² Beşeli uses the phrase “the misery of the unionism”¹²³ for the state of unionism now. The misery is not the misery of professional unionists. “The term ‘misery’ does not point out the absence of luxurious cars, high salaries of unionists or expenditures”¹²⁴ It is the misery of social and political power of the unions.

It is argued that there is both a crisis of the working class and that there is a crisis specifically of the unions. The unions are frequently warned not to be political. Koç opposes this view: “There is no way for creating a new working class or new unions. The history of the working class can not be explained by certain individuals. The main argument of this history is the quality of the workers.”¹²⁵ The quality of unions reflects the quality of workers according to him.

According to Koç, there is a wrong impression that unions previously had a more positive image and they were the more trusted associations. Yet, this is incorrect. The reason for the loss of union members may be attributed to the change in perceptions of unions. However, this is not the case. “The situation of the working-classes and unions of Turkey can not be evaluated in the same context with the developed, imperialist countries.”¹²⁶ The Research of Worker Profile: The Case of Eskişehir, in 2008, reflects the workers’ first choice as an aim of the unions to be pursued is the rise of the wages: “Also 48.5% of the workers mention that the unions should not be involved in politics rather they should focus on the interests of the workers.”¹²⁷

The main problem of the unions is adaptation to the new problems of the working class. The widening of financial capital can not be evaluated by and

¹²² Sazak, F., 2007, p.14

¹²³ Beşeli, M., 2007, p.237

¹²⁴ Beşeli, M., 2007, p.237

¹²⁵ Koç, p.160

¹²⁶ Koç, 160

¹²⁷ Uçkan, B. & Kağncıoğlu, D., 2009, p.44

responded to by the unions having stable positions of the industrial age. According to Özüğurlu, the main crisis for the unions is the crisis of representation in two ways: first, the political representation within the industrial relations and second, the limited number of workers who give the mission of representation of themselves to unions.¹²⁸

In the Research of the Worker Profile: The Case of Eskişehir, in 2004, the institutions most trusted by workers were the presidency, the military and the parliament.¹²⁹ Another study of The Workers' Perception of and Attitude towards Unions: The Case of Eskişehir, in 2008, shows the most trusted three institutions were the military, the presidency and the courts. In this research, the rate of the trust in unions is 4.1% while the trust in military is 43.6%.¹³⁰ As these two studies indicate, the unions are not amongst the top three trusted institutions. There are serious problems about the trust in unions among the workers as it seems in these percentages.

The huge change in the economy and politics influenced the rate of unionisation in nearly the entire world. As can be seen on Table 5.1, there is a trend of de-unionisation in Europe. But the trust in unions has not changed in significant numbers because the unions have strong roles and functions such as the right of 'extending' in that they represent all workers, whether they are union members or not. It is difficult to claim that the unions work for increasing the number of members. In The Research of Worker Profile: The Case of Eskişehir, in 2008, only 20% of the non-member workers have ever talked to a professional of the union about membership.¹³¹ Although there are discussions about the weakening power of trade unions, in the research conducted at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory, as shown in Table 6.3, it was found that 85.6% of the workers perceive that trade unions are important

¹²⁸ Özüğurlu, M., 2007, p.284

¹²⁹ Altan and others, 2005, p.164

¹³⁰ Uçkan, B. & Kağncioğlu, 2009, p.41

¹³¹ Uçkan, B. & Kağncioğlu, 2009, p.43

institutions. The rate that the trade unions are not important institutions raise among subcontracting workers but not in meaningful rates in terms of statistical calculations.

Table 6.3

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|---|-----|---------------|------------------------|-------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Do you think the trade unions are important institutions? | No | N | 4 | 10 | 14 |
| | | Column % | 8,0 | 21,3 | 14,4 |
| | Yes | N | 46 | 37 | 83 |
| | | Column % | 92,0 | 78,7 | 85,6 |
| Total | | N | 50 | 47 | 97 |
| | | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 3,4579; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

In the present study, the workers' perspectives seem to acknowledge the general process of de-unionization. As is seen in Table 6.4., 63.3% of the workers claim that trade unions do not retain their previous importance. More significant is the rate of union members sharing this idea: 76% of the union-member workers think that the trade unions do not hold their previous importance. Importance equates with the social and political strength. The labour history of Turkey witnessed the rise of the strength of the trade unions and labour movement in the late 1970s.

The differentiation between two worker groups is clear on this issue. As can be seen in Table 6.4., while 76% of the union members think that the unions can not retain their previous importance, the rate of sharing this idea declines to 50% among the subcontractors. Moreover, 35.4% of the subcontractors claimed to have no idea about whether the unions could retain their previous importance or not. This result can show the importance of union membership for the

consciousness of unionism and labour history. Since the subcontracting workers are younger, they do not know much about the labour movement before 1980 which stronger than its current situation.

Table 6.4

| | | Worker Status | | Total | |
|---|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | | |
| Do you think the trade unions save their previous importance? | Yes | N | 12 | 7 | 19 |
| | | Column % | 24,0 | 14,6 | 19,4 |
| No | N | 38 | 24 | 62 | |
| | Column % | 76,0 | 50,0 | 63,3 | |
| No idea | N | 0 | 17 | 17 | |
| | Column % | ,0 | 35,4 | 17,3 | |
| Total | N | 50 | 48 | 98 | |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 | |

Khi-square = 21,4452; df = 2; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

Besides union membership the union, the age of the union members and subcontractors can be crucial to understand the ideas of workers related to the importance of unions in a historical context. As can be seen in Table 6.2., 58% of the subcontractors are below the age of 30, while 98% of the subcontractors are below the age of 50. This young age factor makes it difficult to raise awareness amongst these younger workers of the previous tradition of unionism and the labour movement. In comparison to subcontractors, the union members are older: 100% of the union-member workers are above the age of 30 and the 19.6% of them are above the age of 50. The year 1980 was a turning point for the labour movement. Especially workers who were old enough to witness the labour movement before 1980 or workers who have some knowledge about the history and the tradition of unionism mention the loss of importance of the

unions. Age and union membership are influential with the attitudes toward the change in the importance of unions.

Table 6.5 presents interesting findings in the context of the perception of the trade unions among workers. According to the table, almost half of the workers want to participate in the administration of the workplace directly without the instrumental role of the unions. Union member workers and non-union member workers share this opinion at nearly equal levels. This shows the trade unions' policies, strategies and all other practices are not totally accepted or seen as adequate by the two groups of workers. Furthermore, the executive and leadership roles seem to have no support from the workers in the workplace.

Table 6.5 Do you agree with, the workers should participate in the administration of the workplace? If yes, how?

| If yes, how should the workers participate in the administration of the workplace? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Workers should participate directly. | N | 14 | 17 | 31 |
| | Column % | 48,3 | 44,7 | 46,3 |
| Workers should participate by the representation of the union. | N | 15 | 21 | 36 |
| | Column % | 51,7 | 55,3 | 53,7 |
| Total | N | 29 | 38 | 67 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = ,0829; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

6.1.3. Fragmented Nature of Unions

Despite there being only one, United Union of the Employers (TISK), the labour unions are fragmented into several different associations. There are three major confederations of trade unions; Türk-İş, Hak-İş and DİSK. These confederations and the confederations of the government officers formed 'The

Platform of the Labour' as a part of ending the fragmented structure of the labour movement. The fragmentation into these three unions is due to political polarisations or distinctions. Türk-İş is the biggest confederation that was first to be founded and have the 'central' and 'moderate' political preferences and backgrounds, even if having a mixture of different political tendencies within itself. Hak-İş is identified with political Islam and said to have support of the governments of this political background. DİSK is the revolutionary union associated with the left, socialist unionism.

The minimum requirement for representing 10% of the total employed in relevant industry and representing the 50% of the workers at workplaces weakens the labour movement. Besides, these double criteria are against the ILO agreement. "The original intent of this 'double criteria' was to create more order in an environment that was characterized by an extremely fragmented labor movement, with large numbers of small unions with little capacity to represent workers effectively in negotiations with employers."¹³²

Besides the competition and fragmented structure of the union confederations, there is competition between the unions in the same sector or even within the same confederation. The competition between Çimse-İş and Kristal-İş is an example of both competition in the same sector and competition within the same confederation. These two unions are organized in the sectors of glass and cement. These unions also are members of Türk-İş. Before 1980, the differentiation between unions was more politically based but after 1980 the differentiation turned into pragmatic competition.¹³³ Getting 10% of the workers in the sector to be members is main source of this competition. The trend of informalisation in the production includes to make trade unions competing each other in same sector. Recently same situation was seen within the Iron and Metal Factory in Karabük. It is claimed that two trade unions in the metal sector (Türk-Metal and Çelik İş) started to give money to workers to make them members to their union.

¹³² World Bank Labour Market Study, 2006, p.67

¹³³ Uçkan, B., 2004,

6.1.4. The Absence of Trust in the Hierarchy of Unions

There is an important issue about the trust in the unions, their leadership and board. The walls of the unions are full of the sentence of “the labour is the most honorable thing.” But there is a common belief that the unions and the unionists ignore the labour and the workers to instead seek their own interests. The news about the leader of a union who bought a Jaguar is still alive in the memories of the workers and of the public. The distinction between the workers and the hierarchy in unions is evident and there is a significant issue about the use of fees paid by the workers to the unions. The luxurious lifestyles of the union leaders or the image of “cooperating with the employer” was mentioned frequently by the workers.¹³⁴

The case of the privatisation of Sumerbank Ereğli Cotton Plant shows the different approaches among unions themselves. Most of the workers blame the union hierarchy for being passive against the privatisation of the plant. They identify the union leaders as the people who make a career for themselves.¹³⁵

The trust in unions has always been problematic because the practices of unionism, ideology of the union, class formation, relations of the union with the employers and government and personal figures of the hierarchy or leadership influences the trust of workers in unions. This present study presents the findings about the workers’ trust in unions in Table 6.6. Most (73.4%) of the union member workers ‘trust’ or ‘trust much’ their unions. Only 26.6% of them are negative toward unions. However, for the non-union member subcontracts, trust in the unions is only 41.6%. This difference is mainly the consequence of the failure of the unions to be concerned with subcontractors working in the workplace. Some subcontractors mentioned that they are afraid of saying something negative about the union because they are afraid of being fired. The close relationship between the union and the TÜVASAŞ administration and the

¹³⁴ Kalaycıoğlu, Rittersberger-Tılıç, Çelik, 2008, p.94

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, p.109

relationship with the subcontracting firms scared them. Although they are afraid of making a negative comment about the union, almost half of subcontractors mention that they do not ‘trust’ or ‘do not trust at all’ the union, according to the findings presented in Table 6.6.

Table 6.6

| How much do you trust in the unions? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--------------------------------------|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| I am not interested in | N | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 14,6 | 7,2 |
| I do not trust, not at all. | N | 5 | 7 | 12 |
| | Column % | 10,2 | 14,6 | 12,4 |
| I do not trust | N | 8 | 14 | 22 |
| | Column % | 16,3 | 29,2 | 22,7 |
| I trust. | N | 28 | 16 | 44 |
| | Column % | 57,1 | 33,3 | 45,4 |
| I trust very much | N | 8 | 4 | 12 |
| | Column % | 16,3 | 8,3 | 12,4 |
| Total | N | 49 | 48 | 97 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 13,5669; df = 4; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

As shown in Table 6.7., only 33.3% of the workers believe that the unions can develop the rights and interests of the worker. This result likely is because of their union experiences and the success or failure of the union in their workplace. Furthermore, there is no difference amongst the two groups of workers in terms of the trust in unions. An interesting aspect of this table is that almost half of the subcontractors did not respond to this question. Being ‘neutral’ about this issue can partly be interpreted as being afraid of talking against the union as mentioned earlier.

Table 6.7

| Do you think the unions can develop the rights and interests of the workers? | | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|--|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Neutral | N | | 14 | 23 | 37 |
| | Column % | | 28,6 | 48,9 | 38,5 |
| No | N | | 15 | 12 | 27 |
| | Column % | | 30,6 | 25,5 | 28,1 |
| Yes | N | | 20 | 12 | 32 |
| | Column % | | 40,8 | 25,5 | 33,3 |
| Total | N | | 49 | 47 | 96 |
| | Column % | | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 4,4828; df = 2; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

The reasons for the failure in developing the rights and interests of the workers is one of the main starting points of this study. The ideas of the workers are very remarkable about the reasons for the failure in developing the rights and interests of workers. As seen in Table 6.8., one-third (33.3%) of the all workers in the sample think that the main reason of the failure in developing the rights is the inadequacy of union administrators. This high rate shows both the opposition to the current board and also the failure of unionism at the workplace. Furthermore, this opinion is shared by both of the worker groups. Another remarkable aspect of the findings is that very few workers could answer this question because they feared being heard by or complained about the workplace representative or any other workers who are close to the current union hierarchy. Despite being afraid, this result is very interesting to find so many 'brave' workers in the workplace.

Table 6.8

| If no, why can't the unions develop the rights and interests of the workers? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Other | N | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 11,1 | 5,9 |
| The unions are interested in limited number of workers. | N | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| | Column % | 12,5 | 11,1 | 11,8 |
| The absence of dialogue between the unions. | N | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | Column % | 8,3 | 7,4 | 7,8 |
| The pressure of the employers. | N | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| | Column % | 4,2 | 14,8 | 9,8 |
| Insufficient democracy for unions. | N | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| | Column % | 12,5 | 18,5 | 15,7 |
| The workers do not trust in the unions. | N | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 7,4 | 3,9 |
| The inadequacy of quality of members the board of the union. | N | 9 | 8 | 17 |
| | Column % | 37,5 | 29,6 | 33,3 |
| Anti-democratical laws. | N | 6 | 0 | 6 |
| | Column % | 25,0 | ,0 | 11,8 |
| Total | N | 24 | 27 | 51 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 13,2281; df = 7; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

6.1.5. Issues of Democracy in Unions

'Professional unionism' is an important issue in Turkish unionism. The most important problems are the inadequacy of the representation of workers by these professional unionists, problems in the participation of the decision-making processes and the alienation between the workers and the unionists because of the image of the leadership and oligarchic structure in the unions.

However, blaming union hierarchy for the all problems in unionism is inaccurate. The workers, in other words the informal groups, are also important. The informal groups in workplaces are the nuclei for unionism. There are some

examples of activism originating from these informal groups without the organization of unions.¹³⁶

It is obvious that there is a broken link between the bottom and top of unionism. Most of the union member workers think that they can not have any influence in the decision-making process in unions according to the research of “The New Developments in the Working Life and the Changing Role of Unions in Turkey.”¹³⁷

There are examples of the ‘life-time presidents’ of some trade unions. For example, the president of the Trade Union of Turkish Metal Workers, Mustafa Özbek, had been the leader of the union from 1975 to 2009. His presidency did not end with an election in union, but instead because of being sent to jail, the unions had to elect a new president. It is known that during his presidency of 34 years, the people who were opposed to Özbek were eliminated from the union. The Trade Union of Turkish Metal Workers is a prime example of the lack of democracy in Turkish trade unions. Özbek is also famous for his wealth and properties. These examples have a negative effect on the perception of unions.

6.1.6. Powerlessness in Collective Bargaining and Wage Unionism

The unions were the social power groups scaring the governments and applying pressure upon the political parties before 1980s. In 1974, the Coal Mining Workers’ Trade Union was able to subvert the Conservative government in England but in 1985 the Conservative government of Thatcher could break the strike of the same union. Similar examples were encountered in the period of the Reagan government in the U.S.¹³⁸ The same change in power can be observed in Turkey as well. Previously, the political parties had tried to gain the

¹³⁶ Akkaya, 2009

¹³⁷ Insel, and others, 2004, p.43

¹³⁸ Celik, A. cited in 2007, p.29; Coates and others, 2000, pp.28-29

support of unions in the elections. However, nowadays the union leaders can wait for months to arrange a meeting with prime ministers or party leaders.¹³⁹

The situation in the collective bargaining is a clear sign for the lack of union power. The unions can not even try to change or negotiate for the workers' rights other than for their wages. Passivity in political struggle causes the conflicts within unions by depending on the personal characters of the leaders, and not on the evaluation of their performance for the sake of the labour movement.¹⁴⁰ The unions have become places for internal conflicts, oppressing the opposition and not participating in the administrations.

The major example of the absence of union power in Turkey is the activation of the European Social Charter's 5th and 6th sections. The fifth section is about the rights for unionism. The sixth section is about the activism within the rights of collective contracting and strikes.¹⁴¹ The unions have not succeeded in making any progress for the activation of these sections for years, although they attempt to pressure governments, especially in the collective bargaining processes.

It should be remembered that economic progress for the rights of workers can not be gained only in economic struggles with the employers because the economic crisis can retake what was gained by the workers. The main base of the struggle should be political.¹⁴² The unions should give up being the organisation of only the members. Although the laws do not permit it, unions should be able to actively organise the unemployed or the contract workers.

In Brazil and South Africa, the unions have focused on the unionism in the informal sector. They try to establish organic links with the informality to struggle against de-unionisation with the reducing formal sector in the

¹³⁹ Özveri, p.102

¹⁴⁰ Özveri, p.106

¹⁴¹ Gülmez, 2007, p.12

¹⁴² Müftüoğlu cited: Marx, 1992, p.130

economy.¹⁴³ The situation of the expansive informality is similar in Turkey and the unions should focus on and try to solve this important issue. Interestingly, some union professionals claim that for the sake of the economy, they do not support unionism in small enterprises.¹⁴⁴ They prefer the ‘survival’ of the enterprises rather than developing the workers’ rights.

Obviously, the labour unions are not aware of the importance of the widening labour movement or unionism towards the informal sector, subcontractors, privatisation and the unemployed. First, all these groups of workers damage the collective struggle of the organized labour movements or unions because of the competition factor among workers and the existence of substantial numbers in the ‘reserve army’ of workers. Secondly, the limited representation of the workers reduces their collective power in social, economic and political spheres.

The right to strike has been systematically violated. Since 2000, nine strikes were delayed owing to the reasons of ‘national security’ or ‘health.’¹⁴⁵ In Turkish law, the strikes can only be delayed for these two reasons. But since 2000, Turkey has not faced a situation of war or dangerous epidemic, so these two reasons have become tools for the resistance against the labour movement and the unions. While these are infractions, the governments did not face significant opposition from the workers except in the late 1970s, the activism in 1989 and the struggle of the TEKEL workers taking weeks against loss of their security and being taken to the cadre of 3-B. Yet, these exceptions could not bring long-term success. According to the data of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the mean of the workers participated to strikes decreased in years 2001 - 2005 to the 4% level of the number of strikes in years 1985-2000.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Insel, and others, 2004, p.50

¹⁴⁴ Insel and others, 2004, p.50

¹⁴⁵ Celik, p.48

¹⁴⁶ Celik cited: Temmuz 2006

Besides the pressure of the state upon the unions for blocking the strikes, the unions themselves do not intend to strike as they have done previously. The decreasing tendency of striking is not because the workers and the employers have reached an agreement more in the last years. It is because the unions have become hesitant to strike.¹⁴⁷

The unions are mostly criticized by especially the left-wing literature for doing ‘wage-unionism’ instead of ‘political unionism.’ It can be argued that this type of unionism is not only the preference of the professionals in unions, but this is the result of the demand of the members. The Research of Worker Profile: The Case of Eskişehir, in 2008, reflects the workers’ first choice as an aim of the unions to be pursued is the rise of the wages. “Also 48.5% of the workers mention that the unions should not be involved in politics rather they should focus on the interests of the workers.”¹⁴⁸ In this regard, it would be right to insert the influence of the 1980 military coup on these perspectives of the workers as well as the political and social atmosphere in all society.

Table 6.9 shows the responses of workers with regard to the selection of the main aims by the unions: 58.8% of the workers in the sample want the union to protect their interests in terms of wages and working conditions. There is not a significant difference between the types of workers of union members and subcontractors. This explains the tendencies of unions towards wage-unionism. This is the demand of workers, firstly because the aim of ‘making workers to get a political consciousness’ was reported by only two workers in the sample. The workers did not already possess political consciousness; they just did not demand political unionism. Furthermore, the ‘term’ political is enough to scare the workers for the memories of the punishments who were ‘political’ in the past. This is the major difficulty for the ones who seek political unionism in Turkey this is mostly contrasting with the demands of the union-member workers and also, moreover, the non-union member workers.

¹⁴⁷ Uçkan, B. & Kağncıoğlu, D., 2009, p.35

¹⁴⁸ Uçkan, B. & Kağncıoğlu, D., 2009, p.44

Table 6.9

| What should be the main targets of unions in long term? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| To make workers to get political consciousness. | N | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | Column % | 4,1 | ,0 | 2,1 |
| To conserve the Turkish national and religious values. | N | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | Column % | ,0 | 4,2 | 2,1 |
| To rise the welfare of the society not only the workers. | N | 15 | 14 | 29 |
| | Column % | 30,6 | 29,2 | 29,9 |
| To make better wages and working conditions available for the workers. | N | 31 | 26 | 57 |
| | Column % | 63,3 | 54,2 | 58,8 |
| To participate in the administration of the workplace more. | N | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| | Column % | 2,0 | 12,5 | 7,2 |
| Total | N | 49 | 48 | 97 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 8,0351; df = 4; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

6.2. The Influence of the Political and Ideological Atmosphere on Trade Union Consciousness and Its Relationship with the Problems about Worker Identity

6.2.1. The Working Class in Turkey

The occupation is generally seen as the most visible characteristic of an individual. The relationship with society is made with the occupational links. The integration of an individual can be realized with two tools: education and work. Besides the relation with society, work is also something this is the status

as well as the identity of a person. Occupational identity is mostly held with the concept of class in the modern system in social relations. With the rise of the Industrial Revolution and the shift to the class societies highlights the discussions about the working class and, naturally, the major institutions of the working-class: unions.

Are unions the tools for solving the conflict between the working class and the capitalists? Should they have relations with politics or should they remain as “supra-political”? What can be the major missions of the unions? How can they forge a relationship with non-workers or non-members? All these questions need to be problematised to explore the roles and importance of the unions in society. These questions also need to be answered in order to discern the perception of unions among workers.

Nearly a half-century ago, E.P. Thompson offered an approach in social history by claiming that the English working class was “present at its own making.”¹⁴⁹ His idea was that the particular sort of class-consciousness to which English workers, as a group, arrived at by the middle of nineteenth century was neither a “natural” outgrowth of their material conditions or of the relations of production, nor simply one of many possible identities that English workers could have adopted as important in orienting their politics and social lives.¹⁵⁰

“How do established routines and the spatial and temporal dimensions of workplaces help or hinder the formation of solidarity among workers both within similar positions in workplace hierarchies and networks?”¹⁵¹ The changes in the formation of workplaces have a significant role in determining the solidarity and collectivity among workers that will be discussed in relevant parts of this study.

Marxist approach is important for understanding the working class and working class identity in Turkey towards the class identity in historical sense. In

¹⁴⁹ Thompson, 1963, p.9

¹⁵⁰ Krinsky, 2007, p.344

¹⁵¹ Krinsky, 2007, p.344

Marxist terminology, the shift from class in itself to class for itself may be instrumental to consider.

It is not a question of what this or that proletariat, or even the whole proletariat, at the moment regards as its aim. It is a question of what the proletariat is, and what, in accordance with this being, it will historically be compelled to do. Its aim and historical action is visibly and irrevocably foreshadowed in its own life situation as well as in the whole organization of bourgeois society today.¹⁵²

The second approach criticizes the Marxist understanding that Krinsky summarizes:

First, some academic labor historians and sociologists, considering the broad exclusions from working definitions of the working class, concluded that the working class never existed in many meaningful ways, outside the fantasies of the left. Class identities were never, in their reading, the most salient identities to workers, and have had little explanatory power for understanding consequential popular mobilizations relative to subjective ties of kin, neighbourhood, and nation.¹⁵³

Andre Gorz suggests that the real thoughts of proletarians have never been taken into account and it has been ignored what they believe or what they desire.¹⁵⁴

Another approach toward the situation of the working class points out the percentage of the workers in societies. According to this view, the rise of the service sector, the globalisation of trade and labour reduced the workers into a minority in the society and that the workers have never been a majority.¹⁵⁵

The inequalities between the working classes of different countries based on the level of development are important to mention here. It has been usually argued that the most important advantage of the developing countries is having cheap labour, which is an advantage because this attracts capital flow and

¹⁵² Marx, 1975; p.37

¹⁵³ Krinsky, 2007, p.346

¹⁵⁴ Gorz, 1997; p.16

¹⁵⁵ Krinsky, p.348

investments. The position of trade unions in these countries seems to be very controversial because strong and influential trade unions cause an increase in wages.¹⁵⁶ Turkey is very much at the centre of this controversial situation and neo-liberal outlook because the economic policies of neo-liberalism have been implemented since 1980.

The case of the privatisation of Sumerbank Ereğli Cotton Plant shows the different approaches among unions themselves. Most of the workers claimed to support the privatization of the privatisation that shows the individualistic pragmatism rather than a class identity.¹⁵⁷ As Thompson mentions, common experiences, feelings articulate the identity of their interests for themselves opposing to other groups.¹⁵⁸ But the disintegration within working-class threatens this type of collectivity.

6.2.2. The Role of Unions: Political Unions versus Supra-political Unions

Marxists criticize considering the trade unions as tools for improving or ameliorating current relations and conditions of work. It is regarded as a poor political approach that can not have permanent results in the favour of the working class because it is argued that with the emergence of any economic crisis, these improvements would be withdrawn.¹⁵⁹ A key example can be the withdrawal of the social rights that were gained by the working class in the age of welfare states. After the economic crisis in the end of the 1970s, there were serious negative changes of workers in terms of social rights. With the help of changes in the labour process and abandoning the aim of full employment,

¹⁵⁶ Nichols and others, 2000, p.3

¹⁵⁷ Nurol, B., p.108

¹⁵⁸ Thompson, 1968, pp.9-10

¹⁵⁹ Akkaya, Y., 2002, p.1

social rights have faced significant problems especially after the 1980s. The rates of employment, the amount of wages and the length of job duration have all decreased in significant numbers. This can be easily seen in the falling rates of unionization in many countries: “The unions should act as the motor of the struggle of working class and they should support any social or political movement of the working class. They should cover the workers that are not member to unions and pay attention to agricultural workers”.¹⁶⁰ By carrying out these actions, the main aim is being a major actor in the society that has significant public support and power. Marx regarded trade unions as the political associations of the working class that can demolish the waged-labour system.¹⁶¹ Marxists intend to regard “interests of working-class” as the main basis for the trade unions. The working class is naturally the basis of aims and the struggles of trade unions. But should the concept or consciousness of “working class” be the only focus of trade unions in contemporary world?

Trade unions, as representatives of workers and powerful institutions in society, are important parts of the pluralistic structure of modern societies. Historically, trade unions have intervened into many social and political issues like democratisation, membership to the European Union, unemployment or environmental issues. These might not be seen as directly irrelevant to the “interests” of the working class; instead, all these have direct or indirect effects on workers in society. Thus, the trade unions are more than the representatives of workers; they are one of the main social actors in modern societies, a main component of civil society.

Most (68%) of the workers surveyed in the present study think that the main mission of a trade union should be to improve the social rights of the workers. As reflected in Table 6.10., the workers first prefer their unions to protect their social rights over increasing wages. This seems to be in contradiction with the wage-unionism, but the increase in social rights does not

¹⁶⁰ Akkaya, Y., 2002, p.2

¹⁶¹ Akkaya, Y., pp.2-3

directly refer to political unionism. These are short-term aims for unionism, including immediate results.

Table 6.10

| What is the main mission of a trade union? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| To increase the wages of the workers. | N | 15 | 10 | 25 |
| | Column % | 31,3 | 20,4 | 25,8 |
| To make the social rights of the workers better. | N | 30 | 36 | 66 |
| | Column % | 62,5 | 73,5 | 68,0 |
| Other | N | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| | Column % | 6,3 | 6,1 | 6,2 |
| Total | N | 48 | 49 | 97 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 1,5353; df = 2; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

The unions are the representatives of the workers. Not preferring political unionism is what their members demand, as can be seen in Table 6.11. ‘Wage unionism’ is the consequence of the public opinion of the members. “There are wrong opinions that the workers demand to have political and even socialist unions, but the unions do not agree with their members. That is not true. And also there is not a mission of unions to make workers socialist.”¹⁶²

The research in the present study supports Koç’s view, for 68.8% of the workers in the sample demand that their union not get involved in politics (see Table 6.11.). The interesting aspect of this situation is that there is not much difference among the union members and the sub-contractors on this point.

Another important result of this survey reflects important implications. Not a single worker chose the option of “a trade union should represent an ideology or a political idea.” This result is so crucial to show both the demands

¹⁶² Koç, Y. p.176

of workers from their unions, the reasons and justification of ‘wage-unionism’ and also the negative connotations of the concepts of ‘ideology’ and ‘political idea’ in the workers’ perceptions, especially for the identification with the unions. This shows the very legitimate basis of the policies of the unions and working class politics, in general.

For political unionism, in Marx’s and Lenin’s context, the trade unions are the first step for class-consciousness and the struggle of the working class. But in this case, Dahrendorf’s view seems to interpret the current situation in the workers in the sample better. The trade unions, collective bargaining and the political institutions have been functional for the habituation of class conflict.¹⁶³ Additionally, C. Wright Mills’ approach can be related with this situation. He claims that the disciplining role of the trade unions for industry and capital is as such: “The union takes over much of the company's personnel work, becoming the disciplining agent.”¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, the “union derives union security, higher wages for its members; in return, the company receives peace and stability in its plants and higher productivity.”¹⁶⁵ Whether Dahrendorf’s or Mills’ thoughts are adaptable to the case of the workers’ priorities or not, it is obvious that the unions could not make the workers conscious about political unionism. It is not totally definite that the union already has such a tendency.

The differentiation between the concepts of ‘social rights’ and ‘wages’ seems clear in the workers’ minds. For the both group of workers, the emphasis upon and the favouring of the social rights rather than wage increases show the consciousness for the importance of social rights in general terms of the workers, especially after the example of the TEKEL workers activism; because the activism of TEKEL workers created a positive atmosphere for the labour movements in Turkey.

¹⁶³ Dahrendorf, p.77

¹⁶⁴ Mills, 1948, p.21

¹⁶⁵ Hyman, p.21

Table 6.11

| What is your approach to the political activities of the trade unions? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| They should be involved in politics only when it is needed for workers | N Column % | 6 12,2 | 11 23,4 | 17 17,7 |
| They should be involved in politics to save the rights of all social groups | N Column % | 6 12,2 | 5 10,6 | 11 11,5 |
| They should not be involved in politics, instead they should be concerned only with the workers' rights and interests. | N Column % | 36 73,5 | 30 63,8 | 66 68,8 |
| They should be directly involved in politics by founding of political parties. | N Column % | 1 2,0 | 1 2,1 | 2 2,1 |
| Total | N Column % | 49 100,0 | 47 100,0 | 96 100,0 |

Khi-square = 2,0662; df = 3; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

The unions in Europe own the power for influencing the politics of their countries. Adversely in Turkey, politics influences the unions. The unions are mostly the tools of several political movements or parties, but the main aim is usually not related to the labour movement or labour struggle.¹⁶⁶ The differentiation between unions depends on them being used as tools by political agents or by the competition to increase their membership to the 10% threshold in order to compete against each other. To conclude, politicisation of unions is not enough for the labour movement. The point is to make the labour movement a significant political power with substantial influence in the politics of the country, being the subjects of the politics, not objects.

6.2.3. Insecurity of Workers' Right of Unionisation

There are thousands of workers being fired after they have become union members. There are legal issues that can not secure the rights of unionization.

¹⁶⁶ Uçkan, B., 2004,

After sacking workers, at the court stage, the legal process still has not been able to secure these workers' rights or to punish the employer.

Gorz summarizes the insecurity of workers and other employees in society as: "the majority of the population now belongs to the post-industrial neo-proletariat, which, with no job security or defined class identity, fills the area of probationary, contracted, casual, temporary and part-time employment."¹⁶⁷

In the present field research, reasons for not being a union member are shown in Table 5.2 Interestingly, 14% of the workers did not want to answer this question. The major reason for not answering this question was the fear of saying something about the union to a 'stranger' because of the connections between the union and the sub-contracting firm. The important dimension of the research results in Table 6.12. is that almost 68% of the subcontractors are afraid of being union members. This percentage is the obvious result of the job insecurity for the unionization of workers. With new workers not being hired in public enterprises and the expansion of the subcontracting firms along with privatisation, unionization rates are at their lowest levels. At this critical junction, the unions and the labour movement in Turkey need to reach an immediate solution because the percentage of the unionised workers are decreasing year after year and the unions need to have representation in the private enterprises and the subcontracting firms in public enterprises. Otherwise, unionism in Turkey faces extinction.

6.2.4. 12 September 1980 – The Military Coup and Legal Restrictions

Before the military take over on 12 September 1980, the labour movement was strengthening and this trend had seemed to be continuing. The worker activism was gaining power every year. The 1 May Workers' Days were becoming an event for the meeting of millions that pointed to the strengthening

¹⁶⁷ Gorz, 1997, p.69

of working class consciousness in Turkey. But everything changed with the coup: “In fact unionism died with the 12th September military coup. Before, if there had been a strike, the union had been paying the wages of the workers; but now, one month after the start of the strike, the workers would have to go back to work because of lack of wages.”¹⁶⁸ Some of the concrete consequences of the military coup are:

- In 1982, a new constitution placed major restrictions on the political activities of trade unions and further weakening of trade unions ensued through the 1983 Trade Unions Act.

- Unions were forbidden to pursue political objectives – in particular they were forbidden to engage in political activities, to establish relations with political parties, or to use the name or symbols of political parties.

- Politically motivated strikes, general strikes and sympathy strikes were all made illegal; so too were slowdowns, sit-ins, and similar forms of concerted action.

- Strikes and lock-outs were not permitted during a state of war or full or partial mobilisation, and they could be prohibited in the event of major disasters adversely affecting daily life and temporarily restricted in the case of martial law or 'extraordinary emergency law' circumstances.¹⁶⁹

The wages decreased significantly after 1980 and with the neo-liberal economic policies pursued in subsequent period.¹⁷⁰ The military take-over is claimed to be the political completing of the economic policies of the 24 January meeting and decisions. Between 1970- 1979, real agricultural wages in Turkey had risen over 50% but in 1980 they decreased by 30%.¹⁷¹ There are legislative problems in front of the unionism. There is a legal requirement of ‘notary confirmation’ for the membership of a worker to the unions but this becomes real spending for the union or the worker.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ Koç, p.98

¹⁶⁹ Nichols, p.11

¹⁷⁰ Koç, p. 104

¹⁷¹ Nichols, p.11

¹⁷² Insel, and others, 2004, p.22

Table 6.13

| | | Worker Status | | Total |
|---|--|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| What is your opinion about the 12th September Military Coup in 1980? | I am against all the militarist interventions in politics. | N 27 | 30 | 57 |
| | Column % | 55,1 | 65,2 | 60,0 |
| There are both positive and negative dimensions of the militarist intervention to the politics. | N | 16 | 9 | 25 |
| | Column % | 32,7 | 19,6 | 26,3 |
| That was right because it ended the anarchy. | N | 3 | 6 | 9 |
| | Column % | 6,1 | 13,0 | 9,5 |
| That was right because I do not believe in democracy. | N | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| | Column % | 6,1 | 2,2 | 4,2 |
| Total | N | 49 | 46 | 95 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 4,0272; df = 3; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

The attitudes of workers of TÜVASAŞ towards democracy were evaluated by ascertaining the attitudes of the workers. Besides culture and the level of the development of democracy, the relationship between the military take-over and the decline of the rights of the workers is significant. The attitudes of the workers toward the military coup on 12 September 1980 are not so surprising but rather disappointing. The disappointment is due to the low percentage of respondents being against all military interventions in politics. As can be seen in Table 6.13, 60% of the workers in the sample claim to be against all military interventions in politics. That figure is significantly lower than expected since being against all military interventions is one of the first steps for democracy.

For any social group, that 40% (in Table 6.13) is not against all military intervention into the domestic political realm is problematic for the democracy in society. Moreover, the situation for workers is far worse because of the loss of their own rights. The military intervention in 1980 is the biggest harm for the labour in last few decades. In addition; there is not a significant differentiation between the types of workers such as unionized worker and non-unionized worker in Table 6.13. Interestingly, little more

non-unionized subcontractors oppose military intervention (65%) than do the union-member workers (55%). The results in this table also show the level of the democracy consciousness along with the class-consciousness among the unionized workers. Because, it was the military coup, that banned most of the unions and sent a lot of unionists to jails in 1980.

As discussed in the part of Theoretical Background, Bernstein maintains that trade unions are the democratic element in industrial society. Their function is to destroy absolutism and the suppressing tendency of capital, and to be a part of the management of the industry in favour of workers.¹⁷³ In the case of railcar factory, instead of absolutism in Bernstein's terms, the military coup that suppress workers and labour movement. Actually, best possible way for the struggle is through democracy, otherwise the demands of the workers would not be taken into account. The democracy gives the possibility of making a pressure upon the government.

6.2.5. The Paternalistic Nature of Unions – State Relations

The relations between the state and society have long-been a problematic area in Turkey. The issues of democracy, not having a 'ripe' civil society and the weakness of the social classes all have been topics for debate. Turkey does not have a tradition or history of social struggles. Neither social and political nor civil rights had been gained as a result of the social movements such as labour movements. The social or political changes or reforms are the results of the changes of political governments. There is a 'top-down' tradition of the state and society relations and this creates a paternalistic nature.¹⁷⁴ "These benefits had derived from a process of top-down bureaucratic reform however; and what the state gives, the state can take away."¹⁷⁵ This is why the unions and labour movement are weak against the state.

¹⁷³ Bernstein, p.8

¹⁷⁴ Insel, 24.12.2006

¹⁷⁵ Nichols, et al., 2000, p.10

One of the major reasons for the paternalistic nature of unions is the birth and growth of unions in the public sector. In addition, the rise in earnings of the workers was not primarily a result of a strong and organised labour movement or struggle. This has strengthened the paternalistic nature. There is a mandatory relationship between the state and the unions. “Although there is a political difference between Türk-İş and DISK, there is not significant difference in terms of the mandatory structure of the relations with the state.”¹⁷⁶ Unsurprisingly, a similar type of mandatory relationship can be observed in the relationship between the unions and their members.¹⁷⁷ Özüğurlu has categorized the periods of history of the relations between unions and the state as the paternalist dependency in the 1940s and 1950s; corporatist dependency in the 1960s and 1970s; and clientelist dependency after the 1980s.¹⁷⁸ This clientelist dependency is certainly valid in the social policy perspective of Turkey.

6.2.6 Neo-Liberalism

Milton Friedman, the pioneering figure of neo-liberal ideology, asserts that the trade unions cause inefficiency in the market by creating a monopoly of labour. According to Friedman, because of this monopoly, the unions cause the decline in employment rates and inequalities among the labour.¹⁷⁹ It can be claimed that Friedman’s view has had an influence on the neo-liberal or conservative governments after the 1980s. The state has not been able to control the flow of capital and so it is unable to implement the welfare policies and protect workers’ rights. The economic and political control shifted from the hands of the state to the market forces.

¹⁷⁶ Özüğurlu, 2007, p.291

¹⁷⁷ Özüğurlu, 2007, p.288

¹⁷⁸ Özüğurlu, 2007, p.288

¹⁷⁹ Friedman, M., 1988, p.203-204

For the purposes of this study, the main difference between before the 1980s and after them was the significant changes in industry. Import-substitute industrialisation had been transformed into the export-based industrialisation and this forced markets toward being more competitive. As mentioned in chapter 2, in 1974, the Coal Mining Workers' Trade Union was able to subvert the Conservative government in England, but in 1985 Thatcher's Conservative government broke the strike of the same union. This huge change in the power of the unions and in the equilibrium in the political sphere can easily be noticed within only ten years time.

According to the neo-liberal approach, the basis of the unionism can not exist any longer in post-industrial societies unless they become subjected to the contexts of competitiveness and profitability of the firms and economic structure.¹⁸⁰ The major effect of neo-liberal policies is about reducing the state expenditures. Privatisation, decreasing wages, withdrawal of the aim of full-employment are all the negative dimensions of neo-liberalism for the labour movement as well as for unionism.

The important aspect of neo-liberalism is the ideological and discursive power that is able form a hegemony in Gramsci's terms as discussed theoretically in Chapter 2. Hegemony can only be formed with the consent of the dominated. Gramsci claim that capitalism relies on building consent. The standpoints of the workers about privatisation, their main aims, wills, dreams about consumerism are all related to this consent, which shadows the relations of exploitation.

6.2.7. Change in Worker Identity

Individual identity is mostly shaped by social identity. Social identity is the individual's "habitus" where he/she primarily feels a sense of belongingness in order to express her/himself and establish relations in

¹⁸⁰ Özügürü, M., 2007, p.282

society.¹⁸¹ The social identity can be multiple at the same time, but there can be priorities among these identities. The classes, gender, nationalities, political positions, communities or religions are the major examples of social identities.

Work has been identified as being a major aspect of a person's life, determining his/her status, personality, and any other markers of identity. But in recent decades, 'the right for unemployment' or 'unemployment wage' has been mentioned frequently. The structure of employment consists of permanently unemployed people, a minority of skilled workers and the employees of short-term jobs in the service sector. Andre Gorz uses a new concept to identify the society having this sort of dual employment structure and cultural discourse, as 'non-class': "I have used the term 'a non-class of non-workers' to designate the stratum that experiences its work as an externally imposed obligation in which 'you waste your life to earn your living.'"¹⁸² This idea can not be even mentioned easily in the age of welfare states because the work and the occupation was identified an important part of an identity of the person.

In the research by Uçkan and Kağancıoğlu, the workers in the sample primarily identify themselves with their nationalities and secondarily with their religions. Social class is the third identity that was used by workers.¹⁸³ Contrary to the results of the survey, Yıldırım Koç argues that the level of the labour and class-consciousness is much better than 35 years before but the problems are much deeper.¹⁸⁴ Whether it is better or worse, there are serious issues about the working-class identity specifically in Turkey. Lack of strong labour parties can be an example for this. The lack of working class identity as a primary identity can be another example.

¹⁸¹ Bourdiue,

¹⁸² Gorz, 1997: p.7

¹⁸³ Uçkan, B. & Kağancıoğlu, 2009, p.40

¹⁸⁴ Koç, Y., 2007

The proportion of the white-collar workers has increased in last decades. The white-collar workers are a group of people having a strong sense of individualistic perspective rather than the sense of collectivity and belonging to the union.¹⁸⁵ Besides the white-collar workers, it is argued in the literature about unionism that the young workers do not have the tendencies toward the collective struggle or unionism as did their forefathers.

If there is a family member or relative having experiences of unionism, especially before 1980, there would a tendency or sympathy toward unionisation for workers. But with the new management techniques, individualisation rises among the workers. The changing structure of labour is also important for this transition. Flexible work, including contract workers, temporary workers, the legally included workers and not included workers, insured workers, not insured workers, seasonal workers, on-call workers, payroll workers, etc. - all these categories of workers are becoming partially segregated from each other.

The hegemony of widespread consumerist culture is also important for this issue. Richard Sennett's book, *The Corrosion of the Character*, tells the story of a working class family. The father of the family is a worker who believes in unionism, class struggle and solidarity and who possesses all the characteristics of the working-class culture and identity. However, his son is a white-collar employee, wearing expensive suits and watches, who underappreciates the worker identity and views being a worker as a shame.¹⁸⁶ This is an attack on the worker identity and working class culture. "Working class demands have turned into consumerist mass demands."¹⁸⁷ This is namely the major change in worker identity and the working class culture.

The conceptualization of 'contradictory class locations' can be a key for grasping this diversification within the working-class.¹⁸⁸ "According to

¹⁸⁵ Celik cited p.35

¹⁸⁶ Sennett, 2002, p.23

¹⁸⁷ Gorz, 1997; p.40

¹⁸⁸ Wright, 1978

Wright, the bourgeoisie, proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie are main classes and high and middle level executives, self-dependent workers, petty employers, managers, technocrats, journeymen can be called as the group of workers of the ‘contradictory class locations.’”¹⁸⁹ But not only these contradictory class locations are the situations within the workers problematic. Gorz has a different approach, for he claims that the traditional working class is dead:

The only certainty, as far as they are concerned, is that they do not feel they belong to the working class, or to any other class. They do not recognize themselves in the term ‘worker’ or in its symmetrical opposite, ‘unemployed’. Whether they work in a bank, the civil service, a cleaning agency or a factory, neo-proletarians are basically non-workers temporarily doing something that means nothing to them.¹⁹⁰

There are the sub-divisions within the working-class in Turkey and the specific characteristic of the state-society relations damages the working class sensation. The individualistic nature of the relations and the network relations also hinders the working class sense of belonging.

In the intellectual environment, there are paradigm shifts from the working class or labouring class to people, poverty and exclusion. Insel concludes that this shift is not a result of the extinction of the social classes; instead, it is the result of political and ideological transformation.¹⁹¹

There is another study, “The New Developments in the Working Life and the Changing Role of Unions in Turkey,” which analyse the workers opinions about the basic inequalities in society.¹⁹² Most of the workers in that study regard the major reason for inequality is that of having or not having the support of people in high positions with social power. The distinction of ‘being rich or poor’ comes second among the answers.

¹⁸⁹ Celik cited: Wright, 1999, p.989

¹⁹⁰ Gorz, 1997; pp.70-71

¹⁹¹ Insel, 2008, pp. 21-28

¹⁹² Insel and others, p.34

6.2.8. The Change in Political Tendencies of the Workers

Traditionally, leftist parties have been preferred and supported by the workers, especially in the West. Yet, it is argued that there have been changes in these preferences. It is debated that the profile of the worker has changed in that there is “corrosion of the character” of the workers and there is stratification within the working class. The background of these changes is discussed in the relevant parts in this study. Besides these changes, the reaction towards globalisation and international competition in attracting capitalist investments triggers the nationalist tendencies among workers.

The main reason for the strengthening of nationalism among workers is also a defensive mechanism of the workers that is limited to the national borders against internationalised capital. With this defensive attitude, the working class attempts to control and use the power of the nation-state to struggle with the capital. Internationalisation of capital also causes the competition between different nations’ workers and this competition accelerates the nationalist reactions. In French presidential elections of 2002, Le Pen (leader of a party having racist tendencies) had immense support from the working class members. In Sweden, in September of 2006, 30% of the workers voted for the conservatives and other right parties.¹⁹³

In Turkey, similarly, it is difficult to advocate that most of the workers support political left. On the contrary, research conducted by Korkut Boratav presents the weakness of the support for the political left among workers, except for the category of social policies. In the research, the workers seemed to give priority to cultural and traditional references such as religion and the political choices are mainly determined by these factors.¹⁹⁴

The focus of academic studies or the attention of popular or intellectual groups upon the working class or labour has significantly decreased in last few decades “because the organized working-class seems

¹⁹³ Celik, p.39

¹⁹⁴ Celik cited: Boratav, 2004

less and less likely to perform the liberating role assigned to it in both revolutionary and reformist discourses about labor, the study of working-class has lost some of its urgency.”¹⁹⁵ As we can witness, the concentration of the intellectuals, scholars, researchers, and politicians mostly has been centered upon the issues related to gender and ethnicity. According to Castells, ‘the Information Age has undermined the possibility of the working class for being emancipatory subjects and non-class based identity movements are the only potential subjects of the Information Age.’¹⁹⁶

Table 6.14 shows only 19% of workers participate in any political party’s activities. Besides the debates about the existence of political unionism, the social base of these debates is also significant. Workers demand that their unions not to be involved in politics (see Table 6.11), which reflects the workers ideas for the relations between unions and politics; the workers themselves do not participate in political life. Politics is a major tool for social groups gaining rights for themselves and the motor of the social change, so how can Turkish society change in favour of the working class or how can the working class in Turkey gain its rights without participating in politics?

Table 6.14

| Do you participate in any political party's activities? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|---|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| No | N | 41 | 40 | 81 |
| | Column % | 82,0 | 80,0 | 81,0 |
| Yes | N | 9 | 10 | 19 |
| | Column % | 18,0 | 20,0 | 19,0 |
| Total | N | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = ,065; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

¹⁹⁵ Sewell, W., 1993, p.11

¹⁹⁶ Silver cites: Castells, M., 1997, p.360

It can be said that at least most of the workers (89.8%) vote in the elections as Table 6.15. reveals. Yet, besides voting, changing and shaping powerful political parties is also crucial. This can happen only by participating in politics directly.

Table 6.15

| Do you vote for every general elections? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| No | N | 4 | 6 | 10 |
| | Column % | 8,2 | 12,2 | 10,2 |
| Yes | N | 45 | 43 | 88 |
| | Column % | 91,8 | 87,8 | 89,8 |
| Total | N | 49 | 49 | 98 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = ,4455; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

6.3. Comparison of Different Statuses of Workers and the Influence of Union Membership upon Trade Union Consciousness and Worker Identity

6.3.1. Stratification and Disintegration within the Working Class

Subcategorisations have developed within the working-class according to their sector or type of work, such as contract work – public work, public sector – private sector, regular work - precarious work, formal work - informal work, union member – non-union member, etc.

In the case of Turkey, the stratification among workers becomes more complicated. As mentioned previously in this study in theoretical background, Contract workers, temporary workers, the legally included workers and not included workers, insured workers, non-insured workers, seasonal workers, on-call workers, etc. All these categories of workers are put in some kind of competition with each other and this makes the employers' position stronger. The concept of "contradictory class locations" posited by Erik Olin Wright is significant in order to understand these categories. The diversification within the working class has a tendency to harm the class solidarity and class identity. As discussed in the theoretical background section, the trade unions are crucial in order to support workers instead of create competition among them.

In some factories or workplaces, it can be observed that the salaried workers do not eat together with the subcontractors during meal breaks at work and they do not sit side by side with the subcontractors on service buses.¹⁹⁷ Similarly, in the research conducted at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory, the workers of the subcontracting firm can not have meals while the workers of the state enterprise are eating their meals. Besides violating working-class solidarity, these examples go against basic human values and equality. These actions are crucial in reflecting the problem of stratification and hierarchy in the working class. This type of behavior damages the sense of collective struggle and solidarity.

The changes in the labour processes and workplaces cause important disadvantages for the working classes. In Fordist production or organisation of work, there was a vertical integration at the labour process and this makes workers stronger against the employers in bargaining because in this 'vertical integration, the continuity of the work is a necessity and so the workers have to be persuaded to work continuously. But in 'flexible production,' the work is run along the alternative ways or options and the strength for bargaining of the workers decreased.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ Celik, p.54

¹⁹⁸ Insel et al., 2004, p.7

6.3.2. Several Dimensions of the Differentiation and Discrimination within the Working Class

Gender, age, marital status, position at work, wage, sector, size of the sector, length of the time since getting employed, skills and cultural capital of the workers are all factors that affect the workers' view of unionisation and unions.¹⁹⁹ There are significant differences among different categories or status of workers. The union member workers seem the most advantageous category with their social insurance, income, working conditions and collectivity and solidarity. Also there are workers of sub-contacting firms, workers of the private sector and lastly the workers working in informal sector.

In the research of "The New Developments in the Working Life and the Changing Role of Unions in Turkey," there can be seen a significant differentiation between the three categories of workers. The unionized workers receive 904 TL per month and work 49 hours, the workers with insurance but without right of unionization earn 450 TL per month and work 55 hours and lastly, the workers without job security and without right to unionize earn 407 TL per month and work 59 hours.²⁰⁰ There is also a differentiation for the payments of the wages on time: 88% of the union-member workers, 60% of the non-union workers with insurance and 57% of the workers with no union affiliation and no insurance report that they receive their wages on time.²⁰¹ The union-member workers seem more satisfied and the only reason is being organised.

¹⁹⁹ Kalaycıođlu, Rittersberger-Tılıç, Çelik, 2008, p.75

²⁰⁰ Insel, and others, 2004, p.28

²⁰¹ Insel, and others, 2004, p.29

Table 6.16

Is there a discrimination between the union member workers and the sub-contracting workers? (asked only to subcontractors)

| | f | % | Valid % |
|--|-----|-------|---------|
| There is a discrimination in terms of the wages. | 20 | 20,0 | 41,7 |
| There is a discrimination in terms of both wages and working | 28 | 28,0 | 58,3 |
| Total | 48 | 48,0 | 100,0 |
| Missing System | 52 | 52,0 | |
| Total | 100 | 100,0 | |

This present study reveals important results about the inequalities among workers of the state enterprise and the workers of sub-contracting firm. Table 6.16 has a very significant result: All of the sub-contracting workers think that there is discrimination between the union member workers and themselves: 58.3% of the subcontractors think that there is discrimination in terms of the wages and working conditions, while 41.7% of the subcontractors think that there is discrimination in terms of only the wages. It should be noted that this question was only asked to the subcontractors during the field research.

Table 6.17

| How much do you earn from this job? | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|--------|
| | | Worker Status | | Total |
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| 0-800 | Count | 0 | 29 | 29 |
| | % within Worker Status | 0% | 59.2% | 29.3% |
| 801-1200 | Count | 2 | 20 | 22 |
| | % within Worker Status | 4.0% | 40.8% | 22.2% |
| 1201-1800 | Count | 30 | 0 | 30 |
| | % within Worker Status | 60.0% | 0% | 30.3% |
| 1801-2300 | Count | 16 | 0 | 16 |
| | % within Worker Status | 32.0% | 0% | 16.2% |
| 2300 + | Count | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | % within Worker Status | 4.0% | 0% | 2.0% |
| Total | Count | 50 | 49 | 99 |
| | % within Worker Status | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

In this same survey, it is found that the difference of wages among two groups of workers is very remarkable because similar group of workers have similar skills, similar educational levels and similar tasks but they receive different wages. As shown in Table 6.17, 59.2% of the subcontractors earn below 800TL and rest (40.8%) of the subcontractors' monthly wages is

between 800TL and 1200TL. This means that all the subcontractors earn below 1200 TL per month while only two union member workers' wages are below 1200 TL. Almost all the workers of the public firm earn more than 1200 TL. Remarkably, there are some union member workers who earn three times the salary of some subcontractors. This is a key example that demonstrates the existence of inequality, discrimination and disintegration within the working class. This picture of inequality also is representative of the concept of "contradictory class locations," put forth by Erik Olin Wright, which harms working class solidarity and worker identity.

6.3.3. The Differentiation between Union-Member Workers and Non-Union-Member Workers in TÜVASAŞ in the Labour Process

During the field study at the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory, besides the surveys conducted, there were opportunities to making observations in the factory. The research was implemented in different sections of the factory, so this gave a general idea about the labour process in the factory. It was noticed that there are serious differences not only in wages but also in the labour process between two groups of workers.

First, there is inequality between two worker groups in terms of the workload. The subcontractors appear to work harder and more than the union-member workers. Furthermore, the TÜVASAŞ workers had time for sitting, chatting about football matches, reading newspapers and drinking tea while the subcontractors were working, getting tired, sweating, etc. During the conversations with the subcontractors, this situation discussed with them and they complained much about this inequality in the labour process. Although the subcontractors earn one-half or one-third of a union member's salary, they work in much worse conditions.

Second, during both the observations and the findings of the survey presented, there is discrimination toward subcontractors referring to attitudes, behaviours or acts of the employees or employers in the factory. In

observations made in the factory, the union member public workers can order the subcontractors or warn them for several reasons. The subcontractors claimed some incidents of shouting and threats by the union member workers of the factory. How can there be a “union” of workers under these conditions?

The findings of the research show in Table 6.18 almost 80% of the subcontractors think that there is discrimination between union member workers and subcontractors in terms of attitudes, behaviours or acts towards workers. “The workers of all countries; unite!” This was the famous phrase of made by Marx. Yet, how can the workers of all countries unite when the workers in the same factory fail to unite due to workers being subjected to inequalities and discrimination by other workers?

Table 6.18

Is there any discrimination between union member workers and sub-contracting workers in terms of attitudes, behaviours or acts towards workers? (asked only to subcontractors)

| | f | % | Valid % |
|-----------------|-----|-------|---------|
| Yes there is | 38 | 38,0 | 79,2 |
| No there is not | 10 | 10,0 | 20,8 |
| Total | 48 | 48,0 | 100,0 |
| Missing System | 52 | 52,0 | |
| Total | 100 | 100,0 | |

The other aspect of this issue is about the thoughts of the workers of TÜVASAŞ about the subcontractors. Since they are an ‘advantaged’ group in the workplace, they did not complain much in conversations with the researcher. But the findings about their approach toward the subcontractors in

the survey are important. As seen in Table 6.19., there are two major tendencies among the union members that are both of interest. The first tendency is the perception of subcontractors as being a threat to the workers of the main workplace. This is important for presenting the issue of disintegration and competition among workers. Also, the fault of system is ascribed to the subcontractors, as they are deemed responsible for the system.

The second tendency is to ‘be sorry’ for the subcontractors and understand their difficult situation. This tendency is interesting because there was not such a choice in the questionnaire; this was mentioned for the open-ended choice. This shows some of the workers’ conscience and their sense of solidarity for the subcontractors.

Table 6.19

What is your approach towards the subcontractors? (asked only to union-members)

| | f | % | Valid % |
|---|-----|-------|---------|
| Their existence in factory is a threat for us, so I am negative about them | 58 | 58,0 | 58,0 |
| I am negative about them because they harm the solidarity of workers | 13 | 13,0 | 13,0 |
| Their existence makes our job easier so I support their existence in factory | 10 | 10,0 | 10,0 |
| Their existence in factory increases our prestige at work so I support their existence in factory | 5 | 5,0 | 5,0 |
| I am only sorry for their conditions | 1 | 1,0 | 1,0 |
| Total | 13 | 13,0 | 13,0 |
| | 100 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

6.3.4. The Differentiation between Union Member Workers and Non-Union Member Workers in TÜVASAŞ in Terms of the Formation of Worker Identity, Standpoints in Labour Movements and Trade Union Consciousness

The labour activism of the TEKEL workers immediately changed public opinion of unionized workers from the negative to the very positive as discussed in related parts in details. This activism was one of the major motivations behind this study. Other workers' opinions about the TEKEL workers' activism is quite an important segment of this study. It is important because this can give an idea about the working class solidarity and the worker identity among these workers.

According to the results of the survey, shown in Table 6.20., about half of the workers did not support the TEKEL workers for their activism. This can be interpreted as a disappointment after such a whirlwind of debate about the 'waking of working class consciousnesses.' The most remarkable result is the differentiation between the two worker groups in terms of the support for the TEKEL workers: 73.3 of the union member workers did support the activism, which is a high level of support. However, the subcontractors' level of support remained at 25%. This shows the influence of union membership in fostering consciousness for labour activism and trade unionism. Trade-union consciousness is the first step for class-consciousness and class identity formation. The sense of collectivity and solidarity seem to prompt the unionised workers to support the TEKEL workers.

Table 6.20

| What do you think about the workers of Tekel? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| They are not right so I do no support | N | 6 | 20 | 26 |
| | Column % | 13,3 | 41,7 | 28,0 |
| They are right, however I do not support their activism. | N | 6 | 16 | 22 |
| | Column % | 13,3 | 33,3 | 23,7 |
| They are right for their activism and I support them. | N | 33 | 12 | 45 |
| | Column % | 73,3 | 25,0 | 48,4 |
| Total | N | 45 | 48 | 93 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 21,8098; df = 2; p < 0.01 (there is a significant correlation between variables)

There are some ways to understand the consolidation of class identity among workers. For instance, Richard Sennett focuses on the cultural background and daily practices of the person in order to understand the role of the working class identity in the worker's life.²⁰² From this perspective, we can examine the variable of whether or not the worker would like to be a worker if he/she had the chance to begin a new life. The working class culture and identity is characterised by carrying the worker identity as a primary identity and being happy as a worker.²⁰³

The findings in Table 6.21 reveal that most of the workers would not like to be a worker if they have a chance of starting a new life. Furthermore, there is not much differentiation amongst the two worker groups. Seemingly, the influence of union is limited for establishing the worker identity or being a worker lost its prestige in last few decades because of circumstances that the union has yet to remedy.

²⁰² Sennett, 2002, p.34

²⁰³ Sennett, p.35

Table 6.21

| If you have a chance of starting a new life, which job would you like to have? | | Worker Status | | Total |
|--|----------|---------------|------------------------|-------|
| | | Union Member | Sub Contracting Worker | |
| Worker | N | 13 | 6 | 19 |
| | Column % | 28,9 | 13,0 | 20,9 |
| Others | N | 32 | 40 | 72 |
| | Column % | 71,1 | 87,0 | 79,1 |
| Total | N | 45 | 46 | 91 |
| | Column % | 100,0 | 100,0 | 100,0 |

Khi-square = 3,4573; df = 1; p > 0.05 (there is not a significant correlation between variables)

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

In the beginning, the aim of the study was to discuss the assumption that the trade union membership has an important influence on the formation of worker identity and the consciousness for trade unionism and working class. In the literature of sociology and social policy, the union membership was argued to be the first step for the class consciousness, collective identity and the sense of solidarity. In this research, mainly this assumption was tested with combining the theoretical discussions and the field study.

In the field study implemented in the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory, the formation of the trade union consciousness and worker identity, and their interdependence were investigated. The basis of the field study is exploring the importance of the union membership among workers in the process of the formation the consciousness of unionism and worker identity. This is planned to be reached by the comparison of two worker groups: Union-member workers and sub-contractors. The differentiation in the worker status in the factory gave an importance and advantage for this investigation by giving the chance of comparison.

Firstly, the most important aspect of the findings of the research is that the union membership is not influential for the formation of worker identity and trade union consciousness as it was assumed in the beginning of this study and as assumed in the literature of the discussions about working class and unionism. The workers, whether they are workers of the state enterprise (union-members) or the subcontractors, have mostly similar attitudes, thoughts, standpoints which determine their level of the formation of the worker identity and union consciousness. The thoughts about the practices of unionism, labour activism, the political standpoints, their preferences for identifying themselves,

demands of the strategy of unionism (wage unionism – political unionism) are similar between two groups of workers. This similarity shows the insignificant role of unions in the formation of union and working class consciousness.

Secondly, although there are a few examples of the similarities among two worker groups pointed by the research, these are not enough to conclude the influence of the trade unions' importance for forming the consciousness and identity. These examples for the similarities are the case of privatisations and the activism of TEKEL workers. The union members show more consciousness about these in terms of the awareness for social rights and working class struggle than the subcontractor, however, these differentiations in consciousness and working class identity is very much limited with these two examples.

Thirdly, the issues of differentiation, inequalities and the disintegration within the working class is very important for the situation of working class and trade unionism. The field study shows there are important inequalities and even discrimination toward subcontractors. The inequalities in the labour process, income levels, meals, and service buses are significant threats for class as a collective identity and made unionism serve as a collective attitude and struggle. Remarkably, in the labour process, the subcontractors work more and harder than the union members, moreover, the union members are above in the hierarchy that they can give instructions to the subcontractors. This is a result of the power of the union to fire the subcontractors by using the relations with the subcontracting firm.

Fourthly, the structural factors have an influence on the formation of worker identity and trade union consciousness. The issue of unemployment is weakening the sense of security and confidence of the workers especially the non-union members and prevent them from becoming union members for saving their jobs. The organisation of work, labour process and specifically the subcontracting have important influence. The subcontracting creates important problems for the formation of worker identity by creating an inequality in significant levels. The precarious quality of the work without no future security is a big obstacle for gaining a class identity, which can be obtained in time. The

economic policies implemented, privatisation is also an important problem because privatisation can accelerate worries for the future and the process for achieving class identity.

Fifthly, the practices and strategies of the trade unionism in Turkey are important for the formation of trade union consciousness and worker identity. The personal experiences about unionism, the organisation at work, the approach of the workplace representative of union, the functions of union (wage increase, better meal, etc.) can determine this consciousness. The perception of trade unions seems affected by the union hierarchy and the leadership. Workers are not satisfied with the current situation of unionism and there are problems about trust in the hierarchy in unions.

Sixthly, the formation of worker identity is determinant for the approach toward trade union consciousness. The workers seemingly define themselves with their religions and nationalities first. The priority of religion is already argued to be the most of the society, not only for workers. The importance of social class as an identity is not the primary preference for workers. This is very relevant to the formation of social classes, class identities and class consciousness in Turkey. The late industrialisation of Turkey can be one the first reasons for this situation. This late industrialisation coincided with the change in the production system and this had an important influence on the weakness of worker identity. Beside the late industrialisation and the changes in labour process, the ideological and political hegemony of neo-liberalism is important for providing the consent of workers about the unequal nature of the society and makes them ignoring the class inequalities and class struggle.

Seventhly, the demands of the workers and the unions' performance, have been debated. In the literature, the trade unions are criticised for focusing on only the wages and for not being involved in political unionism. The field study shows the workers in the TÜVASAŞ railcar factory do not demand their union to perform political unionism. Their priority is the rise in wages and in social rights. This also shows the short-term pragmatic features of the workers staying away from long-term working class politics. Furthermore, the workers

hold negative connotations when the word 'political' takes place in the conversation.

To conclude with, the unionism has important issues to be solved. The workers are needed to be gained consciousness of trade unionism firstly. And the trade unionism should cover the non-union member workers such as subcontractors. Because the rate of the union-members and the power of representation of workers are in a declining trend. The unions should be the representative of all workers not only the union members. The unions should not be concerned only with the member- workers and practice wage unionism, they should represent all the workers in the workplace and in the sector. The main aim should be the struggling for gaining the right of extension. By this the unions can be the representative of all the workers in the sector in the process of collective bargaining and become more powerful.

Last but not the least, the right of unionization for all workers should be provided. The unions should struggle for gaining this right. The unions should struggle against the neo-liberal policies of the sub-contracting, privatization and against the unemployment that is structural issue of neoliberal economics. This can be reached by the implementation of political unionism. The trade unions are not one of the most important institutions in the society, the social and political influence should be increased.

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APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

İŞÇİ KİMLİĞİ VE SENDİKAL BİLİNÇ SORU KÂĞIDI

A. KİMLİK ÖZELİKLERİ

1) Cinsiyet?

01 Kadın 02 Erkek

2) Yaş?

.....

3) Medeni durum?

01 Bekâr 02 Evli 03 Eşi ölmüş 04 Boşanmış

4) Eğitim durumu?

01 İlkokul
02 Ortaokul
03 Lise / Meslek Lisesi
04 Meslek Yüksek Okulu
05 Üniversite

5) Eğitim düzeyinizden memnun musunuz?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

6) Hayır, ise nedeni nedir?

01 Yüксеle miyorum
02 Farklı işe gi remiyorum

- 03 Ücretim düşük kalıyor
04 Hor görülüyorum
05 Kendi kültür seviyemi beğenmiyorum
06 Diğer (belirtiniz)

B. ÇALIŞMA DURUMU

- 7) **Bütün hayatınız boyunca, ne kadar süredir çalışmaktasınız?**
- 8) **Bu işyerinde ne kadar süredir çalışmaktasınız?**
- 9) **Şu anda esas işinizin yanı sıra ekstra gelir elde etmek için herhangi bir iş yapıyor musunuz?**
01 Evet 02 Hayır
- 10) **Hiç 6 aydan uzun süre işsizlik yaşadınız mı?**
01 Evet 02 Hayır
- 11) **İmkanınız olsa, hayata yeniden başlarsanız hangi işi yapmak isterdiniz?**
Lütfen açık olarak yapmak istediğiniz işi yazın:
.....
.....
- 12) **Çalışma koşullarınız ne derecede sağlıklı?**
01 Çok sağlıklı
02 Ufak tefek sorunlar olsa da şikayetçi değilim
03 Ciddi sağlık sorunları var
04 Fikrim yok

13)Çalışma koşullarınız ne derecede güvenli?

- 01** Çok Güvenli
- 02** Ufak tefek sorunlar olsa da şikayetçi değilim
- 03** Ciddi güvenlik sorunları var
- 04** Fikrim yok

14)İşinizi bulmada en çok hangisinin etkisi oldu?

- 01** Türkiye İş Kurumu
- 02** Hemşerilik, akrabalık, arkadaşlık
- 03** Mezhepsel ve etnik yakınlık, aşiret.
- 04** Kendim buldum
- 05** Benzer siyasi görüşlere sahip olmak
- 06** Sendikanın tavsiyesi

C. EŞ ve ÇOCUKLAR

15)Eşiniz gelir getiren herhangi bir işte çalışıyor mu?

- 01** Evet
- 02** Hayır

16)Eşinizin eğitim durumu nedir?

- 01** İlkokul
- 02** Ortaokul
- 03** Lise
- 04** Üniversite
- 05** Meslek Yüksek Okulu

17)Evet ise, tam olarak işini yazar mısınız?

.....

18)Çocuđunuz var mı?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

19)Eđer varsa, kaç çocuđunuz var?

.....

20)Çocuklarımız çalışıyor mu?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

D. MÜLKİYET DURUMU

21)Oturduđunuz ev size ya da eşinize mi ait?

01 Bize ait. 02 Bize ait deđil 03 Lojman 04 Diđer..... (Örn: ođlum...)

22)Oturduđunuz ev dıřında size ait başka eviniz var mı?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

23)Sizin veya eşinizin bir arabası ya da motorlu taşıtı var mı? (Birden fazla işaretlenebilir)

01 Evet, bana ait 02 Evet, eşime ait 03 Hayır yok 04 Diđer....(Örn: Ođlum...)

24)Kendi ailenizden ve/veya eşinizin ailesinden miras yolu ile edindiđiniz mülkleriniz var mı?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

E. GELİR

25)Şu an çalıştığınız işten ne kadar para kazanıyorsunuz? (aylık, TL)

.....

26)Eşiniz çalışıyorsa, eşinizin geliri nedir?

.....

27)Aşağıda belirtilen yollardan gelir elde ediyor musunuz? (birden fazla

seçenek işaretlenebilir)

01 Kira

02 Faiz

03 Nafaka ödemesi

04 Hisse senedi/ Borsa

05 Şans oyunları

06 Akraba (yurt dışı-içi)

07 Diğer (belirtiniz).....

28)Ücretiniz zamanında ödeniyor mu?

01 Her zaman zamanında ödeniyor

02 Ara sıra gecikmeler oluyor

03 Gecikmeler çok sık oluyor

G. SİYASİ KATILIM

29) İsim vermeniz şart değil, şu an herhangi bir siyasi parti için faaliyette bulunuyor musunuz?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

30) Her seçimde oy verir misiniz?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

31) Şu an herhangi bir STK (oda, dernek, vakıf, kooperatif, hemşeri derneği vb) üyesi ya da gönüllüsü müsünüz?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

J. SOSYAL KATILIM

32) Hangi sıklıkla gazete okursunuz?

01 Her gün

02 Haftada 5-6 gün

03 Haftada 3-4 gün

04 Haftada 1-2 gün

05 Haftada 1 günden az (2 haftada bir, ayda bir, vb)

06 Ayda bir bile değil

33)Evinize düzenli olarak günlük gazete girer mi?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

34)Düzenli kitap okur musunuz?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

35)Şu anda evinizde yaklaşık ne kadar kitap var? (ders kitapları dışında)

00 Hiç 01 10 dan az 02 10-50 arası 03 50-200 04 200 ve üzeri

36)Son iki yıl içerisinde otel, pansiyon, tatil köyü veya kendinize ait bir yazlıkta kalmak üzere tatil yaptınız mı?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

K. TUTUM

37)Size göre Türkiye’de çözülmesi gereken en önemli iki sorun nedir? (İki seçenek işaretleyiniz)

- 01 Yolsuzluklar**
- 02 Hayat pahalılığı**
- 03 Eğitim**
- 04 Eşitsiz gelir dağılımı**
- 05 İşsizlik**
- 06 Sağlık/Sosyal Güvenlik**
- 07 Ahlaki yozlaşma**
- 08 Terör**
- 09 Demokrasi/Özgürlükler**

38)Türkiye’de insanlar arasında eşitsizlik olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?

01 Evet 02 Hayır

39)Eşitsizlik olduğunu düşünüyorsanız, sizce bu eşitsizlikleri en çok hangi ikisi arasındadır?

- 01 Şehirli-Köylü
- 02 Okumuş-Okumamış
- 03 Zengin-Fakir
- 04 Arkası Sağlam Olan –Olmayan
- 05 Fikrim Yok

40)Size göre insanlar neden çalışır?

- 01 Kendimin veya ailemin geçimini sağlamak için
- 02 Çevrenin veya ailenin zoruyla
- 03 Toplumda bir yer edinmek için
- 04 Daha iyi yaşamak için
- 05 Boş durmamak için
- 06 Diğer (belirtiniz)

41)İyi bir işin en önemli özelliği ne olmalı (sadece 2 seçenek seçilecek)

- 01 Çalışma saatleri
- 02 Ücreti
- 03 Sosyal güvencesi
- 04 İşin eğitime uygunluğu
- 05 Yükselme olanağı sağlaması
- 06 Mutlu olabileceğim bir iş olması
- 07 İş yükü
- 08 Ahlaki sınırlar çerçevesinde bir iş olması
- 09 Sağlayacağı sosyal imkânlar
- 10 İşyeri eğitimi olanağına sahip olmak için.

42)Aileniz bir ekonomik sıkıntı yaşadığında ilk olarak kimden yardım talep

edersiniz?

- 01 Akrabalardan biri yardımcı olur
- 02 Arkadaşlarım yardımcı olur
- 03 Bankaya başvururum
- 04 Yardım kuruluşlarına başvururum
- 05 Diğer (Belirtiniz).....

43)İşsiz kalmak konusunda ne derece endişelisiniz?

- 01 Çok endişeliyim. 02 Biraz endişeliyim. 03 Hiç endişe duymuyorum

44)İşinizden ne kadar memnunsunuz?

- 01 Çok memnunum
- 02 İşimden memnunum
- 03 İşimden memnun değilim ama idare ediyorum
- 04 İşimden hiç memnun değilim

45)Kendinizle karşılaştırdığınızda çocuklarınızın geleceğinin nasıl olacağını düşünüyorsunuz?

- 01 Daha iyi olacak 02 Daha kötü olacak 03 Fark yok/ aynı olacak

46)Ekonomik durumunuz daha iyi olsaydı ne/ neler yapmak isterdiniz?

- 01 Araba/ev alır
- 02 Okur
- 03 Ticaret yapar
- 04 Bağış yapar
- 05 Tatil yapardım
- 06 Yatırım yapar
- 07 Yoksullara dağıtır
- 08 Siyasete katılır
- 09 Diğer (belirtiniz)

47)Kendinizi milliyet, din, sosyal sınıf, mezhep, doğum yeri, cinsiyet, meslek,

siyasi tercih gibi kimliklerinizden ilk olarak hangisiyle tanımlarsınız?

01 Milliyet

02 Din

03 Sosyal Sınıf

04 Mezhep

05 Doğum Yeri

06 Cinsiyet

07 Meslek

08 Siyasi tercih

09 Diğer

L. SENDİKA

48)Sendikaya üye misiniz?

01 Evet **02** Hayır

49)Evet, ise sendikaya üye olmanızın sebebi nedir?

.....
.....
.....

50)Hayır, ise üye olmama nedeniniz nedir?

.....
.....
.....

51)Sendikalar önemli kurumlar mıdır?

01 Evet **02** Hayır

52)Sendikalar eski önemlerini hala koruyorlar mı?

01 Evet **02** Hayır **03** Bilgim yok

53)Size göre sendikaların önem kaybetmesinin en önemli nedeni nedir?

- 01** Politik ortamdaki değişme
- 02** Özel sektörün sendika karşıtı tavrı
- 03** Kayıtdışının artması ve taşeronlaşma
- 04** İşçilerin daha fazla ücret için sigortasız çalışmayı kabul etmeleri
- 05** Sendikaların çalışanların beklentilerini yerine getirmemeleri
- 06** Sendikacıların işçilerden kopuk yaşam tarzı

54)Sendika yayınlarını takip ediyor musunuz?

01 Evet **02** Hayır

55)Sendikaların uzun vadedeki amacı ne olmalıdır?

- 01** Sendikaların işyeri yönetimine daha fazla katılmasını sağlamak
- 02** İşçilere daha iyi ücret ve çalışma şartları sağlamak
- 03** Sadece işçilerin değil, toplumun genel refahını yükseltmeye çalışmak.
- 04** Türk milli ve dini değerlerini korumak
- 05** İşçilerin siyasi bilinç kazanmasını sağlamak

56)Bir sendikanın asli görevleri ne olmalıdır?

- 01** Çalışanların daha iyi ücret elde edebilmesini sağlamak
- 02** Belirli bir ideolojiyi veya siyasi görüşü temsil etmek
- 03** Çalışanların sosyal haklarını iyileştirmek
- 04** Diğer.....

57)Tekel işçilerinin eylemleri hakkında ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- 01 Eylemlerinde haklılar, sonuna kadar destekliyorum
- 02 Haklı olmalarına rağmen eylem yapmalarına olumlu bakmıyorum
- 03 Haksızlar, desteklemiyorum

58)4 – C Kadrosunun ne olduğunu biliyor musunuz?

- 01 Evet
- 02 Hayır

59)Özelleştirmelere nasıl bakıyorsunuz?

- 01 Devletin zararını azalttığı için destekliyorum
- 02 Özel sektör daha başarılı yöneteceği için destekliyorum
- 03 İşçi haklarına zarar verdiği için desteklemiyorum
- 04 Yabancıların veya yandaşların eline geçtiği için desteklemiyorum
- 05 Benim için farkedilen bir şey yok.
- 06 Fikrim yok

60)Ailenizde ya da yakın çevrenizde geçmişte sendika içinde yer almış kimse

var mı?

- 01 Evet
- 02 Hayır

61)12 Eylül Darbesi hakkındaki fikriniz nedir?

- 01 Doğru buluyorum çünkü demokrasiye inanmıyorum.
- 02 Anarşiyi bitirdiği için doğru buluyorum.
- 03 Hem doğru yanları hem de yanlış yanları var
- 04 Tüm darbelere karşıyım.

62)Sendikaların siyasi faaliyetleri konusunda ne düşünüyorsunuz?

- 01 Siyasi parti kurarak siyasetle doğrudan ilgilenmelidir.
- 02 Siyasetle uğraşmayıp, sadece işçi hak ve çıkarları ile ilgilenmelidir.

03 Toplumdaki tüm grupların haklarını korumak için siyasetle ilgilenmelidir.

04 İşçi hak ve çıkarları için gerekirse siyasetle ilgilenmelidir

63) Sendikalara ne kadar güveniyorsunuz?

01 Çok güveniyorum

02 Güveniyorum

03 Güvenmiyorum

04 Hiç Güvenmiyorum

05 İlgilenmiyorum

64) İşçiler olarak Sendikayı ne ölçüde kendinize yakın görüyorsunuz?

01 Yakın görüyorum

02 Kendime ne yakın ne uzak görüyorum

03 Yakın görmüyorum

65) İşçiler işyeri yönetimine katılmalı mıdır?

01 Evet **02** Hayır

66) Evetse, işçiler yönetime nasıl katılmalıdır?

01 İşçileri sendika temsil etmelidir

02 İşçiler yönetime sendika aracılığı ile değil, doğrudan katılmalıdır

67) Sendikalar işçilerin hak ve çıkarlarını koruyup geliştirebiliyor mu?

01 Evet **02** Hayır **03** Kararsızım

68) Cevabınız hayırsa, Sendikaların işçilerin hak ve çıkarlarını koruyamama nedeni sizce nedir?

01 Anti-Demokratik yasalar

02 Sendikacıların Yetersizliği

03 İşçilerin sendikalara güvenmemesi

- 04 Yetersiz sendikal demokrasi
- 05 İşveren Baskısı
- 06 Sendikalararası diyalogsuzluk
- 07 Sendikaların sınırlı sayıda işçiyle ilgilenmesi
- 08 Diğer...

M. SENDİKAYA BAĞLILIK ÖLÇEĞİ (Sadece sendika üyesi işçilere sorulacaktır)

69)Kaç yıldır sendikalısınız?

- 01 1-5 yıldır 02 6-10 yıldır 03 11-15 yıldır 04 16-20 yıldır 06 20 yıldan çok

70)Üyeler, herhangi bir davranışta bulunurken sendikanın adını, imajını göz

önünde bulundurmaldırlar.

- 01 Katılıyorum 02 Emin değilim 03 Katılmıyorum

71)Üyesi bulunduğum sendikaya çok bağlılık duyuyorum.

- 01 Katılıyorum 02 Emin değilim 03 Katılmıyorum

72)İşimin aynı özellikte olması ve daha iyi ücret koşuluyla sendikasız bir işyerinde de çalışabilirim.

- 01 Katılıyorum 02 Emin değilim 03 Katılmıyorum

73)Sendikaya üye olmak çok şey kazandırabilir.

- 01 Katılıyorum 02 Emin değilim 03 Katılmıyorum

74)Üyesi olduğunuz sendikanın bağlı bulunduğu konfederasyonun adını biliyor musunuz?

01 Evet **02** Hayır

75)Üyesi olduğunuz sendikanın başkanının adını biliyor musunuz?

01 Evet **02** Hayır

76)İşyerinizde taşeron firmaların yer almasına nasıl bakıyorsunuz?

01 İşyerinin çıkarına uygun olduğu için destekliyorum

02 İşçi hak ve çıkarlarına zarar vereceği için desteklemiyorum

03 Diğer....

77)İşyerinizde çalışan taşeron işçilerine nasıl bakıyorsunuz?

01 Onların varlığı bizim için bir tehdit oluşturuyor, onun için olumsuz bakıyorum.

02 İşçi dayanışmasına zarar verdikleri için olumsuz bakıyorum.

03 Onların varlığı bizim işimizi kolaylaştırıyor, onun için destekliyorum.

04 Onların varlığı işyerindeki prestijimizi arttırıyor, onun için destekliyorum.

05 Diğer....

N. İŞYERİ İLİŞKİLERİ (Sadece taşeron işçilerine ve özelleştirilmiş bölümde çalışan işçilere sorulacaktır)

78) İşyerinde sendikalı fabrika işçileriyle taşeron/ özelleştirilmiş bölüm işçileri

arasında bir ayırım yapılıyor mu?

- 01** Ücret konusunda ayırım var
02 Çalışma koşulları bakımından ayırım var
03 Hem ücret hem çalışma koşulları bakımından ayırım var.
04 Hiçbir ayırım yok.

79) İşçilere yapılan muamele, davranış ve tavırlar bakımından sendikalı işçiler ile taşeron işçileri arasında bir ayırım var mı?

- 01** Evet var **02** Hayır yok

80) İşyerinde yemeklerde sendika üyesi işçilerle aranızda bir ayırım yapılıyor

mu?

- 01** Evet yapılıyor..... **02** Hayır yapılmıyor

81) İşyeri servislerinde sendika üyesi işçilerle aranızda bir ayırım yapılıyor mu?

- 01** Evet yapılıyor..... **02** Hayır yapılmıyor

82) Sendikalı işçilere göre işten çıkarılma riski daha mı fazla?

- 01** Evet daha fazla **02** Hayır aynı

83) İşten çıkarmalarda hangi gerekçeler gösteriliyor?

.....
.....

84)İş kazaları açısından işyerinizde gerekli önlemlerin alındığını düşünüyor musunuz?

01 Evet **02** Hayır