

Disentangling the Causes of Gender Inequality in a Muslim Society: The Case of Turkey

Abstract:

This study investigates gender equality in a predominantly Muslim country, Turkey, which has had secular political traditions since the 1920s. Empirical studies consistently show that there is significant gender inequality in Muslim societies. However, we do not have clear answers about where roots of the inequality exactly lie: Is it Islamic culture, is it the Islamic law that has been the foundation of laws in many Muslim countries, is it traditionalism, or is it patriarchal norms? The goal of this paper is to disentangle the effects of patriarchy, religion and politics on gender (in)equality, arguing that secular political and legal reforms towards gender equality provide only limited empowerment, and that attaining women's rights *de jure* does not guarantee gender equality. Through the analysis of individual level Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) data for Turkey, the paper shows that religion and religiosity affect gender inequality through patriarchal attitudes. In order to eradicate gender inequality, policies should address the factors that feed into patriarchal attitudes and norms, such as traditionalism, education and enforceability of state policies.

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Introduction

In the aftermath of September 11th 2001, there has been a surge in public and academic interest in Muslim societies.¹ The prevalence of authoritarianism and gender inequality in these societies received particular attention. Accompanied by the images of Afghan women in *burqas* and Bush administration's declared intention to "save" them, restrictions on women's rights and status in Muslim societies and the role of the religion in women's experiences were questioned.² Empirical studies have found that Muslim countries score lower on indicators of favorable views or actual outcomes on gender equality;³ however, the experiences of Muslim women are far from being invariable. The levels of gender equality experienced by women vary within the Muslim world and within each country. How do we explain these differences within the same religious context? Similarly, where women have legal rights, why do we observe differences in how women exercise these rights within the same legal-political context?

This article investigates the causal connections between Islam and gender inequality through a quantitative examination of individual level variations in gender inequality, patriarchal attitudes and norms, traditionalism and socioeconomic factors. I argue that Islam, by itself, does not produce gender inequality. My empirical analysis shows that gender inequality is much more closely associated with the persistence of patriarchal norms and attitudes. Patriarchal norms and attitudes are, in turn, sustained by traditionalism and socioeconomic factors, and not religion or religiosity only.

Gender inequality is a multi-dimensional concept, which encompasses inequalities in physical status, opportunities, and participation.⁴ Based on the observation that equality in the

public domain does not necessarily reflect into the private domain, I focus on equality in the context of household relationships, rather than in public economic or political contexts. In order to disentangle the different factors that are associated with gender inequality, I use individual level data from Turkish Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS hereafter), which includes a module on household relationships and domestic violence.⁵ I use three-stage simultaneous least squares regression modeling to accommodate for possible endogeneities while identifying the associates of gender inequality.

Turkey is a critical case for studying gender equality in the Islamic context. It is a predominantly Muslim country where women do have substantial legal rights, but these rights are not exercised uniformly across individuals or regions. Choice of Turkey as the case allows me to rule out factors such as authoritarianism, *Sharia* based legal system, oil dominated economy and Arab traditions as possible explanations. Turkey has been going through political and economic transformation since the 1920s; however there are regional discrepancies in the pace of change. The regional variations make Turkey a quasi-experimental setting for investigating the causal mechanisms related to gender equality.

In the remainder of the paper, I will discuss the concept of gender inequality, review political science work on gender equality, including those focusing on its relationship with religion, elaborate on the constraints on women's decisionmaking, and present a data analysis that investigates the extent these constraints affect gender equality within the family.

Gender Inequality and Muslim Societies

Gender inequality may manifest itself in any aspect of life and in any point throughout a person's life cycle. Inequalities concerning the physical status affect the health and well being of women. These inequalities may begin at the fetal stage with birth preference for boys⁶ and

continue through childhood with inequalities in health care and nutrition, resulting in life expectancy differentials between men and women. Inequalities in opportunities, caused by gender bias in basic schooling, higher education, employment or job advancement lead to gender differentials in social, economic and political status. Inequality in participation often results from restrictions on women's presence in social life, economic activity or politics. Those who cannot participate are deprived from the benefits of participation, such as income or political voice. Advances in participation in one realm do not guarantee advances in others.⁷

It is necessary to distinguish between equality in private and public domains. Equality in the public domain does not necessarily translate to equality in the domestic domain; a woman who participates in all aspects of life may still be financially dependent on the men in the household or she may be expected to perform "women's duties" at home despite contributing equally to the family budget.⁸ The unequal status of women at home may spill over to the public domain and cause inequality even if the formal rules require equality. In Uzbekistan, ironically during the 8th of March women's day celebrations at a university, I observed male professors expect the female professor to serve the tea and say "Won't you dance a little so we can be entertained?" Can we assume that the male and female professors are equal in this institutional setting just because they hold the same official title?

As is true for any other form of inequality based on identities, understanding the roots of gender inequality is imperative in order to determine the right tools and methods to eradicate it. Attaining gender equality is not only a normative goal, but it also has positive externalities in political and economic development.⁹ What is the best way to use our limited resources efficiently to achieve this goal? Should the target be men or women, young girls or adults,

working women or mothers? Should the efforts be focused on passing legislation towards equal opportunities or towards secular reforms?

Much of political science work on gender equality has focused on mass public attitudes about gender equality and women's political participation, especially women's representation.¹⁰ Studies on public attitudes mostly examine Western Europe and the U.S., with recent contributions on Latin America.¹¹ Results on Western Europe consistently show that age, education and employment are significant predictors of feminist attitudes. According to Banaszak and Plutzer, individual religiosity has a negative effect although religiosity in the respondents' environment is not.¹² Cross-national differences turn out to be significant, hinting that development of profeminist attitudes may be facing different constraints in each country.¹³

Studies on women's participation and representation try to explain the variation in the percentage of women representatives in parliaments using national level data.¹⁴ For example, McDonagh finds that democratic, egalitarian principles, combined with welfare benefits targeting women (e.g. child care), enhance women's presence in national legislatures.¹⁵ In a similar vein, Kenworthy and Malami find "the structure of the electoral system, the party composition of government, the timing of women's suffrage, women's share in professional occupations, and cultural attitudes" to be the determinants of gender equality in political representation.¹⁶ Viterna, Fallon and Backfield analyze developed and developing countries separately and argue that different set of factors explain women's representation in the two groups of countries.¹⁷ They find that existing models are good at explaining female representation in developed countries, but we need new models to understand the outcomes in developing countries.¹⁸

Most studies on gender issues in the Muslim world are qualitative single or comparative case studies. Quantitative studies have included gender inequality as an explanatory variable. For example, Steven Fish, who shows that countries where Islam is the dominant religion are on average less democratic, argues that subordination of women in the Muslim tradition is the causal link between religion and regime type.¹⁹ On the other hand, Donno and Russett have argued that the causal relationship between gender inequality and regime type is spurious; that is, Islamic and especially Arab tradition produces both authoritarian regimes and gender inequality.²⁰

Quantitative studies where gender inequality is the dependent variable seek to understand whether Islam, Islamic culture, or Islamic values had any effect on the attitudes towards gender inequality. Studies based on the World Values Surveys (WVS) found that Muslims do not differ from non-Muslims in their democratic values, but the real “clash of civilizations” is on the views on gender equality, gay and women’s rights.²¹ What is it about Islam or Islamic culture that produces these outcomes? If Muslim countries became democratic and/or post-industrial like the countries that are most advanced in terms of gender equality, would that make a difference? Results of research on secularism by the same group of authors suggest that the answer is likely to be no. While some studies, which have an “all good things go together” approach to modernization, include gender equality among outcomes expected to improve with modernization,²² others focus on the persistence of religiosity despite modernization and find that gender equality is an outcome that is directly affected by religiosity and norms of different denominations.²³

Blaydes and Linzer’s study on women’s support for fundamentalist Islam also uses the WVS data, but they focus on Muslim countries included in the survey.²⁴ Although their

dependent variable is not gender equality, they embed an important covariate, gender norms, into their operationalization of fundamentalism. Their analysis confirms the significant variation in views and ideologies within the Muslim world and among individual Muslims. Although they conflate gender norms, religiosity and political ideology (Islamism) in operationalizing fundamentalism, their latent class analysis on the fundamentalism indicators separates these effects out and groups Muslim individuals into “liberal-secular” “fundamentalist” “traditional” and “religious” classes. This result shows that religiosity, patriarchy and ideology are distinct factors, suggesting that we need to distinguish the effects of religion and patriarchy, and investigate which has a more substantial effect on gender equality. Finally, Blaydes and Linzer find that “poorly educated, unemployed, married, and low-social-class Muslim women are those most likely to hold fundamentalist beliefs,” which highlights the importance of economic factors in women’s choices.²⁵

The findings of quantitative political science work on gender equality suggest that we need more work on developing societies and we need to develop new tools and models while studying developing countries and Muslim societies. Looking at these societies with the same lenses that one uses for Western societies may yield a distorted picture.²⁶ Below, I will discuss the empirical foundations over which my following quantitative analysis is based.

How do Muslim Women Reconcile Islam and Gender Equality?

Conventional wisdom in the west and empirical studies may show that Islam has a negative association to gender equality; however, the two are not in conflict according to most women in Muslim societies. An analysis of what women of Muslim countries think about their rights, their place in their family and society, and the role of Islam in how they live their lives

yields a variety of responses.²⁷ These responses differ in how they reconcile religion and gender equality. Their main arguments can be summarized as follows.²⁸

Women's rights and equality can be achieved only under secularism: This argument accepts that there are certain values and practices in Islam and Islamic law that prohibit gender equality and women's full participation in life. They argue that practices such as seclusion (*purdah*), certain *Sharia* laws such as those on inheritance or divorce are unacceptable if the goal is gender equality. They call for total secularism in issues related to women's status in society, starting with legal reforms concerning women, especially family law. They do not necessarily oppose Islam itself nor piety, but they reject Islamism. These women subscribe to and are integrated to the western feminist movements, and strive for applying western type of feminism in their own societies.

Muslim women and their lives are misrepresented: This argument is also oriented towards western feminism, but appeals to the West to get beyond their misconceptions and misperceptions of the Muslims. According to them, many of the assumptions about Muslim women are false ("We do not all wear *burqas*") and things that are considered to be signs of oppression of Muslim women can be found, and are not considered oppressive elsewhere ("Muslim women socialize in women only groups, like women's clubs in the West."). The intention tends not to be engaging in the larger feminist movement on their own terms, but rather to show that Muslim women's situation is not "that bad."

*Muslim women should strive for equality in their authentic way:*²⁹ This argument takes the misrepresentation argument a step further with an anti-imperialist ideology. It says that Islam is authentic to Muslim societies and feminism is not. "The West" should not judge the Muslim women and their choices based on their own value systems, imposition of "feminism" is nothing

but cultural imperialism. Muslim women can find ways to improve their status in their societies in authentic ways that do not contradict the principles of their religion. This view is not entirely against homegrown secularism, although secularism is not seen as necessary.

*“True” Islam is neither patriarchal nor misogynist.*³⁰ This argument acknowledges the problems with women’s status in Muslim societies and their connections to religion. However, it rejects that Islam is “the problem.” It goes further to argue that the unfavorable situation of Muslim women is against Islamic principals because Islam is a religion of equality. Men are held responsible for misinterpreting Islam to suppress women. It is deemed possible to be good Muslims and achieve women’s rights through a correct interpretation of Islam. In a reformist spirit, it is argued that the patriarchal elements of the 7th-8th century Arab culture, which seeped into the religion, should be purged; religion should be reinterpreted in a way that it is consistent with the modern times. Those who subscribe to this view focus their efforts on revisiting the Qur’an and the *hadith* to show how they should be interpreted in a gender egalitarian way.

*Women are best under Islamic rule.*³¹ This argument has the biological differences between the sexes at its core, and says that women and men are created differently for a purpose. It accepts the current order as the way things should be, arguing that what Islam prescribes for women and their relationships with men and their societies is the best they could have: Women’s nature calls for a domestic life; employment outside of home, competing with men in the society are unnatural for women. Feminism is an invention of the men in the West and is based on the exploitation of women. Western women are forced to work against their will and to face difficult situations they are not naturally equipped to respond to, and Islam does not allow similar exploitation. They emphasize the importance of women’s role and responsibilities in the domestic domain.

How do we explain the variety in the way that religion interacts with the pursuit for gender equality? The varied responses of Muslim women to the gender related aspects of their religion are shaped by the sociopolitical system around them and the patriarchal “rules of the game” this system entails. We can assume that women want to have more say about their lives and families, but their responses and choices are still determined by other actors’ choices and the institutional constraints. Religion is but one aspect of the sociopolitical environment within which women make their choices. I elaborate about different factors shaping women’s choices below.

Religion, Religiosity and Women’s Choices

Religion and the constraints that religious observance entails need to be considered as a part of the larger body of constraints that women operate within. Religion is not merely a belief system, it is also a social identity and thus religious communities are subject to group dynamics.³² By definition, any signal or display of religiosity is a social phenomenon, it relays the information that the individual is conforming to the norms of the religious community and seeking social acceptance. An attention to religious rules and principles may factor into individual decision making process not for the fear of God or hope of heavenly bliss, but fears of group punishment or expected group rewards. In such cases, it becomes difficult to determine whether observed piousness is religiously or socially motivated. When identity group and religious community merge, ideological and ritual aspects of religiosity may become traits that are enforced by the group or religious sanctity may be utilized for maintaining the group and enforcing conformity to group’s social norms.

Islam has a strong communitarian aspect to it. There is no liturgy or institutional religious hierarchy; religion is essentially between the individual and Allah. However, Muslims

are part of an *ummah*; they need to exist in their Islamic community and perform their duties for the community (e.g. almsgiving). Social norms of the community often gain sanctity and conformity with these norms may become acts of piety.³³ How do we separate out the purely religious rules and norms from the social ones? This is particularly difficult in Islam because there are a lot of controversies about what the religion really requires, and interpretations of the scholars, the *ulama*, are not unanimous. Some core principles, the immutables like monotheism, are not disputed; however, there are many principles and practices that are subject to dispute, resulting in considerable variety in the practice of the religion and the laws based on this religion. In addition, there are different opinions about the relative importance of the various dimensions of religiosity. In this context, what religiosity entails varies within a country and across different countries.³⁴ “Nominal” Muslims (*abangan*) in Indonesia may claim to be good Muslims and call the “practicing” Muslims (*santri*) prayer-mat Muslims, while the *santri* challenge their religiosity emphasizing the ritual aspect of religiosity over the ideological. Under this uncertainty and complexity, there are various, disputed ways to be religious in Islam.

The uncertainties about religious rules and the communitarian aspect of the religion allow for traditionalism and religiosity to be entangled. Discussions of Muslim women have to be precise about the distinction between social norms and religious rules and about what religiosity exactly entails in the society in question. For example, the concept of “honor,” which places a wide array of restrictions on women’s social activities and sexuality, has little to do with religion, and honor killings are not motivated by religion.³⁵ Behavior and actions that “stain” the family honor are considered shameful not sinful. Premarital sex is not punished because it is adultery (*zina*), a punishable act under *Sharia*, but because it hurts the honor of the men,

reducing them to the position of male authorities that cannot keep their women under control and protect their chastity.

In societies where honor and shame dynamics are emphasized, women's religious observance and piousness do not necessarily map onto their image as virtuous, modest women, which is the essential quality expected of them.³⁶ Religiosity may be a sufficient condition for virtue, but it is not a necessary condition; it is generally understood that signals of religiosity are sometimes just for display, and reputation determines how these signals will be interpreted. Where a simple rumor can destroy the reputation of a woman, religiosity is not a guaranteed way of establishing modesty or virtue. As the case of religiosity-honor relationships make clear, it is difficult to distinguish the real source of the constraints on women's choices where group norms and religious rules are difficult to separate. If the enforcers of these constraints are the others in the society rather than the individual's own conscience, it is more appropriate to focus on the society and the place of women in that society to understand women's choices.

Patriarchy, Women's Patriarchy and Everyday Bargains

Patriarchy can be defined as a sociopolitical organization and associated power relationships that are based on and that favor male supremacy and dependence of women on men. Cultural norms and individual attitudes that favor patriarchy sustain patriarchy and thus gender inequality.³⁷ For example, if parents spend more resources on their sons' education assuming that the daughters are not capable of succeeding³⁸ and will not need too much education for doing housework; then the gender inequality in educational levels and skilled employment will persist.

Patriarchal norms and attitudes emphasize the "domestic nature" of women: their place is home, they are responsible for the home, they are mothers before anything else. A woman is

seen as some man's daughter, sister or wife, always in need of protection and guidance of a man, or in some cases a senior woman, who is responsible for her.³⁹ Even where traditional patriarchy is receding, women's biological differences are grounds for viewing them as inferior to or less capable than men. Boys and girls alike are socialized into these attitudes and norms, sustaining them through generations.

Women's patriarchy, which I define as women's adoption, utilization, and defense of patriarchal norms and attitudes, is a consequence of women's socialization in a patriarchal system and in turn sustains it. Examples of women's patriarchy may be found in different contexts: woman in managerial positions who are harsher towards subordinates of their own gender, midwives (*daya*) who perform FGM and mothers who take their daughters to them in eastern Africa, the Uzbek mother-in-law who pressures the new daughter-in-law to constantly serve the household, the aunt who serves the poison to the girl who is judged by the family elders to have stained the family honor in eastern Turkey, and so on.⁴⁰ We will also see in the analysis of survey results that there are female respondents who have strong patriarchal attitudes, approving domestic violence or accepting inferiority of women. Women's patriarchy is not a mere acceptance or submission to patriarchy; it is women's active employment of patriarchy in their social interactions. It should not be seen as blind conformity, however. The "queen bee" in the workplace or subservient wife and mother at home do not act in conformity with men's authority and power because it is in their nature to do so or because they do not know better. Their actions should be seen as a result of their coping strategies given the constraints and opportunities.

"Bargains with patriarchy," a concept introduced by Deniz Kandiyoti in her seminal essay on women's coping strategies under different patriarchal systems is central to

understanding the ways women survive under social systems that are to their disadvantage.⁴¹ Women are constantly in bargain with the agents of patriarchal systems, trying to expand their space and attain more power given the bargaining chips at their disposal. We can easily point to patriarchy when we see a system of male dominance; however, there are different ways male dominance may be exerted and each requires different responses from the women subjected to it. While a corporate woman in the West may feel the need to act more “masculine” to survive and advance in this environment,⁴² a female member of a traditional family may need to act subservient to avoid pressures from male members, and accumulate credit for getting her way when she asks for it. In modern, Western societies, patriarchal norms and attitudes are in remission, but are by no means erased away.⁴³ Women in these societies engage in these bargains armed with legal guarantees, which are incomplete or lacking developing societies, including the Muslim countries.

Patriarchy and Traditionalism

Traditionalism is defined here as preference for the “old ways,” and should be conceptualized *vis-à-vis* modernity.⁴⁴ Modernity does not necessarily mean Western; societies may modernize in their authentic ways rather than westernization. There are some common traits of the traditionalism-modernism dichotomy. Family-orientation is, for example, traditional. Even if a society may not be organized in tribes or clans, even if nuclear family, rather than the larger family, may have become the norm, maintenance of strong financial and social ties with the larger family and relatives is still traditional. Sometimes traditionalism is observed through the persistence of traditional practices despite the legal imposition of the modern by the state. In Turkey, illegal and criminal practices like blood feuds, marrying girls below the legal age limit, or religious marriages through the imam despite the lack of legal

standing of such marriages persist because they are tradition. Quantitative research on public attitudes shows that traditionalism is still an important factor in explaining patriarchal attitudes in Europe.⁴⁵

This insistence on the traditional is not irrational; quite the contrary, within the conditions and constraints of these communities and societies, performing the traditional way is the rational thing to do.⁴⁶ The problem is: it is often the rational thing to do for men, but the traditions are not necessarily the optimum for the women, they often are not. Because they are borne out of patriarchal social systems, they survive within the rules of the game of the patriarchal system, and sustain it in turn. Traditionalism and patriarchy feedback into each other, but patriarchy persists even in “modern” settings. Traditionalism of the society, especially of the immediate family surrounding women contributes to their eventual disadvantaged positions within family and society.

Patriarchy and the State: Institutional Constraints

External shocks are necessary in order to break this cycle of traditionalism and patriarchy. In previous experiences, the external shock has been either the intervention of the state or the pressures of the changes in the economic structure from traditional towards modern modes of production.⁴⁷ Unfortunately, the intervention of the state does not always succeed, as the enforcement and incentives provided by the state do not always resonate with the society. An example of limited success would be Soviet modernization in Central Asia (remember the Uzbek professor above). Turkish state’s nationalism and modernization projects can be considered failures in the southeastern part of the country, especially among the Kurds.

In addition to enforcement problems, state intervention against traditionalism in favor of gender equality is problematic because mostly men devise these interventions and also because

these men have in mind the interests of the state, not those of the women.⁴⁸ There are many cases where women were *given* the rights, but state's half-hearted gender reforms did not succeed because state policies had ulterior motives and states remained patriarchal in essence.⁴⁹ Two examples are the Republican Turkey, which pursued gender reform as a part of a nation-building project and saw the women as mothers of nation's children rather than individual female citizens,⁵⁰ and the revolutionary Islamic government in Iran, which started encouraging female participation in the work force, only because there was a labor shortage due to the war with Iraq.⁵¹ More recently, Iranian President Ahmadinejad included three women ministers in his most recent cabinet not because he wanted to set an example or because he believes in the capabilities of women, but because he is facing a legitimacy crisis at home and abroad and he needs to co-opt the female population, who were the front-runners and symbols of the protests after the 2009 elections.

States that pursue gender reform but remain patriarchal in essence produce puzzling outcomes. For example, Muslim states have had woman heads of government while the U.S. is yet to elect one.⁵² These women gained popular support as well as the support of the political parties they were representing, because they were wives, daughters or protégés of significant men, previous leaders. While their political successes are triumphs for women in their respective countries, their tenures hardly helped advance the status of women in those societies. The state remained patriarchal, male dominated, although its head was a woman.

In a similar vein, the secular minded women, who pursue the footsteps of the feminist movements in the West, tend to come from the upper classes in developing countries. They are the women who *can* pursue such agendas; however, they are still subject to constraints because they operate within an institutional context that remains patriarchal. Ayesha Jalal's discussion of

Pakistani women who lobbied the state for more women's rights exemplifies this dilemma. On one hand, they made demands on behalf of all women, but on the other hand they were careful about not risking the discontinuation of the privileges the state provided to the dominant classes most of them belonged to.⁵³

In light of the previous arguments, I expect the results of the analysis of Turkish data to reflect the impact of factors that constrain or enhance women's options. I hypothesize that patriarchal norms and attitudes and low socioeconomic status will have significant negative effects. I expect traditionalism and religiosity to affect gender equality through their reinforcing effect on patriarchal norms and attitudes. Patriarchal norms and attitudes and gender inequality are expected to be more prevalent in regions where enforcement of legal equality is problematic, such as in rural areas or among the Kurds.

Data Analysis

In an attempt to disentangle the links between patriarchal norms and attitudes, tradition, Islam, and gender equality, I analyze data from 1998 Demographic and Health Survey in Turkey.⁵⁴ Turkey is a predominantly Muslim country but has had secular political traditions since the 1920s. Its civil code, including the family law, is based on the Swiss civil code. This civil code replaced the *Sharia* based laws in 1926 and women were given the right to vote in national elections in 1934. Turkey has never been colonized; contrary to the experiences of most Muslim societies, western oriented reforms were introduced by its own elite and not imposed by foreign colonial powers. Studying a Muslim society with secular and somewhat democratic politics provides the opportunity to investigate whether secular political and legal reforms towards gender equality bring gender equality and women's empowerment. We can also see how far the effects of *de jure* women's rights affect the societal norms, and become *de facto* rules of the

game governing women's lives and relationships in the society. Thus, rather than studying a Muslim society where politics, society, and gender equality are relatively constant, I study a case where the status quo is a result of a transition in the legal-political aspect of gender equality.

Choice of Turkey as the case also allows for certain controls. Since the political system has been secularized and *Sharia* is not the basis of law, we can rule out the effects that religion may have through the political and legal structures. The choice of a non-Arab case also controls for the effects of "Arab traditions," a factor proposed as an impediment before women's empowerment in Muslim societies. Turkey's democratic experience, albeit not without problems, can also enable us to rule out authoritarian politics and its limited arenas for political participation and expression as explanations.

Reviewing the literature on women in Turkey, we see that there are important advances towards gender equality and women's participation in society, economy and politics.⁵⁵ Arat reiterates the findings that "statistical indicators of female representation among professionals in Turkey has been more impressive than those in many Western countries; figures from the 1970s indicate that one in every five lawyers and one in every six doctors in Turkey was a woman; and Turkey ranked third among all nations [except the Eastern bloc], following the United States and Canada, in recruiting women into academia".⁵⁶ Nevertheless, these advances are not uniform across the country, there is a lot of variation in the way *de jure* equality is implemented and enforced. First, women have increasingly become more visible in the public domain; however, the improvements in the public domain do not reflect in the private domain. For example, laws guaranteeing equal employment, even affirmative action for women in employment, have allowed more women to have jobs outside the home, but this has not brought equality or shared responsibilities at home. Second, all women in the country are subject to the same laws, but there

is considerable individual level, class based, and regional variance in the way they exercise their rights. If the laws are not enforced uniformly across individuals or public and private domains, what factors determine the level of success of enforcement and to what extent? What is the role of religion in this heterogeneity?

The TDHS dataset gives us the opportunity to gain some insights about the associates of gender equality in Turkey. TDHS is administered to 8576 women and 1971 husbands; respondents come from 5 different geographical regions, urban (>10000) and rural (<10000) settlements.⁵⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, I use only the women's survey in the analyses below. This means that the conclusions of the data analysis cannot be generalized to the whole population of Turkey. "A weighted, multi-stage, stratified cluster sampling approach was used," thus the sample is representative of the female population 15 to 49 years of age in Turkey.⁵⁸

There are five sets of variables that I will include in this analysis: Observed inequality, patriarchal attitudes and norms, traditionalism, religion and religiosity, individual socioeconomic status and macro level controls. These variables are briefly described before the section on the multivariate analysis and descriptive statistics can be found in Table 1.⁵⁹

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Observed Inequality: I use an index to measure the observed inequality within the family. The index focuses on occupational and educational inequalities and inequalities regarding the monetary affairs of the family. Since the survey focuses on the household, it is difficult to factor in inequalities the women may face outside of the home. However, the differences incorporated here, such as women's contribution to the budget, reflect the effects of other types of inequalities. Inequality index is an additive index of educational and occupational differences between the respondent and her husband, the share of respondent's earnings'

contribution to the family budget, and decision-making on how the respondent's earnings are spent.⁶⁰

Patriarchal attitudes and norms: There are two variables for patriarchal attitudes and norms. The first is an index for women's patriarchal attitudes, and combines women's responses to questions about justifications for domestic violence and men's superiority to women. The second is a variable about work, which gets at the patriarchal pressures on women's decision-making on employment.

There *are* women who agree that a husband is right to beat his wife if she burns the food, neglects the care of children, talks with other men, spends the money needlessly or refuses to have sexual intercourse. Note that the possible excuses for domestic violence are responsibilities or behavior that are expected from women in a patriarchal society: domestic jobs like cooking and childcare, appropriate behavior like not talking to other men and sparing money, being the female bird that makes the home. If a woman agrees that a husband is justified for beating his wife for these reasons, this shows that she approves of, or at least accepts, physical violence by men and she agrees that a woman should conform to these patriarchal expectations. There are also women who agree that "the important decisions in the family should be made by the male members of the family," "men are usually wiser than women," "a woman should not argue with her husband even if she does not share the same views with him," or "it is always better for the male child to have education than the female child." Although this is a good measure of the prevailing patriarchal attitudes and norms in the country, it still measures patriarchy that is internalized by the women.

Attention must be paid while interpreting the effects of this variable, because the sample consists of women only. In the society, the patriarchal effects are more pronounced because the

patriarchal attitudes are stronger in men and men generally hold the upper positions in societal power hierarchies.⁶¹ If this index were constructed with a representative sample of men and women, the substantive effect of patriarchal attitudes would be higher.

To have a measure of the patriarchal norms in the society in general, I utilize women's employment status and the answer to the question asking the main reason why the respondent is not working. This measure intends to capture the effects of the male authorities and society on women's decisionmaking about themselves, which are not captured by the women's patriarchy index. The different options why women are not working were recoded into a dichotomy that stands for personal preference or inability of the individual versus family obligations and husband/elder restrictions. Those who do work were included with the former group, because they were assumed not to be restricted by men in the family about employment.

Traditionalism: I use women's experiences and expectations about the marriage process as a proxy for traditionalism that they directly experience in their family lives. In modern societies, mostly, two individuals decide to get married and they do.⁶² However, in Turkey, some traditional practices such as arranged marriages, bride money (*başlık parası*) and marriage to a relative (*akraba evliliği*) continue in traditional families. There are legal obstacles or government campaigns against some, such as marriage under the age of 18 or marriage with a close relative; however these practices persist. Most of these traditional practices do not have religious connotations, although some like underage marriage may be justified with *sunnah*, prophet Mohammad's example.

Traditionalism may also reveal itself in birth control practices, traditional couples preferring folk or traditional methods rather than modern methods provided by many public and private health care institutions, such as hospitals and clinics. Traditionalism does not prevent

people from seeking medical care at health institutions. For example, for survey respondents, tradition is not an oft-cited reason for not getting antenatal care or not giving birth in health institutions. If couples choose traditional birth control practices, it is because they choose it and not because traditionalism prevents them from accessing modern methods.

Another indicator of traditionalism may be family size, that is, living with extended family or having more children. It is common for brides of traditional families to live with the in-laws, especially in the earlier years of marriage. Living with a larger family has important implications for imposition of patriarchal norms on the woman because there are simply more authorities: father and mother in laws, and even siblings of the husband in addition to the husband. I use family size, the number of people in the household, variable to measure larger vs. nuclear family aspect of traditionalism.⁶³

Religion and Religiosity:

To capture the effects of Islam, I use dichotomous variables for the declared religion for those who said they are Muslims, which is a big majority of the respondents (90 percent). However, among the Muslims, the survey captures some variations because respondents could identify themselves as “Sunni” “Alawi” and “other Muslim.” The Sunni and the Alawi (*Alevi*) together constitute a great majority of Muslims in Turkey, with a small Twelver Shi’a population; however the share of “other Muslims” in the sample is much larger than the share of non-Sunni and non-Alawi Muslims in the population. My suspicion is that, rather than the denomination (Sunni, Shi’a, Alawi), some people chose to name the *madhab* (*mezhep*), such as Hanafi or Shafi’i which are Sunni schools of jurisprudence. It is also likely that they named the *tariqah* (*tarikah*) they belong to, such as Nurcu, Kadiri, Nakşibendi, etc., instead of denomination. The “other Muslims” are likely to be Sunnis, and it would not be a wild

assumption to think that they are more religious because they are more specific than just “Sunni” in defining their religious affiliation. I use a separate dichotomous variable for them rather than incorporating them into the Sunni category.

Alawis constitute only 4 percent of the sample; however, this category is important in order to tease out the effect of religion vs. patriarchal norms. Alawis are known to be more liberal and secular, and to subscribe to the left of the political spectrum. They do not practice seclusion, men and women perform prayers and religious ceremonies together in *cemevis* (not mosques), and they emphasize education of women. If the Alawi variable is insignificant, that is, if Alawi women suffer as much inequality as other (mostly Sunni) women, then we can claim that overall patriarchal norms influence inequality independently from religious norms of the community, even if these norms are favorable to gender equality.

Unfortunately the survey does not have the conventional measures for religiosity such as religious institution attendance or religious observance. It does, however, have some variables that measure the influence of religion on reproductive practices and preferences of women. A variable asks whether the respondent thinks that use of family planning methods are against religion. Most respondents (and their husbands) do not consider family planning methods, *including induced abortion*, to be against religion. Some do consider certain family planning methods or family planning itself, to be against religion, probably because they think family planning tampers with Allah’s will and design. I use this variable as a measure of religiosity. This measure is quite different from the conventional measures of religiosity; however, I would argue that it gets to the heart of the issue much more directly because it measures the effect of religion on women’s decisionmaking on their own bodies and family lives.⁶⁴

Macro-level Controls: I use macro level controls for region and type of current settlement. The region variable codes for West (including industrial urban areas such as Istanbul and Izmir), North, Central (including Ankara, the capital), South and East. The region to pay attention to is the East, because it has not fully benefited the reforms and services of the state for various reasons such as inaccessibility (ethnic differences, rugged terrain, distance) and the civil conflict since 1984. This region has remained more traditional and more patriarchal than the rest of the country; however, the levels of religious conservatism or religiosity are not higher than some other regions known for their conservatism (such as central Anatolia).⁶⁵ West will likely be significant in the results, because it is the “modern” and more liberal part of the country due to an economy centered on industrialization and tourism.

Urban/rural settlements capture the effects of modernity vs. traditionalism, because urban settings impose a modern life style and access to public services and governmental policy enforcement are easier.⁶⁶

Individual-Level and SES Controls: For individual level controls, I use an index for socioeconomic status as well as total years of education and mother tongue dummy for eastern minority women. The socioeconomic status index includes variables on media exposure, level of income, ownership of the house, heating, toilet, and ownership of goods such as gas or electric oven, dishwasher, washing machine, vacuum cleaner, video recorder, camera, CD player, mobile telephone, and computer.

Education is an important variable, which many studies and reports put at the core of the solution to gender inequality and women’s empowerment problems.⁶⁷ The assumption is that when women get more educated, they will be more enlightened and empowered and they will have more options in life and employment. Besides these intrinsic effects of education, this

variable indirectly captures the effects of factors that prevent women from attaining education, such as region of residence and family pressures. Comparison of data from women's and husbands' surveys yields that rural areas and the Eastern region lag behind the urban areas and other regions for both sexes; however it is also in these areas that the gap between women and men is less favorable for women.⁶⁸ The gap between educational attainment of women and men grows after primary school. According to the data, for a majority of women, regardless of where they live, educational life is over after primary school. A much smaller share of women goes on to secondary school, and education in high school and beyond by girls is highest in the West (8 percent) and in urban areas (8 percent). For 46 percent of female respondents who did not go beyond the five-year mandatory education, the reason is family and for 42 percent the reason given is "parents did not send." Not surprisingly, the parent factor is more prominent for women in the East. Distribution of educational levels across different denominations of Islam reveals some patterns, but they are not as divergent or clear as the distributions across regions or urban-rural settlements are. Education variable may capture some of the effects of region, urban/rural and patriarchal norms variables, diminishing the substantive and statistical significance of these variables.

Previous research on Kurds has shown that the language barrier has been important in state's failure to establish connections with citizens of Kurdish origin, leading to failures in policy implementation and enforcement among the Kurds.⁶⁹ The language barrier could also be a factor in the failure to enforce the legal gender equality, such as in mandatory basic education, among the Kurds. I use a dichotomous variable, Eastern minority, which is coded 1 for those whose mother tongue is an eastern minority language (including, besides Kurdish, Arabic, Laz language and Georgian) and 0 for else (Turkish speaking majority).

Multivariate Regression Analysis:

The purpose of the multivariate regression analysis is to specify a statistical model that explains the variation in the inequality index variable. Since the choice and construction all of the indices and variables described above were theoretically informed, the best way to specify the model could be using the “kitchen sink” approach. To determine the best model, one can run a regression with all relevant variables, see which variables are statistically significant and re-run the model with the statistically significant variables only. This would assume that gender inequality is directly and independently associated with all of the variables. However, as the discussion above suggests, there is considerable endogeneity between the variables of interest and kitchen sink models do not provide insights into indirect causal effects. Coefficients of a statistical model that does not account for the endogeneity would be wrong, so would inference through such a model. I use 3-stage least squares estimation to capture the endogeneities between the variables, but I also report the corresponding kitchen sink model for comparison.⁷⁰

Rather than using a kitchen sink method, I specified a statistical model by building it up, adding one variable at a time, in a way that made theoretical sense. Take the variable for women’s patriarchy: Why does a woman hold patriarchal attitudes, what factors could contribute to the internalization of the patriarchy around her? Variables like traditionalism, patriarchal norms, socioeconomic status, level of education, and religiosity can be expected to be associated with women’s patriarchal attitudes. But these variables can very well have effects on the level of gender inequality independent from the patriarchal attitudes of the women. So, the model specification aimed at first determining the relationship between gender inequality and women’s patriarchal attitudes, patriarchal norms, religion and traditionalism and secondly to specify the

determinants of patriarchal attitudes and patriarchal norms. Table 2 shows the statistical model reached as a result.

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

It would be easier for the reader to follow if the instrumental models are explained before elaboration on the main dependent variable, gender inequality. These instrumental models estimate patriarchal attitudes of women, measured by the women's patriarchy index; and patriarchal norms, measured by a dichotomous variable on patriarchal restrictions on women's employment. Then, these estimates are used as independent variables in the main model predicting the gender inequality.

The instrumental model explaining patriarchal attitudes has seven variables, which are statistically significant. Of these, SES is the most significant substantively: the difference between two individuals who have the minimum and maximum SES is a 32 percent decrease in the patriarchal attitudes index. This is not unexpected: women of higher socioeconomic status are less likely to bow to and internalize patriarchy because they have the resources to resist and they simply have a better hand when they "bargain with patriarchy". Likewise, a woman with a college degree (15 years of education) has a 30 percent lower score on patriarchal attitudes index compared to a woman with no education. These results confirm the findings on socioeconomic status and education in the research on public attitudes reviewed above.

Religiosity, traditionalism and Alawi identification are also important; while the former two are positively associated to patriarchal attitudes, being an Alawi has a negative association to having patriarchal attitudes. The juxtaposition of the effects of religiosity and Alawism is interesting: higher religiosity enforces patriarchal attitudes, but the effect of Alawism is in the opposite direction. Dummies for other Muslim groups (Sunnis and "other Muslims") were not

significant, which shows that it is the more liberal nature of Alawism and its practices that makes a difference. This result should be evaluated in conjunction with the findings on the relationship between Catholicism women's feminist attitudes in Europe.

We can see that an Alawi woman in a non-traditional family will have less patriarchal attitudes; however a traditional family offsets the positive effect of Alawi culture on patriarchal attitudes. This is an interesting disentanglement of the effects of religion and traditionalism. In addition, women who make their decisions about family planning/ birth control based on their religious acceptability are more patriarchal in their attitudes. Patriarchal attitudes are higher for women with larger families and lower for women living in the West, which are related to the amount of patriarchal pressures that women are subjected to.

One may ask why patriarchal norms were not included in this model, reckoning that if there are more patriarchal norms in the family and the community, more of those will be internalized. A model including patriarchal norms was also run; however, in this model (also in the main model) including both traditionalism and patriarchal norms caused specification problems, distorting the coefficients. The reason is the collinearity between the two variables. We will see below that traditionalism variable is a significant estimator of patriarchal norms.

The second instrumental model tries to explain patriarchal norms on the part of the husbands or elders in the family and the larger society as reflected in their restrictions on women's employment.⁷¹ The model that determines the associates of patriarchal norms shows that traditionalism significantly affects these norms. Patriarchal constraints on employment are less of an issue for women whose families subscribe less to traditional practices. The negative effect of higher socioeconomic status on patriarchal norms is expected, but rural settlement also has a negative effect, which is surprising. This is a consequence of the measure for patriarchal

norms, restrictions on decision-making on working: rural women *are* working, but in agriculture! Patriarchal restrictions on employment and work do not apply to women working in agriculture in the rural areas as much as they do for urban women whose employment options are non-agricultural, urban jobs outside the family estate.⁷²

The main model's statistically significant predictors are the estimated patriarchal attitudes and patriarchal norms variables, in addition to age, west and family size. Religion dummies for the different labels Muslims have identified themselves with were not significant. Religiosity measured through the family planning method preferences was indeed statistically significant at the .05 level; however, it had the wrong sign and did not improve the overall model.

It is not surprising that patriarchal attitudes of women and patriarchal norms imposed on them have similar independent effects on the dependent variable of inequality. Besides patriarchy, higher inequality is associated to residence outside the West big families, and younger age. A quadratic age variable was also included; however, it was not statistically or substantively significant. All else being equal a 15 year old woman is subject to 3 times the inequality that a 49 year old woman is. The linear -rather than parabolic- nature of the age affect may be due to the limitation of the survey to women younger than 49 years old. If we had women older than 49, we could presumably get the more financially dependent older end of the spectrum as well as the younger dependent end that the survey captures. We can now observe that the gender inequality decreases as women become adults and start working, establish their own families where they have more power within the family. If we had women of older ages in the sample, we could probably observe also that it increases again as the woman stops working due to old age and moves in with the families of her children.⁷³

The dichotomous variable for the West has direct and indirect negative effects on gender inequality. Significance of this variable confirms the regional heterogeneity in the country, which may be due to differences in economic structures, levels of modernity, extent of state penetration into the society, or success in enforcement of government policies in the west.

Marriage is an important life-cycle event in women's lives because the nature of the family setting, their relationship to the male authority in the household (see fn. 71) and their status in the society changes through marriage. I ran a similar model including the marital status as an independent variable. This variable is highly correlated with age, so I replaced age with marital status in the main model and I included it in the second instrumental model assuming male restrictions on women's employment may change when they get married. The results in Table 3 show that although married women fare better in terms of inequality within the household compared to unmarried women, they are subject to more restrictions about employment. This makes sense because single women who live with their families are more dependent on their families and contribute a smaller share to the family budget if they contribute at all. However, once married, they will have more housekeeping and eventually childbearing and rearing responsibilities that will present more restrictions on their employment compared to a single woman who have less of these responsibilities.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

The statistical models as a whole suggest that gender inequality is associated with patriarchal attitudes women hold and the patriarchal norms in the society as well as the region women live in and age and family size they have. Patriarchal attitudes and norms are, in turn, associated with traditionalism, socioeconomic status, liberalism of the denomination and religiosity, education, family size, being a minority (mainly Kurdish, Arab) and urban/rural

settlement. We see that patriarchal norms and attitudes, which are closely associated with traditionalism, are significant factors and should be targeted to achieve greater gender equality. Religion and religiosity do have an effect, but this effect is mediated through the patriarchal attitudes.

Discussion and Conclusions:

The analysis above is an attempt to disentangle the complex relationships between gender inequality, patriarchy, traditionalism and religion. The aim was to tease out as many details about these relationships as possible using the data available. The analysis has been subject to limitations that emanate from the shortcomings of the data. TDHS is conducted to study the health and fertility of women in Turkey; thus, the questions in the survey are geared towards these aspects of women's lives. Other variables, such as those on socioeconomic status or marriage, are included only because they are thought to be significant determinants of health and fertility. With the available data, it was not possible to get at certain variables of interest directly, such as religiosity or patriarchal norms; I had to use proxies that could best capture the essence of the variable.

Other such limitation is related to the sample: it consists of only women and only women between 15 and 49 years of age. One can assume that inclusion of men and older women would reinforce the effect of patriarchal attitudes, because these attitudes are usually stronger in men compared to women, and in older generations compared to the younger. The results of this study need to be confirmed using data that is representative of the Turkish population at large.

Despite its limitations, this analysis still sheds significant light into the lives and choices of women in Turkey. It points at the complexity of individual level causal mechanisms and presents a simplified version of the interrelated factors related to gender inequality. It also

suggests what may or may not work in the struggle to achieve gender equality in Turkey, with applicability beyond Turkey to the larger Muslim world. First, the Turkish experience and the data show that secular-feminists are wrong to assume that secularism by itself will improve women's status. Second, the varieties in the practice of the same religion do make a difference. Third, the significance of socioeconomic status shows that as the status of the family improves, presumably with the help of economic contributions of the women, so does the women's status within the family.

Legal-political secularism and reforms toward gender equality do not automatically bring gender equality. Gender equality can only be achieved or attained, not given. Reforms have to penetrate into the society, achieve a transformation of norms and attitudes to be able to yield the desired equality. Legal sanctions fail to alleviate the negative effects of traditionalism, but education and having access to resources do help. This makes sense, because without the help of education, socioeconomic status or language, women will have difficulty in accessing state resources, and thus will be subjected to the rules of the game set by the societal norms, not the legal codes enforced by the state.

Education has effects through various avenues, but one aspect of women's education should be emphasized. Part of education should be on Islam, the religion. The state cannot diminish the role of religion in people's lives, but it can have a role in teaching people the religion so that people can distinguish between what is required by the religion and patriarchal constraints that are justified by religion.⁷⁴ This brings us to the question of the uncertainties about "what is required by religion." As emphasized above, Islam is not practiced the same way across, or even within Muslim societies. There are fundamentalist, conservative and reformist interpretations of the same religion, based on the same holy book and words and deeds of the

same prophet. Islam and religiosity have an effect on the prevalence of patriarchal attitudes; however, those Muslims whose practice of Islam is more liberal, such as the Alawi, have less patriarchal attitudes. I think this finding that differences in interpretation and practice of Islam do make a difference in women's lives is very significant and is worthy of further study. This tells us that we should not approach Islam or the Muslim societies as monolithic, and also that in order to achieve gender equality, the concern should be the rise of conservative and fundamentalist interpretations of Islam, not the religiosity of individuals.

In order to achieve gender equality, attitudes and norms should be transformed from currently predominant patriarchalism to be profeminist. Although the state cannot make this transformation happen, it can give an impetus through better enforcement of the legal gender equality. In cases such as women's education, domestic abuse and violence or discrimination in employment, the state should actively intervene and exert the authority of laws over the restrictive social norms. Although gender reforms are not enough to achieve gender equality and much depends on the women's own struggles and "bargains" within the family and the society, providing *de jure* gender equality does not relieve the state of its responsibilities towards women.

Notes:

¹ Throughout the article, I use the term “Muslim societies” or “Muslim countries” to mean societies or countries with a Muslim majority population. This terminology does not have any connotations about the political system, or the extent to which Islamic principles are incorporated into laws and government.

² Abu-Lughod 2002a.

³ Lopez-Claros and Zahidi 2005. Also see fn. 21.

⁴ Sen 2001.

⁵ Utilizing the TDHS data enables me to evaluate domestic relationships and some norms, whereas World Values Survey only focuses on attitudes. This data limits my analysis to females; however, studies using WVS also analyze men and women separately because the two groups differ on the issue of gender equality.

⁶ It is thought that the “missing girls” are subjected to either sex-selective abortions or infanticide (Das Gupta, Zhenghua, Li Bohua and Woojin Chung 2003; Clark 2000).

⁷ Matland argues that there exists a threshold of developmental levels, only beyond which advances in proportional representation, labor force participation or cultural standing do affect representativeness (Matland 1998). Also see fn. 9.

⁸ Europeans tend to support feminist ideals but do not see an egalitarian marriage as ideal (Klein 1987, 33). Also see, Fuwa 2004; and Nyman 1999.

⁹ Dollar and Gatti 1999.

¹⁰ A voluminous literature on female labor participation exists in the field of economics and labor economics. While this literature will not be reviewed here, restraints on female

employment will be discussed in the data analysis section. A related strand of research in sociology studies the relationship between welfare state and gender equality.

¹¹ Banaszak and Plutzer 1993a; Banaszak and Plutzer 1993b; Morgan, Espinal and Hartlyn 2008; Wilcox 1991; Klein 1987. I am not aware of any comparable case study or cross-national analysis on Muslim societies, with the exception of Inglehart and Norris, who include Muslim societies in their cross-national analysis (Inglehart and Norris 2003a).

¹² Banaszak and Plutzer 1993a, 151. Klein notes the relatively strong feminist sentiments in Catholic France and Italy (Klein 1987, 36).

¹³ For example, Wilcox finds that religiosity is significant only in Britain and nearly significant in Catholic Belgium. As in Klein's study, in other Catholic societies such as Italy or France, religiosity is not a good predictor of feminist consciousness (Wilcox 1991, 533). Another interesting pattern related to structural variables is that the effect of women's labor force participation varies according to the rate of women in the work force in the region (Banaszak and Plutzer 1993a, 152; Wilcox 1991, 533).

¹⁴ Paxton 1997.

¹⁵ McDonagh 2002.

¹⁶ Kenworthy and Malami 1999, 260.

¹⁷ Viterna, Fallon and Beckfield 2009, whose research follows Matland 1998.

¹⁸ Viterna, Fallon and Beckfield 2009, 473-74.

¹⁹ Fish 2002.

²⁰ Donno and Russett 2004.

²¹ Esmer 2003; Inglehart 2003; Inglehart and Norris 2003b; Norris and Inglehart 2004.

²² Inglehart and Welzel 2005.

²³ Inglehart and Norris 2003a, 49 and 71.

²⁴ Blaydes and Linzer 2008.

²⁵ *ibid.*, 598.

²⁶ Mohanty 1988.

²⁷ For country case studies or collections of essays on specific countries that make important theoretical points on gender and religion see: Ahmed 1992; Beck and Keddie 1978; Kamp 2006; Kandiyoti 1996; Mahmood 2005; Mir-Hosseini 1999; Moghadam 1993; Moghadam 1994; Moghadam 2007; White 2004.

²⁸ For elaborations on Muslim “feminisms” see: Karam 1997, Kandiyoti 1991b, Abu-Lughod 2002b, Badran 2001; Moghadam 2002; Moghissi 1999.

²⁹ For example, Sibel Eraslan in Turkey (Arat 1998, 125).

³⁰ An example from Turkey is Hidayet Sefkatli Tuksal. Another is Konca Kuris, who eventually fell victim to extremists (Keskin-Kozat 2003).

³¹ Early writings of Cihan Aktaş and the stance of women’s magazine *Kadın ve Aile* (Woman and Family) are Turkish examples. See respectively: Arat 2005, 23 and Arat 1990.

³² Barth 1969; Tajfel 1974.

³³ When social norms and religiosity become too intertwined, official secularism is difficult to be internalized by the society. Religion may be taken out of politics with legislation, but it cannot be taken out of the fabric of the society that easily.

³⁴ Hassan identifies six dimensions of Muslim piety: ideological, ritual, experiential, intellectual and consequential (Hassan 2007).

³⁵ Honor functions in similar ways in non-Muslim Mediterranean societies such as Greece or Spain. See, for example, Péristiany 1966. In the Turkish setting, honor killings are named “tore

cinayetleri” or custom/tradition homicides. Contrary to popular understanding, severe punishment of adultery is historically a rare phenomenon under *Sharia*, because it requires strict proof criteria, such as the existence of four men who have witnessed the very act of sex or confession by the accused four separate times. See Zarinebaf’s discussion of punishment of sexual crimes in Ottoman Istanbul (Zarinebaf 2010).

³⁶ Veiling, for example, is a visible sign of piety and may signal modesty. For various reasons and different cultural meanings of veiling see Abu-Lughod 2002; İlyasoğlu 1998; Göle 1996.

³⁷ Research on public attitudes in Europe use “feminist” or “profeminist” attitudes to name the attitudes I call “patriarchal,” these are two sides of the same coin or the full and empty parts of a glass. I choose “patriarchal” to emphasize the social and cultural foundations of these attitudes, research that emphasizes the gains due to the feminist movements and increasing feminist consciousness use “feminist” to define the attitudes. My arguments and findings on patriarchal attitudes inevitably speak to this literature despite the difference in choice of words.

³⁸ The assumption that women are not as intelligent or intellectually capable as men has found its place in popular idioms and language. A Turkish idiom “*Sacı uzun akli kısa*” meaning “Long hair, short brains/wisdom” exemplifies this bias.

³⁹ For a description of the power structure within the family in Turkey see Arat 1989, 39-41.

⁴⁰ Kanter explains the “queen bee syndrome” by the pressures on the numerically minority “token” women to cope and prove their loyalty (Kanter 1977, 980). She also discusses loyalty tests that require acceptance of or acquiescence with male behavior (e.g. sexist jokes and going woman “hunting”), 978-80. See also Kabasakal 1998 for attitudes of Turkish women in management. In Egypt, mother’s literacy is a distinguishing factor between circumcised and non-circumcised girls, while father’s literacy is not significant (Sayed, El-Aty and Fadel 1996).

Also see Assaad 1980 and Masho and Matthews 2009 on the role of women in FGM. All of the circumcised Somalian women in Dirie and Lindmark's study said they would have the operation performed on their daughters, citing the same reasons why it was performed on themselves (Dirie and Lindmark 1991). In Europe, women who are not employed and live in areas where female labor participation rates tend to have more conservative profeminist attitudes (Banaszak and Plutzer 1993a, 155).

⁴¹ Kandiyoti 1988.

⁴² West and Don 1987 139; Kanter 1977.

⁴³ See studies in fn. 11.

⁴⁴ The focus here is not conservatism as an ideology, but rather observed cultural persistence.

⁴⁵ Banaszak and Plutzer use women's education, labor force participation, divorce rates and religiosity as dimensions of traditionalism (1993a, 148-9). They also use working or looking for work (for women) and marital status in conjunction with non-working wife (for men) as indicators, which turn out to be significant (Banaszak and Plutzer 1993b, 41 and 46). I rely on compliance with cultural practices to measure traditionalism, because women's education and employment may be influenced by economic necessities or governmental policies as well as decreasing traditionalism.

⁴⁶ On rationalist approaches to social norms, conformity, and cultural change see: Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer and Welch 1992; Mackie 1996. Social norms can also be interpreted as informal institutions subject to the dynamics of institutional stability and change (North 1990).

⁴⁷ One can add the increasing role of transnational activism in generating grassroots change. See Cherif forthcoming.

⁴⁸ For political motivations behind emancipation of women in Turkey, see Tekeli 1981. For another example of political considerations shaping the gender reforms, see Miller's analysis of how the 1926 Civil Code's diverges from the Swiss original in order to retain certain Islamic principles, Miller 2000.

⁴⁹ Kandiyoti 1991b.

⁵⁰ Arat 1994; Kandiyoti 1991a.

⁵¹ Najmabadi 1991, 69.

⁵² Benazir Bhutto (Pakistan, PM); Khaleda Zia (Bangladesh, PM); Tansu Ciller (Turkey, PM); Sheikh Hasina Wajed (Bangladesh, PM); Megawati Sukarnoputri (Indonesia, President) and recently Roza Otunbayeva (Kyrgyzstan, President).

⁵³ Jalal 1991, 89.

⁵⁴ A more recent survey, conducted in 2003 exists, however, it does not include the questions which are critical in operationalizing patriarchal attitudes; it is more focused on health and fertility issues.

⁵⁵ There is a significant volume of scholarly work on women in Turkey. For Turkish women in politics see Arat 1989, for politics of Islamist women see Arat 2005, for women's politics within the secular-Islamist politics debate see Saktanber 2002. Three edited essay collections have very informative chapters on women's labor participation, domestic relationships, as well as women in the context of Islamist politics, nation building policies and the feminist movement: Tekeli 1995; Arat 1998, Part III; and Acar and Günes-Ayata 2000. Also see Kandiyoti 1977 and Kandiyoti 1987.

⁵⁶ Arat 1994, 57. For women's labor force participation in Turkey see Arat 1989, 36-39 and Zeytinoglu 1998.

⁵⁷ Details about the survey, including sampling and questionnaires, can be found in the Final Report Turkey Demographic and Health Survey 1998 1999 available at:
http://www.measuredhs.com/pubs/pub_details.cfm?ID=276.

⁵⁸ Turkey Demographic and Health Survey 1998 1999, 9 and Appendix B.

⁵⁹ See the appendix for details of index construction and details on the wording of questions used.

⁶⁰ For married respondents the index includes all four items, for unmarried respondents only the contributions to the family budget and spending decisions were used. An unmarried, working woman who lives on her own earnings would score low on the index but an unmarried working woman who lives with her parents and whose family decides on spending would score high.

⁶¹ If we look at the distribution of answers to the same questions in the husbands' survey, we see that the ratios of men with patriarchal attitudes are higher, for example about half of the surveyed husbands agree to the statements "the important decisions in the family should be made by the male members of the family," "men are usually wiser than women," "a woman should not argue with her husband even if she does not share the same views with him." We also see that fewer men agree with domestic violence and preference for boys in education compared to the number of those who agree with the preceding statements, but more men agree with any of these statements than women.

⁶² Restrictions on gay marriage reflect the traditionalism that still exists in today's "modern" societies. In principle, ban on gay marriage is not that different from families' restrictions on a woman about whom she can and cannot, or must and must not get married to.

⁶³ I also used a variable based on the respondent's relationship to the head of the household (self/husband/father/father in law...), but it was not significant in the analyses, probably because it captures financial dependence more than traditional nature of the family.

⁶⁴ Another option to measure religiosity could be the religious marriage (*imam nikahı*), looking at who gets married by the imam, by the civil authorities or by both, although only the civil marriage is legal. However, in Turkey, religious ceremony is carried out because it is a tradition or when the civil ceremony is impossible (underage bride) or infeasible, unpractical.

Respondents' answers to why they had the religious ceremony also confirm this: more chose tradition and practical reasons than it being a religious requirement. Thus, I do not include preference to have a religious marriage ceremony as a measure of religiosity. Religious civil ceremonies remain a good example of how an act of religiosity has become a social norm.

⁶⁵ For gender issues among the Kurds, the predominant ethnic group in the East, see Yalçın-Heckmann 1995. One might argue that the results related to the East reflect the effect of Arab traditions. Arabs constitute a small minority in the region, which is predominantly Kurdish and Turkish and although there is a cultural continuity with the Arab regions to the south of the area, this is due to similar socioeconomic structures such as tribes rather than an adoption of Arab traditions through Islam.

⁶⁶ Given the high rates of rural to urban immigration in Turkey, one should also check for the effects of the settlement type of the respondents' original hometown. People from rural backgrounds can hold on to their traditions and conservatism after their move to the urban areas. I have done the analyses replacing the settlement type variable with childhood settlement type in the analyses below; however, this variable did not perform well in explaining the outcomes.

This result shows that the current environment is more influential, especially in attitude formation, than the environment in the earlier, formational years of life.

⁶⁷ In fact, women's education and empowerment are so strongly associated that many quantitative studies use education as a proxy for empowerment: Malhotra, Schuler and Boender 2002. See also: King and Hill 1993.

⁶⁸ See Table 2.5 and 2.6 in Turkey Demographic and Health Survey 1998 1999, 18-19. Tables reproduced by the author available upon request.

⁶⁹ Erdem 2006.

⁷⁰ In the kitchen sink models in Table 2 and 3, women's patriarchy variable is consistently statistically insignificant. In addition, the signs of traditionalism, socioeconomic status, rural settlement and eastern minority variables are the reverse; because of collinearities and model specification errors.

⁷¹ For 92 percent of the respondents, the head of household was a male, for 54% it was the husband and for 27% it was the father. Only 3 percent of the respondents were head of households.

⁷² This distinction between agricultural and urban employment confirms the effects of patriarchal pressures: it is acceptable for women to work for the family or locally as day laborers, because in these arrangements men or family elders can control the income and the work environment. Employment becomes a problem when the woman has a job outside of home, which involves a work life and work environment independent of home life and a well-defined income.

⁷³ The old age effect may be confounded by traditionalism, because in traditional societies with large families the elderly are respected. A mother in law has authority over the sons in addition to daughters and daughter-in-laws, especially in the absence of a father.

⁷⁴ This is not to say that the state should impose a “state Islam” on the people. Experiences in state sponsored reformist Islam show that they are likely to fail, a prime example being the differences between official Islam and Islam as practiced by the people in Soviet Central Asia.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min-Max	n
Inequality Index	.79	.19	0-1	8576
Patriarchal Attitudes Index	.26	.27	0-1	8553
Patriarchal Norms	.37	.48	Patriarchal=1	8075
Traditionalism Index	.3	.27	0-1	8576
Socioeconomic Status Index	.32	.19	0-1	8576
Religiosity	.17	.38	Religious=1	8309
Years of Education	5.6	4	0-18	8576
Family Size	5.76	2.86	1-25	8535
Rural	.34	.47	Rural=1	8576
Eastern Minority	.19	.39	E. Minority=1	8575
Age	29.18	9.7	15-49	8576
West	.25	.44	West=1	8576
Alawi identification	.04	.19	Alawi=1	8569
Marital status	.69	.46	Married=1	8576

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Main Model DV: Gender Inequality	Instrumental Model	Main Model Coef. (SE)	Instrumental Models Coef. (SE)	Kitchen Sink Model Coef. (SE)
Patriarchal Attitudes		.16 (.02)	I	-.006 (.009)
	<i>Traditionalism</i>		.09 (.012)	-.06 (.009)
	<i>SES</i>		-.32 (.017)	.12 (.014)
	<i>West</i>		-.04 (.006)	-
	<i>Religiosity</i>		.12 (.007)	.01 (.006)
	<i>Alawi identification</i>		-.08 (.013)	-.02 (.01)
	<i>Years of education</i>		-.02 (.001)	-.014 (.001)
	<i>Family Size</i>		.006 (.001)	-
	<i>Constant</i>		.40 (.011)	-
Patriarchal Norms		.09 (.01)	II	.12 (.004)
	<i>Traditionalism</i>		.35 (.022)	-
	<i>Urban/Rural</i>		-.18 (.012)	.02 (.005)
	<i>Eastern Minority</i>		.12 (.014)	-.018 (.006)
	<i>SES</i>		-.13 (.032)	-
	<i>Constant</i>		.35 (.016)	-
Age		-.004 (.0002)		-.004 (.0002)
West		-.032 (.005)		-.05 (.005)
Family Size		.004 (.0008)		.004 (.0008)
Constant		.81 (.009)		.93 (.012)
	<i>Main Model</i>	<i>Instr. Model I (Attitudes)</i>	<i>Instr. Model II (Norms)</i>	<i>Kitchen Sink Model</i>
n	7767	7767	7767	7767
RMSE	.178	.227	.462	.170
R-sq	.12	.33	.09	.19

Table 2: 3SLS and “Kitchen Sink” Models with Age

Note: All coefficients *except the italicized* are statistically significant at the .05 level of significance.

Main Model DV: Gender Inequality	Instrumental Model	Main Model Coef. (SE)	Instrumental Models Coef. (SE)	Kitchen Sink Model Coef. (SE)
Patriarchal Attitudes		.21 (.02)	I	-.01 (.009)
	<i>Traditionalism</i>		.1 (.012)	-.0007 (.01)
	<i>SES</i>		-.31 (.017)	.1 (.014)
	<i>West</i>		-.04 (.006)	-
	<i>Religiosity</i>		.11 (.007)	.006 (.006)
	<i>Alawi identification</i>		-.08 (.013)	-.02 (.01)
	<i>Years of education</i>		-.02 (.0009)	-.013 (.0007)
	<i>Family Size</i>		.006 (.001)	-
	<i>Constant</i>		.4 (.011)	-
Patriarchal Norms		.08 (.02)	II	.13 (.004)
	<i>Traditionalism</i>		.08 (.026)	-
	<i>Urban/Rural</i>		-.17 (.012)	.02 (.005)
	<i>Eastern Minority</i>		.17 (.014)	-.02 (.006)
	<i>Marital status</i>		.25 (.014)	-
	<i>SES</i>		-.2 (.032)	-
	<i>Constant</i>		.26 (.017)	-
West		-.03 (.005)		-.05 (.005)
Marital Status		-.09 (.007)		-.12 (.006)
Family Size		.002 (.0008)		.002 (.0008)
Constant		.77 (.007)		.87 (.01)
	<i>Main model</i>	<i>Instr. Model I (Attitudes)</i>	<i>Instr. Model II (Norms)</i>	<i>Kitchen Sink model</i>
n	7767	7767	7767	7767
RMSE	.180	.227	.452	.169
R-sq	.09	.33	.12	.20

Table 3: 3SLS and “Kitchen Sink” Models with Marital Status

Note: All coefficients *except the italicized* are statistically significant at the .05 level of significance.

Appendixes:

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B. Variables and Indices:

Refer to Turkish Demographic and Health Survey 1998 1999 for details on sampling, wording and questionnaires (see fn. 57).

Inequality Index: .5 represents equality, 0 to .5 represents inequality in favor of women. Values between .5 and 1 indicate inequality favoring the men.

Educational difference: Respondent's highest education level was subtracted from partner's highest education level. The question "What is the highest level of education that you completed?" the scale for both was 0=no education, 1=primary school, 2=secondary school, 3=higher. The differences were scaled to range from 0 to 1, .5 representing equal levels of educational attainment (n=3115)

Occupational difference: Original occupation scale consisted of "professional, technical, managerial," "clerical," "sales," "agriculture-self employed," "agriculture-employee," "household and domestic," "services," "skilled manual," "unskilled manual." I first recoded these categories into a more or less ordinal scale where 0=not working, 1= agricultural (employer and employee), 2= manual (skilled and unskilled), 3= clerical, sales, services, 4= professional, technical, managerial. Then the respondent's occupational code was subtracted from the partner's. The resulting scale was scaled to range from 0 to 1, 0 meaning respondent has better job, 1 meaning partner has better job and .5 denoting that both work in the same level of occupation.

The answers to the question "Who decides how to spend the money?" were recoded such that 0=self, .5=joint decision (with partner or somebody else), 1=partner or somebody else. This indicator is intended to measure how much control a woman has over the money she herself earns and how much a husband/father is involved in the decision, increasing values indicate decreasing control. Although the

survey does not ask this, the “somebody else” is often the father for unmarried women, most women who chose options involving “somebody else” fall into the “never married” category.

The answers to the question “How much of the family’s budget is met by your earnings” were recoded such that 0=the whole, .25=more than half, .5=half, .75=less than half, 1=no contribution.

The index is the mean of the scores each respondent gets for these 4 variables. Note that missing values are treated as missing, not 0, in the construction of indices in this study. That is, if a respondent did not respond to the budget contribution question, the sum of her scores from the other three variables would be divided by the number of variables with non-missing data. This prevents cases that had missing values for all variables to get a score of 0 in the index, where a score of 0 is very favorable for women.

Another variable, main source of income for the family was also considered as a part of this index, however, factor analysis revealed that it did not belong with this group of variables. Young and unmarried women’s dependence on their family distorted the meaning of this variable, because more than 90 percent of respondents who chose this option have never been married.

Women’s Patriarchy index (Patriarchal Attitudes): The women’s patriarchy index, like the inequality index, is an additive index, which is the mean of the scores across the questions as in the case of the above index; missing values were not included in the calculation. Higher values indicate higher patriarchal attitudes.

The wording of the two questions that were used in the index is as follows:

Woman can sometimes make things that may annoy or make angry her husband. Now I will talk about some situations. Can you please tell me if the husband can have the right for beating his wife in those situations? [0=No, 1=Yes] If she burns the food? / If she neglects the care of children? / If she argues with her husband? / If she talks with other men? / If she spends money needlessly? / If she refuses to have sexual intercourse?

Now I will read you a few sentences, I would like to learn what you think about the ideas in these sentences. Do you agree or disagree with the following: [0= disagree, 1=agree] “The important decisions in the family should be made by the male members of the family.” “Men are usually wiser than women.”

“A woman should not argue with her husband even if she does not share the same views with him.” “It is always better for the male child to have education than the female child.”

Patriarchal Norms: The original question was “You told that currently you are not working. What is the main reason that you are not working?” and options were “Holiday/on vacation, Looks after child(ren), Housework, Sick/handicapped, Can’t find/looking for job, Husband/elders don’t want, No need for working, Does not want working anymore, No talent/education, Discharged, Other.” While recoding, those who chose answers “Holiday/on vacation, Sick/handicapped, Can’t find/looking for job, No need for working, Does not want working anymore, No talent/education, Discharged” *as well as all those who are currently working* were coded 0, meaning no patriarchy effect on choice to work. Those who chose patriarchal home-keeping responsibilities or outright patriarchal interventions by husband or elders on her choice as the reason for not working, the coding was 1.

Traditionalism: Traditionalism index is an additive index constructed like the above, the mean of scores on dichotomous variables for arranged marriage, marriage to a relative, underage marriage, bride money and traditional family planning method preference. Single/never married respondents are also included in these variables, since the survey asks them, hypothetically, whether their family would arrange a marriage or ask for bride money, or how they view marriage with a relative. So, the variables and the index reflect the experiences of the married women and the expectations of the unmarried women.

Arranged marriage:

Married women:[For your last marriage] How was your marriage with your husband arranged? Have you decided together or was it arranged by your families? “By ourselves” “By families”

“Escaped/Abducted.” By ourselves and escaped/abducted were coded 0, family arrangement was coded

1. Abductions generally occur with the hidden consent of the female, to get around the bridesmoney.

Never Married: Who should decide for marriage? Should the decision for marriage [be] made by the couples or by the families? 0=“Couples decide”, 1=“Families decide.”

Bridesmoney:

Married women: [For your last marriage] Did your husband or his family pay bridesmoney to your family? If yes, was it given in cash or in kind? “No” “Yes (in cash)” “Yes (in kind)” “Yes (both).” No was coded 0, all Yes options were coded 1.

Never Married: If you get married, will your family elders demand bridesmoney for you from the other side? 0=no, 1=yes.

Marriage to Relative:

Married women: [For your last marriage] Do(did) you have any relativeness with your husband? 1=Yes, 0=No.

Never Married: Is it good or bad for the husband and wife being close relatives, being cousins for example? 1=Good, 0=Bad (the option “has both good and bad sides” was coded as missing).

Underage marriage: Those who were younger than 18 at the time of their first marriage were coded 1, those who were older and those who never married at the time of the survey were coded 0.

Traditional family planning: The survey asks women which family planning methods they use, then they group the responses to “Never used” “Used only folkloric” “Used only traditional method” “Used modern method” categories. I recoded never used and modern methods as 0 and folkloric and traditional methods as 1.

Interestingly, cross tabulation of marriage and family planning needs shows that all of those who never got married chose “never had sex” option while those who were formerly (not currently) married all chose “no sex, want to wait” option. This “no marriage-no sex-no need for family planning” pattern is probably an effect of traditionalism (e.g. emphasis on virginity and honor).

Family Size Variable: Numerical answer to the question “Now I would like to ask about the household you usually live. How many parsons do usually live in your house?”

Religion and Religiosity: The survey asks “What is your religion?” and if the answer is “Muslim” the interviewer probes for the religious sect. The options in the questionnaire are “Sunni” and “Alawi,” all others being coded into “other Muslim” option. I unfortunately do not know what sect the “other

Muslims” named, but it is definitely a category to look into as is evident in the discussion on educational attainment above.

Religiosity variable is coded 1 for respondents who said family planning is against religion.