

SEXUAL FREEDOM AND STATUE OF WOMEN IN TURKISH SOCIETY (BERLIN SAMPLE)

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ABSTRACT

The issues of immigration and adaptation have important roles in Berlin history. Various immigrant groups have had a significant impact on the city's economic, political and cultural inheritance. Because of the double sided nature of this impact; religious, cultural and social values both societies hold cohered with one another over time. Since the immigration movements began with "Worker Immigration Agreement" signed by Turkey and Federal Republic of Germany in 1961, nearly three million people of Turkish origin have lived in Germany. The population brought with important changes in both societies' social and cultural values.

This study aims to present the sexual perspective of the Turkish origin population living in Berlin by putting the women in the center. The subject will be presented with subtitles like the position of women in Turkish community within social and family aspects, the equal rights, external appearance, dressing and sexual freedom, women honor, sexual education in family and the importance of child gender. The resources of this study are obtained through a fully configured multiple-choice questionnaire technique of survey researching methods implemented in Berlin.

Key Words: Woman, Turkish People in Berlin, Sexual Freedom

Jel Code: Z2, Z28

1. INTRODUCTION

Berlin history has been rigidly tied to the subjects of immigration and adaptation. Various immigrant groups directly or indirectly affected the city's economic, political and cultural diversity for centuries (Gesemann, 2002: 81). Federal Republic of Germany signed worker immigration agreements with various countries (Italy in 1955, Spain and Greece in 1960, Turkey in 1961, Algeria in 1963, Portugal in 1964, Tunisia in 1965 and Yugoslavia in 1968) in order to meet the worker demand especially after World War II (OECD, 2013: 68).

The immigration movements which were planned as small termed with rotation procedure reshaped over time as the immigrants known as guest workers (Gastarbeiter) had rights to bring their families with Family Derivative Law (Familienzusammenführungsgesetz – 1974) and after the worker agreements extended so that the legal conditions for them to settle the country had been occurred (Şen, 1993: 19ff). Turkish population living in Germany

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does not consist of only men who left their wives in Turkey or women as the beginning of the immigration movements but also consists of their wives and children who were born in Germany for more than half a century. Today, Turkish population living in Germany reached the number of three million and nearly one million of those people have German citizenship (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2010). This amount is anticipated to increase with almost 1.87 birth rate and on-going immigration movements from Turkey (Akkaya, Özbek and Şen 1998: 209).

Berlin is a city-state which is important in immigration issues. Some of the valid factors for the importance of the city are that foreign origin population rate is high compared to general population of Berlin and that active immigration policy is implemented depending on this case. The registered people of foreign origin comprise 466.054 of a population of 3.450.889 in Berlin as of the date of 30.06.2011 according to Berlin-Brandenburg Statistic Institute. The great majority of foreign originated people coming from 184 different countries consists of Turkish people with a number of 105.671 (22% of total foreign originated population). When the Turkish people who also have German citizenship are added, this amount reaches the number of 176.300. Berlin is regarded as the first remark among other provinces with its foreign population intensity of 13.6 (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2010). Berlin is named as “The city which is the symbol of Immigration” (Stadt im Zeichen der Migration) with its foreign population rate, multiple culture structure and immigration policies. So it seems appropriate to this kind of field research.

Turkish originated population living in Germany does not have a homogeneous structure like other immigrant groups. A part of the group preserve their origin cultural and life values while others adopt the culture in which they live or they combine both of the culture (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1991: 39). As a result of this, they sometimes take attitudes towards the situations they encounter as having their origin cultural values. On the other hand, they sometimes give responses as having the culture they live with. Immigration oriented population from two communities which are partially different from each other strictly adhere to origin culture and values (religious, moral, family values and norms) thus they have fear to lose those values when an external interference occurs. Therefore, this may bring forward the need to create strategies for defending and preserving those values against the “foreign” culture (Uzun, 1993: 59). This need is subject to decrease as they receive the message of “being a part (in the areas of legal, societal and political culture) of the community in which they live and thus this may cause them to be vulnerable to the environment they live in and to their own values.

The aim of the study is to take its roots from women and sexuality oriented conclusions of the title “Identification development of Turkish originated population living in Berlin”. The main research question of the study is that to what degree women in the Turkish community can live their sexual freedom. The answers of women and men participants are correspondingly evaluated in order to figure out whether the study question is evaluated in different terms by different genders and whether one gender attributes the sexual freedom to corresponding gender in the same level as the other does. In addition to women sexual freedom, the subjects of women’s position in community, role in family, participation in the business life, their right to have education, their privilege to have equal rights with men, their freedom to choose what to wear and their external appearances are investigated. Other subjects that were researched in this concept are as follows: which gender is regarded more appropriate as “householder”, whether there is a gender discrimination towards children and whether the gender of the child is important in honoring or dishonoring the family.

Fully configured multiple-choice questionnaire technique of survey researching methods is utilized in order to reach the representative and closest data about the Turkish

originated population in terms of reality which consists of four generations at the present time. 224 Turkish originated people are selected randomly using the sampling method as part of the survey. According to Karasar, this sampling is a sampling type in which each element in the world has the equal right to be selected (Karasar, 2006: 113).

In this type of sampling, each element in the world is carries a chance to be included in the sampling group. Generally, written anonymous survey method is used because the survey questions include privacy information about participants and it is aimed to make comparisons among the responses by using multiple choice configured survey questions.

The sampling group consists of 224 people who have lived in Berlin for at least 5 years and describe themselves as Turkish. 55% of them are women while 43% of them are men, %60 of them are Turkish while 24% are German and 11% have double citizenshipⁱ. Additionally, 72% of them describe themselves as faithful, while 14% as atheist and 13% as religious. Those of who do not feel to be included in any kind of sect constitute 21% of the total.

2. RESEARCH FINDINGS

2.1. Statue of Women and Equal Rights

The research findings about the statue of women can be summarized as follows:

Generally, %88 of the participants has attitudes towards the men-women equality. When the responses of women and men participants are compared in terms of women equality, men participants give opinions about women equality with rate of 84% while this rate increases about %8 and reaches %90 by women participants. The majority of participants supports the idea that women should participate in business life (92%) and receive higher education (94%).

Regarding the subject of who the householder is, 72% of the participants support the idea that both women and men should cooperate in being partner householders. When women and men participants' responses are compared, it is seen that the rates constitute a gap: %68 of the men participants and 74% of the women participants share their responses as women and men being common householders. The rate of women's ideas that men should be the householder is %10 while this rate is about %25 which means one of the four of men participants expect men to be the householder. On the other hand, men's ideas that women should be the householder is about %1 and the ratio of women who do not support their own gender to be the householder is 5%. These results generally show that women and men do not expect only one gender to be the householder but give ideas about mutual cooperation.

2.2. Women's Dressing and External Appearance Freedom

One of the most important subjects regarding women freedom is their selection of dressing, in other words, to dress by their will. The rate of men who give this freedom to women is 54% which is not very high. On the other hand, this rate is only 4% less than women participants' responses for this area. Furthermore, in terms of women dressing, about 32% of men participants expect women not to dress as contrary to the societal environmental values in which they live which means they want women to dress appropriate for the societal environment. The rate of women who share this opinion is about half of the men rates in the same subject (15%).

2.3. Sexual Freedom of Women

Sexual Freedom of Women is examined with the main topics of the right to have sexual affairs before marriageⁱⁱ, the sentimental behaviors (kissing, close hugs) of father and mother next to their children and freedom to share the same house with their male friends. Regarding

the subject of the freedom to have sexual affairs before marriage for men and women, the majority of participants do not give this freedom to women: the majority of the participants support men to have these kinds of affairs before marriage (57%) but when the question is about women freedom, on the contrary, the majority of the participants reject this right (62%). The rate of the participants who give this freedom to men is about 20% more than those who support women (as opposed to 42%).

When the rates of men and women are compared, the majority of women (58%) attribute the sexual freedom before marriage to men while with about the same rate, they reject (59%) this freedom to their own gender. In other words, women's rates who give this kind of freedom to their own gender remain at about 40%. When the rates of men's answers are analyzed, it is seen that they approve the freedom of women to have sexual affairs before marriage with the rate of 34%. This rate increases %21 more when the question is about men's freedom (55%).

When the participants were asked how they would face the situation if their sisters or daughters' wanted live together with their boyfriends before they got married, the majority of them (55%) responded that they would reject and not consent.

When women and men participants' responses are compared, it is seen that men participants' rates who reject this situation is about 10% more than the women participants (62%).

According to research results of Özdemir (2013) who evaluates the situation by comparing the age groups (15-25, 26-35, 36-45 and 46-70), it becomes clear that: 15-25 age group restrict the freedom of both genders more when compared to the other age groups. The rate of those who give sexual affair freedom to womenⁱⁱⁱ in the oldest age group (46-70) is the biggest one with 51% and the smallest one with the rate of 15% in the youngest age group (15-25).

With the rate of 31%, the youngest age group 15-25 represents the smallest rate who gives the freedom of sex before marriage. As opposed, about three of four (73%) of the oldest age group (46-70) give this freedom to women. This rate represents the highest value attributing this freedom to men as comparing the other age groups. (Özdemir, 2015: 41).^{iv}

2.4. Women and (Family) Honor

One of the priorly thought concepts is honor when the question is women sexuality and freedom to have sex. The research is conducted in the concept of preventing the family honor and not getting blamed:

When the participants were asked whether there was any importance of gender in terms of dishonoring the family, 34% of participants answered as women could dishonor the family and 64% of them answered as there was no difference between women or men, individuals could only blame their own honor. With this answer, the portion of 64% individualizes the concept of honor and this can be interpreted as one's negative behavior should not be attributed to another individual or group.

When the participants are generally evaluated, the majority of them (68%), do not make any gender discrimination, each family member has the same responsibility to protect the family honor. The rate of those who attribute this responsibility to men is roughly the same (men: 9%, women: 8%). The rate of those who attribute this role to women is very little with women: 6% and men 3%.

2.5. Sexual Education in Family and the Importance of Child Gender

Another subject which is examined through the research is about whether parents have responsibility to share their sexual knowledge and values with their children and whether they regard the behaviors that recall sexual behaviors which can be examples for children as true or wrong.

Among women and men participants, the majority of them (88%) support the idea that children should be educated about sexual issues by their parents. On the other hand, majority of the participants (58%) regard the behaviors which can be attributed to sexual issues next to children as normal.

The results can be interpreted as the generation of children would be carrying their parents sexual ideas because of the situation that the majority of the participants would share their ideas about sexual freedom, their knowledge and opinions.

3. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Generally speaking, the majority of the participants support the opinions that women should play role in business life (92%), they should have higher education (94%), they should have freedom to get dressed and they should have freedom about their external appearance (57%), and that there should be mutual roles of genders in family holder (72%). They also support women and men equality (88%), women and men children equality (83%), women involvement in business world (65%) and individual honor approach (83%). The rates of women and men participants are not too different in these concepts.

Although the rate of men who support women and men equality is 84%, the rate of men who oppose to women sexual freedom before marriage (65%), believe that women might dishonor the family name (42%) and support that women should get dressed appropriate to the society they live in. (44%) reaches almost %50

Another promising issue in the study is that women restrict their sexual freedom more for themselves than for men. Thus, when the question is sexual affairs before getting marriage, women's rate who support men freedom is 58% but the rate who support women freedom is 40%. In conclusion, the results of women do not include any equality regarding the subject of the sexual freedom of women and men.

Table 1: Statue of Women and (Sexual) Freedom

Statue of Women and (Sexual) Freedom			
	Gender (%)		Total (%)
	Men	Women	
Women's equality with men			
Women should be completely equal with men.	84	92	88
Women should not be completely equal with men.	16	8	12
Women's role in business			
They can work as housewife.	10	3	6
They can work commercially	90	94	92
No Knowledge	-	2	1
Women to have upper education			
I support.	95	94	94
I think it is unnecessary.	3	6	5
No Knowledge	2	-	1
Who should be family holder			
Men should be.	25	10	16
Women should be.	1	5	3
Both of them should be (mutually).	68	74	72
The one should be who is given much more respect	6	10	8
Environmental effect on women dressing and external appearance			
She should dress as not to be different to the environmental values she lives in.	44	37	22
She can dress by free if the environment is modern.	12	22	18
She should dress totally free whether the environment is modern or not.	54	60	57
No Knowledge	2	3	4
About women's sexual affair freedom before marriage:			
I accept	34	40	37
I refuse	65	59	62
No Knowledge	1	2	1
About men's sexual affair freedom before marriage:			
I accept	55	58	57
I refuse	43	41	42
No Knowledge	2	1	1
About your daughter/ sister to live with her boyfriend before marriage:			
I accept	35	48	43
I refuse	62	52	55
No Knowledge	3	-	1
"dishonoring" of family			
Only a female member can make dishonor of family	42	27	34
An individual can only dishonor his/her own honor.	55	71	64
No Knowledge	3	2	2
Preventer of "family dishonor"			
Men	9	8	8
Women	3	6	5
The entire member in a family is responsible.	66	65	65
I refuse this concept of „family dishonor“.	20	19	20
No Knowledge	2	2	2
Children value depending on their gender			
Male children are more valuable	3	2	2
Their gender differences make no difference on their value.	81	85	83
Male children are not more valuable however they have more opportunity on the society.	13	13	13
About children's sexual education by their parents:			
It is a must	88	88	88
It is not necessary	9	11	10
No Knowledge	3	1	2
About parents' intimate behaviours next to their children			
I accept	52	64	58
I do not accept	45	35	39
No Knowledge	3	2	2

Notes

i 2%, 4% and 2% of the sampling group did not provide their private information of gender, citizenship and family type, respectively.

ii The concept of sexual affair refers not the behaviors like to kiss, holding each other's hands or hug but to have sex.

iii This rate in the age group of 26-35 is 40% and the age group of 36-45 is 39%.

iv This rate in the age group of 26-35 is 67% and the age group of 36-45 is 54%.

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