

**“THERE IS NO PLACE FOR HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE IN MY  
WORKPLACE!” SECOND PHASE PROJECT  
PERCEPTION ANALYSIS REPORT**

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## Executive Summary

Phase One of "There is no place for harassment and violence in my workplace (İşyerimde Taciz ve Şiddete Yer Yok)" project carried out by YANINDAYIZ Association with support of Friedrich Naumann Foundation was completed in 2022. In Phase One of this project that encompassed blue-color workers in textile industry, a web-based questionnaire was developed on awareness of violence and harassment and changes in gender-based perception were measured. Studies on phase two of the project whose phase one had been completed started in June 2023. In the scope of this project, blue-collar workers of 10 textile producers determined in cities selected to represent the 7 regions of Türkiye makeup of the target audience. The cities selected towards purpose and context of the project are **İzmir, Ordu (2), Batman (2), Adana, İstanbul, Eskişehir, Hakkâri** and **Sakarya**. The fact that the project covers cities in 7 different regions makes it even more valuable. Therefore, this enables regions can be compared within themselves and among each other (Eastern Anatolia, Black Sea, Southeastern Anatolia, Marmara, Central Anatolia, Mediterranean, Aegean). In addition, Izmir and Istanbul that are two metropolitan cities were also compared in the scope of metropolitan cities and findings were noted. In the study, **1291 blue-collar workers** at the determined companies in these cities were given trainings on gender-based violence and awareness of workplace violence. Therefore, in order to contribute to termination of violence and harassment against women and girls that are the main targets of the project and that are affected from consequences of inequality the most, awareness tests were applied pre-and post- training and seminar activities.

A total of 27 questions towards measuring effectiveness of awareness raising trainings including **4 demographic questions and 23 questions measuring gender awareness at work, social life, family, and education** were determined. The questions were subjected to cross validation within themselves. Therefore, it was aimed to minimize deception of blue-collar workers while responding to questions.

When analysis of pre-and post-tests applied as a result of trainings given to blue-collar workers at 10 factories in the scope of the project is considered, it was encouraging to see that perspectives of many people towards gender equality was changed in the positive direction and the project fulfilled its purpose. The positive change in perceptions of male

blue-collar workers sharing a workspace with women is particularly remarkable. Thus, we underline that steps that seem minor, this positive effect that is the outcome of these trainings given on gender equality and awareness of gender-based harassment and violence are important in ensuring general gender equality in Türkiye and hope that it would be useful both for participants that received training and for destruction of patriarchal perception in the society. This change that is visible in all findings signals that trainings that would play a significant part in ensuring gender equality can be provided to all institutions and organizations to increase their extensive impact on society. Gender perception is not an absolute norm, but a fluid and re-constructible phenomenon. In this context, studies such as this must be multiplied and supported.

## **Findings**

1291 participants benefited from in person trainings given at 10 factories including one each at 7 different regions of Türkiye and two factories at 2 regions each. 1140 participants solved pre-and post-tests. This 1140 participants included 46% women and 54% men.

Our training provided across Türkiye on prevention of workplace violence and harassment actually targets profiling gender-based discrimination in society as could be understood from the test it applies. A total of 27 questions including four on demographics were asked with three-response system in the beginning and end of training in order to understand if trainings make a difference. Participants responded to gender-based provisions as **correct-no idea-wrong**.

Questions had an understandable style for every participant while they were formed from discourses and phenomena that continue and recreate gender roles, attitudes, and behaviors in the patriarchal social order. Therefore, the perception against fixed provisions in the survey form was also presented in its general terms and became understandable. Thus, it was possible to make a sociological observation on whether trainings on de facto awareness were effective on pre- and post-tests.

While we were trying to ensure awareness of blue-collar workers whose highest level of education were secondary school by making our presence felt at the most solitary parts of the society with our trainings without denying achievements in the Turkish society on gender

equality, we tried to extend our reach from metropolitan cities to cities, from cities in the west to eastern regions. When we consider the post-tests of training we applied at cities with low scores on Gender Index in Türkiye, we caused a considerable turn towards positive in Batman and Hakkâri. As a general example, in Batman the number of persons that responded **correct** to the question ***“Fathers have the last say while a woman selects whom to marry”*** decreased from 40 to 6 in post-test, presenting an encouraging scene. At the same time the number of persons in the same city that responded **correct** to the provision ***“Women must choose to remain silent in a discussion”*** decreased from 29 to 3, demonstrating the change trainings cause on perception. Again, in Hakkâri the 16 persons that responded **correct** to the perception ***“some professions are unsuitable for women”*** said in post-test that this was completely **wrong**.

It could be argued that project outcomes have 3 outlines, that are main themes. Therefore, we tried to analyze our questions by making them thematic within themselves. The first one is **findings on professional life**, second is the group of questions that constitute the main theme of our project **workplace harassment and violence perception** and lastly, findings on **family and social life**. In the next sections you will find content dedicated to these 3 themes.

### ***Findings on professional life***

The 3 questions below validate each other among themselves. Therefore, three questions shall be analyzed as a block. These are basic questions and were very useful in determination of whether women’s presence in professional life was in line with general provisions of the society.

- There are unsuitable professions for women.
- Women must not work if men have sufficient financial means.
- Women and men must receive equal pay.

The mantra “equal pay for equal work” carries the core of women’s movement in the world. It is based on the idea everyone has the right to equal pay for equal work without discrimination. Therefore, these questions measure this core that constitutes the basis of women’s movement. In this context, following the training in Sakarya, predominantly women blue-collar workers of a factory were given training and some remarkable data were

obtained. Improvement in every provision was in 40% to 50%. It was noted that participant men in the city were generally egalitarian and 40% improvement was achieved in men and 22% improvement was achieved in women in every provision.

### ***Workplace harassment and violence perception***

- I was harassed at workplace.
- I would take legal action if I were harassed at workplace.
- I would directly go and tell my employer if I am harassed at workplace.
- I was subjected to violence at workplace.
- I would take legal action if I were subjected to violence at workplace.
- I would directly go and tell my employer if I am subjected to violence at workplace.

It is useful to assess violence and harassment separately although they are collected under a single heading. Otherwise, perception of and commenting on violence as a mere physical action would bring down its meaning while also limiting our perception. While it is easier to detect and understand harassment for it—mostly – includes a physical action (verbal, physical), discovering other types of violence may not be as easy. Particularly, discovering and ascribing meaning to psychological and emotional violence at work is dependent on information and accumulation. Unknowing what we are exposed to deprives us of the ability to describe it. The training we give to participants play a major role and ensure benefits at this point. At pre-and post-tests it was noted that responses given by mostly women to **“I was harassed and subjected to violence at work”** questions changed. This demonstrates a change in perception of violence and harassment in minds of participants. For instance, when we compare these two questions in the pre-and post-tests, **the number of participants that said they were harassed and subjected to violence increased in post-test in Izmir while this number decreased in Ordu.** Moving from here, as we underlined earlier it is important that persons in such cases define what they are exposed to and the role of training is undeniable. For instance, a person that was heavily subjected to psychological violence must be able to define psychological violence first. In this sense, we were pleased to get in return for trainings. In parallel to this, considering other questions above in pre-and post-tests, change was noted in responses.

### **Findings on family and social life**

- Father has the last say when a woman selects whom to marry.
- A woman can go out alone at night.
- Women must be protected by their families irrespective of their ages.

Marxist feminism ascribes women's freedom to their economic freedom, therefore participation in professional life. With reference to this, attitude of the woman in professional life towards herself and her own sex is important. Because the outlook that seeks the main problem in economic concerns does not foresee self-alienation of women. The data presented below in our study support this argument. Data we obtain in this study underline the importance of our effort while it also opens the door to a feminist criticism. Considering the data we obtain; in pre-test many participants including women approve being accompanied by men in both their personal lives and in public and social life. The patriarchy alienates women to the second sex while also drawing them a new form. Here, women are defenseless and in need of protection. In Beauvoir's words, patriarchy that wrote all of history single handedly and left its fingerprints once again formed women in need of protection. Data we obtained in the study draw attention to this point. Consequently, in the pre-test we applied, participants describe that male accompanying that is a subtext of the questions above is required for women. Although this situation varies in percentage between regions, it is seen in all regions. Although improvements were seen in the post-test, there were participants who considered this situation was necessary. Still, even at the lowest point, a 67% improvement can be mentioned. For instance, **"Fathers have the last say when a woman selects whom to marry"** and **"A woman can go out alone at nights"** questions present significant positive differences between pre-and post-test, **"Women should always be protected by their families irrespective of their ages"** question did not give rise to as sharp differences. This may be due to the fact that patriarchy always pacifies women by placing them in the "protected" position, and experiencing this break would help women continue their existence in a much more courageous way in professional and public life. The described improvement is observed much more clearly in Ordu, Istanbul, Adana, and Eskişehir cities.

- It is sexual harassment for a woman to be drawn into a sexual conversation that she does not want to participate.
- A man cannot abuse a woman if she really does not want to.

In these two questions it is noted that the concepts of abuse and harassment are confused, generally many participants respond negatively to these questions; while after the trainings distinctions between these concepts were clarified and there was improvement. When these provisions are considered based on region, it is possible to argue that the act of silence is generally attributed to women in society. While women are generally expected to remain silent in discussions, it is obvious that this assigns to women a characteristic that actually invites mansplaining. While a total of 67 people in Ordu, 37 of whom were women, approved this question regarding the dress code, in post-test this number decreased from 52 to 13 in one company. In other provinces, it decreased from 15 to 0. Similarly, the results in almost all cities, especially Batman and Adana, are similar.

Results to **"Women must choose to remain silent in a discussion"** question are also observed to be on behalf of women and against women. At this point it would be appropriate to apply to the literature and discuss the concept of sisterhood in the feminist perspective. So much so that the women who are the subjects of the 3 questions above were also pacified by the female participants. For example, in a study at a factory in Ordu, 62% of the participants who answered the question **"Women must choose to remain silent in a discussion"** was **correct** were women. Although there was an improvement in post-test at the same location, the improvement detected in male participants was 86% and higher than that in female participants.

The provision groups below are de facto provisions that bring with them violence against women. The fact that these provisions exist in the general society affect lives of individuals that continue their lives in home-professional life in every aspect. Therefore, general gender equality training is also provided in trainings to ensure beginning of preventing workplace harassment.

- Violence is in the nature of men.
- Women who say they have been subjected to violence usually exaggerate.
- News of violence is exaggerated in the media.

- Violence against women is acceptable in some cases.
- Domestic violence is a cause for divorce.
- Measures taken to combat violence against women are sufficient.

However, violence is legitimized by referring to men's nature and disposition. While the concept of violence is missing here, existing news of violence are considered as exaggerations. In the post-test before our training, we generally observe that women agree with these provisions.

## **Prominent Findings**

As could be observed when we compare Phase One report with Phase Two report, we could access an increased number of cities in Phase Two while there is a considerable improvement and positive outcome in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia and relatively traditional Black Sea Regions. However, while concepts of workplace harassment and violence seem confused in the pre-test, the improvement in the post-test demonstrate that the distinction between these concepts was made and presented to participants clearly in trainings.

## **Action Plan Towards Preventing Gender Inequality**

Reciting the suggested solutions, we underlined in Phase One of our project is useful since they would now become application and action plan. Progressing cumulatively would also enable us to think about our additional solution suggestions. Therefore, it is important to improve this and following trainings, reinforce corporate applications post- training.

- 1-** Providing training in intervals in modules from A to Z might help their absorption. For instance, the first module may give training on a general gender equality and in the second stage of this module drama play can be conducted with small and randomly selected groups in workshops. Gender roles of men and women may be changed to observe the impact of being contrary to expectations on persons and achieve transformation.
- 2-** Gender equality and diversity that may emerge with destruction of gender roles and expectations of men and women are important in training on awareness of gender



equality, gender-based harassment and violence. Thus, it can be an added value ton on-violent visibility of men and women in the blue-collar category in the private sector.

- 3-** Trainings may develop in a snowball effect by periodical monitoring and testing by NGOs of institutions and organizations that received trainings, ensuring training is given to newly recruited employees.
- 4-** It is important to ensure they become aware of legal rights and freedoms, describe how to ensure privacy especially in harassment notifications. Thus, it would be useful to increase legal based rights training outside cities/districts where awareness parts of these training modules are high, even to create one of the modules mentioned in suggested solution 1.
- 5-** While it is clear that all these trainings are functional, a point that must not be forgotten is that what repeats is settled. Pedagogues agree on repeating training topics. Therefore, trainings provided demolished a taboo and made small and big changes while not all individuals, that is participants receive this training to the same extent. Thus, trainings must be periodically repeated to ensure they are absorbed and inured.
- 6-** Creation by workplaces that give such trainings of gender-based tests in recruitments, giving gender equality trainings to workers that receive under a certain score followed by post-tests are effective and important in ensuring a sustainable gender equality model at workplace. Therefore, creation of tests by beneficiaries of this project with joint decision and keep them in monitoring can be facilitating factors as well as being in a state of monitoring brings not refraining from this sustainability.
- 7-** In order for all these solution suggestions for preventing workplace harassment and violence to multiply in a water wave, NGOs, municipalities (including city councils, women's assemblies in local government) must work together to pave the way for cooperations, devise gender equality policies together. Therefore, as mentioned in Contract no 190 of ILO and its advisory jurisdiction numbered 206, Ministry of Labor, other relevant ministries, municipalities, social parties, press and NGOs can work together, plan, and act towards implementation.

## Suggested Solutions

If we need to mention 3 suggested solutions that must be included:

- 1- Gender equality starts from family that is the smallest unit of society and spreads into macro units such as politics, education. Therefore, provision of this and all following trainings periodically and in person are important in terms of **sustainability** of trainings.
- 2- As another leg of sustainability, **development of corporate policies with gender equality focus** and application of each in harmony with **corporate vision and mission** comes forward as indispensable to ensure gender equality is **permanent, prevalent, and formative**.
- 3- It is important that factories providing training in phase two including phase one, are **monitored** by trainers every six months.
- 4- Operation of **"open door policy"** by Ministry of Labor including all other relevant ministries as described in Contract no 190 and advisory jurisdiction no 206 of ILO and monitoring of this application are important in terms of improvement of project outcomes.