EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN TURKEY

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ABSTRACT

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN TURKEY

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Women's empowerment programs are carried out in Turkey through various but shared contexts. These aim women's empowerment through various methods which all aim different dimension of women's empowerment. These dimensions reveal the common areas of women's empowerment as benefits of the programs, whereas show the limitations. This study aims to research the effects of these programs for women; while also questioning the methods used in non-formal education programs.

Through the research of two main empowerment programs that carries an economic feature and two other shorter ones we concluded that: 1) As a result of the programs, women reach the stage of psychological empowerment whereas collective work and political mobilization of women in these programs are very limited or absent that is a necessity for women's empowerment, to go beyond a personal transformation to a social change. 2) Women's relational empowerment is observed in their familial and public relations through the increase in self-confidence and communication skills. 3) Improvement in awareness raising and critical thinking on gender issues are observed whereas women's knowledge on gender disparity do not necessarily change gender division of labor at home. Knowledge and practice are not always in concord with each

other. 4) Women's consciousness can rise through dialogue whereas women's rivalries and quarrels create obstacles in the programs that raise questions on women's solidarity and usage of power. 5) In high levels, methods in the literature are in compliance with the methods used in these programs in terms of interactive learning, women's experiences and the sessions connection besides participation; whereas women's experiences and needs have little or no impact in making planning decisions in the beginning of the empowerment programs.

Keywords: Women's Empowerment, Non-Formal Education Programs, Social Transformation

ÖZ

KADINLARIN TÜRKİYE'DE FORMAL OLMAYAN EĞİTİM YOLUYLA GÜÇLENDİRİLMESİ

Ortaköylü Uysallı, Zülfiye Doğa
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Türkiye'e yürütülen kadınları güçlenmesi programları çeşitli ama benzer içeriklerdedir. Bunlar çeşitli metodlar kullanarak kadınların güçlenmesinde farklı boyutları amaçlarlar. Bu boyutlar, programların faydası olarak kadınların güçlenmesinde yaygın alanları ortaya çıkarır diğer yandan da boyutların sınırlarını gösterir. Bu çalışma programların kadınlar üzerine etkilerini araştırmayı amaçlarken aynı zamanda formal olmayan eğitim programlarında kullanılan metodları sorgular.

Bu çalışmada ekonomik özellik taşıyan iki temel programı ve diğer iki kısa programı araştırarak şu sonuçlara vardık: 1) Bu programların sonucunda, kadınlar psikolojik güçlenme boyutuna varıyorlar, diğer yandan bireysel dönüşümden sosyal değişime ulaşmak için kadının güçlenmesinde gerekli olan kadınların kolektif çalışması ve politik mobilizasyonu bu programlarda fazlasıyla sınırlı veya yoktur. 2) Kadınların ilişkisel güçlenmesi ailesel ve toplumsal ilişkilerde, kendine güven ve iletişim becerilerinin gelişmesiyle beraber gözlemlenmiştir. 3) Farkındalığın ve toplumsal cinsiyet konularında eleştirel düşünmenin gelişmesi gözlemlenmiştir; diğer yandan da

kadının toplumsal cinsiyetteki ayrımlar üzerine bilgisi, evde cinsiyetlere dayanan iş ayrımını her durumda sona erdirememiştir. Bilgi ve uygulama her zaman uyumlu olmamıştır. 4) Kadınların güçlenme ortamlarında birbirleriyle diyalog kurarak dayanışma ve destek buldukları ortaya çıkmıştır. Kadınların farkındalıkları diyalog ile artmıştır; diğer yandan da kadınlar arası düşmanlık ve kavgalar bu programlara engeller yaratmıştır. Bu da kadınların dayanışması ve güç kullanımı üzerinde bazı şüpheler bırakmıştır. 5) Yüksek oranlarda, literatürdeki metodlar, interaktif öğrenme, kadınların deneyimleri, ihtiyaçları ve katılımı, incelenen programlarda kullanılan metodlarla uyumludur. Yine de katılımcı kadınların deneyimleri ve ihtiyaçlarının güçlenme programlarının planlanması üzerinde çok az veya hiç etkisi olmamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kadının Güçlenmesi, Formal-Olmayan Eğitim Programları, Sosyal Dönüşüm

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Governments, the development sector and non-governmental organizations aim for the empowerment of women on different grounds and with varying objectives. Integrating women into development programs, increasing the effectiveness of development by involving women or empowering women for gender equality are some objectives of different actors and organizations. Empowerment of women can be attained by using various strategies that include non-formal empowering education. Non-formal empowering education can be applied in areas of violence, to improve life skills, gain literacy, train in human rights and other related areas. It targets the raising of consciousness and the agency of women.

Since women constitute an oppressed group in society, the education of women is crucial in directing their awareness and the action needed for a transformed life and equal gender relations. This can be actualized through education, whether formal or non-formal. Formal education generally perpetuates the status-quo by teaching with a hierarchical understanding of life without offering any content or critical thinking that has the potential to transform the situation. On the other hand, non-formal education for women, most of the time due to its critical and freer nature, has more potential to trigger women's own agency and action for the transformation of their lives. In a more encompassing way it also aims to collectively transform society, which is very relevant to the empowerment of women.

Activities and works were becoming visible in Turkey starting from the Constitutional Period before the establishment of the Republic. Women start to become active for

their empowerment in private but also in public sphere. Women İn Turkey started to be organized around some rights, non-formal education and demands for women's needs. Especially after 1980's women's organizations were increasing in number. After the establishment of the Republic, women's empowerment started to gain attendance. Especially after 1975 through United Nation's projects, women's empowerment was in politics and strategies while at the same time women organizations working for women's empowerment were increasing in number.

This study aims to inquire into the non-formal education of women in Turkey held by various actors and within various contexts; to analyze the inadequacies in the context of women's empowerment; to find out what is missing for the actualization of women's empowerment; to analyze the methods in terms of popular education, non-formal education and empowering education literature; and to investigate the areas that women get empowered through the experiences in the learning setting. This study also investigates the knowledge and skills gained in women's empowerment projects and programs while recognizing the obstacles in the process. Moreover, revealing the dimensions in which women's empowerment is actualized and investigating the changes in terms of women's critical thinking will show the beneficial sides of the programs.

The measurement of women's empowerment is not an agreed-upon issue in literature, but common areas of inquiry exists in the literature. In this study, these indicators are investigated through questioning women's own interpretations of what has changed for them and through interviewing the facilitators on the methods and subsequent issues that arise during projects and the non-formal education process. This information will contribute to making non-formal empowering education for women more efficient through raising women's participation in the process; and will reveal the limitations of non-formal education due to ideological and structural constraints in society. In addition, the study will research women's empowerment in different dimensions that are actualized as a result of women's participation in empowerment projects.

Whereas women's non-formal education exists in all four of the projects that are investigated in this study, two main projects constitute the majority part of the study.

This is due to their duration, having multiple subjects included in a non-formal education setting, frequency of courses and courses that carry an economic feature. The other two projects do not include a direct economic impact, though all four projects carry the feature of being non-formal empowering education, especially for adult women. In this study, most of the focus is on the shared characteristics of these four projects.

This study inquired four projects in Turkey that consists non-formal education sessions. Two extensive programs also consists the aim of empowering women economically. However all these programs have some common points whereas the two extensive ones have more results in terms of women's empowerment?

In this study, it has been questioned in which areas women get empowered. This revealed common points among all programs and showed that awareness raising on gender issues are very prevalent. In addition to this, the study has revealed the experiences that women get in the programs. Besides the subjects discussed in non-formal education sessions, experiences in the programs can also be empowering for women. Then, it's asked whether these carry the potential for the fulfillment of women's empowerment that is related to social transformation. This is the weakest point among all programs. Methods used in the programs were also informative about their potential for women's empowerment. Psychological empowerment is one of the initial stages that most women can actualize. On the other hand, collective empowerment is one of the weakest areas with the political action. Methods are in compliance with the literature which are informative for other programs that empowers women.

In Chapter 1, Introduction, this study will explain what women's empowerment is and why it is important. Besides non-formal education, which is the main area of investigation for this study, other ways for the actualization of women's empowerment are offered.

In Chapter 2, a literature review of the methods used in non-formal education programs for women's empowerment will be investigated. In the same chapter, the experiences of women in these types of programs will reveal other features of the programs that empower women. That means that besides the non-formal education topics

themselves, women's experiences that are provided through gatherings, activities such as travelling or visits, and discussions and sharing are influential in the process of women's empowerment. In addition to this, obstacles are examined that reveal some common problems and restrictions to women's empowerment process. In this way, women's empowerment can be examined in two directions - those that are supportive and those that are non-supportive for women's empowerment. At last, dimensions of women's empowerment are discovered to be able to understand the types of empowerment for women that connotes to these dimensions, and also to be able to reveal the strongest dimensions and the weaker ones. In this way, inadequacies in women's empowerment programs mostly carried out through non-formal education sessions will be touched upon.

Experiences, obstacles and dimensions will enable this study to examine the issues in different directions, but also the issues are to be examined through their ideal definitions that support an empowerment process that is transformative, that goes beyond individual awareness-raising to collective action and social transformation. In Chapter 2 also principles and requirements for a transformative process in women's empowerment are examined as part of an empowerment process.

In Chapter 3, methodology and empowerment programs that this study investigated will be introduced. Description and context of the programs will be introduced in the same chapter.

In chapter 4, empowerment programs that are designed for women in Turkey will be explained. Various programs and their practices will be discussed.

In Chapter 5, we will begin to examine the programs in this study in accordance with the first part of the thesis - to find out in which areas women get the most empowerment as a result of these programs, how well the methods are carried out, what are the empowering experiences of women as a result of the participation in these programs, and what are the obstacles in the course of women's empowerment.

In the same chapter this study investigates in which dimensions women get empowered. How far women become empowered through these projects is an area of inquiry to understand. According to empowerment literature, what are the stages of the

learning process that women go through? Are empowerment programs empowering for women, and if so, in what ways? How do empowerment projects affect women's views and their lives? The study reveals that the gains from women's empowerment on the personal level can show some commonalities. In the same chapter this study asks if the empowerment remains on the personal level or expands to a collective empowerment, which is crucial for gender equality and social transformation. This study takes the stance that only the collective empowerment of women can serve for greater gender equality, whereas personal awareness and mobilization remains to have a limited impact on society.

Women's experiences during the projects and non-formal education empowerment settings are also an area of inquiry, in order to understand the ways in which women's awareness is raised, and support or solidarity is strengthened between women. In Chapter 6 we will show that besides the context of the programs that empower women, the experiences had by women in the non-formal education space also affects women's empowerment. By means of communication and dialogue with other women, women create an environment of support and sharing. How do these programs and the women themselves create a space in which solidarity and support can be created in order to benefit the empowerment process? The answers to this question will display the connection between experiences within the programs and women's empowerment.

Chapter 7 is about the various types of obstacles that influence the empowerment process. In this section, solidarity of women is questioned since women's rivalries are common in long-term empowerment projects. Furthermore, investigating family member's reactions, traditional ideologies in society and questioning the support of others will expose obstacles to women's empowerment.

Lastly, Chapter 8 is about the methods used in these projects that will be compared to those used in adult education, non-formal education, and popular education for women and empowering education literature. In the limited literature on this subject, these terms are sometimes used interchangeably and relatedly. Sometimes, one term may encompass the other. In order to prevent any confusion, the study makes necessary explanations made for the non-formal education terms, and the connection between them is described. These methods point to the significance of women's experiences

and their needs over the course of the projects. In addition, the methods suggest a participatory environment experienced through critical thinking. Evaluation of the non-formal education programs with the literature can inform women's empowerment projects in the future and can draw selected principles for a more efficient non-formal empowering non-formal education strategy. Which stages of these methods are lacking, and in which projects? How are this study's cases in compliance with these methods and how do they not fit in? Are these projects empowering in terms of the methods used? How far do they go in carrying an empowering feature? These are the questions that are investigated throughout this study to be able to understand how these programs provide and limit women's empowerment; while using specific methods.

1.1.What Does Women's Empowerment Mean?

Empowerment do not only have one explanation and description, rather it's approached differently by many authors. The term empowerment has an ambiguous usage (Porter, 2013). Elisabeth Porter explains that traditional thinking perceives empowerment as a course to be achieved via aid, education and health care for women. She warns that this view frequently ignores the ways in which power politics restrict women's access to resources. This means that empowerment is not a direct route - it has other structural or ideological constraints to be overcome. Groups can reach empowerment, though the limitations created through the structures should be taken into account (Rai &Staudt, 2002). Although this study does not necessarily focus on structural constraints, except defining the obstacles such as a non-supportive environment or the gendered division of labor at home, women's empowerment issues are affected by structural and power restrictions.

Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton & Bird (2009) explain two different approaches to empowerment; one is dealing with agency and self-confidence while the other puts emphasis on structural realities. Structural inequalities and related power relations should be considered in assessing women's empowerment.

Power relations create obstacles in the course of women's lives. On the other hand,

power does not always connote to a negative meaning. Usage of power has various ways that creates an explanation for the empowerment types such as power within connotes to personal empowerment. Mosedale (2005) explains power in three dimensions: *power within* refers to self-confidence, *power to* means achieving without diminishing other's power, *power with* is gaining power collectively with other women (p. 250).

Parpart, Rai and Staudt (2002) explain empowerment through Foucault's understanding. They propose that "empowerment involves the exercise rather than possession of power" (p. 4). They define empowerment as the ability for transforming, to challenge the existing restrictions. It goes beyond individual transformation to social transformation.

Naila Kabeer (1999) defines empowerment through disempowerment; the latter meaning the ability to make a choice is denied. If the ability to make a choice becomes available, then one can mention empowerment (Kabeer, 1999). Mosedale (2005) defines empowerment as women's redefinition of the situations which restrict them and the creation of activities which remove them from these boundaries. Kabeer's empowerment definition emphasizes women's agency and women's critical reflection on their own situation.

Mosedale (2015) makes it specific to women's condition and proposes a consistent process of empowerment for the next generations. More importantly, she proposes a transformative empowerment process which extends women's ability to make choices. Mosedale proposes that "redefinition" can mean changing all the embedded constraints through creating and opening up new kinds of opportunities for women. It goes beyond the view which says that giving women the ability to survive in the existing system is enough for women's empowerment.

As it has been touched upon before, the meaning of the term empowerment connotes to different meanings for different people (Mosedale, 2005). Despite this obscurity in its meaning, Mosedale suggests that there are four facets that are widely accepted in

women's empowerment literature. Firstly, empowerment can only occur if there is disempowerment. Secondly, only women can empower themselves, while development agencies only assist the progress of empowerment. Thirdly, whether on an individual or collective level, empowerment requires women to make their own decisions on issues crucial in their lives and to have the ability to maintain these decisions by practicing them. Lastly, empowerment is a continuing process rather than a final stage.

Mosedale (2005) argues that "People are empowered, or disempowered, relative to others or, importantly, relative to themselves at a previous time (p. 244)." Researching empowerment or disempowerment of women in relation to their situation at a previous time suggests a way to assess empowerment, comparing one's situation in the past with the empowerment process they reached today. This is the stance that this study takes as women's empowerment is investigated through an inquiry into the empowerment process triggered through women's participation in empowerment programs.

At what place should women's empowerment process start is a question that informs one of the actors' part in the process. Women's empowerment is "a 'bottom up' process for transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it" (Reeves & Baden, 2000, p. 3). The empowerment process as a bottom-up process is also emphasized by Moser (1993) by using the term 'grassroots'. By starting from grassroots, there is a potential to empower women by means of considering women's needs and desires. In addition, culture plays an important role in the strategy of empowerment programs, as it can create some differences along the way. Porter (2013) suggests a culturally sensitive empowerment strategy for transformation in gender relations and rights.

Smita Mishra Panda (2000) suggests that empowering women has been the fundamental plan for governments and NGO-led mediations. Panda (2000) proposes that the term empowerment includes components such as "power, autonomy and self-

reliance, entitlement, participation, awareness development and capacity building." (p. 44). Panda's description of empowerment illustrates the importance of empowerment in terms of women's self-confidence, awareness, autonomy and increase in capability.

Empowerment consists of fundamental aspects such as facilitating and arranging power; with the two supporting each other (Panda, 2000). In addition, empowerment can also mean a process of challenging unequal power relations, and getting control over sources of power by the people who are deprived of advantages (Panda, 2000). These are the fundamental benefits of women's empowerment, for women themselves and also for wider changes in society.

Empowerment is needed for social transformation that needs women's action to initiate it. Stromquist (2015) defines empowerment "as a set of knowledge, skills, and conditions that women must possess in order to understand their world and act upon it." (p. 308). This definition reveals that women's empowerment is needed for women to examine and assess their world and act to change it. Stromquist argues that empowerment should consist of action on both an individual and a collective level. Relatedly, beyond personal transformation, empowerment is also important for social change.

Social change can be initiated through women's empowerment by means of challenging unequal relations. Participation in the decision-making process, access to and control of resources present vehicles to challenge unequal relations that restricts empowerment on both individual and collective levels. (Porter, 2013) The empowerment process includes both personal and collective levels though social change is not only dependent on empowerment but also on structural constraints. In other words, women's empowerment is not only related to women's own agency but to the structural restrictions they face.

Acting upon the existing situation requires understanding and being aware of the constraints. In order to start the empowerment process, these constraints should be recognized and challenged. Challenging the obstacles may mean challenging the organizational structures that constrain women.

These constraints have to be recognized to assess the condition and position of a woman. When seeking status and autonomy as the measurement of empowerment, Kabeer (1999) suggests remembering that the former does not guarantee the latter. Autonomy can correspond to the ability for decision-making, while status do not necessarily give this kind of power. Kabeer (1999) states that rising female employment may not turn into empowerment in practice since autonomy of women may not be socially acceptable or individually desired. This means that economic power is not enough; traditional gender ideologies are the basic challenge. Challenging traditional gender ideologies and opening new ways for women's lives are crucial points that can be actualized in women's empowerment process.

Empowerment cannot be directly gained through economic power and through learning technical skills. To understand and assess women's empowerment, one should look beyond their economic situation and economic skills, and look for other aspects in the process such as structural limitations. The empowerment process is not only limited to gaining abilities, but also has a potential to institute wider transformation.

Similar to Kabeer's (1999) argument on the requirements of the empowerment process for social change, Longwe (1998) proposes that self-reliance or economic empowerment does not guarantee women's empowerment. Women should be mobilized and organized politically to reach a position of control (Longwe, 1998). Her argument on women's empowering non-formal education suggests a radical view on empowering non-formal education that aims for structural transformation rather than adjusting to the rules in the existing system.

Luttrell, Quiroz, Scrutton and Bird (2009) suggest a joint attention to both agency and structure. They argue against providing access to resources thought to be empowering women which do not take into account the impact of structural inequalities on empowerment (Luttrell, 2009). That means, having access to resources is not enough by itself, since women may not be able to use these resources due to health, economic problems or structural inequalities. Oxaal and Baden (1997) touch upon this by

explaining the limited impact of microcredit programs if they do not "enable women to get control over resources and increased bargaining power" (as cited in Luttrel et al., 2009, pp. 9-10). Luttrel et al. argues that focusing only on democratic interventions for empowerment may not work well since women may be in an economic or health hardship that prevents them from taking advantage of political representation or equity policies. They suggest a joint attention to both agency and structure. Furthermore, they suggest paying attention to providing for the basic needs of women before other empowerment steps.

Ensuring women's strategic or practical needs in the process of empowerment reveals why empowerment is important for women and how it can be actualized. These needs of women are categorized into two parts -the practical and the strategic gender needs of women. Practical gender needs do not deal with challenging the structures, while strategic gender needs work more directly for equality between sexes. Strategic and practical gender needs of women require different actions for women.

Moser (1993) touches upon the issue of practical and strategic gender needs through offering arguments on gender planning that aims for women's emancipation through equality and equity and by recognizing and satisfying strategic and practical needs. Moser defines the former as "political" while the latter is "technical", which is not challenging the status quo but providing the means for well-being (p. 88). As it can be seen these needs are closely related to the discussion of going beyond personal capabilities, such as financial gains, to changing unequal relations.

As it has been said, women's empowerment and its significance can be observed through investigating the needs of women. Women's empowerment can happen through providing practical and strategic gender needs. This issue is discussed widely in development literature since both requires different actions in the course of empowerment that both serve different interests for women. Moser (1993) gives priority to strategic gender needs above practical gender needs, the former concerning itself with class, ethnicity, religion, race and location (p. 89). On the same issue, Reeves and Baden (2000) assert that practical gender needs do not require challenging inequalities in gender; whereas strategic gender needs draw attention to the control of

resources, labour, ownership or decision-making from a feminist standpoint.

On the issue of strategic and practical gender needs, Porter (2013) makes a similar distinction and emphasizes the need for challenging the existing system to be able to reach empowerment and distinguishes an access to basic rights and needs from challenging the existing structures which create inequalities. Matiwana (2004) also proposes to go beyond women's needs to a more strategic way of thinking. These arguments support the idea that women's empowerment is not only important for gaining technical skills but is also crucial for the transformation of gender relations.

The distinction between practical and strategic gender needs may not always be that clear, although Moser (1993) argues that practical gender needs can give way to strategic ones. For example, a literacy training can give women a chance to learn a skill not associated with the types of jobs that are defined as "women's work". Challenging the patriarchal norms can start with achieving practical gender needs. Shirley and Linzi (1996) state that there is even a difference between emphasizing the strategic and practical needs of women, which are actually connected, and that practical needs can create appropriate conditions for strategic changes for women. For instance, practical needs can be fulfilled with economic support, whereas fulfilling strategic needs encompasses consciousness-raising on gender issues or giving training for jobs that are traditionally known as "male jobs", though they can give way to one another.

Women's empowerment process is crucial since it gives women abilities and skills to change their oppressed situation, increase self-confidence and provide autonomy. None of them guarantees the other, which means that empowerment should be analyzed through considering the benefits of providing the practical and/or strategic gender needs of women.

Women's empowerment is crucial for developing their own abilities and confidence, although it is not a one-way situation. Besides gaining skills or self-confidence, in order to gain access to resources or to control them, empowerment must also encompasses strategic dimensions such as consciousness-raising on gender issues and challenging unequal gender relations through this knowledge, and then taking action.

Overall, for the empowerment of women to be actualized it is crucial for all these dimensions to occur, such as gaining economic liberation, autonomy and challenging unequal gender relations.

1.2. Through Which Ways Women's Empowerment is actualized?

Empowerment of women can be actualized through various means and actors. Porter (2013) states that women's empowerment is conventionally perceived to reach through "access to aid, education, and health care" (p.3). Furthermore, she suggests that unequal gender relations should be an issue taken into consideration. That means, besides providing the needs related to health or basic education, gender relations should be considered to actualize women's empowerment.

Porter (2013) exemplifies empowerment interventions by development organizations such as USAID and DFID towards girl's education, health, security and justice. The area of empowerment depends on the organization's plans.

Stromquist (2008) explains informal learning as another way towards women's empowerment besides non-formal education. According to her, informal learning develops one's attitudes and knowledge needed for social transformation. Informal learning constitutes collective work including preparing newspapers for awareness-raising, conducting radio programs, carrying out campaigns, and celebrations of special days related to women (Stromquist, 2008). These activities of NGOs support women's informal learning for empowerment while creating public visibility of women's issues.

Programs that aim to provide literacy for women are presenting another way for the actualization of women's empowerment. Stromquist (2006) suggests that literacy for women's empowerment is helpful in developing women's citizenship activities. In addition to this, Panda (2000) explains approaches used by development agencies. One includes economic interventions through credits or income generation activities; while the other refers to rural programs that encompass providing women's primary needs, health and education.

1.2.1. Microfinance and Information Technology Communication

There are several vehicles for women's empowerment, for example microfinance support for women and information and communication technologies that have become popular in the last decade. Fiona Leach and Shashikala Sitaram (2002) investigate microfinance as one of the vehicles for women's empowerment and a strategy for poverty-alleviation (Leach & Sitaram, 2002). In this strategy, groups or individuals get small loans as support. According to Leach and Sitaram, there are several reasons behind this strategy: women's condition compared to men in terms of economic hardship, discrimination against women in the labor market, and women's importance in house income.

About microfinance programs that are conducted by development agencies, Hunt and Kasynathan (2001) consider the relationship between women's increased position in the private and public spheres and the microcredit provided to them. Through this, they show that microcredit is not only there to give support to overcome poverty, but also to empower women. They suggest that development agencies consider the link between providing women with credit and changing gender relations needed for women's empowerment.

Microcredit does not guarantee women's empowerment. Through their investigation of NGOs, Hunt and Kasynathan (2012) state that there are many women in India and Bangladesh whose microcredit goes directly to their husbands and it stays under the control of the man. This shows that microcredit should also consider unequal gender relations and ensure women's control of women instead of only considering their access.

A study by Haile, Bock and Folmer (2012) investigates microfinance programs for women and its effects on women's empowerment in Ethiopia. They concluded that microfinance programs may trigger an increase in women's decision making in spending, their owning assets and a decrease in household conflicts. On the other hand,

microfinance may also lead to conflict between women and their husbands if men want women to bring all the credit to the home, all for the home. In addition, they state that when women use money for the household and when her financial dependence ends, conflicts over the loans are likely to decrease. Gender relations should be an area of consideration to actualize women's empowerment in its fullest sense.

As another way of women's empowerment, ICTs are investigated in terms of women's empowerment and the extent they changed gender relations. Hossain and Beresford (2012) state that ICTs should be implemented in accordance with the social and cultural situation in terms of gender relations. ICTs can empower if entrenched inequalities on gender issues are changed (Hossain & Beresford, 2012). Related to ICT usage, the study reveals that women don't always make use of mobile phones if their husbands are not abroad because women do not use their phones for their own needs. In addition to this, their usage of mobile phones is not always supported due to entrenched beliefs on gender norms. Even when women use their mobile phones, they may not be using mobile phones for their own purposes other than the family's or traditional female activities (Hossain & Beresford, 2012).

In terms of ICT usage, mobile phones are useful when illiterate women can reach information that can be understood through numbers. Furthermore, ICT should be implemented through the consideration of obstacles to women's evaluation of their own needs, critical thinking and action in terms of the accessed knowledge. Hossain and Beresford suggest a plan for ICT programs that takes into account the gender issues that puts women in a subordinative position. Secondly, they state that through ICTs women can be able to participate in social networks with women from all over the world. Authors further denote that through the usage of ICT, women are able to preserve their private information and are able to feel more free away from male dominance.

Information technologies are an influential means for women's empowerment. Vikas Nath (2001) argues that engendering a knowledge network forms a means to eradicate biases against women in the male dominated society. Furthermore, information and

communication technologies can widen women's areas of action and point to problems easier than before (Nath, 2001). For instance, the study suggests that the potential for knowledge networking in affecting decision-making can work for the betterment of democracy and can help women to be recognized more powerfully in the community.

In addition, Nath proposes to consider gender knowledge networks to eradicate the gap between men and women and to work for increasing awareness in women's communities. In addition, Nath argues that information and communication technologies (ICT) have the potential to connect women all over the world which can initiate information exchange. Empowerment of women becomes possible through building the skills and abilities of women and then women spreading their voices to the world (Nath, 2001). That is to say, Nath argues, that in a network environment women can be empowered by being the recipients of knowledge while spreading their own messages. Besides, as it is proposed in the article, it creates new areas of jobs for women without any restrictions related to the place and time. Nath states that types of ICT program are beginning to be used for women's empowerment all over the world.

1.2.2. Formal and Non-Formal Education

Besides ICT and microfinance, education is a very powerful tool to empower women. The effectiveness of formal education for women's empowerment has been debated since it does not challenge the existing system which restricts women's position in public and private spheres, and which sustains their conventional domestic and reproductive roles (Leach, 2010). Governments and donors have been criticized for not focusing on non-formal education (Leach, 2010). They have been criticized because they work on formal education without challenging the system (Leach, 2010). This idea offers non-formal education as an alternative to formal education to challenge the unequal relations of gender which perpetuates women's role in the domestic sphere and women's accumulation in jobs that have traditionally been named as "feminine".

Unequal participation in education has triggered new plans for non-formal education,

vocational, and formal education. This began to be discussed at the United Nations Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, and gained attention at the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990 (Leach, 2010).

According to UNESCO (1999) schooling for women is not enough for empowerment, rather unconventional training is needed for political and societal changes. UNESCO uses the term *adult learning* related to non-formal education since it suggests an education beyond the formal one, due to its critical stance. It uses the term *adult learning* to explain unconventional training instead of traditional schooling. The necessity of including gender issues in adult learning is asserted. Adult education should go beyond formal education by being critical on political, social and economic structures that restrict women's choices and put them into a secondary position (UNESCO, 1999). It is stated that without reflecting on these situations women's empowerment cannot be fully achieved.

UNESCO stated that empowerment through adult learning can create awareness in women to question the situations of subordinance which they accepted before, and to share the violent incidents that they have experienced. Adult learning also facilitates women's usage of skills in a more effective way with the ability to contend with structures of power (UNESCO, 1999). It is asserted that women's education and empowerment supplement each other.

UNESCO (1999) explained the importance of going beyond formal schooling through its explanation of how adult learning should be critical towards the existing structures. For women's empowerment, going beyond formal education is suggested. "One of the tasks of adult education is to address the limitations and contradictions of formal education and to foster a critical re-examination of the social, political and economic system, as it affects the situation of women." (UNESCO, 1999, P. 7).

Stromquist (2006) proposes that schools are institutions that sustain the gender status quo. In these institutions, the environment instills the entrenched traditional roles that each gender is supposed to play through academic and social applications (Stromquist, 2006). Schools are patriarchal institutions where girls are expected to conform to the

rules of a patriarchal world (Longwe, 1998). How should each gender act in their community, family and in the school environment is taught or instilled in schools (Stromquist, 2006). In addition, Stromquist points out to the teachers' lack of knowledge on gender issues and their traditional view about the perpetuation of gender roles. "School organizations and their processing of knowledge create environments that are not sufficiently critical of dominant social class and gender division to discourage their reproduction." (Stromquist, 2006, p.149).

Formal schooling sustains the disparity between genders in society (Stromquist, 2006). Still, Stromquist recognizes the benefits of formal schooling for women that include gaining skills to analyze and reflect that have a potential to transform women's lives. On the other hand, it may not transform society. Furthermore, she explains that according to the literature, educated women are better in making knowledgeable decisions about their own life and are more ready to work outside and participate in political areas. Schooling can initiate self-reliance rather than offering an education for empowerment (Longwe, 1998). In addition, formal education does not recognize and challenge gender ideologies and attitudes in men and women (Stromquist, 2006).

According to Stromquist, the public school system is unlikely to give women knowledge on their subordinate position and is far from initiating action for a social transformation. Rather, Stromquist (2006) argues for a transformative education outside the formal school which considers participants' own knowledge, triggers their consciousness on social realities, and initiates participants' action for social change. For her, transformative education should give knowledge that one's situation is subordinative, but also offer emotional support and political skills. This transformative aspect of education is likely to be actualized in non-formal and informal settings (Stromquist, 2006).

CHAPTER 2

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION AS a WAY FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

According to Reeves and Baden, Women's empowerment is "a 'bottom up' process for transforming gender power relations, through individuals or groups developing awareness of women's subordination and building their capacity to challenge it." (Reeves & Baden, 2000, p.3). The empowerment process as a bottom-up process is also emphasized by Moser (1993) by using the term 'grassroots'. Within a grassroots process, the feature of empowerment starts from the bottom and becomes an essential characteristic for empowerment projects.

Non-formal education for women's empowerment is mentioned in several resources in various ways. As it has been explained, Longwe (1998) writes on this issue under the umbrella of gender training in which she includes non-formal empowering education of women. In addition, Shirley and Linzi (1996) investigate women's empowerment through education and informal learning; and they explain the reasons for various definitions in this area. Shirley and Linzi choose the term 'feminist popular education' that includes various kinds of programs for women's empowerment, including women's non-formal empowerment education. In order to prevent any confusion, the reason behind using various terms for similar program should be explained.

The explanation below will throw light on the confusion of the definitions:

> Non-formal educational practices which aim to challenge injustice and oppression are variously called ‘community education’, ‘radical adult education’, ‘education for change’, ‘people's education’, ‘liberatory’ or ‘emancipatory education’, ‘transformative education’ and ‘education for empowerment’. The names pick up on different political lexicons and trends. (Shirley & Linzi, 1996, p. 10)

In this study, terms of transformative non-formal education, non-formal education for empowerment and empowering non-formal education are used interchangeably.

Educating women for empowerment, with the consideration of gender issues and transformation of gender relations is a discussed issue in the literature. Anonuevo and Bochynek’s (1995) report on the International Seminar on Women’s Education and Empowerment asks questions about empowerment, and tries to conceptualize it and search for ways to take action for it. They state the participant women’s experiences were emphasized in the conference and gathered by different NGO researchers, UN and government workers. Two aims are explained; one is for special education program for women and the other is for sensitizing others for the acceptance of women’s success and to raise consciousness on gender disparity. Some issues are to be included in a successful education program for the empowerment of women: “promotion of gender awareness; lessons on health and nutrition; integration of technical, entrepreneurial, cultural and communal aspects; information and lessons on politics; and provision of planning and thinking skills” (Anonuevo & Bochynek, 1995, p.7). As this suggests, health, gender, politics, culture and planning and thinking skills are emphasized as crucial in women’s empowerment programs.

In the report of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA) that took place in Germany in 1997, Anonuevo (1998) states that adult women’s learning should consider gender issues. This agenda emphasizes the approach that educational plans should contain issues of the injustices that women face. In addition, women’s adult education should give them the ability to protect themselves from sexual violence, develop strategies to involve men and to give both sexes an understanding of the impacts of globalization (Anonuevo, 1998). Involving men means making them support women’s empowerment and work towards it. Beyond

gaining knowledge, turning knowledge into practice is acknowledged (Anounuevo, 1998). For Anounuevo, gender related injustices should be understood by men and women by awareness-raising efforts. Awareness-raising can be built through non-formal education.

Related to non-formal education, Reeves and Baden (2000) put emphasis on women's mobilization to defend their rights which can be obtained by "capacity-building in terms of literacy, legal knowledge, and political participation." (p. 37). In addition, the functionality of women's empowerment is underlined as a challenge to existing power relations in which women are their own agencies; though they also imply the need for external support (Reeves & Baden, 2000).

Ellis (1994) explored non-formal education programs for women in the Caribbean and South Pacific and provided data from the Caribbean training programs. She defines empowerment with knowledge as something which leads to an involvement in transforming one's life and changing the existing conditions. She emphasizes the need for "skills in mobilizing, organizing and planning" in this process (p. 2). Besides individual awareness and action, she stresses understanding the macro-level in which social reality is constructed which affects individuals' lives. Understanding the macro social reality that is related to their personal lives is another component that arises in non-formal education for change.

Overall, transformative non-formal education for women should challenge gender inequalities and in this sense give women the relevant knowledge needed for this challenge. Since empowerment should start from grassroots, consideration of women's own situation is crucial to understand women's needs and experiences. Transformation for gender inequality and women's empowerment needs collective action.

2.1. Methods of Non-Formal Education for the Empowerment of Women

Methods used in non-formal education sessions for women's empowerment arise as

crucial for the actualization of women's empowerment. It's the methods that can trigger women's empowerment in various areas through making women question their own situation, give them the relevant knowledge on gender and making them participate. Women should participate and tell their experiences in order to reach empowerment.

2.1.1. Participation and Women's Experiences

Women's sharing of experiences and stories are introduced as some of the ways to initiate a collective exercise in non-formal education for women. The sharing of personal stories creates a participatory environment. Heng (1996) emphasizes encompassing "experienced emotional subjectivities" (p. 213) in the educational program since the aim is educating for empowerment. "Education work concerned with empowerment cannot fail to address the pervasiveness of debilitating emotional subjectivities among women. Indeed, that is where it must begin." (Heng, 1996, p. 231). Heng explains that the methodology she applied in empowering education was influenced by feminist view which takes into account the "women's lived experiences and subjectivities" (p. 213). She states that workshops include women-only groups telling individual stories in small groups. To recall reflexivity, "recollection, expression, reflection and synthesis" (p. 213) are used in the methodology of the program, initiated by storytelling. Heng explains that storytelling was used in the program to create an environment for women's voices. As she explains, this serves the purpose of uncovering emotions and experiences that are difficult to talk about, and self-confidence is built through giving voice to one's own opinions.

Storytelling is also helpful in the eradication of rivalries between women, which leads to solidarity. With the women factory workers in Heng's (1996) example, storytelling was used as a way to initiate the progress of solidarity. Heng argues that telling personal stories in small groups led women factory workers to be aware of the prevailing emotional pain amongst them. As feelings of shame or blame ceases to be a prevailing feeling, so being able to act is increased (Heng, 1996). She explains the stages in the empowerment program of women-only groups. Heng proposes that

sharing emotional hardship should be emphasized in the educational process, which then creates a safe space in which women can gain self-confidence together. In addition, as Heng states, common identities and experiences, but also differences between women should be recognized. Besides participation and effective learning, educators need to emphasize the relations between subjective and personal experiences.

Storytelling is offered as a collective exercise where one's story can provoke thoughts in another woman's mind (Heng, 1996). In the program some problems during the storytelling process occurred since women have some experiences that are hard to talk about, or are not easily formulated into words. The research shows ways to reveal the perceptions of women that they have not spoken before or which they were not free to talk about before. Heng states that the concept of "eliciting talk" (p. 207) is highly related to this. She also includes counter opinions or skeptical stances against storytelling as an empowerment strategy. For example, she refers to Ellsworth (1989) who criticized storytelling due to the differences between women and various constructions of meaning (as cited in Heng, 1996, p. 215). Regarding her experience, Heng (1996) states that women-only groups have higher participation levels than mixed groups, since women express more and feel self-esteem more.

In the literature, women's experiences, needs and priorities are emphasized as a consideration of the chosen methodology or any part of this process in the education and empowerment program of women. (Anonuevo, 1996; Heng, 1996; Matiwana, 2004; Shirley & Linzi, 1996). Transformative empowering education should consider participant's own life experience and the knowledge that they have (Stromquist, 2002). Sharing of experiences can make it easier for women to connect their own lives to the macro social realities; in this way they understand the reasons of their own lives through understanding macro social life.

Stromquist (2002) gives an example of a leadership training program in Chile where personal problems were related to wider ones, women's awareness about themselves was triggered, and acknowledgment of collective demands was encouraged. In

addition, women were educated to be able to negotiate and critically understand gender issues. This exemplifies the tenets of empowering non-formal education even if it does not give a direct recipe. Women's personal lives should be connected to society through awareness-raising. Furthermore, critical thinking should be encouraged. For critical thinking, women's own experiences and needs are crucial to be able to connect their lives to the macro realities. If women learn social realities and the reasons behind them through taking into account their own lives, then their experiences will be more meaningful to see the big picture.

Women's experiences and needs can be heard through their participation. Inglis (1997) states that emancipatory adult education should trigger students to acknowledge the education practice as something that is beyond traditional pedagogy. A part of the empowerment process described by Inglis is voicing one's own emotions, ideas and desires. Through the communication made with others, a women can analyze her own ideas about life (Inglis, 1997). This can lead a person to be "communicatively competent" by critically analyzing others' ideas rather than easily accepting them (Inglis, 1997, p. 7). This is offered here as a skill for transformation, which is gained through discussion and communication with others and by being able to make criticism on one's self and others. Henceforth, participation can trigger one's critical thinking.

Non-formal empowering education for women is also used closely or interchangeably with feminist popular education, since both carry similar features. Shirley and Linzi (1996) describe 'feminist popular education' as education to change gender relations and something that values women's own experiences as learners in the program process. Shirley and Linzi (1996) propose that feminist popular education was developed in 1980's as a reaction against male dominated popular education. They state that feminist popular education is a participatory process without any hierarchy during the learning process. They define feminist popular education as "the struggle against gender oppression" (p. 16). Although they further state that not only gender inequalities but also other kinds of inequalities and differing identities are taken into account in feminist popular education.

Shirley and Linzi (1996) explain that feminist popular education endorses women's challenge against areas of oppression, which differentiates feminist popular education from other areas such as gender training and feminist pedagogy which perpetuate the homogenous category of women. Besides, it is suggested that local knowledge should be taken into account in order to gain knowledge about how to transform women's lives. It is initiated by people's own situations, and works towards changing the status quo and social relations (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). They propose that it works towards both individual and collective empowerment.

In the context of education work in the Philippines, Anonuevo (1996) states that they used a popular education methodology focusing on the precept 'the personal is political' and women's experiences. Three exercises are used in the program, one being about women's life stories where they draw their lives as a map or with symbols. The research suggests that this exercise revealed commonalities and differences within women while at the same time showed that their experiences are mostly based on the state of being a women. The second exercise was about women's bodies, and being comfortable with one's own body and sexuality. They showed their favorite part of their body and then touched it. It was designed to go against the general tendency in the Philippines to not talk about women's bodies.

The last exercise focused on an analysis of media products which aimed to reveal issues of stereotypes, things attributed to women and traditional social roles of women and men. Anonuevo (1996) underlines the need for women to understand how gender oppression is related to their lives and how it is manifested. Anonuevo also acknowledges that small groups are better environments to learn and to listen. As the research suggests, analytical thinking and discussion on issues gives women control in their lives. In the research, one of the problems defined in development projects was seeing women as a homogenous group. This causes an ignorance about women by not emphasizing their different needs. Anonuevo argues that women are oppressed by the structures but that they can promote change; at the level of the decisions of daily life or with an organized action to challenge structures. Anonuevo argues for education where women can analyze their identity and understand the enforced side of it through

society. She also argues for education that triggers awareness on power relations and that helps them to define their original identity.

Learning women's needs and understanding them initiates the process of meeting women's needs. It can mean learning women's needs for the empowerment project or informing the empowering education process through women's own needs and experiences. Patel (1996) states that they met with women before the project, to get to know each other and understand their urgent needs through initiating them to action. This gives women a direct engagement with the problem to trigger the process. Patel explains that in 1984 they had a close relationship with women in the pavement settlements in Bombay, and at the beginning it was not that easy due to the different positions of women related to their class. These women reported that their priority need was safe shelter. In addition, together with the facilitators they acknowledged the type of mobilization needed to change it. Later on they established an organization called Mahila Milan, to assist other women in transforming communities for reaching resources. As Patel explains, they raised their own funding for housing. Patel argues that the empowerment process should change women's condition and position together, which means meeting both practical and strategic needs.

Matiwana (2004) explores DELTA's adult learning methodology in their gender and leadership program for women, which listens to women's experiences throughout the training process so women themselves could inform the training and also gives women a convenient space to be heard. Delta is a NGO that works for women's empowerment in the Delta state. Under the issue of women's leadership programs, Matiwana (2004) states that training should relate theories of development to women's own personal stories. Especially with women whose education levels are not similar, the method of using women's own experiences for analysis is influential in the course of the program and makes it easier for women to grasp the concepts (Matiwana, 2004). Matiwana proposes that this is also an advantageous method for motivation since it makes women's experiences valuable. She states that teamwork creates a learning environment where they can discuss things, come together and act together. Listening to women became empowering and initiates collective exercise (Matiwana, 2004).

Stromquist (2008) suggests that NGOs' educational processes mostly start from women's own life experiences with different social, political and personal aspects. Besides, local needs are crucial to emphasize in addition to prepared training content (Stromquist, 2008). When women tell their stories it's crucial to grasp the agency potential behind it, and that they are the ones who can control their own lives. Furthermore Stromquist points out that sharing experiences is also important for the space that has been created with the group. The facilitator in the empowerment project where women tell their stories should create a participatory environment that triggers women's sharing and participation.

Matiwana (2004) discusses what is meant by women's needs if there is no time left for them since they have always taken care of others. The program of DELTA focus on: "personal development skills - of confidence, assertiveness, participation skills and broadening women's knowledge base." (Matiwana, 2004, p. 162). Matiwana states that the women should emphasize self-empowerment and act in a self-assured way. Matiwana explains the importance of gaining skills and self-confidence for women's participation in public life by saying: "the enhancement of confidence and assertiveness skills provides a good basis for the acceleration of participation in social structures." (p. 162). In DELTA's women's empowerment program new components of empowerment are added during the process. Matiwana argues that different theories of development are studied in relation to women's experiences, and connecting these are important. Radical shift is a concern for her, since women should lead communities themselves instead of keeping a traditional understanding. She gives women a role as custodians of morals, values, and cultural identities, which I think refers to an efficiency approach. Since in an efficiency approach women are seen as actors for the development of the society and not as individuals who have to be empowered. In addition, listening to women's experiences informs training content and makes it easier to teach women about theories. Moving beyond women's needs can be more strategic for women's empowerment. This argument is similar to the practical and strategic gender needs argument made by Moser (1993) where she emphasized the significance of strategic gender needs for empowerment.

On the effect of how participant's experiences influence the course of empowering education, Kabeer (2006) points to women's own lives and needs. Kabeer emphasizes considering the needs and priorities of women when making a development plan, and training women with skills, for micro enterprises, literacy and so on. An example that clarifies this necessity is in Bangladesh where local NGO workers said that literacy classes are not necessary for women since participation is non-existent. Kabeer explains the reason for the necessity of women's participation through women's work in domestic and harvest labour. For her, a development plan should take into account women's daily lives and needs. She also criticizes trainings which approach women as mothers and wives. As Moser (1993) argued for the importance of strategic gender needs for empowerment, Kabeer suggests women's empowerment instead of "planning for practical needs" (p. 194). "Empowering women must therefore begin with the individual consciousness and with the imaginative construction of alternative ways of being, living and relating." (Kabeer, 2006, p. 194). She also asserts the need for cooperation with men while empowering women, in order for there to be sustainable change. Women's empowerment should be evaluated by taking into account the issues outside of women's lives which directly affects their status.

Listening to women's voices and what their interests are and encouraging the participation of women has been examined by Sibbons (1998) through an experienced example. Sibbons (1998) investigates gender training in Nepal with the aim of solving the problem of girl's lack of access to education and other problems in education related to gender. She uses the term gender training, which is generally used for training development practitioners or staff. Although she mentions women as a category of participants and expands the term of gender training to women's gender education. Workshops on gender training give insights into how gender training can be influential in this context. Workshops with relevant school committees, parents, teacher trainers, supervisors, ministry education officers, and women were held. Methodology and outcomes were discussed. Sibbons asserts that the partial success of gender training workshops is due to creating an environment where everyone can express their own ideas and interests. When participants' own concerns are taken into

account, the training is more likely to succeed since they can easily relate with the problem (Sibbons, 1998). She advises a kind of training session which firstly allows participants to identify the problem themselves. According to Sibbons, this could lessen the resistance to gender training, since everyone could try to understand the problems themselves - seeing the problem in education as a result of gender disparity. Then the trainer could frame the issue with these concepts on gender.

Sibbons (1998) suggests the need to start the training with participants' identification of issues rather than framing and starting the training with "gender as a label applied to the training session" (p. 43). On the importance of participants' needs, a method for an efficient training is offered: "Further, while organizations may have identified their own objectives and needs, it is also important that the training include an assessment of the participants' perceptions of what their objectives and needs are (Hanson and McInturff, 2008)".

Inclusion of women in a more participatory way had been discussed by Arnskool (1995). Some suggestions on how to approach the issue of gender are listening to women's needs, and how to empower women through ideological changes of both sexes. Arnskool (1995) touches upon education for women's empowerment and investigates Asian education program for the empowerment of women. She explains that in the training sessions, participants tell their beliefs on gender issues. Arnskool asserts the importance of being careful in the process of gender issues since people's beliefs are a sensitive area. Then, unearthing women's experiences requires careful attention and knowledge on women's sensitivities.

Like Sibbon's (1998) suggestion for a more participant approach where trainees tell about the problems in their own way, Arnskool (1995) argues for a relevant method where participants talk about the concept of gender themselves. The difference is that in Sibbon's approach, trainers do not talk about gender in the beginning. Then, participants will be able to understand gender in their own ways, learn the actual meaning of gender and be able to link the topics with their lives. This can increase their affinity and involvement with gender issues.

Related to the book “Gender in Popular Education” (1996), Shirley and Linzi state that popular education generally has two phases; one starts from the learners’ experiences and the other is about creating an environment of experiences in the learning setting which lead participants to experience and reflect on that. Another agreed tenet in popular education is identified as giving voice to learners. Silence can reveal power relations since a women can have voice in the private sphere, whereas they may be silent in public relations (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). As they argue, feminist popular educators should consider unequal power relations which can be the reason for women's silence; and find the instruments to give women a voice to make sharing views and emotions easier. Relating to the book they explain empowerment in two ways, one dealing with self-reliance on the personal level while the other looks for transformation in social life. They state that small initiatives for empowerment at local levels can affect political and social changes on an extended level, and this is due to the political situation that educators teach and the power of women's movement. "The construction of political subjectivity" (p. 25) is defined as crucial. This political subjectivity can only happen through action to defend women’s rights or to challenge existing inequalities. Related to this, analyzing experiences and acknowledging one's life from a different stance all contribute to changes in identity while giving oneself reliance (Shirley & Linzi, 1996).

Another raised point regarding popular education that relates to women’s experiences and subjectivities is the importance of recognizing differences, as explained by Shirley and Linzi (1996). It can refer to different subjectivities of women which can be related to race, age and class, or differences such as power or experience, things that should inform educators during the process of preparation of the program. The educator's’ position related to class is another issue. The educator is generally a middle-class woman while the learner is a working-class poor women. I think this refers to the possible hierarchy in the learning environment, which should be avoided. Although I think reflecting on this reality can be a start to eradicate it. In addition, there can be different power levels between participants like race or other categorizations. Categories of women are not necessarily unified since women can have different

experiences related to race or culture. This necessitates a different understanding of how being a women is shaped by different influences. So differences and the possibility of power hierarchies should be acknowledged in the learning process.

Shirley and Linzi (1996) explained what is meant by women's starting point - it can be a geographic location of a woman's life such as a domestic setting, or as another example it can be a woman's feelings (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). The authors' state that consciousness-raising activities related with feminism are connected with popular education in regards to this, which builds an appropriate setting for women to share their experiences of oppression before reflecting upon the oppression together.

For feminist popular education, the process is initiated with women's own experiences that is viewed as creating women's knowledge. (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). They explain the importance of listening to women's experiences since it "produces a quick sense of recognition and solidarity between learners and facilitators." (p. 23). Besides, they state that every author in the book agreed upon the idea of "experiential knowledge as particularly effective educationally." (p. 23).

How far should women and facilitators direct the course of the program is a question that cannot be answered in one way? "Finding the balance between allowing a spontaneous and creative process to emerge and directing the process to complete an agenda is an ongoing tension in popular education work" (Shirley & Linzi, 1996, p. 27) Authors state that there is a slight difference between emphasizing to offer specific definitions and concepts, and examining women's oppression and notions of femininity.

In the workshop booklet of UNESCO (1999), in the context of adult learning, the community participation approach has been offered for women's empowerment. It is stated that adult learning often goes hand in hand with literacy, learning applicable skills and community participation. An example has been given using a participatory adult learning program for women's empowerment, Mahila Smakhya, in India. UNESCO (1999) states that this kind of program aims to teach women literacy and

skills such as water pump maintenance to enable women to participate in their own empowerment process so they can control the resource distribution and make decisions. An empowering methodology is offered which includes listening to women's needs and their existing knowledge (for example related to health or agriculture), triggering women's roles to be changed at the personal level, and transforming the community. These are also relevant with other kinds of adult education since women's knowledge is emphasized by different authors.

It is mentioned that different kinds of knowledge from different experiences should be taken into account and become part of the learning process (UNESCO, 1999). Besides, since women will start to question their situation, which they never examined before, this can create problems within the community and the family that should be pointed out in the learning process (UNESCO, 1999).

Related to fulfilling women's needs in empowerment projects, the measurement of women's empowerment is a process and curriculum should be adapted accordingly. Matiwana (2004) proposes a reflective thinking on the program, to develop it with new knowledge. She argues that the term empowerment should be continued to be discussed and understood in new contexts. As programs should be reviewed, Matiwana proposes these stages to be carried out: "Questions with regards to determining indicators for measuring women's empowerment, defining the essential elements, the best curriculum to use to effect outcomes, ensuring that programs address empowerment issues and choosing a framework to adopt for participatory content, are ongoing" (Matiwana, 2004, p. 163).

Reflecting upon the program is crucial for renewal and thinking over the concepts, while taking into account women's needs. Another act that programmers should be careful of is the indication of empowerment of women. This can be a confusing process, since contradictions can be observed due to women's empowerment; and woman can state that she is empowered in one way, but in reality she could be oppressed in other ways which creates confusion on estimating attitudes and ideas (Matiwana, 2004). Matiwana proposes that facilitators should consistently critically approach and evaluate paradoxical situations. Women's own experiences can differ

and their process of empowerment can carry specific characteristics that an empowering education program should take into account.

Sheela Patel (1996) argues for educational and organizational plans to work together for the poor to change their situation for the long-term. By and of itself empowerment is rooted in popular education which started in Latin America (Patel, 1996). This implies meeting material needs such as water or food but more directly refers to the strategic needs of women that are related to male domination, division of labor based on gender, and equity for women in all spheres of life (Patel, 1996). By referring to empowerment literature, Patel comes to a conclusion that "empowerment can be understood to imply a process of gaining influence in decision-making over the distribution of material resources, knowledge and the ideology governing social relations" (p. 98). Patel describes empowerment as an end and also as a process. Furthermore, Patel describes women's empowerment aims as challenging patriarchy ideologically while facilitating poor women's power for controlling relations, in the sense of material and knowledge.

Women should be provided with knowledge and material well-being besides the necessary skills to challenge the patriarchal system. In this process, their participation in the empowerment course arises as crucial to be able to determine what their needs are. This process may not be easy, since women may resist working for their needs before their family's needs. What Patel (1996) investigates is related to women's participation in organization plans. To be able to start action, women can be mobilized for the demands of their families and communities, since women do not easily start action that is only related to their own selves. That means, in order to reach women's own needs, the initial process can be started with their family's needs. Only after that will women will be able to state their own needs and work for them.

Another dimension in terms of the influence of women's experiences on the empowerment course and programs is explained through aspects of women's conditions and situations. Related to adult education, Rosemary S. Caffarella and Sharan B. Merriam (1996) argue for two principles in learning: "the interactive nature

of learning and the structural aspects of learning grounded in a sociological framework." (p. 63). This view acknowledges the context of the learning and learners' situation such as how their race or gender and their position in society affects the learning process (Caffarella & Merriam, 1996). They note that experiences in social life and the situation of learners affect the learning course. For example they question the position of the leader regarding power relations and asks if they serve for the interest of the oppressed groups. This research is aimed at understanding the learning process of people. On the other hand, it also gives insights into the different aspects created through the context which are crucial. Beyond the individual person, the environment that a person lives in will have an impact on the educational process.

2.1.2. Critical Thinking and Questioning

Stromquist (2002) argues that training for empowerment should question patriarchal ideologies. In researching empowering education as an alternative style in formal education, Ira Shor (1992) states that "*Not* encouraging students to question knowledge, society, and experience tacitly endorses and supports the status quo." (p. 12). Rather than supporting the status quo, challenging patriarchal ideologies arises as crucial for women's empowerment. Unlike conventional education that protects the existing system without questioning it, these types of education programs are radical. Radical ones are which Longwe (1998) was mentioning as opposed to conservative ones. Conservative education supports the existing situation whereas radical ones challenge the situation. The empowerment process should include a redefinition process of the situation that the women live in by means of being aware of the interferences (Mosedale, 2005).

A redefinition of the process requires women's participation in the course of learning. Shor (1992) starts teaching from students' own thinking on the subject and their situation. This is related to women's non-formal education, where women's experiences and interpretation of the issues should be a starting point before teaching concepts. Students answer questions and reflect on issues, while academic explanations by the teacher comes later (Shor, 1992). Remembering that she is in a

school setting, her argument on alternative school learning as empowering connects to the features of empowering education for women. Problem posing is related to a similar strategy that starts from the student's situation and a style that supports participation. Shor states that rather than starting with lecturing, asking the students what "x" means to them is significant.

Shor (1992) offers a critical education that incites students' connection with their own experiences and unequal social life, place in academia and power in society. It's crucial to mention that Shor investigates empowering education in the environment of academia, though it's also highly related to the non-formal education setting through its empowering aspects and methods. This statement reveals the interconnection between dialogic learning, emphasizing learners' own experience and ensuring to connect the topics to participants' own life experiences. Besides, critical thinking according to her is one of the important aspects of critical pedagogy, which is necessary for women's empowerment education as women should experience critical reflection of their lives and situation in order to challenge the unequal gender relations.

By being critical, women's empowering education should be ideologically political and should aim to question patriarchal and traditional ideologies that create gender biases and disparities. Skills programs for women which reinforce women's traditional roles as mothers and wives that provide them with "feminine skills" had been criticized on the ground that it perpetuates women's restrictive definition and role in the society (Ellis, 1994). Women's increased understanding of her oppressive situation in society and the practical needs related to this should be taken into account besides individual consciousness-raising (Ellis, 1994).

2.1.3. Interactive and Dialogic Learning

Women's participation is crucial for understanding their own situation through consciousness-raising. For this participation to happen, hierarchy should be non-existent between the facilitator and the participants. Only in this way will women will be able to speak up easily and reflect upon their own position and situation in the society. Eradicating hierarchy is offered as a feature of feminist popular education

work by Shirley and Linzi (1996). They argue for a participatory process without any hierarchy in the learning process. Besides the instructor's' own methods for eradicating hierarchy, the participant's own observations are crucial to understanding if it does really work.

Empowering education should be different from any conventional teacher-student relationship. Educators' position related to their class is another issue since the educator is generally a middle-class women while the learner is working-class poor women (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). This refers to the possible hierarchy that can arise which should be prevented. This will create a democratic environment which incites dialogue and critical thinking.

Shor (1992) takes sides with critical democratic dialogue that differs from the traditional classroom, with its one-way talk directed by the teacher and a one-way authority and curriculum. Desocialization is proposed as another tenet of empowering education. Firstly, Shor criticizes dictation and proposes an interactive setting for learning. Secondly, Shor proposes desocialization that requires critically examining the social experiences of our lives such as perceived values and power relations that shape us (Shor, 1992). Shor explains advantageous groups in terms of power, where they use their authority for sustaining the present state of affairs and which leads to socialization of others. Here Shor recognizes the unequal relations of power that is an area of inquiry and criticism in feminist thinking. Then, a dialogic environment becomes crucial for creating a critical thinking on social relations and for challenging gender relations.

2.2. Learning in a Safe Environment

Non-formal empowering education settings create a safe space for women where they can share their experiences and create solidarity away from male dominance. In order to understand how solidarity and sharing among women is triggered by a safe environment, one needs to explain the features of space and the convenient conditions that are necessary for women's solidarity and sharing. Explaining the significance of a safe space and its characteristics sheds light on the solidarity between women. It also

reveals the relationship between non-formal education and solidarity created among women in the course of the empowering education.

Safe space and sharing among women through the creation of trust are interrelated subjects. In order to deal with the constraints in every sphere of their lives, women need a space for themselves where collective sharing through critical analysis can take place. Shirley and Linzi (1996) stress the importance of having a specific place away from women's everyday duties for the empowerment education. A distinct place for women is viewed as influential in order to provide a place for women to reflect on their situation (Patel, 1996). This space should include creating confidences between women, something that Shirley and Linzi point out to as being important in a learning environment that can be actualized in community work. On the other hand, a distinct place is needed due to the responsibilities in women's daily lives that may restrict their participation in education programs, so creating a convenient environment for women should be a priority to avoid these restrictions (Anonuevo & Bochynek, 1995). In the arrangement of an empowering program for women; ensuring a convenient space arise as crucial.

According to Stromquist (2008), safe spaces give women an opportunity to create acquaintances and find ways to act for change. Women gather together, and through collective effort they find new ways to fight for their rights. In order to challenge the existing beliefs and order through action, Stromquist (2008) refers to secure spaces that are away from male dominated areas. She reflects upon the educational attempts of NGOs to teach new forms of knowledge for challenging male dominance created through individuals. For her, these educational interferences by NGOs reveal a kind of challenge to gender issues. She reflects on informal learning for adults by NGOs that serve for collective and personal change that is without any control of the state and is conducted in a safe environment. As she argues, action plans in this environment can be made easier.

Safe spaces are also crucial for women to share their experiences with each other. Safe spaces are emphasized in the adult literacy education of women where women have

traumatic stories to tell (UNESCO, 1999). UNESCO (1999) asserts that women's situations should be taken into account in the learning spaces to create a safe environment for them where they can freely share their experiences.

Stromquist (2002) argues for "new spaces for learning" (p. 26) that should be created for activism and for women who are improving their acknowledgment on gender issues. Those who are in these groups can have the opportunity to develop their awareness and agency in an environment where no outsider can control them. In these spaces, existing patriarchal order has to be challenged if it's an empowering education (Stromquist, 2002). In the context of adult women's empowerment Stromquist states that women-led NGOs are constituting an important part of action and speech on gender problems. She defines non-formal education for women's empowerment as creating a free environment to learn.

Women's space is also critical for questioning, analyzing and doing collective work. Patel (1996) states that "Women must set aside a separate time and space for themselves to question collectively their situation and develop their critical thinking about it, prioritize issues to tackle and acquire skills that enhance women's individual and collective autonomy (as cited in Stromquist, 2002, p. 26). Stromquist points to this women-only space as "alternative social spaces for the discussion of gender issues" (p. 26). Then, for collective work that encompasses solidarity and sharing among women, a separate place can be created in non-formal education.

As it has been argued here, the alternative space that is mentioned in this study offers a setting for building women's self-confidence but also for women's sharing and solidarity. Stromquist (1995) offers a convenient space for women to be able to share their stories and ideas with each other. On the other hand, the facilitator should take the role of ensuring the participation of the learners. The convenient space can be created to improve self-reliance and confidence (Stromquist, 1995). Anonuevo (1996) reflects on the educational programs at the grassroots level and states that due to women's almost pressing need, which is to survive, how important is this education for them? She explains that women respond by saying that this gives them a different perspective and opens up possibilities in life while sharing commonalities with others through discussions taking place in a convenient space. This space provides an

environment for women's sharing and self-confidence.

Space can take on different connotations. It can be a setting appropriate for women to reach, a safe space where women can speak freely, or any specific area for women to progress politically away from male domination. Although all of them refer to women's need for a space that can foster free expression of speech, analysis, plans for empowerment and a space that forms a sharing environment with other women.

Safe space creates an environment for women to share with each other and create solidarity that can lead to new ideas and action. Sharing and solidarity among women can make women aware of their own potential of agency and they can gain knowledge on the relations between different spheres of life. Women's everyday experiences are important to learn in an empowerment project (Stromquist, 1995). Stromquist argues that when women tell their stories it's crucial to grasp the agency potential behind it, to show they are the ones who can control their own lives. Also, sharing experiences is important for the space that is created by the group (Stromquist, 1995). Stromquist (1995) emphasizes women's sharing of their own experiences, which leads to an acknowledgement that they are the actors in their life. Besides, as she proposes, they can then relate to micro and macro levels of social life. Sharing of one's own experiences is also crucial to fight against oppression through solidarity.

Heng's (1996) research on consciousness-raising and collective work empowerment programs for women factory workers to fight against oppression exemplifies the importance of solidarity. Issues at the factory and at home are related to oppression and silencing women (Heng, 1996). To give voice to women's silence is an important step for finding out the problems, to connect these to social life realities, to acknowledge women's situations and to analyze accordingly. Action starts with telling, sharing, understanding the reasons of oppression, reflecting upon it, analyzing and planning accordingly. Solidarity among women has been well proven by this program. Heng suggests that women feel secure in the supportive group environment. In addition, they could speak up about their problems in their marriages and with their husbands.

Heng (1996) explains the process which starts with women's experiences. She suggests reflecting upon women's experiences in a critical way through the dialogue between participants. As she asserts, women's personal experiences lead to a collective sharing due to the similarity in their lived experiences. She states that the process includes "building bonds, breaking silence; talking stories, talking pain; and making sense" (p. 224). Sosibo's research in 1996 on the empowerment project of the National Association for Women's Empowerment program (NAWE) in South Africa also creates an example of collective work. In this project, women reported that solidarity between women is actualized throughout the process. Then, sharing becomes one of the stages of the empowerment process that can trigger women's agency to take action for their lives.

Lastly, a connection between relational empowerment and experiences of sharing in the learning sphere is observed in Rowland's study. The women in PAEM reported that their empowerment within relationships was supported by their participation in the groups, actualized through the opportunity to share experiences with other women (Rowlands, 1997).

2.3. Obstacles to Women's Empowerment Process

Although women may be empowered on the personal level; external factors constituted by structures and ideologies can constrain their empowerment process. Institutions such as the family and the workplace, women's lack of self-confidence, rivalries between women, traditional beliefs on gender, gendered division of labor and a lack of economic resources can generate obstacles for women in the process of empowerment.

In the context of women's leadership training for empowerment and community work, restraints to women's empowerment are described as "the patriarchal nature of society, the low status of women reinforced by legal discrimination, lack of self-confidence and low self-image, and cultural beliefs that relegate women to an inferior status" (Matiwana, 2004, p. 164). As it's shown, male dominance and ideologies against

women are ongoing problems during the progress of women's empowerment. Besides, Matiwana indicates lack of self-confidence that is related to women. This is to be overcome.

One of the constraints in any empowering workshop education reveals itself in the practice of empowerment. Learners can change their perceptions or gain skills but when they go back to their home or workplace the same kind of oppressive environment can overburden them (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). That means that institutions such as family or workplaces can create hardships for women when they want to turn their views and skills into practice.

One of the obstacles that is created through the family and other institutions can be traditional stereotypes against women. Besides traditional stereotypes against women as an obstacle, Sosibo's (1996) research reveals that interferences to women's empowerment process can also arise from society's underestimation of the work of women, lack of basic facilities to sell women's work and inadequate economic resources for women (Sosibo, 1996). Sosibo notes that society's views and restrictions continue to show themselves as an impediment. Sosibo warns about the assessment of empowerment through income-generation since it's crucial to reveal "interactions and interrelationships under which income is obtained." (p. 312), as it is shown in the research that some women had to give their income to their husbands due to traditional norms. Even when women reach economic independency, traditional ideologies and usage of power over women can restrict the course of women's empowerment.

These traditional ideologies view women's empowerment process as something that threatens the traditional and entrenched ideologies in society. It is stated that empowered women in the context of leadership and empowerment programs can be seen as threats to old beliefs and this can be encountered with opposition (Matiwana, 2004). In this case, women can be empowered, but due to entrenched biases on gender, their ideas may not be accepted in their family or in society.

Sosibo argues that structural constraints can also constitute an obstacle in women's empowerment. An example of the hardships created for women during the

empowering process comes from Sosibo (1996), with her research on women who worked together and created solidarity in the NAWE program held in South Africa for the empowerment of women. Although the women thought that control of resources is still in the domination of men in institutions, in donor agencies and in local governments (Sosibo, 1996). The domination of men in institutions constitute structural obstacles for women.

The obstacles are also emphasized by Stromquist with a criticism on Sen's (1999) argument on women's empowerment. Sen argues for a change in the "attitudes of the family towards outside economic activities" (as cited in Stromquist, 2015, p. 311). Stromquist argues that Sen does not pay attention to ideological and material powers in social life that create an obstacle to the transformation of gender relations.

Dealing with constraints and hardships are described by Stromquist (2002) as another characteristic of empowerment to acknowledge. Stromquist defines two areas of conflict; one is related to institutions and the other is related to family spheres, where the recognition of women's needs must happen instead of the family deciding on what women need. For her, conflict has to be faced by women. She offers that women should be able to manage the situation of conflict which can trigger women's agency in protecting their rights through gained skills. She points out to a continuous action of women for their rights, even in the environment of confrontation. This is a sign of women's empowerment.

Besides facing the conflict situation, for Stromquist (2002) resilience is highly connected with the empowerment of women. She explains resilience as related to continuity and permanence that means "not to be overwhelmed by the seemingly insurmountable difficulties." (p. 28) Stromquist's argument suggests a persistent and constant attitude by women if their empowerment is under restriction. Therefore, women should continue to fight for their rights through gained abilities in the course of their empowerment. Being determined to fight for one's own rights guarantees one's long-term empowerment, which reduces the possibility of disruption in the empowerment process. It becomes important to protect one's own targets of empowerment which may help to build a strong ideology of acting coherently with

empowerment aims. That is to say, since women's empowerment is highly related to gender equality and since its absence is an entrenched matter in the society, long-term commitment becomes critical for the process. For this resilience, commitment and one's own power is crucial in its existence and usage.

Constraints in terms of women's empowerment are explained through the concept of power and the necessary perceptions that a women must have in this process. Mosedale (2015) describes the constraints to women's action by using girls access to education as an example. Considering the general norms and ideologies that constrain girls' access to education, Mosedale asks some questions. First, she asks if there is a restriction applied by her family, which connotes to *power over*. Secondly; she asks what a girl needs in order to get an education, such as skills or a belief in its advantages that connotes to *power within*. Thirdly, she asks whether there are other people around that can support her in the course of empowerment, which without is another evidence of an obstacle. Mosedale also considers asking the question whether there are other restrictions such as socially entrenched values and norms that are creating hindrances to girls' access to education. Addressing these questions will show the constraints to women's action.

Along with entrenched attitudes towards women or lack of support from others as obstacles for women's empowerment, women themselves can create an environment for hardship due to problems with other women. Animosity between women can occur, which should be dealt with carefully during the empowerment process. Heng (1996) points out to the problem of antagonism between women due to differences such as race, age and marital status.

Shirley and Linzi (1996) pointed out to animosity between women during the empowerment projects. This animosity between women participants during the empowerment programs can be due to any kind of difference regarding ideas or types of varieties such as race and age (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). Shirley and Linzi (1996) explain the process of conflict between learners that creates different situations. In all-women groups animosity occurs regarding race, class or sexual preference (Shirley &

Linzi, 1996). Differences between women can lead to animosity.

Heng (1996) explains that during the workshop with Malaysian factory workers, a tension occurred due to marriage status, by favoring marriage over being single. The research shows that when these problems were given emphasis by the participants the animosity faded away. This is shown as important due to the collective sensitivity it creates. "Non-participation and silence becomes the way to cope." (Heng, 1996, p. 230) Then, what these programs try to do is unpack the silence and create a collective effort.

Competition among women is explained as being created through the socialization of women; which is created through the ideologies that subordinate women (Stromquist, 2002). Stromquist (2002) refers it to as "rivalries among women." (p. 29). About the issue of women's problems with other women, Stromquist points out to the importance of "gender solidarity" between them (Stromquist, 2002, p. 29). That is to say, solidarity is offered as a solution for rivalries between women.

Research by Guerin, Kumar and Agier (2013) presents a case study of women's self-help group (SHG) activity in rural Southern India and makes an inquiry into the relational sphere in women's agency. They question the way women describe and practice empowerment in order to understand various ways women use microfinance programs. Scholars (2013) focus on the relationship between women and they defend the effectiveness in women's agency and empowerment. This relationship refers to relations with other people - husbands, kin or neighbors. In addition, it also refers to women having power over other women.

Guerin et al. (2013) discuss the definitions of power in the literature and explain the usage of power in gender and development studies that first implies "power over", and then "power to", which implies working collaboratively and that is closer to feminist thinking. Guerin et al. explains how "power over" exists in "power to"' in women's relations with other women. Rivalry among women is explained by "power over" - that is usage of power over someone without considering others benefits. Women may create hardships for another women when they are empowering themselves. This is an

indication of animosity amongst women.

> In other words, “power to” may involve a certain form of “power over”. This type of “power over” is relative in the sense that it takes place mainly among women themselves. Women do not seek to challenge the hierarchical order of female subordination. Though many of them are perfectly aware of their material and ideological dependence on men, they have internalized such structures, seeking to make their position in the pre-existing framework more comfortable rather than challenging the framework itself. (Guerin etl al., 2013, p. 89)

Guerin et al. explains usage of “power over” through women’s acceptance of female subordination and their perpetuation of inequality. Rather than challenging the existing situation, women find strategies to live well in the existing system. Related to the Guerin et al.’s study, Cornwall’s (2007) ethnographic research in Nigeria reveals the complex relationship between women that exceeds the myths of women’s solidarity and of women as a group if they can. She questions the myth of women’s solidarity and offers a new perspective. She does not deny autonomy and solidarity as tenets that can lead to action, rather she calls for their qualification. For this she exemplifies women's autonomy. On this, Cornwall states that autonomy of women should be investigated through relational terms rather than perceiving women as totally independent of "existing webs of sociality" (p. 165). Besides, she explains solidarity as being based on interests that bring people together, rather than assumed shared characteristics of interests.

In summary, obstacles that restricts women’s empowerment are due to traditional ideologies, structural constraints, lack of control over male dominated areas and rivalries among women. In order to overcome these obstacles, sustained effort by women and solidarity between women are offered as solutions.

2.4. Dimensions of Women’s Empowerment

Stromquist (1995) states that empowerment as a concept started to be used during the U.S. Civil Rights Movements. It is to transform unequal power distribution in all spheres (Stromquist, 1995). Emphasizing the importance of adult women's empowerment, she points out to adult women's experiences and the potential for

eroding male dominance by creating change in women. Women are oppressed by the oppressors who are applying and supporting values, attitudes and norms that subordinate women. That is why they need empowerment to challenge this. “It is the oppressed who need to become empowered in order to challenge the oppressor.” (Stromquist, 2015, p. 309)

Empowerment as a concept should encompass cognitive, psychological, political, and economic components (Stromquist, 1995). Stromquist does not necessarily use the same terms when dividing empowerment into components or dimensions; she uses the terms interchangeably. In another article, she describes the four dimensions as economic, political, knowledge-based and psychological (Stromquist, 2015). In this study, the knowledge dimension is written under the heading of awareness-raising, since Stromquist (2015) uses the term knowledge dimension as interchangeable with “awareness of one’s reality, including possibilities and obstacles to women’s equality” (p. 308).

Stromquist (2002) mentions that understanding oneself as a victim can lead to action. She explains awareness-raising as a method for women to become aware of their subordinate position and to confront unequal relations. Before Freire’s conscientization methods, she states that conscientization has been used by women since 1969 and is an issue that goes back to US workers. According to her, gender consciousness-raising triggers women’s activity outside their traditional responsibilities.

The cognitive dimension “refers to women’s understanding of their conditions of subordination and the causes of such conditions at both micro and macro levels of society.” (Stromquist, 1995, p. 14) In addition, Stromquist (2006) described the cognitive dimension as a “critical understanding of one’s own reality.” (p. 150). The gain of critical understanding is investigated under the topics of awareness-raising, cognitive empowerment, or knowledge empowerment since they all require critical examination of one’s reality. Usage of these terms relatedly and also interchangeably makes one able to investigate the topic from various perspectives which are actually interlocked.

Stromquist's arguments on knowledge dimension is investigated by other authors, in the following paragraphs, through the propositions on changing old beliefs and the improvement of new knowledge on gender issues. This dimension, that is called knowledge empowerment, cognitive empowerment, or awareness-raising, forms the longest part between other dimensions in this study. The reasons are that it forms the most common dimension of empowerment between participants and is widely investigated in the literature.

Examples on the context of cognitive empowerment is given by Stromquist. The cognitive dimension of empowerment encompasses knowledge about women's sexuality and aims to break the taboos in sex information. (Stromquist, 1995) In addition, Stromquist suggests that legal rights are crucial to support the cognitive dimension of empowerment, since women need to know their legal rights.

The consideration in this study is women's empowerment through non-formal education that raises women's consciousness and triggers their critical examination of the environment that creates gender inequalities. Although there are many forms of non-formal education, some of them particularly aim to empower women that are called "empowering education". It can take on different names in different contexts as we will see in this paper. Awareness is a crucial step for women because desire and ability to change the situation starts with critical examination and raised consciousness.

Erin Murphy-Graham (2008) proposes that empowerment can be achieved only if the education of women increases their knowledge, understanding, self-confidence and raises their consciousness on gender equality. (p. 31) Graham uses a case study of an innovative secondary education program Sistema de Aprendizaje (SAT) in Honduras. In this program, women became more critical about their environments. One of the ways that women find to stop men from drinking alcohol excessively is to convince them to go to church, since it's forbidden to drink in a church. Through encouraging men to go to church, women could distance men from drinking. This exemplifies women to take action to change their environment.

Women's empowerment is initiated through awareness-raising, which starts the process of change. In this study, awareness-raising and critical thinking are shown as

closely related since being aware of the inequalities requires a critical examination of the existing situation that oppresses women. Awareness-raising involves the process of the recognition of gender inequality and the reasons behind women's oppression. "The process of empowerment involves, first, women recognizing the ideology that legitimizes male domination and understanding how it perpetuates their oppression" (Mosedale, 2005, p. 248). Mosedale (2005) defines empowerment as women's redefinition of the situations which restrict them and creating ways for their activity away from these boundaries.

In defining the consciousness-raising approach of NGOs in the context of women's empowerment, Panda (2000) states that this aims towards women's strategic needs or position instead of only focusing on material aims such as economic gains. Panda defines this approach as having a feature of longer-term transformation. That is why, in this study, women's awareness-raising is analyzed separately; both to understand the style of the non-formal empowering education of women in Turkey and also to investigate women's critical thinking on gender issues.

Related to Stromquist's (1995) explanation on the cognitive dimension of empowerment, where she argued that it includes a process of questioning old beliefs, women should go beyond this and question their environment and power relations. Women's empowerment requires awareness-raising since women may not be able to identify their subordinate situation. Without any identification of inequalities, there will be no action to change. In addition, people are social products and their values and beliefs are shaped by society that is not always supportive of equality or recognizing inequality. This explains the role of non-formal empowering education on raising women's awareness, and also reveals the significance of awareness-raising as a step in the empowerment process.

Awareness-raising in the empowerment process includes gaining knowledge. Stromquist (1995) offers "emancipatory knowledge" as one of the ways to begin the empowerment process. (p. 16). Mosedale (2005) argues that women may not be aware of the restrictive situation that they live in, but defining the oppressive situation may create awareness in them. In her essay, she argues that women will be the actors of their life through creating awareness about their environment. Murthy (1998) proposes

a similar thought on being unaware of the oppressive situation, which she refers to as being “incapable of imagining alternative ways of being and doing.”(p. 204) Murthy states that men and women are “products of social institutions.” (p. 206). She uses this view as an evidence of the need to transform the consciousness of men and women. She defends the agency of both men and women to challenge patriarchal institutions. According to this view, women’s notions can take form through culturally embedded practices which are learned in the family and in the society. This can mean that an alternative learning that raises women’s awareness on gender issues will have a potential to transform the embedded constraints and views that are shaped through that.

Awareness-raising is crucial to transform embedded beliefs and open up new ways for understanding and living. Kabeer (1999) refers to a 'deeper' level of reality which is seen as natural since it is embedded in norms and customs. (p. 441) Entrenched beliefs in society are not easily recognized by society as they have become a part of the society’s principles. These principles can be transformed for social change. Then, one’s perception on an issue should be questioned to become aware of the existing situation.

With the theory of ‘belief-mediated social change’, the influence and the role of mediating objective opportunities by subjective beliefs has been advocated to achieve women’s empowerment. (Alexander & Welzel, 2011) Alexander and Welzel define two forces in women’s empowerment which are divided into objective and subjective. Women’s empowerment due to social situations can be exemplified by the social services which are influential in women’s empowerment and perceived as a context-related issue in an objective sense. On the other hand, they argue for the importance of subjective beliefs in women’s empowerment. They assert that “women’s emancipative beliefs” affect women’s empowerment and leads them to be active in achieving this (p. 381): “We hypothesize that these objectively widened opportunities operate to the favor of women only in as far as they nurture a belief in the legitimacy and desirability of women’s empowerment.” (Alexander & Welzel, 2011, p. 365) Women’s empowering non-formal education can awaken these beliefs that initiate women’s

desire to get empowered.

The process of awareness-raising does not only consist of women's desire to get empowered; but it also requires critical thinking about one's environment. Critical thinking is both an issue of method, as a principle that should exist in a non-formal education context that aims towards women's empowerment, as well as a part of the empowerment process that explains awareness-raising. Awareness-raising is a process where critical thinking begins about issues that we accept as normal. It widens one's perspective on the reasons for inequalities. Critical consciousness is shown as crucial in the process of empowerment - which is being aware of other possibilities of choice and requires a questioning of the social order rather than accepting it as natural (Kabeer, 1999). If people and women are social constructs and if their beliefs are shaped through this way then they may not be aware of any oppressive situation. These entrenched beliefs may not give women a perspective or idea about other possibilities of choice. Then, is it possible that women may not be aware of their situation? Can others intervene in this situation? Despite these questions, awareness-raising can widen opportunities in women's thinking.

Awareness-raising is crucial for women to get empowered, but the context and the ideology it carries is also significant. Stromquist (2002) argues that educating for empowerment should question patriarchal ideologies. Related to awareness-raising and knowledge empowerment, Stromquist (2015) states that knowledge empowerment includes women's acknowledgement of gender relations that subordinates women and learning ways to challenge this. Then, the ideology of non-formal empowering education should be questioning patriarchal relations and the context should trigger women to question their subordination. These two principles are connected with awareness-raising that requires questioning. In this study, knowledge empowerment is investigated under the heading of awareness-raising, and they are in close relation with each other.

Awareness-raising does not only happen through critically analyzing one's environment and unequal relations; but it can also be actualized through examining

other people's opinions. Rather than accepting all ideas, awareness-raising of women leads to a critical examination of other thoughts. Part of an empowerment process described by Inglis includes one's voicing their own emotions, ideas and desires. Through the communications with others, a person can criticize their own ideas about life (Inglis, 1997). This can lead to "communicatively competent" people who critically analyze other people's ideas rather than easily accepting them (Inglis, 1997, p. 7). In addition to this, Kabeer's (1999) argument of being aware of other possibilities and raising critical thinking on accepted things is explained as being a part of the empowerment process.

Like Kabeer (1999), Mosedale (2005) is highly stressing the necessity of women's own agency if the goal is empowerment of women, and for women to question their environment. Mosedale (2005) proposes that women's agency can be shaped through realizing the disadvantaged position and searching for its reasons, while acting through one's own consciousness created out of this process. Although it is mentioned in several ways in the literature (Murthy, 1998; Mosedale, 2005), women sometimes are not aware of their disadvantaged position or they do not have any assistance or consciousness to challenge this position. This shows aim and meaning of women's empowerment programmes and how and why women may need these programs. Women's empowerment may need to be assisted from outside through women's need to get empowered.

An example of women's raised awareness and critical thinking can be observed in Graham's (2008) study, where after the SAT - an innovative secondary education program - some women said that they saw their environments differently and they understood the problems around them differently, including gender issues. Most of the women from SAT were judgmental on the gender division of labor compared to other women who did not participate in SAT. This study becomes an evidence of the effect of teaching women about gender equality on their critical thinking and desire and ability to change their environment.

Critical thinking and opening up new perspectives are essential stages that can be actualized by awareness-raising. Women's empowering non-formal adult education

has a potential to give women a space to voice their issues, to become aware of the inequalities in society regarding gender, and to find ways to be emancipated from the constraints.

The second dimension of empowerment is the psychological dimension that Stromquist explains as "the sense that one's self has value and deserves a good and fair existence." (Stromquist, 2015, p.308) In another article, Stromquist (2006) defines the psychological dimension of empowerment as "feelings of self-esteem." (p. 150). The common elements which form the core of personal empowerment in the empowerment program case studies of Rowlands' (1997) study are the development of self-confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of self. This conclusion made by Rowlands reveals a similar stance with Stromquist on the meaning of women's psychological empowerment which Rowlands investigated under personal empowerment.

Besides explaining psychological empowerment on the personal level, it can also be extended to the collective level. Psychological empowerment is significant for women to be able to improve their self-assertiveness to act for change and be confident in public spaces (Stromquist, 2015). Self-esteem and self-confidence are offered as necessary conditions in psychological empowerment (Stromquist, 2015). Stromquist proposes that this attribute can only be gained through women's collective experiences in groups through collective action. In this point, she points out to the close relationship between local spaces and psychological_empowerment, in which the former is needed for the latter. Local spaces' importance is explained through social geographers' argument that newly gathered social actors are more productive in local spaces. Stromquist proposes that this is also true for women since local spaces are closer to their homes, and under these terms traveling difficulties do not exist. In addition, she argues that taking action at the local level will help women to have experiences and leads to increased productivity. That means that she argues for the connection between local spaces' importance and psychological empowerment.

Psychological empowerment is actualized through the improvement in women's feelings that leads to their action at individual and societal levels. (Stromquist, 1995) This action by women is taken by women to make the conditions better, while it can

enhance the idea that women can make their claims happen. (Stromquist, 1995)

Women's underestimation of themselves is explained by Stromquist (1995) as "learned helplessness" (p. 14). It is stated that low self-esteem of women can inhibit the opportunities for women through their acceptance of the traditional attributes such as passivity and self-sacrifice. Naila Kabeer (1999) touches upon the same issue and argues that gender inequalities in basic well-being achievements can occur in the situation of women's absence of choice or men's domination; though it can be a consequence of underestimation of women's own well-being (p. 440).

Psychological empowerment can be actualized through women's consciousness and increase in self-esteem. Like Kabeer's (1999) emphasis on women's underestimation of their own selves, Mosedale (2005) proposes a related and complementary argument on how women can reinforce their own subordination: "Inevitably, when people are oppressed, their own perceptions of their situation are shaped by the ideology which supports the oppression they face" (Mosedale, 2005, p. 253).

About psychological empowerment, Stromquist (1995) argues that it can not be taught to women, rather the appropriate conditions can be prepared for them. By this, she means the arrangement of the empowerment project by the participants. Identification of problems, finding solutions, turning the solutions into practice and evaluation of the actualized actions are some ways suggested for participants. Stromquist argues that participants should be initiated to practice these and to declare their ideas and actions.

Improved self-confidence is observed in an example of December women trainees from a training program for women that becomes an evidence of the improvement in understanding oppression and inequalities on both gender and class levels (Coats, 1999). After this education program, women had reported that with the training of their self-confidence and ability to connect with the issues had raised. (Coats, 1999) This becomes evidence of how adult education affects women, increasing self-confidence and raising their ability to face problems. Besides describing transformative education, these examples support the idea that change is possible through women's non-formal transformative adult learning.

Thirdly, the dimension of economic empowerment necessitates that women be able to employ in a fruitful activity that will provide financial autonomy. (Stromquist, 1995) It is described as "capacity to generate income." (Stromquist, 2006, p. 150) Marketing, accounting and necessary proportions of funding are proposed as requirements for a successful income generating program. (Stromquist, 1995) Stromquist states that these programs are often not successful due to inadequacies in design, application and funding.

Economic empowerment through women's income lessens women's dependency on their husbands' decision making. (Stromquist, 2015) In that way, Stromquist states that they are more likely to be autonomous in making decisions. On the other hand, the downside of this situation can be explained by gender division of labor that creates a double burden for working women. Furthermore, due to the liberal regime today, unpaid work is not considered as important since the market signifies economic exchanges that creates profit. (Stromquist, 2015) This, as she suggests, causes an ignorance of household in the design of public policies which inhibits a successful economic empowerment strategy.

Lastly, the political dimension of empowerment means the ability to examine the environment in political and social specifications, and it also means the ability to organize and mobilize to transform the society. (Stromquist, 1995) That is to say, an empowerment process must involve awareness and collective action for a social transformation (Stromquist, 1995).

Stromquist (2015) suggests that political empowerment does not only connote to macro levels; though women's negotiation and relations and decision-making within the household are also important indicators for social change. She mostly focuses on the micro level, which is the household, and explains women's situation in the private sphere such as domestic violence and women's care in the context of political empowerment. At the macro level of political empowerment, being a political representative can be a strong example, whereas it is also linked to the micro level which is the household. (Stromquist, 2015) "The household must be considered a major target for social change" (p. 311) due to issues of domestic violence; women's unrequited work; women's inadequate time for their self-improvement, organization

and mobilization and women's sexuality that become obstacles for women to be free." (Stromquist, 2015) She warns that agency should be analyzed in the context of the situation in the household.

Explaining different dimensions of women's empowerment is crucial to reveal various ways that women can get empowered. Connections between these dimensions can give perspective on how these dimensions support each other. The connection between dimensions can happen between psychological and relational empowerment. For instance, Rowlands (1997) links the importance of psychological empowerment to relational empowerment. She states that for there to be empowerment in relation to other people, it is largely dependent upon self-confidence and agency. Besides, empowerment in relation with others will increase through negotiation and communication skills (Rowlands, 1997). These are explained by Rowlands at the personal level. Relational empowerment is observed here under the heading of political empowerment.

On measuring women's empowerment through their relations in the private sphere, Erin Murphy-Graham (2010) proposes a framework. Graham's findings offer awareness on gender, relational and structural resources as areas of empowerment for women who had participated in an innovatory secondary education program where they learned to negotiate in intimate relations. Relational resources is explained to encompass "everyday communication, change directed negotiation skills and the ability to express their feelings and demonstrate love and care" (Graham, 2010, p. 325). Rowlands' (1997) description of relational empowerment is also related to this as she suggests its meaning as "developing the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of a relationship and decisions made within it" (p. 15). These points will inform my analysis of women's empowerment on the household level under the topic of relational empowerment through increased negotiation and communication skills.

One of the important levels of learning in the empowerment phases is proposed as involvement with political thinking. Stromquist (2002) perceives empowerment as something to encompass women's challenge of the structures that are dominated by men. To do that, she considers that it is necessary for women to learn how politics

function so they can be able to make a mutual arrangement and observe. For this, evaluating the previous happenings and simulating the incidents are offered as two ways to learn.

Stromquist (2002) asserts that none of the dimensions are adequate by themselves for women's empowerment. She argues that if designed properly, education can incite these four areas of empowerment; cognitive, psychological, political and economic. Then these areas become necessary areas for women's empowerment. She asserts that empowering education should be long-term and sustained since it should break old patterns of dependence and should give a comprehensive understanding of the implications of gender in a society. The process of empowerment involves change, in the personal dimension, collectively, and in relationships. (Rowlands, 1997, p. 89)

The personal dimension involves awareness-raising. Women's adult education for empowerment aims to firstly give consciousness. Other stages may or may not be on the agenda such as collective work. Consciousness-raising and the educational process can incite self-confidence. Graham (2008) states that knowledge, self-confidence and acknowledgement of gender equity should exist at the same time in order to lead women to control their own lives. Graham states that even if woman has self-confidence she may still believe that her life is limited to home, so awareness of gender issues are important at this point. As Heng (1996) states, women's storytelling, their free talk and self-confidence can be supported through speaking up on one's own opinions.

Rowlands (1997) defines the empowerment process through education or other development interventions as having consequences that are unpredictable by the facilitators and that can not be directly given but should come from within the people that are in the process of empowerment. For Rowlands (1997), empowerment dimensions are categorized as:

> Personal: developing a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity, and undoing the effects of internalized oppression. Relational: developing the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of a relationship and decisions made within it. Collective: where individuals work together to achieve a more

> extensive impact than each could have had alone. This includes involvement in political structures, but might also cover collective action based on cooperation rather than competition. Collective action may be locally focused - for example, groups acting at village or neighborhood level - or be more institutionalized, such as the activities of national networks or the formal procedures of the United Nations. (p. 15)

Collective action or mobilization of women is observed in Rowland's (1997) work where PAEM participants reported some features in their empowerment process. Travel, activity outside home, sharing and group activities lessened their isolation in their home and create new spaces for group interaction. Besides Stromquist's definition on the dimensions of empowerment, Rowland's categorization will also inform this study's analysis. The personal level, relational level and collective level in the empowerment process will reveal women's self-confidence, relation with others and investigate their activities outside home. In addition, Stromquist also made a similar distinction. Besides explaining empowerment through various dimensions, Stromquist also explains it through learning processes. She designs this process as: "Internal process; psychological and cognitive and collective process; political, organizational and economic" (Stromquist, 2002, p. 27). While Rowlands divides it into personal, relational and collective; Stromquist uses the term internal process, psychological or cognitive that are related to personal; and both mention collective, although in different ways. These processes can also be explained through the concept of power since the ways in which power is used will reveal different kinds of empowerment processes.

Lastly, Rowland's usage of power explains the dimensions of empowerment.

> … *power over* is "controlling power..."; *power to* is "generative or productive power..."; *power with* corresponds to togetherness in the usage of power, *power from within* connotes to the psychological side of power that is about one's own self, which can affect a person's equal relations with others. (Rowlands, 1997, p.13)

Rowlands' explanation of the usage of power reveals several processes in the course of empowerment. Rather than "power over", "power to" is perceived as necessary in

the empowerment process in order to be able to transform one's life. Relational empowerment seems relevant to "power to" since women use "power to" to transform their relations or environment at home and in public. "Power with" connotes to collectivity that is perceived as necessary to women's empowerment. "Power from" is related to psychological empowerment that belongs to the personal level. That is to say, different authors explained the empowerment process in various ways. Still, they all refer to similar kinds of processes in the course of women's empowerment.

2.5. Transformative Learning and Social Transformation

Related to collective struggle, going beyond personal transformation to social transformation is proposed in the literature. Application of the learned knowledge and skills starts the process of change. Besides women's own ideas, being able to critically reflect on ideas is noted as crucial for transformation of people and social change. Inglis (1997) proposes that realizing varieties of power and how it engages with society and with our lives are significant for the transformation of social life. Inglis proposes identification, defining and evaluation as processes to struggle against oppressing power.

Social transformation is regarded as crucial by some scholars as it is pointed to as the aim directed from personal transformation. Inglis (1997) explains education for empowerment and education for emancipation as two opposing processes. For him, the latter means collective education that leads to transformation in the social and political sense. Inglis proposes that while empowerment is at the individual level, education for emancipation encompasses structures.

By mentioning that feminism considers this issue, Inglis asks "How it is that people move from personal transformation to social and political transformation?" (p. 14) Shor and Freire (1987, p.110) give the answer "although critical reflection is fundamental for the radical transformation of society, it is not enough by itself" (as cited in, Inglis, 1997, p. 14). Inglis argues that personal transformatory learning is not enough by itself to lead to emancipatory education. In addition, he ascribes this role to

the educator who will direct the process of emancipatory education through analyzing power and help the learning group to acknowledge how the power runs and functions in the social life. As Inglis suggests, learners should be able to see how they are controlled by these power relations. Inglis proposes that adult education should explain power through proper language for the oppressed groups rather than only offering a theory of power, if it aims to go beyond personal to social emancipation. Overall, Inglis demonstrates the limitations of personal transformation which can go beyond and reach the collective struggle for social transformation.

On human rights education and transformative learning, Felisa Tibbitts (2005) clarifies some aspects and methods related to articles in the field. Tibbitts states that human rights education triggers trainers to engage learners in the empowerment course and advance human self-respect. Moreover, human rights education is not only a consideration of human rights but also on initiating an individual action to assure these. (Tibbits, 2005) Several techniques are explained by Edward W. Taylor in the 1990's which in sum refers to safety and a trustable environment, a learner-centered approach with the trainees' participation, exercises for revealing points of view and critical examination, trustable teachers, working through emotions first before any critical examination, feedback and communication. (as cited in Tibbits, 2005) Tibbitts points out to emerging techniques shared in the articles of the issue Intercultural Education (2005);

> A willingness to bring tensions and conflicts into the group…; an emphasis on critical analyses and reflection, both of personal perspectives and social elements, including power structures in societies…; …acquisition of consciousness regarding the inherent connection of personal experiences to human rights and justice issues…; consciousness leading to empowerment and the development of strategic actions…(pp. 109-110)

Tibbits (2005) proposes that this is widening the transformative learning theory and application which encompasses Freire's critical consciousness. It is crucial to cite Tibbitt's point on these conditions and methods: "If, in this issue, we are able to identify and illustrate some promising conditions and practices for fostering transformative learning, we cannot prescribe such conditions" (p. 112). Although some emerging issues are seen in several pieces of literature that are related to adult

education, empowerment and transformation. Principles of these methods are hard to be agreed upon, however literature shows some consistent practices and suggestions on these methods.

Related to collective action, organizing is offered as a stage of the learning progress in the empowerment process (Stromquist, 2002). Organizing is an ordered and continuous way for a group under a certain progression and frame. (Stromquist, 2002) Organized women means empowered women who feel independent to govern themselves and the empowerment process continues to grow during the organizing activity (Stromquist, 2002). That means, empowerment leads to organizing, which triggers further empowerment. Stromquist explains two levels of organization; one is at the local level that possesses goals related to the household and the local community while the other is beyond the local which Stromquist argues requires relations with the state. She argues for this stage as the required stage. Globalization and new sets of interactions in relations are emphasized; between women's movement, parties and civil society. She stresses the effect of this learning environment for women's ability and confidence to speak and offer their views. Stromquist explains organizing and mobilizing which she sees as a requisite for having political impact and to grow this power. "Changes in the social relations of gender necessitate modifying cultural norms, values and practices." (Stromquist, 2002, p. 35)

Stromquist (2002) suggests that collective identity that is formed through groups which triggers mobilizing is important. She argues that through forming these groups, power is created and transformation starts with this political process. She exemplifies it as "demands for basic neighborhood services" and "redefining rights as citizens." (p. 33) With regard to the women's movement, Stromquist (2006) states that eradication of inequalities is the main goal. The stages in which to reach this goal are described as identifications of women's groups which requires "internal action (e.g. consciousness-raising and empowerment) and must precede external action (e.g. pressuring the state)" (p. 150)

Stromquist goes beyond the level of consciousness-raising to the practical side of empowerment, which requires an application of what has been learned. Mobilization is mentioned as a strategy to reach resources and goals. (Stromquist, 2006) She gives

an example from Peru where communal kitchens were created. The process of mobilization itself is viewed by Stromquist (2002) as giving new abilities to affect social or political life. She argues for mobilization in order to gain political power. She also offers financial development of women combined with cognitive empowerment as the most successful type of informal learning and bases her argument on Latin American experience. A Filipino program which she exemplifies uses methods for empowerment in the training session, challenges the knowledge that is learned and relates this to an applicable experiment.

Heng (1996) proposes that the education program with female factory workers in Malaysia aimed consciousness-raising on their oppression, acknowledgement of rights and collective organizing. Anonuevo (1996) also argues that knowledge should be turned into collective action for change. Their work in the Philippines include women's position in social life, law, oppression and also organizing. Patel (1996) also states that with collective action, women can deal with issues in the private sphere but also outside the public sphere. In the context of women's non-formal education in the Caribbean and South Pacific, Ellis (1994) points out to mobilizing and organizing. Various educational works for women's empowerment create an example of the importance of including mobilizing in the program. Collective action for social change and wider transformation are mentioned in the literature as important stages of the empowerment process for women.

Empowerment of women requires collectivity besides individual empowerment. "As a theory of social change, it cannot stop at empowerment of individual women, but must seek ways of translating it into collective action." (Stromquist, 2015, p. 309) Stromquist indicates that going beyond awareness to action is crucial. Due to the examples of women's self-confidence after talking and sharing with other women (Heng, 1996), it can be said that the personal development and self-confidence also starts with group work, which is about sharing. In other words, there is a close connection between psychological empowerment and collective sharing. Sharing of the qualities between women such as self-confidence triggers a collective action to challenge gender relations. (Stromquist, 2015) This links women's sharing with that of other women, which is crucial for collective work. In addition, Rowlands (1997)

also suggests collective work as one of the stages of empowerment, besides personal and relational dimensions of empowerment.

To actualize social action, Stromquist (2015) offers an attention to the dimensions of economic, political, knowledge and psychological empowerment that is in relation with each other. “Empowerment is based upon individual self-discovery, self, assertiveness, and critical learning about one’s world, as well as upon collective organization.” (Stromquist, 2015, p. 319) Stromquist (2008) refers to two NGOs, Flora Tristan Center (FT) and Manuela Ramos Movement (MR) in Peru, where a favorable dialogue among learners was encouraged while structures, values and norms that influence all aspects of life which affect how women and men live was taught. Stromquist (2008) asserts that learning and reflecting upon gender issues will give way to collective action of women to transform these problems. Women’s own agency in challenging gender inequality should be taken into consideration, but also the impossibility of changing the social structures without collective action is crucial to know. (Kabeer, 1999)

Moreover, in arguing for women’s action Longwe (1998) indicates the need for political and ideological struggle in women's empowerment, which is channeled through women's collective action challenging gender inequality. She believes that empowerment will be actualized by women themselves if women are provided with political mobilization and organization. This perspective is down to top since she argues for women’s own agency to reach empowerment it requires women’s action.

Related to action, women’s acknowledgement of their own power should be turned into an action which Matiwana (2004) calls “tools of intervention” to change their personal situation. (Matiwana, 2004, p. 165) Consciousness-raising is pointed out in the article as the main action. Matiwana states that in this program they focus on leadership of women since they expect women to act collectively to build a community where women understand the importance of collective decision making. Matiwana’s research proposes a kind of community program through women’s consciousness and leadership training which highlights collective planning and struggle.

Parpart, Rai and Staudt (2002) emphasize the importance of individual and collective participation in understanding empowerment. Challenging dominating systems or actions generally lead to women's political agency in private and public spheres while increasing women's understanding of themselves (Parpart et al., 2002). In addition, they state the importance of political action for challenging the status quo even if it does not lead to change in prevalent power hierarchies. The act of challenging the oppressive structures that restrict women's lives hides features of empowerment in itself. On the problems of participation of women for collective action, they state time, money or other costs. For example, they propose that time can be a problem for a working-class woman. Besides collective action, involvement in the empowerment programs in general can create hardship for women; Stromquist (1995) points out to the difficulties of women's participation in empowering projects due to their daily burden in order to sustain their lives.

Collective struggle plays a significant role in the relations with institutions. Nevertheless, this is not an easy task considering the embedded ideologies on women's roles. Sosibo (1996) explains that leaders and women had the same idea when claiming that the sewing contracts received from school principals got rid of their abuse. This exemplifies a collective action of women in the stage of reaching their goals. Sosibo (1996) investigates the empowerment project of the National Association for Women's Empowerment program (NAWE) in South Africa in which Zulu women had participated. Women-only groups also provided them with a possibility for living without male domination (Sosibo, 1996). Sosibo states that working together and creating a solidarity are informed as empowering by women. Research shows that since they began to work, their children and husbands start to feel the need to perform their tasks at home. Solidarity is closely related to collective work, in which the former does not guarantee the latter, but can lead to it.

Collective work is introduced in the empowerment literature as a stage to take action, challenge the existing structures and to be politically effective. Parpart et al. reflects upon empowerment literature on awareness-raising and personal and collective action,

which does not adequately consider the obstacles created by institutions and political structures. “It does, however point to the need to situate individual and group action/agency within the material, political and discursive structures in which it operates” (Parpart et al., 2002, p. 17).

Anonuevo (1996) argues that the understanding gained through learning today and in the past should be converted to an action using collective work for transformation. On the organizing, she explains the module’s aim here as "highlighting the fact that coordinated efforts by politically conscious agents achieve more than isolated individual efforts" (p. 129). She further states that social movement is emphasized instead of an individualistic approach as liberals support. Then, going beyond individual struggles to collective ones can be more effective.

Through creating forums, the collective power of women for transformation in social life is considered by Patel (1996). By referring to Batliwala (1994), Patel (1996) describes several components that are required for empowerment. Firstly, she argues that educational initiatives should be arranged to challenge patriarchy on an ideological level and ensure poor women's access to and control over resources, both tangible and informational. Secondly, organizations that work for women's empowerment should point to the specific area and find the most oppressed and poor women in this location. Thirdly, women should be initiated to have a distinct space to reflect upon their situation together and examine this. They should be encouraged to critically think over their environment and structures and transform their biased gender beliefs. Patel argues for these kinds of forums to lead to a collective. As Patel asserts, through a developed consciousness and collective power women can raise the most important issues for change. They can then deal with obstacles inside and outside the private sphere. Skills that will help women to gain personal and collective autonomy is emphasized. Through these skills, challenging the existing unequal relations will become possible.

Even though Patel refers to development programs and educational interventions in general, her area of investigation is closely related to the women’s empowerment

process that includes non-formal learning. The empowerment process does not necessarily refer to educational programs in the literature, but it can be about community work or awareness-raising which are still relevant to this study's topic. It is important to mention other kinds of empowerment processes that are relevant to non-formal education, awareness-raising or collective work. Development literature mentions issues regarding community work, women's adult education and rural appraisals that are similar to non-formal education for women's empowerment. Since resources in this area are limited, taking all of them into consideration will expand the area of investigation where they can support each other. Since Patel describes that her article outlines an "organizing and consciousness-raising approach", (p. 106) it's relevant to this study. Interwoven subjects are considered important for this study to reach a general plan for women's empowerment, with a complete programming. Women's empowerment programs can aim consciousness-raising. Nevertheless, if educational programs for women aim for women's empowerment that is related to social inequalities, collective action seems very relevant to reach the aim of social transformation for women's empowerment.

Community work exemplifies a success of collective work among women. Although Beth Bingman (1996) do not investigate gender education for women, she points out to community groups, here women in the Appalachian community, and its liberatory consequences for women. This is crucial also in the subject of education for women since being in groups and working collectively helps women to fight against oppression due to building solidarity and trust between them (Bingman, 1996). As Bingman states, acting in community groups becomes crucial for some women in coping with gender problems in their lives. She further notes that women who have problematic marriages are getting support by other women at the center and they are assisted with new possibilities and ideas. It is crucial to mention that Bingman puts community work in the category of popular education, as they create learning spaces and formal classes for women. She explains that this is due to women's involvement in the organization. She explains that this is due to women's involvement in the organization itself and the development of leadership of women where women can make decisions. This is actually a center that works for the community where women

do various work for the community with other women (Bingman, 1996). She explains that these are grassroots organizations. Referring to Arnold and Burke (1983, p. 9), she argues that "the milieu of the community centers exhibit many of the characteristics of popular education" (p. 186). In more detail "the-starting point is the concrete experience of the learner; everyone teaches; everyone learns; involves a high level of participation, leads to action for change, collective effort focusing on group rather than individual solutions to problems, it stresses the creation of new knowledge...the process is ongoing..." (p. 187). With Patel's (1996) research, Bingman's investigation become evidence of the empowering effects of organized action for women.

Besides community work, the collective organization of women can be actualized in various settings, from rural to work areas. Chan Lean Heng (1996) investigates educational work done with female factory workers in Malaysia which took place in the factory setting. These women are assembly-line operators who perform a repetitive work. The program's aims included consciousness-raising on oppression, being aware of the rights and to be able to reach a collective organizing.

Women's Development Collective (WDC) in Malaysia carries out non-formal education which includes gender and leadership. They argue that awareness-raising is not enough by itself if an action for change does not happen (Stromquist, 2002). This is very crucial for evaluating a non-formal education program for women since awareness should be turned into practice.

Longwe (1998) proposes that adult education and empowerment have three components; "enlightenment, conscientisation and collective organization" (p. 19). In order to prevent any confusion on the terms gender training and non-formal empowering education of women; it should be noted that gender training can be used interchangeably with women's empowering non-formal education.

As a reminder, Longwe (1998) uses the term gender training which encompasses women's non-formal empowerment education. She divides gender training into two; one is conservative and the other is radical. The main criticism made by her towards

conservative gender training is that it lacks a political point of view and action. As Longwe formulates, beyond technical and economic resources, political questioning of gender inequalities and collective political action towards it are needed. Conscientisation is emphasized for acknowledging the gender inequalities that are widespread in structural discrimination. On the other hand, radical training should give tenets such as: noticing gender issues in participants' own experiences, analyzing and identifying gender inequalities, and the critical examination of gender disparities and collective action to challenge patriarchy and discrimination. According to Longwe, a radical view considers political and ideological levels in women's empowerment.

Related to the criticisms made towards a conservative approach in empowerment programs by Longwe (1998); Rao and Pant (2006) offer a rights-based approach to adult education by criticizing the educating women with emphasizing traditional gender roles that restrict women's mobility. They state the need for offering women ways to challenge injustices related to gender. Besides providing adult basic education they emphasized the importance of practices that serve to change gender relations. "For this purpose, there needs to be sustained effort to broaden the concept of literacy from 'learning to read and write and do arithmetic' to the acquisition of skills for social action, active citizenship and women's empowerment" (Rao & Pant, 2006, p. 138). Even this exemplifies a literacy education; going beyond the acquisition of skills for the existing needs to an active and empowering process are pointed out.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Non-formal empowering education projects in Turkey are conducted by various foundations, universities and organizations. It is not a well-researched area in terms of the methods used and also in terms of the benefits for women's empowerment. What methods are being used? Are these methods in compliance with the popular education and empowering education literature? Besides its methods, I wondered in what ways women get benefit from these empowering projects? In what ways do women get empowered? What kinds of experiences did they go through? How do those experiences contribute to their empowerment process? What kind of obstacles do they face from their environment? What are the drawbacks of these projects in terms of the empowerment aspects of it?

In order to answer questions on methods, this study is informed by various literature areas; popular education, empowering education and non-formal adult education. Finding the appropriate terms for these projects is not a direct process, since several terms can be used interchangeably or different terms can connote to different kinds of non-formal education. In order to understand these non-formal education projects, gender training initially guided my research. Then, through the literature I realized that the term is generally used for workshops for organizations or NGO staff. I continued and I began to research empowering education projects for women. I encountered several projects that give women empowering education in different fields. I realized that it would be restrictive for my thesis to only include gender awareness non-formal education for women since it is not very common as a topic and the projects that focus

on awareness-raising are very short in duration.

In order to investigate women's empowerment on several dimensions, I found extensive projects where they provide non-formal education to women on several issues including women's rights, gender, entrepreneurship, and self-confidence while at the same time educating and training women on collective production or active involvement in the market. These projects, such as *Polatlı'da Kadınlara Yönelik İş Kurma Merkezi Kurulması Projesi* and *Kozadan İpeğe Ev Eksenli Çalışan Kadınlar Kooperatifi,* carry an aim to empower women economically while stressing the empowerment of them in other areas through their non-formal education sessions on women's rights, entrepreneurship or gender. Women experience both economic empowerment due to starting businesses and psychological empowerment due to non-formal education sessions on gender, women's rights, self-confidence and related subjects.

This study have targeted several groups, two of them being the most extensive and constituting the biggest part of the interviewed women participants in this study. *Çağdaş Kadın ve Gençlik Vakfı* used to provide non-formal education projects on self-confidence and entrepreneurship that the participant women mentioned; they also introduced topics on violence against women and women's health. On the other hand the foundation called KEİD, The Foundation for Women's Education and Employment carries out the Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP) that aims to introduce women to their rights and gender related topics. This program is shorter compared to the more than six months programs; it takes just a couple of months depending on the curriculum applied. It consists of several modules on subjects of rights, communication skills, and violence against women, strategies against violence, parenting, sexuality, reproductive rights, politics, women's movement, organizing and solidarity. In addition, consciousness-raising (awareness-raising) meetings are designed to improve women's consciousness on gender and violence conducted by The Foundation for Women's Solidarity. The Foundation carries out neighborhood meetings that aim for consciousness-raising on women's issues for one day for the same group at an irregular sequence that can be one day in a month or one day in a year since same women only get it once, but it shares common points with all other projects in terms of its focus on gender and women's empowerment. It is useful

to include various kinds of programs, whether they are short or long term, to be able to acknowledge the missing aspects of shorter ones and to investigate the advantages of extensive ones. Common points among these programs in terms of the topics and the areas that women get empowered make it possible to study these programs together. In addition to this, methods used by the facilitators require similar strategies in all these programs which give way to analyzing these programs in the same manner.

Participant women from these projects are generally all from the same low-level education background and most of them were housewives or home-based workers before. There are couple of women in this study who are university graduates but most of them are not very well educated. Including the university graduates revealed that some problems are shared amongst all women. It doesn't matter how educated women are, some common issues are experienced among them all such as persistent gender division of labor at home, awareness-raising as a result of non-formal education programs and empowering experiences of solidarity and sharing among women. On the other hand, dimensions of empowerment can vary among women depending on the program, their family environment and background. Some women are more empowered in various ways and areas compared to others, because they were subjected to psychological or physical violence, were not active in the public sphere, had low self-confidence or their independence was restricted in the past.

Some groups of women share common backgrounds, in terms of unequal conditions, low self-confidence and passive ways of living, especially women from two extensive projects. In order to be able to interview them, they were reached through using the snowball method of building contacts with other facilitators and participant women. After a while I realized that some women interviewees participated in both of the programs. For instance, there are cases where a women had participated both in *Kozadan İpeğe* and HREP program of KEİD. I realized that the same women were visiting the same projects. Two of my respondents complained about the situation since they always see the same women who they had personal problems with before.

Eventually in this study women were contacted using the snowball method. Contacts are established with other women participants through meeting with facilitators and women and vice versa. Since this area is not very well researched in Turkey, there is a

need to investigate the effects of these projects in terms of women's empowerment, to point out to the inadequacies through examining the required dimensions for the actualization of women's empowerment. For the actualization of women's empowerment, social transformation is pointed to as necessary and provides another area of inquiry to investigate - the extent of these projects in terms of social change. Facilitators of non-formal empowerment education and the women themselves also inform on the problems that arise during these projects that appear as crucial to understanding women's needs and problems in the empowerment process.

In terms of understanding the specific impacts of these projects or women's evaluation on the effects, in the beginning a plan was made to understand the effects in terms of each program separately. Though, the situation is more complicated than that since some women had participated at KEİD HREP but also participated at *Kozadan İpeğe*. Sometimes women participated at the Women's Solidarity Foundation meetings but at the same time KEİD HREP or *Kozadan İpeğe*. In another situation, women participated at KEİD HREP but also were involved in *Çağdaş Kadın ve Gençlik Vakfı*. That is why the impacts of the projects can be interconnected.

Besides the difficulties in separating specific effects of specific projects for some women, it is also hard to distinguish the specific effects of specific activities at the projects since dimensions of women's empowerment are affected by economic empowerment, non-formal education projects and also collective activities and increased social life which arise as common points of some women participants. On the other hand, sometimes the dimensions where women get empowered are specifically ascribed to a specific implement such as sharing or non-formal education sessions on self-confidence. When a specific effect of women's empowerment is directly connected to a specific feature of the program, such as when women mention that their self-confidence increased as a result of non-formal education sessions on self-confidence, it's mentioned in the study. When there is no direct connection that is provided by the women, the effect on women's empowerment is attributed to the overall features of the program including non-formal education sessions, economic activity, sharing among women and travels.

In order to investigate the impacts of these projects on women, this study interviewed

seven facilitators and one project coordinator. One of the facilitators is both the founder of the *Kozadan İpeğe* and also a facilitator on the topics of gender. Rather than using a structured interview technique, a more in-depth type of interview was conducted. With using semi-structured in-depth interviews, it is easier to grasp the deeper meanings and changes in women's lives through diminishing the chance of missing details and their full stories. Along with semi-conducted interviews with the facilitators, this provided an overall idea about the non-formal education sessions, women's roles in the process, and the methods used by the facilitators.

The interviews have been analyzed through qualitative analyses techniques. By using the literature and the related concepts, a design of semi-conducted interview is established. Common arising topics among the interviewees are researched from the literature through the topics of empowerment and empowerment projects for women and non-formal education for women. Besides, popular adult education literature and empowering education literature informed this study by contributing to the analysis of project methods by using both facilitators and participant women's reportings. This way, women's empowerment areas initiated by the projects and the techniques of the projects are analyzed. Furthermore, this study aims to understand in which ways these empowerment projects are empowering for women. Using the dimensions of empowerment from the literature about the relationship between women's empowerment, empowering projects and empowering non-formal education projects; transformed areas for women are investigated.

In this study, women from five different projects are interviewed for the evaluation of the impacts of these projects. The most extensive and most influential ones are *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*. "*Kozadan İpeğe Ev Eksenli Çalışan Kadınlar Kooperatifi"* provided several kinds of empowering non-formal education projects for women. This study usually refers to this program as *Kozadan İpeğe* and the other as *Polatlı* as it took place at *Polatlı.* Besides its economic feature, this project also offers modules on eleven different subjects: gender, communication-conflict, resolution, domestic violence against women, and women in decision making mechanisms, women in work life, home-based working, women's movement and organizing, consciousness of citizenship, civil rights, consciousness and reproduction health. This study used the information on the blog page created by the coordinators. If information provided by

the coordinators or the facilitators is used, the study will specify it. Otherwise all the information used here is accessed from their websites ("Kozadan İpeğe Kadın Kooperatifi").

The Cooperative of *Kozadan İpeğe* Ev Eksenli Çalışan Kadınlar was established in June 2007 with twenty-three women who struggle with poverty. In this study, six women interviewed from this program, in which one is only participated in the non-formal education sessions. According to the accessed information on their website, founders of *Kozadan İpeğe* aimed to make home-based working women's labour visible and eliminate the tools that oppress women. They also aimed to prevent off-the-record employment, through creating awareness by non-formal education projects. In addition to this, they provide knowledge on economic and social rights. They aimed to affect public policies by coming together with other home based workers to make problems visible through discussing and transforming the situation.

Their activities exemplify a kind of action taken together for women's interest. Through their activities, more than 3500 home-based women workers in Turkey gave support for the request of minimum wage from the Ministry of Social Security. In addition to this, women from the cooperative made requests to certain ministries. They included demands for kinder gardens and improving the criteria principles for the establishment of cooperatives.

They also participated in activities, meetings and demonstrations with other women organizations. They also carried out some meetings designed to share experiences and to make atelier work in Diyarbakır, Hatay and Nevşehir.

Another kind of activity that they carried out regularly was mapping. They made some mapping works to reach other home-based worker women. Mapping means indicating the specific connections used to reach home based workers. It is like a snowball method where they reach other women to create a wider connection. This reveals a type of organized work of women.

Through reaching women this way they prepared a non-formal education program for the ones who wanted to participate in the cooperative. The non-formal education program is called "Empowering Education". The aim is defined as making women,

who do not go out a lot or have difficulties in expressing themselves, aware of their capacities, and their possibilities. When we look at the project's economic aspects, raising income and promotions turn up as important. They also aim to increase women's income. For that they have trainings on developing a production, promotion and communications network. Furthermore, the topic of production development consists of sessions on the modernization of traditional production, designing, sewing, accessorizing, knitting and related areas. At the time of *Kozadan İpeğe*, women used to participate in fairs and *kermises* to sell their products or to produce orders.

They also organized classes for illiterate women who wanted to participate in the program. Participant women were active with the founders in radio or TV projects where they shared their stories. They also carried out group works facilitated by a psychologist. This was especially for the women who were subjected to domestic violence. Several women in this study reported that these sessions worked well for them.

Another crucial feature of *Kozadan İpeğe* is their concern for women's needs and ideas. They conducted needs analysis while planning the activities. Questioning the needs of women directed the process of the project. That is why regular meetings were carried out where everyone gives their ideas and gets feedback. For instance, women reported the difficulties they have in communicating with their children. This informed the project that led to the arrangement of the projects on child growth and ways to communicate with children. They made decisions using the feedback of twenty-three women in the cooperative.

Another project that was based in *Polatlı*, Turkey targeted future women entrepreneurs. *Polatlı'da Kadınlara Yönelik İş Kurma Merkezi Projesi,* or "Project of Establishing Business Establishment for Women in Polatlı" is owned by the chamber of commerce in Polatlı while Çankaya University and Polatlı Municipality were partners and were supported by the Ankara Development Agency. In this study, six women were interviewed from this program.

Zeynep, a technical expert of the project, explained the project. It was an eighteen month program and afterwards the women learn to become an entrepreneur and ways to carry out business. She said that the municipality provided places for women's own

businesses such as restaurants or clothes store. All women have KOSGEB certificates. Consultancies were offered in the process and the women participated in festivals to sell their products. They were given stands for free in Ramadan houses where they could sell their products. Currently, some of them use their rent-free stores in a business center called PERPA where they can produce their goods. It was an agreement made with the municipality.

In addition to this, Zeynep gave a description of the project in a written document which this study will use to clarify the features of the project. This project is a women's entrepreneurship project, as they define it. It started in 2014 and ended after 18 months. They state that their aim was to ensure women's participation in economic and social life through owning businesses.

They also mention that this project adopts women's standpoints in women's entrepreneurship and stresses sensitivity on gender issues. They state that without this kind of an approach, women's entrepreneurship remains insufficient.

Women were educated on self-confidence for empowerment by learning issues of gender, communication, conflict resolution and difficulties in work life. In self-confidence training, they acknowledged the KOSGEB program and were provided with sessions on management, organization, marketing and finance. Women also participated in vocational trainings. They state that they have used additional activities informed by women's needs and requests.

It is crucial to mention that the *Polatlı* Municipality provided places for women that demonstrates the support of local administrations. There will be additional information about the project that will be explained in this study, through the written document that technical expert Zeynep from *Polatlı* Business Center provided.

In *Polatlı* 192 women were provided with self-confidence non-formal education, 131 women with entrepreneurship training and 115 women with vocational courses. They arranged technical visits to other women cooperatives to demonstrate examples of other work. Additionally, cooking training reached 15 women and computer training to 61 women. They also invited entrepreneurial business women to create a sharing environment for participant women. Inviting an entrepreneurial woman to share her

own experiences served to set a good example for other women. Women learn from non-formal education sessions through gaining knowledge and questioning; but also knowing other successful women for their encouragement.

In a practical sense, *Polatlı* provided women an environment for hands-on experience. In production and sales locations, 17 women owned a store of business. The HREP program by Women for Women's Human Rights-New Ways was also included in the process of the project. As HREP is provided by another foundation, they created a variety in types of non-formal education areas such as financial literacy training by TEB that was provided to 25 women. On October 7-11 2015, women entrepreneurs attended the YÖREX Fair with their products. In addition to his, in August they have participated in a festival and marketed their products. The project conducted social activities and trips that demonstrates collective work and action of women.

In general look which is beneficial when reading this study, two extensive programs include economic activities, collective activities, relational empowerment and mobilization. On the other hand other smaller programs can not be investigated in these areas due their content and duration. This also shows the limitation of this study.

Besides being a limitation, describing the areas that are related to each pair of program will show the scope of this thesis. It also shows the potentials of the programs.

Relational empowerment, economic empowerment, mobilization and collective work requires a long-term and also activity focused program that empowers women not only with non-formal education sessions but also collective work and communication practices.

Table 1. Shared and Different Areas of Empowerment among Programs

SHARED AMONG ALL PROGRAMS	TWO EXTENSIVE PROGRAMS
Psychological Empowerment	Relational Empowerment
Solidarity and Support among Women	Economic Empowerment
Obstacles	Mobilization
Methods	Collective Work

Table 1 shows that programs are influential in common areas; although due to their nature and content, some can not give skills related to economic gains or is short-term which inhibits collective work.

Before describing other programs that are investigated in this study, it can be beneficial to provide a table that shows common and different areas of empowerment that are shared among all programs. Two extensive programs can be investigated in more detail due to their duration and rich content; whereas other programs can be investigated on some specific areas.

Other smaller projects are in some ways like the bigger ones. KEİD is "Kadın Eğitim ve İstihdam Derneği", that can be translated as the Women's Education and Employment Foundation. They carry out HREP sessions by facilitators trained in WWHR. One of the facilitators of KEİD HREP that is interviewed for this study has a university degree in social service. .

As it is explained in the foundation's website, HREP is a program that lasts for four months, with around 20-25 people and 3-4 hours of non-formal education every week. It consists of 16 sessions and happens once a week ("Bir Toplumsal Dönüşüm Aracı Olarak KİHEP*").*

Another foundation that provides empowerment programs for women is Women's Solidarity Foundation. Its neighborhood meetings are one day long and around a couple of hours or so depending on the situation**.** They call the program a meeting that also carries out a feature of being a non-formal education session. They have a rough plan that consists of several subjects to be presented. These are informative as well as discussion-based meetings that aim to give information on gender issues but also make women share their experiences and enable them to reflect on their own lives. As Pervin told me, in the project text it is described as "Meeting to increase consciousness and awareness". This study will use the information provided by Pervin, one of the facilitators in the foundation and a graduate from Gender and Women's Studies.

The foundation was established in 1993. Neighborhood meetings are sometimes carried out as part of a wider project or independent from any project. Meetings are not practiced regularly, rather they are practiced only from time to time. Women's

meeting were practiced by feminists since old times, as they used to come together with other women to create an environment for sharing and consciousness-raising. Before 2014, neighborhood meetings in various places were carried out by the foundation. It can be due to volunteer action but the exact number is unknown. For instance, there was a Canadian Project and these meetings were the only activity of the project. At the facilitator's direction, consciousness-raising meetings were carried out at the house of someone in the group, at a woman's foundation or women's organization. An example of their visits can be presented by their meetings in a Quran Course. This shows their intention to reach various segments in society through targeting specific groups. In addition, they also visited vocational courses or gathered women from the same neighborhood in one of the houses.

In this study, explaining the types of empowerment areas of women is stressed. The information obtained from women participants and facilitators relate to the empowerment theory. Interviewees are asked questions in the field of empowerment and non-formal empowering education for women. Its possible gains and drawbacks are revealed this way and connections are made between women's gains and the existing information in the literature. Similar responses and empowerment areas among respondents presents an overall empowering aspect of these projects. Besides, a brief look at the profiles, methods and reporting of the facilitators and coordinators will be useful to show any insufficiencies and also reveal alignment of methods with the literature. Names of the facilitators and the participant women are fake names given for this study.

All facilitators that are interviewed for this study are well experienced in the area of gender and women. Their experience and knowledge about gender issues are crucial since in the chapters on methods, their knowledge are important to make contribution to the area of women's non-formal education for empowerment

CHAPTER 4

EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN IN TURKEY

There are various kinds of women's empowerment projects in Turkey carried out by various actors. These actors can be international organizations such as the United Nations or ILO, universities, women-specific NGOs, or the Ministry of Family and Social Policies. Sometimes these organizations carry out a joint project together. The types of the projects differ in some aspects, through training skills and non-formal education projects exist as focal points.

On the empowerment projects in Turkey, several studies have been conducted to investigate its implications. A crucial study was made about European Union-funded women's empowerment projects in Turkey. Jennifer M. Landig (2011) notes that EU funded projects mostly aim to increase the number of women in the workforce while triggering women to increase the effectiveness of entrepreneurship. Landig aims to measure these projects' success on these grounds: "higher employment rates for women; sustainability of women's employment; and higher rates of women entering non-traditional sectors" (p. 206). Besides being non-traditional, Landig proposes that EU-funded projects' successes increase when they carry attributions such as initiating self-confidence in women and presenting women's rights to both women and men. On the latter principle that Landig argues, this study can refer to the reports of women participants which is included in the chapter "Obstacles in Women's Empowerment Process" that denotes the importance of men's awareness on gender issues to contribute to the women's empowerment process and to the increase in gender

equality. Without the participation of everyone, obstacles to women's empowerment process will disturb the equality between men and women.

As it is mentioned in the previous paragraph, financial aspects are crucial, while self-confidence of women and men's involvement in the empowerment process are also considered as important in an empowerment project. To understand the general tendency in the projects by the EU, Landig (2011) explains the inclination towards entrepreneurship in the projects.

As Landig (2011) explains, entrepreneurship is a concerning issue for most of the projects done through EU funding. Starting from 2007, Turkey obtained financial aid through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) that assures financial assistance to some candidates or to the ones that carry potential (Landig, 2011). In the pre-accession stage through the following of the Accession Partnership Document (APD), the decision is also made for which projects the EU will be supporting (Landig, 2011). These projects are analyzed through the GAD scheme which emphasizes changing the system by taking into account both men and women, since embedded structures should be challenged throughout long periods of change (Landig, 2011). Since most of the EU projects target women's entrepreneurship as a way to overcome women's underrepresentation in the workforce; the study analyzed the Small and Medium Enterprise Development in Southeast Anatolia (GAP-GIDEM), Women Entrepreneurship Support (WES), and the Women Business Incubator Centers (KISGEM).

The Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) and its Regional Development Administration is an organization of government carried out sustainable development works in Southeastern Anatolia (Landig, 2011). The study suggests that it could be useful to include women in these programs since they provided business development and related services to entrepreneurs. It is also stated that WES conducted training and consultancy for entrepreneurship where many women benefited. Raised self-confidence, awareness, increased knowledge in entrepreneurship and business advantages were recorded after the program (Landig, 2011). Besides finding useful aspects of the projects, Landing argues that these projects have downsides regarding "evaluation, monitoring, and sustainability, and a limited EU budget" (p. 211). Lack

of follow-up makes the results blurry since the long-term benefits are not very well documented or monitored (Landig, 2011). This is an issue that always has to be taken into account in the plans of women's projects. Constant evaluation of women's empowerment process will be beneficial to show the limitations and potential of the empowering programs.

It is crucial to add Landig's (2011) observation on the women's empowerment situation in Turkey since through her analysis of women's statements from those projects, social obstacles are revealed such as permission difficulties for women's travel. She further states that these entrenched patriarchal values attribute to women traditional gender roles such as housewife duties. At the same, Landig explains that lack of self-esteem are creating drawbacks in the women's empowerment process. Her study then suggests an ideological change but also women's own psychological transformation for women's empowerment.

On the issue of men's contribution, Landig' (2011) gives examples of ISKUR programs that try to include husbands in their awareness-raising seminars. This exemplifies gaining consciousness on gender issues. Besides, the National Action Plan encompasses the issues of awareness-raising for men. With the monetary aid from the European Commission, the KSGM developed a National Action Plan that consists of training on consciousness-raising and sensitivity of men towards the issue of gender equality (Landig, 2011). As the study shows, the work of KSGM in this area exemplifies another kind of consciousness-raising training on gender issues for the groups such as for the police force, judges and religious leaders. Furthermore, as it is suggested, KSGM reported an increase in awareness in these groups, especially in the police force. Besides working with women, working with men is also an applied area in Turkey.

Men's consciousness should be raised alongside with women, but financial aspects of empowerment projects are also part of the empowerment projects. Although it is criticized on the grounds that only financial benefits are not enough for transformation. Related to Landig's (2011) observation of the projects in Turkey that tend to focus on women's entrepreneurship; Gökhan Gökulu and Mina Furat (2013) criticize development politics and projects for women in Turkey in terms of their economic

focus and other issues. They state that in order to change the accepted beliefs on gender in society, lack of long-term projects and projects based on the strategy to make women join economic life and contribute to family income are hindrances. They also propose that in order to make an effective program that is welcomed by the targeted groups of women, programs should be planned and developed in cooperation with the so-called group members. Microcredit projects carried out for women increased in number when the interest of government organizations, NGOs and international organizations raised for these issues (Gökulu & Furat, 2013).

Besides, apart from women's empowerment projects that target men and women at the same time, some projects aim to create transformations in the business world for women's empowerment. As an international organization, United Nations proposed Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) to corporations from 2010 onwards to ensure gender equality at the workplaces, market and in general (UN Global Compact, 2014). The study shows that by agreeing on WEPs, CEOs in the business world promise to improve gender equality as part of company strategy. Furthermore, it is explained that from 2014 there are 808 organizations that have signed WEPs in which 20 of them are from Turkey. Global Compact (2014) reported that International Labor Organization (ILO) has several contracts for human rights and agreements and recommendations on women's employment issues. Although these do not guarantee implementation, it gives an insight on how gender equality and women's empowerment is perceived in the business world. This exemplifies a women's empowerment project at the organizational level and in the business world.

Women's empowerment projects can encompass financial areas and/or consciousness-raising and self-confidence of women. In addition, an empowerment program for women may aim for micro changes or structural changes in the long run, but in Turkey the latter is a weak area. To look at the projects organized through government bodies can inform this study on the general tendency in Turkey towards women's empowerment issues. Gökulu and Furat (2013) explain that women's empowerment politics conducted by the government started in 1985 with Turkey signing the CEDAW Convention. They mention some of KSGM projects which focus on women's

economic development, development of gender equality and so forth. Besides, they add İŞKUR's project, which is a Turkish Labor Agency and a government organization, aiming for women's participation in the workforce. As it is proposed, they carry out a project that aims to increase women's role in economic life, to initiate women's employment and to eliminate the drawbacks in the process. The authors mention another government organization, KOSGEB that conducts similar projects. In addition, KOSGEB carry out projects that support women's entrepreneurship training and monetary aid for women are arranged. Gökulu and Furat state that The Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey has training projects for women entrepreneurs.

Garanti Bank's credits for women entrepreneurs is another example of work by various actors (Gökulu & Furat, 2013). The authors criticize the absence of any program that aims to establish politics supporting gender equality in government institutions and local administrations. They further state that these kinds of projects are far from the target of structural change, rather they intend to initiate micro effects. In addition, they criticize the United Nations and KSGM projects where the concept of empowerment is used as an objective; whereby empowerment is perceived as a concept concerning women's income. This is said to be observed in the projects' nature. Another crucial problem raised is the absence of reports on gender sensitivity training contexts, on the problems encountered and the evaluation process. They argue that women's empowerment processes where women are the agents for their own change is not a concern. It is not known if these women are going to apply the politics learned. They pointed out that the politics are generally based on giving micro credits to women.

Beside financial projects, women's empowerment can also be aimed for in projects that raise women's awareness and skills. In Turkey, *Anne Çocuk Eğitim Vakfi* (AÇEV) carried out a project named "Kadınların Çok Yönlü Güçlendirilmesi", through support from the Sabancı Foundation Grant Program (AÇEV) 2009-2011. For three years, in five cities, literacy training and consciousness-raising on rights of the disabled were carried out (AÇEV). Additionally, the Mother-Child Education Program in Turkey aims to offer support for mother and child to develop their lives and enhance aims to direct them individually and as a family. In this program, group discussion sessions are used as a strategy (Kağıtçıbaşı, Bekman, & Goksel, 1995). Women's

empowerment can happen in various areas and by various projects that aim for specific areas of empowerment.

In order to see the general picture of women's empowerment non-formal education projects and projects in Turkey, several organizations can be mentioned which have effective and wider projects for women's empowerment. Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) New Ways is a non-governmental women's organization that was established in 1993. Two facilitators that are interviewed for this study have certificates from WWHR as Human Rights Education Program for Women (HREP) facilitators. HREP is crucial to investigate due to its prevalent application all over Turkey. Through the consideration of women's lack of knowledge on human rights, the foundation prepared a HREP that consists of women's human rights topics as well as other related subjects for a more holistic understanding. These topics cover areas such as violence, women's organizing and reproductive rights. As the foundation explains in their official website, their principles include encouraging women to take collective action for fighting against human rights violations, considering safe spaces for the creation of a setting for women's solidarity, taking action towards grassroots organizing and raising women's awareness.

WWHR uses a methodology that is participatory and is carried out in small groups. HREP encompasses 16 topics that are covered once in a week: Introduction, Presentation of the Human Rights Education Program for Women, Needs Assessment, Women's Human Rights, Constitutional and Civil Rights, Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, Strategies Against Violence, Women's Economic Rights (Section I), Women's Economic Rights (Section II), Women's Economic Rights (Section II), Communication Skills (Section II), Gender Sensitive Parenting and the Rights of the Child, Women and Sexuality (Section I), Women and Sexuality (Section II), Women and Reproductive Rights, Women and Politics, Feminism and the Women's Movement, Women's Grassroots Organizing ("HREP as a Tool of Social Transformation").

WWHR prepared reports for the evaluation of their HREP program, which are available on their website, that states observed changes in women in terms of self-confidence, ability to prevent domestic violence, and participation in the labor market.

This is in addition to WWHR's work for advocacy and strengthening grassroots women organizations. HREP is an important program that is widely carried out in Turkey's various cities. As the foundation suggests, HREP aims to make women become aware of human rights, and to inform them in the ways that the law and male domination impacts our lives on both national and international levels. In addition to this, they aim to build critical approaches towards rights and introduce ways to exercise rights and get empowered for social change Organizing ("HREP as a Tool of Social Transformation").

On the other hand, political empowerment projects are held by Association for support of Women Candidates, *Kadın Adayları Destekleme Derneği* (KA.DER), that were established in 1997. KA.DER suggests that through ensuring equal representation of women with men in politics, women and men's equal representation in every areas can be provided. Siyaset Okulu, "Schools of Politics" by KA.DER was held 2008-2009 in ten different cities through the economic support of the Sweden Consulate General. These schools were operated by 250 women politicians from various parties. These schools aim to increase the rate of women candidates, to ensure the network between women candidates, to empower women for politics in terms of practice and theory, to increase awareness on gender issues and to empower women for local administration. As they claim, women who participated in these schools became candidates in local elections; for instance seven women from the twenty-four who participated in Mersin Schools of Politics had been chosen as councilors in the municipality ("Kadın Siyaset Okulları (2009-2011)").

With the support of United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF), a trainers training program on "women's human rights" called Empowering Women Citizens was introduced to women's organizations and women representatives of NGOs. Through this training women can share the knowledge and skills with other women organizations or women citizens. The project was held in 2008-2011 and had 358 women participating in the trainers' trainings. In addition to, between 2013 and 2015, the Empowering Women Citizens and Activists as Electorate and Active Citizens Project was held with the support of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights. Before 2014's local elections, it aimed to empower women and trigger women's political participation through supporting active and participatory citizenship

("Kadın Yurttaşların ve Aktivistlerin Seçmenler ve Aktif Yurttaşlar Olarak Güçlendirilmesi Projesi (2013-2015)", 2013)). The training lasted for three days and the project took 1.5 years. The aim was to reach 8000 citizens. They prepared a book that is available through KA.DER's website that offers the trainings in the projects through the impressions of the participants.

KA.DER and WWHR exemplify the non-formal education projects for women's empowerment in Turkey. The projects continue to change women's lives in various cities from the east to west of Turkey.

Another foundation, Flying Broom Women Communication and Research Foundation, prepare news page in their website especially on women's issues and gender. They conducted various kinds of projects such as The Child Brides project that was conducted in 54 cities throughout Turkey with the financial support of the Sabancı Foundation 2010-2011 ("Child Brides"). The objectives include transforming public opinion, to make early and forced marriages visible, and to trigger organizations or related institutions in order to find solutions. Film screenings, seminars and interviews with women participants are some activities in terms of finding a solution with citizen-community networks.

Another example is the 'Building Bridges' Project where the objective was to increase consciousness on gender issues and to improve the network between women and women's NGOs. It started in Mardin in December 2003 where local meetings were held through the organization of local administrations. Two documentaries were shown in each province of Turkey. Eighty-one provinces were visited and the project ended in 2005. Flying Broom evaluated the project as an example of a participatory democracy because grassroots women were participants in addition to local administrations, public officials. ("Building Bridges").

Another project is from the International Labor Organization (ILO) that is called "Kadınlar için Daha Çok ve Daha iyi İşler" conducted by government-related partners and women NGOs ("Kadınlar için Daha Çok ve Daha İyi İşler: Türkiye'de Kadınların İnsana Yakışır İşlerle Güçlendirilmesi"). A development partner of the project is stated as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) in 2013-2016. The project aim proposed to develop a national policy for raising women's

employment, to constitute decent work advantages for women by active labour market policies and to construct consciousness on gender equality and labour standards. The project was held by Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR) and the Ministry of Family and Social Policies was also one of the partners in the project. According to the ILO official website, Women's Human Rights Education Program for Women (HERP) started in March 4th 2016 through the cooperation of ILO and the Municipality of Altındağ Ankara.

With reference to the information in their website presented under the Ministry of Family and Social Policies in Turkey, the General Directorate of Women's Status carries out several projects for women ("Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü"). As it is stated, Turkey's Engineer Girls project was started by the ministry, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Limak Holding in 2016-2020. It aims to support girls who wants to become engineers and to make them examples in the profession of engineering ("Türkiye'nin Mühendis Kızları Projesi").

KAMER is another organization which carries out consciousness groups and visits to houses in order to raise women's consciousness about gender disparity and ensure women's empowerment. The organization supports women's entrepreneurship and carries out works to prevent violence against women. In addition, research in terms of the gender issues are considered as part of the organizations activities. KAMER is mostly influential in east part of Turkey where many women are in need of empowerment.

Another project carried out by the General Directorate of Women's Status in Turkey is the Trainers Training Project for the Staff that Works in the Area of Domestic Violence. The objective of the project is given as improving the vision of staff in the production of serving and to increase their professional knowledge and skills in the area of domestic violence. The project is carried out by the Ministry of Family and Social Policy, the Ministry of the European Union and the British Embassy for the staff who works in women's shelters. It is carried out with 106 staff members, between 2013-2014, who are from the Centers for Monitoring and Preventing Violence ("*Aile İçi Şiddet Alanında Çalışan Personele Yönelik Eğitici Eğitimi Projesi"*).

These are the types of projects that are carried out through some collaborations of partners or through NGOs in Turkey. Women's empowerment is an area of wide range where violence against women, women's participation in the labour force, entrepreneurship of women, and women's human rights are some topics and areas that NGOs, ministries or other actors aim to facilitate. In addition to this, women's empowerment can be aimed through training NGO staff who work for women's empowerment. In terms of educating women, empowerment projects can encompass a variety of topics or aims such as involvement in market relations or self-confidence building non-formal education projects.

CHAPTER 5

DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

To analyze the impacts of the non-formal empowering projects and the non-formal education sessions carried out for women's empowerment, arguments in the literature on the dimensions of women's empowerment and some of its features will be informing the study. Understanding at what levels or areas women get empowered requires examining the specific context and the meaning of empowerment.

On the measurement of empowerment, to assess the success or improvement of women in terms of empowerment, it should be done through a specific context and through acknowledging what is empowerment (Rowlands, 1997). Empowerment is proposed as a unique progress, where evaluation of flexibility and widening of understanding are required (Rowlands, 1997). For instance, Rowlands argues that it can be a measure for women's empowerment if a woman becomes able to attend the meetings outside in public sphere, due to permission or their own attempt. That is mostly analyzed in the following section, as taking action and/or collective work and its organization is considered as criteria in understanding how far women get empowered.

In this section, empowerment dimensions of women are observed through considering the backgrounds of some women, and the common dimensions of empowerment for women. Women participants who were interviewed have education levels that are generally low and most of them were housewives before the project. Although not many of them, some have had hardships in finding a job. If the education level is not

mentioned in the study that means that it is relatively low. Another common point among most of the participants is the restriction of mobility experienced in the past. This information can lead to a better understanding on how these women get self-confidence, relational empowerment, consciousness-raising and critical thinking. Empowerment as a concept should encompass cognitive, psychological, political, and economic components (Stromquist, 1995).

5.1. Psychological Empowerment

One of the dimensions of empowerment is psychological, that Stromquist explains as "the sense that one's self has value and deserves a good and fair existence" (Stromquist, 2015, p.308). In another article, Stromquist (2006) defined the psychological dimension of empowerment as "feelings of self-esteem" (p. 150).

Psychological empowerment of women can lead to agency of women and power within. Kabeer defines agency as "the ability to define one's goals and act upon them" (p. 438). Agency composes people's own explanations, desires, willingness in their action that is the power-within (Kabeer, 1999).

Psychological empowerment of women is one of the dimensions of empowerment, besides political and knowledge, that provides self-confidence and the skills to attend in the public sphere through non-formal education (Stromquist, 2015). From the literature, case studies of a similar issue are important to consider to categorize changes, be able to recognize arising issues in these kinds of projects - such as in PAEM and in this study *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*.

Rowland's case study of "Programa Educativo de la Mujer (Women's Educational Program) Santa Barbara" is related to the cases of *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*. PAEM was established in 1986 as a result of the search for new ways to get rid of the dependency of women (Rowlands, 1997). Rowlands states that it came out as a result of the idea that there needs to be an educational program giving experiences to women that will decrease their dependency.

Slightly different from *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*, Rowlands explains that this program was more bottom-up since it is was formed through women's needs. Both *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* consider women's needs too but at different levels. Rowlands states that PAEM produced its own popular education booklet. As it is explained, they formed different groups, and sometimes they do small projects such as vegetable work. After a while, workshops began to be held on issues such as gender and sexuality. Empowerment areas of women are defined by Rowlands. She states that self-confidence and esteem are expressed by almost every women which Rowlands categorized under personal empowerment. Besides, the effects of being organized on personal empowerment has been reflected. That is to say that psychological empowerment of women is examined through self-esteem, a sense of self and recognition of oneself as being a victim. In this part, psychological empowerment will be investigated under five categories that are self-esteem, identity and self, recognizing oneself as a victim and awareness-raising.

5.1.1. Self Esteem and Identity

Psychological empowerment connotes to a "feeling of self-esteem" as Stromquist (2002) suggests (p.23). Psychological empowerment is both related to sharing and an increase in self-esteem. In Rowland's (1997) research, women's speaking out led to an increase in self-confidence and relatedly being able to speak up more. Just as in the cases that are researched here, Rowlands' cases illustrate triggering women's speaking by the facilitators and forming small discussion groups.

As Rowland's (1997) research shows, for women self-confidence can be gained through breaking silence. Besides the relation between breaking silence and psychological empowerment, Mosedale's (2005) argument over women's power within is also related to increasing the self-confidence that leads to psychological empowerment. Mosedale defines power within in relation to psychological empowerment. Self-esteem through power within is seen as a crucial step for women to take action and start the empowerment process.

As the literature in the previous discussion reveals, self-esteem is required for action

and constitutes an important tenet for psychological empowerment. On the other hand, its absence is discussed by Kabeer (1991) as she argues that gender inequalities in basic accomplishments can be due to women's underestimation of their own well-being. To break this underestimation, self-esteem building raises women's sense of self-worth. To start the empowerment process women's underestimation of their own selves should be resolved. Underestimation of oneself stands as a restriction to women's empowerment and an issue to overcome. In this way, the empowerment process can be triggered with an increased in self-esteem.

Self-esteem is a required aspect for women's psychological empowerment. Most of the women mentioned that these programs increased their self-esteem. Cahide from *Kozadan İpeğe* expressed her feeling:

> After the *Kozadan İpeğe* project, myself and us as a group achieved and succeeded while sharing this with others. These are honorable, proud and delightful emotions. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> They made me feel that I can do it. When women do not have economic freedom they can not get through some problems. Thanks to the foundation I have self-esteem. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> My favorite education was the one about self-confidence. It helped me a lot. I am a person who got out of the home and established a business; but of course I was lacking self-confidence. That is why I am very glad that I participated in self-confidence training. Now I greatly have self-confidence. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)
>
> Beforehand, I had no self-confidence. Then I got confidence in myself. I wanted to do things but I lacked self-confidence and wondered whether I could do things or not. HREP was great, both for my mind and for my psychology that has been balanced. Our instructor was like a psychologist. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

Statements show that through non-formal education projects and through the overall process in these projects, financial gains or other activities, self-confidence and self-esteem increase as a result. Women's increased self-confidence gives courage to them and they self-assuredly express this. As Semra expressed it, economic freedom is also an important aspect of the projects *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*, which increased women's self-confidence and lessened their economic dependency on men. Semra graduated from university after the cooperative and now earns her own money (before

she was a housewife). Self-confidence can also increase the ability to communicate and for decision-making as the example below reveals.

> Due to self-confidence I can by myself decide how to communicate and where to go. (Cansu, *Polatlı*)
>
> I was generally silent. Now I can express myself, and this is a big issue for me. (Nihal, *Polatlı*)
>
> That excitement and those feelings - they were nice to experience. It was also nice to learn things and to say "I accomplished things". We as women made something. Being with the cooperative was also honorable and cheerful. These were very important things for me. We also had foreign guests. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> O heyecan, o duygu, onları yaşamak da çok güzeldi. Bir şeyleri öğrenmek de çok güzeldi. Bir şeyleri başardım, demek, biz kadınlar olarak bir şey yapmışız, sonradan tabii kooperatifin adıyla duruş sergilemek de çok onu verici bir şey idi, gurur verici bir şeydi. Bunlar da benim için çok önemli şeylerdi. Yabancı misafirlerimiz de oldu. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

These statements demonstrate psychological empowerment of women by gaining self-confidence, and in connection with self-confidence there was an increase in communication skills. In the literature, the psychological empowerment category of Stromquist (1995) is highly related to the personal empowerment category of Rowlands. Since psychological empowerment is about self-confidence, Rowland's (1997) personal empowerment is explained as "developing a sense of self and individual confidence and capacity" (p. 15). An increase in communication skills can be evaluated as an increase in capacity through self-confidence. Besides women's own sequence of empowerment in the empowerment process, methodologies applied in the projects arise as crucial.

On the methodology of the program and increasing women's self-confidence, Rowlands (1997) suggests that an empowerment approach should have a methodology that improves self-confidence and self-esteem. Besides, she states that overlooking the embodied oppression of women should be prevented and women should be included in the decision making and planning process of group activities. She points out to the debate in cultural imperialism on influencing the authentic cultural features of these groups that can be perceived as disturbing the integrity of that specific culture. "Women need to be free to act from their own analysis and priorities and not be

manipulated by outsiders; yet the restrictions of internalized oppression, which limit women's options, must be challenged" (Rowlands, 1997, p. 134). Women challenge obstacles through an increase in their consciousness, self-confidence and realization of the reasons and solutions to the entrenched values that subordinate or oppress women.

Besides the importance of self-confidence for the empowerment process, ignoring structural obstacles is criticized. As reported by Longwe (1998), self-reliance is not equal to empowerment since it ignores structural inequalities. Political mobilization is crucial at this point as she argues that empowerment can only happen if women get their position by themselves. Longwe states that self-reliance can be obtained through formal schooling, but this is only teaching within patriarchal values. Then, the reason that these women get self-reliance may be due to their economic participation, independency, and participation in the public sphere or can be solely due to the nature of non-formal education. While the exact reason is not completely clear in all cases, this arises as one of the limitations of this study. Furthermore, this section reveals that women gain self-confidence through empowerment projects and are able to communicate with others easier than before.

On the other hand, identity and self is closely related to psychological empowerment since it occurs from one's own understanding of one's self. Due to transformations in the mind, women consider their own existence in a different way, as being more valuable and as more of an individual. Anonuevo (1996) argues for a popular education that is unconventional and encompasses a women's empowerment non-formal education that triggers women's awareness of their power and the ability to define their authentic identity. Among the participant women, recognizing a distinction between their old and new identity is common. Anonuevo proposes that the popular education of women should make them analyze their identity and grasp the aspects enforced by society. This means being aware of the effect of society on one's identity. Then, the awareness-raising of one's environment is in connection with recognition of identity. Through this recognition, a woman can separate the aspects of the social environment from her identity, and be able to find connections. That can be seen through women's definition of personal transformation.

> When I look at myself before and then after being in the organization, I ignore my past identity. Now "I" exist. I have changed but not in negative ways. I was not bad before, but one main behavior of mine has changed - I learned how to say no since, and couldn't before since I was oppressed a lot. We Anatolian women face oppression a lot. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Anonuevo's (1996) argument on women's recognition of their own original identity is evident in this statement. This respondent faced psychological violence which was at its most when she was a new bride. But now she could differentiate past from present and could identify what is different in the present in the sense of her new identity. She also stated that:

> Of course, trainings were very important but the person who has changed my life, who helped me to be my authentic self and made me my true self was my gender instructor. I asked her questions and she answered me. She said "You can do it; I see this in you." Sometimes she was angry with me and said "You could do this or that if you wanted to but you didn't." (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Recognition of one's authentic identity can be actualized through a facilitator's emotional support and encouragement. Encouraging women and making them realize their potential came out as crucial for women's self-esteem and the courage to act. Being aware of the potential to change may lead women to action. Women explain these stages as two different periods; one belongs to their old self and the new one belongs to a more courageous and independent self. Another respondent also explained it as becoming 'herself'. Semra faced psychical violence before, but now this has changed. While explaining her change from being passive to being strong she stated:

> These things happened, I did not suddenly become "myself". (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Women use the words self and identity frequently, which shows that their interpretation and perception of themselves had been dramatically changed. The statement below indicates a woman who had found herself after a process of improvement. This process that she defines here can connote to an empowerment process. Besides realizing their own change their spouses can also see the difference.

Cahide was aware of this and was able to define her own change.

> My husband understands that I am determined. He understands that I will do what I say I will do. Sometimes he tells me "You were not like this before, you have changed a lot." To them I am a rebellious woman. And I said "Yes, I am not like before. Accept this. I am not the women that you make sit down and I am not foolish and ignorant as before." (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

> Eşim şunu anladı, "kararlı olduğumu" (vurgulayarak), ben artık bir şey, dediğimi yapacağımı anladı. Bazen "sen eskiden böyle değildin, sen çok değiştin, "hala bazen diyor. Onlara göre asi kadınım. Dedim ki "evet ben eski ben değilim. Artık bunu kabul et." dedim (gülerek) o eski vurup oturttuğunuz kadın değilim, o mal aptal cahil, değilim dedim. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Women made effort to sustain and to preserve their new identity. Changes in terms of identity and self can be actualized in several ways. One of the ways to change one's identity and self shows itself in sparing more time for personal needs. Besides self-esteem, women should have a time for themselves apart from the needs of the family members and daily maintenance in the process of personal empowerment (Rowlands, 1997). Rowland's research provides that PAEM meetings ensured a time for rest. Since women are traditionally viewed as housewives, it is traditionally almost unimaginable for women to think of herself before her family. From this point to a sense of self is an important phase for women to consider their own identity. One of the respondents from *Polatlı* Project specified this.

> I was always trying to fulfill my responsibility towards my children. Now I think about myself more (Nihal, *Polatlı*).

This statement shows that women used to only focus on their children's needs, and now there is a shift to recognize their own personal life. Traditional attributions to women can be replaced by a new understanding that considers women's own needs and desires. Women may not be aware of their personal needs due to responsibilities at home. The example shows that women can learn the importance of focusing on their personal needs.

Women's understanding of their identity arises as a common change among women. What is the role of the facilitators to trigger women's transformed identity or women's

understanding of their identity? During the research for this study, a method applied in several projects arose as crucial in the sense of women's identity. The method of the Women's Solidarity Foundation is to encourage women to introduce themselves to others without mentioning their children, husbands, or without defining themselves as a wife or a mother. This stands as a strong example that makes someone think about their authentic identity. Belma, one of the participants in neighborhood meetings, who is active in political struggles and has an atelier for women, explains the method and how women should be also thinking about themselves.

> Neighborhood meetings made me question new things. My life is so much about my family that I had difficulty describing myself. It is very difficult to describe yourself without referring to your children, house and husband. This makes someone think that all women are free. They should do things that only belong to them. This is not being selfish, or not being a bad mother or spouse. This is something that she can do for herself, and maybe society will change in this way. Society can only change through this way. Before my son started to go to school I was thinking that I should not do things of my interest. Why shouldn't I? There were years that I was away from my activism and I have waited for my son to finish his school. This atelier that I established was my plan for a long time but I have waited for this, due to the understanding that my children come first. I have questioned this understanding. (Belma, WS)

The above statement reveals that women may have difficulties in describing themselves without including their traditional duties as mothers and wives. The foundation's method makes women question their identity that is separate from their identity at home, and makes them analyze their thoughts in the past. This shows that postponing women's own desires can leave them behind. Belma is aware of how women become subordinated due to the needs of others, and she thinks it should be eradicated. Through this, self-identity may arise apart from your home and family responsibilities. Feeling a sense of self can be felt by women if they use their time for their own desires and needs. Personal focus is important for empowerment since women are the actors of their lives in the process of empowerment. Realizing that she was not doing something for herself exemplifies awareness-raising of women. Just as in the previous example, another women realized that she has to spare time for herself. In the statement below a sense of self is triggered through the facilitators' question.

> Our HREP facilitator asked me "What do you do for yourself?" I don't do

> anything. When I wake up every morning it is the children, my spouse and the house. My spouse will come home and I have to cook, and at the time of religious holidays I have to buy clothes. I said "I do nothing." I do not even go to the cinema or to a theatre. Nothing for myself. I have realized that. After this conversation with the facilitator, I went to dinner with my friend. Then I went to buy some trousers for myself. I have started to buy different things for myself every week. I wanted to do that for myself. You should do things for yourself in life but you have no time if you are a mother. About health or other issues, I was always staying in the back scene. It was never my turn. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

Besides their family responsibilities, women become aware that they do not spare time for themselves. Through raising the question, a facilitator awakened Cemre's mind on her own needs, and she began to address and practice it right after the conversation. Her realization was that she always thinks about her family needs rather than her own. Afterwards, she started to listen and act to her own needs. She said that now she will prioritize a visit to a hospital if it is more urgent than her children's needs. Related to Cemre's response, it can then be concluded that empowering non-formal education projects need to make women aware of their needs through considering personal needs beyond family responsibilities. Then, women can be able to tell what they really need. This is also connected to feeling a sense of self, since many women described their process of empowerment as finding their new identities because of the empowerment process.

5.1.2. Awareness Raising

Gaining knowledge is argued to change the perspective of people while triggering a new understanding towards social life (Stromquist, 2015). The knowledge that Stromquist mentions is a knowledge that should be used to challenge unequal gender relations. According to her, this knowledge must seek to identify women's subordination and to find ways to transform it. It is also argued that the acquisition of knowledge can be through formal education, schooling, and non-formal education in which the latter is this study's concern.

In this study, the knowledge dimension is investigated under the heading of awareness-raising, since Stromquist (2015) uses the term knowledge dimension in the women's

empowerment process interchangeably with "awareness of one's reality, including possibilities and obstacles to women's equality (p. 308)."

Building awareness towards reality means consciousness-raising that belongs to an internal process and cognitive development of women in the process of empowerment. In the empowerment process, the cognitive area is explained by Stromquist (1995) as a "critical understanding of one's reality". Stromquist (2002) states that consciousness-raising "enables women to see themselves as individuals with agency beyond their responsibilities for home and family." (p. 28). Consciousness-raising is one of the initial steps for struggling against inequalities. Awareness-raising in feminist studies is to raise consciousness on gender issues and power relations so that action can start after the realization. Stromquist (2002) describes consciousness-raising as a way for women to realize their oppression and challenge the inequality.

Consciousness-raising can be actualized in various ways. In order to understand the inequalities in social life, one should question the impact of this environment on individuals and groups. Stromquist (2002) argues that the realization of being a victim leads to action. Related to Stromquist's argument, this realization triggers the transformation process. Consciousness-raising includes a process of recognition of oneself as a victim. Through this way one can realize the boundaries to be struggled in order for a better equal gender relations.

Recognition of being victimized is also related to realizing the gender relations and power hierarchies that subordinates women. In that way women can differentiate between the positions of being under oppression and being free. Recognizing oneself as a victim is one of the initial steps towards empowerment. While women realize and question their situation, they could reflect upon the oppression that they are subjected to. Action and change comes after this step. These women are reflecting upon their own pasts and thereby transforming their own perceptions.

> I always supported equality but we did not live like this and we did not know equality. We thought we should be in the background all the time. Without any desire, I was adapting to that kind of life. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> I was oppressed a lot. I have subjected to psychological violence before. The project made me question my oppression and taught me to never let this happen

again. I now understand that I do not have to accept violence. (Cansu, *Polatlı*)

> Even when we are free, we experience oppression that started in past times. This oppression is due to our families. Since we were girls, we have been raised differently. Therefore, I do not want to continue this with my daughters. Still, since Turkish society does not accept our freedom through their support of traditions and customs, I advise my daughters not to be oppressed. I gave myself as an example. I have been oppressed for years, because my husband did not let me work outside the home. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

All these women are thinking over their pasts that they normalized before, and how they acknowledge it differently in the present. They faced with oppression and adapted to that kind of life as if they had no other choice. Now, they are aware of these oppressive situations that they do not have to live through. When women's perception on gender issues change, they realize other possibilities in life.

Women can become aware of other advantageous in life through the realization of social issues such as gender. Acknowledgement of their own power as women should advance to an action which Matiwana (2004) calls "tools of intervention" (p. 165) to change the existing situation. Change starts with the transformation of beliefs. Beliefs shape one's life and directs one's actions. These entrenched beliefs are explained by Kabeer (1999) as a 'deeper' level of reality which is seen as natural. When this is questioned, then awareness-raising begins.

Awareness-raising and relatedly critical consciousness is also investigated as methods in empowering education. Empowering education literature mentions critical consciousness for one's empowerment as crucial. Shor (1992) denotes a desocialization process of communication which creates critical consciousness. At this point, Shor refers to Freire (1973) in order to point out to questioning and being able to critically reflect on the existing situation. In addition to this, Mosedale (2015) mentions consciousness-raising in the process of empowerment that makes women reflect upon their situation in society. "The process of empowerment involves, first, women recognizing the ideology that legitimizes male domination and understanding how it perpetuates their oppression" (Mosedale, 2005, p. 248). In addition, in the theory of 'belief-mediated social change' the influence and the role of mediating objective opportunities by subjective beliefs has been advocated to achieve women's

empowerment" (Alexander & Welzel, 2011).

Beliefs change and social change are closely connected for women's empowerment. This happens through critical thinking that can connote to becoming aware of the things that one has accepted as natural. Awareness-raising and questioning are closely connected since raising awareness on a particular issue happens when one questions old beliefs.

Consciousness-raising for questioning naturalized beliefs is crucial to occur in NGOs strategic aims for women. In defining the consciousness-raising approach of NGOs in the context of women's empowerment, Panda (2000) states that it aims to fulfill women's strategic needs or develop their position, instead of only focusing on material aims such as economic gains. Panda defines this approach as having a feature of longer term transformation. That is why, in this study, women's awareness-raising is analyzed separately; both to understand the style of the non-formal empowering education of women in Turkey and also to investigate women's critical thinking on gender issues.

Awareness-raising for the projects in this study is considered through non-formal education sessions on human rights, violence against women and self-confidence, and are designed to ensure awareness for women on the subjects that they did not critically think about before. It also gives a chance to grasp the meanings and reasons behind the inequalities that women face so that one can identify their own situation and the situation of the whole society that they live in.

Reflecting upon existing situations and taken for granted values gives way to a new kind of understanding. Mosedale (2005) defines empowerment as women's redefinition of the situations which restrict them and a creation of ways to take their activity away from these boundaries. The redefinition process is highly related to Shor's (1992) explanation of de-socialization where one reflects upon their own situation. In this way, naturalized beliefs and values are triggered into transformation. These projects can be a tool to open up women's consciousness to new possibilities. Mosedale argues that women may not be conscious of their own situation such as the restrictive environment that they live in; but through the identification of problems, women's awareness can increase. Women become aware of gender discrepancies and

the oppression that they live. The following quotations represent critical thinking and consciousness-raising gained by the participants.

> It opened up my scope of views. I realized the issues of not being dependent to a husband and to become self-sufficient. I was not aware of some of these things. (Nihal, *Polatlı*)
>
> We discovered the idea that we live under male oppression. Women stay behind. My family used to always ask where I was. If I didn't inform them about where am I at a particular time, this used to lead to oppression. After getting this education, you can rebel. At least you can question things and weigh the options. (Elif, *Polatlı*)
>
> We raised our sons by the statement "My son is able to do everything." Though as a girl, my mother raised me with oppression. I am the only one in my whole family who graduated from high school. If we do not raise our sons like that, if we explain to them that women and men are equal…When a man marries a woman, the woman is not property, she is an individual. If I have a daughter-in-law, I think I will side with her more…I am more dominant than the others in my family, since they let me study. If you ask my sisters they think boys are different. I am discussing this with my friends and also with my family. Why do you prefer men? We, women, created this preference. If we raise our sons differently I think there will be no gender discrimination anymore. (Hacer, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

These responses reveal women's consciousness on male dominance and women's awareness on the necessity to challenge this by action. As the statements show, it can be actualized through acknowledging the equality between men and women and being able to face a situation that is not in accordance with gender equality. An increase in women's communication with a critical stance becomes evidence of the advocacy of one's own views on gender issues.

> I was always questioning my environment just by myself. Now I can tell my opinion easily. For instance, we watch the news on TV together with people. In these situations, if someone says something, I would not argue against those people's opinions. Now I continue to tell my opinion until they understand it. Sayings like "If she was not wearing that skirt it would not happen to her." This freezes my blood. This kind of a view should not exist. (Hacer, *Polatlı*)

The respondent's answer shows an ability to analyze other's ideas in a critical way on the basis of gender equality. Besides criticizing other views, women also criticize their own approaches against issues or their own attitudes towards life. One of the case

projects of this study, the project at *Polatlı*, provides non-formal education sessions to ensure women's understanding of oppression experiences and to initiate critical thinking about the lived experiences, as the example below reveals. Consciousness-raising can be observed in women's re-examination of their past.

> My biggest problem was facing my boss' harassment. Even though he had kids and so forth, one of my bosses told me that he liked me. I got upset about this because I thought it happened because of me. I was thinking "what was wrong with me?" Now I know it is not about me. I can freely wear my clothes and go out. (Hacer, *Polatlı*)
>
> Trainings showed me my missing aspects like a movie. I wish I did more things. I could have done different things. This is what I have realized about life. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

As the first respondent shows, feelings of guilt leads to free thinking and being able to analyze the events of oppression better. A critical examination of the past shows that women go through the dimension of awareness-raising as part of an empowerment process that is a cognitive empowerment which is created through knowledge. In addition, Cemre also reflected on her past and told about how she realized her own desires. Besides changing approaches about past experiences, Mine reported her approach against the issue of oppression.

> In education sessions you realize that even if he is the closest person to you, even if he is your spouse, what he does is oppression. (Mine, *Polatlı*)

Through gaining the ability to define oppression, women can be able to recognize and identify the oppression even it exists in their own family. Thinking over the issues and being able to practice thoughts in real life appears as crucial for transforming ideas and behaviors. Transformation of ideas about a subject can become possible through the consciousness-raising of women. As it was mentioned before, some of these women have participated in more than one non-formal education project. One of the respondents mentions a meeting where the issue of abortion was discussed. She reflected that her idea has changed dramatically on this subject. Even though this study investigates only non-formal educational projects, due to the reason that it also represents a learning environment, mentioning her experience can be informative on

the effects of non-formal education regarding consciousness-raising in women.

> Abortion was an alien subject for me. I come from a slum areas. There, abortion is shameful to talk about. On the other hand it's a topic of the women's movement in general. Therefore, at that point I felt that in gender issues, I should go beyond. (Solgün, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Solgün was not used to talking about abortion due to the environment that she lived in. Now she can critically analyze that situation and find the connections of the features of her environment and her beliefs. A similar experience belongs to a participant in *Kozadan İpeğe*. Meeting on gender issues transformed her opinions. This meeting is outside the scope of this research but including it can inform on the possibility of transforming views through learning settings. Her awareness on LGBT issues such as sexual preferences of people had dramatically increased.

> There were closed sessions, but we could only participate open sessions. Only women that work in women's groups or other institutions related to women's issues could join the closed sessions. We had choices of subjects and I chose the subject of LGBT. It was about women prisoners and LGBT women. I specifically chose this subject because it was a subject that I did not know about. I learned various issues on violence and gender. To participate there and to wait for your turn was important for me. One of the women talked about her sexual preference, she shared this with us. For me, it was not something to judge. My point of view is not like before. Fifteen years ago I did not know anything, so I may have thought differently. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

In turning to the effects of the non-formal education sessions in the projects in this study, change of perceptions on the concept of equality is observed. Women's biases against differences disappeared. Just as the example above reveals, another respondent from *Kozadan İpeğe* explained how her understanding about equality of people has changed as a result of non-formal education sessions.

> I have learned to perceive people as equal; with their colors, religions, black and white, because it is a human who I see. This is what I got from the trainings. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Besides changing old attitudes, recognizing other's needs and identifying dangers in our environment represents an example of consciousness-raising. The same

respondent tells how she views the environment through a critical examination.

> You perceive home and the outside environment in a different way. For instance, you are passing by a dark street and you do not care but after these trainings you notice a hole in the street in front of a broken down light. Then I think that broken light is not good for a woman who is outside. A disabled person may be injured because of a pit in the street. I mean these show awareness in your life. You can change your family and then you can change society. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

By becoming aware of the problems in their environment, women also realize the necessity of change at the macro level beyond the micro level in which the former connotes to the society and the latter to the private sphere.

Two comprehensive projects, *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe*, initiated women's critical thinking and awareness-raising. On the other hand, through conducting a shorter program, Women's Solidarity Foundation has an objective to explain and discuss gender issues in their meetings. They aim to make women question their daily lives and the gender roles that are attributed to them. In addition, the foundation seeks to help women who are subjected to violence with emotional support and guidance. The foundation introduces efficient exercises to make women question the entrenched traditional gender roles and existing gender inequality. They seek to reach to this part of the empowerment process that consists of consciousness-raising and critical thinking. Although women continue to struggle against unequal gender relations, the necessity of a change in society is clear.

> I have questioned myself. For instance, the most difficult thing that happened during the exercise was confronting my life. It was a game about dinner and your place at the dinner table. My place is always the one closest to the food and sink. As I said before I have four kids, and this position makes it easiest for serving. (Belma, WS)

The need to change society for the actualization of women's empowerment is a crucial point that is evident in the women's statements. These consciousness-raising meetings give women a time to critically reflect on their gender roles at home, that reveals the necessity of changing society. Women become aware of their gender roles through games. In this way, women's critical thinking process is induced. In addition, women

face their roles at home and question their position. It also shows that consciousness-raising may not turn into application. Belma's responsibilities related to gender roles remain the same.

As the previous statement shows, games and exercises can lead women to question their roles in daily life. Questioning is a process where normalized thoughts and entrenched beliefs should be re-examined. In the previous example, re-examination of gender roles were exemplified by Belma. On the other hand, people's ideologies can be formed through the environment that they live in. "Inevitably, when people are oppressed, their own perceptions of their situation are shaped by the ideology which supports the oppression they face" (Mosedale, 2005, p. 253). Throughout the empowerment process people may become aware of things they were not aware of before and start to question things they perceived as normal before. Murthy (1998) proposes a similar line of thinking on being aware of the oppressive situation which she refers to as "incapable of imagining alternative ways of being and doing" (p. 204). Questioning and critical thinking leads to a process where you reflect on your old beliefs and transform them to new ones. Normalization ends with questioning.

Normalization of one's situation can be a hindrance to take action, since women may not be aware that they should take action. At that point, awareness-raising appears as a useful tool to challenge any existing situation. Women in this study were not aware of some aspects of gender inequalities before. Their ideas changed after their participation in these projects. One of the participants below visited European countries with the *Kozadan İpeğe* project although she was not that independent before. Statements of women participants below show the transformation of normalized thoughts regarding women's situation and gender roles.

> For instance, in the past when my husband did not let me go somewhere, I used to perceive it as normal. He did not let me go to a local market in the first five years of our marriage. My neighbors were going but he would not let me go since he was jealous of the male sellers. Now, we have passed this stage and I can go anywhere, and I let him know when I come back from somewhere. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

> At the project, I learned that housework or other women's responsibilities are more excessive than men's contribution at home. Childcare, cleaning the house, preparing food for winter, family relations, gifting to weddings, elderly care - all these are done by women and if you At that moment, I relaxed

> psychologically. I thought, I make a contribution at home. I was thinking that I was useless. Think about it - I am a university graduate but I was having that perspective. I accepted the fact that men bring money and look after us. Actually, he could not make it without me. That is so important - feeling that "I am useful." (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Sevim explains how she normalized her husband's reaction. Her ideas are shaped by the ideology of her husband as Mosedale (2005) argued that women's understanding can be effected by the outside environment. Semra's statement demonstrates thinking over the gender roles and women's unrecognized contribution in the family. She recognizes the value of women's work. The traditional understanding that underestimates women's contribution to the family in the economic sense is questioned through a new perspective. On the other hand, the fact that this participant's education reached to the university level at the duration of *Kozadan İpeğe* is important to remember.

Questioning accepted beliefs and one's own ideas are steps to transformation. Kabeer (1999) states that 'deeper' a level of reality is challenged by women through the initiation of the empowerment projects. A respondent from *Kozadan İpeğe* told about how her perception has changed about gender through the agency of education sessions. Normalization of gender roles disappeared in women's minds and led to critical thinking on gender roles.

> Actually my feminist side is not that dominant, I support the idea of equality but I am not a sharp feminist since feminism is a different thing. A feminist is perceived as negative. When someone hears the word feminist they thinks it means being an enemy to men, but feminism is about equality. When you are taking lessons on gender, you understand this well. You understand the roles that were given to you since birth. For instance, before a child is born clothes are prepared; pink for girls and blue for boys. Look at the roles! Then they are born and one of them gets a blue bed and the other pink. Why not something in the middle such as yellow or white? It is the same with toys. You can not do this or that, because you are a girl or a boy. You have to do this and this. Gender is the role that is given from birth. These were all normal to us, but after the lessons they were abnormal to us. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Zerrin explains how she perceives gender roles now that go back to birth. She explains how she perceived gender issues as normal before and how now she sees them as

abnormal. Normalization of the old beliefs can also reveal themselves through a critical examination of the media. Instead of accepting or grasping the issues as the news presents it, women can also start to question what they watch. Their critical understanding of society is crucial for a wider transformation. One of the university graduates who can be counted from another category, who was a business consultant in the "Women for Women" Project and attended the non-formal empowering education projects of the "Çağdaş Kadın ve Gençlik Vakfı". She attended KEİD HREP since she was working in the foundation. She became the director of the kindergarten that belongs to the foundation. She explains how she started to question the media.

> Despite one's education background, when you are trained you look differently. You are interpreting the news while before you were only listening. Later on you examine things, you look around differently, even to the television. This happened as a result of our trainings. (Sevinç, KEİD)

Questioning normalized beliefs or discourses are attained in the stage of awareness-raising. Instead of listening to the news without making any interpretation, Sevinç gained a critical understanding towards the issues that are represented. One of the respondents that attended to KEİD HREP was always familiar with women's issues, even though she explained how a thought awakened in her mind by the agency of KEİD HREP sessions.

> I realized that I was living my life with restrictions when I could be living with more freedom. I try to explain this to my close friends. I always tell people that one should not live with neighborhood pressure. In this way you can be more productive. This idea came out more with the education sessions due to the sharing of experiences. We talked about our past and now we see things differently. (Esma, KEİD)

As Esma reveals, being able to differentiate freedom from restrictions can liberate one's thoughts. Raising consciousness can give way to questioning social norms around us that generate hardships. One of the participants from *Kozadan İpeğe* finds a way of coping to balance her work life and family responsibilities and expresses her thought on this possibility.

> Sometimes a women teacher does not want to become a director. She does not want to take this responsibility because she has to stay more at school as a director. I do not know why women always have to be the ones to sacrifice themselves. This responsibility is burdened to women. Beforehand I was thinking that women should not necessarily become a director, they can be a teacher and be at home at the same time, now I say "why not?" If I can help with money, why should I leave my career? (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

This exemplifies the ability to examine a normalized thought about entrenched gender roles and norms in the society. A shift from the belief that assigns women the total responsibility of home to a thinking that supports women's participation in the workforce shows that women are not destined to do housework. In this case, the respondent hires a domestic worker to lessen the overburden, while she continues to live according to her desires. This is a coping strategy for women to be able to balance their home responsibilities and outside work. That means, questioning one's environment and awareness-raising does not guarantee any change in other's attitudes related to gender roles or inequalities. One of the ways of coping with assigned gender roles can be to get help for housework. Increased awareness may not guarantee equal sharing of housework, and women continue to find ways to cope. Women's awareness-raising do not always lead to equal share of housework, while some women can cope with it through getting paid help. This arises due to the absence or lack of men's involvement.

Similar examples of lack of support from men can exist even though women's knowledge on gender roles is adequate. Even awareness-raising do not necessarily lead to results in practice. Women become able to identify the reasons behind this, thus being able to analyze the social reality. In that way, women are able to define solutions. Such as the below respondent that comments on her husband's restrictive behaviors. Rather than blaming her husband, after talking with the facilitators, she realized a bigger reality that connects the family and society. This critical reflection is an example of connecting one's own life with the macro problems, such as the societal norms behind the attitudes of raising children or being able to explain the reasons behind male domination. Stromquist's (1995) term "emancipatory knowledge" (p. 26)

can be observed in her statements.

> First you get angry towards your husband because he did not let you work. Then you say to yourself, he grew in this kind of an environment. If your wife works it can upset him since people around will say he could not look after his wife and had to send her to work. Then you try to understand this, and when you understand the problems lessen. Of course these roles are attributed by society. Because people raise boys like this and he is supposed to look after his wife - he was given this responsibility since childhood. These things are explained to us which are useful. This is the same for girls - we raise them with housework responsibilities. We will overcome these things over time. By means of these education projects we will slowly change these things, they cannot change suddenly, and no one will change suddenly. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Through the understanding of the reasons behind male oppression, and by linking it to the attributed gender roles, liberating thoughts can appear for women, even though the practice does not change. These thoughts came out as a result of awareness-raising on gender issues. This belongs to cognitive area of women's empowerment. In the empowerment process, cognitive area is explained by Stromquist (1995) as a "critical understanding of one's reality" that connotes to awareness-raising. This dimension of empowerment is actualized through various ways that exists in all programs of this study. Consciousness-raising can be observed through one's changed beliefs and opinions towards the issues, concepts, approaches or events that happened before and are happening now. Women start to realize the reasons behind gender roles and their own situation in society and in the private sphere, but also their own perceptions towards a variety of things which are generally related to gender roles. Normalization of entrenched beliefs ended through one's critical thinking and consciousness-raising.

5.2. Political Empowerment

Political empowerment is defined as "awareness of power inequalities and the ability to organize and mobilize" (Stromquist, 2002, p. 23). Even though this study includes mobilization and organizing in the following section; in this section relational empowerment of women is considered as the main focus. Based on Stromquist's

(2015) argument that political empowerment can be actualized on the micro level that is the private sphere, firstly women's relations and negotiation skills are analyzed. That means that political empowerment is analyzed mostly on the relational dimension, rather than on the state dimension. Political empowerment of participant women is inadequate or non-existent on the state level, but women actualized crucial changes in their relations with others in various areas.

5.2.1. Relational Empowerment

Political empowerment encompasses both the private and public spheres. Stromquist (2015) suggests that political empowerment does not only connote to macro levels, though women's negotiation and relations within the household are also important indicators for social change. That is why this study investigates relational empowerment under the category of political empowerment.

In addition to this, Parpart, Rai and Staudt (2002) consider the private sphere apart from the public sphere as an area to carry out political agency. According to them, this is actualized by challenging the control on action and the overall system. On the other hand, relational empowerment can be actualized at the private sphere in relations between spouses. Graham (2009) proposed that when women participated in the education program SAT, an innovative secondary education program for women in the rural Honduran Garifuna community, their marital relations improved due to negotiation skills. Their capacity to communicate increased as a result of the program. Graham's study and these findings regarding increased communication skills and increased dialogue of women, which give way to relational empowerment, are in concordance with the findings in this study. In addition to this, Rowlands (1997) explains relational empowerment as "developing the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of a relationship and decisions made within it" (p. 15). Eventually, relational empowerment is due to negotiation and communication skills with others.

Relational empowerment is about negotiation skills and the ability to examine one's environment and thoughts in a critical way. Rowlands (1997) states that through improvement in self-esteem, women start to understand their value as humans and as

part of the social community. That means that self-esteem is crucial for women to have power and exist in a community. This power should be used through communicating with others, through negotiating and listening to one's own desires. In this way women will be able to influence relationships.

According to Rowlands (1997) women negotiate and influence the relationship of herself with others that connote to women's relational empowerment. By this way, they can express themselves better. In this sense, relational empowerment is crucial for women, so they can easily communicate and express their own desires. Rowlands points out the importance of household relations of women besides other areas of importance such as women's health or education. That is why relations in the household are crucial to investigate since this is a recognized area of gender inequality that affects women's everyday lives. In addition to this, relational empowerment is crucial for relations with others that is not limited to the household but also includes relations with authority figures or other kinds of social relationships.

Relationships with authority figures, social relationships or relations in the household are crucial areas in which to investigate women's relational empowerment. Rowlands' (1997) study showed that in a health program for women's empowerment, women's relationships with their husbands, children and families improved over time. Rowlands states that for changes in the power dynamics of relationships, not only women but also others should change. This is crucial for this study, since some interviews will reveal that women change but they continue to face conflict at home.

Self-esteem, expression of one's self and communication skills are closely related to each other in terms of relational empowerment. Women's relational empowerment can increase through better communication skills, better expression of their self and self-confidence. Rowlands (1997) shows the connection between self-esteem and communication skills that exemplifies the relationship between different dimensions of empowerment. Besides, if needed, they can speak their opinion even it is not in compliance with others. Regarding

relations with others, social relations in terms of communication skills, bargaining skills and easier expression of self-got easier for many women.

> I improved my social relations. I got together with many women and being with them gives me happiness. I like being with other women. (İlayda, KEİD)
>
> These education projects make you empowered. You relax more and your human relations get easier, besides you have more courage for life. Rather than ignorant courage, you have courage through calculation and estimating…I can easily bargain at the market now. Before I would buy immediately. Then, you learn. They taught marketing and sales to people who will establish businesses. (Sevinç, KEİD)
>
> Since I started to work I can easily ask for things to my family. In addition, in my environment I can easily express my opinions to my friends and to other public figures. I can easily say what I think. Education for self-esteem was so useful. (Nihal, *Polatlı*)
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> We started to talk more in public. I was silent before and worried what people will say. But after this program I could express myself easier than before. (Nezahat, *Polatlı*)
>
> It was not easy for me to talk with people, I was always shy. I know how to talk, but why was I shy? I couldn't talk in public before and I don't know why. Now, I can talk in front of the president. I am now in this good position in my life, and it's hard for me to believe. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)
>
> I was more impulsive before. I was right but it was not necessary to demonstrate sudden reactions. It was not necessary to say things at some moments. Now I balanced this. I have learned to manage this. To be more silent, to say things in a proper time…I have learned to be silent sometimes and to speak rightly when necessary. Besides I have learned not to interrupt someone's words. I was hasty. Now I can manage this. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

These examples reveal the increase in communication skills at the public and private sphere. Instead of passivity these statements represent dialogue with others. Women feel more relaxed when communicating with others, whether their silence led to speaking up or their uncontrolled communication is more rational now, they can express themselves better than before. We have seen this issue in psychological empowerment that is due to personal empowerment. These are connected to each other, as various dimensions of women's empowerment can be actualized in a connective way. Rowlands (1997) connected women's personal empowerment to relational empowerment in which the former does not guarantee the latter but is necessary for its actualization. In addition, relational empowerment can happen through various ways, can be in relation with other dimensions, one of which can be

mobilization.

Through travelling to other countries, relational empowerment can be actualized, since communication skills can improve through mobilization. This can be observed in *Kozadan İpeğe* where women experienced travels and visits to women's groups in other countries. Rowlands (1997) mentioned travelling as effective for enhancing women's empowerment. In Rowland's analysis of various projects that empower women, travelling arises as an effective way for the process of empowerment. One of the respondents tells her experiences in *Kozadan İpeğe* where they went to European countries to meet with other women groups and to get non-formal education. It is revealed that dialogue is a crucial issue for women. Communication, socialization and easier dialogue with others are mentioned by women several times.

> We were in France, having breakfast together and we had training sessions. We shared our knowledge and thoughts with each other. There was a group from Germany and France; we were the Turkish group. Foreign people were telling their experiences. I know how to speak German so I could have dialogue with them, I could have a conversation with them. This makes one happy. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Communication with other women is mentioned by Sevim and resulted in positive feelings. She points out that dialogue made her feel good. Women are happy when they can communicate with others in different environments. Relational empowerment can also be observed through the disappearance of women's fear of hierarchy. At the time of *Kozadan İpeğe*, women shared their experiences with other women's groups where communication skills doubled their confidence.

> Before we perceived a rector, a director or a manager as unreachable and special people. We thought like that. The process of communication became easier because we were talking in behalf of the group if needed. That eased the tension. Experiencing dialogue with various people in various positions that made me realize that they are no different from us. That men are people like me or you. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Through eliminating the fear of communicating with certain people, women could converse with other people from various segments of society. Due to reasons such as lack of education or unemployment, and not being used to any public or working life;

women sometimes feel a lack of self-confidence. They may not have been able to participate in a conversation with various people. This reveals itself especially in the dialogues with authority figures or in communication amongst family members.

Rowlands (1997) explains that women can increase their communication with family members, friends or authority figures through empowerment projects. She explains that women's increased communication skills can be dependent on their background or the environment that is present in their daily lives. Women's increased relational empowerment through their practice of communication with the "authority" figures is crucial to analyze to understand how their confidence increased and how their perspective towards hierarchy has changed.

> Self-confidence education was useful. We visited various places. For instance, bank staff came to teach us. Then when I had to visit the bank, I saw the director and walked towards him. I can go directly to the director of the bank and talk with him. Doing this makes me very happy, I feel relaxed and I can express myself. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)
>
> We visited one of the ministers together with some people from the cooperative. Beforehand I was afraid of making mistakes when talking to someone and got stressed, and as a result I could not talk. Though I overcame this through the process in *Kozadan İpeğe*. Of course I still get excited, but I am more relaxed than before. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> If some senior people come from another country, I can communicate with them the same way as I do with others. I do not expect something from those people and I get positive reactions from them. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Women's experiences of communication with other people, those they did not easily communicate with before, shows the practical side of empowerment that is experienced by women. This automatically leads to the eradication of hierarchy for women and they feel more relaxed when talking with various people. Communication and negotiation skills at the private sphere and public sphere can be observed at the same time.

> Now I solve problems in my family without a clash. I know where to stop. You also learn the limits when conversing with your neighbor. Also, you can say hello to someone on your street. We gained all of this from the education modules and we have been changed by this. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Relational empowerment is connected to learning ways to communicate with others and to be able to solve conflicts. Zerrin benefited from new skills of communication and arranged her relations accordingly. Negotiation at home can be related to a lessening of the housework burden at home. The ability to influence the decisions in a relationship that is offered by Rowlands (1997) can be actualized by sharing housework.

> My husband can iron better than me. I have found a method - I tell him how nicely he does the ironing, and now it is his responsibility. He does the ironing. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

After the participation in the empowerment projects, Semra could negotiate part of the housework with her husband. A major shift is apparent in women's efforts to change the division of labor rules at home after questioning the situation that they accepted before. Still, women continue to do most of the housework. Women do not silence their own needs and desires to prevent conflict in their relationships.

> Conflicts started between me and my husband. I was avoiding conflict before, but the way I perceive it now shows me that life shouldn't be like that. I realize that we should stand up for ourselves. Now I directly tell my opinion. In the past, I used to preserve my silence when he said no. I was saying "Do as you like." Especially on money issues I am more independent now; beforehand if I intended to buy anything, I had to ask. (Nihal, *Polatlı*)

Nihal learned that she has to face with conflict instead of silencing her opinions. She also actively became involved in decision making due to her financial independence after *Polatlı*. In addition to this, women's relations with their children can change too. Changing the nature of the relationship (Rowlands, 1997) can occur in women's relations with their daughters.

> I wanted the same nice things in life for my daughters that socializing brought

> to me. I send my daughter to the project of our foundation in Germany when she was 12. I sent her to the foundation's summer schools. Through time every evening we started to communicate about our days and her private life. When I met with the foundation my daughters were 12-13 and in puberty and thanks to the foundation, I have learned how to communicate with them. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

She remarked her increased ability to communicate with her daughter and the effort she was making to socialize her children. This increased at the time of the project and she became closer with her daughter. Due to Zerrin's increased consciousness, she wants her daughter to live similar experiences of socialization that she's had. Their relationship and communication has been transformed through Zerrin's learning process.

Increased communication and negotiation skills can be seen also between women and their spouses. Most women in this study were housewives before, who started to consider their own needs rather than their spouse's, and who need relational empowerment to overcome the problems that can arise from this. Through the negotiation skills of being able to say no or being able to express their desires, women's mobility and freedom increased in various areas including sexuality, housework and travelling. This is demonstrated by Zerrin by how she is able to question women's traditional gender roles and be able to freely express to her husband her desire to be part of the foundation.

> I lost my brother and I met with the foundation which made my mind better. I was in depression. The foundation makes me better, home makes me sick. I said to my husband "If you make me choose one of them I will choose the foundation and break up with you. Do not mention this again." Thirteen years have passed and he never asks negative questions related to the foundation. For example, if I want to go somewhere then I would try to get permission three or four days before. From the education projects you also learn to decide by yourself if you will go out or not, you stop asking permission from your husband. Saying no is never taught to women. Now we know that no is no in terms of sexuality or other areas in life. It is as if everything was our responsibility. Wake up in the morning, serve your husband in the evening, wash his clothes, prepare his food, and prepare his breakfast because it has been taught to us like this. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Vakıf beni iyi ediyor, hem beynimde iyi ediyor çünkü vakıfla tanıştığım zaman abim ölmüştü 42 yaşındaydı ve ben ilaç içiyordum depresyondaydım. Vakıf beni iyi ediyor ev hastalatıyor. Bana tercih yaptırmak zorunda kalırsan ben orayı tercih ederim ve senden ayrılırım. Bana bir

> daha bu konuyla gelme demiştim. 13 yıl oldu herhalde bir daha onun konusu geçmedi. Mesela bir yere gidecek olsam Ankara dışına çıkacağım uçakla gidiyorsam, otobüsle gidiyorsam, 3 saat önceden söylerdim ben şuraya gideceğim beni götürür müsün diye. 3 gün önce 4 gün önce ben gideceğim gidebilir miyim? Hayatına bunu da öğreniyorsun hayır demeyi. İzin almamayı. Bunu öğreniyorsun eğitimlerde de, evet çünkü biz kadınlara bu da öğretiliyor, hiç hayırı öğretmediler bize. Hayırın hayır olduğunu şimdi biliyoruz, her konuda da cinsellik konusunda olsun, hayatımın yaşam alanında olsun hayır demesini öğrendik biz. Sanki her şey bizim görevimizmiş. Sabah kalk, gece ona hizmetini yap, sabah kahvaltısını hazırla, yok onun çamaşırını yıka, yok onun yemeğiydi, bize böyle öğretildi çünkü ama şimdi diyorum ki yani ben o evde ben de yaşıyorum ben de çalışıyorsam**.** (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Zerrin could communicate with her husband and protect her right to participate in the foundation. She is aware of the social roles that are ascribed to her and she shows increased awareness on traditional roles that are attributed to women. Women become able to distinguish their own personal desires from the gender roles attributed to them. This is also related to women's increased awareness on their original identity as Anonuevo (1996) proposed that popular education of women should make women analyze their identity and grasp the enforced aspects by society. Zerrin is able to negotiate for her original identity which leads to relational empowerment.

To actualize relational empowerment, consciousness-raising should follow action for negotiation skills and communication to be developed. Taking action for communication may be needed to be granted permission, which was a common problem among women in this study. Some could not get permission from their spouses to go somewhere, which changed after the project. That change was due to women's negotiation skills and also transformed perceptions of their husbands. The permission issue for women and women's mobilization is analyzed in the study by Rowlands (1997).

Rowland's (1997) findings about women's increased mobilization through increased relational empowerment as a result of empowerment projects resembles the findings in this study in terms of women's increased mobility and solution of permission issues. Through reaching personal empowerment with basic elementals, the women in Rowlands's (1997) empowerment projects had to struggle against power relations and gender practices by going out from the home to participate in the group. This is observed among women from *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* in that they become more

independent. In Rowland's cases, independence of women happened by getting permission from their husbands. She proposes the importance of the transformation in men's point of view in women's close relationship with men. *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* revealed a similar line through the increased tendency for women to speak up about their needs and ideas. Besides, Rowlands necessitates "a re-negotiation of decision-making and resource-use patterns" (p. 132) for women's more intimate relationships with men. Women's relational empowerment at home fits into Rowland's definition of relational empowerment that influences the decisions related to the gender division of labor. Women who needed to ask for permission before can freely travel today.

> Before my husband was creating a problem if I didn't stay at home. One day I went to another city without telling him. Now, when he calls, I don't ask for permission, I only tell him the place I am at the moment. The situation got to this point, before I had to ask for permission. My other friend from the cooperative was in the same situation of dealing with her husband and mother-in-law. We were motivating each other. Now women from the cooperative will not return home even if you force them. None of the women from the cooperative will do that. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

The women's struggle to eliminate the restrictions subjected by their husbands led to their freedom in travelling. They are able to get empowered in a relational sense through speaking up for their desires. One of the women respondents was also a housewife and was still looking for a job when the interview took place. Her husband was restrictive and she could not travel alone for a long time. After the project she could negotiate with her husband even when he was not compromising. She travelled to Europe with *Kozadan İpeğe*. When asked in what ways she got empowered, she answered:

> I am empowered in all ways. For instance, I can tell my husband "This is your problem." I can express this. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Cahide's statement shows that women do not try to compromise to prevent conflict. Before the cooperative many women from *Kozadan İpeğe* were not even going to another part of the city or to another town. After *Kozadan İpeğe*, they started to be able to travel to other places including European countries. They started to negotiate with

their husbands or their husbands started to be less restrictive through the process of empowerment. Women also prevented any problems that would be detrimental to their own being and tried to protect their right to actualize their needs. They were persistent in their empowerment needs and practiced negotiating with their husbands to prevent any obstacles to this process.

Related to being persistent in the relational dimension of empowerment to actualize action and mobilization, Stromquist (2002) proposes developing resilience as one of the learning processes in women's empowerment. Resilience is observed in women's statements that led to relational empowerment. They are persistent on freedom to travel, raising their self-confidence, working outside, participating at the projects and expressing their ideas.

Developing resilience and facing conflict without trying to avoid the situation are offered as crucial stages from the internal process in women's empowerment. Stromquist's (2002) theorization of empowerment dimensions are also described as learning processes (2002) that consists of the "internal (psychological and cognitive)" and also the collective process "(political, organizational, economic)" (p. 27). Then, resilience is an internal stage that leads to a relational dimension of women's empowerment. This feature is observed in most of the examples given here on relational empowerment of women. Resilience is crucial in relational empowerment since women gain through resilience and being persistent on necessary issues.

Stromquist (2002) suggests that resilience and facing with conflict is crucial for women's empowerment and can be observed in communication skills by women. This is revealed in Sevim's statement about her husband not giving permission for a visit to a local market, and how her communication eventually changed with her husband. Her courage increased and she could raise her opinions easier than before.

> One of our educators used to say that anger and pressure are not useful to make someone accept your idea. Communication and empathy are crucial. We learned this and I try my best to apply it. The way I express my ideas has changed. Before, I did not feel to ask for anything because I was thinking it was useless, he will not accept it. But now I have courage. I can express myself to my husband, I can request something. Before I was trying to not tell him anything, even if I wanted to. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Sevim realized the value of her desires and the need to express them for the actualization of them. This reflects increased courage and the need to communicate for one's own independence. She became well aware of the necessity to communicate if her own needs are to be actualized.

Besides increased communication skills as a result of the non-formal education sessions and travels to the foundation or other related activities; relational empowerment can also be actualized as a result of economic independence. This can happen through indirect ways, such as women's participation in economic life that to some extent can balance the gender division of labor at home. As women earn money and start to work outside, spouses feel the necessity to help them. Still, men's work at home is perceived and done in order to help; rather than to share. In this way, relational empowerment arises as a result of the economic independence of women and the transformed division of labor without the need to negotiate or communicate.

> Before I was not working and my husband was not helping me. Now he helps more with the kids and housework. This is maybe due to my tiredness. He changed after I started to work in my store. (Nezahat, *Polatlı*)

Without any direct intervention, men can start to share housework, triggered by women's participation in work life. Thus, relational empowerment is supported through indirect ways such as economic independence. This reveals the impact of economic empowerment on relational empowerment. Besides women's economic empowerment and an increase in relational empowerment as a result, economic empowerment can also affect women's skills to express herself. At the same time, non-formal education sessions were influential on women's increased communication skills and self-confidence. Women's transition from passivity to activity is observed by them being active outside the house in work life. As a result of being active and participating in non-formal education sessions, Cansu could express herself better than before.

> I was passive before. Now thanks to God I can defend my rights and I can express myself. With my self-confidence I can do whatever I want. Beforehand I was a person who couldn't express herself, thanks to God I can express myself

> now and I can be at the front stage and do what I can do. Thanks to God, education projects were useful for me. (Cansu, *Polatlı*)

Besides working outside, this participant states benefits provided by the education projects that enhanced her communications skills. In terms of relational empowerment and women's freedom in mobilization or in making decisions, it is not black and white for every woman. Even when they find coping strategies to reach unrestricted freedom, they may continue to face psychological violence. Rowlands (1997) argues for the necessity of other people's transformation for women's empowerment. She proposes that women's increased awareness may not be adequate for their empowerment in relationships. The relational empowerment process includes resistance to oppression but it can also consist of hardships.

> Throughout my life I had to get used to living unhappily, but I started to find ways to prevent unhappiness. I do not know if I succeeded but I want to do what I like. My ideas stay the same even when my husband says negative things. I can go anywhere if I want to, nothing can stop me. Though I will let him know. I say "If you do not accept this, it is your problem." There is nothing to do, I want to go to the cooperative, and this is that simple. I can go, but going through these problems is exhausting. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Cahide expresses her struggle to protect her freedom to travel while her statement reveals difficulties in the process of resilience. Relational empowerment can consist of difficulties that can be overwhelming. She always has to fight for her desires and this brings tiredness. Cahide decided to go to Berlin with the project of the "*Çağdaş Kadın ve Gençlik Vakfı*" (ÇKGV). She said that she never traveled that far before, forget about another country, even in the same city. She is not educated and her husband would never let her go that far. She said she was determined and she was trying to convince her husband. She tells about the dilemma she lived through this period.

> I was determined but I had inner conflict. If I was faced with an overreaction than maybe I would not go. I was in a dilemma. As I said, psychological oppression is very hard, if you are always faced with it. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

This shows that relational empowerment can not be easy for all women as it is also due to their spouse's awareness on women's issues. This example reveals the crucial role that men play in the women's empowerment process. Lack of support or discouragement can create restrictions for women. The level of reaction from spouses creates an obstacle and can affect women's empowerment. Mentioning PAEM, Rowlands (1997) touches upon the issue of support from others. She states that "For changes to happen in the power dynamics of close relationships, not only must woman herself change, but also the other person." (p. 79). This adds a new dimension to the investigation of relational empowerment that is beyond women's communication and negotiation skills and deals with men's attitude towards women's empowerment process.

Men's involvement is crucial for women's actualization of relational empowerment, but the involvement of other members of the society is also crucial, especially ones closest to women in her family. In addition to the issue of relations between spouses, relational empowerment can happen between women and their mother-in-law or between women and their family. In Turkey, oppression against new brides is common through the submission of women at home. Here, mother-in-laws expect domestic serving from brides, such as cooking or cleaning. In the below statement, Cahide reflects the changes in her relationship with her mother-in-law that connotes to a change in the nature of a relationship from one of the principles of Rowlands' (1997) in the sense of relational empowerment. In addition, Hacer reflects an increased ability in negotiating with her family, illustrating another principle offered by Rowlands.

> My mother-in-law was phoning me saying, "Come today and bring me to the hospital". She used to behave according to her plans, she would call you and want you to come over but she never asked if you had any plans or if you could come. Though at the time of the cooperative I started to tell her "I am going to a cooperative as you know, so tell me your plans beforehand." Before, it was impossible for me to tell her something like this because I was afraid to. Then she started to ask "Do you have to work today?" I did succeed in making her ask this. It is a success for me. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> Because they are my mother and father I was holding myself back. It was an issue of family, environment and respect. Although I am respectful I tell what I have to tell. (Hacer, *Polatlı*)

Both participants are now able to express themselves to older members of the family. They can easily express their desires and needs without any fear. In this way they actualize relational empowerment in their relations with family members. Women can be respectful and be able to express their opinions at the same time. This demonstrates a balance between women's own needs and other's expectations from society. Rather than being anxious and fearful, women can communicate with their environment and be able to look after for their own needs.

Women participants feel more confident and free to tell their ideas and reactions. Avoidance of conflict is less than before as they now believe in protecting their rights. Women are able to express themselves easier than before and they are more relaxed in communicating with others such as family members or outsiders. Being able to defend their freedom they are more independent than before if they want to go to another city or elsewhere. As the interviews show, attitude change by husbands is influential in this process, which can be due to women's increased self-confidence and communication skills, and women's increased mobility or economic activity. On the other hand, attitudes by husbands can create hardships for women. Relational empowerment at the household level, and in the relations with others outside the family is increased with non-formal education projects and through the activities outside or at the foundation as well as experiences provided throughout the projects.

Political empowerment in the private sphere is investigated under relational empowerment. On the other hand, political empowerment can be actualized with political action at the public sphere. Political action and collective action are closely related though not all collective actions are carrying a political feature. That is why this small section is essential to evaluate if any of the programs reach political action that is perceived as crucial for social change. Collective action has a potential in organizations that is actualized through political action to fulfill the demands of development (Rowlands, 1997). Collective action does not necessarily turn into political action but has a potential to trigger a political process.

Political action does not only happen through collective action but can be actualized through a personal process. Besides the micro level for social change through political empowerment that is investigated with relational empowerment; on the macro level,

being elected in political bodies can help women to raise their demands and trigger changes in gender relations (Stromquist, 2015). Then, for wider transformation, political action is needed to be able to create gender equality and raise demands for women.

To be able to create political action, mobilization is required. Related to case studies in this study, only *Kozadan İpeğe* Cooperative directly mobilized women in the political sense. At the Public Ateliers, women made some demands such as a market place, kindergartens and the improvement of procedures for cooperative establishment from the related ministries.

Besides, sometimes women from HREP training can form non-governmental organizations as one of the facilitators of HREP reported. In the projects analyzed in this study, continuous political action is lacking. However women's relational empowerment regarding their relations within the private sphere and also in public sphere increased.

5.3. Economic Empowerment

Thirdly, the dimension of economic empowerment necessitates that women be able to employ in a fruitful activity that will provide financial autonomy (Stromquist, 1995). It is described as "capacity to generate income" (Stromquist, 2006, p. 150). Economic empowerment in the sense of earning income is observed to have beneficial effects on relational empowerment and participation in the community. Research by Kabeer and Noponen (2002) suggests:

> "A study of the impacts reported by women organized into self-help groups by PRADAN, a livelihoods focused NGO working in the poorest states of India, found that while membership of SHGs had a number of important livelihood impacts, it was only those members who had additionally attended PRADAN's training courses, which promoted their capacity for longer-term planning as well as providing practical skills, who reported the greatest impact on intra-household relations and participation in the community (as cited in Kabeer, 2012, p. 49)"

In this example, the interrelation between empowerment dimensions is explicit. Women's relations and public participation can be improved through practical skills that show other benefits of skills and relatedly economic empowerment. Since *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe* carries economic benefits for women, this can be related to their other areas of empowerment from relational to socialization in the public as most of them reported in various ways.

Interrelations between dimensions of empowerment is crucial to know since economic empowerment can also be influential on other areas just as non-formal education sessions are. Rowlands (1997) argues for the interrelation between economic independence and an increase in self-confidence where both of them can be supportive of each other. She argues for the interaction between elements in the process of empowerment. She categorizes empowerment aspects and states that the psychological dimension is the most common in her case studies. It is also the same for this study. On the other hand, economic aspects of women's financial gains exists in two extensive projects, *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*. The former was a cooperative where they learned sewing skills and had non-formal education sessions about entrepreneurship, production and market rules while the latter provided stores for entrepreneur women, non-formal education sessions about entrepreneurship, production and market rules.

It is crucial to point out that the women in *Kozadan İpeğe* cooperative reported small amounts of earning, one of the most important reasons being that it was not surveilled for a long time. Furthermore, even though the cooperative ended, some of them found jobs in other women's foundations such as KEİD, or they started to work in other women ateliers for production or other kinds of jobs. That means that their experience at *Kozadan İpeğe* was advantageous for them in finding new networks and getting new skills and job opportunities in the future.

On the other hand, women in the project at *Polatlı* also reported that they earned a small amount of money because their stores were newly established. Women's empowerment through economic ways seems to contribute to self-confidence more than to the material well-being. On the other hand, this shows that for a long-term evaluation women's income activities should be observed for longer periods.

In both projects women gained economic skills and participated in sessions about entrepreneurship and market rules. Working on skills that will be beneficial for financial gains exist in two extensive programs in this study; where women gain and use skills for the market while they learn the market conditions. They realized that market demands change throughout time and they have to improve themselves for production and marketing. In the beginning of the *Kozadan İpeğe* Project, women made some research on the market goods, and realized that they need to develop their products according to the changes and the demands in market conditions.

> I learned to sew socks and I have also made cellphone covers. We started to produce goods that are sellable. We were going to buy yarn together. This were cheerful. It wasn't always bad times. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> I did not know how to sew, I learned it there. Now, I can use any serial industrial machine and overlock machine. I learned to sew there. First, I started with ironing, then since it was group work, through friends I started to sew and improved myself. Now I can sew and make products to provide my own needs even if I do not work outside. If I have to I can go into a garment industry and sew in a factory. These are our gains. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

The economic empowerment process is supported through new skills and gaining new knowledge about market demands. As Sevim states, skills related to the garment industry can be beneficial for future jobs and opportunities in the business world. Through using these skills, she possesses the necessary ability in order to work in any garment industry. Even if the project ends, these skills can be helpful for increasing women's chance to get a job in this specific area.

> I already knew handicraft. I could imagine my product but I didn't know how to make it. I could design but my handicraft was not perfect. Initially, I was not very good at sewing but later on I started to show it to other women. We all became professional sewers. We have started with home-type sewing machines and then we started to use the industrial ones. Now we don't easily like other bags because we can identify the mistakes. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Improvement in handicraft and learning to use machinery for textiles are women's gains in the textile business at the cooperative. Besides these, through the information from the *Kozadan İpeğe* blog page and from the founder of the cooperative, it can be said that other skill trainings had been given to women. Training on the modernization

of traditional production and designing, sewing, accessorizing and knitting are offered as classes. Non-formal education on entrepreneurship was introduced. For illiterate women who participated in the project, literacy classes were introduced that can also be beneficial for job opportunities. Literacy classes can also be beneficial to find new jobs as it adds a new skill that will contribute to economic empowerment. In addition to this, some women from *Kozadan İpeğe* participated in another production atelier right after *Kozadan İpeğe* Cooperative ended. They are still working there and earning money.

On the other hand, in the project at *Polatlı*, economic empowerment, management, organization, marketing and finance were offered as classes. Vocational trainings in the area of cookery, computer use, financial reading and writing are some classes that were introduced to some women. Some women have stores now, although they do not make a noteworthy profit since the stores are new. Though as women from *Polatlı* reported, they gained self-confidence and better relations in the household or with others through conducting their own business. In the section on relational empowerment, some empowering areas were also due to economic empowerment.

Eventually, women from both extensive projects improved their abilities through the skills training courses and classes related to business. Even though no one reported to earn enough money from the projects yet, they learned new skills for future jobs and some of them continue with work life even though the project has ended.

Besides revealing the benefits due to gaining skills and learning production and mobilization, it is crucial to evaluate the method applied in these classes. Problems include understanding the difficulties that women have in the sessions on technical skills. Through the observation that is included in the section about the methods and the impact of women's experiences, it is revealed that some women may have difficulties in understanding or they get bored in subjects related to more technical areas that women may not be familiar with. The topics that are needed for economic empowerment may be alien to women due to their low levels of education or lack of interest. This is an area to be focused on in order to reach maximum efficiency for women. Before analyzing this, the features of transformative learning will inform the study on the necessary features of empowering strategies for women, especially

mobilizing and organizing to provide transformation for unequal gender relations and for women's empowerment.

5.4. Transformative Learning and Social Transformation

In this section, the features of transformative empowering learning for women and the ways to actualize transformation for women and gender relations in general are discussed. In the previous section, dimensions of empowerment are analyzed through the empowerment literature. In this section, women's empowerment is examined at the practical, organizational and collective level that is required by various authors in order to have any visible gains of empowerment in the application level. Collective empowerment is part of an empowerment process, whereas some projects do not include such arrangements, some involve various kinds of collective activities and action.

Collective action can reach to collective empowerment which is part of an empowerment process but also can be considered as a stage or level that exceeds personal level. Personal empowerment also encompasses a large part of this study through revealing empowering implications such as psychological or relational empowerment, and investigating the necessity of collective action to enable wider social transformations. It also initiates a stronger action that goes beyond individual gains. Therefore, women's empowerment and awareness-raising should reach to a collective level, for social transformation which is necessary for women's empowerment.

Inglis (1997) asks "How it is that people move from personal transformation to social and political transformation?" (p. 14). Shor and Freire (1987, p.110) give the answer "although critical reflection is fundamental for the radical transformation of society, it is not enough by itself (as cited in, Inglis, 1997, p. 14). That means that personal transformation does include critical reflection, but for a transformation in society and the political situation it should go beyond. In addition, Stromquist argues for going beyond the level of consciousness-raising to the practical side of empowerment, which requires an application of what has been learned. Application of what has been learned

should include mobilization for the actualization of one's aims. Mobilization is a method that helps one to be able to reach resources and targets (Stromquist, 2006). "As a theory of social change, it cannot stop at empowerment of individual women, but must seek ways of translating it into collective action." (Stromquist, 2015, p. 309).

Stromquist (2008) indicates that going beyond awareness to action is crucial. She asserts that learning and reflecting upon gender issues will give way to collective action of women to transform these problems. In this way she offers a strategy for collective action for women which requires critical examination of gender issues. When women's critical examination goes further into practice, women's agency becomes important which is required for social change. Women's own agency in challenging gender inequality should be taken into consideration, but also the impossibility of changing the social structures without collective action is crucial to be aware of (Kabeer, 1999). That is to say, women's agency should be actualized at the collective level to change social restrictions that are created by the structures. Furthermore, social structures should change for women's empowerment that can only be attained through collective action. It is presented as a requirement for wider social change in order to deal with structural inequalities that can create hindrances for women's empowerment process.

5.4.1. Mobilization

Collective work encompasses taking action by women for a change. On the other hand, taking action can also be actualized at the personal level. Women's empowerment process composes women's consciousness-raising and taking action for change. Unless action is taken for change, consciousness-raising can not find any application area to realize changes. This process necessitates women's education to reach individual and collective acknowledgement and then to claim their rights (Stromquist, 2006). This part investigates women's action for empowerment to assess if women's empowerment is practiced through action whether collectively or individually, and if it goes beyond the personal level.

To evaluate women taking action, this study uses interview analyses of facilitators and participants to question collective work while considering its specific type, such as

cooperative sewing as economic collective work or visiting municipalities for demands. On the other hand, taking action can also be observed in other ways besides as a collective process. Mobilization that gives way to action is actualized by women through personal or collective ways. That is why this study also considers individual mobilization since it creates considerable changes for women who were not working or who were not participating in public life.

Individual empowerment should reach to mobilization for women to be able to practice what has been learned and to gain tangible benefits. In terms of the practical action, that is taking action for change, Rowlands (1997) asks "How, then, might be the concept of an empowerment approach to development be translated into practical action?" (p. 133). Practical action can be through an individual or collective way but it definitely consists of taking action. Rowlands emphasizes three points to consider for the practical action: "methodology, organizational structure, and the role of the 'change agent'" (p. 133). She also points out to the importance of monitoring and evaluation.

Firstly, the initial aspect that Rowlands (1997) proposes for the empowerment process to be effective is methodology. This requirement connotes to a methodology that is able to trigger an increase in self-esteem and self-confidence. According to Rowlands, this requires respect for all women participants. She states that PAEM exemplifies this kind of an approach as it perceives women as being capable of taking action in their empowerment process and acquiring results. Rowlands criticizes a methodological approach that excludes women in the planning process or in the process of arrangement of activities as it may incite a belief that women are not capable of leading or planning. Through directing and informing women, *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* are closer to Rowland's methodological approach. In both projects women's needs partly shape the project process. In the former one, women are asked which kind of a group they desire, a foundation or a cooperative; in the latter skills trainings are planned according to women's desires while HREP was introduced to solve disputes between women. The other three are planned according to women's needs but not through women's autonomy and planning of the process. This is also related to taking action as women can become active through planning and controlling.

In addition to participating in decision making areas, women can be more likely to take action if they are liberated and not restricted through various means. Secondly, according to Rowlands the methodological approach should be able to criticize women's restricted ideas and beliefs about their own abilities. In addition to this, recognizing women's limitations that is due to their life conditions or beliefs will be able to prevent "internalized oppression" (p.134). In this way, internalized oppression that is created due to the subordinate beliefs will be tackled with when women take action for change.

If internalized oppression exists that was created through the subordination of women, it should be overcome through women's action. "An analysis of internalized oppression can explain the active role of women in maintaining and defending cultural traditions which perpetuate the subordination and mistreatment of women" (Rowlands, 1997, p. 134). Accepting women's subordination in advance can hinder women's empowerment process and can also create obstacles for taking action. A more liberated approach should be taken to take women out from their passive role in the society.

Perceiving women as active rather than passive is crucial to trigger women's potential to initiate transformation that offers a more liberated approach. Challenging women's passive role can be actualized through challenging traditional gender roles. An entrepreneurship educator at *Polatlı* informed on this issue and proposed that women in the project were always having similar ideas that represented traditional areas of women's work, such as cooking. Facilitators challenged and tried to widen women's scope and imagination, but in general women did not change their ideas. Women still take action but a more liberated action may not be possible in every instance. Most women tend to establish businesses related to sewing or cooking that are known as women's work. An immediate need to earn income without extended periods of education can be one of the reasons for this choice to continue with traditional women's work that they have been familiar with since birth. Challenging the view of women as passive victims becomes crucial for practicing empowerment through taking action.

Another requirement for an effective practical empowerment process is organizational structure. Rowlands (1997) argues that a program that has a limited time frame, for instance 2 years of duration, limits the empowerment process through its structure of time. An organizational structure that limits the time of the women's empowerment project is presented as a hindrance. This is only non-existent in *Kozadan İpeğe* since they continue to participate in non-formal education sessions besides fulfilling the tasks of the cooperative. At *Polatlı,* non-formal education sessions ended but women continued to learn through running their own businesses. The time limitations as part of the organizational structure exists in all other projects including HREP at KEİD and consciousness-raising meetings of *Women's Solidarity Foundation*.

Thirdly, Rowlands (1997) argues for the importance of the skills possessed by the animator, who is generally called as "facilitator" in this study. Rowlands recommends them to have skills supporting mutual learning, being a good listener, and being aware of the commonalities and differences between herself and the participant women. All facilitators that were interviewed are experienced in the area of women's empowerment through non-formal education, were familiar with the culture of targeted groups, and perceive the sessions as an opportunity for mutual learning.

In addition to the mutual learning process that should be considered by the facilitators; rather than creating dependency through the leadership of co-ordinating a team, Rowlands (1997) proposes choosing facilitators among women as it was practiced in PAEM. Only *Kozadan İpeğe* carries part of this feature as some women introduced their knowledge to newcomers. Regular meetings with women and also travelling to other places to meet with other women's groups and improving a sense of agency were provided as activities for empowerment. *Kozadan İpeğe* demonstrates this features as they had regular meetings with other women's groups. In addition, *Polatlı* shows this feature as they come together with other women's groups. Taking action will be analyzed through the mobilization and the collective work of women.

Stromquist (2002) states that ability to mobilize is related to political empowerment.

On the other hand, it does not have to be political; it can also consist of a process where women mobilize by themselves for the transformation of their lives. Going out from the domestic sphere to outside life and the public sphere has an important place in women's empowerment process. Going outside of the home starts the mobilization process. Many women from these projects were sitting at home and only doing housework. These women related the depressive feeling that they experienced and motivated by going out.

With *Kozadan İpeğe*, women started to go out by attending the meetings for non-formal education. They formed a cooperation and this stands as an example of organized work of women. They worked in an organized way for production and henceforth material gains. Women from the project at *Polatlı* used to stay at home all throughout their lives. Now they feel more confidence and motivation since they started to go out in public to carry out business. Women from both projects reported feeling better than before since they left home and started to work outside.

Related to mobilization through leaving the house, Rowlands (1997) explains PAEM's empowering effects on women and she states "But the notion of 'leaving the house' may also refer to the difference between the private and the public sphere: that through PAEM women have claimed their right to have input and influence outside the immediate limitations of the family" (p. 77). In this part Rowland's argument is connected to mobilization of women; through going out to take action women mobilize themselves and go beyond the restrictions of the private sphere.

Going beyond the restrictions of the private sphere eradicates women's isolation and opens up opportunities for women's empowerment. Rowlands (1997) argues that women in the PAEM projects had been in isolation in the private sphere, which is a hindrance to the empowerment course. Rowlands (1997) uses the phrase "an obstacle to the empowerment process" to explain the restrictive situation that women are subjected to (p. 77). This can be overcome through taking action and mobilizing to challenge the restrictions. It tells how women mobilized by stepping outside of the house.

Mobilization through going beyond the personal sphere not only creates an opportunity

to challenge the structures but also supports the increase of women's motivation towards life. Similar changes with the PAEM project are observed at *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe*, where women were isolated at home before their participation in these projects and their motivation towards life increased after their participation. Therefore, the mobilization process started as a result of their participation. In order to participate in the projects, women had to go out and participate during several stages of the project. Participation creates an opportunity for women to reach far beyond home boundaries.

Participation initiates another process that consists of travelling activities and visits arranged for women. Women mobilize through travelling activities. Women from *Kozadan İpeğe* who could not get their husbands' permission to travel to another city, were able to travel to European countries. At *Polatlı*, women got out from their homes, opened a store for themselves which they manage alone or with other women. They also participated in festivals to sell their products. While most of the women in this study were housewives before or still are, their interpretation of change through the difference between being at home and outside revealed the psychological impact of mobilization on women. Even though this is an initial step in the process of taking action, it still can be counted as an action carried out by women in the sphere of public.

Taking action and mobilization can be actualized through personal mobilization by being active outside in the public sphere through women's projects. In this way women feel more confident and make an effort for their empowerment through practice. Practice can also be actualized in terms of women's human rights by going beyond learning to mobilize for ensuring these rights. Tibbits (2005) states that human rights education is not only a consideration of human rights but also on initiating an individual action to assure these (Tibbits, 2005). Since human rights education was part of some projects, especially in HREP, emphasis on action by Tibbits is crucial to consider. Therefore, knowledge on rights should reach application. Human rights arises as a mobilization area for women that should be protected.

Mobilization can be supported through developing personal empowerment that the women in Rowland's (1997) empowerment projects present. By going out of the home

to participate in the empowerment group, women can initiate a process of fighting against unequal power relations. That means that mobilization includes struggling against gender relations. In this section, individual action is the main focus since a collective one is relatively weaker in the projects considered. Women in many ways challenge gender relations, through challenging the notion that women belong to the private sphere.

Mobilization makes women confident and happier through an aim for change and a struggle for well-being. These constitute goals and resources for a better life. Stromquist (2006) suggests mobilization as a strategy to reach resources and goals. In addition, the process of mobilization itself is viewed by Stromquist (2002) as a process of gaining new abilities to affect society. One of these abilities can be skills related to economic well-being and making money. Through mobilization they practice these skills with economic activity. Women do not want to stay at home. They mostly remember this as routine and feel it is not useful and beneficial anymore.

> Women in *Polatlı* would be only cooking and taking care of their husbands if the chamber of commerce did not exist. This is the routine of housewives, there is nothing else. I wake up every morning, I do my job, and I have my own money. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)
>
> Home no longer provides anything to me. When your children are small you are at home, you take care of the kids. Then kids grow, they go to the school, my spouse goes to his job and I stay at home. Cooking dinner and cleaning the house every day, it's always the same routine. You can't look after yourself but also you can't complete housework which is a weird situation. I used to go to a *gün* (a gathering day for women at someone's house from the group) but I got bored from all of them. I went to the training sessions every day. I was leaving my child at home. I got used to this tempo. Since the training sessions have ended, I can't stay at home. If you go out, you take a shower and you dress yourself. When I was at home I was not washing my hair. I thought I am not going anywhere so why should I wash my hair? Now you have to do it. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)
>
> Ev bir şey vermiyor artık. Çocuklar küçükken ev. Çocuklarla meşgulsün. Ev oluyor çocuklar büyüyor. Büyüyünce herkes okula eş işe gidiyor ben kalıyorum. Her gün ev sil süpür yemek yap aynı rutin işler. Kendinize de bakmıyorsunuz evinizin de işi bitmiyor garip bir uurm. Gezmeler günlere gidiyorsun onlardan da çok sıkıldım. Her gün bu eğtiimdeydim, çocuğumu evde bırakıyorum. Bir de bu tempoya alıştım. Evde duramıyorum eğitim bitti. Çıkarken elbette giyiniyorsun yıkanıyorsun. Evdeyken saçlarımı yıkamıyordum açıkçası. Dışarı çıkmaaycağım niye yıkıyorum mesela. Şimdi mecburen yıkıyorsun. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)

Women reveal that staying at home does not provide anything useful for them. They

describe that they are more active than before. In addition, they consider the importance of going beyond the traditional responsibilities of women. They lost their motivation at home; and they reflect upon being at home as a routine, and a negative process. They talk about the increase in their motivation by being active which reveals psychological healing. Participating in public life provides benefits for women's well-being. Women start to feel that they need to take care of themselves and be prepared for outside life. Women do not perceive home as a productive site, it's something that they are not satisfied with. Once they go out, women connect to life in a more productive way that exceeds the limitations of the domestic sphere.

Related to women's activities in the public sphere, Sevim from *Kozadan İpeğe* compares being at home and being active outside in public in which she defines the former as unproductive. She states that at least she was taking off her pajamas, combing her hair and making a preparation when she was attending the non-formal education sessions. She expressed that she was not interested in doing all these preparations during the time that she was staying in the domestic sphere. She mentioned that at least she was doing something for herself, neither for her husband nor for her children. She expressed the benefits of this process for her family. The process is initiated due to her own benefits; and in this way she is able to make her family happy. This respondent was restricted to the house for years because her husband was not giving her permission for employment outside. After the project she could get permission and now she is working at the foundation KEİD's kindergarten. When they mobilize, women take empowering steps to change their lives.

> One of the most important changes for me was leaving the house thanks to my participation at these trainings. Since my husband was not giving me permission and I could not work, I sat in a corner doing nothing. I watched TV, did some cleaning and prepared dinner. I was not producing anything. There was a time when I was not even going out to take a walk, maybe I was close to depression. Luckily I participated, and I have a desire to do things. At home it is not like that. Here I do not get tired, because you feel that you are doing something, you are accomplishing things and doing something useful. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> En çok beni sevindiren mutlu eden iyi ki gittim iyi ki eğitimleri aldım iyi ki bu derneklere katıldım dediğim şey evden çıkmam oldu gitmemiş olsaydım derneklere çok istememe rağmen çalışma hayatını izin verilmediği için kendimi bir yerde sineye çekip evde bir yerde kendimi köreltmeye başlamıştım. Açıyordum kadın programları izlemeye başlamıştım bişey üretmiyordum. Sadece evin temzliğini yapıyordum akşama yemek hazırlıyordum bir de televizyon açıp oturuyordum yani. Kendim için dışarı çıkayım gezeyim tozayım bile

> yapmıyordum son zamanlarda bu da ne yapar insanı geriye götürür belki de depresyona girecektim belki daha kötü olacaktım yani iyi ki katılmışım diyorum bir şey yapma hevesim var hala var hiç yorulmuyorum. Ama evde nasıl oluyorsun bir bulaşığı yıkasan bile ay diyorsun. Dünyanın işini yapıyorsun burada ama yorulmuyorsun neden biliyor musun beyin olayı enerji veriyor insana yani bir de bir şey yapmış hissediyorsun kendi işe yarar hissediyorsun, bişey başardım diyosun, kendine göre o da insan için en büyük herhalde şey. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Feeling useful and productive are benefits of the mobilization of women. Travelling to the foundation to attend the courses initiates women's mobilization process and productivity. Women want to feel productive and exceed the limitations of their traditional responsibilities in the private sphere. Through mobilizing, women become able to identify their own desires and feel satisfied through accomplishments. Women get control of their lives and fight for it.

> I am not married but I have self-confidence. Not every man can be with me. I am economically free, while at the same time I can go anywhere I want. I don't like to be controlled, I like to be free. I wasn't always like this, you become like this after a period of time, and now I always want to be like this. This process started before the project but throughout the project I became more determined and this feeling get more intense. I like to live without being questioned. (Elif, *Polatlı*).

Women want to experience their mobilization without any restrictions from their environment. They want to take control of their lives. They do not want to be questioned about their acts and they want to go wherever they want to. Thus, mobilization can be created through personal agency.

Besides individual mobilization, collective mobilization of women is present in their experiences along with the project. In *Kozadan İpeğe*, most of the women reached goals related to the production of textile goods. Through this stage, they started to take action, researched the market and tried to find new ways to produce. Mobilization provided them with knowledge of the market which appears as another kind of benefit. Besides individual mobilization, the statement below reveals collective mobilization that provided market knowledge.

> It was an eight month process. We went to the market to research the goods. We carried out business research. We went to the "Soma Pazar Çıkrıkçıları". This is a place where they sell folkloric products. We agreed on 100 socks to

> produce for them. We were visiting places with a group. Therefore we understood that no one demands lacework or beads. Our instructor wanted to show this to us so that we would develop new kind of goods. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

As the statement above reveals, mobilization for production creates an environment for learning. The empowerment process of mobilization provided them with new ideas for their economic empowerment. That means that mobilization has a potential to support the economic dimension of women's empowerment. Women gain knowledge about the market and find opportunities to observe improvements and changes. In order to be successful at production, they need to observe market demands and make an assessment for possible production strategies. Mobilization is crucial for one's action towards empowerment.

One of the women from KEİD kindergarten, where she works and attends HREP, stated how mobilization with a group has been carried out to introduce products at *Çağdaş Kadın ve Gençlik Vakfı.* Sevinç was working in the project "Women for Women" and she is a university graduate. She attended self-confidence, communication, and entrepreneurship non-formal education sessions there. After several meetings she became a business consultant in the foundation. Through this period she said she went to places that she never imagined going to before. In her example, self-confidence and mobilization goes hand-in-hand. She is telling about the times she worked in the Women for Women project. It exemplifies a foundation activity that she was working in and how it transformed her.

> Beforehand, I could not enter a men's coffeehouse. We went to one of them to introduce our *gözleme* (a kind of pastry). We dressed well. Men were acting like, "whatever, let's buy these." I told them "Please; you will buy if you are hungry, this is a service. We did not come here as beggars." I would never believe I could make a speech like that and enter coffeehouses or a police station. You produce something to sell and you create a market…we made our business bigger. We had a woman driver. This created strange emotions -you see the students, they love you and you earn money in return. I was able to see trade. Maybe not trade, but I saw different environments and business lives, besides my own job. (Sevinç, KEİD)

By visiting these places, Sevinç could show courage and participate in the practical

side of trade. In addition to this, through mobilization she could have the courage to make speeches that she could not do before. This connotes an increase in communication skills through mobilization. Communication is crucial for women's empowerment if they can find an area to practice it in. One of the participants explained how they were active with the meetings and how they communicated with other women's groups. Being part of the work the NGO is doing creates an experience for women to be active. They could mobilize with the meetings arranged in the projects. Therefore, *Kozadan İpeğe* created an environment for women's mobilization through contacting and communicating with other women's groups.

> We were present at various meetings. Some people from our cooperative were participating at these meetings. We left our contact details and created a network. Sometimes foreign cooperative members or women from other foundations made tours to visit NGOs. Then, just as we accept guests to our house, we welcomed them and they visited our foundation. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Through establishing networks with other women's groups, the women in *Kozadan İpeğe* cooperative found a space for their practice of empowerment through mobilization. The same respondent explained the women's experience in foreign countries. While almost all the women from *Kozadan İpeğe* were housewives before, with the projects they could experience travelling to other places. The foundation provided them an opportunity to mobilize through travelling to other places. Rowlands (1997) also observed travelling as an important process for women in the course of empowerment. The same respondent tells the experience of all the women.

> There was a joint project in Germany, and they came to Turkey. That project was held in three places, including Germany and France. I and a group of women went to Germany and the other group went to France. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Going out from home to participate in the foundation provided opportunities for visits to foreign countries. Freedom to get mobilized was not something that all women had due to lack of self-confidence or restrictions, or both. Similar mobilization processes can be observed in *Polatlı*.

> I never even stood in front of my house's door, but then I traveled to other cities with my neighbor. (Cansu, *Polatlı*)

Dramatic change for women due to travelling is prevalent in the extensive projects. Two projects, *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı,* initiated women's mobilization at the public sphere. Participating to the programs at the specific places, visiting market places and other women's groups, and travelling and starting a business triggered the women's mobilization process that provided women with more freedom and confidence. Women get mobilized through meetings, traveling and collective work for production and market research. Benefits of mobilization for women arise as they learn market conditions, meet with other women's groups and communicate with them. They have an increase in communication skills, self-confidence and satisfaction through accomplishments. They could go far beyond the domestic sphere and mobilize for action that empowers. The foundation activities can be an effective tool to trigger women's mobilization that is needed for change.

5.4.2. Collective Work

Collective work is explained as an important stage of women's empowerment since social transformation requires collective action. Women's collective work is crucial for wider action and change. "As a theory of social change, it cannot stop at empowerment of an individual women, but must seek ways to translating it into collective action" (Stromquist, 2015, p. 309). Empowerment of women should reach to the collective level from an individual one. Longwe (1998) argued for collective organization in the process of empowerment, and she proposes that adult education and empowerment have three components; "enlightenment, conscientisation and collective organization." (p. 19). Therefore, Stromquist requires collective action for social change in the women's empowerment process and Longwe argues that adult education for women's empowerment should reach to collective organizing.

Collective empowerment is a required stage for empowerment and can affect other dimensions of empowerment such as the psychological dimension. Stromquist (2015) indicates that women should share their knowledge with other women to initiate a

collective action to challenge the status quo in gender relations. Sharing knowledge is offered as a psychological tenet. She asks how women gain these psychological features. The answer lies in empirical evidence that being in groups and collective work provides this through carrying out these actions (Stromquist, 2015). She points out to the link between acting in local spaces and psychological empowerment. That means, collective empowerment and psychological empowerment are connected to each other just as the empowerment dimensions are interrelated.

Interrelation between various dimensions of women's empowerment shows us an empowerment process that is not going in only one direction. It includes several directions which are supporting each other. Besides the psychological benefits of collective empowerment, women's empowering collective work can also increase the women's attention to collective decision making. Matiwana (2004) describes the case program where they aim for leadership of women through supporting women's collective action necessary to build a community. In addition, women in community building understood the importance of collective decision making. Matiwana's research proposes a community program that increases women's acknowledgment, and leadership that triggers collective strategy. Then, if the nature of an empowerment project consists of any collective action, practicing it can be beneficial for understanding its significance. Benefits of collective action arise as collective strategy and acknowledgement of collective decision making.

Collective action can also be beneficial in triggering political action since it carries a potential to initiate one. Acknowledging the significance of collective action can happen in organizations through a hands-on experience. Empowered women, specifically the ones in organizations where collective acting is at stake, are inclined to take political action to actualize development necessities (Rowlands, 1997). Rowlands proposes that these development necessities can be about economic needs or needs related to the legal system. Then, organization is crucial to create an environment for women's collective work that is likely to lead to a political action for a variety of changes legally or economically.

Although it has the potential, the collective work of women does not always initiate or consists of political action. In addition, collective work always encompasses

mobilization of women. Different from self-action, it is made through group work. It can be a collective production work, or it can be a political action made through visits to the related ministries. As we will investigate now, two extensive projects of *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* represent this in various ways. One of the women respondents explained their collective action in *Kozadan İpeğe*. As she reports, visits to the mayor and making demands were part of what can be regarded as collective political action.

> We visited the mayor in the name of our cooperative. We have asked for a stand for free. Before we went there we had tried to make an appointment for years. Then I explained the issue to one of the ministers when we visited her. Our facilitator initiated me to start to talk, and then I started. As I said I have learned to talk properly. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Collective work is observed in *Kozadan İpeğe* that also created a space for women's collectivity due to its nature as a cooperative where they practiced to make demands. Through this, women in *Kozadan İpeğe* not only produced goods together but as we already mentioned, they also visited municipalities which exemplifies a political action. They produced together and they also acted together for making demands from the governing bodies.Women were encouraged to act together since producing together can be financially beneficial as well as beneficial to make stronger demands to the governing bodies. Furthermore, *Cahide*'s statement reveals that collective action can be an opportunity for women to practice their transformed communication skills. Knowledge and application arise as being important for a stronger process of women's empowerment.

Kozadan İpeğe stands as an example that reflects both collective work and consists of the practice of political collective work. Collective work and taking action together for a specified aim can be beneficial in areas that are related to women's empowerment. Application of knowledge is not only important to support the process of women's empowerment but also for a better business strategy and for bringing forward stronger demands from the governing bodies. These strategies and stronger demands are good opportunities for women's empowerment. *Kozadan İpeğe*'s founder and gender facilitator Nil explained the importance of organizing, public mobilization and public

empowerment. The information provided by her describes the collective work and mobilization that *Kozadan İpeğe* women experienced. Her statements reveal the significance of collective action in both making demands from related bodies and in reducing the costs in business.

> We have an education program on organizing. We talk about the importance of organizing and solidarity. Let's say you have to visit a mayor, which does not mean that it is necessarily a legal entity. What we explain in the "organizing" is the fact that the mayor may be frightened by you if you go with thirty other people. If you visit the mukhtar with forty people he will be frightened. However, if two people visit a mayor and ask for a place in the local market, no one will listen. If they buy something it will be 2.5 Turkish liras per kilo; but five women and fifty pockets can be ten or fifteen Turkish liras. Women do not have that much money. This explains how organizations start. These are the people who are together in solidarity, who have the same problems, who are poor but are about to earn money and who come together to sell what they produce. Therefore if they come together and buy their supplies together, it will be cheaper for them, even if they make *gözleme* (a kind of a pancake). Organizing means making demands in all areas. When we work or raise our voices and if we unfurl our banners, the more people you have the more your voice will be heard. The second stage of organizing is to decide what to do through the organizing process. You should hire a place, buy telephones, spend on electricity etc. You will spend money. To ensure women's union and to create solidarity a convenient space is needed. Municipalities should provide this, but they do not. *Kozadan İpeğe* women had a number of visits to the municipalities, especially to Mamak Municipality. But since they are from AKP; they don't understand women's desire to go out in the public sphere. Some women changed their parties over time. They went to the AKP mayor and asked for a place in the market area. They went and they did not feel frustrated. At the beginning, these women were definitely not like that. (Nil *Kozadan İpeğe*, facilitator)

Women learn the importance of organizing for making demands and in reducing the costs of business. Furthermore, solidarity and organizing are two basic attitudes that are encouraged for women. It is taught to women at *Kozadan İpeğe* by the facilitators. They do not only learn the importance of organized work but they apply it in various areas such as production or making requests. Organized action is supported by the facilitator Nil for women's benefit to eliminate the obstacles in the process of buying, producing and selling. Her explanation reveals the application of being empowered and how the process itself becomes empowering for them. Their mobilization and visits to the mayor exemplifies women's agency by mobilization to trigger change.

They take collective action for their lives that is an important stage in women's empowerment process. Other actions of organized collective work that exemplifies public mobilization are explained by her.

> Women went to the Çankaya Municipality to get a place in the market area. They visited both the municipalities and local administrations. They were making waffles and to sell them they asked Çankaya Municipality for a place. They were given a place somewhere in front of the municipality and the police force were told not to disrupt the women. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe*, facilitator)

Women's collective action can serve women to reach to their demands in a more assured way. Besides, as this example shows, collective action and support from the decision-making mechanisms becomes crucial for opening up new opportunities for the women in the empowerment process. It is more beneficial for women to make their demands collectively, so it can be more effective and can be beneficial for many women.

These benefits are triggered through several activities that *Kozadan İpeğe* provided to women. They participated in activities, meetings and demonstrations by other women organizations. They also carried out some experience sharing meetings and atelier work in Diyarbakır, Hatay and Nevşehir. They worked with organizations in Germany and France. They carried out an exchange program with MİX-Cite in France and Babop in Germany that had a gender approach. For the empowerment approach in development methodology, Rowlands (1997) requires analyzing the encouraging aspects and obstacles that women face. In both case studies of Rowlands, encouraging aspects arose through travelling. Therefore, women participants at *Kozadan İpeğe* fulfilled this side of empowerment.

In addition to traveling and meetings, the women made some mapping work to reach other home-based worker women. It is like a snowball method where they reach other women to create a wider connection. This reveals a type of organized work for women. Through reaching women in a collective way, they prepared a non-formal education program for the ones who wanted to participate in the cooperative. The education program is called "Empowering Education". The aim is defined as making women who do not go out a lot or have difficulties in expressing themselves aware of their

capacities and possibilities. In their approach, empowerment requires collective organization.

These organized activities are all arranged throughout the project and practiced regularly. *Kozadan İpeğe* includes the topic of the organization of women in their non-formal education modules and they also consider its application. Before the cooperation *Kozadan İpeğe* was founded, "Çağdaş Kadın ve Gençlik" conducted various non-formal education projects and activities that focused on the organization of women and collective work.

In addition to *Kozadan İpeğe*, women in *Polatlı* practiced mobilization and collective work. In this way the participation of women is triggered in areas where production take place but also where they have an opportunity to think about their products. In addition, they meet with other women cooperatives where women produce together. An entrepreneurship facilitator at *Polatlı,* Derya Sener , explained their collective work.

> They went to a festival and decided what to produce and what to bring there. They were very participatory in organizations where they can sell their products. They also visited women's cooperatives. (Derya, facilitator, *Polatlı*)

Collective work at *Polatlı* included both visits to women's cooperatives but also visits to festivals. The latter created an opportunity for the observation of the market. Through experiencing various areas to sell their products, women mobilized collectively for their own work and to gain knowledge on production. Collective mobilization provides women with a hands-on experience. In addition, they have a chance to meet with other women cooperatives and share experiences with them. Furthermore, collective work can be beneficial for each women's product and financial gains.

> Maybe we also give ideas to some women. Let's say you make noodles, but if you make the pocket of the noodle nicer it will be more beneficial. Another woman next to your store may be sewing; so she can sew your pockets. Another one makes garnishes and decoration…when I said the benefits of collective production they start to take action together and support each other. Maybe we had influence in choosing business ideas. We prevented competition by saying

> do not do this, do another thing; do not do the same things. (Derya, facilitator, entrepreneurship, *Polatlı*)

As her explanation suggests, making business together can have a potential to create a solidarity between women through collective production. In addition to this, it can be beneficial for business since everyone can focus on what they are able to do and produce a common good. It also serves to prevent the production of the same goods without any varieties in business. In this way, everyone can focus on a different part of the production and in the end create a common good. In other words, collective work provides another benefit that is solidarity and collective gains in production. Collective work and solidarity are suggested for the participants at *Polatlı,* but only some women continue to work and produce together after the project is finished.

In *Polatlı*, women's collective work in production exists but political mobilization is an inadequate practice. They visited several festivals, a fair to sell their products, and cooperatives for learning and selling. They learned about organizing and collective work. Women participants visited the municipality to solve problems regarding the places that were given to them for selling their products. One of the facilitators of HREP, who applied HREP at this project, explains that some women's groups were formed after each woman's participation at HREP. At *Polatlı* they could not cover the topic of organizing due to timing problems.

> Of course, beforehand there were groups in Ankara that I introduced to HREP training. One of the groups had joined an NGO and tried to make it active. Some of the women organizations were established such as the foundations "VAN Kadın" and "Çanakkale El Emeğini Değerlendirme". HREP is beneficial for triggering women's organizing. However, we could not discuss the subject of organizing in *Polatlı* due to time problems. (Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*).

As it is explained above by Hale, women's organizations can be triggered through HREP. Covering the topic of organizing is crucial so that women can understand the importance of organizing, collective work and political mobilization. On the other hand, direct application is more crucial since only explaining the topic may not be enough to trigger any collective action. As *Kozadan İpeğe* shows, if women find a

place to practice it is more likely to occur. For extensive and long-term empowerment projects, organization and collective work of women should find an application that is crucial for empowerment to be actualized.

Benefits of collective work encompass various areas such as production or demands for women's needs. Overall, women's collective work is proposed as a necessity that should exist beyond individual consciousness-raising. In the development literature women's collective power is considered as crucial in addition to consciousness-raising. Since non-formal education for women's empowerment is a type of development program, principles argued for this is relevant to consider. In general, development projects for women should raise the consciousness and collective power which help women to bring forward the issues for change (Patel, 1996). This can make them challenge and change the hardships in and outside of the private sphere. For a wider change, collective action is required.

Going beyond individual consciousness-raising to collective action opens up new opportunities for change. This is social change that is needed for women's empowerment. Difficulties in the public sphere can be challenged through collective action. This is also associated with challenging the existing system. Parpart et al. (2002) states that being aware of the structural limitations are important in the empowerment process. They explain that empowerment is the capability to change and challenge the existing restrictions. Through Rowland's statement, Parpart et al. explain *power within* that refers to personal consciousness-raising, *power with* that connotes to working with others collectively, and *power to* that leads to transformation. *Power to* refers to collective work with others and is strongly related to challenging the existing system that can only happen collectively.

Whereas *power with* is exercised in both extensive projects, the element of *power to* is inadequate in these projects since it is generally limited to personal change rather than wider social transformation. What is observed in the projects in this study is that they all have potential to give personal empowerment, whereas some lack collective action. Looking at the literature for the arguments on collective action reveals the importance of it.

The importance of collective organization is mentioned in the literature as a crucial

part of empowerment. “Empowerment is based upon individual self-discovery, self-assertiveness, and critical thinking about one’s world, as well as upon collective organization” (Stromquist, 2015, p. 319). In other words, empowerment is about one’s personal self but also requires collective action and organization.

Women’s empowerment should go beyond individual awareness-raising. Collective organization is crucial for preventing obstacles towards women’s empowerment.

Overcoming obstacles may require political struggle through collective action. Collective organization and action are required for political struggle which is needed for women’s empowerment. Longwe (1998) proposes the need for political and ideological struggle in women’s empowerment that is routed through women’s collective action challenging gender inequality. These political and ideological struggles are argued to be supported by a principle in the non-formal education projects for women.

In terms of women’s non-formal education projects, women’s collective action is argued to be an important tenet for the context of these projects. Anonuevo (1996) explains an education module used for women on body or mobilization subjects and makes suggestions on the organization of women. She proposes that there is a need for turning the awareness gained to collective action for transformation. Besides, Parpart, Rai and Staudt (2002) state that even if the aim is not reached at the end, political action is crucial to confront the existing conditions. That is the political action that we already mentioned; as part of a collective organization.

In order to reach political action through collective organizations, appropriate organizations can be influential. Empowered women, particularly in organizations that collective empowerment can be attained, are inclined to take political action for transformation on the side of development necessities (Rowlands, 1997). Then, being in an organization and also taking collective action are more likely to lead to political action.

Political collective action is not observed in all the projects, but both extensive projects reflect collective action in various ways such as production, meeting with other women’s groups and making demands to the related bodies. On the other hand, it is

not limited to these examples. Aims of collective action can vary; demands can be economic ones but also other kinds of development necessities can exist, such as an efficient justice structure and legal protection (Rowlands, 1997). Urraco's case study of Rowlands (1997) exemplifies this where a health promotion team pushed the local community and the nation to let justice be done for the murderer Nelly Suazo. This shows that organized and collective work can transform social injustices. This is crucial also in the subject of education for women since being in groups and working collectively helps women to fight against oppression due to solidarity and trust between them (Bingman, 1996). As Bingman states, acting in community groups becomes crucial for some women to also cope with gender problems in their lives. It is crucial to mention that Bingman puts community work in the category of popular education, as they create learning spaces and formal classes for women. Eventually, women's collective action and organization serves various aims and needs of women in terms of rights or justice.

Collective action can serve justice, production or political demands and it is required for empowerment. On the other hand, it can be difficult for women to attain. Related to the issue of women's lack of participation for collective action, Parpart et al. (2002) states the problems as being money, time and other costs. An explanatory example is working class women who are likely to have time problems (Parpart et al., 2002). In addition to this, Stromquist (1995) proposes that women's participation in these empowerment projects may create hardship for women since they have daily responsibilities in their lives.

If women are able to participate in these empowerment projects, they can be beneficial for them in various areas. As the projects in this study reveal, especially *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe*, some benefits of collective work are increased solidarity, an assured way of production, obtaining results easier when making political demands, and also learning from each other through visiting market places or other women's groups.

Besides the two extensive projects of *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*, others were not providing an active environment through collective work besides the sessions themselves where collective activities were carried out, such as discussions or exercises. Even though other projects did not include collective production or

collective political demands, they included the topics of organization or topics related to solidarity. For instance, the *Women's Solidarity Foundation* meeting is aiming consciousness-raising but they are limited with time, so sometimes the issue of organization, which connotes to collective, is not mentioned but they do talk about solidarity.

The meetings of the *Women's Solidarity Foundation* creates a space to practice non-formal education that is limited to a time range in one day. They talk about solidarity and offer ways to support other women who are subjected to violence. Then, solidarity can initiate a collectivity among women. Solidarity does not guarantee that it will reach collective work, on the other hand it carries some features of collective work. Women collectively support and communicate with each other to find ways to resolve the issues in their lives. In order to be able to help other women and to also help themselves, women are encouraged to support each other in terms of violence or other related issues which can only be done collectively. Pervin from Women's Solidarity Foundation is asked if they cover the topic of organizing. She said that even though this is not included they talk about women's solidarity.

> We were not talking about organizing but we were talking about women's solidarity. What can we do when we are subjected to violence and where we should go for help? If there is someone who is subjected to violence we say "What can we do and how can we support?" Though let me say that we did not mention this issue in every meeting. (Pervin, facilitator, W S)

Collectivity to some extent can be traced to solidarity. Solidarity is needed in violent situations so that women can support and inform each other. Due to the time limits of this meeting for women's consciousness, solidarity between women can only be told or discussed during the sessions. Since this program only aims for the awareness-raising stage, the practical side of the program remains out of consideration. Though collective work, which is an application of awareness-raising, can be actualized if women come together after the meetings and form collective organization. In addition, non-formal education sessions are able to provide a space where solidarity between women can be created in various areas such as ways to eradicate violence against women.

Another program that is applied by KEİD is HREP, which includes organization of women as a topic. HREP leads to knowledge empowerment but it does not necessarily arrange organization of women or any kind of collective political action. Even the facilitator stated that organizations formed by women after HREP is not very common. They do not have a practical exercise for collective work other than in class group works. A facilitator of HREP reports that she emphasizes women's solidarity as a topic.

> I lay emphasis on women's perspectives and women's solidarity and that we should support each other as women. I stress the difficulties of being women. They listen well. (Merve, facilitator, KEİD, HREP)

The topic of solidarity is covered through the understanding that supporting each other is important. Merve is asked if the HREP program could trigger a social transformation.

> This should reach to social transformation. Women's organizing is included in the program. (Merve, facilitator, KEİD, HREP)

Solidarity and organization are mentioned in these programs, but turning it into practice may need a better initiation process. It should also be said that time limitations create restrictions for these projects and even if they consider empowerment of women, they may not directly aim and arrange collective organization.

Overall, collective action is suggested as part of an empowerment process. Stromquist (2015) suggests that as a theory of social change, empowerment should not remain at the individual level but should be turned into collective action. Then, empowerment projects for women should carry a feature to trigger women's collective action. Empowerment projects for women should include practical exercises for collective action. In that way, women will become their own agents in their struggle for empowerment. Besides, through political collective action women may be able to transform structures. Empowerment is being able to transform and struggle to change the existing structures (Parpart et al., 2002). Challenging structures requires an action beyond the personal level that is collective. With collective action, social change can

be initiated.

How can social change be attained? Carolyn-Medel-Anonuevo (1996) explains the education module they used in the Philippines which contained various parts on subjects such as women's body, law and organizing. On the organizing, she states the modules aim was for "highlighting the fact that coordinated efforts by politically conscious agents achieve more than isolated individual efforts" (p. 129). She further asserts that social movement is intended rather than an individualistic approach as liberals support. In other words, exceeding the individual and carrying out organized political struggle is required for social change through demands and empowerment. In addition, Rowlands (1997) defines empowerment as a gender concern besides being a class or a race issue. She states that empowerment "is about transforming social relations" (p. 131).

For women's empowerment, social change is crucial because without challenging the status quo and structures, women's empowerment will be restrained by structural obstacles. In order to overcome these obstacles, social change through challenging the existing unequal relations is crucial. HREP facilitator Hale gives opinions about the issue of social change and explains the importance of educating women on the protection of rights. She is asked if the program's aim is personal or social change.

> Personal change. It aims to create awareness, sensitivity, and in this sense it is very successful. Now the women are aware of many things and they can react to them, which contributes to their personal progress. (Hale, HREP facilitator)

Personal change is the basic aim of HREP, which includes knowledge building but also acting towards issues. In addition, Hale is asked if it can reach to social change.

> Yes, because I always give these messages to the women that I will explain now. We talk about what is being done for women's rights. Parliament is under male dominance. They decide in favor of themselves. What would happen if the parliament was women? We need women members of Parliament. Male judges decide in one way and women judges could decide in another way. We should make our decisions according to the law and we should make correct choices. At that point, our choices are important. I do not give messages on what women should choose but I make them think about it…they became conscious of their rights. They became aware of what needs consideration.

(Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*)

One of the strategies for social change explained by Hale is women's participation in Parliament or the significance of women considering the necessary things through thinking and raising consciousness. That means, social change is not planned through collective work but through going through the topic of decision making for women's empowerment. A similar question on the aim of social change is asked to a facilitator that worked at *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Women's Solidarity Foundation.*

> It depends on what you do. In the Women's Solidarity Foundation we have prepared an education program about establishing local cooperation for municipalities and women groups. We did some work to facilitate their organizing. Organizing women in a one-day meeting is almost impossible. However, to eradicate gender inequality and to prevent violence, women's solidarity is a very basic formula. Therefore, without talking about this subject it will be missing. We say that we should support each other and so forth. We tell them that our accomplishments up until now are a result of women's struggle. Consequently, a little bit of motivation can be given in the training. (Filiz, facilitator, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Organization can be the core issue in several training programs that are not given to ordinary women but to women's groups. On the other hand, a facilitator of non-formal education on gender, Filiz explains the impossibility of organizing women in one day, because the foundation's consciousness-raising meeting is one day. Although the solidarity of women is always pointed out as an important point that is crucial to trigger the importance of collectivity in women's minds. Without ensuring the application of women's organizing and collective work, consciousness-raising remains at the "motivational" level as Filiz reflects.

In the extensive projects of this study, some forms of collective action are observed. Both *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* have organized visits to marketplaces in their projects which provides a chance for women to collectively carry out activities to observe the market. In both projects, collective production is supported for the benefit of each member. In addition, making collective demands to the municipalities are observed. Meeting with other women's cooperatives exist in both projects, which constitutes a collective work. Solidarity is a topic that exists in all projects and programs that can

initiate the process of collective work such as production, visits to other women's groups that initiate experience sharing, or making political and other demands related to women's needs.

CHAPTER 6

EMPOWERING EXPERIENCES IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Non-formal empowering education for women provides the knowledge that is necessary for empowerment and a space for the discussion of gender issues, violence and/or other technical skills. Women get empowered through the knowledge gained but also their experience in the empowering program space provides benefits for the process of empowerment. That is why analyzing this issue as a separate but also connected subject is crucial to evaluate what kind of empowering experiences women have in these projects and spaces. Experiences of women in the specific learning settings will reveal the impacts of the shared space. These spaces are triggered through the sharing of experiences between women. In addition, thanks to the discussions on the topics and related experiences, women learn from each other and gain awareness about women's issues. Through realizing that they share common problems, women become able to create solidarity.

6.1. Sharing and Awareness Raising Due to Being with Other Women

Experiences of sharing and participating arise as crucial for women's empowerment process, since participant's experiences are crucial for connecting their own stories to macro realities. In addition, it is also important for women to participate, share their own stories and be able to feel the relief of participating and questioning their own experience. Stromquist (1995) proposes a convenient space for sharing with other

women. The convenient space can be created to improve self-reliance and confidence but it can not be directly given (Stromquist, 1995). Women have their own roles in creating this space since it is made meaningful through sharing and discussing. Sharing experiences is important for the space that is created with the group (Stromquist, 1995). It is also stated by Stromquist that through sharing, women can find connections to micro and macro levels of social life. That is to say, they can find the reasons behind the micro realities that are eventually linked to macro ones such as structural limitations or entrenched beliefs in the society. In addition to improving their understanding towards social life, in these non-formal education settings women find an opportunity to participate and tell their own experiences.

> One woman had some problems at home, about her kids and husband. I told everything about my life to her. Now in my head there are no question marks or problems unsolved. I do not know what more I could tell about my life to the other women. It was a relieving experience for me. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

This example shows that when telling about their own experiences women can feel relief and find solutions due to sharing. Participation here can mean telling your own experiences, participating in lectures or participating in a conversation with the facilitator.

Participation can support women's solution to problems and lead to the questioning of experiences. Women reflect upon their lives when they participate and share their own stories. One of the respondents who is more educated than the others shared her participation experience during the course.

> It was like psychotherapy for me. Both me and my friends have some things missing in life or experiences that disturbed us. We could share these in the course setting. Most of them are related to male oppression from our husbands, fathers or from family members. I was raised in a slightly relaxed environment but I was oppressed by my father when I was a child. I have shared this experience of mine…and you question these experiences after the training. (Elif, *Polatlı*)

Besides the psychological therapy effect of sharing, questioning one's own experiences can start through sharing. Sometimes, women do not participate in the

beginning. Throughout time they start to participate which then becomes an ability for women that is improved through the process of empowering lectures. They learn how to share and participate through practicing those in the non-formal education sessions.

> Beforehand, I was silent in lectures; in the finance course. We did not know our instructors well. After we had participated in self-confidence training, I started to talk. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)
>
> I did not have hard times but sometimes I was sensitive about some issues. Beforehand I was having difficulty but it does not exist anymore. In this sense, I got empowered in the cooperative. This was due to the trainings in the cooperative. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Participation without any difficulties becomes an attitude that women gain throughout the projects. Breaking the barriers to share ideas or experiences with others gave women a new ability for participating. Besides opening up throughout time, the respondent below explains how she felt the need to share with other women and the instructor. This also exemplifies learning from other women. When they witness other women's sharing, they get courage to do the same. Heng (1996) explains that storytelling was used in a program to establish an environment for women's voices. Heng states that this serves the purpose of uncovering emotions and experiences that are not very easy to talk about. In addition, Heng proposes that self-confidence appears as a result of talking about opinions. Storytelling is described as an effective method by Heng since one woman's story can provoke a thought in another woman's mind. The commonality of women's experiences also encourage women to talk.

> In the beginning, we were not participating. I was a little bit shy and didn't feel the need to participate all the time. After a while one can feel more free and participate more in the sessions. Later on I felt the need to share what I did not want to share before. I even felt the need to share special things. There are some moments with the instructor and other friends that you see the, sharing. For example, someone shares something that is similar to your problem. You can share an idea. I had good times in those courses. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

This positive expression about having a good time is related to talking with other women, sharing experiences and finding a space to express. Communication with other women can create an environment for women to share their daily wishes. Non-formal

education sessions provide women a setting that they can share their own life experiences.

> I was giving examples. During the courses, someone asked if we desired to do something that we can't do right now. I said "Yes, it is a very simple thing", and they laughed. I wanted to be in my morning gown and have breakfast with my children and husband for a very long time. They found it to be very simple. My husband was working on Sundays too and I always wanted to do this. Now we are doing this and placing importance on this. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Women find a space to voice their own desires about life through communication. Participation has its own dynamics which can be effective or not. Participation can be easier for women if the topic is in relation to their lives. This reveals the importance of linking the topics that are discussed, such as gender division of labor, to women's own experiences, such as division of labor at home. When it is linked, women feel an interest in participating. Facilitators suggest that women participate more about the issues that are related to their own lives.

> Sharing what is related to one's life and one's own experiences induces more attention because you want to start to talk and to share. Since my husband did not let me work, for years I lived through deep emotions. When we talked about this subject during the sessions, I wanted to talk more, to get other's opinions or to share my ideas. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Sharing ideas and hearing other's ideas can be beneficial to women to have voice. They can reflect upon the experiences that they lived through. The learning space is crucial, and it should be a trustful and relaxed setting. One of the KEİD HREP participants reflected on the program where safe space exists where one can share with trust. She tells how this trust is built.

> You can speak anyway you like, very easily. Because you feel comfortable, maybe you even share things that you couldn't share before, since you are now working on building your trust. Trainings went well, and in this sense I perceived it as something positive. (İlayda, KEİD)

The learning space becomes a trustful setting where women can share what they could not share before. One of the respondents told about her experience of sharing. She said

that when she goes out somewhere, her father used to say “I trust you.”

> “Do not say you trust me all the time, it makes me feel bad” was the way I thought when my father used to tell me that he trusts me. This is a very oppressive word and carries a lot of meanings. He oppressed me for years and I arrived at this age carrying this word. Do not talk to men and do not go there… (Gökçe, KEİD & facilitator, WS)

After sharing she could feel relief about her problem.

> It sounds funny and it makes you feel good. People get shocked. It felt good. I think this event is a very funny one. I laugh when I tell this story, and even that makes me feel good. (Gökçe, participant in KEİD & facilitator, WS)

Sharing with other women can have therapeutic influences since it can relax women and they can accept the reality lightly. Participation and sharing can have psychological effects on women in the positive sense. Silence of women can transform itself into sharing and active communication. Sharing and communicating with others arises as beneficial to examine one’s own life and to be able to cope with problems.

Besides the non-formal educational aspects of women’s awareness-raising on gender issues, women can also raise their awareness through listening to each other’s stories and meeting together. Sharing does not only give psychological relaxation to women, but also triggers critical examination. A learning setting creates a space for women to share their ideas and own experiences. In these settings they raise each other’s consciousness through dialogue and taking into account other’s opinions. In these settings, women learn from each other and reflect upon their lives.

Stromquist (1995) emphasizes women's sharing of their own experiences which leads to an acknowledgement that they are the actors in their life. In addition, part of an empowerment process described by Inglis (1997) represents personal well-being through voicing one's own emotions, ideas and desires. Through communicating with others one can criticize her own ideas about life (Inglis, 1997). Sharing with others can lead to critical thinking about experiences in life.

Sharing of experiences through dialogue is closely related to solidarity and understanding. Sharing with others is beneficial for solidarity through supporting its

improvement. Heng's (1996) research on women factory workers shows that women's consciousness-raising and collective work through an empowerment program reflects solidarity between women. As Heng explains, the process is initiated through women's experiences, and then their reflecting upon these in a critical way through dialogue of others. Heng explains the process as "building bonds, breaking silence; talking stories, talking pain; and making sense" (p. 224).

Similarly in the case of PAEM that is investigated by Rowlands (1197), it appeared that women began to realize that women have common problems. In addition, women find an opportunity to reflect upon these problems from a social and political angle. Rowlands states that they could reach information in a group. By being in a group, women learn things that would be difficult to learn and understand in a private sphere.

Sharing can trigger awareness-raising for women through a dialogic environment. Awareness-raising can be actualized through acknowledging women's issues in general through hearing other's stories. In addition to this, it increases encouragement through hearing success stories. This is also beneficial for critical thinking about one's own life. Here, the respondent makes a comparison between women's lives and her life. In addition, through hearing stories of other women she realizes the difficulties that women experience.

> When I was hearing different stories from women, I was feeling grateful about my life. At that moment, I thought I had a good marriage even if I got married to him without being sure due to his weight. But at that moment when I listened to women's stories, I realized that I got married to a good man. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

> They brought entrepreneur women to the lectures and they told us their life stories. It makes one feels an incredible power that makes one think "I can also do this." (Beyza, *Polatlı*)

Hearing other's stories increases the awareness of women on women's issues, and they learn about other's lives. In the second quotation, through the stories of a business women, the women's self-confidence increased. Hearing successful stories from other

women can increase the possibility of becoming a successful woman entrepreneur. Sharing can encourage women and show her the possibilities in life.

Hearing other women can encourage women but it can also make women question their own ideas. One of the participants in KEİD HREP who was politically involved before and who is a university graduate, told me of an experience that changed her perspective about an issue. She said that she was supporting one of her friends' thoughts on her daughter's possible future experience regarding her sexual life; saying that she should be careful so as not to regret her experiences in the future. While she was relating and supporting this story, other women from the room told her "Experience belongs to the one who experiences it". In that moment, she examined her ideas that were not challenged before. The sharing space in the project created an opportunity for her to reflect on her own ideas.

> That means I also have some traditional beliefs on some issues. I do some political and progressive action, though on gender and women's issues such as sexuality we are not fully improved yet. (Esma, KEİD)

Showing the courage to criticize oneself is crucial and appears as a sign of consciousness-raising. When asked if they gained knowledge on gender issues, one of the respondents from *Polatlı* related what she learned about other women. Elif acknowledged the depths of women's issues.

> My life is easier than others lives since I am not married. When I learned about others' lives I felt lucky. I understood and grasped what women go through. I became aware that we are living in a patriarchal and oppressive society, but we only know the surface of the issue. This issue is very serious. (Elif, *Polatlı*)

Women's awareness on women's issues in society can increase through hearing other women's stories. Through hearing the oppressions that women live through, they can see the structural obstacles and entrenched traditional beliefs behind women's subordination that can be observed in the family and society. Along with realizing that there are various kinds of women from different backgrounds or places; women understand that women have common problems. Through realizing this they feel closer to each other even if they are from various backgrounds. This creates solidarity

between women since they acknowledge that all of them are women and oppressed in common ways. This is also related to the eradication of hierarchy along with the realization that richer or educated women can also be oppressed.

> Meeting with different women was a turning point in my life and it was very beautiful. For example, knowing a woman from the Black Sea region, or from various areas in Ankara…I used to believe that women who live in richer areas do not have any problems. Though I have learned that women are women everywhere, from the Black Sea, from east to west, rich women, poor women, educated or non-educated women are all women. Violence is everywhere, women are subordinated everywhere. We can struggle and we can say we are equal. We are equal on behalf of the law but not at home. I have learned all of this. Women are women. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Women learn from each other the common of experiences of being a women. Through learning each other's stories they can feel solidarity by realizing that other women are also going through similar experiences of oppression. Furthermore, it triggers critical examination due to being open to other ideas. Hearing other women's opinions due to the space created with non-formal education can raise women's awareness on a variety of issues that are related to all women's lives.

6.2. Solidarity and Support among Women

In the non-formal education setting, women can feel the sisterhood and solidarity. They can give emotional support to each other and find a safe space to discuss their problems. Support and solidarity arise as crucial for coping with problems, for supporting the empowerment process through being in unity with other women. Solidarity and support do not necessarily occur between participants, but it can also occur between the participant women and the facilitator women.

Solidarity and trust is observed in the process of women's collective work and being in groups. Bingman (1996) investigates community groups in an Appalachian community where she could observe the collective work of women. Even though this is not an education program, since these projects include collective work of women, it represents an experience of women in a learning setting. In *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı*,

the women experienced solidarity. In addition, the Women's Solidarity Foundation and KEİD created a space for a women's group work, group discussion and sharing of experiences that also leads to solidarity and sisterhood. Being in groups and working collectively helps women to confront oppression, due to solidarity and trust between them (Bingman, 1996). Bingman states that women acting in communities handle gender related problems better.

Solidarity starts with the process of sharing one's own experiences. Shirley and Linzi (1996) explain the influence of listening to women's experiences since it "produces a quick sense of recognition and solidarity between learners and facilitators" (p. 23). The learning environment can become one for support and solidarity.

One of the respondents who is a university graduate reflected on the program and how she felt about being with other women. Esma points out to the characteristic of these groups as creating sisterhood.

> My friend also told me that she was feeling very good there and luckily women were participating. We really discovered sisterhood between women in a couple of settings. Of course it is not always happening in every meeting, for example we could not find that kind of feeling in union's women's studies committee. Though we did in a general women's studies class, an effect of the instructor who has been doing this job for years. Learning this difference was important. (Esma, KEİD)

A non-formal education setting for women's empowerment is crucial for meeting with solidarity. When the same respondent is asked if she felt hierarchy in the sessions, she highlighted the support and unity between women. Through sharing similar experiences and emotions; women feel closer to each other which creates a potential for solidarity.

> That setting was very different, it was a setting where people were from all segments and spheres. It should be done like that, to make everyone participate. One of our friends who is a university graduate had difficult times talking about her experience. She was crying. She told about the violent experiences that she was subjected to by her family. We were all shocked, we hugged, and then made her laugh, and then she continued to talk. We all were full of emotions and gloom. This is such a beautiful cooperation. I also experienced that feeling. (Esma, KEİD)

Emotional support between women can exist in these empowerment projects where women come together and tell each other their own stories. This solidarity can also be actualized between the participant women and the facilitator. One of the respondents explained her relationship with the facilitator, which is beyond teaching and learning. The experience reflects sharing and emotional support.

> It would be great if I could continue with her. I was feeling like a child and also an adult when I was with her. I was looking for affection and attention when I was with her. A person can look for something outside of their home, not only from her husband. In that environment you feel this and you want this. I always wanted to go to her because she relieved me. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

Affection and attention are expressed by Cemre that exceeds any form of formal relationship between the facilitators and women participants. Sometimes women feel an emotional support coming from the facilitators. She describes how an HREP instructor makes her feel good.

> When she told us about something, its effects would go on for a week for me. Rather than use psychiatric pills, listening to her would work for me for a week. It was relieving for me. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

Dialogue with women that can have a potential for psychological support becomes life changing for women as they can feel better about life. Beyond knowledge empowerment, some women feel psychological empowerment through the easiness they feel when they are listened to and have communication with the facilitators.

A similar setting is created in *Kozadan İpeğe* to support women, especially in terms of violence. Especially for the ones that are subjected to violence, a group formed that is carried out with a psychologist. That was a closed group where shared experiences had to be confidential. Sharing their own experiences and getting support from the psychologist helped the women to deal with their own issues.

> When you share, some feelings increase or are evaded. To experience that feeling is important. That feeling can be felt well. That is psychologically good for me…in a violence project, we had meetings with the psychologist for months. The way I perceive my spouse and environment had transformed. I was having difficult times. God sent those facilitators to me. In those times, I was going insane even at the times my spouse talks with me in a normal way. I came to that position. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Due to violence and restrictions and negative attitudes by family members in the past, the psychology of women can be harmed. These kinds of closed groups for women who were subjected to violence can become part of the projects to help women deal with the problems in their lives. For the transformation of negative and harmful feelings from the past, psychological help has been revealed here as beneficial. In the same closed group that is the violence project, Hacer from *Kozadan İpeğe*'s non-formal education projects who did not participate in the production process, argued that it was the most efficient experience for her to deal with the problems in life.

> Bişeng carried out a group work. I learned a lot from that group work; I learned communication. I used to have an unsmiling face; they told me that I am better when I smile. I started to get along with my mother and spouse. It was also very useful to visit government offices. That was not a communication class that we participated in at the time of the *Kozadan İpeğe* cooperative; rather it was group work with a psychologist. Whatever you talk about with the psychologist it will take place in the group and information will never go out from there. These people were selected. We did not see each other on the outside until the group work was over. After the group ended, I realized that I got along better with two of my friends. (Hacer, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> Bir grup çalışması yaptı Bişeng. Ben o grup çalışmasından çok şey öğrendim, iletişimi. Ben suratı asık biriydim, dediler ki, gülümsersem daha iyi olduğumu söylediler. Annemle de eşimle de anlaşmaya başladım. Devlet dairesine bir yere gidince orada da çok işe yaradı. Onları anladığımı düşünüyorlar. Bu iletişim dersi değildi, bu psikolog ile grup çalışmasıydı. Bir psikolog ile ne konuşulursa grupta konuşulurdu ve konuşulanlar dışarı yansımazdı. Bu kişiler seçildi. Dışarıda birbirimizle görüşmedik o grup çalışması bitene kadar. O gruptan sonra 2 arkadaşla daha iyi anlaştığımı fark ettim. (Hacer, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Group work in *Kozadan İpeğe* provided a space where women can talk freely and seek help for their needs. The principle of confidentiality is reserved through some rules. Hacer claimed that her life changed after this group. She did not want to go into details, but it was obvious that the group helped her to cope with problems related to herself and others around her. She also stated that she made good friends. She defined that sharing can create a beautiful energy. This practice stands as an example for women's empowerment projects. Women reported high levels of positive impact.

Solidarity can start through sharing, then understanding each other by finding common points. Communication in the learning setting can provide women with other possibilities in life besides noticing commonalities. In the statement below support of

each other and sharing opinions goes hand-in-hand, things that are empowering experiences for women.

> Everyone was sharing their ideas and giving examples. They were making comments. Generally everyone is supporting each other and giving ideas. Then you can think of other possibilities. If not, then participation is enough in itself and you acknowledge other women like you. You realize that you are not alone. This empowers a person. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Solidarity can eliminate women's loneliness. Being able to acknowledge other possibilities as described by Sevim is a stage to reach after participation. It was beneficial for her to hear other ideas and widen her perception. Sharing, support and solidarity between women occurred during the projects which were supportive for increasing psychological health, the feeling of not being alone, increased awareness on other possibilities and improved relations with others. Solidarity can exist between women and can be beneficial for them. Though there is a problem that resides in this assumption as Cornwall (2007) suggests - it actually consists of various kinds of relationships of women with other women that do not connote to solidarity all the time. Women's rivalries in the next section will touch upon this issue.

CHAPTER 7

OBSTACLES TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROCESS

In this study reactions to and attitudes towards women's action for empowerment is investigated that have common points among women. It is stated that empowered women in the context of leadership and empowerment programs can be seen as threats to old beliefs and can be encountered with opposition (Matiwana, 2004). Women sometimes are encountered with opposition in the process of empowerment if the society does not approve their attitudes.

Other restrictions are due to the situation of the country - from an economic standpoint as well as policies and institutions' attitudes towards gender equality, which is not investigated in this study but is researched by various authors. Structural realities can overwhelm women. On this issue Kabeer (1999) refers to contextual possibilities that affect the process of empowerment. Sosibo (1996) also mentioned something similar where a lack of basic facilities to sell their work, inadequate economic resources, underestimation and attributed traditional roles to women are some restrictions towards women's empowerment. Dominant powers arise from the institutions, policies and government attitudes which can affect women's empowerment process. Groups can reach empowerment though the limitations created through the structures should be taken into account (Parpart et al., 2002).

This study focuses on discouragement of women by various means such as perceiving them as housewives or not permitting them to go out or work. Mosedale (2015) describes the constraints to action by using education as an example. Considering the general norms and ideologies that constrain girls' access to education, Mosedale asks some questions. First, she asks if there is a restriction by her family, which connotes

to *power over*. Secondly, she asks what a girl needs in order to get an education, such as ability or belief on its advantages that connotes to *power within*. Thirdly, she asks if a girl has any allies who are questioning the social values and norms and in what ways they restrict the girl's education.

Obstacles and reactions from family or friends have an impact on women's empowerment. Matiwana's (2004) argument on these kinds of projects and the environment's reaction that perceives empowerment as a threat to traditional beliefs can explain the possible reasons behind this. In some cases lack of support appears as a discouragement for women. In this study, unsupportive reactions and attitudes are presented as obstacles.

Here several kinds of problems and hindrances to women's empowerment process have been observed. One is the rivalry between women which creates fights and confrontations. The other deals with reactions of family or friends to women's participation in empowerment projects and women's struggle to change the views of their family and environment. This is also mentioned in the literature as a common problem, so I wanted to show you the other side of the empowerment process of women which creates various kinds of obstacles or a non-supportive environment.

One of the obstacles is due to others, such as a spouse or other family members or friends. From the literature, Shirley and Linzi (1996) touched upon this issue through explaining a workshop education where women raised their awareness and changed perceptions; though when they go back to their house or workplace the oppressive environment can be overwhelming. This also appears in the domestic sphere where in this study a gender division of labor is observed as a stable problem.

Another obstacle is rivalries among women that create hardships in the process of projects, and affect the outcomes. For the empowerment approach in development methodology, Rowlands (1997) requires analyzing the encouraging aspects and obstacles that women face. In the context of women's leadership training for empowerment and community work, restraints to women's empowerment are described as "the patriarchal nature of society, the low status of women reinforced by legal discrimination, lack of self-confidence and low self-image, and cultural beliefs that relegate women to an inferior status" (Matiwana, 2004, p. 164).

7.1. Rivalries among Women

This section is important in the sense that it reveals an obstacle that is created between and by women themselves. Rivalries among women can create an unproductive environment without any bounds of trust that will distance women from the project and from other women. The space that was one's empowering setting can be distracted through rivalries or quarrels. This problem arises in both programs; *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe*,that should be transformed to an environment where sharing and healthy communication exist instead of rivalries.

The possible reason of the occurrence of rivalries, especially in *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı,* is due to the nature of the projects, through their economic feature, through women's experiences of business life and other reasons that the interviews will reveal.

Stromquist (2002) explains that rivalries among women is created through their socialization, and Shirley and Linzi (1996) point out to animosity between women during the empowerment projects. Shirley and Linzi (1996) explain the process of conflict between learners that creates different situations. In all-women groups animosity occurs about race, class or sexual preference (Shirley & Linzi, 1996).

In this study, solidarity is observed between women at some levels, although rivalry and quarrels between women is also a topic of this study due to the information gathered from *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe* Projects. On the issue of women's autonomy and solidarity, Cornwall (2007)'s work criticizes some presumptions on women's empowerment. Cornwall critically approaches the arguments on gender relations in gender and development thinking through ethnographic research in Nigeria. Cornwall's argument composes two areas of feminist fables of women's emancipation from male dominance. Cornwall describes the first one as "the powerful social imagery of women's solidarity" (p. 150) that is related to the idea that the only way for women's mobilization is women's focus on collective interests and oppression. Cornwall investigates ideas about female solidarity and autonomy which are common issues in many gender and development interventions. For Cornwall, these ideas underlie the advancement of women's projects or self-help and credit groups besides mainstream

mediations. Cornwall explains the myths of development projects for women.

> "Get women into groups, the development mantra goes, and they will be transformed into social, economic and political actors. Get women into parliament, and they will represent women's interests. Give women access to independent incomes, and they will be freed from dependency on men (Cornwall, 2007, p. 150)."

Cornwall tries to show that various other impacts on the women's empowerment process are ignored and some conclusions are presumed with bias. Besides, Cornwall explains that focus group discussion sessions in applied research or Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) takes into account women's ideas and approaches as a social group. In addition, women-only spaces are perceived as settings where women can speak up, be authentic, and improve self-esteem to explain themselves and to take action. Cornwall argues that all these representations can be featured as myths for what they do and for their substantial narrative theme. Cornwall warns that this is not arguing that women's autonomy and solidarity do not exist. Rather, Cornwall states that myths are not true or false. Political theorists considered that myths instill political agendas through moral aims (Cornwall, 2007).

Cornwall (2007) argues that myths in gender and development intervention approaches are not in accordance with women's own life experiences, even though these women are to be empowered by this interventions. Cornwall criticizes mainstream development interventions on their essentialist thinking on women and men which ignores various needs of women. Approaching gendered power relations from heterosexual partnership lacks a dimension since women's usage of power should not be restricted to their relations with men but also with other women.

Cornwall (2007) suggests that women's solidarity and autonomy can be seen as a gender myth that many feminists adhere to. In addition, Cornwall argues that ideal representations of women's solidarity and autonomy is not in accordance with the complicated relationship of women to men or to each other that gender and development generally do not consider. Cornwall suggests that the reason for ignoring these relations is due to the power of the idealizations and myths of women's solidarity

and autonomy. Cornwall states that women and men in her research tell stories about co-wives harming each other, mother-in-law's animosity against their daughter-in-laws and problems between sisters-in-laws. Cornwall also observed other areas where women come together, such as at women's associations. In these settings, collective action for the benefit of members of women's associations and for increasing the relationship with other women and women's leadership abilities are observed.

As Cornwall (2007) explains, women who were selling the same products next to each other in the market were in competition with each other, and that created a problematic situation. Cornwall states that in some women's savings and credit groups in Ado, men administer money due to the women quarreling with each other. Henceforth, group savings turns into a domination by one person. This is generally the men who look after the savings and get a portion from the women in return.

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Suggestions for development practice are viewed by Cornwall in two levels. Firstly, short and fast solutions for women's empowerment ignore the analysis of unequal usage of power. In addition to this, women's long term commitment is an overlooked principle which is actually necessary for women's collective work for the transformation of their's and other women's lives. Secondly, development practice's suggestions that offer zero-sum ways for supporting women's power are inadequate to overcome inequality and injustice. Through this, Cornwall (2007) criticizes the development practice interventions:

> Enquiring more deeply into and working with women's own sources of strength, solace and security rather than reading their situations through a set of institutionalized lenses that bring only one dimension of their gender relations into focus. (p. 164)

Cornwall's proposition for development practices is highly related to non-formal empowering education projects for women. Informed by Cornwall's (2007) analysis, development practice and empowering education projects for women should be a long-term process where women continue to act for their empowerment. Furthermore, in these projects, rather than only focusing on the unequal gendered relationship between men and women; power relations between women should also be a consideration to ensure women's collective work and transformation. Cornwall suggests surpassing the

assumption that women are naturally more cooperative and they will always speak up for the benefits of women as a group if they can. She does not deny autonomy and solidarity as tenets that can lead to action, rather she calls for their qualification. For this she exemplifies women's autonomy and states that it should be investigated through relational terms rather than perceiving women as totally independent of "existing webs of sociality" (p. 165). Besides, she explains solidarity as being based on interests that bring people together rather than assumed shared characteristics of interests.

Guerin et al. (2013) states that literature suggests that, especially in development studies, empowerment is perceived as being able to able to act and think which is in opposition with the idea of usage power for dominating. Then, how women perceive empowerment in both *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* seems problematic due to several reasons. One, women tried to earn more money through eliminating others in the cooperative which arises as a problem for *Kozadan İpeğe* (for example when a trader chooses to work with specific women in the cooperative, and eliminates others). There were groups formed which later on had problematic relations with each other. On the other hand, in *Polatlı* some women tended to steal other's ideas on entrepreneurship, and one of the facilitators reported that efforts to overcome this situation had been made through giving advice on entrepreneurship. These are actions that dominate other women and the usage of *power over* in Rowlands (1997) terms; which means that power is used by dominant groups against marginalized ones, especially by men over women or by men over men.

Along these lines, *power over* can also show itself in women's relationships with other women. This shows a problematic point in women's practices of empowerment. Women can have solidarity amongst each other but their actions can entail or involve empowerment (Guerin et al., 2013). Guerin et al. observed *power over* between women, but not necessarily between women from the same project but women in relation to their families, neighbors or husband’s relatives.

Rivalries or antagonism between women is important to mention since in both cases in this study, in various ways rivalries had an impact on the projects. In *Kozadan İpeğe*

facilitators tried to solve the problem between women whereas *Polatlı* HREP included a strategy to solve the problems between women. In order to find ways to cope with this problem, identifying several cases may be useful for future plans in empowerment projects for women. Through the interviews with the instructors and participant women, this study will try to show the reason for the problems. Of course any attempt to interpret the situation is only reflecting the interviewees view on the issues; that is why some of the interview parts that are related to women's opinion about other women are not included. Still, it is important to take into account the views to better analyze the situation.

In both *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe* rivalries among women created hardship. Antagonism and rivalries between women in empowerment projects are considered in the literature (Heng, 1996; Stromquist, 2002; Shirley & Linzi, 1996). It can be due to differences between women regarding age, race or marital status, several being mentioned by women in this study. Besides, trust issues appeared as a result of women's violation of the principle of confidentiality since an incident occurred when women told of others' experiences to others.

One of the youngest women in *Polatlı* told about her experiences. I asked her if she could share about herself easily. Marital status and differences in points of views can make women fall behind in sharing experiences.

> I was not very relaxed. There were other women and the shared experiences were heard outside. We could partially tell our experiences. *Polatlı* is a small place and we would be seeing those women here all the time. We were two friends who were single. The other women's stories and life styles were very different from ours. Their perspectives were different. I could not share my life experiences with my boyfriend. Though sometimes I was sharing with my facilitator. I could not talk about my experiences with alcohol since it would get a lot of reactions. If there were other people from other cities that we would never see each again, we were relaxed in telling our stories. (Hacer, *Polatlı*)

Due to a lack of trust women may not feel comfortable in telling their own experiences. In addition to this, differences between women that can create reactions based on traditional values and norms in the society can create hierarchy. For instance, this

reaction can be observed between an old and a young woman due to the age difference; the older one may behave in a way where she thinks she is more powerful than the younger one. On the other hand, traditional values and norms dignify married people against single people, which is generally true for women. One of the respondents from *Kozadan İpeğe* told that she was discriminated by participant women because of her religious difference from others. Though she related that all the women overcame this later on and are close friends now. Semra thought other women discriminated against her in the beginning due to her religious sect since she was the only one with those beliefs. Though, according to her, the problem was solved during the process since women's attitude got more positive.

Besides the problems related to religion or marital status, problems between women during the non-formal education sessions can reveal itself regarding topics about sexuality. This is a participant's interpretation that reveals the problem of creating an environment appropriate to every women due to differences in point of views.

> Instructors were easy-going with the participants and participants were not serious. I attended one of the sexual trainings and I could not listen to any more. I did not want to listen to all those details about another woman's sexual life. (Solgün, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

This also reveals another kind of problem among women since ways of sharing sexual experiences can become disturbing to others. Then, rivalries among women can also arise as a result of sharing which may not be welcoming for every women. In addition to the problems among women that arise as a result of different perspectives on age, marital status or sexuality, rivalries among women can also arise as a result of economic activity. The project coordinator Çiğdem explained the rivalries among women at *Polatlı*. She pointed out that the rivalries started after women began to earn money. In order to prevent this, solidarity arose as a solution. She proposed that the concern for solidarity between women is crucial; which is an issue that the self-confidence facilitator laid emphasis on. This quote from the project coordinator also reveals a method they used to eradicate rivalry. Afterwards they decided to give HREP to women.

> When women start to earn a little bit of money, they quarrel with each other. Whatever happens with women's solidarity is important. That was what the self-confidence instructor Ugur was underlining. Despite this, money changed

> everything. Nothing serious happened but there were some small rivalries. We realized the necessity for them to receive a very intense education with serious practices. It was with Hale, the KIHEP instructor. (Çiğdem, *Polatlı*, coordinator)

Money is proposed as the main problem that is attempted to be dealt with using more non-formal education. An entrepreneurship trainer from *Polatlı* proposed that there can be benefits to not intervening in women's rivalries if the issue is due to some trade competition. These women will encounter this in business life anyway.

> They were interfering with each other's business and we thought we should do something about this. Then we saw that it happens due to a women's successful sale on the internet and other's jealousy. The other women also want to sell but she can not while other women can. At first we thought to step in. Then we thought "this is free market and we are not a cartel office". We let them alone. They have to learn to live like this. One way or another they will confront this in business life. Competition can make them improve, that is why we decided not to intervene. (Derya, *Polatlı*, Entrepreneurship Trainer)

As Derya explains, competition and confrontation among women arise as a result of financial gains. This can be evaluated as a kind of practice that they experience due to the mobilization in the trade area. Since it's a practical project where the women do not only listen to lectures but practice entrepreneurship, they could experience some difficulties that could arise later.

Derya's example on the women's problems between them reveals that it can be due to political views and age. It can also be due to business ideas that women think they steal from each other.

> For instance, there was a woman who was close to a political party and worked in a women's branch. I think she was older than the others. She had an authoritative attitude and problems appeared because of that. There were problems especially related to competition. A women may say to another women - I have produced noodles and you also did this, so do not produce noodles. I am making photography frames and the others bought frames; the first one says why are you interfering with my business? These things happened a lot. Some women were selling and the important thing is to be able to sell. (Derya, *Polatlı*, Entrepreneurship Trainer)

Competition in business life was an important reason behind the rivalries. Women

from *Kozadan İpeğe* also had some problems with each other. Then it revealed itself as a problem partly related to but not directly caused by the economic feature of these projects.

> Some women participated in hundreds of trainings. What can it solve? It's a shame for all the work that had been done. When money is involved, things get ruined. Money creates harm. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe*, facilitator)

Money is argued to be the main problem in *Kozadan İpeğe* too, just like *Polatlı*. Confidentiality problems were mentioned by Hale from *Polatlı*, where participant women were telling other participant women's experiences outside the training setting. Hale explained the importance of confidentiality.

> There were some women who wanted to talk all the time and who wanted to be the only one that talks. There was a problem related to sharing other's experiences with others outside the setting. Some people told things to others and the women felt hurt by each other. One of the basic principles at the start of the group was confidentiality. (Hale, *Polatlı*, HREP)

Technical expert in *Polatlı* Project told about how women divided into groups.

> The ones who sit all day get caught by feelings towards the ones who sell. This created discussions. (Zeynep, technical expert)

Other than age, religion or marital status differences, economic experiences throughout the project can also create negative feelings for women and divide women.

> Some problems between women started to occur. The most important thing that I observed was when they had to make deals with an intermediary person in production for trade. They divided into groups and one of the groups tried to work with that intermediary trader while excluding the other group from this trade relation. Rather than earning 300 Turkish lira by working with 5 people, they chose to earn 600 Turkish lira with 3 people. They eliminated their friends. I heard about this and I said "Friends, I am a socialist and I prefer to divide labor . This kind of a strategy will not be good for you and I give you time to fix this." And I retreated. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe,* facilitator)

Due to the reasons related to business and money, quarrels occurred between women. Even though the trainers tried to solve the problems through the meetings with women, it could not be prevented. Since they should not be taking sides, the quarrels between women were hard to resolve when they started. Just as Nil, Zeynep from *Polatlı* Project

who was a technical expert stated something similar when she was talking about the rivalries that occurred.

> It is not possible to say to someone that another women is right. Then they say "Zeynep is supporting sides." (Zeynep, *Polatlı*, technical expert)

The impossibility of taking sides means that solving the problems between women becomes challenging, as defending some and not others may not be acceptable.

> Zerrin and Solgün quarreled about becoming the head of the cooperative. The head was changing from period to period. I was giving the message that the cooperation belongs to all of us. In addition to this, each woman has different talents in terms of work. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe,* facilitator)

Aside from the rivalries due to problems related to earning money, women may also rival through the statuses that they can gain in the cooperative. Though in *Kozadan İpeğe*, leaders change from period to period so everyone has the same right to raise any opinions and show effort for the cooperation.

7.2. Obstacles Which Created by Others

Women's participation in projects of empowerment and the traveling associated creates reactions from family members or society that reveals an underestimation of women's presence in these projects.

> I told my husband that we were going to Berlin with *Kozadan İpeğe*. "What business do you have there?!" he said. I told him I was going for a project and I will never get this chance again. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

The same respondent tells how she faced with the reactions. She explains the fear created in her through the family's restrictions.

> Before the project I was attending public courses. I could get a certificate but I did not because my husband was spreading terror at home. If you are afraid of things, what is going to happen? I used to fear my mother-in-law in the past, I used to fear them, him, her. This is very hard to live through, it is very hard t o live with fear. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Cahide faced difficulties along the way for empowerment. Discouragement of women arises as an obstacle to their improvement. One of the respondents from *Polatlı*

explained the reactions from her social environment. Women's relatives can discourage women or they may not believe in women's success.

> I hated my husband's relatives. When I started to do things they didn't want it. For the opening of the project none of our friends and relatives came. They didn't want me to do it .They did not want me to have a store. I always get negative reactions from this environment. Things like "You can not do that, you will fail, you will lose what you have". These were my husband's relatives. Some of my relatives also had the same attitude. But this life is ours. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

Women can be criticized by their social environment and discouraged to reach their objectives. Sevim from *Kozadan İpeğe* tells about her spouse's reaction. It is expected from women that they take care of their house and children before doing other things in life. This understanding is a hardship for women which is investigated in detail in the gender division of the labor section.

> We were sewing at the *Kozadan İpeğe* Cooperative. When I told my husband that I am going to the foundation, he did not perceive it as work. He knew that everyone was a woman. He would not let me work because he was jealous of men. Of course, he does not directly tell me this but he let me go to the foundation. In the beginning he reacted. I was going to the meetings and he said "What business do you have there? Sit at home and take care of your child and your husband", and I said to him "I will go there when you are not at home and I will be back when you are at home." When you suddenly want to work, since it is not something that they are familiar with, it is viewed by them as wrong. My husband was not in a good economic condition. But when I brought home money, I did not give it directly to him because he would not take it. In the end I was spending that money for home expenses. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

The response below reveals the coping strategies of women in dealing with attributed gender roles that keep them behind from working life. She makes a deal with her husband that she will be at home when he and the children are there - that she will fulfill her gender roles. In addition to this, discouragement of friends against women's participation arises as another issue and shows the views of the social environment against women's empowerment process.

> There were some people saying "How ridiculous is this. Don't you get bored?" Some were from my family and some were my friends. There were people who ridiculed me and said "She could not find anything to do and she is making a living through the courses." But there were some family members that were fully supporting me. (Hacer, *Polatlı*)

Women's struggle for empowerment consists of dealing with others opinions or

restrictions. Women's friends or family should also participate in the transformation process to ease the realization of women's empowerment. The issue on gender division of labor related to other's support for women is observed in another chapter in this study.

Obstacles can also be due to entrenched gender roles and related norms. Women's lack of participation at lectures and a lack of interest are also obstacles for women created by themselves or by other reasons.

> Conditions are not perfect for women, due to time restrictions and responsibility for children. Facilitators can not look after the children for more than two hours. When children need to go to the toilet they call their mothers. That is why some women come and go regularly. Nevertheless, you try to direct the group. You have to also warn them about using cell phones. (Merve, KEİD, HREP)

When women come with her children, women could not focus on their education and empowerment. Women try to get empowered while at the same time try to fulfill their daily responsibilities. Obstacles in women's empowerment process is also represented by attributed gender roles. Besides these, women's lack of attention to the sessions is observed, which can be due to boredom or lack of interest in the subject that is also analyzed in this study. Overall, traditional gender roles that attribute child responsibilities to women is related to people's reactions and also to women's daily struggle for their empowerment. As Matiwana stated, empowered women in the context of leadership and empowerment programs can be seen as threats to old beliefs and can be encountered with opposition (Matiwana, 2004).

7.3. The Role of Men and Gender Division of Labor

Empowerment of women can be actualized by women's agency, although it also necessitates an attitude change by men which is an issue of what Rowlands (1997) calls re-negotiation in intimate relationships. In that study, women's hardship is due to economic or physical violence that can be explained by 'power over'. Rowlands points out to the inconsistency of creating support or disempowerment through these relations. Rowlands explains the possible problems that could arise, for instance working while doing the same amount of domestic work which doubles women's

tasks. This can trigger men's involvement but generally women find another woman for housework (Rowlands, 1997).

There is a need to work for the responsibility of men to decrease the 'obstacle' and give way to transformations in gender issues (Rowlands, 1997). Men's role in the process can be actualized through being facilitators of gender training that gives knowledge on gender issues. Even though our topic is not about gender training, since it is a program to gain knowledge on gender there could be some information on the ways men are involved in the process of women's empowerment and gender equality. Krishnamurthy (1995) remarks "In India, for example, gender trainers are increasingly working with mixed groups, and there is a move to train men to be gender trainers, in order to overcome some of the difficulties women face in training men on gender issues." (as cited in, Rowlands, 1997, p. 132). Furthermore, at a workshop on women's empowerment that took place in Mexico in 1995, the dominant line that was considered by NGOs and grassroots organizations was the importance of working with men for increasing consciousness and to bring about a promise for change (Rowlands, 1997). She cautions that training men may not be sufficient since the organization's structures and practice should be in accordance with its ideology for gender equality. An example is given for men's involvement in PAEM, when women communicated with their spouses about the usage of resources of the family and men started to realize the advantages of it. It is relieving for men to decide about the family matters in cooperation with his wife. This section also serves to show that women's empowerment projects lack any education programs for the husbands. Educating men can be beneficial for women as well through the creation of support from spouses.

Even though women struggle for transformation, it's difficult for them to actualize it if society does not change. This study analyzes women's evaluation on how women can get empowered and what the problems are. This section is created through women's own experiences and ideas. It also shows that women's struggle for empowerment against male dominance and other restrictive situations due to gender disparities need men's contribution. Otherwise the process of empowerment becomes a struggle for women that only themselves can fight. While revealing women's hardship in the empowerment process, this study argues for men's involvement in women's empowerment struggle, for eradicating the gender inequality and

transforming wider structures which are crucial for women in all aspects; social, economic and political.

Women's struggle for empowerment is highly related to men's level of consciousness on gender issues. Gender division of labor at home is the most common subject that is unchanged in this study's cases. This is only one of the examples from many obstacles that women face in daily life in private and public spheres. Some participant women in this study suggested that these empowering non-formal education projects should also be for men. In the literature, men's role in women's empowerment is a touched upon issue. Matiwana (2004) proposes a wider change which she explained as "rebuilding communities", where men should also be included (p. 165). On the obstacles created through men, Hearn (2001) asked why men resist the transformation of gender equality and what can be done for it.

Do men intend to work for gender equality? Hearn (2001) writes a couple of reasons for men's refusal to work for gender equality:

> "Patriarchal practices, sexism, maintenance of power, complicity in current arrangements, definition of gender equality as 'women's business' and not the 'main or most important' issues, preference for men and men's company (p. 2)."

The transition of men's relation to power is emphasized by Hearn (2001) in that eradicating the definitions of being men is related to power. "It highlights the need to challenge men's power, dominance and violence, whether interpersonal, institutional, or structural." (p. 11). Murthy (1998) defends the agency of both men and women to challenge patriarchal institutions. She states that men and women are "products of social institutions" (p. 206). She uses this view to show the need to transform the consciousness of men and women.

Obstacles to women's empowerment can be due to women's own passivity towards change through not realizing the possibilities or due to men's domination over women. Kabeer (1999) argues that gender inequalities in core welfare achievements can arise in women's absence of making choices or men's supremacy. That is why women's empowerment process includes both women's own courage and self-esteem to take action and also men's attitude towards women's freedom of choice outside the boundaries of gender roles. Social change requires change in external realities besides

individual transformation (Kabeer, 2006). For sustainable change, Kabeer asserts the need for cooperation with men while empowering women. Women's empowerment should be evaluated by taking into account the issues outside women's lives which directly affects their status. That is why revealing the obstacles and women's interpretations on their own situation may show other effects on the empowerment process of women. Karll (1995) states that awareness-raising for both men and women is important for transformation in a conservative environment. Karll denotes that

> …the burdens for women of health care, maternity, family responsibilities, community ceremonies, traditional customs and behavior will not change rapidly and radically, especially if men do not understand the importance of alleviating the work burdens of women for social progress and well-being and are left unaware of the need to have women participate in more meaningful ways in community activities and decision-making. (p. 119)

In this study's cases, one of the respondents who is familiar with gender knowledge reported that she questioned her place at the dinner table due to the exercise provided through the foundation. Her expression reflects the lone struggle of women against gender roles at home.

> Even I could not break this pattern. I continue to struggle but sometimes I can not. This struggle continues at home, and before society changes it will keep on like this. (Belma, W S)

She points out to the need to change the society and women's never ending struggle to change this. I asked what empowerment of women is. The responses reveal what is the struggle of women in their fight for empowerment.

> I think change in gender relations can happen with increasing the number of women and men like us. We are raising our kids, and this has to begin from the family. The same responsibilities should be given to both boys and girls. Discrimination starts at home. First family and then if your relatives see your example and be like you men will respect women and will not perceive them as sex objects or like as ignorant. Actually women are very clever. If you want to change things it is not sufficient to increase the number of women like yourself. There should be also be more men that think like I do. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Women are aware of gender discrimination at home. The respondent perceives men's involvement as necessary. It is asked to one of the respondents if she is thinking about challenging the gender division of labor at home. She chooses to keep her ideas to herself since it doesn't work at housework.

> Of course I am and I also give my thoughts. Though when you say these things men used to say "Why do you talk like this? What have we done to you?" If this pot is going to be washed, everyone at home should take the responsibility as I do. I try to make my husband think like that. Therefore the first answer I get from my husband and son is "Why are you angry? Did we complain because no one washed the pot?" They don't realize the problem. I cannot tell that I have overcome this situation. I keep my ideas to myself rather than telling them. Male dominance still exists. (İlayda, KEİD)

Difficulties in communicating with family members for eradicating the gender division of labor may be overwhelming for women. They may choose not to struggle against it. Many women think that men should also get gender education. Due the power relations at home, it is understandable why women want men to raise their consciousness on gender issues. When it is asked what women can do collectively for their empowerment, one of the respondents answered:

> This issue is related to men. I think men have to change. If men do not change their psychology, then men can not accept change. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)

Beyza points out to the need for men's transformation. All these women emphasized the importance of men's involvement and support in eliminating gender discrimination. Besides, all of this supports the idea that the ideology of the society has to change towards equality in gender relations.

Gökçe, a KEİD HREP participant and trainer in Women's Solidarity Foundation, reveals the restrictions to women's empowerment and what can be done. She mentions the difference between consciousness-raising and transforming one's own life.

> For instance, I am going to women's studies and I have participated in many things. It changes my perspective but it does not change my life. You are living with the same people. Until those people change, even if you try very hard, there is nothing you can do. What can you do? You can learn as much as you want, but if the person in front of you is like this, there is nothing you can do. You try hard by yourself. This is a life like this and to change a person's life is very difficult. When giving education it should be given to closed groups; to the women with headscarves. For instance, when a women has a headscarf she may not be talking to women who do not have a headscarves. You have to give this training to these kind of people. To make those women question, it should be given to those communities, to closed, small groups of rural women. (Gökçe KEİD HREP participant & facilitator W S)

These responses can inform future empowerment projects for women, where men's

involvement can become one of the strategies to eliminate obstacles coming from others. Gender division of labor at home is closely related to men's involvement because even if women get empowered, housework and childcare will continue to be women's work if men do not take this responsibility together with women. If her family does not transform, she may find herself in the same oppressive situation related to division of labor.

A category of obstacles in the women's empowerment process consists of an almost untransformed area for women that is gender division of labor at home. For this study, in order to understand women's position at home, some questions are asked to women related to their experience of housework at home. Even when women get educated on gender issues and even when most of them are well aware that housework is not only a woman's job, gender division of labor still persists. It can be due to women's acceptance even if they are aware of the social constructs behind gender roles, or it can be due to their husband's reluctance to support women. Sometimes women feel too tired to say anything. Men's support in terms of gender roles arise as crucial which are evident in the interviews with women and facilitators.

On the issue of gender division of labor, participant women's awareness raises as a result of these projects. An example of women's raised awareness and critical thinking can be observed in Graham's (2008) study, that after the SAT, the innovative secondary education program, some women said they saw their environments differently and that they understood the problems around them differently, including gender issues. Most of the women from SAT were judgmental on the gender division of labor compared to other women who did not participate in SAT. On the other hand, implementation of this knowledge becomes difficult as the following paragraphs and interviews will show. Groups can reach empowerment, though the limitations created through the structures should be taken into account (Rai & Staudt, 2002). In this study it connotes to the institution of family that creates gender norms, which results in women's subordination and excessive housework.

This section will be informed by women's own interpretation of their lives. One of the respondents from the KEİD HREP program, who is one of the exceptions in the study

as being a university graduate, is well aware of gender issues. She said that it is good to revise information on this area, especially in order to know the amendments in legislation. When asked about her home life, she said that her husband is relatively conscious of gender issue. But she is still having issues with gender division of labor at home.

> The person who washes the dishes and irons the clothes or deals with tomorrow's dinner is me. The people I live with are men, and in their mind they believe in women's struggle and they are against oppressing women. Yet, I am subjected to oppression. There is a reality like this. I felt a responsibility to do those things. Since I am a women I am that person who will do these things, unfortunately. (İlayda, KEİD)

From her explanation, it can be concluded that gender division of labor is not taken as a serious issue that oppresses women. This participant said that she sometimes tries to talk about this division of labor, but men in her family do not really understand. Gender roles are perceived as natural, not counted as something that restricts women. Another woman who is also a university graduate was already aware of gender issues. Besides all of the knowledge she had before she participated in the Women's Solidarity Foundation's one-day program for consciousness-raising, the meeting made her question the gender roles that she experiences. Even though it was a short course, one exercise was very effective on women since it made women question their place at home. Regarding the gender division of labor they ask questions about where you sit at the dinner table and in the end you understand that all the responsibility regarding preparing food and serving is on women. This participant who owns an atelier for women, who produces goods and has conversations on women's problems from time to time, told me that she became aware of the situation at home after this exercise. She is aware that gender division of labor exists and it has to be eradicated.

> When that game was introduced I was faced with this. I sit close to the sink during dinner time. I told myself, "Whoa! I am also sitting there." I am also like that. A part of myself is like that. You know everything, yes, society made you a slave and ignored you. Some fathers forget to talk about their daughters when someone asks about his children. You are aware that society did this but also the struggle continues at home. My husband is a university graduate but he is like a Middle Easterner. I am living with my husband and three sons. I try to tell my sons that his point of view is wrong. (Belma, WS)

Learners can change their perceptions or gain skills but when they go back to their home or workplace the same kind of oppressive environment can overburden them (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). Mosedale (2005) defines empowerment as "women's redefinition of the situations which restrict them and their creating ways for their activity away from these boundaries" (p. 252). In this study, the restrictions created by gender division of labor arise as an issue that women have difficulties changing. Belma continues to tell the struggle she is going through and women's struggle in general.

> With or without desiring this, I am a woman who resists male domination but I hear so many reactions against me. At my home, this is still not solved. We share work and my spouse helps me. For instance my husband is one of the most helping husbands in Turkey if you think on the average. We raised our kids together and Sundays are his free day and he cooks. When I gave birth my husband did the cleaning. Even though he is doing all of this, let's say my son has an exam on the same day with my activity, he says your priority is your children not the activity. He says "You go to your son today, this is your responsibility." He does not have the trust that I can manage my life completely. Even the better men say this "Arrange your house and be done with it, if it's completed than I can give you a favor, okay you can do this." My situation is also like this. (Belma, WS)

Stromquist (2002) defines two areas of conflict in women's empowerment process, one is related with the institutions and the other is related to family spheres which require recognition of women's needs instead of the family's decision on what women need. Stromquist (2015) points out to "ingrained ideological and material forces in society that prevent gender transformation from becoming a reality (p. 311)." Both the ideology of the environment and the material conditions direct the process of women's empowerment and should be taken into account. Both are affecting the process of women's empowerment and should not be disregarded.

In the below statement, it appears that men sometimes help with housework but helping is different from sharing as they continue to do less housework compared to women. This understanding should be totally eradicated as gender division of labor can not be solved with men's help but with equal sharing. Belma reveals the understanding that women's first responsibility is their familial one. Women are forced to find a balance between work life and home life in which home should come first. Another participant, an elementary school graduate from *Kozadan İpeğe*, told me the

difficulty in changing gender division of labor. She is working in an atelier now, where they produce bags. She continued with this atelier right after *Kozadan İpeğe* ended. Acceptance of the impossibility of changing gender division of labor can be observed, though that does not mean that they don't fight for it. It can be observed that in both cases below, daughters are helping with housework. Housework is still attributed to women, whether they are wives or daughters.

> I went back home late at night. Now my daughters are at home, and they wash the dishes. I cannot see a kind of awareness in my husband. You can change lots of things in life but you cannot change work at home. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> My daughters help me with housework. I do most of the work. I asked my husband to do more housework. He said okay but then he does not perform it. (Nihal, *Polatlı*)

In the first two statements, negotiation of housework with daughters shows that gender division of labor does not change but can be owned by another women. In the third statement, the respondent does the most of the housework. Even though some women try to intervene in the situation, they do not want to struggle all the time. Another woman from *Kozadan İpeğe* told me that she is doing most of the work except ironing, which she has given to her husband as a responsibility by complimenting him on how nicely he irons. This is a coping strategy of women to deal with gender division of labor at their home. She gives examples of another house where they visit from time to time. Gender division of labor still exists for her even in not every setting.

> Our family life regarding housework has improved, but I could not fully put things in order. I bought a garden and in that garden I am treated like a sultan. My husband used to serve tea to me and to my friends in that garden. Though when we came back to our house here I turned out to be slave Isaura. I can be a sultan there. Here I do everything by myself. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Semra's case represents women's role at home - dealing with housework. Her awareness does not necessarily change her position that puts all the housework responsibility on her. Some other women do not negotiate housework even though they are aware that this is not only women's responsibility. The following participant reports that she is and has been under psychological violence.

> I have been cooking fresh food since the cooperative. When I was going to the cooperative, I always prepared the food beforehand. Cooking does not bother me. What bothers me is when my husband tells me something, and this makes me angry. I do not want to make him tell me things, this affects me the most. It effects my psychology. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Another coping strategy of women is doing the tasks at home while participating at the cooperative. Trying to accomplish both creates an overburden for women. Some women do not find it problematic to do all housework alone. They have some reasons:

> My husband does not help with housework, my daughter helps me. Sometimes I think about saying something like "I also get tired, I go to work and come home too." But then I find no use in saying this. I can catch up with this work by myself. My husband comes back from work later than me and there is no use in waiting for him. I will fall asleep while waiting for him to come and do housework. I did not complain because I did not find it necessary. Besides I also think that I can do it myself without getting tired. It does not bother me that my husband does not help, I also do what he has to do such as repair work. I do not like his style of doing things, he makes it worse. I can do the same things that he does. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Equal share of house responsibilities is not actualized for all women participants in non-formal education projects. Reasons vary, between being tired of struggling or the general belief of women that women can do faster and cleaner. House responsibilities are not only limited to house chores, it can also refer to childcare responsibilities which are traditionally viewed as a woman's duty. When one of the respondents said that she is taking care of the children more than her husband, it is asked if she had any objection to this situation.

> One time when he was watching a football game, he rocked our child on his feet. He is giving me this example all the time if I say to him that he does not care for the child enough. I told him you don't care for our child. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)

This experience shows that men do not tend to care for children as women do. Beyza reacted to this and did not accept it as it is. Furthermore, continuity in reactions and struggles for gender equality and empowerment are necessary to actualize empowerment. Stromquist (2002) says that resilience is highly connected with

empowerment of women. She explains resilience as related to continuity and permanence that means “not to be overwhelmed by the seemingly insurmountable difficulties.” (p. 28). On the other hand, even when women raise their consciousness, they can live with hardship at home regarding the elimination of gender division of labor. Although some of them are still using the word “help”, they are aware that they should not be the one who is responsible for all the housework and child care. Gender division of labor is an issue that needs to be solved by practical strategies, otherwise knowledge empowerment by itself may not be sufficient. In order for women to spare time for their own improvement equal sharing of domestic tasks is required. If women do less domestic tasks, they can benefit from other activities better (Rowlands, 1997).

CHAPTER 8

METHODS OF EMPOWERING EDUCATION IN TURKEY

Due to some of the participants' and mainly the facilitators' responses from in-depth interviews, some common methods of empowering education in literature and in Turkey are described, while pointing out to the problems in the methods used.

Ira Shor (1992) writes on empowering education at school, though her concepts and principles and the environment that is created in the classroom are similar to empowering non-formal education. Shor is trying to go beyond the conventional education methods that are supporting status-quo without questioning it. Shor shows that the aim of empowerment education consists in questioning the status quo and acting to change it. Shor argues for the principles of empowering pedagogy. These are formed in Shor's definition of empowering education - participatory, affective, problem-posing, situated, multi-cultural, dialogic, desocializing, democratic, researching, interdisciplinary and activist. Some of these principles are applicable to women's non-formal education that are analyzed in the following sections.

Shor (1992) explains that starting the lecture with posing a question creates participatory learning that creates a dialogic process. With a critical approach and posing a question women's participation can be initiated that creates an interactive process which does not consist dictation. Even though these issues are separately analyzed, they are connected with each other.

8.1. Participation, Women's Experiences and Needs

Participation came out to be the common feature of empowering education for women. Women's experiences and responses are important tools for women to learn more about themselves, to find ways to solve problems and to help them understand the link between their own experiences and the macro reasons between social realities. During the participation, active learning should be emphasized as opposed to staying passive (Shor, 1992). If the aim in women's education is change, then participation is one of the most important principles in Shor's opinion in non-formal learning. From a feminist perspective, Stromquist (1995) emphasizes the importance of sharing experiences in the group. She suggests that facilitators in the empowerment programs where women tell their stories should create a participatory environment that triggers women's sharing and participation. Women's everyday experiences are important to learn in an empowerment project (Stromquist, 1995). Stromquist argues that when women tell their story it's crucial for grasping the agency potential behind it, and that they are the ones who can control their own lives.

In addition, in popular education work, participation through the participants' own experiences is proposed. Encompassing non-formal empowering education for women, popular education informs this study on the methods of popular education as opposed to formal education that supports the status quo. In the book "Gender in Popular Education", Shirley and Linzi (1996) described popular education as having two phases; one is initiated by learners' own experiences and the other is creating an environment of experience for them which they can reflect upon. It is important to add Shor's point that empowering education does not correspond to something without teacher's knowledge and experience transmission to students. In terms of the academic world, Shor states that, the crucial point is not to silence students when doing it. Participatory learning does not mean that the educator is not going to teach anything; it means teaching through triggering participant's participation.

Participation can be actualized through storytelling. Heng (1996) argues that telling their own stories in small groups led women factory workers to be aware of the prevailing emotional pain among them. Heng states that as feelings of shame or blaming oneself cease to be a prevailing feeling, so being able to act is increased.

There are some other methods other than storytelling that are used by facilitators to initiate women's participation. Asking women's feedback about the session represents a method for women's participation. Heng's concept of "eliciting talk" (p. 207) is related to this method as it makes an effort to make women talk. About eliciting talk Heng states that storytelling is offered as "eliciting talk", as a collective exercise where one's story can provoke a thought in another woman's mind (Heng, 1996). Feedback can have the potential to create such an environment to express opinions. When I asked the facilitator Hale what she does to ensure participation, she answered:

> Everyone participates by herself. We do not say "You are not participating. What do you think about this subject?" We do not have an approach like this. If she does not want to participate we do not have issues with it, but in any case they want to participate. They at least say a sentence in a group. For instance, Beyza is one of the women that benefited from the program. Her favorite part of the program was the question at the beginning and at the end of the sessions to understand what kind of awareness they have reached. Everyone gives feedback and at the end I asked what they thought about the program. We want them to speak their minds. Beyza loved this even though she was not active generally. However, since she found a chance to express herself or express herself better, she loved this. (Hale, HREP, *Polatlı*)

Feedbacks after the sessions can create an opportunity for women to participate and to bring forward their opinions. The same respondent explains the evolvement of the program into some kind of a therapeutic session where participation of women increases over time. Heng's concept of "eliciting talk" (p. 207) finds its application in these sessions.

> Women started to participate in the program and then it became like a therapy for them. When sharing increases women talk about serious subjects such as sexual rights, communication, economic rights…After a while they always wanted to come to the sessions and talk. It did not matter what we talked about. Then they decided to stay together. They came to the point of being organized by themselves and this seems to be something the program facilitates. (Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*)

Participation of women can increase throughout time by talking about various subjects. It is asked of *Kozadan İpeğe* coordinator and facilitator Nil if she would intervene if someone does not participate.

> I have been giving trainings for forty years. I am interested since women can

> have something to tell to all of us. Anyway, they talk a lot and sometimes I need to end the discussions. In women's studies you must intervene. You must ask easy questions; you have to be careful in choosing the words you use. Sometimes a presenter somewhere asks me the kind of question that I do not understand. If someone does not understand something, you have to repeat it. I ask women if they have any examples in the topic or I ask their opinions on it. They definitely try to say something, and I do not have problems regarding this issue. I will surely make them talk. As I said before, they talk a lot and I try to find ways to cut it short without hurting them. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe* facilitator)

Generally women do not have issues in participation. For ensuring women's participation, she emphasized the need to use the appropriate language and being clear. If someone does not participate, I asked Filiz, a *Kozadan İpeğe* facilitator, what she does in a situation like that.

> I do not do anything, not to participate is a preference. Especially when the topic is violence I try to understand why women do not talk. Is it due to her shyness in a group or lack of self-confidence? Is there a reason behind it and if she starts maybe she will not be able to pull herself together? I also give trainings on these issues concerning what to do in women's groups. One of the most common mistake is to make women speak as much as possible which is seen as a success. It is commonly accepted that if you involve the group and if they talk about themselves as much as possible and give information about themselves it is seen as a successful program, but this is not true. It is not true especially in short-period groups. In short-period courses in *Kozadan İpeğe* I have tried to tell these issues without going into things deeper since it can exhaust women…if a woman does not trust herself, sometimes I ask questions like "What do you think about it?" to encourage her. If the problem is due to a different reason and if I notice it then I do not push her a lot. If the subject is lighter, we can intervene to include them. (Filiz, facilitator, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Filiz cautions about sensitive issues that women can find hard or exhausting to talk about. Part of the empowerment process described by Inglis (1997) is voicing one's own emotions, ideas and desires. Through the communications made with others, a woman can criticize her own ideas about life (Inglis, 1997). This process may not be very easy. In addition, Filiz's statement also informs one on the difference between easy-to-talk-about subjects and the ones that are difficult to talk about. Then the balance between encouragement and considering the sensibility of women appears as crucial in the sense of participation methods.

Some principles can be added for a more effective conversation in the sessions. While inquiring about group work or interaction, Hale explained a principle of listening to

each other when participating in sessions.

> We made rules such as listening to others and not disrupting others while they are talking. They try to answer each other without interrupting each other's sentences. (Hale, HREP facilitator, *Polatlı*)

Games and exercises appear as methods for women's participation in the sessions. Through participating and exercising they can understand better.

> We play games. We did drama in the communication section. We played a game where you write communication barriers. You designate a topic. Everyone has a sentence on their chest like "Interrupt my speaking", "Listen to me well", "Give me advice", and "Do not listen to me". You choose six or seven obstacles to communication and you say that everyone should behave to each other in accordance with the sentences written. You give them a subject and they start to talk. For instance, a woman is always interrupted by others since she has this on her chest but she does not understand what is happening. One of them has "Listen to me well"; everyone listens her well and she feels good. It is a very good game for understanding the barriers to communication. Then you understand the obstacles in communication and you ask how they felt and what they thought. For instance in the introduction part, everyone adds a positive adjective before her name. Then everyone remembers her in that way and you never forget that. (Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*)

This communication method can increase women's awareness on communicating with others while also creating an environment for women's participation. Since everyone is involved in the games and exercises, they can give women an enjoyable type of participation while also making them aware. Stromquist (2002) gives an example of "instructional methods" (p. 31) in women's non-formal adult education, such as songs, exercises and role playing. Like the Women's Solidarity Foundation's method of introducing oneself without mentioning their spouse, children or their title as wives, Hale used a method of instruction where you add a positive adjective before your name. These types of methods increase women's participation without pushing them hard, while helping them to identify themselves outside of daily responsibilities and restrictions. In addition, participation of women may not be easier or possible due the familiarity between women or due to the difficulties of sharing. Besides, Hale also does not defend the idea of pushing women to participate, and adds that they eventually participate.

> It depends on how she feels about herself. Sometimes she can silently listen to a session in the corner, but comes to you after the session and tells you something. You do not push them, maybe that woman may have many things

> in her head. Since women there are friends with each other; they sometimes could not open up easily. (Gökçe KEİD HREP participant & trainer WS)

A KEİD HREP instructor told similarly said that women should not be pushed. It is asked of her if there are women who do not participate at all. As it has been touched upon before, while participation of women is crucial, it is also important to make the distinction between sensitive and easy to talk about issues.

> In this kind of work there is no forcing. I have been working with people for years and I am a social worker. I am observing and I do not rush. When I ask them what to continue with, one of them said the examples of life experiences are good to talk about. (Merve, KEİD, HREP)

Asking what women's needs are during the session can be another strategy to help women to understand better. Merve said that she gives examples from her own life. She stated that giving examples from her own life affects women slowly. Besides, due to Merve's observation, when she talks about violence for instance, something awakens in women's mind. Pervin from the Women's Solidarity Foundation explains how participation of women is up to women themselves.

> It was not an education session or a workshop. We were not expecting everyone to actively participate, it was not compulsory. We were not trying to get everyone's interpretation one by one, they would participate if they wanted to. If the group was smaller it was easier. If the number increased to forty or fifty that makes it not possible. Then we could not even introduce ourselves to each other. We could talk with the people sitting in the front, but we could not have an interaction with those in the back. (Pervin, W S)

The size of the group is also crucial for the participation of women, which is easier with smaller groups. Generally the women meet with small groups in the neighborhood. Sometimes, if they are going to bigger groups, participation becomes difficult.

Respondents' reaction to participation methods such as theatre-like plays reveals that these exercises work well for women. One of the respondents said she had started to talk after a while, especially after the self-confidence lecture. When asked about her participation, one of them evaluated HREP lectures.

> The HREP instructor's lecture was very good. We were making theatre plays. She makes you stand up and you have to stand up. She was making us participate. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)

Methods to increase women's participation are also used in the *Kozadan İpeğe* Project.

The game that Cahide explains is for building confidence between the trainers. Through participation in these kinds of plays, women can enjoy the sessions more.

> Our instructor was explaining in an entertaining way. Her introducing of lectures was theatrical. For instance, we were grouped in pairs and you released your body to your friend and she held you. In another exercise we formed circles. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Games that ensure interaction between learners can be useful for everyone's active involvement. The same respondent answered me about the methods in the KEİD HREP program.

> KEİD was not using the same style but we discussed our thoughts on sexuality and so on, talking about that topic in detail. The facilitator of HREP's discussions were also beautiful. Especially on subjects of sexuality, and also on other subjects, her explanations, the sharing, and making us participate. For example, on sexuality, since we can not talk about our sexual organs and cannot break the taboos, she was talking about these things. She was asking our opinions on the topic, our ideas on the topic whatever comes to our minds. For instance, beforehand we could not say the name of the women's sexual organ aloud. Everyone was speaking their thoughts. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Besides the encouragement of women to raise opinions or to actively participate, women can break taboos through talking openly. The subjects that were hard to talk about can be easier for women to reflect on. While this increases women's awareness, it opens new scopes for their identification of themselves. One of the methods related to considering women's experiences in the sessions is from the education work in the Philippines that Anonuevo (1996) states applies a popular education methodology that adopts the understanding "the personal is political", and considers women's experiences. One of the three exercises is about women's life stories where they draw their lives as a map or with symbols (Anonuevo, 1996). This study used this example in the previous section about participation to reveal how women's participation triggers their reflection upon their own past. A method used in the *Kozadan İpeğe* reveals a strategy to unearth women's own experiences.

> The facilitator introduced a game and it was influential for me. She asked us to draw something about ourselves. She told us to illustrate something from our past, something like a memory. She told us it is not important how we draw, that we should draw without thinking if it's ugly or beautiful. In that session we were sharing stories from our childhood and I returned to my childhood. I was unhappy and alone at home. I drew a house, and it is still with me. There is a child looking out from the window and that is me. I was always staring out

> from that window; I could not live my childhood. There were kids playing outside and I was looking at them. My mother was not letting me out; in that environment if you finished elementary school then you are perceived as a young girl. My mom had some ignorant behaviors. Everyone was playing with balls in front of the house and I was watching them. It had affected me so much that I painted this. I felt very emotional that day. My parents set up an arranged marriage for me when I was 16. I left that house and entered a new one. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)
>
> Hiç önemli değil, dedi, güzeli çirkini, kötü çizerim, hiç öyle şeyler düşünmeden. Ben de çocukluğa dönerek, o eğitimde de çocukluktan gelen şeyleri anlatıyorduk zaten. Ben de tabii, mutsuz, evde tek bir ev yapmıştım, hatta duruyor o. Evde pencereden bakan bir çocuk var, o da ben. Hep o pencerenin arkasından bakakalmıştım, çocukluğumu hiç yaşayamadım. Dışarda çocuklar oynarken ben onlara hep bakıyordum.Annem beni dışarı göndermezdi, biz de ilkokul bittiyse koca genç kız oldun. Öyle cahilce annemin şeyleri vardı. Kapının önünde herkes top oynardı, karşılıklı binalarda bişeylerde. Ben öyle onlara bakardım, çok beni etkilemiş ki bunu yaptım. Çok duygulandım o gün zaten. Zaten genç kız… 16 yaşındayken de nişanladılar beni. Evden çıktım, eve girdim. (Cahide, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

In order to unearth women's own experiences and to trigger their reflection on their pasts, drawing games arise as a useful method. Since groups in empowering projects for women are vulnerable groups due to poverty or lack of education in this study, methods of participation can differ. Due to the findings in this study and through the analysis of facilitator's statements on the issue, it became apparent that participation may become harder for women if they have any sensitivities or negative experiences towards the topics that are discussed in the sessions. Then, observing women and behaving sensitively while introducing some games for increasing participation, as this study shows, may be helpful for the participation of women.

Various methods to increase women's participation can be used in different contexts. For instance, drawing themselves is also related to reflecting and thinking about one's life. Women can find an opportunity to think about their past and assess the reasons behind the experiences that they lived through. Then, the participation of women in empowering session should be carefully assessed, observed and acted upon. Drawing also reveals itself as a method to elicit the issues that are hard to talk about. Sensitive issues may be hard for women to talk about which can be elicited in between the sessions since other women's existence may create disturbance to others. In addition, methods such as feedback, games of communication, sessions for sharing private experiences, drawing or alternative introduction methods for women can trigger their participation in the sessions. Participation group size is also crucial to ensure everyone's close involvement. Several methods are used to elicit women's talk and to

increase women's participation through encouraging them to share their own experiences. These methods arise as crucial to make women analyze their lives and heal.

For an effective empowerment project, women's experiences and needs should be taken into account. Topics that will support women's awareness and knowledge are crucial. In addition, making sure that participant women understand the topics in the sessions shows the extent women get benefit from the program. This requires consideration of women's own experiences and knowledge. Furthermore, ensuring that women can connect their own experiences to the topics discussed reveals how far women's needs and experiences are taken into account.

Taking into account women's needs and experiences in the beginning and throughout the empowerment program requires a participatory process. Shirley and Linzi (1996) describe 'feminist popular education' for changing gender relations and as valuing women's own experiences as learners in the program's process. They state that feminist popular education is a participatory process without any hierarchy during the learning process. They define feminist popular education as "the struggle against gender oppression" (p. 16). That means it is applicable to these projects that are investigated in this study. On the other hand, a participatory process is pointed out as an important tenet.

Besides participation in the process, being influential in the beginning is also crucial in terms of women's own needs. Rowlands (1997) proposes that in development interventions the needs of women are defined by outsiders. She states that in SUTRA, an Indian NGO, women's own identification of their needs are seen as the fundamental part of the empowerment process.

Designing the empowerment project through women's own needs and experiences is crucial for its benefits. Cornwall's (2007) research suggests overcoming the myths in gender and development that perceives solidarity and autonomy of women as non-changing and static, giving way to a deeper investigation of women's own life experiences that is in some ways in opposition with these myths that development interventions assume in the first place. Cornwall's research becomes evidence of the necessity in understanding women's life experiences before attaching solidarity and

autonomy myths, and to be able to see the various dynamics for women related to these myths. Cornwall's suggestions point out that women's own life experiences can not be assumed and overlooked if the aim is to carry out a development practice for eradicating injustice and inequality.

The issue of participation is also related to women's experiences since in these kinds of empowerment projects, women participate through telling their own stories. As Heng (1996) relates about workshops of women-only groups, the methodology she applied was initiated by a feminist view that considers "women's lived experiences and subjectivities" (p. 213). Heng proposes that storytelling is raised as a method to create a setting for women's voices. Storytelling is asserted as a method that can activate other women's minds. This way women can tell their stories, which was harder for them to do. This method can increase the participation of women which gives way to sharing and telling experiences that are crucial for resolving one's problems. Heng connects this to "eliciting talk" (p. 207). Making women speak out can be actualized through storytelling.

It is important to mention that Heng refers to Ellsworth (1989) who criticized storytelling due to differences between women and various constructions of meaning (as cited in Heng, 1996, p. 215). Related to this, Solgün from *Kozadan İpeğe* stated that during the sexuality topics she did not feel comfortable hearing other's sexual stories since for her women were passing the boundaries in terms of privacy. In addition to Solgün, Nihal from *Polatlı* expressed her discomfort in the lectures:

> I did not share my life that much. My friends there were talking too much. I listened most of the time. I did not feel comfortable in that setting, friends were laughing and talking. (Nihal, *Polatlı*)

For some women it was not a safe space all the time. They could feel uncomfortable due to other's private issues. Even though these are safe spaces that women could feel comfortable, not everyone can feel the same. Stromquist (2002) defines these empowering spaces as "alternative social spaces for the discussion of gender issues" (p. 26). Though not all women may have the same comfort as others.

Feeling comfortable is important for reflecting on the issues and to be able to express oneself. Besides the alternative space created for women to solve gender related

problems, acknowledgement of one's own situation will happen through seeing connections between one's own life and the macro social realities. Ellis (1994) argues for acknowledging the macro level reality that affects individual lives; the process that should go beyond individual awareness to the connection of understanding wider social reasons**.** Then women's experiences should be analyzed in connection to wider social issues and realities.

Connecting women's own lives to wider social realities shows that an empowering program considers women's own experiences throughout the learning process. Considering women's needs in a project can be on various levels besides the connection to social realities. Women can inform the nature of the project before it begins; or they can inform the sessions that are carried out through sharing experiences or focusing on specific subjects that are related to their own lives.

Informing the program in the beginning or in the course of the learning sessions can not be present in all programs due to some reasons, such as time limitations and pre-arranged plans made without consulting the women. Rowlands (1997) cautions about the short-term projects that burden for fast, explicit and quantifiable outcomes. In fact, she states that the empowerment process can proceed for years and may necessitate a flexible approach through unguessable results. Rowlands proposes if the specific aims in a project are not reached in a certain time period, this can be recognized as failure. Speaking of 'empowerment projects' can be perceived as a disagreement in terms because the project is generally for a certain period of time with prearranged purposes (Rowlands, 1997). In addition, she argues that in order to embrace an empowerment approach, women should be setting the program and directing the pace of change. While the *Kozadan İpeğe* project asked women's opinions about the project at the beginning and during the process, the *Polatlı* project also added a new program called HREP, which helps solve women's rivalries.

Firstly, I would like to analyze how far women's own needs shape the planning process of a development program. Kabeer (2006) emphasizes considering the needs and priorities of women when making a development plan and training women in skills, micro enterprise, literacy and so on. At the start of the *Kozadan İpeğe* cooperation, facilitator Nil stated that they offered women ideas on forming a foundation or a

cooperation. She explains how they took into account the economic needs of women when forming the cooperation. She also explains the drawbacks of forming a cooperation.

> In this project the cooperatives are not sustainable for women because there is no legal difference between setting up a cooperative by these women and the cooperative member who earns billions and establishes a villa. Women cooperatives should be fulfilling the same legal responsibility as the latter. Therefore, through my own observation I have decided that it is not something to be offered to women. Though it does not work by means of a foundation too; you can not make sales through the foundation. You need to start a company connected to the foundation to earn money. Cooperatives have two sides; first you improve the consciousness of rights, and second is earning money. Women have chosen the cooperative. At that time, there were twenty-three women. I was introducing the topic of organizing and explaining how foundations are established and what are the possibilities, and explained that you can't make sales there. For that, you need a company that is connected to the foundation. We offered these as options…I gave a training for organizing, the women were asked their opinions and they were convinced about the idea of establishing a cooperative. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe,* facilitator)

On the blog that the founders created for *Kozadan İpeğe* ("Kozadan İpeğe Kadın Kooperatifi") they inform on how women's needs shape the project's process. They state that needs analysis is made before planning the trainings and activities. For instance, it is stated that in the regular meetings women stated the hardships in communicating with their children, which give way to the programs on communication with children and child development. This reveals that women's needs are shaping the structure of the program.

In a similar fashion, at *Polatlı* women were listened to at the start of the program in order to understand if women needed this program. Even though the program was not fully established through directly asking women what they need, the coordinators were careful in understanding if the project would be favorable and beneficial for women.

> Before this one, there was another project called DFD. We did research for the project in *Polatlı* and had reached a thousand women. 190 women declared that they wanted to work to become entrepreneurs. The project had been structured due to their decision. It was determined if there was any need; then this work was constructed on top of it. That is why it was considered trying to reach women with real ideas. But since there was a time gap between the start of the project and that time, women went back to their hometowns, abandoned the idea to work, and had a child. So the community that we had decreased in a certain

> amount. We explained to them the plans for the project, we held some opening meetings and tried to explain what the project is about. (Çiğdem, project coordinator *Polatlı*)

Informing women about the plans of the program is crucial as women can assess if they really need the program. Patel (1996) stated the importance of this and that they meet with women to become acquainted with them. In addition, they listened to women's urgent needs to help them start the process. Their project was in Bombay where women expressed their urgent need was having shelter, and discussed with the facilitators the ways to actualize this. Women raised their own funding for housing. In addition, regional knowledge is crucial while producing knowledge. It is initiated by people's own situation and their work towards changing the status quo and relations (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). In Kozadan İpeğe women were asked if they need a cooperative or an NGO whereas in Polatlı women were asked if they need a project like this whether limited they exemplify a method where women are involved.

Secondly, in addition to women's role in the creation of the programs, women's own experiences can lead the whole process of the program. Facilitators described the ways women link their experiences to social realities and to the topics discussed in the learning sessions. Hale, HREP instructor at *Polatlı,* answered our question about the method. Her answer reveals how they make women link their experiences to the concepts discussed.

> For instance the issue of violence. They always say "I was subjected to psychological and economic violence but I was not aware of it." We ask the meaning of psychological violence and then they give their answers. If what they say is not okay, then you formulate it again. Then they realize that they were subjected to this or saw this. You give their statements back to them and they become aware. (Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*)

Through posing questions, women understand their own situation in life. They can evaluate their own position and assess if they are subjected to any type of violent attitudes, whether physical or psychological. Rather than introducing the concepts of the topics one after another, women's own thinking should be encouraged in this process. When Filiz was talking about the importance of controlling the group dynamic and asking right questions to women she further stated:

> I think women learning from each other is very effective. My role in those education sessions is being a facilitator. Of course I have a framework program

> in my head but I also look at the needs of the group and what they need to talk about. Then the program is directed by the group. At the same time, I fulfill the topics in my head at the end of the program. (Filiz, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Women's learning from each other was defined by some women through their experiences in the program. Gender facilitator Filiz told her observation about this and how women's needs can shape the sessions. It is asked of her the kind of subjects that women are interested in and where they lose their concentration. The answer to this is crucial to learn the effect of the link between women's own experiences and the concepts about the topics in the non-formal education classes. The more they are related, the more interested women are.

> If I talk about theories they are not interested at all. It should consist of everyday examples as much as possible. It is same with the police. If you do not give the training through their own experiences, they are not interested. (Filiz, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Connecting concepts to everyday life is crucial for understanding and acting to transform the problems. In the context of education work in the Philippines, Anonuevo (1996) states that they used a popular education methodology focusing on the precept 'the personal is political' and women's experiences. That shows that personal experiences are perceived as crucial for the general society and the problems associated with gender inequalities in society. Just as the other programs that this study researches, Pervin from Women's Solidarity Foundation explained that some topics that are technical may decrease the attention of women during the course of consciousness-raising meetings. In the program *Polatlı*, an entrepreneurship trainer proposed that women had difficulties in learning some topics that are not familiar to them such as finance.

> They did not understand finance and sales plans in marketing since you need to make something by using numbers. Things like production costs were not understood. In verbal topics participation was fair. They did not interested calculating and calculating costs. (Derya, facilitator, *Polatlı*, ent.)

Another respondent's answer from *Polatlı* reveals the difficulties in understanding the subjects.

> I did not understand the finance class. Finance was a subject that I do not know, and that subject bored me. It was because I could not understand. (Cemre,

Polatlı)

Both respondents' answers reveal that women may have difficulties in benefiting from the topics discussed. In order to fulfill women's needs, this issue should be taken into consideration in order to ensure that all women are benefiting from the program. Besides this, some women also could not learn to write a business plan. It is asked if there were women who had difficulties.

> There were lots of them. They got training and we gave consultancies. Still there were some who did not have any business plan and who could not write it. Sengul, for example, she established a very successful cleaning organization and organized lots of women. Because of her they earned money. They go to wedding halls and clean. She can organize this but when we asked for a business plan through a couple of sentences; nothing came out. Is it due to our training or due to their motivation? Of course, trainings did contribute since they gained different perspectives. For instance, a woman is going to buy something and we told her to research the prices. She doesn't even think about that. Or even for a smaller thing she asks what to do. It can be simple for you but she feels the need to consult. As I have said, Sengul, made a huge organization but maybe it is due to our culture since we do not read and write a lot or the education level affects things. They still could not write the things that I simplified. (Derya, *Polatlı*, ent.)

The reason behind this is unknown, which means more evaluation and research on this area is needed to find out why women are not interested or could not do specific tasks in these trainings. As Derya says, women who are very successful in organizing may not be that successful in other thing. If women's own needs and experiences are to direct the empowerment in non-formal education, then information should be ensured that is useful for all of them. If not, new strategies should be applied to make sure everyone understands and is interested in the topics.

An HREP facilitator also touched upon the issue of women's lack of interest due to the details of the topic of law, too much information or due to their education levels. She proposes that knowledge on particular issues such as details in law should be briefer. In addition, she proposes that consciousness-raising should be the primary focus in these non-formal education settings.

> Talking about our legal rights, we were going through the clauses of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Though these topics are not easy to remember by heart and are also not easy to learn. Why are these universal declarations important? I explain through asking these kind of questions. There are some practical problems even

> though rights exist in the constitution. We have to defend our rights to change the practice. That is how I explained the issue. Their education levels are already low and this is not their area of interest. There is so much information; laws etc. This information should be briefer. Consciousness-raising should be longer. Women start to yawn, etc. (Merve, facilitator, HREP, KEİD)

If women's interests should be part of the process of the lecture, then focusing on the most potentially beneficial parts of the sessions will be useful. In order to find the best way for this, an assessment should be made. Merve's statement informs this study on the features of the modules used in non-formal education sessions.

> The modules are practical and consist of lots of interaction, but still you overwhelm people with too much information. You make them read through the constitutional articles but they do not remember anything later. I give them the appendixes. I also have to work before I come. Women also can forget this and I let them know that there is a resource for for these topics that they can turn to anytime. You can look at these resources of information when you need it. (Merve, facilitator, KEİD, HREP)

If many women do not understand the sessions, then the topics become useless. Entrepreneurship training is a more practical subject where you must turn your knowledge into practice. Women's lack of interest and difficulty in understanding specific topics should become a concern in women's empowerment projects. Then women's potential can be fully realized and their productivity can increase.

Women's own experiences carry a significant part in the program. As Filiz told me, everyday life should be included in the sessions. Besides, as Filiz also says, making women link the subjects to their own experiences is important to consider and should be ensured in the non-formal education sessions.

> For instance they share an experience, we try to make them connect their experiences to the topics discusses If she could not make the connection then I make it for her. ; It evokes something in her mind and then she gives examples. If she can not, I tell the central theme and start the subject. This is why observation is crucial beyond just knowing what information to use in which situation. For instance, in a two day session with educated women in Istanbul who were not very familiar with this area I used different methods. That was difficult work because it is necessary to listen to everyone's words carefully. To sum up, the facilitator should connect and relate women's experiences to the subjects discussed. (Filiz, facilitator, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

She explains how the facilitator uses women's own experiences to explain the concepts. She also interprets as useful the method of ensuring the connection between

the subjects and real life experiences of women. Otherwise, the topics will not be remembered by women after a certain period of time.

Entrepreneurship trainer Derya explained to me the way they explained the topics according to the women's education levels. Certain types of language was adapted in the training to help women understand the topics better. Since entrepreneurship is an area that can consist of technical details, simplification may be needed. It is asked how the style and language of training depends on the groups.

> It happened with improvisation. We knew that the women's education level was low; even though there were also educated ones it was more for the uneducated level…there were different stories, those who were subjected to violence by her husband and divorced…actually our approach was more a general one. We did not inquire about personal details. We made the topics simpler and used language that they could understand. If you train university students it will be different from this. Simpler and with the examples that they can understand. For instance, we had a production plan which was complex but if a woman's business idea was *bazlama* (a kind of bread*)*, we tried to specify the topic to *bazlama.* We had to change our language according to them. (Derya, *Polatlı*, facilitator)

If the topics are explained in relation to women's own life experiences and knowledge, then it will be easier for them to connect and understand. Merve from Keid also explains how she changes her method according to the profile of the group. This is crucial for forming the lectures according to women's needs.

> I look at the structure of the group, the style of focusing and ability to receive. I follow four different strategies in four different groups. I carry out some topics in a simpler way and the others longer. I make them play games according to the group. A group felt panic and said "We cannot do this. Let's talk" They have ten weeks to live that experience. You can spend a lot of time and you can miss the topics. Their experiences are very different. They could not easily let go of their conditioned beliefs. I do not make group work with them in order to prevent their anxiety. Then, through the end, they started to play slightly more. Rather than pushing them to talk, one starts and the others join. In some groups, small group works work well. (Merve, KEİD, HREP)

The structure of the group, education levels of women, language, experiences, knowledge and ideas of women should inform the project sessions if women's needs are to be fulfilled. Their level of understanding should be assessed for a more efficient project. Besides strategic needs, women's practical needs such as money or shelter

should also be researched, understood and fulfilled.

One of the respondents who is a university graduate reflected upon KEİD's HREP program when I asked if the instructor links women's experiences to the subjects that are introduced in the course. Besides this connection she also emphasized the instructors practice on posing questions. This phase is also linked to dialogue as is investigated in the previous section on the methods and also to the critical thinking that is provoked through posing questions. I have included this issue in the participation section since asking questions appears as a method to ensure women's participation in the sessions. Educator's problem-posing triggers a dialogue in a classroom that makes one question the present socialization that leads to a process of desocialization (Shor, 1992). Anonuevo (1996) offers some methods for including women's experiences in an education program for women. After women tell or draw about their stories a discussion follows that supports women to tell their experiences by linking the experiences to structural issues in the society (Anonuevo, 1996). She considers the need for women to realize how gender oppression is related to women's lives and how it works.

> Experiences are linked to the subjects. The instructor poses a question. She asks if someone has a story to tell about the subject at hand. Sometimes she starts the discussion through giving examples about her life. Conversations are started relating to the topics. From there, everyone was making inferences. (Esma, KEİD)

The facilitator ensures the participation of women through asking questions. Listening to women became an empowering process and initiates collective exercise (Matiwana, 2004). Starting from women's experiences becomes crucial when trying to make them reflect upon their lives. Then, they start to grasp the concepts related to their lives. Especially with women whose education levels are not similar, the method of using women's own experiences for the analysis of the discussed topic makes it easier for women to grasp the concepts (Matiwana, 2004).

> The instructor was asking; "Why not any other color but pink; or why do you prepare the dinner table but your brother does not help you?" She was asking this and saying you were born from the same mother and father. She was beginning like this. When she was explaining violence they do not start the subject by saying things like "men can not use violence against women and he

> does not have a right to do it." She was asking if we know what the violence against us at home is. What kind of a thing do you see in your life? Someone said that she had never been subjected to violence in her life. That women did not know different types of violence, violence only means beating according to us. However, she did not know psychological violence, sexual violence, economic violence and so on. The instructor asked her "Have you ever been without any money?" and she responded that her husband does not give her money. The instructor told her that this is violence. They were explaining in these ways. They do not put in your head information…the violent types are such and such and there are five kinds of violence. If you explain like this, no one will remember it. However, they were explaining through the example that they get from women. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Telling about a topic through asking questions can lead women to reflect on their experiences and to define them. Women's own experiences and the link to the topics are effective for the level of interest. If women do not find any relevance to their own experiences, sessions on specific subjects do not take their attention. Then the usefulness of these education sessions are closely related to the needs and experiences of women. It is asked what the topics that she got bored with were.

> Sexuality. Sexuality in me does not really exist. What I mean by its non-existent is that I am not a woman who experiences sexuality a lot. Because the issues discussed were distant to me, I got bored. (Gökçe, participant KEİD, & facilitator WS)

The same respondent answered on the most interesting topic for her. When it was asked of her if it was due to the connection with her life, since she was looking for a job, she said yes.

> Probably it was employment. I liked that topic a lot. I always listen to that topic carefully. What can be done with this issue? That session was very good for me. What can be done and how do uneducated women earn? It was good. (Gökçe, participant KEİD & facilitator WS)

Rather than making a structured program from the beginning, the program of empowerment should be informed by women. *Kozadan İpeğe* project, through talking with women and asking their opinions, decided to form a cooperative. Besides *Polatlı*, they reached women and asked them if they needed a project of this kind rather than developing a project with women. Rowlands argues that organisational structure can influence the empowerment process. As she states, in Urraco the program was based

on two years' work which appeared as a restriction to the program. Women's Solidarity Foundation's meetings are restrictive in this sense, as it lasts only one day for around two hours which is structured beforehand. *Polatlı* and Keid projects are the same. *Kozadan İpeğe* would have been continuing for longer if problems did not occur in the cooperative. Rowlands' states that animators should be chosen from the group members by themselves like in PAEM, and women should take different tasks in different periods so the program which is open-ended can develop more freely with the group's own measures. *Kozadan İpeğe* project applied this and heads of the cooperative changed regularly where women themselves became leaders. They had meetings regularly to reflect upon the project and discuss the issues. Rowlands proposes regular meetings of the members and coordinators to share ideas and travel to other places so that they can practice and improve their own agency. As PAEM has shown, encouraging factors can include women taking leadership roles through autonomy and self-monitoring; and needs, analysis and acknowledgements should be included in the methodology and the materials.

Besides, this issue is related to the description of empowerment that should be a bottom-up process (Moser, 1993; Reeves & Baden, 2002). That can be evaluated though the line that empowerment projects should be planned from the bottom and should not be given to women from the top. Mostly *Kozadan İpeğe* does not use this kind of a strategy.

The creation of a method by Filiz, the instructor of Women's Solidarity Foundation and *Kozadan İpeğe*, exemplifies a method that triggers women to think about their experiences and needs in life. The method unravels women's own needs. The method helped women to understand their authentic self-identity outside their traditional identities of being a wife or a mother. Women could introduce themselves through talking about their own life experiences outside their household responsibilities. In addition, this method ensures preventing any hierarchical situations by forbidding each woman to tell about their income or marital status. Her method is still used by every facilitator in every session of the Women's Solidarity Foundation where women describe themselves without mentioning the forbidden things such as age or

occupation.

> I was going to a program in İzmir with the "saved women" who have high income levels and are university graduates. We learned the profile of these women and thought "We will go there and meet with these women." Half of the day will be spent with women talking about their experiences in foreign countries, and the universities that they graduated from. This can bother other women. We prepared a method on the plane. No one will be mentioning their surname, age, job, marital status or number of children. I was going to meet with women with a high education level and everyone would probably be going to compete with each other in terms of their status in life. This method came out after these thoughts, and I discovered this method. It started with a little bit of biased thinking about a group of women. I said "you will not be telling about particular issues about yourselves" and they said that this was impossible. There are people from a certain family background but when they could not mention that then no hierarchy occurs. It would not mean anything to mention it. We carried out the whole session without mentioning things like who got their doctorate from where. Some had hardship in the application of this, but I think it was important. The reason why I developed this is as I have explained, through a bias, but it led to something else. That method of introducing reveals that there are things attributed to women and we always define ourselves accordingly. We never think about ourselves. That is also due to being a women. What do I like, where I want to go, what do I like to wear…since we focus on others things we can not turn to ourselves. I have found this for another purpose but this introduction style helps women to remember themselves. When she says "Well, what I will tell about myself?" she starts to think about herself and this is very beneficial for the training. There are some women who say they can not find anything to tell and this creates a very serious confrontation that sometimes women can not remember what they like and say "What did I love?" Therefore, this method brought a second benefit. (Filiz, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Triggering women to describe themselves without using certain identities in life can help to prevent any possible hierarchical situation and competition among women. In addition to this, they are able to critically think about themselves and become aware of their self-identity. Linking women's own experiences to the subjects is also closely related to knowing the identity of women. This way, women can become aware of their own life experiences and needs, which will help them to understand the topics in line with their needs outside household responsibilities. Furthermore, they question their own life situations. As Hale explains, different identities and profiles of women can partly determine the topics discussed by showing different needs of particular

women's participant groups.

> My manner of telling depends on the group profile. If there are many young women in a group, then you will be mostly talking about civil rights or other topics in the training. When you are discussing civil law in one of them, you mostly talk about guardianship and alimony. Participants profile are important in terms of which topic to discuss. Violence. They always said "I was subjected to psychological and economic violence but I was not aware of it." (Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*)

Making topics relevant to women's own life experiences is beneficial for women. If the topics are relevant to their own lives they can be interested to resolve their own life problems. This relevance can be established through various ways, as Hale suggested, in considering how women's family issues are to be solved. Hale answers the question on the problems in these empowering education projects for women; she argues that women's needs related to her family and family relations should be provided through the non-formal education sessions.

> Women have a problem. Women want to provide for their children's needs first. They want to start with communication. They want to solve the problems associated with their children. They do not know how to behave to an adolescent. They do not know. When you tell women that that is normal for them to behave with anger and it will go away, women have less problems. You tell them that during this time, they are the ones who need to manage the situation. He/She is an angry adolescent and you are the one who has to be understanding. You have to give this information to them. They think this problem only belongs to them. They find out that other women also have the same problems regarding their children. Women want to solve their problems associated with their children first; then with their husbands, and then with then problems in the house. Then she recovers. It does not mean anything to immediately give women any information. First you have to solve her problems and say "You exist. You should do this and this because it is beneficial to you in this and that way. You have to spare time for yourself." If she solves her problem related to her adolescent children, and after she gets the information her relationship changes and she says "I have started to solve my problems, now I can spare time for myself." Then she starts to recover. However, we have to solve women's problem with her husband and family. This is socially and economically true. The main problem of women is her children and her family. She can recover after she solves these issues. Women should be supported by society. Women do not have any support mechanism for her children. What will happen if she works? The social government should have a purpose like this but it does not. We talk about care economy. Why can't women join the workforce? (Hale, *Polatlı*, HREP)

One of women's prior needs is argued to be communication with their children. Then, as it is stated, before making the plan of the empowerment program women's needs should be asked at the start to be able to design a beneficial program for women. Since they ensure the fulfillment of women's urgent needs, it will be easier for them to be able to become empowered in other areas of life. When the question is asked if women orient and direct the session through the facilitator's emphasis on specific topics, the respondent who is a facilitator of the Women's Solidarity Foundation program explained women's high interest about the topics that are related to their lives and other women's lives. This stands as evidence of how women's experiences and needs direct the non-formal education sessions. The question was asked to her as a facilitator in the Women's Solidarity foundation so that her statement informs one on the method in the one-day meetings.

> When we discuss violence it may last long. Examples are given and that took a long time. In addition, many questions were raised towards the end. A woman started telling a story about her neighbor and asked what she could do about it. Sometimes there are enthusiastic groups and it can last longer. (Gökçe, facilitator WS, participant HREP KEİD)
>
> The topic can take longer or switch to another subject due to women's desire to talk on a specific subject. Women would sometimes ask so many questions and when good questions arise you have to answer. Generally they had time limitations and we could make it faster or slower. (Pervin, facilitator, W S)

Women direct the sessions through their needs; if they need to discuss a specific topic then the session proceeds accordingly. In addition to this, the Women's Solidarity Foundation found a way to ensure the need to escape from a violent situation. Since the foundation is basically established to assist women who are subjected to violence and provide support and information for them, at the meetings they distribute small brochures to guide women when in a situation of violence. This way they could ensure that they explained the ways that women can deal with a violent situation.

> We were distributing a brochure. We were not explaining each clause but telling that you can do this, or due to this clause every application is free of charge. It does not necessarily have to be your legal spouse; you can apply no matter who the person is, an uncle, a father-in-law. We were giving the basic

> information, and what can you do. If you are at the same house with the person who exercised violence you can send them away and ensure that he will not come closer to you and disturb you via the phone. You can go to a shelter. If someone wants to ask something she would ask it. We were offering to talk later if it was related to something with detail such as divorce; so as not to use the other's time. (Pervin, W S)

The brochure is prepared according to women's needs in dealing with a violent situation. It is a small brochure that women can carry with them and hide easily. They can use it as a guide to get away from any violent situation. It consists of information to consult when needed. Pervin explained that facilitators talk about security plans if there is time left in the sessions. As Pervin explained, the brochure should be confidential and no one should see it. The brochure provides information about what women will need to know to cope with a violent situation; it exemplifies a method to ensure women's access to the information that they need.

Another area where women's own needs should be considered is the evaluation of women's empowerment through the projects. Rowlands (1997) suggests that development agencies should embrace an empowerment approach and to observe and evaluate the work they do. In this sense, she considers the methodology where women could be effective in establishing the criteria for evaluation of the empowerment. WWHR prepares evaluation reports regarding their HREP (Human Rights Education Program for Women) and defines the areas that are most beneficial and the respondent's answers. In this study, two of the facilitators, Merve and Hale became HREP educators through the WWHR trainings.

In order to get direct benefit from the projects, topics should be related to women's lives and the connection should be offered to women. In addition, women's needs should be investigated before the programs begin. Rather than only gaining knowledge on gender issues and then forgetting most of it; women should be able to practice what they learn through critical thinking on their experiences and needs. Women's own needs and experiences should be elicited in order to have an effective project. The method of introduction of oneself without mentioning specific features of an identity was helpful in making women think over their needs in life. In addition to this, women's needs, such as communication with their children, arises as something else

that should be taken into account. Methods used show that women should be interested in the topics discussed. They should easily understand the lectures to get benefit from it. Women's needs direct the non-formal education sessions that are analyzed in this study; through putting emphasis on specific topics more. In addition to this, a discussion environment is created in the sessions, by women's telling of their own life experiences. Through telling their own stories, women become able to understand their own needs in the society.

Considering women's needs throughout the process of a non-formal empowerment program raises another issue that distinguishes the types of women's needs. Investigating strategic and practical needs of women and how they're fulfilled by the programs will reveal the approach used for women's empowerment. Reeves and Baden (2000) assert that "practical gender needs do not require challenging inequalities in gender; whereas strategic gender needs cover control of resources, labour, ownership or decision-making while being actually feminist" (p. 14). Strategic gender needs are more about challenging the unequal relations in gender. Porter (2013) distinguishes between gaining basic rights and needs and challenging the existing structures which creates inequalities. Also, Matiwana (2004) proposes to go beyond women's needs to a more strategic way of thinking. Fulfilling women's primary needs and developing a strategic way towards empowerment is crucial. Shirley and Linzi (1996) state that even though there is a difference between strategic and practical needs of women the two are connected to each other. They further state that ensuring to meet with practical needs can create appropriate conditions for strategic changes for women. Moser (1993) proposes that practical gender needs can give way to strategic ones.

In the context of women's empowerment programs that are investigated in this study, practical needs are fulfilled through economic activities that give women the necessary skills for their employment and business. On the other hand, strategic gender needs are the core of all non-formal education programs for women's empowerment in this study. *Kozadan İpeğe* takes into consideration both the practical needs of women through giving skills and monetary advantages of starting production in the cooperative. Technical knowledge can be counted as practical, even if not directly it can have a potential to help women earn money through the particular knowledge.

Furthermore, strategic needs are emphasized in other kinds of non-formal education sessions on gender related topics that emphasize women's issues and women's empowerment. In *Polatlı*, women were given a place in a trade center, for their production that can be counted as a practical need. In addition to this, they were trained on particular areas such as cooking or sewing while they attended non-formal education sessions on entrepreneurship. Furthermore, HREP was applied that includes women's human rights and gender related topics that put emphasis on strategic needs. Both programs combined practical needs with strategic ones.

Neighborhood meetings for Consciousness-raising by Women's Solidarity Foundation meets strategic needs through its critical approach on gender issues, and offers strategies to cope with a violent situation such as domestic violence. Another foundation of this study, KEİD, uses HREP in their projects. HREP includes both practical and strategic gender needs, economic empowerment as a practical topic and gender roles as strategic; but does not provide women's practical needs such as participation in the labour force.

Practical and strategic gender needs are both crucial to fulfill for women's empowerment. On the other hand, practical gender needs generally do not include challenging gender roles. As this study shows, empowerment programs that aim to empower women economically are likely to perpetuate feminine skills. Ellis (1994) investigates non-formal education for women and criticizes the skills projects for women which reinforce women's traditional roles as mothers and wives. In these programs "feminine skills" are provided which perpetuates traditional beliefs on gender roles. Even though all these programs adopted a women's empowerment approach and a goal towards gender equality, economic activities are still more inclined to be focused on the usage of feminine skills. Through this criticism, the *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* programs exemplify an application of perpetuating feminine skills such as sewing or cooking. Though it can not be said that these programs are completely supporting the idea of feminine skills; because they do not. Women generally choose these areas of work themselves. Adding information and skills to already existing abilities can be beneficial in terms of reaching immediate

results and accessing financial resource immediately. Otherwise, longer programs may be helpful in giving abilities outside the scope of feminine skills that women in these programs are not familiar with.

Teaching women skills that do not only focus on feminine skills was actualized at *Polatlı,* which the project coordinator explained. They offered education sessions on finance, marketing and accounting lectures which are areas that are not perceived as feminine. They also offered computer lessons to every women participant. Çiğdem told of the problems with eliminating traditional gender roles in the nature of the program.

> We trained them in computers. An entrepreneur has to know computers and accounting to some extent. Those trainings are a must. We tried to elaborate on this issue. There were women who had ideas but the ideas were like this; "I will open a *bazlama* (a kind of a flat bread) store" or "I will open a handicraft shop". As you know, these are a little bit supportive of traditional gender roles. Since they do not leave home you can not expect them to have a vision. We decided not to rush and to increase the examples and ideas in the entrepreneurship training and help them to find new possibilities. We did not want to emphasize traditional gender roles. There were some women with new ideas. However the problem is not finding different ideas. There should be a supportive mechanism for doing so. One of the women said she wanted to be a fashion designer, however if we can not give her the skills to become professional the idea of being a designer does not mean anything. That is why reluctantly we had to direct them according to our capacity. In addition, women did not have very different ideas except one or two whose ideas were not applied in their business. This was because they could not decide on the idea or did not have any capital. (Çiğdem, *Polatlı*, coordinator)

Perpetuation of feminine skills was also due to women's own choices and the reasons can vary. Besides, the capacity of the projects play a role. This section reveals that women's own needs and experiences should be brought together with the programs' aims to improve women's view. Women's experiences are considered in the non-formal education setting through participation, but women's needs do not really direct and control the process of empowerment projects. At *Polatlı,* HREP was put in the process of planning due to rivalries among women, whereas at *Kozadan İpeğe* there were regular meetings for considering women's needs in addition to asking women their needs at the beginning of the program. Women's needs by themselves may be

inadequate to follow since what the market requires should be raised as another consideration. *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* considered both women's strategic and practical needs through economic activities and also Consciousness-raising non-formal education sessions. HREP from KEİD and Women's Solidarity Foundation consciousness-raising meetings are focused more on strategic gender needs whereas at ÇKGD entrepreneurship education was more practical and self-confidence building sessions were more strategic. In addition, women sometimes have difficulties in understanding the topics due to lack of knowledge or interest. This raises a question on the extent that women's own needs and experiences are taken into account in the design of the sessions.

8.2.Critical Thinking and Questioning

Ira Shor (1992) states that "*Not* encouraging students to question knowledge, society, and experience tacitly endorses and supports the status quo." (p. 12). Unlike conventional education that protects the existing system without questioning it, these types of education projects that Longwe (1998) was mentioning are radical as opposed to conservative ones. Mosedale (2005) defines the empowerment process as a redefinition process of the situation that people live in, and being aware of the obstacles in life.

Critical thinking and questioning as Shor (1992) suggests are methods for empowering education. Shor defines empowering education as "a critical democratic pedagogy for self and social change." (p. 15). This is also related to participation since to improve participation Shor denotes it is crucial to start from students' own process of thinking about a particular topic and starting this process from their own situation.

Critical questioning can also reveal itself in the style of teaching. Rather than giving all the information in the beginning, making the participants think about concepts is a supported idea in related literature. In the context of government education programs that include gender awareness-raising in their focus, Sibbons (1998) suggests the need to start the training with participants' identification of issues rather than framing and

starting the training with "gender as a label applied to a training session" (p. 43). Sibbon's study is about training methods for awareness-raising for gender that mentions staff training. Still, Sibbon's study is related to the issue of gender awareness in non-formal education methods.

In the context of critical pedagogy and critical literacy education of adults Freire (1978) suggests consciousness-raising and criticizing the status quo in these classes. Freire's critical pedagogy method forms the basis of critical teaching for adults. Freire offers discussion and critical analysis of the world. Participants should learn what is propaganda and ideological indoctrination and create a critical sense of the world that is triggered through instructor's problem posing (Freire, 1978). Freire argues for politicization of the participants through triggered critical thinking.

Critical thinking can be triggered through ensuring participant's activity in the learning sessions. Sibbons (1998) suggested a more participant approach in the beginning where trainees tell about problems in their own way; whereas Arnskool (1995) argues for a relevant method where participants tell about their beliefs on gender issues. HREP facilitator Hale explained how they introduce gender in the non-formal education sessions.

> We start by asking what "gender" is. We start through questioning. (Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*)

Hale's method of facilitating is in accordance with the literature's arguments on gender awareness training or critical thinking in adult education. Critical thinking in the learning sessions is important in the sense that it opens up new perspectives for the participants. In order to actualize this, one has to reflect upon her own position and situation. Mosedale argues that defining the restrictive situation may lead to an awareness. This is related to Shor's (1992) definition of empowering education where posing questions and critical thinking on the status quo are offered as important methods. It is asked of one of the facilitators if she would describe gender.

> What matters is the example here. I ask them what kind of adjectives come into their minds when they think about being a woman or a girl. We start with warm-up games. We write these on a board or on a flipchart. I ask the reasons for the mainstream definitions about women and say that women and men are

> biologically different but it should not affect women's position. Then I start with asking if this creates an obstacle. Sometimes there are women who say "Yes, men are more powerful and have more muscles." We explain the connection between inequality and attributed gender roles to women and men by society. It is explained step-by-step in the module by Pınar İlkkaracan what is to be asked at what moment in the learning sessions. (Merve, facilitator, HREP, KEİD)

By starting with gender roles and asking questions to women, the critical thinking process starts as the connection between the macro inequalities and gender roles are established. At HREP facilitators make women question the attributed gender roles and make them understand gender inequalities in society. Staring from women's own ideas makes it possible for women to hear and question themselves and their own lives. Shor (1992) starts teaching from students' own thinking on the subject and from their situation. This is related to women's non-formal education, where women's experiences and interpretation of the issues should be a starting point, before teaching all other concepts. First students answer questions, reflect on the topics discussed, and after that comes academic explanations by the teacher (Shor, 1992). Remembering that Shor's study is about academic learning, her argument is related to empowering education in general since she argues for empowering education. In addition to this, Shor's empowering education consists of questioning the status quo which is another aspect of non-formal education for empowerment that makes women question the existing system. On the other hand, problem-posing that is offered by Shor takes into account starting from student's own situation and supporting students' participation. Then, participants can critically think about the problem that is posed by the facilitator. According to Shor, rather than starting with lecturing, one should ask the students "what x means to them" will be more empowering.

Starting from participants' own thinking and triggering of critical thinking belongs to the process of empowering non-formal education. Remembering what Matiwana (2004) said on women's needs is crucial since she questions the meaning of women's needs. She argues that it's hard to address if there is no time left for women because they have to take care of others all the time. This points out to the women's gender roles that are traditionally attributed to them as caregivers, though being aware of this may trigger one's questioning of gender roles. One of the facilitator's methods that

makes women question their own situation and face their situation is important to mention since it describes how women have changed. Her method of mirroring arises as a method for critical thinking and questioning of one's own situation related to traditional gender roles.

> Our women are emerging now. Beforehand, they were shy in every community where they participated. When we met, I was asked them to tell me the most important thing in their lives. They told me their names and then mentions their husbands, children, and marriage; as such they define herself. At the end I said to all that we defined ourselves through being mothers and wives. I told them that no one talked about her handicraft even though we gathered for handicraft. I wanted them to confront the situation and to be careful next time because regarding gender issues we have to change our language. We have to change our language first. That is why, in the sessions, through these examples I try to make them confront things immediately through mirroring. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe,* facilitator)

Through mirroring, Nil makes women recognize and describe their own situation at home and in society. Women tend to describe themselves in the context of being mothers or wives. Facilitators make women question this description that supports traditional gender roles. Nil's method in gender issues reveals the importance of questioning the roles of girls and boys since birth. Both mirroring and asking questions on the definition of being a boy or a girl make women critically think about attributed gender roles. Then through directing them, connections are established between their own life experiences and the topics discussed.

> My groups will not be more than twenty-five people. First I tell the concepts and what gender is. I am active when telling, pretending to be a pregnant to explain that it starts from birth when we realize our child is a girl or boy. What kind of names do we give to them, to a boy and to a girl? Why do we use Rose for a girl or other similar names? Why? I have to guide them. Then I give examples and make them realize that women have these kinds of names and these are the reasons why…other ways will not be accepted by the society. Then I expect them to tell me their experiences and if they have examples from their lives. Then one of them said, "I did not know that it would be a man, because of the name I thought it would be a woman." We sometimes have these reactions. (Nil, *Kozadan İpeğe,* facilitator)

Critical thinking and posing questions about entrenched beliefs can widen women's perception and make them realize the gender roles that are given by society. Talking

about everyday lives helps women to grasp the issues better. They can give examples and question everyday habits. Another facilitator from both *Kozadan İpeğe* and Women's Solidarity Foundation argues that giving concepts and descriptions is not enough by itself; rather making connections with our lives is crucial. She connects everyday experiences of being a women to the concepts discussed.

> My approach is more about talking about everyday lives and being women. Besides thinking about how we perceive being a women and how we live as women. I start with this and then link it to gender. I do not find giving names and descriptions one by one as important since this does not matter. How does society shape us and what are the consequences, and effects of this on our lives? How can we transform this? These are the things that I focus on. I start with asking. It depends on the group that you work with. When we work with experienced groups, we trainers use a technical style through slides. However, if the group consists of women who have never participated in a consciousness-raising workshop, I try to make it like a conversation, a discussion, through questions and answers. I try to minimize my talking, maybe since I am a psychologist. You ask the right questions at the right times and control the dynamics of the group. (Filiz, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Besides critical thinking on gender roles through facing one's own position in life and through questioning gender roles in society, women are triggered to think about how to transform these issues. Through a dialogue, women can participate and converse more. Rather than only focusing on describing the concepts about gender issues, through dialogue women question the effects of gender roles on their lives. While this passage shows how Merve, a facilitator, makes women critically think, it also shows that it's a non-dictated two-sided conversation. In addition, Merve explains how she conceptualizes what the women say and links the experiences to the topics.

> Redefining is also used. I conceptualize what they say, saying that "This is something like…" and explain the concepts through the examples that they give me. (Merve, facilitator, KEİD, HREP)

Women not only tell their ideas and question gender relations but they are also directed to grasp the concepts related to their own experiences. Redefinition can be helpful in making women's minds clear about the issues and understanding the connections. Shor (1992) offers a critical education that incites student's connection with their own experience and to challenge the unequal society, academia and power relations in society. Shor's argument reveals the interconnection between dialogic learning,

emphasizing learners' own experiences and ensuring the linkage of subjects to participants' own life experiences. Besides, critical thinking according to Shor is one of the important aspects of critical pedagogy, which is necessary for women's empowerment education as women should experience a critical reflection of their lives in order to challenge the unequal gender relations. Women's Solidarity Foundation's one-day meeting for consciousness-raising on gender, law and violence uses a method to make women question their own experience. They could question traditional gender roles; which gives way to the realization of the gender division of labor at home.

> In our examples there was a game that asks where you sit at the kitchen. Everyone tells that her place is at the head of the table, her husband is in the opposite side, her son is there…Women sit at the head of the table to serve food to others easily. (Gökçe KEİD HREP participant & facilitator W S)

Making women question their everyday life experiences related to women's gender roles through games can be effective since through observing one's own life, reflecting upon inequalities can be easier. Another facilitator of the Women's Solidarity Foundation is Pervin, who explains the way they make women question and understand gender oppression.

> Through talking about women and men, we ask how do gender relations cause violence and how does violence occur? Men's dominance over women and their desire to control them, and when women confront it and go beyond expectations, what happens then? Women are then subjected to violence. We were then adding that it is coming from her husband, family and from the society. Then we were explaining the types of violence and asking them questions. If they are around 20 people, we would ask "What is physical violence, economic violence?" First we were asking this. The women recognizes an insult but does not know that it is psychological violence. She works and gives all her money to her husband and perceives this as normal but this is also violence. We were not immediately telling about all types of violence. If time allows; then it is more interactive. (Pervin, facilitator, W S)

Through asking questions about gender relations and violence related to gender, women can be able to define what violence is. Since the link is established between the experience and the topic of violence, women can recognize violence. In this way, a situation of violence that was not recognized before as violence will be perceived by

women differently. They become aware that being subjected to violence can happen in various ways such as psychologically. Being able to define an oppressive situation is crucial in order to get rid of that situation. Then women can be able to recognize themselves as victims, raise their awareness and look for other possibilities in life. On the other hand, women may think that gender roles are necessary. Then, facilitators ensure that women rethink about her own idea in a critical way. Pervin tells about the way they intervene if someone supports or finds gender roles natural. Other women sometimes respond, which ensures that women learn from each other and reflect upon their own thinking.

> When an older woman says "But men work the whole day and so why don't we prepare their dinner when they come home?" you can not leave this question unanswered, otherwise it means approving her idea. You should answer her with proper language. If the issue is violence, I do not remember a time when facilitators stopped talking about the topic when women said that they were subjected to violence by their husbands or fathers. If it was something that we couldn't leave unanswered, we answered. Sometimes women used to give answers to each other. We also did not want any disputes between the women." (Pervin, facilitator, WS)

Questioning and critical thinking are supported by the facilitators through responding to women in way that makes them critically question their own ideas. Also, it's a creation of a non-formal gender consciousness-raising setting where women learn from each other and make each other critically think over the subjects. That creation of a learning and questioning space is beneficial for women to develop their awareness.

> At Solgün's house there were few people. Normally, we were 12-15 people, but there it was less. One woman would leave her work late and join us afterwards. We talked about violence; and the women were sincere in talking about it. A woman told about her experience related to violence. Another women came and said that "That does not happen here. Those things happen in slums and to poor people." A woman next to her said "One of my relatives was killed by her husband who graduated from two universities." Though this did not lead to any dispute. (Pervin, facilitator, W S)

Women can make each other question through sharing their own experiences. Besides facilitators' methods to make women question the existing gender relations, women can also question each other. Facilitators take this into consideration and are aware

that it is important for women's awareness. As it was analyzed in the section related to women's awareness-raising due to being with other women, a learning space created through the programs can be helpful to create an environment or discussions.

Women's Solidarity Foundation shows that women learn from each other and they trigger thinking for each other. In addition to this, a similar fashion of learning can be observed in KEİD, as a response to the question "How do they criticize their own thinking?" KEİD HREP facilitator Merve's answer reveals that women learn from each other in the course of the sessions.

> If someone says "A woman's place is her home" then someone opposes it. (Merve, facilitator, KEİD HREP)

Women learn from each other, whereas the facilitator should also inform the participants to develop their perspective on women's role in society. This way women can be able to question their normalized thoughts. Women's Solidarity Foundation facilitator Pervin explained how they make women question the value of their duties at home. Women's awareness-raising in terms of their housework and realizing the value of it can be a good start to transform gender division of labor. Pervin continues to explain how they make women question gender division of labor at home.

> After the exercise that makes you think about where you sit at the dinner table, we were talking about the inequality in gender division of labor and someone asked "He also works and he comes home late at night…" If someone says something like this, then these conversations last long. Then we may ask "Ok, then don't you really work at home?" We were asking "What are you doing at home from morning till night?" They were describing a variety of tasks. Some were also working at home through producing goods, if they were poorer. Things such as taking care of the children, cleaning the house and preparing food - don't you think this is labor? At that stage women were realizing and saying "Oh, we work." We asked them to imagine if they did not do any of this and how much it would cost if you wanted to buy these services from outside? All food will be bought from outside, all clothes will be bought and ironed outside. It would cost 5000 Turkish liras, so let's say then that you contribute to the house economy with 5000 liras. Do you have any insurance, pension or breaks from work? There isn't even a person that comes to you and says thank you. We were creating awareness like this and telling the women that they do work. (Pervin, facilitator, W S)

Facilitators touch upon the issues that are related to women's own life experiences that make women become face-to-face with gender roles. This way women can trigger change in their lives. Women's statements on critical thinking and questioning reveals the benefits of the sessions. One of my respondents told me about a HREP facilitator at *Polatlı*:

> She was making us think and when we started thinking ideas were created out of the process. (Hacer, *Polatlı*)

Another respondent from *Kozadan İpeğe* explains how the facilitator poses a question and makes women question their own lives. Furthermore, she ensures that women understand the importance of women's participation in decision making mechanisms.

> The instructor was asking; "Why not any other color but pink for girls, or why do you prepare the dinner table but your brother does not help you?" She was asking these things and saying "you were born from the same mother and father" - she was beginning like this. When she was explaining violence she did not start by saying things like "men can not use violence against women and he does not have a right to do it." She was asking if we know what the violence against us at home is. What kinds of things do you see in your life? (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Through posing questions to women, facilitators trigger women's critical thinking. In addition to this, problem posing is done in relation to women's own life experiences so that they will find the new knowledge relevant and can criticize their own life experiences. Women can gain a new perspective through critical thinking of their own lives. Facilitators can make women question their own position in life through the examples and related questions. The same respondent explains how facilitators pose questions to make women understand the importance of women's role in society.

> The facilitator that was talking about women's decision-making mechanisms started like this - while you were walking down this street violence occurred against you by men and no one helped you. The police were men too and everyone was against you. "If you had not done anything to provoke it, he would not have done it" the police may say. The facilitator asked one of the women what she would do if she were the police. She said she would protect the woman. Now when I talk about something I do it through examples. This way women may not forget what they learn. In addition to this you get ideas from others rather than only telling about yourself. (Zerrin, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

In order to explain the importance of women's position and participation in the society, facilitators trigger a critical thinking process through posing questions to women. Through the examples women can find connections with their own life. Understanding and acting starts through questioning and awareness-raising. Giving examples from life, asking about the gender roles that we all see in our lives, making women describe the oppressive situation that they live through, describing the concepts and asking about them - all are beneficial for women's beneficial relation with the lectures and for effective learning.

Without posing questions to participants in relation to the topic and to their own life experiences, topics will be perceived as irrelevant by women. Problem posing and making women think over their lives will make them question the situations that they accepted before as natural. Through questioning they can realize that the issues discussed in the sessions are relevant to their everyday lives. In this way, by making connections with the knowledge gained through the sessions and its relations with everyday life, women will be able to know what can be done to improve their position and situation. Through games such as the dinner table game by the Women's Solidarity Foundation, women will understand their position in the family and can fully realize the gender division of labor at home. In addition to this, rather than giving all the information in the beginning, facilitators are eager to ask women first what they think will increase their critical thinking and relation with the topics discussed. Through asking questions and giving examples from everyday experiences of women, facilitators can ensure that women are questioning the status quo and the experiences that they live in a gendered society.

8.3. Non Hierarchy and Dialogue

Eradicating hierarchy is offered as a feature of feminist popular education work by Shirley and Linzi (1996), in that they argue for a participatory process without any hierarchy in the learning process. Besides facilitators' own methods for eradicating hierarchy, participants' own observations are crucial to understand if the methods are beneficial for women. Hierarchy can occur between the participant women and the

facilitator women, or only among the participant women.

In terms of the hierarchy between the facilitator and the participant, empowering education should be different from any conventional teacher-student relationship. Educator's position related to their class is another issue since the educators are generally middle-class women while the learners are working-class poor women (Shirley & Linzi, 1996). This refers to the possible hierarchy that can arise which should be prevented.

Hierarchy can be prevented through ensuring dialogue in the learning setting. Shor (1992) takes sides with critical democratic dialogue that differs from the one-way directed talk by the teacher and the one-way authority and curriculum in a traditional classroom. Firstly, Shor criticizes dictation and proposes an interactive setting for learning. Secondly, she proposes desocialization that requires critically examining the social experiences of our lives that shape us such as perceived values, perceptions and power relations (Shor, 1992). Shor explains the advantageous groups in terms of power who give authority for sustaining the present state of affairs and leads to the socialization of others. Shor here recognizes the unequal relations of power that is an area of inquiry and criticism in feminist thinking. Then, a dialogic environment becomes crucial for creating the critical thinking of social relations that is considered in empowerment education and in women's non-formal education for empowerment. Mutual critical thinking and participation will ensure that no hierarchy will be felt by women.

Non-hierarchical order in the learning setting and a teaching style that adopts learning through dialogue rather than monologue are crucial for an empowering learning environment. Therefore, sometimes it is acceptable to only teach some parts in a session since knowledge on particular topics such as women's rights should be an emphasis besides creating a dialogic environment.

Dialogue is considered as an important aspect of empowering education by Shor (1992). "An empowering teacher does not talk knowledge at students but talks *with* them." (Shor, 1992, p. 85). When it is asked about one of the instructor's method who applies the HREP program she explained the method considers women's own interpretations through the learning process. "Dialogic pedagogy" (p. 85) is used as a

term by Shor. Though it is also highlighted in Shor's work it does not mean that students are free to talk non-stop; rather facilitator's control of the learning setting and ensuring a democratic learning session are kept in balance.

In this section, dialogue and interactive learning is posed against dictation. Dialogue will support a non-hierarchical learning setting. Dialogue is also crucial for women's participation that is already analyzed separately. The dialogic program is conducted by the teacher together with the student's participation. The reason we use the term teacher here is because Shor analyzes the academic learning setting which is empowering. Teachers can also be perceived as the same as the facilitator. Dialogue is defined by Shor as challenging power relations. Dialogue connects people and initiates an action that starts from reflecting (Shor, 1992). Then dialogue is crucial for action and triggered by critical thinking. By referring to Freire's statements on dialogue, Shor points out that student teacher dialogue is at the heart of the method. She adds that the teacher should direct the teaching program together with student's participation. Then, dialogue becomes another element in empowering education that is also creating an environment for women's participation. Methods here are supporting each other for an empowering setting.

Paulo Freire (1978) examines critical pedagogy that is in opposition with traditional ones, which make participants agents in their change and also creates a dialogic environment. Freire explains the method in critical learning based on dialogue that creates a "horizontal relationship between persons" (p. 83). In this way, Freire points out to the importance of creating a non-hierarchical environment. Freire (1978) focuses on literacy education in the context of adult education and proposes a critical approach through dialogue that will provide participants with a critical transformation rather than a naïve one. In addition, Freire offers a teaching method that is collaborative rather than being top down. One-way teaching is described by Freire as "domestication" (p. 89), in contrast to a process with dialogue.

Arnskool (1995) touches upon education for women's empowerment and investigates Asian education projects for the empowerment of women. She explains that in the sessions, participants tell about their beliefs on gender issues that shows that participants' own ideas are crucial. The consideration of ensuring participants'

reflection on the topics, that is crucial for a dialogic learning setting, is explained by Hale, HREP facilitator from *Polatlı* project. She explained the process of sessions that include directing questions to learners and creating a dialogue. On the consideration of ensuring participants' reflection on the topics, an example is explained by Hale, HREP facilitator from *Polatlı* project. She explained the process of sessions through asking questions of learners and creating a dialogue.

> We ask what biological gender is and what does gender mean in the social sense. We carry out the sessions through asking questions. Then we form the answers together. They express their own ideas and we write them on the board. Then we give the definitions, what is included and what is not. What are the roles given to men and women in society? What do we think of when we say "women" or "men"? We then understand what is biological and what is not; and then we understand that gender in a social sense is crucial to understand. We explain all the topics in this way. This is an interactive program where they find the answers themselves. We explain constitutional and civil rights but then ask their opinions in terms of the situation in Turkey. (Hale, facilitator, HREP, *Polatlı*)

Here the feature of the program being "interactive" arises as the opposite of dictation. A facilitator at the Women's Solidarity Foundation and *Kozadan İpeğe* describes an interactive environment where she explains how she involves women through conversation, experience telling and question and answer. She also depicts the problems in the empowering education of women in her other groups. She related that structured style is generally used for the trainings in public institutes or consultant workers through statistics. Then she explained the difference between those groups and the groups of women in neighborhood meetings for Consciousness-raising. In terms of the differences between the two group's interests, education levels and needs, women in neighborhood meetings need to be in dialogue more to be able to make sure that they can feel related and can benefit from the topics discussed.

> In places like *Kozadan İpeğe* where participants are women from neighborhoods, I do not use a structured style. It is more like a conversation, question-answer and sharing experiences. If you do it in another way and if they are not used to this style, it will be artificial for them. In addition, there may be some illiterate women to whom the material that you give will isolate. One should not do this. (Filiz, facilitator, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Dialogue and non-dictation happens through making sure that women participate and speak their ideas. Interactive methods of teaching is beneficial for women's learning and women's empowerment. If the setting of learning is a dialogic environment, then sharing becomes easier. The same respondent's observation about women's interest during the sessions reveals that women's participation is crucial for their learning process.

> If you do something based on "explaining" and if women do not talk they will listen to you for around ten minutes. (Filiz, facilitator, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

This shows that interactive learning heightens the interest of women whereas an opposite environment that is dictation decreases their attention. Women's Solidarity Foundation's one-day meeting for women's Consciousness-raising directs women in an interactive meeting where they are encouraged to pose questions and make interpretations.

> I was introducing the foundation and telling about the topics such as violence and legal rights that we will be talking about. I was saying something like "We do not want to carry this out as an education. It is not like we tell and you listen. Let this be interactive. Ask questions whenever you want and make your own comments. (Pervin, facilitator, W S)

Informing the participants about the interactive nature of the meetings can encourage women at the beginning of the non-formal education session and make them feel comfortable about raising opinions or experiences. The methods used in empowerment education are generally related to each other. Some statements of the facilitators can consist of various ways of applying methods that this study analyzes under different headings. On the other hand, showing the linked connections between them will inform this study on the overall approach in women's non-formal education sessions. Filiz from *Kozadan İpeğe* explains the method of interactive learning where she reduced her own talking.

> …However if the group consists of women who have never participated in a Consciousness-raising workshop I try to make it like a conversation, a discussion, through question and answer. I try to minimize my talking, maybe since I am a psychologist. (Filiz, facilitator, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Sometimes the nature of the topic will lessen the degree of participation by women, if

it's mostly based on information. All examples that are given from the session related to entrepreneurship of women in *Polatlı* project use a dictation teaching style rather than an interactive learning style. This can be due to its content since entrepreneurship is an area where some technical details are needed to make a successful plan. Derya Şener stated that:

> We did not talk about business ideas during the lectures. It was more to listen and go back home. (Derya, *Polatlı*, entrepreneurship trainer)

She explained that it was also due to the reason that women did not want to share their ideas because it is very common for others to steal ideas about the type of business that they will establish. To prevent any risk, they did not talk about it. Sharing and dialogue may not be present in all learning settings.

Eradicating hierarchy is an aspect of the programs that aims for critical learning. Interactive learning provides an environment of non-hierarchy.

When it is asked of Merve, a HREP instructor of KEID, how she ensures participation, she offers an example of a method which was suggested by a participant women. This method of participation eradicates the hierarchy as some of the women participants reported. Then eradication of hierarchy through the facilitators' examples from her own life, creates an environment of participation.

> I try to give examples. I try to give examples from my life and try to be sincere. These things slowly affect the process. (Merve, KEİD HREP)

The same facilitator tells that she communicates with women between the sessions. Since it creates a space for women to talk about sensitive issues privately with the instructor, it also creates a setting that consists of interactive and informal communication outside the sessions. I think this also appears as a method to break the hierarchy and create an environment of equality and communication.

> At breaks for tea, we have conversations. Normally I need to prepare for the rest of the lecture but instead I sit with them. (Merve, facilitator, HREP, KEİD)

Eradicating the hierarchy is closely related to building trust between the facilitator and the participant. If women participants feel close to the facilitator, then they listen better and ask more questions. Eliminating the sense of hierarchy is likely to occur when

emphasizing common points between the facilitator and the women.

> The trainer should be able to behave suitably with every segment of society and should differentiate between tones of voices. I have a red accessory for my hair but I do not wear it when I go to the trainings. Physical appearance has an effect. You should not be wearing excessive things. You should be using women's language. When you speak to them with their language and gain their trust, then your ideas are listened to more. That trust is very important. When she trusts she listens more. She asks more questions. If they feel distant from you they do not listen to you or take you seriously. It is due to the differences between her and your world; they are not interested in you in the first place. However, if you find something in common, that is easier. (Gökçe KEİD HREP participant & facilitator WS)

She mentions the disadvantaged areas in the city of Ankara where she says she will not be wearing particular accessorizes to prevent any distancing that could occur between herself and women. If she would wear excessive clothing, she could seem alien to women. Rather, she chooses to dress and behave according to the culture where she is going to facilitate sessions. In those places that they meet with women, sometimes most facilitators are well educated and they have to behave properly regarding customs and try not to show off. Showing off through appearance can create a feeling of hierarchy by women and may distance the facilitator from the particular culture.

In addition to adjusting physical appearance and language according to the cultural and social environment where the facilitators are going to be present, Pervin from Women's Solidarity explained the way that they broke any possible hierarchy through making women practice an introduction method. She mentions the introduction part where women should not talk about things like their age, children or husband when they are introducing themselves to others.

> The introducing part was very good. First, we were telling about ourselves: "I like preparing food but I like eating more." Then laughter…We were using the same method in every meeting such as talking about food to warm up. "I like making ceramics, I like this and that…" Duygu used to say that she likes to play with kids and made a joke "It is forbidden to say "my children" but I found a way to include that. "We were breaking it. In addition, the average age was over thirty and women saw us as young types of people and felt relaxed. For instance, Dilek, a friend from the foundation, considered eliminating the hierarchy. Arranging seats as circles rather than sitting everyone facing to us; this way everyone faces each other. We tried it but then the settings for this was not appropriate. We had meetings at home one or two times but others

> were in other locations. For instance the Keçiören Solidarity Atelier. It was also like a *gün (* a day that women gather together to chat and eat food). (Pervin, W S)

Besides the method of introduction without mentioning marital status or children, methods for preventing a hierarchical setting are offered as sitting in a circle or giving examples from one's own life. This method was founded by Filiz who from time to time worked in consciousness-raising meetings of Women's Solidarity Foundation which is explained in previous chapters.

Respondent women reflected upon the facilitator's method in class. Their answers revealed which methods work well to eradicate hierarchy and to create dialogic environment instead of emphasizing dictation. The example below shows a way to erase hierarchy between the instructor and the women. A HREP facilitator shared her own experiences with women which exemplifies mutual sharing in the learning environment.

> She shared stories about her own family and friends. I liked her a lot. (Cemre, *Polatlı*)

Even the question on methods carried out by the facilitators is not directly asked to women; some women showed that their relations with the facilitators were very important in the process of empowerment. It is asked to Beyza if her perception changed during the sessions and she pointed out to the facilitator's sharing.

> We shared with the instructor; she was like one of us. She was giving examples from her own life. From her sister-in-law and so on…(Beyza, *Polatlı*)

Mutual sharing came to be beneficial for change in women's lives. Eradication of hierarchy through sharing can open up new perspectives for women. "She was like one of us" reveals the absence of hierarchy between the women and the facilitator. Rather than being portrayed as an outsider, the facilitator was accepted as a person who belonged to the group. A similar expression came from another respondent:

> I did my best in HREP instructor's course. She perceived us as herself. She was solving our problems and she was sharing with us. (Elif, *Polatlı*)

Eradication of hierarchy through mutual sharing is beneficial for problem solving. "She perceived us as herself" is another way of describing the union between the facilitator and the women. They defined the facilitators as themselves or themselves as the facilitator. Either way, union and trust can be observed. When I asked one of the respondents from *Kozadan İpeğe* what she liked most about the instructor of gender, she pointed out to the instructor's sharing with them.

> She was not formal, she was natural and she understood us. Sometimes she shared her special experiences with us. Think about it, she is an educator but we are alike. She is a women too even though she is an educator. She could be a student but she will still be a women. She was understanding us well because she is a women, too. Her experiences were similar to ours and she shared it. Truly she shared with us. When we were sharing our private experiences she was giving us examples, because she as a women also faced with hardships. She became an educator but she also lived and maybe was living through the same things. Because of this, we loved to go there, our instructor was not boring. Maybe it is due to the person, maybe some people are teaching in a boring way. But ours was fun. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

Facilitators' own experiences and examples can make women feel closer. After revealing their experiences women may feel a union with the facilitator and realize that all women have gone through similar experiences. Creating a non-hierarchical trust setting can happen due to sharing. Another expression from *Polatlı* reveals the same dialogue between the facilitator and the participants. The features of the dialogue are explicit in her statement:

> In the beginning we thought that they are going to give advice and we were reluctant. But the HREP instructor was very sincere. It was like having a conversation in the house. (Hacer, *Polatlı*)

Trust, mutual dialogue and sharing are all very crucial in the learning process. Women listen well and learn more if the facilitator does not dictate or use power over them. Rather than feeling as though in a classroom, Hacer felt a free and relaxed environment in the learning setting. Beyond being a conventional lecture, she felt it was like chatting in a house which erases the hierarchy and creates an absence of dictation. Creating a space for women to make conversation reveals the dialogic environment. This participant is from *Kozadan İpeğe,* and she makes a similar evaluation with the women

in *Polatlı*. The facilitator she is talking about was giving training on gender issues.

> Our instructor was really a good one…we were coming together, she was coming and giving lectures to us. We were given breaks, having a cup of tea or coffee to get in the mood to converse. Of course, the instructor was carrying out her education in an order but sometimes we were shifting to make conversations with each other. Sometimes someone was sharing something about the topics and the topics discussed could turn into a conversation, from the morning till the night. (Sevim, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

A balance between making conversation and lecturing in an order is expressed by this participant. "Finding the balance between allowing a spontaneous and creative process to emerge and directing the process to complete an agenda is an ongoing tension in popular education work" (Shirley & Linzi, 1996, p. 27) Authors state that there is a slight difference between only focusing on offering specific definitions and concepts, and examining women's oppression and femininity. Both teaching and communicating are crucial processes in women's non-formal education for empowerment.

Another respondent from *Kozadan İpeğe* made a similar comment on another facilitator's session about gender issues, where fun and being serious are mixed together. Furthermore, enjoyable time is crucial since the facilitators' relaxed behaviors can prevent a hierarchical environment where the lecture is dictated from the beginning to the end.

> One of our instructors who was lecturing on gender issues was my idol. According to the situation, she could be authoritative in a disciplined way or used a folk language through some jokes and so on. She did not have any ego, she was very clever. Sometimes everyone was slacking and she could balance it. She was cheerful and had discipline and authority at the same time. She is my idol. (Semra, *Kozadan İpeğe*)

The importance of using folk language is revealed here. Women feel no hierarchy when their instructors make jokes, make a folk conversation while having a kind of authority in the setting. Communicating with women is crucial but also the language used will determine the positive influence of the dialogic process. Another response came from a participant of the KEİD HREP program. When she is asked about equality

in the education setting, she responded:

> The instructor's attitude is not "I know everything and I came to teach you." I can say that for the trainings from women's foundations. They do not construct a relationship like that. It is not like "I know it and let me tell you, then you go and interpret it by yourself." (İlayda, KEİD)

All of those examples that reveal a dialogic and equal learning setting reminds one that unequal power relations are to be prevented among women as well as between men and women. Power hierarchies are closely related to gender hierarchies since it's still a power hierarchy. Besides gender hierarchy where men are seen as superior to women; women can also feel hierarchy between themselves which is not necessarily between the instructor and the participant. A statement by a woman respondent gives a clue about sessions where women are shown that all types of women can be oppressed. This way they will not think that women from a higher ladder in the social hierarchy cannot be oppressed by society. Women's experiences are common which points out to solidarity at the same time.

> Women in general and me, we are going through the same experiences. Professors can be perceived as different. Our instructor told us not to think like this. (Beyza, *Polatlı*)

Beyza also perceived that all women have similar experiences. Finding a common point between women may increase trust and dialogue among them. Besides the hierarchy that should be prevented between the facilitator and the participant women, another kind of hierarchy among women should also be prevented.

Instead of using a dictating language in the non-formal education sessions for women's empowerment, facilitators are likely to use a dialogic language to make women participate. At some points one-way teaching is needed to give particular information, for instance about women's right's articles, whereas at other points mutual dialogue is needed for an effective learning process. This way of facilitating the sessions will build trust between women and the facilitator and will make the change easier for women to attain. Women will be more likely to change if they closely interact and share with the

facilitator. Facilitators use several methods to ensure women's trust and prevent any hierarchy among themselves and women. Some of the facilitators are adjusting their appearance and language according to the culture of the participant women's group. In addition to this, giving examples from their own life experiences make women feel closer to the discussions so they are more likely to solve their problems in life. Besides the hierarchy between the facilitator and the participant women, women are also provided with an approach that sees all women as being similar in terms of being subjected to similar oppression from society. Women tend to feel closer to the facilitators that share their own life experiences and consider their opinions more. Differences among women regarding age or status do not create hierarchy. Women start to understand that whether rich or poor, all women are subjected to subordinate situations. An introduction method where women are not permitted to mention their status, age or marital status came out to be an effective method to raise women's consciousness about how to perceive other women.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This study is informed by empowerment and empowering education literature, adult education and popular education which are all related in their aims and methods. For the assessment of methods in the programs, various resources for non-formal education are used. Besides one or two resources on women's empowering education and empowerment projects for women, there is not adequate literature available for the direct assessment and evaluation of empowering non-formal education for women or relatedly empowering projects for women that consists of non-formal education sessions.

On the other hand, literature on empowering non-formal education methods is not vast, especially if it considers women's non-formal education. That is why this study brought various resources together to be able to explain the methods in this area and to find relevances between various sources on popular education for women, adult education, empowering education and the non-formal education process of women. The usage of different terms for non-formal education for women's empowerment is due to a lack of resources on the area of women's non-formal empowerment education. That is why this study is created through using various resources that approach empowerment and education from different angles. Although various concepts are used, the relevance of them are explained in the paper as all of them connote to the same education style and context in some way.

This study tries to find the relevance between women's empowerment and non-formal education, although there is a lack of literature on the direct relationship between them.

Because education literature does not focus on women's empowerment, there are inadequate resources to evaluate the methods used in non-formal education projects and its impact and usefulness for women's empowerment.

Some women participants in this study participated in several programs that are discussed here. That is why for a couple of women it's not very clear with understanding which program impacted them more.

Empowerment of women is a complex process. A women may be empowered in one area not in another. Even though controlling the direction of the interviews was kept to a minimum, in order to get information about specific situations, some specific questions on empowerment were asked. This could have created bias in women's thoughts and sayings. Though this was attempted to be minimized by semi-structured methods.

Non-formal education for women's empowerment is a type of development program that aim for women's empowerment. Non-formal education for women's empowerment can consist of various topics related to women's issues, gender relations, gender division of labor, violence and political empowerment. Non-formal education is not always applied by itself but within a program that also consists of other activities such as production or entrepreneurship for women. That is why this study did not limit its scope only to non-formal education sessions by itself, but also to the programs that aim for women's empowerment by using various means other than non-formal education sessions such as traveling or production.

All of these programs offer similar but also different topics to women in a free environment where anyone can tell her own opinion. Even though the topics can differ from program to program there are certain issues that are discussed in all of them, such as awareness-raising on gender, done through questioning gender norms in society. Women are also informed about violence and how to recognize violence. Not only the education session topics themselves but also the experiences that women have who are in the program have empowering aspects that are investigated in this study. Taking into account the obstacles that women live through, this study also investigated other effects on women's empowerment process. How far these programs are transformative arose as another investigative area that provided answers in terms of the inadequacies

of the programs. Overall, methods applied in these programs and non-formal education sessions are in close relation with women's empowerment, whose investigation revealed the crucial points in women's non-formal education for empowerment.

Looking at the dimensions of women's empowerment, the psychological empowerment aspect of women's empowerment is a crucial stage for social change. It belongs to an area of personal empowerment that is actualized among the participants. This becomes evident of the success of the programs in terms of psychological empowerment that includes self-confidence and identity.

The reason that these women get self-confidence can be due to earning money, traveling or participating in public activities, or it can be solely due to the non-formal education. The exact reason is not always completely clear for everyone and this arises as one of the limitations of this study.

On the psychological level, women in this study gained self-confidence and relatedly increased their communication skills. Since women gain self-confidence they become able to express and think about their own desires. These empowering non-formal education programs need to make women aware of their needs through considering personal needs beyond family responsibilities. Then, women can be able to tell what they really need. This is also connected to feeling a sense of self, since many women described their process of empowerment as finding their new identities. The psychological dimension of empowerment is the most common dimension of empowerment that is actualized among women.

Self-confidence and self-identity belong to psychological empowerment. On the other hand, this study investigated awareness-raising of women as it's the sole aim of non-formal education sessions for women. Investigating awareness-raising separately informed the study on how women start to critically think about their own experiences and society. Women participants in this study reported that they were able to think over their pasts that they normalized before but perceive differently now. They faced with oppression and adapted to that kind of life as if they had no other choice. Now, they are aware of these oppressive situations that they do not have to live through. When women's perception on gender issues change, they realize other possibilities in life.

Thinking over the past requires critical thinking on lived experiences. Critical thinking of gender roles and the related issues are observed in women's statements in terms of their lives, their environment and different point of views. On the other hand, it may not be easy to practice the knowledge, because even if women critically think about issues it may not be easy to intervene or change the issue. Even though women are aware of the gender roles, for most of them, gender division of labor still prevails at home. This study also shows that women's awareness or critical consciousness can also improve through dialogues with other women during the sessions.

Through understanding the reasons behind male oppression, and by linking those to attributed gender roles, liberating thoughts can be actualized for women. This study investigated the cognitive area through the investigation of awareness-raising and critical thinking. Consciousness-raising can be observed through one's changed beliefs and opinions towards the issues, concepts, approaches or events that happened before and are happening now. They start to realize the reasons behind gender roles, their own situation in society and in the private sphere, but also their own perceptions towards a variety of things which are generally related to gender roles.

As another dimension, political empowerment does not really exist for these women. In two extensive programs, visits to municipalities were political actions but did not persist over time. That is why this study investigated political empowerment through relational empowerment that is more common among women. Relational empowerment is observed in their relations with family members or other actors in public life. Some relations between psychological empowerment and relational empowerment are found since some women expressed relational empowerment that occurred through an increase in their self-confidence and ability to communicate.

Related to relational empowerment, women participants feel more confident and free to tell their ideas and reactions. Avoidance of conflict occurs less than before as they now believe in protecting their rights. Women are able to express themselves easier than before and they are more relaxed in communicating with others. Being able to defend their freedom, they are more independent than before if they want to go to another city or elsewhere. As the interviews show, husbands' change in attitude is influential in this process, which can be due to women's increased self-confidence and

communication skills, and their increased mobility or economic activity. Relational empowerment at the household level and in their relations with others outside the family is increased with non-formal education programs and through the active life and experiences provided throughout the programs. Women's negotiation and communication skills are increased both in the private sphere as well as in the public sphere.

In terms of political empowerment, only the Koza Cooperative directly mobilized women in the political sense. At the Public Ateliers, women made some demands such as a place in a market area and. kinder gardens. In addition to this, women visited ministries to demand for the improvement of procedures for establishing a cooperative.

In terms of economic empowerment, building working skills can be beneficial for women to become entrepreneurs, work in a business or produce their goods. Kozadan İpeğe created such an environment where women learned sewing and the stages of production of textiles. *Polatlı* also offered courses on sewing as well as cooking. Women used these skills when opening their place of work. In *Kozadan İpeğe* women experienced collective production and earned their own income. Women in *Polatlı* were entrepreneurs who produced their own goods to sell in the market. Some women from *Kozadan İpeğe* started to work at the *Zeytindalı Kooperatifi* after *Kozadan İpeğe* had ended and continued to produce there. Both extensive programs *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe* provided technical training for being entrepreneurs and for the business and production process. KEİD HREP and the neighborhood meetings did not offer classes on developing working skills or economic empowerment. HREP may only carry a potential to trigger women to become economically dependent.

If the issue is women's empowerment that also requires gender equality, then psychological and relational empowerment remains limited in terms of impact on the society. Psychological empowerment is crucial but not enough for transformation of gender relations.

Since psychological or relational empowerment are not enough by themselves for social transformation of gender relations and women's empowerment, collective

empowerment is another required dimension. Collective action can be lacking in women's empowerment projects in this study except for "Kozadan İpeğe Ev Eksenli Çalışan Kadınlar Kooperatifi" and "Polatlı Kadın Girişimciler için İş Kurma Merkezi Kurulması Projesi". Shorter projects generally remain at the level of awareness-raising and create a space for women to experience awareness-raising, solidarity and support with other women. Although solidarity should be turned into action to be able to have wider gains for every woman in society. Political and collective action is needed. While political action in practice exists in *Kozadan İpeğe,* it did not persist for a long time. In both *Polatlı* and *Kozadan İpeğe* collective work exists at some level. Women's education, consciousness and action for change are linked to each other. KEİD HREP includes a section on organizing and Women's Solidarity Foundation covers the topic of solidarity.

Collective work consists of mobilization of women. On the other hand, mobilization should not necessarily be practiced collectively. Women's empowerment can be actualized through personal mobilization that starts with going out from the home to participate in the projects, especially in longer ones. Women negotiate their demands for travelling and participating in project activities. Though for some of the women, this freedom did not go far or even stay the same after the project was over. Women are happier and more satisfied with life when they are out working or participating in public life rather than sitting at home all day. Women's well being is closely related to their mobilization with going out.

Two extensive programs, *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı,* initiated women's mobilization in the public sphere. Participating in the programs at the specific places, traveling, and opening a business triggered women's mobilization process that provides women with more freedom and confidence. Overall, solidarity of women exist in all programs, but collective work lacks in most of them.

Women's experiences in the program can be empowering for them. Sharing, solidarity and listening to other women are some experiences that women have. In addition to this acknowledgement, if women express their ideas they can create a productive dialogue with others. This study shows that sharing, support and solidarity between women was created during the programs - all being beneficial for increasing

psychological health, ending feelings of isolation achieved through solidarity with other women, increased awareness created by critical thinking on issues and on their own experiences in life, and improved relations with others.

In terms of the obstacles in the empowerment process, gender division of labor arises as a non-changed area. Women continue to do most of the housework even though they developed awareness on gender relations and division of labor. That means that women's knowledge empowerment does not necessarily lead to practice, and this reveals an area of obstacle. Then, men's support for women's empowerment is crucial for the actualization of women's empowerment.

In addition to men's involvement, reactions to women's empowerment from family members or friends is not always encouraging, but rather an underestimation of women's success is observed. This reveals a problem in the women's empowerment process, and their environment should also change beyond personal change. This is again connected to the issue of the need for political mobilization for wider change and social transformation for women's empowerment.

Obstacles from the environment exist for women but women should be determined in the process of empowerment. On the other hand, as this study shows, even when women raise their consciousness, they can live through hardship at home regarding the elimination of the gender division of labor. As though some of the women are still using the word "help", they are aware that they should not be the one who is responsible for all housework and child care. Gender division of labor is an issue that needs to be solved by practical strategies, otherwise knowledge empowerment by itself may not be sufficient. In order for women to spare time for their own improvement, an equal sharing of domestic tasks is required. For the actualization of women's empowerment in all spheres, support from others arises as crucial. Especially relations with family members should change from a traditional view to a view that supports women's empowerment. It is revealed that women's awareness and critical consciousness may not be turned into a practice in all areas if people around them do not change their attitudes towards gender equality.

On the other hand, the study shows that the collective work of women does not always lead to solidarity, as women's rivalries and competition created hardships in both programs. This creates another area of obstacles that are especially observed in programs that carry an economic feature that heightens competitiveness and rivalries.

Other than economic competition, differences among women can also lead to rivalries that are observed in the two extensive programs in this study. Rivalries among women should be taken into consideration before any program and necessary plans should be made accordingly.

Lastly, methods in the programs reveal that most are in accordance with the methods in the literature. Critical thinking is triggered during the sessions, besides technical lectures about finance or entrepreneurship. Hierarchy is eliminated through the facilitators' appropriate language, clothing, dialogue and sharing of personal stories.

Various methods to increase women's participation can be used in different contexts. In addition, methods such as feedback, games of communication or games for awareness-raising, and drawing or alternative introduction methods for women trigger their participation in the sessions that this study investigates. These activities also trigger women's critical thinking on an issue and support the process of awareness-raising and questioning gender norms or other related subjects. In the sense of participation group size is also crucial to ensure everyone's close involvement.

In the programs that this study investigates, methods are used to reveal that most are in accordance with the methods in the literature. Critical thinking is triggered during the sessions, besides giving technical or legal knowledge. In this study, it is found that hierarchy is eliminated during non-formal education sessions through the facilitators' appropriate language, clothing, dialogue and sharing of personal stories.

As the facilitators pointed out, if the number in the classes increases, it becomes hard for women to participate or to carry out interactive learning. Even though women's needs can affect the sessions, most projects are not planned with the women. Only Koza was close to this approach as they asked women if they needed either a foundation or a cooperative. On the other hand, all of them consider women's needs

in the process through creating a participatory environment for them to share their experiences and find connections between their own experiences and the topics discussed. A problem is discovered about women's interest which can decrease due to the subject discussed, such as financial issues or legal rights that may not be very interesting or easy for them to understand. Women have difficulties in understanding technical issues or get bored with issues related to law. The difficulties of understanding or not being interested shows that the projects are not designed for all women as some parts could not reach the women. This should be an area of investigation for further projects. If these projects are for women and women's empowerment, then every women should be able to benefit.

In terms of increasing women's participation as a method, a dialogic environment and interactive learning is provided, though the number in the groups is crucial here for ensuring women's participation. As the facilitators pointed out, if the number increases, it becomes hard for women to participate or to carry out an interactive learning.

Besides creating a participatory environment through interactive learning, women's needs are to be fulfilled through various ways. *Kozadan İpeğe* and *Polatlı* considered both women's strategic and practical needs through economic activities and also consciousness-raising non-formal education sessions. HREP from KEİD and Women's Solidarity Foundation meetings are focused more on strategic gender needs.

In a dialogic process in a non-formal education setting that is not conventional, the creation of a dialogic environment becomes evident in the investigated programs of this study. This is also related to the absence of hierarchy as suggested for these kinds of critical learning in an education setting. Participant facilitators in this study have different methods of eradicating hierarchy and creating dialogue, such as alternative introduction exercises and sharing personal experiences with participant women.

Dialogue between the facilitator and the participants should carry a particular feature that is questioning. Programs designed for women's empowerment that consists of non-formal education sessions carry the potential to raise women's awareness on

gender and women's issues. Women's relations at home and at public transforms as a result of their participation in these programs, since women increased their communication skills and gained self-confidence. For women's empowerment, obstacles remain even though psychological empowerment and relational empowerment is practiced. Programs should go beyond psychological and personal empowerment and provide women with skills to mobilize and organize politically for a transformation in society. Even though women become able to critically think about their environments and their own life experiences, they may not be able to apply their transformation due to men's resistance. For the transformation of society that is necessary for women's empowerment, women should act collectively and effect politically. Besides women's collective work and action, men's awareness should also be raised to create cooperation in the household and in public. In addition, if the planning and organization process of the programs takes into account women's needs and experiences, a more efficient and beneficial program will be applied. Women's mobilization and critical thinking are possible to actualize through non-formal education sessions that this study investigated. In addition, methods that trigger critical thinking and that considers women's participation and experiences are in usage in all programs. Women's self-confidence, awareness-raising and relational empowerment are common points in the study. Women's empowerment is not only about women's psychological or relational empowerment, but it's also related to unequal gender relations in the society. In order to be able to transform these relations, collective action and political influence are the areas that need to have more emphasis put on in future non-formal education programs for women.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü	
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü	x
Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü	
Enformatik Enstitüsü	
Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü	

YAZARIN

Soyadı : Ortaköylü Uysallı

Adı : Zülfiye Doğa

Bölümü : Toplumsal Cinsiyet ve Kadın Çalışmaları

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) : Empowerment of Women Through Non-Formal Education Programs in Turkey

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans [x] Doktora [ ]

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. [x]
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir. [ ]
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz. [ ]

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:

APPENDIX B

Turkish Summary

Kadınların Türkiye'de Formal Olmayan Eğitim Yoluyla Güçlendirilmesi

Kadınların güçlendirilmesi, farklı kalkınma politikaları ve projeleri ile gerçekleştirilebilir. Kalkınma projeleri farklı amaçlar taşırken, yalnızca kadının güçlenmesine odaklanabilir veya ekonomik güçlenme hedefi taşıyor olabilir. Fakat kadınlar için kadınların güçlendirilmesi, kadının ihtiyaçlarına karşılık gelebilen, cinsiyet eşitliğine hizmet eden bir bakış açısı gerektirir. Bu çalışmada incelenen programların hepsi benzer içeriklere sahiptir. Aralarındaki farklar da bir o kadar büyüktür. Bu yüzden hepsinin girdiği belirli alanlar ve yalnızca bazılarının incelenebildiği alanlar vardır.

Kadınların bu projelerle güçlendirilmesi, Türkiye'de şu ana dek çok az araştırılmış bir konudur. Bu yüzden, bu konuyu daha derinlemesine araştırmak, yapılan projelerin kısıtlamalarını ve faydalarını anlamak, aynı zamanda da kadınların ihtiyaçlarını belirlemek açısından önemlidir. Türkiye'de yapılan kadınları güçlendirme amacı taşıyan programların en büyük eksikliklerinden biri, kadınları sonrasında yeterince gözlemlememek, program bittikten sonra durumlarını yeterince sorgulamamaktır.

Kadınların güçlendiği alanları sorgulamak için literatürde farklı kaynaklardan yararlanılan bu çalışmada, yetişkin eğitimi ve güçlendirici eğitim kaynaklarından da yararlanılmıştır. Feminist bakış açısına sahip kaynakların yetersizliğinden, birtakım

kaynaklar yetişkin eğitimi ile alakalı da olsa, feminist bakış açısındaki kaynaklarla uyumluluğu sayesinde ortak noktalar bulunabilmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın en önemli amaçlarından birisi kadınlar için yapılan güçlendirici programların etkisini araştırmaktır. Bunun etkisini araştırırken birkaç etmeni bir arada göz önünde bulundurarak; kadınların hangi alanlarda güçlendiğinde, kadınların güçlenmesinin bireysel aşamadan kolektif düzeye getirilip getirilmediğine, bu süreçte karşılaşılan zorluklar, deneyimler ve metodlara bakıldı.

Çalışma Ankara'da gerçekleşen dört program incelenerek yapıldı. Kadını güçlendiren programların birbirinden büyük farkları fakat büyük ortak noktaları da vardı. Bu yüzden çalışmada da ayrıntılı bir şekilde, programların kapsamları belirtilmiştir.

Çalışmanın bazı sınırlamalarından da bahsetmek gerekir. Kadınların hangi alanlarda güçlendiğine bakarken, bunların tam olarak hangi etkiler sonucu doğduğunu bilebilmek her zaman çok net ve kolay olmamıştır. Örneğin özgüveninin arttığını söyleyen bir kadının özgüveni formal olmayan eğitim seanslarında bahsedilen konular ve tartışmalar ile mi artmıştır, yoksa bir girişimcilik yaptığı ve para kazanmaya başladığı için mi? Çalışmada kadın tarafından spesifik bir etki belirtildiği zaman bundan mutlaka bahsedilmiş, ancak kadın bundan bahsetmiyorsa yalnızca bunun böyle olduğu söylenmiştir. Bu yüzden uzun süreli ve kapsamlı programlar kadınlar üzerinde çok daha zengin etkiler bırakmaktadır. Kadınlar her açıdan daha fazla dönüşüm yaşarlar. Süre uzun olduğu için bilgilerini pekiştirebilirler, diğer kadınlarla aktivite yapabilirler, aynı zamanda da ekonomik olarak kendilerini güçlendirebilirler.

Bu çalışmanın diğer bir sınırlaması ise alandaki kaynak eksikliğidir. Bu eksikliği yetişkin eğitimi literatürünü de katarak kapatmaya çalıştım. Yetişkin eğitimi ve güçlendirici eğitimi ortak noktalarda birleştirip, metodlar üzerine sorgulamalar oluşturdum. İlerideki çalışmalarda, güçlendirici eğitimlerin kadınlar için spesifik yöntemlerine değinilebilir. Alanların birleşmesiyle, uzun süreli ve kalıcı bilgiler açığa çıkabilir.

Çalışmada temel dört program incelenmiştir. İncelenen programlar, Kozadan İpeğe Ev Eksenli Çalışan Kadınlar Kooperatifi, Polatlı'da Kadınlara Yönelik İş Kurma Merkezi Kurulma Projesi, Kadın İstihdam ve Eğitim Derneği'nin KİHEP eğitimleri ve Kadın

Dayanışma Vakfı'nın bilinçlendirici toplantılarından oluşmaktadır. On yedi katılımcı kadın, yedi kolaylaştırıcı ve bir proje koordinatörü ile görüşme yapılmıştır. Görüşmeler derinlemesine mülakat metoduyla yapılmış, ses kaydedilmiştir. Kozadan İpeğe programı kadınlara cinsiyet eşitliği, şiddet, girişimcilik gibi konularda düzenli olarak ve uzun süreli eğitimler vermiş, aynı zamanda da kadınların kooperatifte toplu üretim yaparak para kazanmasını sağlamıştır. Polatlı'da da kadınlar özgüven, KİHEP eğitimleri almış, bir yandan da ekonomik beceriler kazanarak kendi dükkanlarını açabilmişlerdir. KEİD'te eğitim alan kadınlar yalnızca KİHEP modüllerini öğrenmiş, bu sayede kadına karşı şiddet, toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği gibi konularda bilgilenmişler ve tartışma ve destek imkanı bulabilmişlerdir. Kadın Dayanışma Vakfı ise mahalle toplantılarında kadınlara toplumsal cinsiyet konularında bilgi vermiş, onların sorunları ile ilgilenmiş ve birbirlerine destek olmalarını sağlamıştır.

İki büyük program ilişkisel, kolektif güçlenme alanına girebilirken; iki diğer küçük program bu alanlara girememektedir. Bunun dışında hepsi psikolojik güçlenme ve deneyimler boyutlarında bir arada olabilmektedirler.

Bu çalışmanın büyük bölümü *Kozadan İpeğe* ve *Polatlı* programlarıyla oluşturulmuştur. Bu iki program süre olarak uzun, içerik olarak kapsamlı, ekonomik özelliği ve aktiviteleri olan programlardır. Diğer iki program daha kısa süreli ve içeriği daha az kapsamlı olanlardır. İki büyük program kadınlara ekonomik olarak önemli beceriler öğretirken ve buna ortam sağlarken; diğer ikisinin böyle bir özelliği yoktur. Dört programın da ortak noktaya geldiği alanlar vardır. Bunlardan en önemlisi Psikolojik Güçlenme alanıdır. Psikolojik Güçlenme kapsamına giren, kendine güven ve bilinçlenme de, bu programlara katılan kadınların neredeyse hepsinde gözlemlenmiştir. Türkiye'de kadınların güçlendirilmesi için yapılan projelerde, en güçlü alan psikolojik güçlenme yönündedir.

Dört programdan da kadınlar, toplumsal cinsiyet konusunda farkındalıklarını arttırmış, toplumdaki ve evdeki statülerini sorgulamıştır. Eskiden bu yana doğal karşılanan cinsiyet ayrımcılığının her alanını tekrar sorgulayabilmiş; doğal kabul edilen durumların aslında öyle olmadığını anlamışlardır.

Bu alanda güçlenme çeşitli oyunlarla da desteklenmiştir. Kadınlar bu oyunlarla evdeki ikincil konumlarının farkına varıp, kendilerine dönüp yaşamlarını sorgulamaktadırlar.

Farkındalıkları artan kadınlar, eskiden yalnızca eşleri ve çocukları ile ilgilendiklerini fark etmiş, bundan sonra kendilerine de zaman ayırmaları gerektiğini fark etmişlerdir. Yıllardır kendileri için hiçbir şey yapmadığını fark eden kadınlar, şimdi kendileri için de bir şeyler yapabileceklerini anlamışlar; çocuklarının ve eşlerinin her daim ilk sırada olmaları gerekmediğini idrak etmişlerdir.

Birçok kadın, kendilerinde artan toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği farkındalığı ile beraber, artık bazı kadın rollerinin onlara toplum tarafından verildiğini fark etmiş ve bunu sorgulamışlardır. Çoğu da farkındadır ki, doğumdan itibaren bize dayatılan toplumsal cinsiyet rolleri düşündüğümüz gibi doğal değil, toplumsal olarak inşa edilmiş rollerdir.

Bu değişimle beraber, kadınların eşleri de bu durumu fark etmiş, bazen kadının güçlenmesinden endişe ederek karşı çıkmış, bazen de bunu kabullenip kadınların yeni duruşlarını kabul etmişlerdir. Eskiden olsa yan sokağa gitmek için bile izin alamayan kadın, şimdi arkadaşlarıyla başka şehirlere yolculuk edebilmektedir.

Kadınlar sadece kendi hayatlarını değil, başkalarının ve çevrelerinin de duruşlarını sorgulamaya başlamışlardır. Örneğin haberleri izlerken veya başka birisinin fikirlerini dinlerken; eskisi gibi bir kenarda oturmak yerine, kendi düşüncelerini açıklamaya başlamış, katılmadığı noktaları belirtme cesareti gösterebilmişlerdir.

Toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliğinde en önemli konulardan birisi şiddet her programda bahsedilen bir alandır. Kadınlar böylece karşılaştıkları zaman şiddeti tanımlayabiliyorlar ve aynı zamanda da bu durumdan kurtulmanın yollarını arayabiliyorlardır. Daha önce yalnızca fiziksel şiddetten haberdar olan kadınlar, artık ekonomik veya psikolojik şiddeti tanıyabilir hale gelmiş, böylece kendi saygınlıklarını daha da arttırabilmişlerdir.

Psikolojik güçlenmeye dahil edebileceğimiz bilgilenme aşamaları, toplumsal cinsiyet konusunda ve genel olarak eşitlik konusunda kadınları bilgilendirmiştir. Daha önce eşitlik anlayışı çok da güçlü olmayan kadınlar, şimdi etnik veya dini ayrımcılığın daha iyi farkına varmış, eşitlik prensibini daha da bilgili ve güçlü bir şekilde zihinlerine yerleştirmişlerdir.

Başka bir boyuta geçtiğimizde, kadınların ilişkisel olarak güçlenmesi karşımıza çıkar. *Kozadan İpeğe* ve *Polatlı*'ya katılan kadınların çoğunda ilişkisel güçlenme

gözlemlenmiştir. Bu tarz bir güçlenmede kadınlar hem özel hayatlarındaki ilişkilerde, hem de toplumsal ilişkilerde daha fazla özgüven kazanmış, iletişim becerilerini geliştirmiştir. Kadınlar daha önce kimseyle rahat konuşamazken, zaman içinde otorite sahibi figürler dahil daha rahat iletişim kurmaya başlamışlardır. Bu alanda formal olmayan eğitimlerin etkisi dışında bir de yapılan aktivitelerin, gezilerin de etkisi vardır. Bu konuda en güçlü program *Kozadan İpeğe'*dir. Yurtdışına da yapılan çeşitli gezilerle, kadınlar farklı ortamlar görmüş, evlerinden bile dışarı çıkamayan kadınlar çeşitli Avrupa ülkelerine ziyaretlerde bulunmuştur. Bu ziyaretlerde başka kadın kuruluşları ile de tanışmışlardır.

Daha önce bahsedildiği gibi, iki büyük program ekonomik özellik de taşımaktadır. Her ikisinde de kadınlar yeni beceriler öğrenmiş, fakat bu beceriler çok fazla dikiş, yemekten öteye geçememiştir. Bu noktada kadınların çabuk bir şekilde maddi gelire ihtiyaç duyduklarını ve en garanti yol olarak bu becerileri seçtiğini varsayabiliriz. İki diğer program, KİHEP ve mahalle toplantılarıyla bu yönde bir katkı sağlamamıştır. Ekonomik güçlenme konuların bir parçası olarak anlatılmıştır. Bu yüzden dolaylı bir etki yaratma potansiyeli de vardır.

Bir diğer boyuta geçtiğimizde, bireysel güçlenmenin ötesinde, dönüştürücü öğrenme ve sosyal dönüşüm konularına geliyoruz. Kadının güçlenmesinde bireysel boyut çok önemlidir. Kadın ancak kendi fikirlerini ve davranışlarını değiştirdiği zaman etrafında bir etki yaratır ve kendi hayatını değiştirir. Ancak literatürde de bahsedildiği gibi, kadının güçlenmesi için kadın erkek eşitliğini sağlamak ve sosyal dönüşüme gitmek şarttır. Kadının güçlenmesi yalnızca bireysel dönüşüme değil, aynı zamanda toplumun da dönüşümüne bağlıdır. Yapısal sınırlamalarla mücadele etmek için, kadınlar bir araya gelmeli ve bununla politik anlamda toplu olarak mücadele etmelidir.

Toplu mücadele programların genelinde eksik bir boyuttur. İki büyük programda bile sınırlıdır. Bu yüzden kadınların güçlendirilmesi için yapılan projelerde, mutlaka kadınların toplu aktivitelerine, politik hareketlerine önem verilmelidir. Aksi halde kadınlar öğrendiklerini uygulayabilecek bir alan bulmakta zorlanırlar. Bu alanı bulabilmek için, öncelikle var olan eşitsiz cinsiyet ilişkilerine müdahele etmek gerekir.

Bu çalışmada görüşülen kadınların çoğu eğitim düzeyi düşük, orta yaş üzeri kadınlardır. Özellikle iki büyük programa katılmadan önce çoğu evden bile

çıkamayan, eşlerinden izin alamayan, kendine güveni eksik olduklarından bahsetmişlerdir. Ancak programa katılmak için bile evden çıkmaları gerekmiş, zaman içinde eşlerini ikna edebilmeye başlamışlardır. Daha önce aşağı sokağa bile gidemediğini söyleyen kadınları şimdi istedikleri yerlere gidebilmektedirler. Kadınların iletişim becerileri, ikna yetenekleri ve kendilerine güvenleri bu şekilde de gelişmiştir.

Kadınlar formal olmayan eğitim seansları dışında, bir de eğitimlerde yaşadıkları deneyimlerle de birçok aşama kaydetmişlerdir. Kadınlar bu eğitim ortamlarında, bu her program için geçerlidir, çeşitli sohbetler yapmışlar birbirlerine destek olup, birbirleri ile yakınlık kurmuşlardır. Kadınlar bu formal olmayan eğitimler sırasında birbirleri ile tartışmış, birbirlerinden kadınlar hakkında ve diğer konularda birçok yeni fikir öğrenmişlerdir. Bu demek oluyor ki, yalnızca kolaylaştırıcı değil, aynı zamanda kadınlar da birbirlerine öğretmişler, bilinçlerini geliştirmişlerdir.

Kadınlar birbirlerinin sorunlarını dinledikçe ve çözüm aramaya çalıştıkça, kendi hayatları için de çözümler bulmaya başlamış, bu sayede duygusal anlamda da destek görmüşlerdir. Kadınlar arası dayanışma, kolektif yapılabilecek bir işin öncülüğünü taşıyabilir. Bu yüzden kadınlar arası dayanışmaya her programda önem verilmelidir. Kadınlar arası dayanışma programların hepsinde çoğu zaman bahsedilen bir konudur. Bundan bahsetmek ve kadınlara bunun önemini anlatmak başlı başına ne kadar önemli olsa da, kadınlara bunu uygulayabilecekleri bir ortam sağlamak da çok önemlidir. Devamı olmayan veya ders dışında bir arada aktivitesi bulunmayan programlardan kadınların faydalanması daha sınırlı olmaktadır.

Formal olmayan eğitimlerin içeriği ve bu sırada yapılan tartışmalar kadınlara birçok fayda sağlamıştır. Kadınların kendi anlatımları dışında, kolaylaştırıcıların anlatımları da bu çalışmada incelenmiştir. Bu yolla, formal olmayan eğitim seanslarında kullanılan metodlar incelenmiş, literatür ile uyumluluğu sorgulanmıştır. Kadınların bu eğitimlerden tam olarak faydalanması için bu metodların da sorgulanması, zaman içinde yenilenmesi ve literatürde bahsedilen metodlar ile kıyaslanması gerekmektedir.

Başlıca önemli unsurlardan biri, kadınların katılımını sağlayan bir metod kullanmaktır. Bu çalışmada görüşülen tüm kolaylaştırıcılar, kadınların katılımının öneminin farkında olduklarını ve bunu eşitli yöntemlerle uyguladıklarını belirtmişlerdir. Yalnızca

anlatacakları konu çok teknik olduğu zaman, kolaylaştırıcılar daha çok tek taraflı bir anlatım benimsediklerini söylemişlerdir.

Kadınları güçlendirmede önemli metodlardan olan kadınların katılımını sağlamak diğer metodlarla yakından ilintilidir. Kadınları eleştirel düşünmeye sevk etmek, kadınların deneyimlerini ve ihtiyaçlarını göz önünde bulundurmak, diyalog temelli bir çalışma sağlamak sayılabilecek önemli unsurlardandır. Bu unsurları göz önünde bulundurarak, fazla yönlendirmeci olmayan sorular sorulmuştur. Alınan yanıtların çoğu kadınları katmaya çalıştıklarını, tek taraflı bir anlatımdan çok diyalog temelli bir yaklaşım uyguladıklarını söylemişlerdir.

Diyalog ile bağlantılı olarak, hiyerarşi de yıkılmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu programlara katılan birçok kadın dezavantajlı bölgelerden gelmektedirler. Eğitimciler ve kadınların arasında herhangi bir hiyerarşik ilişki oluşmaması için, eğitimciler birçok yöntem uygulamışlardır. Öncelikle kıyafetlerine dikkat etmişler, fazla dikkat çekici aksesuarlar kullanmamaya çalışmışlardır. En çok etkili olan yöntem ise kolaylaştırıcıların kendi hayat hikayelerinden örnekler vermesi olarak tespit edilmiştir. Katılımcı kadınlar özellikle bu konuya değinmiş ve böyle bir tarzı olan kolaylaştırıcılara daha yakın olabilmişlerdir.

Bunun yanında önemli bir diğer nokta ise kadınların deneyimlerini ve ihtiyaçlarını göz önünde bulundurmaktır. Kadınların deneyimleri ve ihtiyaçları iki noktada önem taşır. Birincisi, projeler kadınların ihtiyaçlarına göre planlanmalı ve şekillendirilmedir. Bu aşağıdan yukarıya bir süreç oluşturur. Öncelikle kadınlara sorularak proje yapılmalı ve projenin içeriği buna göre oluşturulmalıdır. Bu noktaya en çok *Kozadan İpeğe*'de önem verilmiştir. Kadınlara vakıf mı kooperatif mi istedikleri sorulmuş ve buna göre yol alınmıştır.

İkincisi, kadınların deneyimleri ve ihtiyaçları proje süresince de önemlidir. Örneğin *Polatlı'*da kadınlar arası sorunları çözmek için daha sonradan KİHEP de programa eklenmiştir. *Kozadan İpeğe* ise kadınların sorunlarını çözmeleri için psikolog eşliğinde terapi seansları düzenlemiştir.

Kadınların deneyimleri ve ihtiyaçları formal olmayan eğitim seansları süresince de dikkate alınmalıdır. Bu, kadınların deneyimlerini daha büyük sosyal gerçekliklere

bağlamaları ve daha iyi anlamaları açısından çok önemlidir. Örneğin ekonomik şiddetten bahsedilirken, kadının bunu yaşamda tanıyabilmesi ve tanımlayabilmesi için, gerçek hayattan örnekler verilmeli, kadınların kendi hayat deneyimleri dinlenmelidir. Kadınların deneyimlerine bağlanmayan konular unutulacak, kadınlar için bir önem teşkil etmeyecektir. Bu yüzden mutlaka kadınların kendi deneyimleri sorulmalı, hayat hikayelerinden parçalar dinlenmeli ve tartışılan konular arasında bağlantı kurulmalıdır.

Kadınların aynı zamanda sorgulama yapmalarını da sağlamak gerekir. Bu metod, eleştirel düşünme ile yakından ilintilidir. Kadınlara tek taraflı bir ders anlatımı yapıldığında bir süre sonra sıkılmaya başlayacaklar ve hayatlarında bunu nerede uygulayacaklarını bilemediklerinden unutup gidecektirler. Öte yandan, aynı zamanda kadınlara da sorgulatarak yapılan bir formal olmayan eğitim, onların kendilerine dönmelerini sağlayacaktır. Bu yolla, hayatlarında daha önce problem olduğunu fark etmedikleri sorunlarla yüzleşecek, kendilerini ve toplumu sorgulayacak ve bu sorunlara çözüm bulunması gerektiğini anlayacaktırlar.

Kadınların sorunlara çözüm bulması, bilgi ile ve tartışarak kazanılacak bir özelliktir ancak bunun uygulaması her zaman o kadar kolay olmayabilir. Daha önce kolektif ve toplu politik hareketlerden bahsederken söylendiği gibi, kadınların bireysel güçlenmenin ötesine geçmeleri ve toplumu değiştirmeleri gerekir. Bunun gerekliliğini gösteren başlıca kanıtlardan birisi ise kadınların eve döndüklerinde yine ikincil konumda kaldıkları, bildiklerini uygulamakta zorluk yaşadıklarıdır. Bu programlara katılan kadınların hepsi toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliğinin farkındadır ve bunun değişmesi gerektiğini bilir. Ancak yine büyük çoğunluğunun anlattığına göre, eve döndüklerinde cinsiyete dayalı iş bölümü hala devam etmekte, kadınlar farkında olsalar da bunu engelleyememektedir. Bazı kadınlar mücadelenin bir işe yaramadığını görmüş ve vazgeçmiş, bazıları ise bir şekilde idare etmektedir.

Kadınlar her ne kadar bilinçlense de birçoğu hala ev işlerinin hepsini veya çoğunluğunu yapmaktadır. Bu da gösteriyor ki, bu programların yalnızca kadınlara yönelik olması veya toplumun değişmemesi, kadınların tam anlamıyla güçlenmesine engel yaratmaktadır. Bazı kadınlar bu programlara katılırken etrafındakiler tarafından küçümsenmiş ve ciddiye alınmamıştır. Toplumun hala kadınların gelişimini desteklemediği ve göz ardı ettiği aşikardır.

Kadınların cesaretlerinin çevreleri tarafından kırılmaya çalışılması sık rastlanan bir durumdur. Bu çalışmada da görüldüğü üzere, erkeklerin bu sürece dahil olmaları gerekir. Ancak o zaman kadınlar öğrendiklerini uygulayabilecekleri alanlar bulacak ve eşitliği yalnızca zihinlerinde yaşamak zorunda kalmayacaklardır. Böylece hem iş hayatına katılabilecekler, hem de ev işlerinde eşitsizlik yaşamayacaklardır.

Kadınlar ve kolaylaştırıcılar erkeklerin de bu sürece katılımını önemli bulmuşlardır. Özellikle kadınlar kendi deneyimlerinden yola çıktıklarında, mutlaka erkeklerinde bu süreçte olmaları gerektiğini söylemiş, aksi halde kadının sürecinin zorlaşacağını çeşitli şekillerde aktarmışlardır.

Bu çalışma, bireysel güçlenmeden sık sık bahsetmiş, hatta bunu en güçlü boyut olarak göstermiştir. Bu çalışmanın aldığı duruş, bireysel güçlenmenin toplumsal dönüşüme kadar uzanabilmesidir. Bunun için politik programlar gereklidir ve aynı zaman bireysel çabaların ötesinde kolektif oluşumlar zorunludur. İlerideki programlar için bu özellikler mutlaka göz önünde bulundurulmalıdır. Kadınlar evdeki hayatlarını bile değiştirmeye çalışırken, toplum ideolojilerinin engelleri ile karşılaşmaktadırlar. Her ne kadar iletişim becerileri, toplumun tüm katmanları ile konuşabilecek kadar geliştiyse de, becerilerinin pratikte sonuç alabilmesi için daha kapsamlı ve tüm cinsiyetlerin desteğini alan bir mücadele gerekmektedir.

Daha önce de bahsedildiği gibi kadınların kolektif hareketleri eksik gözükse de, kadınlar bireysel anlamda oldukça harekete geçmişlerdir. Önceden çoğu ev kadınıdır ve bu durumlarını hepsi olumsuz cümlelerle belirtmiştir. Dört duvar arasında olarak betimledikleri ve evde kaldıkları günlerden çoğu olumsuz duygularla bahsetmiştir. Programa katıldıktan sonraki zamanlarını kıyasladıklarında büyük değişimlerden bahsetmişler, evden kurtuldukları için ne kadar mutlu olduklarını detaylı bir şekilde anlatmışlardır.

Hiçbir kadın evde kaldığı zamanları olumlu bir şekilde hatırlamamış, üretemedikleri ve depresif hissettikleri bir zaman dilimi olarak anlatmışlardır. İki büyük programın özelliği olan ekonomik aktiviteler de onlara çok iyi gelmiş, hemen sonuç alamasalar da kendi paralarını kazanabilecekleri bir yol açıldığından bahsetmişlerdir. Kadınların bilgi anlamında gelişimi yanında, aynı zamanda ekonomik olarak da belirli bir

harekete sahip olmaları, kendi söylediklerine göre, özgüven ve iş yapma becerilerini arttırmıştır.

Programdan sonra artık birçok işi başarabileceklerini fark etmişler, bundan sonra da eskisi gibi özgüvensiz olamayacaklarını belirtmişlerdir. Kısaca, formal olmayan eğitimlerin yanında, kadınlara başka aktivite ve ortamlar sağlamak, onların gelişen beceri ve düşüncelerini daha da iyiye desteklemektedir. Önceden pasif olan kadınlar artık fikirlerin, söylemekten çekinmemeye başlamış, önce eşlerine karşı daha rahat davranabilmiş, ardından da toplumdaki farklı otorite figürleri dahil herkesle rahatça iletişim kurabilmeye başlamışlardır.

Kadının güçlenmesi sürecinde karşılaşılan tek engel alanı bu değildir. Kadınlar da kadınların hayatını zorlaştırabilmekte, özellikle kapsamlı ve uzun programlarda aralarında çeşitli sorunlar çıkabilmektedir. *Kozadan İpeğe* ve *Polatlı* kadınların birbirlerine olan düşmanlıklarıyla devam etmiş, kimi zaman bu sorunlar çözülmüş kimi zaman ise devam etmiştir. Kolaylaştırıcıların da söylediklerine dayanarak, bu tarz sorunlar genelde ekonomik boyutlar girmeye başladığı zaman kendini göstermektedir. Bu programın kapanmasına kadar gidebilecek bir tehlike yarattığından, bu tarz projelerin planlanması aşamasında mutlaka dikkate alınmalıdır. Kadınlar arası dayanışmanın her daim var olduğu miti, bu tarz durumlarla yıkılmaktadır.

Kadınlar toplumda gömülmüş bulunan eşitsizliğe dayanan ideolojilerden tarihten bu yana hep etkilenmişlerdir. Bu eşitsizlik hem özel hem de kamusal alanda kadını daima kısıtlayan bir durum oluşturmuştur. Kadınların güçlenmesi için planlanan programlar, kadınların bireysel gelişimi dışında, toplumun genel sorunlarına da değinmelidir. Bu sorunlara değinebilmek için politik bir duruş sağlamak, kadınları da dayanışma yoluyla bir arada tutup bu politik duruşu savunmaları için desteklemek gerekir.

Bu noktada yol gösterici olarak eğitimler kullanılabilir ve eğitimler sırasında çeşitli aktiviteler ile kadınların kendilerine olan güveni pekiştirilebilir. Psikolojik olarak güçlenen kadınlar birbirlerini etkileyecekler ve daha da büyük işler başarabileceklerdir.

Bu çalışma gösterdi ki, kadınların bireysel olarak güçlenmesi farkındalık arttırıcı birçok programla mümkündür. Bu aşamaların forma olmayan eğitim seansı içinde bile

olsa oyunlar ve aktiviteler de kadınları cesaretlendirerek uygulanması gerekir. Kadınlar katılarak ve konuşarak kendi hayatlarındaki problemleri çözebilir duruma gelebilirler. Toplumu anlayarak, güç ilişkilerini idrak ederek ve kendi yaşamları ile bağlantı kurarak belirli bir algı ve farkındalığa ulaşabilirler. Bütün bu incelenen programlar da bunu doğrulamıştır.

Kadınların ilişkisel olarak güçlenmesinde her ne kadar özgüven ve iletişim becerilerinin rolü büyük olsa da, kalıcı bir kadın erkek eşitliğinin sağlanması için erkeklerin de bu sürece katılımı ve kadın erkek eşitliğini desteklemesi gerekir. Bu çalışmada kadınların ve kolaylaştırıcıların en çok yakındıkları konulardan biri budur. Kadınlar için yapılan güçlendirici programlar bu yüzden bir yere kadar etkili olabilmektedir. Yine bununla alakalı olarak, toplumsal sınırlamalara karşı durabilmek için, kadınların bireyselin de ötesinde politik birlikleri önem kazanır.

Bu çalışmada incelenen kapsamlı programların gösterdiğine göre, kadınların ekonomik güçlenmesi büyük önem taşır. Ekonomik güçlenme hem kendilerine özgüvenleri açısından önemlidir, hem de eşlerine bağımlılıklarını yok etmek anlamında kritiktir. Bu demek değildir ki her program ekonomik özellik taşımalı. Yine de, kadının tam olarak güçlenmesinden bahsedebilmek için maddi gücü mutlaka dikkate alınmalıdır. Bu aşamada her zaman uzun süreli ve kapsamlı programlar kadınların hayatında daha uzun süreli etkili olabilmişlerdir.

İleride yapılacak formal olmayan eğitim çalışmalarında sürenin değişim için büyük önem taşıdığı hatırlanmalıdır. Sürenin yanında programların kapsamı da çok önemlidir. Kadınlara her program öncesi ihtiyaçları sorulmalı ve programlar buna göre planlanmalıdır. Sona erdikten sonra bile kadınlarla görüşülmeye devam edilmeli, yaşamda ne noktaya geldikleri araştırılmalıdır. Her kadın program bitimi ve sonrasında programı özgürce değerlendirebilmelidir. Ancak bu yollarla gerçekten etkili bir çalışma yapılabilir. Bu çalışmalarda toplumsal dönüşümün nasıl olacağı da tartışılmalı, bireysel güçlenmenin ötesine geçerek, daha sağlam bir kadın erkek eşitliği ve kadının güçlenmesi için, toplumsal değişime yönelik de planlar ve projeler hazırlanmalıdır. Hali hazırda güçlü olan psikolojik güçlenme alanı, kolektif güçlenme alanına doğru kaymalı, kadınlar uzun sürede ve aşama aşama politik olarak toplum yapıları ile mücadele edebilecek duruma getirilmelidir.