

PACKING WOMEN'S COMPROMISES AND TACTICS AGAINST PATRIARCHY IN
MERSİN HÂL

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ABSTRACT

Packing Women's Compromises And Tactics Against Patriarchy In Mersin Hâl

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The main objective of this study is to understand women's working conditions by examining compromises and daily tactics of working women as packing women who have worked at Mersin Gross Bazaar [Hâl] as highly patriarchal workplace. Packing as a job is described by 'women job' because it requires to sit all day, be docile, and have nimble fingers and a good taste. Therefore, packing women were invited to work in Hâl by employers through 'sergeants'. Although, they are hired because of their 'feminine' features like docility, nimble fingers and capability of cooking and cleaning; they are inferior and male workers are superior in the workplaces. As a result of that, they do not feel secure while working with male co-workers because of possibility of gossips, insults, sexual harassments or violence. They have produced and used several tactics and compromises in order to feel safer in the Hâl. They have taken benefits from occupational gender segregation not to rival male workers in packing jobs. Also, they are invisible in the Hâl because of both the structure of the workplaces and preferring not to be visible in order to avoid possible gossips and sexual harassments. Moreover, they called their male co-workers as 'brothers' and 'fathers' to prevent possible intimate relations within workplaces. Lastly, 'honor' is an obligation to work as packing women. Otherwise, women

without honor are accepted as 'floozy' women who are willingly to involve in intimate relations with other men. I claim that if proper social policies would apply in such a patriarchal workplace, working women might not need such kind of tactics and compromises which prevent women to have long term gain.

Keywords: Women Employment, Gender Segregation, Honor, Patriarchy, Women's Tactic

ÖZ

Mersin Hâl'inde Paketleyici Kadınların Ataerkilliğe Karşı Taviz ve Taktikleri

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Bu çalışmanın temel amacı kadınların çalışma şartlarını Mersin Hâl'inde çalışan paketleyici kadınların tavizleri ve taktikleri üzerinden incelemektir. Paketleyicilik meslek olarak tüm gün oturmayı, uysal olmayı, küçük ve hızlı ellere sahip olmayı ve zevk sahibi olmayı gerektirir bu yüzden de 'kadın işi' olarak tanımlanır. Tam da bu yüzden ki kadınlar Hâl'de paketleyici olarak çalışmaya işverenler tarafından 'çavuşlar' aracılığıyla davet edilmiştir. Uysallık, eli çabukluk ve yemek yapma ve temizlik marifetleri gibi feminen özellikleri nedeniyle işe alınmış olsalar da işyerlerinde onlar değersiz; erkekler ise üstündürler. Bunun sonucu olarak paketleyici kadınlar dedikodu, hakaret, cinsel taciz ve şiddet olasılığından ötürü erkek iş arkadaşlarıyla çalışırken kendilerini güvende hissetmezler. Daha güvende hissetmek için ise bir takım taktikler ve tavizler üretirler. Kendilerine uygulanan cinsiyete dayalı mesleki ayrımcılıktan faydalanarak erkek işçilerle kendi meslekleri üzerine rekabet etmekten kaçınırlar. Ayrıca, gerek kendi istekleri gerekse Hâl'in yapısından ötürü olası dedikodu ve cinsel tacizden kaçınmak amacıyla çalışırken görünür değillerdir. Dahası, erkek iş arkadaşlarını 'abi' ve 'baba' olarak tanıtarak işyerinde olası yakın ilişkileri önlerler. Son olarak, 'namus' paketleyici kadınlar için zorunluluktur. Aksi taktirde namussuz kadınlar yakın ilişkiye gönüllü 'civık'

kadın olarak tanımlanır. Eđer uygun sosyal politikalar ataerkil işyerlerinde uygulanırsa, çalışan kadınların bu tarz uzun dönem kazanımlarını engelleyen taktiklere ve tavizlere ihtiyaçları kalmayacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadın İstihdamı, Toplumsal Cinsiyet Ayrımcılığı, Namus, Ataerkillik, Kadın Taktikleri

To My Sister

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ILO	International Labor Office
KEIG	Women's Labor and Employment Initiative
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
METU	Middle East Technical University
MESEDE	Mersin Fruit and Vegetable Merchant Wholesalers Solidarity Association

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

Women's employment has been discussed in several decades in feminist discourse because women's participation of labor market and their emancipation was related by many scholars. Although, women have been engaging in labor as carers in their family, the importance of participating in labor market as wage laborers is needed to analyze deeply, which creates alternative to their position in their domestic domain through participation in social production and control of income. Eventually, participation of labor market has been crucial for women autonomy and power in society.

However, unfortunately, even if women gain autonomy and power thanks to becoming wage laborers, there are still several questions that need to be asked which are "why women earn less than men", "why women's works are less paid works than men's" and "why women and men work are segregated". In other words, after women entered to the labor market, equal pay and equal work was not supplemented. Many researches show that both patriarchy and capitalism have crucial role on women inferiority in the labor market.

With this respect the main objective of this thesis is to understand women's working conditions by examining compromises and daily tactics of working women as packing women who have worked at Mersin Gross Bazaar [Hâl¹],

¹ I prefer to use "Hâl" at the rest of my thesis because I think that Hâl is an unique term that is used for describe their workplace. I will explain it deeply later chapters.

highly patriarchal workplace² for almost 50 years. My main research question is “what the mechanisms behind women’s daily tactics and their obedience³ in a patriarchal workplaces are”.

I believe that my research contributes current women’s employment policies by suggesting policy recommendations for women workers who work at low-paid, informal and flexible jobs.

Although questions form the foundation of the research, to decide the most appropriate method is crucial for a research in order understand their practices at the workplace most sufficiently. I will explain deeply my methodology with a separate chapter but I will give brief information my methodology at next section.

1.2. Methodology

As a researcher I have desire to question unknown so that I need to admit that this research is a journey for me by discovering the field research.

I preferred to conduct a research on packing women at Mersin Hâl because 8 months ago they involved in a strike⁴ for a claim of wage increase. They were so strong that organize themselves against both male workers and employers who are all male. However, male workers and employers’ attitudes towards them were insulting and included even violence. How do these women survive at

² Hâl can be described as a patriarchal workplace because women who work at there are counted less valued than male workers and there are also certain norms that men already decided on. I will discuss them in deep at later chapters.

³ Obedience as a concept in existing literature is defined as

⁴ The strike had took 2 days. Many policemen and male workers intervened the strike. In the end, women remain unregistered workers but they achieved to get wage-increase. They started to work with 55 TL rather than 50 TL. When I talked to women, majority of them declared that they did not attend the strike at all or they did not attend it intentionally. They said that about ten women made the organization and forced them or encouraged them to attend.

such a patriarchal settings in which men have right to beat them but also how do they become such stronger that take a risk by organizing a strike? These questions led me to conduct a field research on them. After my first visit to the field, I discovered that if those women work 'properly' and do not try to tarnish men's authority, they are regarded as benign and get permission from male workers for being parts of the Hâl as workers. They produced many ways to prevent men's pressure or seduction by formulating their own behaviors so that they can maintain their existence at the Hâl.

I conducted a qualitative research at Mersin Hâl with 18 packing women and a male employer by applying semi-structured interviews and taking benefits from my field notes. I selected my interviewees randomly, I introduced myself and my research and asked them whether they wanted to join or not. When I asked them to introduce me with another woman, they rejected because they could not leave their workplaces. Therefore, I worked based on workplace; I selected different workplaces which could be bigger, could use technological devices or have various number of male or female workers. In total, I visited 13 workplaces at Hâl and interviewed 19 people. Also, when I spent time at workplace, I had to chance to talk male workers as well but even these conversation was not structured, it provides me with another perspective. However, I need to explain that I took benefits from my observations also. I spent my time at their workplace and observed their behaviors and attitudes towards male workers and vice versa.

They work as packing women who sit in front of vegetables and fruits and prepare them as ready to sell products by removing rejected products and sorting them in boxes pearly. They have to wake up at 5.00 a.m .because their houses are quite far away. They start to work at 7.00 a.m. and finish at 5.00 p.m. but if their work is not finished, they are not allowed to go, they have to

continue working until all products are packed. They earn 25, 46 \$⁵ per a day and 2, 31 \$ for each extra hour after the shift. They are unregistered workers who are not recognized by the legal system and work without social security.

I am aware of the fact that I had several assumptions in which some of them maintain their positions but some of them are become my arguments after visiting the field. I believe that to share my assumptions clearly is essential to understand my research; I will discuss my assumptions at the next section.

1.3. Assumptions

It is obvious that each research can possess its own assumptions that lead researchers to the main research question. In my research, I have various assumptions that make me question the social reality and encourage to search on. First, when I read the article about their strike and watched the violence that they faced with, I thought that Hâl is not such a workplace that women work freely and securely because those women work in bad conditions without any insurance and have to work with many men who do not respect them, actually who insult, harass or beat them. Considering this fact, I assume that they feel insecure while working with those men because of the possibility of gossip, insult harassment and violence.

Second, the possible conflict between men and women at the Hâl made me encourage assuming that these women have some kind of concerns like equal pay and equal treat. Organizing a strike that was occurred among just female workers makes me think that they have egalitarian perspectives towards their positions at the Hâl. I did not expect to find awareness about feminism but I do expect to find some women's efforts to be treated equally.

⁵ 55 TL equals to 25, 46 \$. The currency was calculated at August 16, 2014 and 1 TL is equal to 2, 16 \$. In Turkey, current minimum wage is 525 \$ including premium of social security but packing women earn 509, 2 \$ if we assume they work 5 days in a week without social security (Official Gazette, 2013/1).

Third, I assume that majority of packing women are migrated from rural to Mersin which is a complex city with many ethnic groups who migrated from Eastern part of Turkey because of security issues and economic hardship (Erjem, 2009) and consequently, I think that patriarchy preformed its rules and norms more deeply.

Fourth, I assumed that their family, especially their fathers and husbands, are not pleased with the fact that their daughters or wives work outside of the home. Therefore, they need to ease their fathers' and husbands' oppositions; which cause that those women face with work-family conflicts deeply.

Fifth, I presumed that male workers do not want to work with female workers because they might be concerned about earning less because of female workers who are willingly to earn less. As Hartmann (1976) discusses that men are known as breadwinners in the family so that they deserve to be paid more than female workers. Actually, the videos from their strike made me assume like that because there were no male workers in their strike.

Therefore, by the end of these assumptions, I believe that without any daily tactics and practices against patriarchy at workplace, it is hard to work there as packing women.

1.4. Arguments

When I was analyzing data that is provided me by packing women, I was surprised what I found: they actually reproduce patriarchy at the workplace with their daily tactics and practices. I will start to discuss my arguments with their position in the family.

As I assumed that many of them faced with difficulties about their working conditions at Hâl because of both its structure in which there are many stranger men and also unsuitability of working. However, it is needed to clarify that

those who are single and live with their parents are tolerated and also encouraged for working as paid labors. Moreover, if woman's paid work have a return to her husband or parent by supplying income or if she works with her husband at the same workplace so she can be controlled and spied by her husband, she minimizes her possible problems with her family which occurs because of working outside of the home. This argument is essential to understand who they are; which is a crucial information to understand patriarchal pressure on them.

Moreover, I find out that packing women are found by employers for taking advantages from their women's skill which is socially constructed. In other saying, because they have learned how they become proper women by cooking, cleaning and being orderly/tidy, they are the best candidates for packing products when forwarders needed beautiful packing to increase their profits. They have already known which products are rejected and they are seen as "masters of beauty". Women have a talent to organize goods with a beautiful visual presentations as they did all time at their houses. Therefore, they were invited to work at Hâl by employers and they were welcomed at Hâl. However, my claim is that they are invited because of two reasons. Firstly, they are open to be exploited by employer because they are the source of cheap labor. Even, they are forced to involve in cooking and cleaning activities as well. Hiring women provides employers with several advantages like paying less, getting cooking and cleaning out of the way without hiring extra workers and by dealing with more 'docile' workers. Secondly, male workers do not want to involve in packing as a job because they describe packing job as women's work which is inferior.

In addition, I believe that women produce tactics and practices to survive against patriarchy because they do not want to lose gained power in their family. Although these tactics and practices are the way to work at Hâl according to packing women, I need to admit that these all cause to reproduce patriarchal norms. After they gained inferior positions as workers at Hâl, they need to find

out the ways to feel more secure during working hours. Their workplaces which are located the most distant from the entrance of Hâl. When they work at the workplace which is like a huge empty garage for a truck, their places are settled at rearmost space, closed to the kitchen. It is almost impossible to recognize them like they are invisible. I claim that to be invisible at Hâl provides them to avoid being harassed by men and to keep their position at inferior as workers so that they could not be seen as a threat to men because men's works are accepted more important and visible when women's are invisible and their work regarded as inferior.

To survive at Hâl as a woman requires to be "honorable [namuslu]" which is actually a part of being woman. Almost all female workers agree on the fact that if a packing woman would not behave properly during working, she is "available" for sexual intercourses and also accepts to be harassed by men. They called such a woman as "floozy [civik kadın]". In Turkish I can describe it as a woman who does not behave accordingly social norms, does not know how to sit or talk with men, and uses her sexuality for her advantages. They believe that "honor" gives them a shield to protect them against men. With this respect, accepting proper rules as parts of honor and not questioning them are the first condition of being honorable as they said that women need to know themselves and behave accordingly. Being careful about their walking, talking, and wearing is the requirement of being honorable.

After they become invisible and "honorable" by putting a border between them, they need to figure out their relationship with male workers because they have to work together, talk with them and eat together. They share their workplaces so that they need to configure their positions "properly". Although, many of packing women that I interviewed with them say that they cannot trust them, but blame them to be unreliable, they also claim that male workers are like their brothers and fathers. I believe that it is a kind of protection tactic that ensures them with a safe space because brothers or fathers cannot see them as women who are "available".

1.5. Significance

Women labor force is accepted as an indicator of development in the global level so that governments give importance to social policies that are designed to increase the number. In other words, many governments and non-governmental organization a focus on finding the ways to increase female workers in labor market because the numbers of women in labor market is an indicator of development and almost each government have afforded to be called one of the 'Developed Nations' (Çağatay&Özler, 1995). As OECD report, *Policies to Increase Labor-Force Participation of Women and Older Workers* indicates that there are several ways to increase women labor force which are flexibility, taxation, support to children care and others. However, many researchers and NGOs are against social policies on women employment which aim to make women more inferior in labor market like flexibility, child or older benefits and longer maternity leave. For example, in Turkey, flexibility which aims to regulate working hours according to employers and employees without restriction is seemed as a key policy to increase women labor force but KEIG (Women's Labor and Employment Initiative) claims that it makes women less powerful in negotiations about their working conditions and strengths women's inferior position at workplaces (KEIG, 2014). Even if women labor force have been increased with these policies, women at work and family maintain to be exploited by patriarchal norms because they started to lose their visibility at public space, their roles in labor market would be accepted as secondary, they would be segmented at secondary sectors and less values jobs would maintain to belong women with worse conditions and less wage.

I admit that as long as women labor force has increased, women have gained some autonomy and power in the society. Considering this fact, involving in a paid job is counted as a requirement of empowerment but it is also essential to discuss their position in the labor market. Although, they gain more autonomy

in the family thanks to their economic freedom, they faced with several difficulties in their works and their family by reproducing patriarchal codes in return for women's tactics. Therefore, this example about flexibility shows that quantitative data on women's employment are not enough to prove that these policies have a return for lives of women workers who work at flexible, low paid and informal jobs.

In this study, I show how these women are disregarded by the state and how they are forced to improve their own tactics and practices to endure and survive in the Hâl. It is significant because even if they are paid equally and work more flexible, they are still deserved to be called '*survivors of patriarchy*'; which requires re-thinking about both future policies and existing policies on women's employment.

1.6. Contributions

Some numerical indicators show that although, women labor force has been increased, it does not mean that they have gain fair pay and fair treatment at the workplace; unfortunately focusing number leads us to disregard women position in the labor market. Therefore, as I explained that being part of labor market is not sole solution for women to reach liberation from patriarchy at society. Discussing their position and problems at workplace is necessity to understand and cope with patriarchy because we should consider that patriarchy is not a 'thing' that is same for all social context or for all time so that focusing female workers' problems at workplaces and their ways to deal with them should be questioned by social researchers as well.

Although, I accept that increasing numbers of female workers at the labor market is crucial to create gender equality by taking benefits from being employed like income, self-confidence, social networks etc. but unfortunately, it is not enough for equal pay and equal treatment, at the end, gender equality. I

believe that it is because patriarchal structure of workplaces prevents women to take advantages from empowerment in return for employment. Although female workers find ways to deal with it in order to maintain benefiting from positive outcomes of working, these tactics which are just cut-ways to cope with patriarchy re-produce patriarchal norms on women.

With this respect, I claim that their daily tactics and practices to cope with patriarchy provide us another perspective to discuss women and employment. Researches on women's tactics should be increased to discover patriarchy at workplaces deeply. Literature on women's employment generally has focused on patriarchal pressure on women but I think that their ways to cope with it are disregarded. In my position, especially, feminist researches should consider women's re-bounds against patriarchy although these tactics and practices have made patriarchy re-produce in different ways. However, even feminist literature has included several researches about the ways to deal with patriarchy at family (Dube&Palriwala, 1990; White, 1994), there are limited researches to focus on women's tactics at workplaces against patriarchy (Erman et al, 2002; Beşpınar, 2010). I believe that as a feminist researcher, in general my thesis contributes feminist literature by illustrating female workers' perspectives towards patriarchy at their workplaces.

Moreover, specifically, there is no researches on women who work at Hâl in which there are many male co-workers who see themselves more superior. These jobs should be introduced to literature because southern part of Turkey includes a few Hâl which provides job opportunities as packing workers for women. Describing 'packing' which is not described yet as a job is needed to understand women's employment. Their working conditions and structures of workplace are unique in Turkey and I claim that taking into consideration of them make researchers ensure that patriarchy can be shown in different shapes.

Furthermore, I am sure that my study includes several social policy recommendations for those who work at flexible, informal and low paid jobs by

putting a different but significant perspective to discussion on women's employment. It will prove that although increase in number of packing women is also crucial for women employment as an indicator, researchers and politicians should focus on existing structure of workplaces in which women work because numbers are not as significant as decision makers have claimed. After women get into labor market, they start to be exploited by their male co-workers and employers even if they gain some power in their family. My thesis could be a proof in order to discuss social policies that produce more egalitarian and fair treatment without patriarchal pressure on female workers.

With my thesis, I am able to recommend social policies for those packing women but also I can claim what is not sufficient for them. Sometimes, to find out the best options might require to eliminate worse ones. Therefore, I give importance to shift out insufficient but popular policies like flexibility. As my findings show that working at Hâl can be counted as a flexible job for women so that they are available for taking care of their domestic jobs. On the other hand, their positions at the society and their jobs at the workplaces maintain being described as carers; which cause to ensure their inferiority in the society. Considering this fact, it can be said that there is a contradictory between what packing women desire to be and what packing women have to be in result of patriarchal norms. Therefore, my study includes a discussion on flexibility in the context of Mersin Hâl.

1.7. Guiding Concepts

There are several concepts like "visibility", "autonomy", "empowerment", and "tactic" that were used throughout this thesis. In this section, I will give brief descriptions of these concepts by benefiting from the existing literature on women and employment since I believe that understanding these concepts is crucial to understand packing women's situation.

“Visibility” is still discussed in the literature in terms of whether it is a social category or not. However, Brighenti (2007) highlights the social-type of “visibility” which is linked to “recognition”. He argues that a person can be recognized by being looked at him or her. They test and testify whether he or she exists or not by seeing him or her. He defines “recognition” as a social form of visibility, and it also creates consequences for the relationship between minority and majority groups because an unrecognized person or group can be deprived of social recognition. In my context, packing women in Mersin Hâl can be categorized as invisible and deprived of social recognition.

“Autonomy” is a concept which feminist literature discusses from different perspectives. Stoljar (2013) summarizes the situation by criticizing Kant’s and Rawl’s explanations. Both Kant and Rawl took the concept of “will” into account and focused on the notion of self-implicit. They argue that an autonomous man ought to be self-sufficient in the society. On the other hand, feminists deny self-sufficiency in the theory of autonomy and re-conceptualize “autonomy” as “relational autonomy” by taking gender relations into consideration. Stoljar (2013) says:

If relationships of care and interdependence are valuable and morally significant (cf. Mackenzie & Stoljar 2000a, 8–10), then any theory of autonomy must be “relational” in the sense that it must acknowledge that autonomy is compatible with the agent standing in and valuing significant family and other social relationships.

In my context, after packing women gained autonomy or “relational autonomy” in return for employment, they became a significant member of both family and society.

“Empowerment” is one of the most used concepts in my research because I believe that as long as packing women work, they continue to be more empowered. But, what is “empowerment”? In feminist literature, power have been discussed as a controversial concept. Power has been considered in terms of an oppressive or unjust power-over relationship which can be called

'domination', 'oppression' or 'subjection' (Allen, 2014). However, many feminist discuss that describing power as power-over or domination is being part of masculinity, thus, "power" as a concept needs to be re-conceptualized as a capacity to produce a change (Miller, 1992). With this respect, in my research, packing women have been empowered in the sense that they are able to produce some change in their lives thanks to their paid-works.

One of the most important concepts in my work is 'tactic'. As Beşpınar (2010) claims women's strategies to deal with patriarchy aim to find individual ways for surviving in the labor market in the short-term instead of aiming long-term collective gains. In fact, many rural migrant women are also forced to find a 'breathing room' thus they find their their breathing rooms through their strategies. However, these strategies prevent women from demanding a collective goal in long-term. Beşpınar (2010; 530) argues:

I show that these strategies are personal and practical ways that women develop to gain economic security through their families and their own resources. At the same time, these strategies reinforce patriarchal values and traditional gender roles. In this regard, they are far from being tools for women's collective empowerment.

In addition, although, these strategies help women to work outside home and gain some authority and power in the family, these strategies reinforce patriarchy at the end. Therefore, actually these ways cannot be categorized with the notion of strategy which aims changing existing order in the society consciously and systematically (Beşpınar; 2010) as most of existing literature on working women's strategies do (Erman, 2001; Kalaycıoğlu&Tılıç,1998; Çınar, 1994; Kağıtçıbaşı, 1986).

However, it does not mean that women do not bargain with patriarchy as the weak and exploited ones in the society. Certeau (1984; 37) discusses that there is space for the weak as well. He says through the tactics the weak one can create their own room for maneuver among powerful ones who oppress, dominate and exploit them. A tactic does not have to aim to solve the problem at

all or to beat the adversary. Actually, the weak does not have to identify the enemy as a distinct, visible and objectifiable space. He says:

It takes advantage of "opportunities" and depends on them, being without any base where it could stockpile its winnings, build up its own position, and plan raids. What it wins it cannot keep. This nowhere gives a tactic mobility, to be sure, but a mobility that must accept the chance offerings of the moment, and seize on the wing the possibilities that offer themselves at any given moment. It must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the proprietary powers. It poaches in them. It creates surprises in them. It can be where it is least expected. It is a guileful ruse.

Therefore, in my work I prefer to use 'tactic' rather than 'strategy' for naming packing women's bargains with patriarchy in the workplaces.

1.8. The Scope of Thesis

In this section, I will try to explain structure of my thesis by giving details about chapters. It includes six chapters which are introduction, methodology, literature review, Mersin Hâl and Packing Women, Compromises and Tactics of Packing Women and conclusion. With this structure, I believe that I afforded to have the most fluid content for readers.

I put in a methodology chapter (Chapter 2) which includes clarification of feminist methodology, my intention to work on women's employment, my expectations before going to field, information about my field and unit of analysis, explanation of my data collection and analysis and then limitations and barriers of the study.

Chapter 3 is on existing literature on rural migrant women, unregistered women and working women's work-related strategies because majority of packing women are rural migrants and unregistered workers; which are actually connected with each other. In addition, due to their intention to work outside the home they have produced some strategies in order to ease their

fathers' and husbands' oppositions and protect their family honor. Therefore, I thought that to integrate the existing literature on rural migrant women, unregistered female workers and their work related strategies is most convenient way to inform readers for literature.

In the Chapter 4, I started to analyze my data. First, I gave brief information about what the Hâl is and why it is so important in the region. Then, I informed readers about structure of the Hâl and division of labor in the Hâl so that I aimed that readers could visualize the Hâl in which packing women work. After that, I described who packing women are including their backgrounds, families' perspective towards their working outside the home and motivations and drawbacks of working.

Then, in Chapter 5, I discussed that female workers in the Hâl who want to maintain working as packing workers should develop some compromises and tactics at such a patriarchal workplace; which are being invisible, calling workmates as family members and describing their jobs as inferior and being honorable as a compromise.

Finally, in the conclusion chapter, I made an overview of my thesis and evaluate their positions with the lens of social policy on women's employment. Then, I recommended possible and more exclusive social policies in order to provide equal treatment at workplace for women working in these insecure, flexible, informal and low paid jobs.

CHAPTER 2

2. METHODOLOGY

In this thesis, I will try to explain how women produce tactics and practices in their daily work life against patriarchy at their workplace. During my efforts to find proper answers for my question I rediscovered my standpoint in my research as a researcher. In this chapter, first I explained my position at social science methodology by giving information about feminist methodology and then my motivations to work on women's employment. Next, I detailed my expectations I had before the field because I think the preparation stage is also a part of a research. After that, I gave more information about my respondents and data analysis. Finally, I mentioned limitations and barriers of my study.

2.1. Feminist Methodologies

In my research, I have conducted a feminist research which aims a social change that challenges patriarchy through its outcomes. Feminist research has been an guiding methodology for the last three decades. Those who claim that gender biased sciences should be challenged contribute to their research by questioning the position of women in society. That position is a passive and subordinated one and women are attributed with emotions and lack of reason. Therefore, it can be said that feminist research is beyond making women being subjects of research but it is also for empowering women through the outcomes of the research (Walker, 2005).

Feminist research involves concerning feminist theories which try to explain power relations between women and men, and propose analysis on and solution to gender inequality. Therefore, while feminist researchers structure their research question and also methodology, feminist theories and literature show the way how to do and why there is a need to do it. Eventually, feminist researchers who endeavor to keep attention on the relationship between knowledge coming from the field and patriarchy can produce or improve feminist theories in order to provide more justice for women (Walker, 2005).

In addition, feminist methodologies have been shaped by feminist epistemology which is described as gender influence on the concept of knowledge and practices of justification in the society by Anderson (2004). There are three stages of feminist epistemology which are as follows: feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint and feminist postmodernism (Harding, 1987). First, she points out that feminist empiricism was launched in 1960s and 1970s in order to criticize male-centered and partial social knowledge. Social research was criticized for digging only masculine world and generalizing those data as if it reflects the 'real' and 'universal' world. It was clear that the voices of women in researches were needed to create objective knowledge so that the voices of women are central for feminist methodologies (Walker, 2005).

Second, Harding claims that the researcher plays a crucial role for a sex bias free research as well. She thinks that the notion of objectivity in researches is regarded so masculine that it prevents a woman researcher from using her experiences and her consciousness in the research which are actually quite valuable. At this stage, Harding advocates that a woman researcher has a broader perspective on social reality because she has also faced with the same gendered pressure in her life. Therefore, the subjectivity of researcher is essential through conducting the research.

Third, feminist postmodernism is concerned with differences among women in terms of race, ethnicity or class. Specifically, after 'A Black Feminist Statement'

was published in 1977, feminist researchers have emphasized 'difference' because they realized that there was a need to question the right of white, middle class women to speak for all women (Harding, 1987). Therefore, it is essential to focus on the diversity among women such as disabled, lesbian or Afro women in order not to make over generalizations through feminist methodologies.

Crucially, I have tried to put my feminist concerns into the first place during my research because I do not want to treat those women as merely the subjects of my research. I needed to be aware of the fact that there should be several other researches on gender issues because patriarchy has still recomposed itself in different concepts and times. Therefore, women are affected by patriarchy in various ways which have been changed depending on time and place. That's why, feminist researchers cannot give up digging the causes of patriarchy and we continue to conduct researches more in order to be able to suggest other ways for achieving justice.

2.2. Researcher's Intention

Before I started to work as a research assistant at METU, I was hired as an executive assistant at one of the international companies whose center is located in Switzerland. I thought that I was lucky when I started to work because before that I worked in several positions as a student. At that time, I regarded myself as a young person thus I had difficulties in labor market. However, while I was working at cooperate international company; I realized that those difficulties I encountered were not occurred just because of my age but also of my gender position in the society.

My mother was working as a cleaning lady and I was working as an executive personnel but we had lots of common disadvantages at labor market such as the feeling of insecurity because of the male coworkers' attitudes, lower payment

compared to men and also being assigned inferior tasks compared to men. Therefore, I thought that these difficulties show that patriarchy varies only in its form in the society but my mother and I always found the way to deal with it. I believe that these ways have been the best guides to find the solution against patriarchy; at least to understand the problem deeper. Eventually, I decided to work on the issues of women, employment and patriarchy for my research interests to be a part of the solution.

However, my intention to work on Mersin Hâl emerged after I read the news about their strike. I admired their courage and fight against patriarchal norms. I thought that I was aware of the fact how working in a Hâl is difficult for a woman because in the Bazaar which is smaller than a Hâl, I experienced male harassment as a woman costumer. Therefore, I thought that working as a woman would be harder, thus, these women took a great risk of being harassed or faced with violence by going on a strike. Throughout my study, I intended to render them visible in the feminist literature.

2.3. Expectations before Going to the Field

As I pointed out earlier, I believe that preparation to the field could be counted as a part of a research because as a young woman I felt the pressure and stress of issues like whether I could be able to reflect the workers' experiences, whether my personality would affect their attitudes towards me and what kind of dresses would be proper. Before going the field I needed to find answers and ways to deal with all these questions and concerns.

First, I was really nervous whether my background would lead me to a wrong direction while understanding possible findings. As an individual I have an identity that was shaped by education and culture, and a position in the academia, thus, my work and my position in the society might create a stance that would result in a miscomprehension of the issue. Moreover, I affected the

reality in the Hâl and I was about to make a research in a place where I was in, which created a situation that is called “reflexivity” by Bourdieu (Wacquant, 2007). Therefore, I saw a need to be aware of this fact and examine my findings accordingly.

Second, I was afraid of the fact that being a student from METU might create prejudice towards me because of its political stance vis-à-vis the recent resistance in Turkey⁶. I could be labelled as vandal, anarchist, *çapulcu* and etc. so I might not gain their trust.

Third, I thought I need to pay attention on my physical appearance and attitudes too because I might be regarded as a “snob” who came from Ankara and try to find out who they are.

As Wacquant (2004) says:

It is in the Algerian crucible that Bourdieu’s libido philosophica was unexpectedly diverted and irreversibly transmitted into the libido sociologica that would fuel his lifelong pursuit of a science of practice and symbolic power.

My first visit to the field made me realize that I have several mistakes and prejudices before going to Mersin. I had full arguments and outcomes, and my field was merely for confirmation of these thoughts and assumptions. However, I was not aware of the fact that I forgot the “social”, the women. Before I went to Mersin, I thought that I really focused on how I can prevent turning them into the objects of my research, but through the field I realized that it was not enough. They were actually the objects of my studies even if I was completely open, equal or trying to feel to be one of them (Stacey, 1988). After I realized that I was trying to find proper answers to my inquiries, I started to listen to

⁶ Turkey experienced Gezi Park Protests in May 2013. It started as an environmental movement to prevent the demolishing of the Gezi Park at Taksim Square. A construction company, with supports of the government, wanted to establish a mall at that area by cutting the trees and demolishing the Park. The movement gained supports from all over Turkey and turned into an anti-movement. METU has been among the opposition with its academics and students. During and after the Gezi Park Resistance METU has preserved its position at the side of the protestors who have been tagged as *vandal*, *çapulcu*, and anarchist by the then PM Erdoğan (Bianet.org).

them without any prejudice. At the first stage, I failed due to my *libido philosophica* in the field even if those women actually talked about themselves openly.

Although I thought that my *libido philosophica* led me to a wrong direction, I was still not able to control it even after I collected and analyzed the data. I thought that I did not discover anything significant that I could achieve a breakthrough in academia, thus my research has been a waste of time. My academic concerns resulted in a situation in which I missed out the fact that each individual is different, thus we end up having several different ethnographies which are precious also for social researchers.

Therefore, I claim that I discovered myself while I conduct the field research because all my above confessions are parts of the research as well. I really appreciate being part of this journey as a researcher. Therefore, I claim that all these expectations, pressures and stresses belong to this study as much as my findings.

2.4. Research Site

Before describing my participants, I need to clarify why I selected Mersin Hâl to conduct a research in and what kind of features makes the Hâl unique. Initially, my attention was driven by some news I saw on the internet. The news was about packing women's strike at Mersin Hâl for a claim of higher daily-wage since they worked without social insurances as unregistered workers. There were photos and videos which were added to the news in which they seemed very strong that they were able to protect themselves from the violence used by male workers or employers. Moreover, they were well-organized and did not allow any other women to get in the Hâl for work. As Hartmann argues the coupling of patriarchy and capitalism makes women inferior at the labor market (1976). In my opinion it is a valid argument in the Hâl context as well. I think

that they resisted not only against capitalism but also patriarchy at workplaces through their strike because I assumed that they grew up in patriarchal families and worked at patriarchal workplaces which were supposed to put them in powerless and inferior positions compared to male workers, in this way capitalism deepens women's inferiority by creating low paid workers. This is the reason why I started to question how these women work at such a workplace in which they could not feel safe against male workers.

Together with that, I claim that Mersin Hâl has its unique features as a workplace which needs to be discovered. First, there are many female and male workers who migrated from other cities to Mersin in order to settle down. This means that although they have different cultural background and positions towards women's position in society, they have let women work in Hâl even though Hâl includes many stranger men inside. Second, packing has gendered characteristics as a job that makes it a low-skilled and less-valued job which has been never discussed in the existing literature. Third, Hâl as a workplace includes several separate packing houses and commission agents but the structure of Hâl in general has a proper order and a clean distribution of tasks. I think that their consensus on how the products should be served to market is related to capitalistic goals which are possibly similar for most of the employers. Likewise, their consensus on the distribution of tasks at the workplaces is related to patriarchal norms because these codes are already accepted as given. Eventually, I believe that, Hâl is managed by the coupling of capitalism and patriarchy which makes women more inferior. Thus, I felt the need to conduct a research on packing women in order not to make them remain invisible. This is the background of why and how I chose Mersin Hâl as the field of my research.

2.5. Research Method

For the purpose of seeking answers to my research question, I had visited Mersin Hâl for two weeks in total in different times. First, I arranged a preliminary visit in April 2014. I stayed in Mersin for a week and visited the Hâl regularly. In July 2014, I arranged a second visit to collect more data and it also took a week. I met many male and female workers at the Hâl. Although, only some of the workers accepted to participate in my research, most of them tried to help me in different ways such as offering tea, inviting to breakfast and lunch and accompanying me at Hâl. Sharing time with them has been a precious experience for me due to both their welcoming and their unique working conditions.

I conducted a qualitative research method to find out my answers. For that purpose, I prepared two different questionnaires for packing women and employers. In the questionnaire for women there were three different parts which are composed of descriptive features, working life and Hâl and family-work dimensions. At the first part, I aimed to find the relations between their age, marital status, origin and educational background, and their position against patriarchy. At the second part, there were questions about their working conditions, wage, job descriptions and most importantly questions that helped me to find out their tactics and practices at their workplaces. At the last part, I try to analyze how their family responded to their working conditions at Hâl and how their family lives have been affected.

2.6. Respondents

I have 18 packing women interviewees which have different backgrounds. The average age is 36, 6 and the average working experience is 15, 16 years. As

Figure 1 shows, 61% of my participants are married and 33% are single and I have 1 widow participant whose husband has passed away.

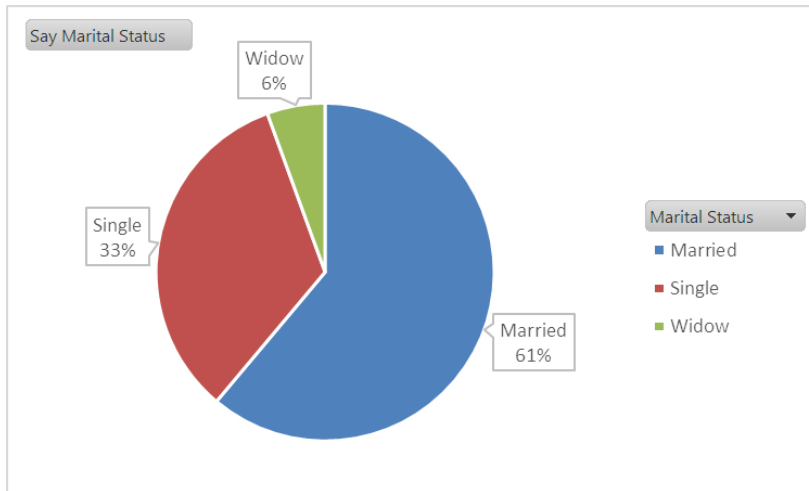


Figure 1: Graphic of Marital Status of Respondents

Furthermore, Figure 2 indicates their educational backgrounds. Half of them quitted education because of the need for their labor at the family. The highest educational degree is secondary education with 17 %. There are also several school girls who work at Hâl during the weekends or holidays.

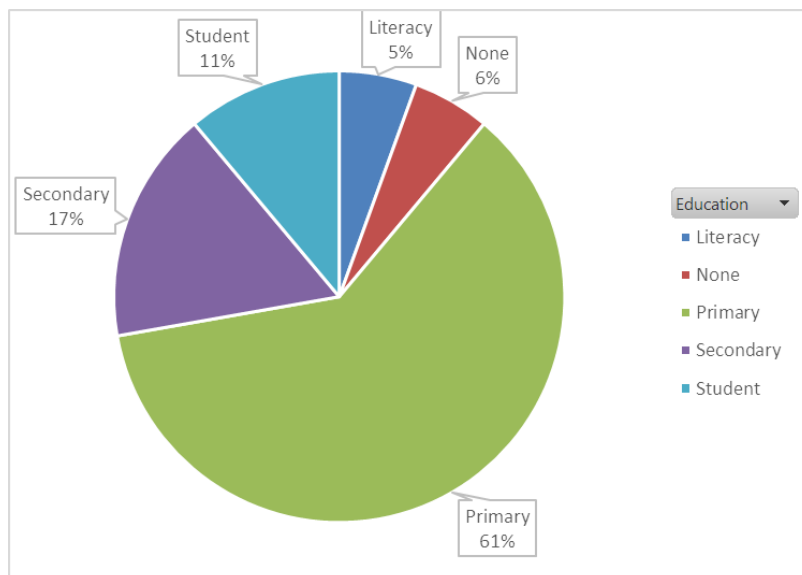


Figure 2: Graphic of Educational Background of Respondents

Their cities of origin include Mersin, Diyarbakır, Adana, Hatay and also different cities from South Eastern part of Turkey. However, most of them describe themselves by their ethnicities such as Kurdish, Arabs or Turkish and also some of them define themselves by emphasizing their religious sects like Sunni or Alevi.

In addition to packing women, although I prepared a second questionnaire for employers to find out why they prefer to hire female workers for packing, I did not focus on interviewing them because I believe that in this study it is more important to listen to women. Why do they think they are the best option for packing? I talked with only one male employer who was willing to talk to me, but actually he made me listen to him. He summarized how they as employers decided to hire women workers and why they preferred them. Although I received valid information about the procedural aspects, as I stated before, I did not want to focus on male employers, thus I treated these as additional information.

Before going further by elaborating on who these packing women are and how they became paid laborers at the findings chapters, there is a need to discuss how these information were collected and then analyzed.

2.7. Data Collection and Analysis

I believe that being in a totally strange environment confuses a researcher about how she should begin to search. At least it has been valid in my situation. In this section, I will explain how I collected my data and analyzed them to reach my conclusions.

When I first arrived at the Hâl, I was surprised by the vastness of the area which seemed easy to get lost inside. I have been lost several times when I was looking

for packing women because I did not know which part of the Hâl they were working. The only thing I knew was that they work at the Hâl. I asked several people but was not able to find them until I finally saw two of them. I followed these women and found an association which is called Mersin Fruit and Vegetable Merchant Wholesalers Solidarity Association (MESEDE)⁷. I talked with them on the phone before my arrival in order to ask their help to find packing women and they gave me a phone number which belonged to a forewoman. I had never called the number not to damage my relationship with my possible interviewees because she might create distrust between me and my future participants. Packing women might feel insecure when their forewoman asks them to talk with me. As an example of a possible outcome, I want to mention that the forewoman asked the workers to hide the fact that they are informal workers, which constitutes a vital part of my study. However, when I asked a tea-maker man whether it is possible for him to show me where they work; he introduced me to a packing woman who is willingly to talk with me. This is how I coped with the feeling of being a stranger with a little help.

I had to select my participants randomly since the snowball method did not work for the Hâl. My interviewees could only introduce me to the women who work at the same workplace because they are not allowed to leave their workplaces until their shift is finished. Therefore, after I completed my interviews at one workplace, I understood that I had to focus on workplaces rather than women. I tried to select different workplaces with different sizes. Some of them serve only to one city whereas some of them serve to several. In addition, workplaces could be categorized according to whether they work for a bazaar or a supermarket. Also, some workplaces use technological devices for packing whereas some of them only have packing women. I considered these kinds of categories for differentiation and preferred to choose different workplaces.

⁷ Mersin Meyve ve Sebze Toptancı Tüccarları Dayanışma Derneği

After I entered a workplace, I had to sit down next to a packing woman while they were working. They were afraid of being scolded by the employer for spending their time on me and letting me in. Therefore, I preferred to ask my questions while they were working. It also provided me the opportunity to make observations. I gave several breaks to write these observations down on a paper as parts of my field diary. At the end, I spent several days at the Hâl and talked with 18 packing women.

After the field, based on the structure of my questionnaire, I categorized my data into three groups which includes information on who they are, how they work and how they are affected by their family. I tried to use quantitative data by creating tables and figures to strengthen my arguments because there are many correlations between quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, I decided to use some public photographs in order to stress the realness in it and to prevent treating them as objects of the research.

Unfortunately or maybe fortunately, this research has its own limitations and barriers in itself. Discussing them is a requirement to reach the main aim of the study because they and the ways to cope with them should also be precious for a researcher.

2.8. Being a Woman at the Hâl

I need to confess the fact that I had various gender-related difficulties when I visited the Hâl at the first time. After I encountered with these difficulties performed by male workers, I produced several tactics to deal with them. I divide my difficulties into two following categories in terms of their reasons: my physical appearance and my gender.

It is needed to explain male and female workers' profile to clarify my unrest in the Hâl. Women are barely visible at the Hâl. It is impossible to see alone women

in the streets of the Hâl. If a packing woman needs to leave her workplace, she needs another woman to accompany her. Therefore, when I was walking alone, I paid attention because of the fact that I did not fit the daily-life in the Hâl. In addition, female workers wear traditional clothes like baggy trousers [şalvar], loose-fitting dresses and head scarfs without any accessories and make up. Their clothes covered their whole bodies so that their skins are not seen by anybody. In this context, I would be regarded as different so that it could make me seem “available” for intimate relations with men.

As I explained, I was worried about my appearance before I arrived to the field because I assumed that men who work at the Hâl could make me feel disturbed with their looks or talks. According to scholars (Karal&Aydemir, 2012; Altınay&Aral; 2007), sexual violence have been increased in past decade in Turkey. Being aware of this fact, as a woman, I do not feel safe while I walk around in strange places, unfortunately. However, I really wanted to be wrong about my assumption. However, when I walked through the streets, most of the male workers went out and watched me from head to foot. I felt like a model who gives a fashion show at a podium. I tried not to be prejudiced about them but once several cars and trucks chased me and honked at me, I thought that I was right to be concerned. I put on a jean, a white t-shirt and sun glasses, and I did not tie my hair up on that day. I think, such a dressing style made me look like a stranger at the Hâl and gave them the ‘right’ to harass me in a way. After that day, I put on a sweat suit, tied my hair up and wear a scarf and gave up using sun glasses. I admitted the fact that it worked and I was not harassed like the previous day. However, it is essential to be aware of the fact that I was not the one who decided what I was going to dress, I was forced to wear like that by men’s attitudes which put pressure on me and scared me.

Second, I met someone who asked me why I was there whom I replied that I was there because of my work. However, it was not enough for them who actually wonder whether I was alone or not. When they heard that I came to Mersin from Ankara by myself for my research, they were surprised by the fact that I

went there alone. How did a 'girl' get the permission from her parents and do I have a fiancé or boyfriend? They were curious about my private life because there should have been an abnormality compared to the society because my courage to go there alone is regarded as a sign of marginality in the society; which is a gender-biased way of thinking. I had to explain how this was normal for me and my family. However, I felt tired because after they listened to me, they gossiped about a woman who decided to divorce. They thought that she is willing to be harassed because she is not grateful. In these kind of moments, as a feminist woman, I have a great difficulty in not participating in the discussion because it could harm my research by creating problems between me and my interviewees. They should not feel being judged by me, thus I felt the need to be quiet.

In fact, on one side, these difficulties forced me to understand the situation of packing women in the Hâl more deeply because they are faced with these kind of difficulties in their daily work lives. I questioned how they survive in both physically and psychologically.

2.9. Limitations and Barriers

During my interviews, I faced with several difficulties such as arranging time and space for my interviews, employers' attitudes, male workers' attitudes and also symbolic violence caused by patriarchy in the Hâl. Let me tell my first interviews in order to clarify the problems I experienced through the field.

When I first visited the Hâl, I met a man who works on an association at Mersin. The people I asked before him did not know where the packing women work. Thus, I had to ask him to introduce me with some packing women. Then he took me to a packing lady. I wanted to tell this story as an example to show how hard it is to think of these women independently of their workplaces. She was nice while meeting with me and accepted to participate in my research. However,

she was nervous as if she was engaging in a dangerous work. She wanted to talk at the kitchen because she needed to cook at the same time, otherwise her boss could get angry at her. She insisted that I join them for lunch. Her boss, her male co-worker and another woman were also present at the lunch. Her boss started to ask questions such as who am I, what kind of questions I will ask, whether I am a financial officer who is investigating the, how long these interviews will take time and etc. Then he started making fun of me by saying what a ridiculous work I endeavored. Female workers were offended, I was also offended but I had to stay calm. After lunch, the woman I was going to interview started to work immediately since they needed to finish their work. She gave me a mat to sit next to them and then she both worked and answered at the same time. However, those women worked with men at the same place, so men thought that they have the 'right' to interrupt my interview and gave some personal information about his female workers. After I finished my work at that workplace, all of the women warned me to be careful about men.

This story exemplifies my experiences at the Hâl. However, I categorized the barriers and limitations to my study into four sections based on this example. First, I had a problem in arranging my interviews in separate places apart from their workplaces because many of them refused to give a break for the interviews. They said that they had to continue their work, otherwise their bosses could reprehend them. Because of their fear for their bosses, they rejected to allocate separate time for me. It might have caused that when interviewees were under pressure, they could not answers my questions deeply. Also, they probably did not want to answer some questions because they were shy of sharing their thoughts with other colleagues.

Second, I really had a hard time with employers who were all male. I think they did not like me because they were worried about the possibility of revival of the strike like the one happened 6 months ago. This concern was apparent when many of them said that those women are treated well, paid well, and then asked women's approvals. Furthermore, some of them were more suspicious about

me. Packing women works without insurance, they are unregistered workers. In Turkey it is forbidden and causes serious penalties for employers. Therefore, they wanted to interfere in some parts of interviews and give answers instead of women. When they were finally convinced that I was not a financial officer, they underestimated me because for them it was nonsense to come from Ankara and give importance those women lives. I tried to remain calm and smile to get rid of these problem so that packing women and I could have separated time and place from employers.

Third, bosses were not the only problem that interrupted my interviews but there were also male workers who were engaged in carrying works. They were actually offended at me because I selected packing women to interview. They were excited about my questions and wanted to answer them but because I had limited time and because of my research question I could not allocate time for them. However, as I put earlier, they acted as if they have the right to interrupt our conversation and gave very personal information about the women who were speaking at that time. As a researcher in that area, I need to observe what happens there without any questions. Thus, although male workers' speeches created a conflictual situation towards women's, I have to present the truth with all perspectives.

Fourth, when I walked around Hâl, I needed to pass several workplaces in which many male workers work but I think I could not fit the overall picture with my jean and t-shirt. While I was walking on the streets, almost each man watched me and sometime laughed at me. Keeping in mind the warnings about not walking alone, I felt insecure and wanted to finish my 'job' immediately. Therefore, I tried to split my visits; I arranged them with day breaks.

To sum up, I can say that I was faced with symbolic violence at Hâl because I was working as a researcher but patriarchal settings there prevented me from conducting my research in some ways. It also made me feel insecure and directed me to produce tactics in order to deal with patriarchy as I explained

above. To make it clear, I need to describe the structure of the Hâl with more detail

CHAPTER 3

3. LITERATURE ON WOMEN WHO WORK IN LOW PAID, UNREGISTERED WORKS

Most of the packing women who have been working at Mersin Hâl migrated from their villages to Mersin in 1950s. Afterwards, they started to work at low-paid informal works because of economic problems. It directed me to investigate the existing literature on rural migrant women and women who work at low-paid, unregistered works.

After these rural women migrated to the cities because of the changes in the economic structure, they are affected by the lack of enough income in their households. Although they need to produce tactics for both getting permission from their husbands and surviving in the workplaces, their entrance to the labor market has changed their lives by changing their position in the family.

In this chapter, first, I made a discussion on rural to urban migration and women preferences during migration. Second, I look at informal works and women in Turkey and their working conditions. Third, I explained their work-related strategies. Lastly, I discussed relations between empowerment and employment for migrant working women.

3.1 Migration from Rural to Urban and Gender

Migration as a term has been discussed for several years by scholars. It is possible to describe 'migration' in different ways. Migration can be defined as a population movement which affects structure of the society sociologically,

economically and politically (Özer, 2004; Jackson, 1969). On the other hand, İçduygu and Sirkeci (1999) discusses that migration can be counted both as a result and a reason itself. It is caused by social and economic changes but it also triggers social and economic changes.

In Turkey, migration movements have been affected by industrialization and urbanization in 1950s. As a result of Turkey's incorporation into the world market by decreasing importance of agriculture and the promotion of industry, people residing at rural areas started to migrate from their lands to the cities (Özer,2004). As Hartmann (1976) also discusses, industry forced people to be part of wage labor. Men became potential workers and cities were regarded as sources of better living conditions when their income has been diminishing and their farm has lost their value. They tried to find paid works because their lands started not to generate be enough income for the entire family. Besides, cities started to demand low-paid factory workers so that rural migration to urban has become indispensable (Şen, 2014; Erman et al, 1997; Özer, 2004).

Young men migrated first from rural to urban in order to find jobs and explore the cities, then many rural families started to migrate to cities by leaving their lands. In this respect, rural women moved to cities as either wives or future wives, bride [gelin]. There are very limited independent female migrants except from those who are sent to cities for helping their brothers or for living with their relatives with the idea that a single woman in a city can find an urban-based husband who would probably earn a bigger income (Erman, 1997; Erman, 2001; Erman et al; 2002).

As migration affects many dimensions in the society, it has also changed women's lives. Rural migrant women enjoy staying in cities compared to villages because of hard works, oppression and social control in the villages (Erman, 1997). First, before migration, rural migrant women had to work as unpaid family workers in their lands. Their works were invisible and regarded as unworthy. In other words, as Mansur (1978; 29) says: " For peasant women

farm work is compulsory through tradition, completely integrated within home and family life, and inevitable. "Rural women have not gained any power to control their production or any social recognition in return for their work. Erman's researches on migrants neighborhoods (1997) show that rural migrant women describe their life in the villages as "hard work", "a lot of work" or "filthy work". On the other hand, city life has given them more free time compared to villages because they are not required to cultivate lands, milk the cows, and feed chickens, produce butter or cheese. Living in the city means comfortable and clean life for rural migrant women as former unpaid family workers.

Second, according to them, especially young women who are expected to serve their family-in-law suffer from being oppressed by strict rules like not talking in the public spaces, not calling their husbands by their names, not playing with or caressing their children. They have to obey the rules and respect their family and not to question existing rules. Compared to villages, migration to cities gave women a distance from their family-in-law so that they feel less pressure from them (Erman, 1997).

Third, they have to make an effort not to get a bad reputation in the village. Except from their family, they feel the pressure of their neighbors who observe women's behaviors and clothes. They have to wear long sleeves and stockings and cover their hairs. Moreover, their behavior towards elderly have to be respectful. They complain how these social pressure coming outside the family affected their lives in a bad way in the villages compare to cities (Erman, 1997).

In addition to these three aspects, women began to work in paid jobs in the cities which also brought social recognition and income. Although these jobs are low-paid, insecure and flexible jobs, women started to gain autonomy and power in their family in return for their wages or daily-wages (Erman et al, 2002; Beşpınar, 2010; Ecevit; 1993; Rittersberger-Tılıç&Kalaycıoğlu, 2000). However, it should be considered that those women who migrated from rural to

urban are faced with several drawbacks in both family and labor market. They are forced to work without social security in informal jobs. Thus, to discuss these drawbacks and their strategies of dealing with these problems is also crucial for understanding women in the informal market.

3.2 Women in Informal Sector

3.2.1 Decent Work vs Informal Work

To describe what informal sector is essential in order to make a clear analysis on women's position in the labor market because many women, especially migrant women, have suffered to work in unregistered jobs (Dedeoğlu, 2010; Kumbetoglu et al; 2012; Chant & Pedwell; 2008). However, I would rather to describe "decent work" because it provides a comparable perspective while discussing informality in economy.

Ghai (2003) noted that decent work was explained with four components in 1999 in the Report of Director – General to the International Labour Conference. These four components which are employment, social protection, workers' right and social dialogue were listed and elaborated in the same report.

As a component of decent work, employment should have been evaluated in three dimensions which are employment opportunity, remunerative employment and working conditions. First, it is clearly said that there should be work opportunities that labor force can be canalized into and for the people who are willing to change their jobs. Therefore, unemployed people who are able to work and try to find a job would not be discriminated from labor force. Second, together with employment opportunity, it is fundamental to combine it with remunerability and fair working conditions which are essential to describe the "quality" of work. For many countries, remunerability can be measured with two different indicators which are as follows: data on absolute poverty below

and the proportion of workers earning an income less than half of the median wage. To earn less than absolute poverty or less than half of median wage can be considered as a proof of the claim that people in that country live under subhuman conditions because they cannot cover their needs with such a wage. Third, on the other hand, working conditions should be organized considering occupational safety and workers' health. Workers should be protected from possible dangers and accidents during the work hours. These three dimensions show that a work has to have certain qualifications in order to be labelled as "decent". There should be more job opportunities; it should provide sufficient wage and safe working conditions.

Another important component that should be analyzed is social security. According to Ghai (2002), social security should cover people's basic needs and protect them against income cut caused out of unemployment sickness, maternal leave and destitution in old age. ILO's Social Security Convention (No. 102), classified them into nine elements which are medical care and benefits in respect of sickness, unemployment, old age, employment injury, family, maternity, invalidity and survivors. In this respect, it can be grouped as income security and medical care. First, it is crucial to touch upon the question of what income security in order to understand social security. ILO (ilo.org) defines income security:

Income security is about the level of income (absolute and relative to needs), assurance of receipt, expectation of income adequacy now and improvement or deterioration in the future, both during a person's working life and in old age or disability retirement. Income security is about actual, perceived and expected income.

Making workers' wage sustainable and provide workers more secure life with their income are two important social security obligations. Second, as ILO's Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention (No. 130) declared, all precautions should be taken considering the possibility of sickness and accident and all services should be provided for workers in decent work.

The other indicator that shows whether the work is decent or not is workers' rights on issues such as forced and child labor under abusive conditions, discrimination at work and freedom of association. Forced and child labor is an issue that is taken into consideration by the Abolition of Forced Labor Convention (No.105) and ILO the Minimum Age Convention (No.5). All kinds of forced labor like slavery-type, bounded labor, serfdom and prison labor and the use of child in workplace as cheap labor are prohibited. Also, ILO's Discrimination Convention (No.111) provides disadvantaged-minority groups with equal treatment and opportunity at workplace. It does not only refer to occupying jobs but also getting promotions in workplace. For example, unemployment rates for women and men are proof of gender discrimination in employment. Similarly, figures of male and female manager and director show that women and men do not receive equal treatment in workplace too (Ghai, 2002; Hartmann 1976).

Moreover, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) announced freedom of association as one of the human rights for all people in order to defend their interests, organize joint activities and negotiate with policy makers. ILO was concerned and stressed that freedom of association is fundamental for workers to act together against interest groups via unions. Unions establish a balance between workers and market via negotiation process (Ghai, 2002). As it was stated above, work conditions get closer to a decent point in a country where forced and child labor can be prohibited in real terms, discrimination in workplaces can be prevented, and freedom of association can be provided without any limitation,. However it is not enough; ILO published the description of "decent work" on their website as follows (ILO.org);

Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.

As I discussed earlier, the concept of decent work is an ideal form of employment and as I explained in the beginning of the section, it is required to grasp it in order to understand the drawbacks of informal works.

Since Hart (1973) first discussed, “informal sector” can be defined as income generating activities which fall outside of formal legislation. In other words, informal sector is the illegal production of private goods and services (Portes&Centeno, 2006). Therefore, informal workers can be described as people who work without an official contract arrangement as in the case of home-based workers, industrial outworkers, irregular workers, temporary workers and part-time workers (Barrientos, 2012).

Informal economy in Third World countries was started to be discuss in 1960s by development economists and sociologists. Hart (1973) claimed that when rural people migrated to urban in order to be workers in factories, the urban economy could not absorb their labor force, thus, labor force gained a dual character which caused cheap labor. However, with the rise of competition between U.S.A, Europe and Japan, they had searched the ways to decrease the production cost. They had two alternatives which are deskilling with higher technology or reducing labor cost. Although establishment of higher technology in factories is a way to reduce the production cost by dividing production process, it is also a costly alternative. Therefore, they changed their production strategy which led them use these available cheap labor. Therefore, they established their factories in third world countries and took advantage from their people because in these countries there were not any obligation for employers to register their workers to the system. Moreover, in developing countries number of unregistered workers had increased too because of economic crisis and rural migration (Yukseker, 2003; Portes and Schauffler, 1993).

After all, it has continued to grow up despite workers’ organizations, state intervention and the process of industrialism in third world. Due to the aim of unions which protects workers’ rights and put pressure on employers, informal

sector purposed to break the solidarity among workers and their control on production process. Furthermore, state intervention on tax regulation and social security provision led employers to find another way to reduce cost. The ambition of being an industrialized country should be thought in relation with the extending informal economy because this ambition makes the governments more flexible while applying rules and regulations (Mansur, 1999).

The change in production strategy from import substitution to export orientation provided people, especially women with several jobs but not decent ones (Chant & Pedwell, 2008). They are forced to work at inferior jobs, with low wages, and through longer working hours because in these circumstances employment, social protection, workers' rights and social dialogue cannot be realized as ILO report declared.

3.2.2 Unregistered Women in Turkey

Along with structural adjustment in Turkey, export-oriented production became the primary goal of economic authorities with the support of IMF and World Bank. In addition, during the economic crisis, hidden economy through reinforcing factors such as unemployment, loss of productivity, and economic instability had caused to a (Kümbetoğlu et al, 2012). Together with migration from rural to urban, women were the best option in this hidden economy as the source of cheap labor (Dedeoğlu, 2010; Ecevit, 1993; Erman; 1997).

However, it should be considered that women also became willing to work outside the home. In Turkey, men in the households started to have difficulty in generating enough income for the entire family because of increasing unemployment rate as a result of smashing small-scale or self-employed enterprises and downsizing in private sector and government sector (Sönmez, 1996). This is the reason why women started to seek paid works in order to

'support' their husbands by providing extra income for their households (Erman, 2001). Erman says (2001; 123):

Increasing unemployment rates as a result of bankruptcy of the self-employed or small scale enterprises, downsizing in private and government sector and a decreasing number of stable and secure jobs in the formal sector are increasing pressure on migrant families to rely on women's economic contributions. Migrant women may have come to the city to get away from the heavy work in agriculture, yet in order to compensate for the decreasing family income they are joining the labor force in the city in increasing numbers.

Indeed, number of women in the labor force had increased in the 1980s and 1990s because women started to seek paid jobs, and on the other side, markets demanded cheaper laborers who could work flexible. In addition, decreasing available jobs in the formal sector resulted in the integration of women into the informal sector as less paid, flexible and uninsured workers (White, 2002; Erman, 2001; Moghadam, 1996).

Although, the number of women who work in unregistered works has been decreasing in the last five years as Table 1⁸ shows, women's position in the labor market preserves its inferiority. Therefore, types of women's job in unregistered employment and their working conditions should be discussed in further detail.

⁸ These data are taken from Turkish Statistics Institute website. I was not able to get it yearly because annual news releases do not include informal works statistics.

Table 1. Women's Employment by status in social security registration, between May 2010-May 2014 (Household Labor Force Survey news release announced on May 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014)⁹

	Total Employment	Unregistered	Unregistered ¹⁰ (%)
May-2010	6 682	3 934	58,9
May-2011	7 223	4 279	59,2
May-2012	7 589	4 210	55,5
May-2013	8 000	4 269	53,4
May-2014	7 974	3 952	49,6

Many of them worked by doing piecework either at home or in the workshops. Between 1989 and 1995, number of women who work by piece rose from 66,000 to 138,000 (Erman, 2001). In this way, they were able to carry out their duties in their families as housewives. However, they started to work outside the home as well. They were employed as cleaning ladies in the middle-class households or low-skilled informal workers in the manufacturing sector thanks to their 'natural' and 'traditional' talent on cleaning, knitting and sewing (White, 2002; Erman, 2001).

Either cleaners or low-skilled workers in small-scale textile workshops had similar working conditions. Their working conditions can be classified into three categories which are low payment, the lack of social security, and social pressure on them in the name of 'honor'.

First, it is necessary to understand that wage and skill is connected with each other because these women have suffered from lower payments because of this

⁹ <http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=16010> ,
<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=13566> ,
<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=10878> ,
<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/PreHaberBultenleri.do?id=8570> ,
<http://www.tuik.gov.tr/ZipGetir.do?id=6247&class=onceki>

¹⁰ Unregistered: Employed persons who were not registered to any social security institutions related to the main job. (Household Labor Force Survey News Release)

fact. However, it is essential to keep in mind that 'skill' is a socially constructed term. As many scholars discuss (Walby, 1986; Reskin, 1993; Erman, 2001; Ecevit, 1993) women's work could not be counted as 'skilled' jobs, since although their works require exclusive skill such as knitting and sewing, the works in which they are engaged are accepted as an extension of their traditional duties and responsibilities. On the other hand, men's jobs are labelled as skilled, thus, valued compared to women's jobs because they have enjoyed being at the public sphere and improving their skills in terms of qualifications, education and experiences and also they have muscle power that is required by employers in the industrial sector (Hartmann, 1976). Ecevit (1993) finds out that while female workers who sew or knit in the textile factories or workshops are defined as unskilled workers, male workers who cut fabrics are defined as skilled and rewarded by higher wage. As this example shows, the notion of 'skill' which makes women inferior in the labor market is gender-biased and socially constructed. Considering this fact, women have been suffered by low payment in return for involving traditional women's work.

Second, informal women workers are vulnerable because of the lack of social security. Small-scale textile workshops seek to enhance their profit so that they seek cheaper laborers who could work without social security; who are generally women (Dedeoğlu, 2010; Kümbetoğlu et al, 2010). They have regarded their works as temporary until their economic situation would be bettered. Thus, although they desire to be insured, they do not negotiate with their employers over social security (Erman, 2001; Erman 1997). Therefore, they are left unprotected against both unfair treatment and possible occupational hazards because they are invisible for legal institutions.

Third, their entrance to the labor market or maintenance in the labor market as paid laborers depends on their husbands' permission. Their husbands do not permit the women to work outside the home in cities which are known to be 'evil' to them (Erman et al, 2002). There are two reasons for not allowing or supporting women to work outside; which are the fear to lose family honor in

the society and the fear to damage male authority by decreasing control over women's domestic labor in the family. First of all, their husbands perceive working outside the home as a threat to family honor [namus]. Women's conducts belong to family honor which is controlled and protected by male members of family. Women's misconducts which are spread through 'gossips' could be punished by putting an end to women's working lives because these gossips are perceived as threats to family honor (Erman et al, 2002; Beşpınar, 2010). Therefore, these women pay a great attention on not being the subjects of gossips. For men, the fear of losing their male authority constitutes the second reason of why men do not feel comfortable about women's working outside the home. Additionally, they are worried about the possibility that women would neglect their duties and responsibilities as good wives and mothers (Erman et al, 2002; Beşpınar, 2010).

On the other hand, although husbands do not want their wives to work outside of home as low-paid workers or cleaning ladies, most of them could not resist to women's instances and economic difficulty in their households. Women have produced several strategies to get rid of these dilemma in the family and drawbacks in the workplaces.

3.3 Women's Work Related Strategies

As Walby (1990) defines patriarchy as 'a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women', women have experienced to be dominated, oppressed and exploited by men in the society (Erman, 2001). Therefore, women's paid works are perceived as a threat of losing power to dominate, oppress and exploit women. However, it is crucial not to neglect 'women's bargaining with patriarchy' in the dynamic relations between women and men in the patriarchal structure (Kandiyoti, 1988). Considering this fact, it can be said that women who work in low paid, informal

works have their own strategies for easing husbands' or fathers' oppositions, coping with difficulties in combining family and work life and surviving in the patriarchal workplaces. As Beşpınar (2010) prefers to use 'work related strategies' instead of 'work strategies', I also prefer to focus on 'work related strategies' while investigating literature so that I am able to include information on behaviors of unemployed women who think about working or postpone it.

First, women think that working in a paid job is an important requirement for well-being of the family because of economic hardship. The need of extra income in the households makes the situation negotiable among them. Their husbands or fathers think that outside the home is not appropriate for 'chaste' women because the city life has several danger for them like sexual harassment (Beşpınar, 2010; Kümbetoğlu, 2001). Therefore, women who are willingly to work outside the home find the ways to ease their husbands' and fathers' opposition. To wear a scarf and long, loose clothes helps women to show their husbands that even if they start to work outside the home in the city, they maintain to protect their family honor and modesty to family (Beşpınar, 2010). Specially wearing a scarf is a shield not to be harassed and be an object of rumor in neighborhood; which could cause not to get allowance from their husbands or fathers.

Second, they work with relatives or neighbors to show that their husbands or fathers their workplaces are 'clean'. Beşpınar (2010) describes 'clean workplace' as a workplace in which women are safer and do not get harm. It should be focused that even if works in the 'clean' workplaces are low-paid, inferior and informal, women prefer to work in there because they give more importance their reputation in order to keep their paid works going with permission of their husbands or fathers (Erman, 2001; Beşpınar 2010; Dedeoğlu, 2010; Kümbetoğlu et al, 2010). In brief, working with relatives or neighbors is a way to ease male members' opposition in the family because these networks convince men about the fact that there is no 'outsider' in the workplaces (White, 1994).

Third, working at the home could be another strategy to provide an extra income for their households. If a woman is not able to get allowance from their husbands or fathers, they prefer to stay at home and do piecework. On the other side, it should be considered that working at the home is more common among women who have toddlers or elder. They benefit from being at home by taking care of their children and doing housework so that their husbands cannot complain them not to neglect their 'fundamental' responsibilities as housewives (Erman, 2001; Beşpınar, 2010; White, 1994). In addition, women who work outside home are threaten not to let working so that they become more careful and meticulous in order to prevent men to complain about incomplete housework.

Fourth, they categorize their income in return for paid work outside the home as money for bazaar [pazar parası] while men's are counted as money for living [ekmek parası]. Men in the family are breadwinner when women are known as carers so that women's work cannot be as important as men's. Dedeoğlu (2010; 21) says and also refers to Walby:

As women's work is considered to be temporary and often pays less, their income is usually seen as pazar parası, while the income of men, burdened with earning enough to support the family, is considered to be money for bread (ekmek parası). This distinction corresponds with the family wage system, whereby men earn a wage sufficient to support their dependents whereas women's income is secondary or complementary to men's earnings (Sylvia Walby 1997).

To accept their jobs as temporary and consider their income as money for bazaar help women to show that they do not intend to question husbands' or fathers' authority as backbone of the family. Therefore, men feel not to lose power on their wives and are eased to allow them to work outside the home (Dedeoğlu, 2010; Erman, 2001).

To conclude, women who desire to work in paid jobs produce certain strategies for easing husbands' and fathers' opposition by not steal their thunders and being meticulous housewives and protecting themselves from both bad

reputation and sexual harassments. For that purpose, they are willingly to wear scarfs and long, loose clothes, preferring to work with relatives in a clean workplace, being a responsible housewives by supplying husband's demand in the home and considering their income less important than men's. However, it is essential to ask: are these strategies that aim long-term gain or are they temporary?

CHAPTER 4

4. MERSIN HÂL AND PACKING WOMEN

In order to reach an outcome on this research, there is a need to clarify our understanding on a Hâl and packing women. Therefore, in this chapter, I will first describe the Hâl including its history, structure and division of labor in it. Second, I will try to clarify who packing women are by giving information about the process they started working in the Hâl, their family reaction, and their motivations on working.

4.1 Mersin Hâl Structure

It is essential to understand the space where research is conducted because the space has its own characteristic features which create social dimensions accordingly. Therefore, in this section I will examine the historical development of Hâl and explain why Mersin Hâl is an enormous source for Turkey. Then, I will point out its physical structure. Next, I will describe types of workplaces located there with a focus on packing houses. After that, I will clarify the division of labor within workplaces.

4.1.1 Historical Background of Hâl: Bazaars

Hâl has been a unique workplace that includes features of *bazaar* with a traditional background from the Ottoman period. Bazaar is a term used for

describing a complex system or place where commercial activities take place and where people who live in nearby neighborhoods fulfill their social and economic necessities (Şahinalp&Günel, 2012). As Özdeş (1998) discusses, the Turkish equivalent of bazaar is “Çarşı” which is originally “Cihar-Suk”. “Cihar” means “four” in Persian and “Suk” means “streets” in Arabic. It defines the places on which bazaars are established. Özdeş describes bazaar as a shopping center located on both sides of streets with several workhouses. With this respect, “Hâl” can be described as a gross bazaar for vegetables and fruits in which commercial activities are carried out by brokers who buy products from local farmers and sell to retailers from other cities or countries.

It is essential to examine its historical background in the Ottoman periods because it helps to understand the structure of bazaars and Hâls as well. Ottoman Empire endeavored to build places that would increase economic activities in that area. For this purpose, they had built several bazaars, covered bazaars and public shelters but they also had constructed several public baths and mosques for those who were engaged in commercial activities. While trades routes were increased by means of several conquests, it increased the need for more bazaars which turned these cities into commercial centers in the end (Şahinalp&Günel, 2012).

It is clear that bazaars contain several bazaaris who have been its participants as Greetz (1978) discusses in his article, titled as *the Bazaar Economy: Information and Search in Peasant Marketing*. He conducted a research in Middle Atlas at Morocco for investigating bazaars as parts of peasant market system. He points out the fact that in Middle Atlas, bazaars are the source of income for local people by the employment opportunities it provides. This is valid for bazaars in Turkey as well because several farmers, weavers, merchants or ranches’ owners are employed in bazaars (Tunçel, 2009).

Although his work does not include any information about women labor force in bazaars, it can be claimed that in Ottoman Empire women were parts of this

labor force. I need to emphasize the fact that women were able to engage in activities in bazaars with the handworks like carpets or weaved products they produce through home-based work. Even if they formed an exclusive part of labor force at bazaars, they were not accepted and welcome in bazaars by male merchants who were members of the “Lonca¹¹”. Moreover, in Tanzimat era, women were not allowed to enter bazaars because of the prohibitive state (Dulum, 2006).

After giving above information about bazaars’ historical backgrounds, I believe it is clear why my field, Mersin Hâl, has been an important source of labor force in the region.

4.1.2 Establishment and Importance of Mersin Hâl

In my thesis, Mersin Hâl includes several workplaces as a huge complex which was re-established in 1992 with the aim of expanding its capacity. However, it was founded at 1926 by Italians. If we examine the year 1926, we can notice that all new buildings and institutions like Hâl, Port Company, first factory, Ottoman Bank and Commercial Stock Market were established in 1926 and served for the improvement of trade in Mersin (Aykın, 2001). From 1926 till today, Mersin preserves its importance as a port city and also for its lands that are among the most productive lowland in Turkey, Çukurova.

Due to the reasons that are discussed above, Mersin Hâl is counted as the most important Hâl in Turkey. Cukurova Lowland which includes Adana and Mersin is an essential source of agricultural production for Turkey because of its geographic features such as productive soil and Mediterranean climate (Kara, 1988). With this respect, Mersin Hâl which is run by Mersin Municipality is vital for both local community and also the other parts of Turkey. It supplies both job

¹¹ Each merchants were enrolled in a chamber which protected and improved their economic areas and their interest within those areas (Abuşoğlu, 1972).

opportunities and broker service for farmers to export their products to other cities in Turkey. Also, for other parts of Turkey, it provides an organized transportation facility for productions which are cultivated in those areas. As Kara says that although, industrialization and urbanization damage agricultural areas at Mersin and Adana; Cukurova Lowland preserves its importance as a source of agriculture.

Mersin Municipality declares that Mersin has the most intensive polyculture agricultural activities in Turkey by means of Cukurova Lowland where varied products can be cultivated in four seasons. Therefore, Mersin has a huge potential for economic activities in foreign and domestic market by improving commercial facilities. For this end, Mersin Hâl was re-established as the first in the Middle East and Balkans and second in the Europe.¹² There are several different workplaces in the Hâl as Table.2 shows:

Table.2: Types of Workplaces in the Mersin Hâl

Type of Workplaces	Number
Brokers	414
Producers' Unions	6
Sellers of Green Products	36
Forwarders	376
Wholesale Foods	204
Multi-Purpose Workplaces	246

Although, in my visit to the Hâl, I could not observe the distinct features of different workplaces; I realized buildings that serve for socialization and workplaces that involve in economic activities.

¹² I gained these declaration by applying Right to Information Act (Law No : 4982). I write an e-mail with a petition in which I asked information about the Hâl. I got a reply in August 13, 2014. These information are based on this reply.

4.1.3 Buildings at Mersin Hâl

Another important point is its physical structure which includes several streets, two mosques, coffee houses and also an association. There is only one entrance which has a consultation desk for visitors, workers and trucks. After entering the Hâl, there is a street just for restaurants and coffee houses for socialization. However, I need to emphasize that these coffee houses are classified as traditional coffee houses in which women are not allowed to enter (Oral, 1997). These coffee houses and restaurants are located in the same area so that women cannot go there for lunch even if there are not established rules that abolish it. Also, there are many buffets at corners of the streets that provide workers with snacks or tea. Furthermore, there is a bakery in the Hâl because actually employers do not order lunch from outside the Hâl, instead, packing women prepare the food for a workplace. In this context, there is a meaning behind operating a bakery inside the Hâl.



Picture 1. Entrance of Mersin Hâl (Öksüz, 2012)

Also, there are two mosques inside the Hâl. It is necessary here to mention that these mosques are mainly used by men. They are able to use the main floor for their worships whereas women have a separated and small place to engage in worshipping. Therefore, it can be said that these mosques also serve to male workers at Hâl like restaurants and coffee houses.

Besides, Hâl incorporates an administrative building and an association (Mersin Fruit and Vegetable Merchant Wholesalers Solidarity Association). As I have put earlier, Hâl is managed by the Mersin Municipality, thus, at the center of the Hâl there is an administrative building to supply communication between Hâl and Municipality. On the other hand, merchants at Hâl are also organized under an association which was established in 1975 and currently have 702 registered workers. On their website, they explain their aim as follows:

“Our members work for 81 cities in Turkey and also Europe, Middle East, Asian and Balkan countries as well by providing them with a hygienic, attentive and precise vegetables and fruits’ forwarding. In return, they contribute to the economic development of Turkey and they are the power to prevent imbalance prices.” (“Hakkımızda”, 2014)¹³

Actually they set a committee to decide daily price for products and then to negotiate it with other partners such as farmers, workers and municipality. It is relevant to mention that there is not a woman member inside this committee.

Ultimately, women workers do not have any place to go out and socialize inside the Hâl complex. They are actually not counted as parts of the Hâl, although the number of women workers are as high as men’s. During my interviews, I asked them whether they need a place for supplying their needs like changing rooms, gym or separate bathrooms. They were surprised by my question because they think that they do not need to socialize at workplace, they have to finish their work and have to return directly to their homes. Therefore, it can be claimed that women workers also do not consider themselves as parts of the Hâl; which

¹³ http://www.mesede.net/wp/?page_id=5

is a point that I will explain in the next chapter. However, before that I will describe types of workplaces and give more information about packing houses.

4.1.4 Types of Workplaces in the Hâl

There are many wide streets which has many shops located on both sides of them as Picture 2 shows. These workplaces can be classified in three which are broker shops, pack houses and forwarding agents. However, it should be noted that there is no sharp division among them. Thus, workplaces can involve in many tasks like many pack houses work as forwarding agents.



Picture 2: One of the Street in Mersin Hâl ("Mersin Yeni Hal Kompleksi | Mersin, Bina - Gezene Sor")

I explain how Hâl works with an example that is also part of our kitchens. Farmers who live in Mersin and around are engaged in agriculture throughout

the year and then they sell their products to brokers for small profits. Usually, farmers choose their brokers depending on their personal relationships; they prefer him because they share the same family origin or have some mutual friends. Broker shops are located at the forefront of the Hâl. After they buy villagers' products, they load them on a truck. Some of these broker shops work as packing houses and forwarding agents as well. I believe that the division of labor in the Hâl has become problematic in the last two decades. When I asked an employer of packing house why they are not involved in broking, they said that there is an order in the Hâl and each of them should be aware of their role and do not engage in others. However, when I mentioned multi-tasked broker agents, they said it was not like that two decades ago. I concluded that after the renewal of the Hâl, broker shops started to recognize their potential on export which led them to incorporate all other tasks in order to reduce costs and increase profits.

After brokers receive the products, they sell the products to packing houses in order to make them ready-to-sell to the markets all around Turkey and also close countries. There are two types of packing houses, one depending on technology and the other on labor power. Although there are a few packing houses that work with high technological devices and engaged only in packing, many packing houses are located in the same place with forwarding agents. High-tech packing houses are located at the corner of the streets because they need a bigger space compared to others.

On the other hand, forwarding agents which are located on the back front of the Hâl occupy smaller places and prefer to hire few women instead of working with high-tech companies in order to reduce the costs. In this type of packing houses, let me call them forwarding-packing houses, female workers sort fruits and vegetables once the rotten ones are removed, and put them in the crates and boxes to prepare a good presentation. When process of packing is finished, they distribute them to other cities or countries. Each forwarding-packing houses have their own access points to which products are sent. These access

points can vary based on personal relationships or traded products. For example, if an employer who is in charge of the forwarding-packing house is from eastern part of Turkey, he either uses his personal contacts to establish his business between Mersin and his hometown or if he processes citrus fruits more, he prefers to work with other cities in which citrus fruits cannot be cultivated because of the climate. Forwarding-packing agents work a couple of days in a week because they are organized to finish their work as soon as possible.

4.1.5 Division of Labor at Forwarding-Packing Houses

Division of labor would be preferable point to start in order to understand packing women because who they are not is also a determinant in this context. Before describing, I need to describe the physical features of a forwarding-packing house which is crucial to grasp how workers work there.

Forwarding-packing houses are located at the outermost of the Hâl entrance. A house looks like a truck garage as Picture 3 depicts. Inside the houses, there are kitchens, toilets and an office for the employer. Kitchens which are located at the back front and mostly on the second floor belong to women. Toilets are shared by women and male workers but women do not feel insecure because there are keys to lock from inside. They compare these toilets with agricultural field which they are used to work because while they were working at fields, there was no separated place to relieve themselves. They actually feel grateful to employers for the keys. Moreover, there is a small room with a table and some chairs in it for the employer so that he can host his guests and deal with arranging the financial issues of the house.



Picture 3: One of the Forwarding-Packing Houses (Öksüz, 2012)

Forwarding- packing houses have three different type of workers which are crating/carriers men [Kasacılar], foot servants [Ayakçılar] who are usually old or disabled men and less qualified compared to crating men, and packing female workers [Ambalajcılar, Paketleyiciler].

After products arrive at the pack houses, crating men are responsible for carrying them and putting them in front of women. Then, when packing women finish putting products inside of the crate, crating men have to carry the crate and place it inside the truck. Their work continue until the truck is ready to be forwarded. Although, some of houses have technological devices to make carrying easier, most of them use their muscle power to lift them up. They are relevantly stronger and middle-aged men. Most of them work without insurance as unregistered workers but if employers need to register a worker in order to prove they have a registered worker inside their workplaces, employers choose to insure a carrier man. Most of them can be categorized as breadwinners in the society, they gain priority among others. They are day-laborers who earn 25, 46 \$ per a day. Their shift begin at 7.00 a.m. and finish at 5.00 p.m. but it should be considered that compared to packing women and foot servants, they generally

work overtime after 5.00 p.m. so that they are paid extra 2, 31 \$ for each hour after 5.00 p.m.

When packing women start removing rejected products, foot servants need to clean them up and have to give crates and packing papers to women for the packing process. As I observed and discussed with both male and female workers, foot servants cannot be women because the job necessitates being strong enough to carry many crates at the same time. If packing process needs extra labor, it cannot be provided by crating men. Those who help packing women are part of foot servants. However, these men are not qualified to be carrier workers because they are not strong enough to carry full-crates. They are elder or with some disability in their bodies. They have family but most probably their children are married. Their working conditions are same as crating men. They start working at 7.00 a.m. and finish at 5.00 p.m. but they are less likely to be registered with an insurance. Also, their daily wage is 25, 46 \$. They are not asked to work overtime if women do not need an extra hand because crating men can cover their work for them during overtime.



Picture 4: A Packing Woman Who is Sorting Oranges into the Crate. (Tekin, 2013)

On the other hand, women are at the bottom of this hierarchy. Their job is to remove rejected products and to sort them into crates with a good presentation. They are also responsible for daily cleaning and cooking. They are predominantly single, widow or married women. Their ages differ because students or elderly women can also engage in packing. They usually find the job through a relative or a neighbor. All of them are day-laborers who work for 2-3 different forwarders in a week without any social security. They work between 7.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. in return for 25, 46 \$ TL, they are paid extra 2, 31 \$ for each hour after 5.00 p.m. I could make a brief introduction to introducing packing women through these explanations. In the next section, I will give further information on how they became a paid laborer, whether their family support them or not, and why they insist on working.

4.2 Packing Women in Mersin Hâl

It is essential to discuss the position of packing women within their family in order to analyze why they need to produce tactics for surviving at the Hâl. The existence of these tactics are rooted in patriarchy at family in which women experience an inferior position. Before clarifying their participation in the labor market, I will give a brief summary of my interviewees to show how they vary in terms of their stories.

I interviewed 19 people in total, 18 of them were packing women and one of them was an employer who actually wanted to talk with me. 6 of them are single, one of them is widow and 11 of them are married. The most experienced woman has been working for 45 years while the least one has been working only for 1 month. The average number of work years is 16, 05. The highest education level is secondary school. The demographic features of my respondents can be viewed in Table 1 which includes their age, marital status, region, education, number of children that they have, information about

whether their family support them or not, how they spend their income, and the years they have spent working at the Hâl.

Table 3. The Demographic Features of Participants

Age	Marital Status	Region	Education	Number of Children	Does your family / husband support ?	For whom do you spend your money?	Experience
43	Married	Hatay	Literate	1	No	Myself	34
33	Married	Diyarbakır	Secondary	2	No	Home	4
42	Not Married	Hatay	Primary	None	Yes	Myself	25
36	Married	Urfa	Primary	3	No	Home	1
37	Married	Silifke	Primary	2	No	Home	10
45	Married	Karaman	Primary	2	Yes	Home	5
46	Married	Hatay	Secondary	None	Yes	Home	20
41	Married	Silifke	Primary	2	Yes	Husband	25
25	Married	Silifke	Secondary	1	Yes	Husband	12
40	Not Married	Hatay	Primary	None	Yes	Home	20
37	Not Married	Hatay	Primary	none	Yes	Home	13
40	Married	Maraş	Primary	2	Yes	Home	25
58	Widow	Mersin	None	5	No	Home	45
39	Married	Muş	Primary	4	No	Myself	20
33	Married	Adana	Primary	Pregnant	No	Myself	1 month
13	Not Married	Diyarbakır	Student	None	No	Myself	2
15	Not Married	Adana	Student	None	Yes	Home	2
41	Not Married	Diyarbakır	Primary	None	No	Myself	10

As Table 1 indicates they have different features in terms of age, origin and education. However, how they were welcome by employers at the Hâl and how

their family react to their choice to work is quite the same. They also share common points in their intentions and motivations which lead them to cope with drawbacks of working by bringing tactics and practices out.

4.2.1 From Unpaid Family Workers to Packing Women

Their entry to the Hâl as packing women is not a coincidence. Their first daily jobs have been packing because it was settled by their employers. As elder packing women stated, many of them have been working in their villages as agricultural workers before working at the Hâl. However, during 1960s someone who was called “Sergeant” [Çavuş] came to their village and offered them jobs as packing women. For women workers, the Sergeant should be a woman who visits villages and fields located there, and offers female gatherers to work in the Hâl. The Sergeant gets a daily-wage for each woman who she can convince to work for herself. However, sergeants do not stop gathering new workers, after these women accept her offers and start working at the Hâl,. The duties of these sergeants have changed in time to maintaining the order of hiring packing women. Each employer has their own sergeant who is responsible for deciding the women that will work for the house. One of them describe their sergeant in these words:

She is responsible to find workers for packing. She goes from door to door or gives us call and asks whether we want to work at the Hâl or not. Then we ask her what the conditions are because we cannot work for any job (Age 15, Not Married, Worked for 3 years).¹⁴

However, it is needed to put emphasis on the fact that daily-wages of sergeants are paid by a portion of packing women’s wage. For example, if a sergeant finds 30 packing women for different workplaces, she gets 75 \$ in a day by getting 2, 5 \$ for each woman. In other words, workers earn 25 \$ in a day instead of 27, 5

¹⁴ Çavuş ambalaj için işçi bulmaktan sorumludur. Kapı kapı dolaşır, telefon eder bize. İş var bu işte çalışmak ister misiniz diye sorar. Biz de sorarız ne işi? Her işte çalışmak olmaz sonuçta.

\$ so that employers do not pay extra money for sergeants and do not deal with women workers. Employers argue that women solve their problem among themselves.

Eventually, they started to work in Hâl with first step of employers who are all men because they asked sergeant to find those women. For almost 50 years, they have hired women for packing because they claimed that women are the best in packing. First, it is important to pay attention on the existence of “packaging or packing” as a part of production line to understand why they decided to hire women. Serving products with an esthetic appearance became the way of getting more profit from the market, good appearance attracts customers’ demands. (Rettie&Brewer, 2000). Therefore, employers started to look for workers to do it with a minimum cost. With this respect, packing is known as kind of a routine job which is done by sitting in front of the products all day. Actually, routine jobs are regarded as feminine which are inferior compared to men’s work due to women’s so-called natural patience (Reskin, 1993). In addition, those potential workers should have a knowledge of vegetables and fruits. Therefore, women were considered as the best candidates for packing as one employer said:

Nomads engaged in agriculture after they settled. In summer, these women used to grow citrus, mostly lemon. They packed these lemons in order to send them to Ürgüp for storage at the end of the summer. If it is supposed to be 150 lemons in the crates, it cannot be 151. They do not count one by one but they know. They gained handiness. They pack lemons like doing needle work. Products within good packages are durable, for preventing them from rotting. They also remove the bad ones. So, we hired them because they already know the job and we can make use of them (Male, Employer).¹⁵

¹⁵ Yörükler yerleşik hayata geçtikten sonra tarımla uğraştılar. Bu kadınlar da yazın turuncgiller yetiştirdi, genelde limon. Kışa doğru sahile gidip topladıkları limonları Ürgüp’teki depolara yollamak için ambalaj yaparlardı. 150 tane olması gerekiyorsa o sandıkta 151 çıkmaz. Saymazlar da ama bilirler. El yatkınlığı kazandılar. Oya işler gibi ambalaj yapıyorlar. Bu da bizim için gerekli. Dayanıklı olur güzel ambalajlı ürünler. Kırılan olmaması için. Kötü olanları da ayıklarlar hem içinden. Biz de işe alırken işte nasıl olsa biliyorlar, işimize yararlar diye aldık kadınları.

By hiring women in forwarding-packing houses, employers started to benefit from women's 'natural' abilities. They have used women for cooking and cleaning which are regarded as the duties of women in the society as well. Women are responsible for cooking for almost 5-6 workers, sometimes more, in twice a day, then they have to clean whole workplace without any extra payment at the end of the day. One of the middle-aged male workers who is engaged in carrying crates said that it is because women are docile and employers have the power of controlling them, women obey without questioning. When I interviewed a packing woman and asked her why her boss prefer to hire women, she said:

Boss has hired them intentionally because they are docile, women are docile. For example, he cannot yell at male workers as he yells at women to make them work faster because men are angry and yell him back. It creates fights.¹⁶

Above explanations clarify that employers want them because it is easy to exploit them by using them in 'inferior' jobs and taking advantages from their socially constructed abilities like cooking and cleaning. On the other side, how they decide to be packing women should be analyzed from their own perspectives. They have several reasons to decide working outside home like meeting their needs which are decided by themselves. The oldest ones said that they were teens in those days and their family sent them to work in the Hâl because they needed cash money for the family or wanted their girls to take care of themselves. One of them said:

I am the only one who works. I had 6 brothers and sisters. I and my sister did not marry, others are married and separated. My parents have garden in our village which they work on. They supported me in my wish to work because I have never been a burden on them. They said that we need to take care of ourselves. They did not demand my income because I

¹⁶ Patronlar bilerek alıyorlar kadınları işe çünkü onlar yumuşak başlılar, kadınlar öyle. Mesela erkek işçilere hızlı çalışması için bağırılmaz kadına bağırıldığı gibi çünkü erkekler sinirli onlara bağırırlar. Bu kavga yaratır.

have already relived them by not being a burden on them (Age 42, Not Married, Worked 25 years).¹⁷

Although there are packing women who said they do not give their money to their family by cash, they are all agreed on the fact that they have to help them if there is a need. For example, they are many who give cash money to their family while waiting the harvest season because while their family have been engaging in agriculture, until cultivation they need income to sustain their living. Another example could be their family's special needs like weddings:

They support me. They wanted us to take care of ourselves. They did not want my money but I relieved them by not being a burden on them. I only gave my money to them for my brother's wedding (Age 42, Not Married, Worked 25 years).¹⁸

In short, they were allowed to work because they were regarded as burdens on their families. They declare that it is because their parents started not to take care of all children with the income they gain from agriculture. It is simply because of poverty that forced their parents to send their daughters to work outside home while they were continuing to invest in their sons' future by sending them to schools or giving them money for their weddings or jobs as many packing women said. However, as White (1994) also discusses, when a comparison is made between daughters and sons, sons are seen as investments to the family's future so that they prefer not to consider their sons as a burden on them.

This is how women engaged in the labor market at Mersin Hâl. The reasons can be listed as follows: parents' seeking for decreasing the economic burden on the family and gathering extra cash, and employers' need for packing workers who

¹⁷ Ailede bir tek ben çalışıyorum. 7 kardeşlik. Bir kız kardeşim bir ben kaldık. Onlar köyde bağ bahçeyle uğraşıyorlar. Çalışmamı desteklediler çünkü onlara yük olmadım. Siz kendinizi idare edin diyorlardı. Paramı istemediler ama onlara yük olmadığım için rahatlattım onları.

¹⁸ Çalışmamı desteklediler çünkü onlara yük olmadım. Siz kendinizi idare edin diyorlardı. Paramı istemediler ama onlara yük olmadığım için rahatlattım onları. Onlara sadece erkek kardeşim evleneceği zaman para verdim.

can easily be placed at the bottom of hierarchy at the Hâl because of the qualifications and requirements of the job. As a result of these, women have turned from unpaid family workers into paid laborers as packing workers. However, after these transformation was completed, the conflict over their work are not yet solved inside the family because of the social norms which are not moderate about women's work.

4.2.2 Support from Whom?

In the family, women are seen as sources of domestic labor like cleaning, cooking and caring children and elders. In fact, they do not attain a permanent position within the family because they are likely to pass to another family as brides or "Gelin", literally "the one who comes" in Turkish. After they are "taken" by another family through marriage, they need to serve their parents-in-law (White, 1994). Therefore, working outside home is a serious issue in the family because if she works, who is going to deal with the cleaning and cooking, and who is going to take care of children instead of her?

It is obvious that working outside home could create conflicts within family or among couples. Husband's permission is one of the most important determinant on women employment. Women employment depends on husband's permission in Turkey. I believe that it is the one of the most important barriers to women employment. In her research on women who worked in factories in Bursa, Ecevit (1991) says that 40% of female workers had to get permission from their husbands, 40% of them were forced to get permission from their fathers and others were faced with rejections from other family members.

Half of the packing women in my study are supported by their families or husbands and half of them are not. However, when I furthered our conversation in issues like whether they are married or not, who controls their income and where their husbands work, it can hardly be said that those women are

liberated from their husbands' permission. First, four women among nine who claim that their family support their work are single. As I said before, they are in a more powerful position in the family because after their brothers got married, they are in the charge of the household by putting cash money in. Additionally, they are not taken care by their fathers. One of my participants said:

They supported my work because I have never been a burden on them. They said that we need to take care of ourselves. (Age 42, Not Married, Worked 25 years).¹⁹

Another one said:

I am the only one who work outside but I also work in home. I put cash money in home eventually. (Age 37, Single, Worked 23 years).²⁰

Second, two of the married women who are supported by their husbands work with their husbands in the same workplaces. It can be claimed that their husbands do not need to take cautions for preserving their power on their wives. Also, those packing women give their daily wages to their husbands. Therefore, although those women are supported for working outside the home, they are not empowered in return. They are always protected and controlled by their husbands and they do not have an authority on deciding how to spend their income.

On the other hand, those who are not supported by their husbands or children are all married except for one who is suggested to get retired and one who is only 13 years old. When I asked why their family do not want them to work, only two of them could answer my questions. One of them said:

My husband does not support me. But working is not a shame. He wants me to serve only to him. I also need money. (Age 39, Married, Worked 20 years).²¹

¹⁹ Çalışmamı desteklediler çünkü onlara yük olmadım. Siz kendinizi idare edin diyorlardı. Paramı istemediler ama onlara yük olmadığım için rahatlattım onları.

²⁰ Dışarıda bir ben çalışıyorum ama evde de çalışıyorum. Eve nakit para sokuyorum sonuçta.

And the other one said that her husband beats her by saying working is a sin for women. However, it was surprised me that the rest could not find the answer of the question. They just said that they do not know why. They guess that it is taught by their parents.

Eventually, while their parents allow them to work, their husbands do not let them to work because there are supposed to stay at home for cooking, cleaning and caring. A good mother should be at home and look after their children and a good father should not let his wife work. It is regarded as a sign for insufficiency for men in the family. Many packing women declare that their husbands are right to feel uncomfortable about their wives' working experience. They asked me to look around and tell why a woman wants to work at the Hâl while being surrounded by strange men. In the next section, I discussed the drawbacks of working at the Hâl from the perspective of packing women.

4.2.3 Disadvantages of Working at the Hâl as a Packing Woman

First of all, they all complained that packing as a job is so hard to continue all day because they have to sit over their knees and go over tons of products with smelling their dust. Deniz Tekin who is a reporter in DİHA (Dicle News Agency) interviewed packing women after their strike. One of her interviewees said:

Our work is a heavy work. Therefore, 90 % of those who work as packing workers grow herniated disc or cervical disc herniation diseases. As long as you are healthy, you can work there ("Mersin Hali'nde kadın işçilerin ücret eylemi sürüyor", 2013)²²

²¹ İstemiyor o çalışayım. Çalışmak ayıp bir şey değil. O diyor ki bana hizmet et sadece. Para bana da lazım.

²² <http://www.evrensel.net/haber/70946/mersin-halinde-kadin-iscilerin-ucret-eylemi-suruyor>

They generally use cartoons or thin cushions for sitting on during working time regardless of the weather. Together with limited breaks in working hours, these conditions harm their health with respiratory and hernia diseases.

Second, treatments of these diseases depend on their health insurance. If they do not have any, they have to spend a sizeable amount of money to hospitals for treatment. They carry a risk to get sick because of these working conditions but they are not integrated to health system because of the informality. Also, they cannot retire because of unregistered workers without noticing how many years they have worked. Many of them pay their social security premiums themselves.

According to the first paragraph of Article 4 (b) of Law No. 5510 (2006), those who do not work or work less than 30 days can pay their social security premium themselves. They are forced to pay their premiums in place of their employers, although they work 6 days a week. They work at several workplaces in a week, they have more than one employer none of which want to register them. Unfortunately, they have a vulnerable position in the social security system of Turkey.

Third, they need to be fast and practical not to hear any scolding from their employers. They are afraid of being rebuked by their bosses. For example, in my second visit to the Hâl, I preferred bigger forwarding-packing houses. When I entered to ask whether they want to make interview with me or not, they asked me to get permission from their boss. I had to ask their boss for permission, then he asked me how long it would take. My interviews generally took 20 minutes so I said him that I need 20 minutes. However, he did not allow me to talk with them. Instead, he asked me to wait for 30 minutes after which I could make interviews in their 15-minutes break. Employers are so strict in controlling women in workplaces when male workers are more autonomous in arranging their works.

Fourth, their insecurity in the workplace directed me to find my outcomes. They feel insecure in the Hâl because they have to work with several strange men in patriarchal workplaces in which men occupy powerful positions and women are inferior. One of them said:

Here women are perceived and treated like slags, they think whether they can take us to bed. But, of course it depends on women, if a woman holds herself back, work honorably and go directly back her home. Some women are not like that (Age 43, Married, Worked 34 years).²³

Another one said:

Every day, you are in elsewhere. You work with different strangers. If you work appropriately, it is not bad. Why would happen bad things if a woman works with honor (Aged 25, Married, Worked 12 years)?²⁴

Women are afraid of being alone in the Hâl because of working with male strangers. They feel insecure about being harassed by men. I think, it is the reason why they justify their husbands' unwillingness for giving permission to them. During my interviews, they were shocked when they heard that I was alone in the Hâl as a woman. Each one, no exception, suggested me not to walk around alone. However, if they prefer to work as packing women, we might expect that they need to have some positive outcomes or motivations as well.

4.2.4 Motivations and Positive Outcomes behind Working at the Hâl as a Packing Woman

Those women who work at the Hâl have been working for at least 50 years and do not give up working despite these drawbacks. I believe that there would be

²³ Buradaki bayanları başka gözle bakarlar, basit görürler, hani böyle elde edebilir miyim diye bakarlar. Ama tabii bu kadına bağlı, kadın kendini tutarsa, namusu şerefiyle çalışırsa evine giderse. Bazı kadınlar böyle değil.

²⁴ Hergün başka yer, tanımadığın bir sürü insanla tanışıyorsun. Sen uygun çalışırsan kötü olmaz, Namuslu çalışırsan niye kötü bir şey olsun.

significant outcomes of or motivations behind working in the Hâl such as gaining social network, working flexible hours and earning money.

First, many of them agree on the fact that working with several other women provides them protection and network of trust. They trust previous women workers who worked there and also their sergeant because she helps them to find the job in the Hâl and guarantees them that workplaces are 'OK'. One of the packing women said:

We asked our sergeant what the job is because we do not work at anywhere. We have to ask. She said Hâl business. Then we asked how the environment was, she replied it is OK. After all, we are here (Aged 15, Not Married, Worked for 2 years)²⁵.

As she says, many of them feel more secure thanks to their sergeants, neighbors or relatives who work as packing women at the main entrance of the Hâl. After that, existence of women in the Hâl makes them feel safer. Many of them say that they actually reject to work as cleaning ladies or babysitters although they are aware of the fact that if they want to work, they could find such jobs in the cities. While they think that it would be dangerous to work alone in a stranger's house, there are 'sisters' in the Hâl and they watch out themselves.

Wacquant (1998) describes Bourdieu's social capital as resources gained by virtue of membership in a group. In the Mersin Hâl, it can be claimed that being a packing women in Hâl creates a protected circle for those women through their social capital.

Second, for packing women, another positive side of working as a packing woman is about flexibility of working conditions. Many women claimed that they feel freer in Hâl because they can choose their workplaces and their working days. If they are engaged in a formal job, they might not take a break

²⁵ Biz de ne işi diyoruz. Her işe gitmiyoruz. Sormadan gidilmez. Hâl işi demişti. Biz dedik ortam nasıl. Dedi valla ortam güzel. İşte buradayız.

whenever they need in case of family issues because of strict working days and hours. One of them said:

Hâl is freer. Children are barriers to regular jobs. If I did not have any children, I would look for a job with social security. But now, I work whenever I want (Age 36, Married, Worked 1 year).²⁶

Packing women leave and go back to work easily because they do not have a contractual relationship with any of the workplaces. Therefore, they neither know nor deal with legal procedures for leaves such as maternity leave or an annual leave. In addition, there is not a possibility of being rejected because their work does not require being updated on the improvements of the sector like in the case of middle-upper class jobs as Beşpınar (2010) discusses.

I guess that the last point can be misread by those who support ‘flexibility’ for increasing women’s employment. However, it should be kept in mind that they are vulnerable because their jobs are informal, inferior and low-paid.

However, apart from working in Hâl we need to pay attention to their insistence on “working”. During the interviews, they used following words while talking about the work: “not being in need [muhtaç olmamak]”, “not depending on [eline bakmamak]”, “being useful [işe yaramak]”, “feeling strong [güçlü hissetmek]” and “feeling offended [zoruna gitmek]”. With this respect, it is obvious that working has changed their life in a good way. They gained an autonomy in the family through their income. Their power on decision mechanism in the family has increased as a result of their income. For example one of my participant said:

I and my husband work. He works as a truck driver. He does not want me to work. But I do. I can buy what I want easily. I can buy dowry for my daughter and send money to her and my son. I spend for my home. My husband spends for his work. He bought a truck and pays its credit and buys some stuff for the truck. I decide everything about home. He does not get involved house works because he does not want to spend

²⁶ Kocam ve ben çalışıyoruz. Kamyon şoförü o. Burası daha serbest, devamlı işe çocuk engel. Çocuk olmasa sigortalı iş bakardım. Ama böyle istediğim zaman çalışıyorum istemediğim de çalışmıyorum.

money. I decide because I spend for it (Age 37, Married, Worked 10 years).²⁷

However, it should be considered that although their power in decision making is related to domestic issues, it is necessary to pay attention that they are able to control and spend their income.

In addition, working makes women stronger against difficulties in their lives. One of the women whose husband is in jail has to take care of two children at school age. She said:

I look what I was and what I am now. I feel freer and also I struggle with all troubles. Before that, I just took care of my house and husband but now both my husband, children, house and my work. If I stayed at home in whole day, I would feel depressed but in here I delve into work and forget my problems.(Age 37, Married, Worked 3 years).²⁸

Being in public and dealing with several issues makes them notice their potential to cope with problems, thus, increase their self-esteem.

To sum up, it can be claimed that motivations for working at the Hâl which are working with other women and flexible working days and financial and social gains of employment like being more powerful in decision making process in their family and feeling stronger, increasing self-esteem encourages women to ease their family position about their decision of working. However, it also forces women to produce tactics and abide compromises for surviving in the Hâl.

²⁷ İstemiyor çalışmamı Hâlde çalışmamı. Ama ben çalışıyorum. İstediklerimi rahat rahat alıyorum. Kızıma çeyiz yapıyorum. Kızıma yolluyorum (2 yıllık üniversite okuyor), oğluma yolluyorum (askerde). Eve harcıyorum. Eşim kendine harcıyor. Kamyon aldı. Onun kredisini ödüyor. İçine harcıyor. Evle alakalı her şeye ben karar veririm. Zaten o para harcamamak istediği için evin işlerine karışmaz, ben evle ilgilendiğimden eve de ben harcıyorum.

²⁸ Neydim ne oldum diye düşünüyorum. Hem özgür hissediyorum hem daha zorluklarla mücadele ediyorum daha önce sadece evimle eşimle ilgilenirdim, hem onlar hem çocuk, hem iş hem eşimle ilgineliyorum. Hani evde olsam daha sıkıntılar geçiririm psikolojik olarak hani burda işe daldım mı unutuyorum.

CHAPTER 5

5. COMPROMISES AND TACTICS FOR SURVIVING AT THE HÂL AS PACKING WOMEN

This chapter explains my findings. I claim that although there are compromises like the insistence on being honorable [namuslu], women develop their own tactics such as accepting their working positions as inferior, being invisible, creating a so-called family environment in the workplaces to endure the pressures of patriarchy which would otherwise end their jobs at the Hâl or their “happiness” in the family. However, in the end, I need to admit that these tactics and compromises that they obey without questioning re-produce the patriarchy at the workplace like a vicious cycle. While working outside the home decompose some patriarchal norms at family through gained autonomy and power as a result of women’s income, different forms of patriarchy at the workplaces keep women inferior in workplaces and society.

5.1 Inferiority through Vertical Gender Segregation

In my study, I argue that gender segregation which is a result and a cause of social inequality makes packing women inferior in their workplaces. However, I claim that women benefit from involving in inferior jobs and underlining their jobs’ inferiority to ensure their position at the Hâl. If their jobs are not labelled as womanly jobs which are regarded as easy, simple, routine and do not require

any knowledge and skill, men might engage in packing so that employers do not hire women and prefer men as packing workers. Before I discuss their tactics, I believe that it is required to discuss segregation at workplace and definition of men's and women's work in order to understand why and how they produce tactics.

It is essential to discuss what segregation means in the Hâl to analyze how women are perceived inferior. Segregation is described as physical and social separation of members of different social groups. Particularly, it occurs when minority groups based on ethnicity, religion, race and gender are isolated from the majority (Hartman&Reskin, 1986). However it should be noted that it does not only mean physical separation. As Reskin (1993) points out, segregation is an important part of social inequality because majority and minority groups are treated differently by subjecting groups to different reward systems. In addition, the rules in this context are set directly by majority, or in a way that favors majority.

The notion of sex segregation at workplace was introduced by Gross (1968) to describe women's and men's preferences in different occupations or different workplaces. As I stated above, female and male workers are quite separated in the Hâl in terms of places where they work and socialize. There is a strict border between packing women and crating men in terms of their status in the Hâl. Gender segregation can occur in two ways at workplace which are horizontal occupational gender segregation and vertical occupational gender segregation. (Reskin,1993).

Horizontal segregation is how the sector is predominated by a particular gender. For example, child care service sector is mainly composed of female workers because women's practices at home as carers create a perception that women are natural carers (Browne, 2006). In the Hâl context, I do not claim that there is a sector-based horizontal segregation because in the process of delivering prepared food to customers, there are several processes and works

that belong both to women and men starting from cultivation to selling the products. It should be considered that 'packing' is a job within the food processing sector and it is defined as women's jobs.

However, vertical segregation explains how opportunities of career progression within the sector are shaped by gender. It is proven that women are less likely to work in the high-level positions. Caprile et al states (2010):

Vertical segregation referred to the under (over) representation of a clearly identifiable group of workers in occupations or sectors at the top of an ordering based on 'desirable' attributes – income, prestige, job stability etc, independently of the sector of activity. Under representation at the top of occupation-specific ladders was subsumed under the heading of 'vertical segregation', whereas it is now more commonly termed 'hierarchical segregation' (Bettio&Verashchagina, 2009, p. 32).

Reading above citation by considering the Hâl structure makes us more conscious of how packing women are inferior in the segregated workplace. Bettio and Verashchagina (2009) sort the requirements of 'desirable' work as income, job stability and prestige. First, although packing women and crating men gain the same amount of daily-wage, crating men gets more than women at the end of the day because they get approximately 8 \$ more in return for working overtime. Employers demand male workers to stay at the workplaces to finish loading the truck after women end their works. Therefore, it can be claimed that crating men earn more than packing women. Second, job stability is counted as one of the requirements for a desirable job. Packing women have to work at two or three different workplaces in a week; it depends on which workplaces request them to work. On the other hand, although crating men also work at two or three different workplaces, they have settled weekly-agreements with employers. They have weekly schedules so that they do not feel the fear of unemployment for even a day in a week as opposed to packing women. Third, Bettio and Verashchagina (2009) discuss that prestige is a source of desirability for a job. In the Hâl, packing work is not desired by men not because of its low payment but because of its low prestige.

Indeed, I need to explain why crating men deny involving in packing by labeling it as a womanly work in order to clarify how women benefit from their inferiority.

5.1.1 *Packing as a Women's Work*

Valuing work, called work as skilled is always socially constructed. During the industrialist era men's work has gained more value than women's due to the fact that the system needed manpower. Therefore, the definition of skills is tied to men's work instead of women's, and the level of skills was used to determine the wage of labor (Rees, 1992). She summed up:

Feminization of a particular occupation or profession is seen to have the effect of deskilling it. Where certain professions which previously excluded women altogether, such as law and medicine, have admitted women, new profession: women do not necessarily enjoy the status and pay and conditions that previously accrued only to men.

In other words, feminization of a work causes the decrease of its desirability in the labor market since men are skilled workers and cannot be engaged in inferior jobs that do not require qualified skills (Bradley et al, 2000). In the Hâl, men are known to be strong and women are defined as being patient and docile. One of the respondents who is not married, 42 years old and has worked for 25 years in the Hâl says:

Men cannot succeed in packing. How can we do other works? We are not strong enough. They also cannot sit all day. Indeed, we are used to these kind of jobs (Aged 42, Not Married, Worked 25 years).²⁹

Most of the packing women declare that men cannot handle packing because their nature does not allow 'sitting all day', and they are used to being busy even

²⁹ Erkekler beceremez çünkü sıkılır. Biz diğer işleri nasıl yapalım gücümüz yetmez. Onlar da sabahtan akşama kadar oturamaz. Biz alışınız hem böyle işlere.

in their free time. In Turkish, 'sitting all day' is a phrase to express how a person does not work all day, how she or he wastes her or his time without involving any wage earning work in their daily life. To work as a packing worker make men seem useless. During an interview with a packing woman, I asked "why she defined packing as women's work" and "why men do not want to work as packing workers". A crating man says;

I prefer to work on my feet for a week without break but women are used to sit all day (Crating man, middle aged).³⁰

Therefore, in the Hâl, packing is regarded as a job that does not require any skill so that men do not involve in.

Furthermore, it is thought that sorting products neatly requires nimble fingers and a good taste which are earned by birth by women. By means of their nimble fingers, they are the most appropriate candidate for this kind of jobs, one of employer says:

If it is supposed to be 150 lemons in the crates, it cannot be 151. They do not count one by one but they know. They gained handiness. They pack lemons like doing needle work.

Sorting 150 lemons without counting is actually a skill but it is regarded as a natural talent by the employer.

Being packing women does not require knowledge or skill, it depends on talent which entails being a woman. Many female and male workers agree on the fact that those who want to work as packing workers need to be talented and tasteful like artists. One of the packing women says:

This is a women's work and we are beauticians of vegetables. Women knows the best and the most beautiful better than men (Aged 45, Married, Worked 5 years).³¹

³⁰ Bir hafta ayakta çalışmayı tercih ederim ama kadınlar alışkın bütün gün oturmaya.

³¹ Kadın işi tabi bu. Bizler sebze kuaförleriyiz. Kadınlar daha iyi bilir iyiyi de güzeli de.

Another respondent says:

Women are neater and faster than men, they do their works smoothly. This is a women's work and an art and we are the artists (Aged 40, Married, Worked 25 years).³²

As above examples show, packing as a women's work do not need skill, it requires being a woman. When I asked crating men why they do not admire to work as packing workers, they actually cannot find a proper answer and say that it is appropriate for women's nature.

In this respect, if a man involves in a women's work like packing, his action is regarded as disobedience towards his masculinity and men's nature. There are a few men who are engaged in packing as a wage-earning job like Remzi and Mustafa.³³ Although, most of my respondents have not met them face to face since they work at different workplaces, they are aware of their existence through rumors. Although packing women trust these men more than crating men, both crating men and packing women make fun of them by tagging them as "gay", "sister" or "faggot". Dunne (1998) discusses how homosexuality damages a male-dominated society by shaking the masculinity of men. Therefore, I claim that by calling Remzi and Mustafa "gay", "sister" or "faggot", they deny their male existences and "insult" them. One packing woman says:

This is not suitable for men. It could be weird. Ladies are ladies; man is man but faggots [ibneler] do this job. There are Remzi and Mustafa. Their below parts are men. God forbid but creates them (Aged 39, Married, Worked 20 years).³⁴

They are more invisible and inferior to women in the workplaces because they are not allowed to have breakfast/lunch with other co-workers at the same table. One packing woman says:

³² Hem kadınlar daha düzenli, seri, düzgün yapar. Bu kadın işi. Sanat bu biz de sanatçınız.

³³ I preferred to use pseudonyms in order to protect their identities.

³⁴ Erkeğe yakışmaz bu iş. Şey kaçır. Bayan bayandır, erkek erkektir. İbneler yapar ama Remzi ve Mustafa var. Aşağı taraf erkek. Allah korusun ama yaratmış işte.

There is Girl Remzi for example. They called him a girl because he works with women. He earns same amount with crating men. But, he cannot sit at the same table with them (Aged 37, Not Married, Worked 10 years).³⁵

With this respect, although they are as strong as crating men, they are treated like women or more inferior than women since they are packing men. It is possible that Remzi and Mustafa are not regarded as men who deserve to be crating men because of the femininity in the way they dress and talk. Crating men do not want to lose their prestige in the Hâl and also in society by dealing with packing.

Therefore, it can be claimed that as long as men think that packing is an inferior, lazy and an unskilled work that belongs to women, women are able to their existence at the labor market in the Hâl.

5.1.2 Subordinating Women by Pushing Them to Work as Packing Women

I believe that the most exclusive theory to explain the division of labor in the Hâl is the dual labor market theory which is discussed under the name of segmentation (Reich et al, 1973; England et al, 1988; Dickens and Lang, 1985). According to this theory, market can be evaluated in two sectors which are primary and secondary. Primary sectors encourage their workers to have career prospects reasonable security sniff favorable conditions, who are crating men in the case of Hâl. On the other hand, workers in secondary sectors are packing women who are likely to be inferior by working part-time, and with less stability and benefits. Rees (1992) argues that decision of employers on workers in the primary sector is socially constructed by sex and race stereotypes, which is a valid argument for the Hâl as I tried by above explanations.

³⁵ Kız Remzi var mesela. Ona Kız diyorlar kadınlarla çalışıyor diye. İstif atan erkekler de aynı alıyor mesela. Ama onlarla masada oturamaz mesela.

As Walby (1986) laid stress on the fact that creation of segmented labor market prevents the homogenization of workers, thus it provides employers with the strategy of divide-and-rule. By creating segmentation within working class, employers could avoid resistance and solidarity of workers as well. This was proven during women's strike in the Hâl because the strike did not include any male participants. Even, some male workers used violence towards female protestors in order to stop them.

Actually, I claim that women are aware of the fact that they need the existence of segmented labor market in the Hâl because otherwise they are not allowed to work in this workplace. One of them says:

This is a women's work. Women cannot carry crates. We work by sitting. However, if men know that there are profits for them in packing, they would do it (Aged 25, Married, Worked 12 years).³⁶

Also, one male worker says:

We earn same amount of money. If we wanted your jobs, we could take it. But we don't want you to be unemployed (Crating Man, Middle-aged).³⁷

Indeed, women's works are desired less by men and unfortunately, especially women who low-educated, ruled by their fathers or husbands, or migrated are compelled to work for these inferior, informal and low paid jobs. Packing women noticed the fact that if men decide to involve in packing, they could be fired because men are more powerful at the Hâl. Therefore, they support crating men to subordinate their jobs as defining their works as an unskilled and a sitting-all-day-job. Also, although they declare that men who are engaged in packing are more trustful, they maintain to subordinate them by questioning how they can work for packing as men.

³⁶ Bu bayan işidir. Kadın sandık taşıyamaz. Biz oturduğumuz yerden çalışıyoruz. Ama işlerine gelirse yaparlar.

³⁷ "Sizinle aynı parayı alıyoruz. İstersek alırız işlerinizi. Biz siz işsiz kalmayın istiyoruz."

It is clear that women's attitudes and tactics succeed to maintain their works in the Hâl but it also ensured their inferiority as packing women. Their tactics make them gain short-term outcomes like autonomy and power in their family in return for their wage. However, their tactics prevent them from acting commonly for a long-term empowerment and getting rid of inferiority in society by demanding gender equality.

5.2 Invisibility

When I went to Hâl for the first time, I could not find these women for two hours. I asked several people including information desk where their workplaces are located, but nobody could show me where these women work. I even asked a boy who works as a bread delivery boy; however he said that he has not seen any women in the Hâl. I remember that I was wondering whether I was at the right place.

It is clear that women gain social status and visibility in the public spaces via their employment status (Ecevit, 1991; Erman et al, 2002). However, in Turkey, no study has looked at working women's visibility in their workplaces which is built by men. I argue that as a tactic to protect themselves from rumors or harassment, packing women prefer not to be visible at the Hâl by taking advantage of the psychical structure of forwarding-packing houses which is decided by men.

Forwarding-packing houses are located in a huge and the most distant place at the Hâl. Therefore, it is difficult to see any women before reaching the place where women work. As I said, forwarding-packing houses seem like garages which have lots of space inside for trucks' parking. One corner is separated for crates and packing papers, usually the other corner is used as bosses' place with a table and chairs or constructed as an office. Also, there is a second floor which is used as kitchen by women. Some forwarding-packing houses have a few trees

in front of their streets in order to create a shadow area for getting protection from the sun.

As I stated, packing women start working at 7.00 a.m. by preparing breakfasts for all workers at the forwarding-packing house. Thus, almost all packing women get in the Hâl together and walk to the workplace together. Then, they start their work at the kitchen which is located at the second floor, in the deepest corner of the workplace. After they clean the kitchen, they sit in front of a little mountain of products which makes women less visible since products are generally unloaded either to the deepest corner or near the truck which has to be reloaded at the end of the day. Women can barely be seen from outside of houses since they work either at the corner or nearby the trucks. When they finish their shift, they go back to bus stops together with other women.

On the other hand, their male co-workers who can work outside of forwarding-packing houses are able to benefit from shadow area for cooling off, eat in restaurants, drink coffee and tea in coffee houses, or pray in the mosques. Indeed, they are allowed to work with only their pants on, and they are free to take off their t-shirts while women's bodies are covered by modest dresses and scarfs.

Although, space in the Hâl is built by men and how workers use this space is already determined by male workers, it can be thought that women intentionally choose being invisible. Although packing women could act together for socializing, they do not prefer doing it because it would render them more visible in the Hâl and make them seem as a part of the Hâl like male workers. These could create two outcomes which endanger women's position.

First, if they become more visible in the Hâl, the possibility of being watched by men increases, so the possibility of being harassed or being gossiped about. "Gossiping" is always a concern for women working outside home. Erman and her colleagues (2002) discuss it in their research on working rural migrant women and empowerment:

“Gossiping” about women is commonly used to control their behavior in squatter/migrant communities; gossip is usually carried out by other women who spend most of their time inside the neighborhood, socializing with each other (Erman,1996). In our research, many women expressed their concerns about gossip, and the women working outside the home said they had to be conscious of their behavior more than ever in order not to create any suspicion regarding their chastity.

In my research, it is also valid that packing women do not want to be an object of rumor. In such a case, they think that they would not be able to maintain their jobs with their chastity which is a requirement for working outside home.

Regardless of class dimension, working women do not want to be objects of gossips in order to preserve either their honor or career (Beşpınar, 2010). In the Hâl, packing women prefer not to be visible at the public spaces because they want to avoid gossips which would damage their reputation in the society. Moreover, if they are invisible and not known in public through gossips, they are less likely to be harassed. As I stated above, they already feel insecure in the Hâl since they think that their workmates are not trustworthy people. Therefore, they believe that they are protected from harassments through staying invisible.

Second, being invisible like a ghost can be interpreted as a tactic for ensuring their jobs in the Hâl. Their visibility would render their jobs more visible as well; which could lead to a competition between men and women on these jobs. In this structure, men are engaged in the most visible works at the Hâl so that they are worthy of the best treatment. If women’s work would be more visible and less inferior, male workers would consider women as rivals, thus, would not accept them as workmates.

In short, their visibility in the Hâl can be discussed as a tactic which ensures women’s work at the Hâl and staying out of harassments or rumors. As some researchers (Beaton, 1982; Ecevit, 1991; Erman et al, 2002) discuss working outside home provides women with a social status as a result of the increase in public visibility. However, it is essential to discuss whether they are visible in

their own workplaces or not because being visible only during through the way home is not enough to claim that their visibility increases in the public.

5.3 Treating Workmates as Family Members

After packing women ensure their place at the Hâl by being less visible and admitting their inferiority, they need to calculate their behaviors and attitudes towards male co-workers. Otherwise, as I stated, they could be backbit or they could be harassed by male workers. Therefore, when packing women work with men, they create a family-like fiction in the workplaces by calling male co-workers “brother [abi]” or “father [baba]”. It provides them with a safe chamber in which any intimate relation is forbidden.

As Bourdieu (1996) states, family is a well-founded fiction which controls sexual relations within the society through the sanctity of family. He says:

This constant maintenance work on the feelings complements the performative effect of the simple *naming* which constructs an affective object and socializes the libido (for example, the proposition ‘She’s your sister’ contains the imposition of brotherly love as desexualized social libido – the incest taboo).

Creating so-called “brother-sister” relations in the workplaces forces male workers to control their sexuality towards packing women. For example, a packing woman who has worked for 5 years said: “ I actually trust them. [...] Actually we are family in here. We are sisters to them.” (Aged 45, Married, Worked 5 years).³⁸

³⁸ “Ben aslında onlara güvenirim. [...] Aslında burada hepimiz aileyiz. Bacınız biz.”

Another one said:

But there is no sexual harassment in here, I haven't heard of any. We are all together here like a family, there is no foreigner (Aged 25, Married, Worked 12 years). ³⁹

As women's speeches show, 'familization' of the workplaces helps to create "a fictive family" inside the workplaces. Actually, packing women among my respondents who stated that they trust their male co-workers are treated like sisters, thus, their 'brothers' cannot harm them on the contrary they protect them.

On the other side, I claim that those who do not trust their male workmates feel less secure than those who claim that they have a so-called family in their workplaces since calling and treating men as family members is an individualized tactic. Therefore, other women outside of the 'family' become possible targets of rumors and harassments. Therefore, I argue that they feel that they need to be more careful about their behaviors towards men in the Hâl.

5.4 Honor as a Compromise

To work as packing women in Hâl has a sole condition which is being honorable [namuslu] for both employers, and husbands or fathers. As I stated before, packing is regarded as if it is based on natural talents rather than skills. Thus, being experienced or trained is not important for women's entry to the Hâl because their talent depends on their gender. On the other hand, not being honorable is counted as a reason not to survive in the Hâl as a woman which might result in losing jobs or being harassed. Furthermore, if their family would learn about their bad reputation through gossips, they would give an end to women's jobs or lives in the name of 'honor'. Therefore, packing women accept and do not question the significance of 'being honorable'. According to them,

³⁹ "Hiç cinsel taciz duymadım burada. Burada hepimiz birlikteyiz, aile gibi. Yabancı yok."

there is a simple rule in the Hâl: if a woman is honorable, no one would dare to harm her, then she would work in peace; but if a woman prefers to be floozy, she becomes open to men's attention.

In the beginning, I felt the need to explain what 'honor' is and how 'honor' is interpreted in the society. Yurdakul and Sever (2001) define 'honor' as a type of sexual honor that requires proper physical and moral qualities that women need to have. However, it is necessary to clarify what 'proper' is and who defines it.

Certaeu (1984; 36) says that naming 'proper' is a requirement to establish a break between the powerful and the weak. He says:

The "proper" is a triumph of place over time. It allows one to capitalize acquired advantages, to prepare future expansions, and thus to give oneself a certain independence with respect to the variability of circumstances. It is a mastery of time through the foundation of an autonomous place.

Through the combination of gender lens and Certaeu's definition; 'proper' is defined by men because women's honor also belongs to their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons. Erman et al (2002) discusses that woman's sexual conduct is defined as family honor which has to be protected by men. Woman's sexual misconducts are regarded as threats to family honor.

With this respect, it can be said that men in their family and in the Hâl decide how packing women have to behave, look, dress, and talk under the name of 'honor' by threatening them to prohibit their working outside home or to be harassed by male workmates. Since male members of family are concerned about their family honor, male workmates think that those women who do not behave properly are willingly to be harassed. One packing woman who is 43 years old, married and has worked for 34 years says:

Here women are perceived and treated like slags, they think whether they can take us to bed. But, of course it depends on women, if a woman holds

herself back, work honorably and go directly back her home. Some women are not like that (Age 43, Married, Worked 34 years).⁴⁰

She is worried of being regarded as a slag who is ready to make out with someone if she does not control her wishes and desires and do not ‘work with honor [namusuyla çalışmak]’. And another one said:

Every day, you are in elsewhere. You work with strangers. If you work appropriately, it is not bad. Why would something bad happen if a woman works with honor (Aged 25, Married, Worked 12 years)?⁴¹

‘Working with honor’ should be analyzed in order to understand what kind of compromises are made in women’s daily working life. ‘Working with honor’ can be discussed in terms of keeping men at a distance by regulating women’s behaviors and making them have proper physical appearances. First, women need to pay attention to their behaviors towards men. As I stated in above sections, women do not trust male workmates, thus they try to be less visible in the Hâl and during their work shift through treating men as family members. However, packing women think that they have to control even their gestures or laugh when they talk to men because their behaviors can be interpreted as an “invitation” by men. One woman said that:

We need to be careful. For example, there are various people among men. You need to be careful about the way you look and laugh. Otherwise, they gossip about you by saying that she flirts with this man and talks to that man (Age 43, Married, Worked for 34 years).⁴²

When a packing girl who is 15 years old says that women have to be careful about the way they sit and talk. I asked her what kinds of ways in talking or sitting are not ‘proper’, she replied:

⁴⁰ Buradaki bayanları başka gözle bakarlar, basit görürler, hani böyle elde edebilir miyim diye bakarlar. Ama tabi bu kadına bağlı, kadın kendini tutarsa, namusu şerefiyle çalışırsa evine giderse, neden zarar görsün.

⁴¹ Her gün başka yerdesin. Bilmediğin insanlarla çalışıyorsun. Eğer düzgünce çalışırsan, kötü değil. Namusuyla çalışan kadının başına neden kötü bir şey gelsin ki?

⁴² Dikkatli olmalıyız. Mesela çeşit çeşit insan var erkeklerin içinde. Nasıl baktığına, konuştuğuna dikkat etmelisin. Yoksa arkandan laf ederler; şu erkekler konuştu, şunla flört etti diye.

If a woman is not honorable, she cannot know where to sit. She sits cross-legged in front of men. She calls men my baby, my dear. Also, she goes nearby men a lot and talks a lot with them. She cannot survive here (Age 15, Not Married, Worked for 2 years).⁴³

Actually, they point out the need to create a border within intimate sexual behaviors are forbidden against men because it is needed and required for being honorable. Also, as my observations also support that when women and men are in free time in pack houses, they try to socialize separately.

The second requirement of ‘working with honor’ at the workplaces is having a decent and chaste appearance. They prefer to wear traditional clothes by putting on long and loose pants [şalvar], loose shirts and veils. They feel honorable by dressing up this style. One woman said:

Our neighborhood is willing to misunderstand. If you live in the city center, you can wear whatever you want. They gossip even if you wear a short-sleeve shirt. I cannot dress up like that. I got job offers from cafes and restaurants in the city center. They asked me to work but I did not accept. They said that I need to wear pants and short-sleeve shirts. At least, we have covered dresses. We are honorable (Age 15, Not Married, Worked for 2 years).⁴⁴

According to them, packing women have to cover their whole body with clothes and not to put on make-up. However, the most important symbol to show their chaste appearances is wearing a veil. Beşpınar (2010) explains how working class women take benefits from wearing a veil in order to ease their husband’s concerns about working outside home, and to feel safer outside home while working. She (2010; 526) refers to Goffman and Kandiyoti:

In Goffman’s (1959) terms, the veil is a “sign-vehicle” which conveys information about a woman’s “code of conduct” in her social

⁴³ Oturduğu yeri bilmez. Erkeklerin karşısında ayak ayaküstüne atar. Bebeğim cicim der. Bir erkekle çok konuşur çok gider. Bu kadın burada barınmaz.

⁴⁴ Bizim mahalle hemen yanlışa çekiyor. Böyle nasıl desem çarşıda otursan falan açık bile giyinebilirsin. Kısa kollu bile giyinsen laf ediyorlar. Öyle gidemiyorum. Tekstil geldi bana kafeterya geldi bana. Dedi gelin çalışın diye. Ama ben kabul etmiyorum. Bize dediler kafeteryada kısa kollu giyeceksin pantolon giyeceksin dediler. Burada kapalısin en azından namuslusun.

interactions. It is what Kandiyoti (1998; 283) calls "traditional modesty marker"; it symbolically carries the information about a woman's modesty to husband, family members, and society at large.

Considering the structure of the Hâl, it can be claimed that Beşpınar's argument is valid for packing women as well. Actually, in the Hâl, I experienced how I felt safer when I put on a veil compared to not putting it on.

Therefore, I agree on the fact that wearing a veil and loose pants or not talking to men make packing women feel more secure against sexual harassments. However, their connection with 'honor' cannot be underestimated and forgotten. Those women who do not wear veil or talk freely with men are labelled as 'floozy [Cıvık]'. Floozy women are perceived as being willing to involve in intimate relations with male workmates. As a result of their behaviors, they are unprotected in the Hâl.

To conclude, there is a golden rule that packing women have to obey in the Hâl; which is being honorable if they want to survive in the Hâl or maintain their employment status. They have to "work with honor" by wearing veils and loose pants and also controlling the way they talk, laugh, sit and behave at large. However, it legitimizes sexual harassments in the workplace because when a woman does not act upon the codes of sexual conduct, she is regarded as if she deserves and actually desires to be harassed.

CHAPTER 6

6. CONCLUSION

In this study, working women's compromises and tactics in patriarchal workplaces have been investigated through a field research on packing women in Mersin Hâl. My main research question is "what the mechanisms behind women's daily tactics and their obedience in a patriarchal workplace are". Finding out responses to my question helps me to suggest social policy recommendations for women who suffer from working at low-paid, informal and flexible jobs.

Majority of packing women are rural migrant women, thus their position in the city are treated with rural migrant women in the existing literature on. In addition, packing as a job is presented through the lens of gender segregation. In the end, their fight with patriarchy both in the family and the workplaces are discussed, and then their ways to find a breathing room are examined by assessing their positions in a patriarchal society.

This study is based on qualitative research methods. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with packing women who are at different ages, marital status and experiences. In the process of data collection, I preferred to be in their workplaces rather than asking to talk outside of the Hâl so that I was able to observe both women and men while they were working. I could even witnessed small chats, fights and gossips. I was invited to their breakfast and lunch, by means of this I was able to build informal focus group meetings during tea break or lunch time. Moreover, as a woman researcher, I wrote a field diary to

remember my position in the Hâl. In brief, in this study, my findings are constituted by semi-structured interviews, informal focus groups and a field diary.

Before going to the field, as a researcher I had several assumptions. When I was at Hâl, I had a chance to reconsider them. First, I assumed that packing women feel insecure about working with men because of the possibility of gossip, insult, harassment and violence. I am right about the fact that they feel insecure and they do not trust their male co-workers but not because of possibility of physical violence but possibility of gossip, insult and harassment. Second, I presumed that they have some concerns about equal pay and equal treatment. Although they did not express their concern by focusing on 'equality' they believe that they deserve better pay and better treatment. Third, I assumed that most of them are migrated women and feel patriarchy more than others. Majority of packing women are migrated from southeastern part of Turkey, close cities to or countryside of Mersin. Although, I assumed that their fathers have a major pressure on women not to work outside, this was not the case in Mersin. Since the family needs an extra income, their fathers allowed them to work. Lastly, I presumed that crating men do not work with women; they are afraid of earning less since female workers are willing to gain less. However, in the Hâl, there is a district, a clear division of labor based on gender. Therefore, men do not feel insecure for losing their jobs to women. As a researcher, I really enjoy being wrong about some of my assumptions because it is more confident to gain arguments after the field research.

Packing women who migrated from rural to urban have worked for 50 years at the Mersin Hâl. They became a part of the labor market because of economic problems in the family and market's need for nimble fingers. However, although they became paid workers, their duties in home and pressure for being good wives and mothers are not decreased. Therefore, they have faced intensive work-family conflict in their lives.

At the time I conducted the research, they earn 25, 46 \$ per a day and 2, 31 \$ per an hour in overdue. I realized that this amount is below the legally defined minimum wage when I calculate their monthly income and compare it with the minimum wage including the social security premium. In addition, they are isolated from social security system because they work unregistered, thus without any social security. They do not have stable workplaces because each workplace is not open all week. Therefore, they are invited to different workplaces in each week by a sergeant. It causes an insecure environment for women by making them work with different male workers in different workplaces. To relieve themselves and to feel more secure through compromises and tactics are essential to preserve their places in labor market, otherwise they could be withdrawn from labor market by their fathers' or husbands'. Furthermore, they develop compromises and tactics in their workplace not to lose their jobs to male workers.

In this study, I found that one of the main barriers to work outside home is fathers' and husbands' opposition. It can be eased if a packing woman gives her daily wage to her husband. In other words, if a packing woman gives up controlling her own income, her husband or father allows her to work outside. Also, if a packing woman work with her husband in the same workplace, her husband do not prevent her from working outside home. Therefore, spying and controlling their wives in the workplace is crucial for men.

Considering packing as a job, I found that packing is regarded as a women's work which is inferior, unskilled and low-paid because it requires sitting, being patient and docile, and also having nimble fingers. Employers of packing houses take advantages from regarding packing as a women's work because they aim at creating cheap, patient and docile workers. Packing is regarded so inferior that male workers do not want to be engaged in packing in order not to lose their power in workplaces by working like a woman. Actually, they 'insult' male packing workers by calling them 'faggots'.

Furthermore, the data of this study revealed that packing women produce compromises and tactics because they need to avoid the possible gossip, sexual harassment, insult or violence in order to feel more secure, to convince their husbands or fathers to maintain being paid labor and not to rival male workers in packing jobs. First, in workplaces they prefer to be less visible than men in order to convince male workers that they are not a threat as an alternative work force. Second, packing women accept their works as unskilled and unworthy so that male workers do not desire involving in packing. Third, in workplaces, packing women try to create 'a fictive family' by calling male co-workers as family members. In this "family", all intimate relations are forbidden to prevent possible intimate relations and sexual harassment. Fourth, being honorable and 'chaste' is accepted as a part of womanhood, thus, 'working with honor' is a requirement in the Hâl. They acknowledge that if they want to continue working in the Hâl, they need to be careful about the way they behave and dress.

Otherwise, they could be regarded as they are available for intimate sexual relations because of gossips. As a result of these gossips, they could be harassed or their husbands might not give permission to work outside. Although, their compromises and tactics provide them with opportunities in order to maintain working in the Hâl, they also reproduce patriarchy by preventing collective long-term gain which would emancipate women from patriarchal norms.

When these findings are being interpreted, main limitations of the study should be kept in mind. First, many packing women whom I interviewed were under pressure because their bosses did not let us leave the workplaces for interviews. Therefore, they might have not given 'honest' or 'deep' answers to my questions since they were afraid of their bosses. Second, during the interviews many male workers interrupted our conversations and gave private information about female workers. It might have led respondents to felt less secure during interviews. Moreover, women might have not given open responds about sexual harassments because their male co-workers were present there. In brief,

although I could collect exclusive data, I had to manage the situation in the Hâl and benefit from these conflicts.

In addition to listed findings, it is argued that social policies on women who work in low-paid, flexible and informal jobs are not sufficient for providing them with welfare in the society. Packing women in the Mersin Hâl work with limited wages as unregistered workers; which is actually illegal. Furthermore, they do not have stable workplaces, thus they do not have a guarantee for being hired for next weeks. Therefore, although many women have worked for more than 25 years, they do not have chance to retire. Moreover, they are excluded from the healthcare system since they are not registered. I believe that the first condition that provides packing women with egalitarian and strong status in the Hâl is increasing investigations in packing houses to control whether there are unregistered workers or not. Then, punishments for unregistered employment should be increased so that employers might be deterred from employing unregistered workers. These restricted investigations and punishments are able to encourage employers to hire stable female workers rather than temporary packing women.

As packing women's example shows, flexibility causes a perception that women's jobs are unworthy to be registered compared to men's jobs. As a result of this, women who work in flexible jobs in labor market suffer from not being able to acquire legal retirement and health insurance. Therefore, both their inferiority in their family and workplaces are preserved through regarding women's working as temporary. It is essential to encourage women for working outside home because they gain autonomy and power in their family and social status in society in return for employment. Considering this fact, a policy that encourages employers to hire part-time, flexible workers would damage women at the very most.

I am aware of the fact that without encouraging employers to adopt the ideas of 'equal payment and equal treatment', these social policies do not work properly

in the society. First, in addition to penalties I suggest that the state should encourage employers to hire 'women' and register them through government promotion or reduction in premium of social security. Second, I believe that some meetings like seminars, conferences which will be organized at the Hâl should be promoted for creating an awareness about equal payment and equal treatment.

In addition to social policy recommendations on women's employment, it is also essential and vital to prevent sexual harassments in public space, and to create woman-friendly environments. As the Mersin Hâl example shows, women who work with male co-workers feel insecure because of the increasing violence and sexual harassment towards women in the society. There is a vital need to produce a policy including heavy penalties to prohibit violence and sexual harassments towards women. Through these heavy penalties men could be deterred from harassing women, and women could be more visible in the public space. In return for this, women employment rate would be increased in a safer environment.

On the other hand, I am also conscious of the fact that these penalties would not be enough to create a social change. Therefore, it is essential to create an environment in which both men and women could be visible by trusting each other and not being afraid of each other. I advise the municipality which is responsible to manage the Hâl to organize such events which makes women and men have fun together, spend time together, and engage in creative activities together. Then, the municipality should encourage employers to build a dining hall which is able to encourage women and men to eat together outside the packing houses. Also it would liberate women from cooking for male workers. Moreover, the municipality should establish a kindergarten for both female and male workers' kids so that both women can be exempt from caring duties as mothers, and male workers can take responsibilities of taking care of their kids as fathers. In addition, it is also essential to provide a transportation service for both male and female workers so that they can spend time together on the way.

I believe that spending time together would make women feel safer and be more visible at the Hâl. Therefore, women and men could understand that there is nothing wrong in spending time with each other.

I claim that women should be emancipated from their domestic labor through encouraging women's employment. Therefore, in Turkey welfare regime should not depend on the unit of family because women, as carers in the family, are affected the most. As long as children and elderly care continue to be seen as a responsibility of the family, caring would remain to be a duty of women. This phenomenon excludes women from the labor market and contribute to their disempowerment by attaching patriarchal duties to them which make them inferior in the society. In brief, I suggest that welfare regime should not depend on neither family nor private sector which are already gender-biased. In this point, the state should eliminate gender biases and provide women fair and equal treatment in the society.

This study shows how packing women need to make compromises and produce tactics in particular because they do not feel safe in patriarchal workplaces. However, my study is also beneficial for future researches about working women by discussing working women's positions in the workplaces and its relationship with women's empowerment. One of the future researches could be a comparison between working women who work in low-paid, flexible and informal jobs at different workplaces like factories or industrial zone. It would provide an exclusive study on inferiority of female workers in the labor markets. In addition, social classes can be added as a dimension to these works as well. An example for such a research question might be as follows: "How does social class dimension affect women's ways to cope with patriarchal pressure at their workplaces?" Possible participants of this study might be female workers working at industrial zone depending on their nimble fingers, nurses working at military hospitals, female representatives serving male-dominated industry and female construction engineers working at construction yards.

Considering the enlisted findings and their relations with social policy, the significance of this study lies in the discussion on how sole women's employment cannot not be enough to empower women. Instead of daily tactics and compromises, social policies such as providing them with fair and equal treatment in the workplaces, encouraging them to be visible in the public spaces and releasing them from domestic works help women to gain collective long term outcomes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. DESCRIPTIVE

- a. Age
- b. Marital Status
- c. City of Origin
- d. Education
- e. How many children do you have?
- f. How many people do you live in house?

2. WORKING LIFE

a. Previous Experiences

- a. Is this your first job experience? How many years have you worked for?
- b. What kind of jobs have you engaged in?

b. Working at Hâl

- a. How could you find this job?
- b. Why do you prefer to work in there?
- c. What was the first step to be hired by employer? How was his or her attitudes towards you? What were the promises and conditions?
- d. How old are you when you started to work in Hâl?

- e. Could you please explain your working conditions? Working Hours, Health Risk, Insurance, Wage?
- f. How many men and women work in Hâl? What is the division of labor among men and women?
- g. Do you know how many years women have worked as packing women in Hâl?
- h. Does your employer provide separate facilities such as toilets and showers for women?

c. Gender Dimension – Patriarchy in Hâl

- a. What are the positive outcomes of working in Hâl:?
- b. What kind of problems do you have while working in there?
- c. Do you think this work is suitable for women or not? Why or Why not?
- d. If no, what do you think your employer prefer to hire women as packing workers?
- e. Do male workers apply for packing worker? If not, why ?
- f. How women should behave while working in there?
- g. What are the expectations of employers about packing women?
- h. What is the meaning of ‘honor’ in the Hâl?

3. FAMILY & WORK DIMENSION

- a. Are you the sole income provider in your family?
- b. Who does care children or parents in your family? Are you the only person who performs the majority of the care-giving to children or parents in your family?
- c. What your family think about your working? Who does encourage or discourage you to work OR work in here?
- d. Can you control your wage? How do you manage it?

- e. How do your working life affect your family life?
 - a. Who does engage in housework in home? Do you have time for that? (Time based family-work conflict)
 - b. Do you think working in here affect your behavior towards family member? (Strain based family-work conflict)
 - c. Do being women in here and being women in home have any mutual points or differences?

Research Asistant Simge Sönmez

Middle East Technical University, Depertmant of Social Policy

Appendix B: TURKISH SUMMARY

MERSİN HÂL'İNDE PAKETLEYİCİ KADINLARIN ATAERKİLLİĞE KARŞI TAVİZ VE TAKTİKLERİ

Giriş

Bu çalışmada çalışan kadınların ataerkil işyerlerine karşı kullandıkları taviz ve taktikler Mersin Hâl 'inde çalışan paketleyici kadınları konu alan saha araştırmasıyla incelenmiştir. Araştırmanın ana sorusunsalı ataerkil işyerlerinde çalışan kadınların günlük taktikleri ve itaatlerinin arkasındaki mekanizmaların neler olduğudur. Araştırmamın sonucunda aldığım cevaplar düşük ücretli, enformel ve esnek işlerde çalışan kadınlar için sosyal politika önerileri geliştirmeme yardımcı olmuştur.

Çoğu paketleyici kadın kırsaldan göç etmiş kadınlardır bu nedenle şehirdeki pozisyonlarını anlamak için var olan kırsal göçmen kadın literatüründen yararlanılmıştır. Buna ek olarak, meslek olarak paketleyicilik cinsiyete dayalı ayrımcılık perspektifinden incelenmiştir. Son olarak, hem aile içinde hem de işyerlerinde ataerkillik ile mücadeleleri tartışılmış ve onlara bir nevi soluklanma alanı yaratacak yolları incelenmiştir.

Yöntem

Bu çalışmada nitel çalışma metotları kullanılmıştır. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler farklı yaştan, medeni durumdan ve tecrübeye sahip kadınlara uygulanmıştır. Veri toplama sürecinde, görüşmeleri Hâl dışında yapmaktansa işyerlerinde yapmayı tercih ettim böylelikle çalıştıkları sırada hem erkek işçileri hem de kadın işçileri gözlemleme şansım oldu. Küçük sohbetlere, tartışmalara

ve dedikodulara şahit oldum. Kahvaltılarına ve öğle yemeklerine davet edildim ve bunun sayesinde bu zamanlarda enformel odak çalışması toplantıları yapabildim. Dahası, Hâl 'de geçirdiğim zamanlarda kadın araştırmacı olarak konumu hatırlatması için saha günlükleri tuttum. Kısacası, bulgularım yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerin yanı sıra enformel odak grup çalışmalarına ve saha günlüğüne de dayanmaktadır.

Varsayımlar

Sahaya gitmeden önce, araştırmacı olarak bir takım varsayımlara sahiptim. Hâlde çalışırken bazılarını tekrar düşünme şansına sahip oldum. İlk olarak, paketleyici kadınların olası dedikodu, hakaret, cinsel taciz veya şiddet ile karşı karşıya kalmaktan korktuklarından ötürü kendilerini güvende hissetmediklerini farz ettim. Bu varsayımında haklı çıktım çünkü paketleyici kadınlar bu tarz olasılıklardan ötürü kendilerini güvende hissetmiyorlar, erkek iş arkadaşlarına güvenmiyorlardı. İkinci olarak, erkekler ile kıyaslandıklarında eşit ücret ve eşit muamele talep ettiklerini düşündüm. 'Eşitlik' vurgusu yapmasalar dahi daha iyi bir ücret ve muameleyi hak ettiklerine inandıklarını fark ettim. Üçüncü olarak, çoğunluğunun göçmen kadınlar olduklarını ve bu yüzden diğer kadınlardan daha fazla ataerkil muameleye maruz kaldıklarını farz ettim. Çoğu kadın Türkiye'nin Güneydoğu Bölgesi'nden veya Mersin'in kırsal bölgelerinden göç etmişti. Babalarının ev dışında çalışmaları konusunda birincil baskı kaynağı olduklarını düşünsem de Mersin Hâli için bu doğru değildi. Ailenin fazladan gelire ihtiyacı oldukça, babalarının paketleyici kadınlara çalışmaları için izin verdiklerini keşfettim. Son olarak, kasacı erkeklerin kadınlar ile çalışmak istemediklerini çünkü daha aza çalışabilecek kadınların Hâl 'de çalışmasının erkeklerin alacağı gündeliği düşüreceğinden korkabileceklerini düşünmüştüm. Fakat Hâl 'in içinde uygulanan iş bölümünün çok keskin cinsiyete dayalı olduğunu fark ettim. Bu yüzden, kasacı erkekler işlerini kadınlara kaybetmeleri konusunda kendilerini güvende hissediyorlar. Sonuç olarak, araştırmacı olarak

bazı varsayımlarımda yanılmaktan zevk aldım çünkü böylelikle bulguları saha araştırmasından sonra edinmenin daha güvenli bir yol olduğunu keşfettim.

Temel Bulgular

Kırsal göçmeni paketleyici kadınlar yaklaşık 50 yıldır Mersin Hâl 'inde çalışmayı sürdürmektedir. Piyasanın eli çabuk ve narin ellere ihtiyaç duyması ve ekonomik zorluklar yaşayan ailelerin ilave gelir arayışlarından ötürü işgücü piyasasının bir parçası olmuşlardır. Fakat ücretli işçi olsalar dahi, ev içi görevlerinde ve iyi anne ve iyi eş olma baskısında hiç bir eksilme yoktur. Bu yüzden, hayatlarında yoğun bir iş-aile çatışması ile yüzleşmek durumundadırlar.

Araştırmayı gerçekleştirdiğim sırada, paketleyici kadınlar günlük 55 TL ve mesaide geçirdikleri saat başına ise 5 TL kazanıyorlardı. Bu miktarı ile aylık kazançlarını hesapladığımda ve sosyal güvenlik primlerini dahil edip asgari ücret ile kıyasladığımda; paketleyici kadınların kazançlarının yasal asgari ücretin altında kaldığını fark ettim. Ek olarak, kayıtsız çalıştırılıp sosyal güvenlik sisteminden dışlandıkları için sağlık sigortası veya emeklilik haklarından faydalanamamaktalar. Paketleyici kadınların işyerlerinin tüm hafta çalışmamasından ötürü sabit bir işyeri ve işvereni yoktur. Bu yüzden hafta boyunca farklı işyerlerinden farklı günlerde çalıştırılmak üzere 'çavuşlar' aracılığıyla davet alırlar. Bu durum paketleyici kadınlar için güvensiz bir çalışma ortamı yaratmaktadır çünkü her hafta farklı erkek işçilerle çalışmak zorunda bırakılmaktadırlar. Kendilerini rahatlatmak ve daha güvende hissetmek için kullandıkları tavizler ve taktikler işgücü piyasasındaki yerlerini korumak için gereklidir; aksi takdirde babaları veya eşleri tarafından işgücü piyasasından çekileceklerdir. Dahası, bu tavizler ve taktikler işyerlerinde işlerini erkek işçilere kaptırmamak içinde elzemdir.

Bu çalışmada ev dışında çalışmanın önündeki ana engellenin babaların ve eşlerin karşı koyması olduğunu tespit ettim. Eğer paketleyici kadın yevmiyesini

eşine veya babasına veriyorsa; babasının veya eşinin ev dışı çalışmaya olan karşıtlığında azalma olduğunu gözledim. Ek olarak, eğer paketleyici kadın ve eşi aynı işyerlerinde çalışıyorlar ise kadının eşi kadının dışarıda çalışmasına engel olmamaktadır. Sonuç olarak erkekler için eşlerini veya kızlarını gözetleme ve yevmiyelerinin kontrolünü ele alma ev dışı çalışmaya izin vermek için elzemdir.

Paketleyiciliği meslek olarak düşündüğümüzde, paketleyiciliğin aşağı, düşük ücretli ve vasıfsız olarak tanımlanan kadın işi olarak algılandığını gözlemledim. Çünkü paketleyicilik işi tüm gün oturmayı, hızlı ve narin parmaklara sahip olmayı, uysal olmayı ve zevk sahibi olmayı gerektirir ki tüm bu özellikler toplum içinde kadına atfedilmiş özelliklerdir. İşverenler paketleyiciliğin kadın işi olarak algılanmasından faydalanarak ucuz, sabırlı ve uysal işçiler çalıştırır.

Paketleyicilik o kadar aşağı bir iştir ki erkek işçiler 'kadın gibi' çalışıp işyerlerindeki güçlerini kaybetmemek adına paketleyicilik işiyle ilgilenmezler. Var olan iki erkek paketleyici işçisine 'ibne' diyerek hakaret edecek kadar 'kadın işini' aşağı görürler.

Paketleyici kadınların bu taktik ve tavizlere ihtiyaç duymasının üç ana sebebi bulunmaktadır. Kadınlar, 1) paketleyicilik işi için erkek işçiler ile karşı karşıya gelecek bir rekabet ortamı yaratmamak, 2) dedikodu, hakaret, cinsel taciz ve şiddetten kaçınabilmek ve kendilerini daha güvende hissedebilmek 3) aynı zamanda eşlerinin ve babalarının iznine bağlı ev dışı ücretli çalışma hayatlarını sürdürebilmek ve bunun sonucunda aile içinde kazandıkları güç ve otonomiye kaybetmemek için de bu taktik ve tavizlere ihtiyaç duyarlar.

Bu nedenlerden ötürü paketleyici kadınların davranışları dört ana başlıkta toplanabilir. Bu dört ana başlık değersiz olmak, görünmez olmak, erkek çalışma arkadaşlarına aile bireyi gibi davranmak ve namuslu olmaktır. İlk olarak, paketleyici kadınlar, paketleyicilik işinin kadın işi olduğunu ve erkek işiyle kıyasladığında hâl içinde daha değersiz olduğunu kabul ederler. Böylece, paketleyici kadınlar hâl içindeki işgücü piyasasında kendilerine ait alanı belirleyerek, paketleyicilik işi için erkeklerle rekabet etmek durumunda

kalmazlar. İkinci olarak, kadın işçiler gerek hâl içinde gerekse kendi işyerlerinde daha az görünür durumdadırlar. İşyerlerinin erkekler tarafından karar verilen fiziksel yapısının yanı sıra, kadınların tercihleri de bu durumda önemli rol oynamaktadır. Kadınlar daha az görünür olmanın dedikodu veya cinsel taciz olasılığını düşürdüğü kanaatindedirler. Üçüncü olarak, işyerlerinde çalışma sırasında ve yemek zamanlarında paketleyici kadınlar gerek işverenlerine gerekse iş arkadaşlarına ‘abi’ ve ‘baba’ diye hitap ederek aralarında doğması muhtemel samimi ilişkinin önüne geçmek istemektedir çünkü aile içindeki samimi, yakın ya da cinsel ilişki baba-kız, abi-kardeş arasında yasaktır. Son olarak, bir taviz ve gereklilik olarak kadınların orada çalışıp çalışmayacağı, cinsel tacize hedef olup olmayacağı konusunda ‘namus’ belirleyici rol oynamaktadır. ‘Namussuz kadın’ oturup kalkmasını bilmeyen, makyaj yapan, erkek iş arkadaşlarıyla şakalaşan, samimi konuşan ve açık giyinen kadın olarak tanımlanır ve ‘civık kadın’ olarak adlandırılır. Hâlde çalışmanın ilk şartı namuslu kadın olmaktır aksi takdirde civık kadın olarak muhtemel cinsel tacize davetiye çıkarmış olarak kadın edilir. Bu durumların aksi gerçekleştirildiği takdirde hem hâlde işçi olarak barınamaz kadınlar hem de babaları ve eşleri çalışma izinlerini geri alabilir ki bu durum onların aile içinde güç kaybıyla sonuçlanabilir. Kadınların uyguladıkları taviz ve taktikler her ne kadar hâldeki işlerini devam ettirmelerine olanak sağlasa da; aynı zaman ataerkilliğin yeniden üretilmesine de sebep olmaktadır çünkü bu taviz ve taktikler kadınların ataerkil normlardan özgürleşmesini sağlayacak müşterek, uzun dönemli kazanımların oluşmasını engellemektedir.

Kısıtlar

Bu bulgular yorumlanırken, araştırmanın kısıtları göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Öncelikler, araştırmaya katılan çoğu paketleyici kadın mülakat görüşmeleri sırasında işleri yarıda bırakamadıkları için baskı altındaydılar. Bu yüzden, patronlarının ve iş arkadaşlarının yanında sorularına

yanıtlamak zorunda kaldıkları için 'dürüst' veya 'derin' cevaplar verememiş olabilirler. Buna ek olarak, görüşmenin işyerinin içinde yapılması erkek işçilerin görüşmeyi yarıda kesmelerine ve kadınlarla alakalı özel bilgiler paylaşmasına olanak sağlamıştır. Bu durum katılımcıların daha az güvende hissetmelerine sebep olmuş olabilir. Dahası, paketleyici kadınlar erkek iş arkadaşları yanında cinsel tacizle alakalı sorulara açık cevap verememiş olabilirler. Kısacası, işyerlerinde açık görüşmeler her ne kadar geniş çaplı gözlem yapmama olanak sağlamış olsa da; bu durum araştırmamın kısıtlarının ana sebebidir.

Sosyal Politika Önerileri

Araştırmamın bulguları, kayıtsız, düşük gelirli ve esnek işlerde çalışan kadınlara sosyal refah sağlayabilecek sosyal politika önerileri sunmama olanak sağlamıştır. Aslına bakılırsa, hâlde düşük yevmiye karşılığında kayıtsız olarak paketleyici kadın çalıştırmak var olan yasalara aykırıdır. Dahası, sabit bir işverene sahip olamamaları, her hafta başka bir iş arayışında olmalarına sebep olmaktadır. Bu durumda, 25 yıl çalışan paketleyici kadınlar dahi emekli olma fırsatına sahip değildir. Ayrıca, var olan sağlık sistemine de dahil edilemediklerinden korunmasızlardır. Devlet tarafından gerçekleştirilen denetimlerin Mersin Hâlinde artırılmasının kadınların hâl içindeki statülerini daha eşitlikçi yapabileceğine inanıyorum. Kayıtsız işçi çalıştıran işyerlerinin tespitinin yapılması ve cezalandırılmasının işverenler üstünde bir kontrol mekanizması yaratacağını düşünüyorum. Bu denetimlerin ve cezalandırmaların işverenleri kayıtsız işçi çalıştırmaktansa işçilerini kayıt altında tutarak sigortalarını yatırması konusunda zorlayacağına inanıyorum.

Paketleyici kadınlar örneği gösterdiği gibi, esneklik kadın mesleklerinin erkeklerinkine kıyasla daha az değerli ve bunun doğrultusunda daha çok kayıtsız olmasına neden olmaktadır. Bunun sonucunda esnek çalışan kadınlar yasal emeklilik ve sağlık güvencesinden yoksun bırakılmış olmaktadır. Bu yüzden, hem ailedeki hem de işyerlerindeki değersizliklerinin kadın

çalışmasının 'geçiciliğine' bağlı olduğu bakış açısını unutmamak gerekmektedir. Bu gerçek ile yola çıkılırsa, işverenleri esnek çalışma düzeni için yüreklendirmek kadınların uzun dönem güçlendirilmesini engelleyecektir.

İşverenlerin eşit ücret ve eşit muamele fikrini sahiplenmeleri için yüreklendirilmediği taktirde, bu tarz sosyal politikaların toplum içinde istenilen amaçlara ulaşamayabileceğinin farkındayım. Bu yüzden bu politikalara ek olarak, öncelikle işverenlerin devletin sağlayacağı teşvikler doğrultusunda kadınları işe almaları ve kayıt altında tutmaları cesaretlendirilmelidir. Sonrasında, toplantı, seminer ve enformel eğitim teknikleri sayesinde eşit ücret ve eşit muamele fikri yaygınlaştırılmadır.

Kadınların istihdamına yönelik sosyal politika önerilerinin yanı sıra, bu bağlamda cinsel tacizin önlenmesine yönelik sosyal politikaların üretilmesi ve geliştirilmesi elzemdir. Bu politikalar aracılığıyla kadın dostu yaşam alanları kurmak mümkündür. Mersin Hâli örneğinde olduğu gibi toplumda artan şiddet ve cinsel taciz olaylarının artışında katkısıyla erkeklerle çalışan kadınlar kendilerini güvende hissetmemektedir. Ağır cezalar içeren şiddeti ve cinsel tacizi engelleyici politikalar üretmek zorunluluktur. Bu politikalar aracılığıyla, olası olaylar önlenabilir ve kadınlar kamusal alanlarda daha görünür olabilir. Bunun karşılığında ise kadın istihdamı daha güvenli ortamlarda artabilir.

Diğer bir yandan, bu cezalandırma yönteminin toplumda içselleştirilmiş bir değişim yaratamayacağının bilincindeyim. Bu yüzden, kadın ve erkek ilişkisinin korkuya değil de güvene dayalı olduğu bir çevre yaratmanın gerekli olduğuna inanıyorum. Mersin Hâl'inden sorumlu Mersin Büyükşehir Belediyesine kadın ve erkek çalışanların bir arada eğlenebileceği, vakit geçirebileceği ve katılabileceği aktiviteler organize etmelerini öneririm. Sonrasında, belediye işverenleri hâl içinde kadın ve erkek işçilerin bir arada yemek yiyebileceği kafeterya inşa etmeleri konusunda hem teşvik hem destek olmasını salık veririm. Belediyenin hem kadın hem de erkek çalışanların çocuklarını iş saatleri içinde bırakabilecekleri kreşler inşa etmesinin hem kadınların daha rahat

çalışmasını sağlayacağı hem de erkeklerin çocuk bakımı anlamında sorumluluk almasına yol açacağı için gerekli olduğunu düşünmekteyim. Böylelikle kreşin hem erkek hem de kadın işçiler tarafından kullanmasıyla güven inşası sağlanabilir. Bunlara ek olarak ortak kullanım için sağlanacak ulaşım hizmeti onların işe gelip giderken birlikte zaman geçirmesini sağlayacaktır. Kısacası, birlikte zaman geçirmelerine yönelik aktivitelerin ve yapıların artırılması kadın ve erkek arasındaki güven ilişkisinin kurulmasında faydalı olacaktır.

Bunların yanında kadının istihdam edilmesinin öneminin vurgulanması ve ev işinden özgürleştirilmesi gerektiğine inanıyorum. Bu yüzden, Türkiye'deki sosyal devlet anlayışının aileye bağımlı devam etmemesi gerektiğini çünkü kadınların aile içindeki yükünün arttırdığını düşünüyorum. Çocuk ve yaşlı bakımının aile içinde giderilmesi gerektiği anlayışı, aile içinde bakımdan sorumlu olan 'anne'nin görevi olması fikrini pekiştirmektedir. Bu durum kadının iş gücü piyasasına girememesine ve sonucunda ataerkilliğin yeniden üretilmesinden dolayı toplum içinde güçsüzleşmelerine ve değersizleşmelerine sebep olmaktadır. Kısacası, sosyal devlet rejiminin ne aileye ne de cinsiyete farkı gözetken özel sektöre bağımlı olmaması gerektiğini savunuyorum. Bu noktada, devlet cinsiyet farkı gözetmeksizin toplumda kadına yönelik adil ve eşit muameleyi sağlamalıdır.

Gelecekte Çalışma Önerileri

Bu çalışma paketleyici kadınların ataerkil çalışma ortamlarından güvenli hissetmediklerinden ötürü nasıl taviz ve taktiklere ihtiyaç duyduklarını göstermektedir. Ancak, çalışmam aynı zamanda kadınların çalışma ortamları ve güçlenmeleri arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemek isteyenler içinde faydalı olacaktır.

Bunlardan bir tanesi fabrikalar ve sanayiler gibi farklı işyerlerinde çalışan düşük ücretli, esnek ve kayıtsız çalışan kadınların taviz ve taktiklerini araştırmak olabilir. Ek olarak, farklı mesleklerde çalışan yüksek ücretli ve

statüde çalışan kadınların taviz ve taktikleriyle kıyaslanabilir. Böylelikle sınıf kavramı analize eklenebilir. Örneğin, sosyal sınıf boyutunun kadınların çalışma hayatlarında ataerkillik ile baş etme yollarını nasıl farklılaştırdığı araştırmanın konusu olabilir. Olası katılımcıları ise sanayide çalışan kadın işçiler, askeri hastanede çalışan hemşireler, erkek çalışan yoğunluklu sektörlerde çalışan kadın mümessiller ve şantiyede çalışan kadın mühendisler olabilir.

Sonuç

Listelenen bulgular ve onlar ile alakalı sosyal politika önerileri göz önüne alındığında, kadınları güçlendirmenin sadece ve yalın olarak kadınların istihdam edilmesi ile mümkün olmayacağı açıktır. Bu sonuç çalışmamın önemini göstermektedir. Kadınların günlük taktik üretmeleri yerine; onlara müşterek uzun vadeli kazanımlar sağlayacak işyerlerinde adil ve eşit muameleye yol açacak, onları kamusal alanda daha görünür olmaları için yüreklendirecek ve ev işlerinden özgürleştirecek sosyal politikaların varlığına ihtiyaç vardır.

Appendix C: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

☒

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü

☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

YAZARIN

Soyadı : SÖNMEZ

Adı : SİMGE

Bölümü : SOSYAL POLİTİKA

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : PACKING WOMEN'S COMPROMISES AND TACTICS
AGAINST PATRIARCHY IN MERSİN HÂL

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans

☒

Doktora

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1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir

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2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

☐

3. Tezimden bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

☐

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: