

## “Justice versus Equality: governmental discourse regarding gender”

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### ABSTRACT

To be presented under the “Society and Sociology”> Gender studies section.

After the 1990s, Turkey has experienced various legal reforms to improve gender equality, including the Law for the protection of the family, law 4320, in 1998. In the 2000s, when Turkey showed intent to access the EU, several reforms to fulfill EU directives, especially in terms of gender equality policies were initiated. The Turkish Constitution was changed in 2004 by adding the following statement: “women and men have equal rights. The state is obliged with the realization of this equality” (Dedeoğlu, 2009, p. 48-9). Parallel to external pressures, Turkish feminist movements also pushed the government (Ertürk, 2006; Aldıkaçtı Marshall, 2008) to “make gender policy amendments” (Aldıkaçtı Marshall, 2013, p 11). Notwithstanding all the aforementioned attempts to ensure gender equality, “a woman is murdered, on average, every two days” (Ihsan Cetin 2015, p. 349).

This presentation will analyze some of the legal reforms aimed to promote gender equality and to eliminate gender-based violence, a rampant problem in Turkey, which have been passed by the current government. Namely, the following items will be analyzed: article 10 of the Constitution, a few articles on the Penal Code, the Labor act of Turkey (law 4857), and the law to protect family and prevent violence against women (law 6284). By utilizing feminist critical analysis, this presentation will attempt to extrapolate how political discourse perceives womanhood, violence, and gender in an attempt to comprehend whether those policies enact “cultural violence,” which Galtung (1990) identifies as “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence -exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art ... that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (p. 291).

**Keywords:** cultural violence; feminist critical discourse analysis; gender equality; gender-based violence; legal reforms.