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### Gender Aspects of Brain Drain: The Case of Turkish Immigrants in Germany

Gamze Arslan  
Mehmet Oğuzhan Okumuş

Harriet Taylor Mill-Institut für Ökonomie und Geschlechterforschung  
Discussion Paper 43, 02/2021

#### Herausgeberinnen

Miriam Beblo  
Claudia Gather  
Madeleine Janke  
Friederike Maier  
Antje Mertens  
Aysel Yollu-Tok

**Discussion Papers des Harriet Taylor Mill-Instituts für Ökonomie und  
Geschlechterforschung der Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht Berlin**

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Die Herausgeberinnen

# Gender Aspects of Brain Drain: The Case of Turkish Immigrants in Germany

Gamze Arslan and Mehmet Oğuzhan Okumuş

## **Authors**

*Gamze Arslan* completed her B.A. degree in International Relations at Bilkent University in 2016 and obtained a M.A. degree in Political Economy of European Integration at HWR Berlin in 2019. In her master's thesis, she studied the motivation to migrate to Germany for highly skilled Turkish migrants. Currently she works in the e-commerce industry.

*M. Oğuzhan Okumuş* completed his double degree in Psychology and Economics (B.A.) at Boğaziçi University/Istanbul in 2016 and obtained a master's degree in Political Economy of European Integration (M.A.) at HWR Berlin in 2019. In his master's thesis, he studied the motivational differences in migration decisions of highly skilled Turkish immigrants in Germany. His main area of interests includes behavioral economics and political economy of migration. Currently he continues his education in Economics at Ludwig Maximilians-Universität Munich and working as a Research Assistant at Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition econlab.

## **Abstract**

Growing rate of women in the highly skilled immigration necessitates a closer look on the motivational differences of women in their migration decisions. This paper investigates the gender related aspects of migration decisions of highly skilled Turkish immigrants in Germany with respect to three factors: economic participation and opportunities, social aspects including political empowerment, and health-survival domain, following the conceptualization of Global Gender Gap Report (2017). For this purpose, the study conducts a quantitative survey with 146 participants from Turkish community groups on the social media channels. The results show that the health-survival domain, specifically based on degree of self-censor, the probability of being harassed in daily life and perception of sexual freedom, appears as significantly more effective for women in their migration decisions compared to men.

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## 1. Introduction

In 2002, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came into power in Republic of Turkey. The right wing AKP government reached the victory in the elections through a campaign with the promises of economic growth, end of political corruption, and providing the security of justice. Only two of their electoral promises were related to the religion of Islam (Kaya, 2014: 50); however, their voice has shifted to an Islamic voice over time. Even though Erdoğan, the party leader, said they guarantee that there will be no interference with people's lifestyles, Turkey has taken a conservative turn in the last two decades. A lot of concern has raised from secular part of the society about their freedoms. While the recent changes in Turkey's political and social environment have been affecting the life of residents of Turkey from many aspects, women and women rights were affected even more drastically. For example, "Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu" ("We Will Stop Femicide Platform"), announced that since 2016 the rate of the murdered women has been increased (in 2019 447 women and in 2018 440 women), and most of them are caused by domestic violence. The institutions have not shown the efforts for the effective implementation of Law No. 6284 and the Istanbul Convention. Women were killed while they were under protection of the state right after trials for their divorce. Women whose demand of protection has been rejected were murdered or injured by males. (Kadın Cinayetlerini Durduracağız Platformu, 2020).

In addition to femicides, the terrorist attacks have become common during 2015 and 2016. Within 2 years, there were nine bomb attacks (3 in Ankara, the capital city and 3 in Istanbul, the biggest city with more than 15 million inhabitants) with lots of civilian deaths ("Türkiye'de Son Beş Yılda", 2018). Security issues even worsened following the coup attempt in July 2016. As a result of coup attempt numerous inhabitants lost their jobs and the right of civil servants to go abroad for travel purposes was suspended. Besides that, hundreds of opponent journalists, academicians and even PMs were jailed. With the last General Election in June 2018, a new regime started to reveal itself, by which Turkey put an end to its parliamentary democracy. When the economic crisis that peaked in 2018 also added up to this accumulation of events, a lot of highly skilled Turkish

individuals started to seek opportunities in other countries to establish a better life for themselves. As a result, Turkey began to experience a significant brain drain, which announced by parliament president İ. Karaman as "Turkey is now a country that exports brains" ("TBMM Başkanı Karaman", 2018).

In this research the brain drain with the focus on gender from Turkey to Germany is examined for several reasons. First of all, Turkey and Germany appeared to be an important migration corridor since 1960s started with the guest worker (*"Gastarbeiter"*) agreement between two countries and continued with political asylum seekers during 1980s. The immigrants that have moved from Turkey to Germany as guest workers were originally planned to be temporary migrants. However, both types of immigrations were followed by family reunions (Kirisci, 2007; 91). Even though the first Turkish migrant wave in Germany consisted of low skilled migrants, the diaspora and transnational network that they have built become a motivation for the future migrants. This diaspora or co-national network is important since when immigrants move to a new country, they also desire to build up a social life. Therefore, these networks work as a pull factor and sometimes create persistent channels between sending and receiving countries as in the example of Turkey and Germany (World Bank 2018: 103). Language could also be barrier and cost for a migrant in the new target country. Even though high educated migrants have the skill and education background to overcome the obstacle of language easier than other type of migrants, inability to speak a country's local language could cause migrants underuse their potential and skills and hence lowering their chances in the labor market. On the other hand, speaking a country's language could help building up a social life and overcoming bureaucratic barriers easily (World Bank 2018: 105).

In this research, the impact of gender gap in Turkey on the migration decisions of highly skilled Turkish women will be examined. In this respect, the results of a survey conducted among highly skilled Turkish individuals in order to assess the effect of economic, political and health related factors, as discussed by Global Gender Gap Report (2017), on decision making process of highly skilled Turkish women, and the findings will be compared

with the answers obtained from highly skilled Turkish men. The study will also provide four hypotheses:

H0: There is no significant effect of gender gap on highly skilled women's migration decisions.

H1: Economic factors play significantly more positive role on highly skilled women's migration decisions compared to highly skilled men.

H2: Social factors play significantly more positive role on highly skilled women's migration decisions compared to men.

H3: Health-related factors play significantly more positive role on highly skilled women's migration decisions compared to men.

This paper is structured as follows: The paper will start with presenting the theoretical background of the study. In this part, the gender related aspects of brain drain will be discussed, and then the current issues in Turkey regarding to women's right will be provided. Next, the methodology of the measurement of gender gap and the methodology of the research conducted for this paper will be explained. Following this, the results of the conducted survey and the discussion of findings will be presented. Finally, the paper will provide concluding remarks including a brief limitations section

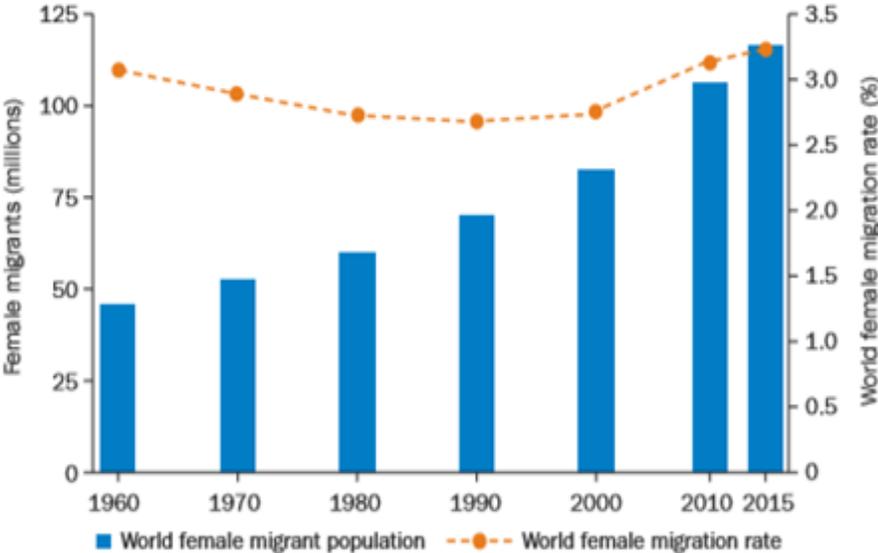
## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Gender Related Aspects of Brain Drain**

According to World Bank (2018), three main trends are observable in migration flows recently (p. 239). First, the rate of highly skilled people's migration in overall migration is rapidly rising. Second, a few OECD countries receive significantly more immigrants compared to others. And third, there is an increasing feminization of highly skilled migration. Majority of the highly skilled migrants are now female (World Bank, 2018:241). This rising feminization of migration flows is depicted in Figure 1. Besides that, the rate of females among highly skilled migrants is increasing even more rapidly,

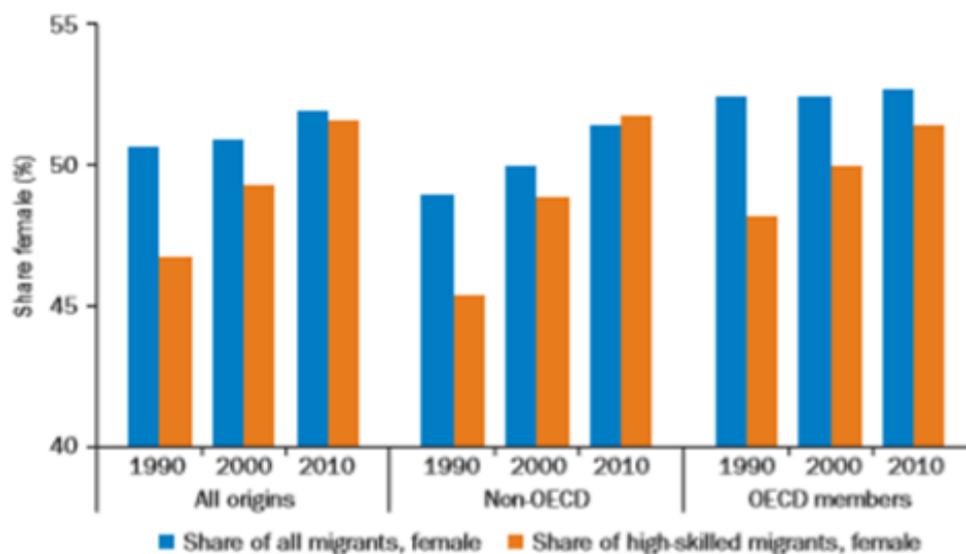
as Figure 2 demonstrates. Even though the share of women at overall migration is rapidly increasing, gender aspect of migration, as well as brain drain, have recently started to draw attention in the field. Despite of this recently gained recognition, there is still a gap in the literature that studies highly skilled migration and gender together (Dumont et al 2007: 2). However, over-representation of women in brain drain makes the research in this area necessary and important.

**Figure 1:** Global Female Migrants Stock, 1960-2015



*Source: World Bank (2018), p.72*

**Figure 2: Female Share of Migration by Skill Level and Origin, 1990-2000-2010**



*Source: World Bank (2018), p. 72*

In both OECD countries and non-OECD countries the share of women among all migrants are higher than men, as seen in Figure 2. One reason for that is the increasing rate of women acquiring higher education degrees. In some countries women build the majority of the total students at universities. Nonetheless, labor market opportunities for women are not growing at the same rates. Causes of this lack of opportunities for women vary from gender discrimination to culture conservatism. As a result, women tend to migrate high income countries with more liberal environments (World Bank, 2018: 241). This results in the high migration rates of the highly skilled women.

Nevertheless, women have not received sufficient attention within the highly skilled migration framework. In general, the migration studies in the previous literature regarding to female labor migration focus mainly on less skilled sectors, which are dirty, dangerous or low-paid such as sex work or domestic work (Kofman and Raghuram, 2009:1). Furthermore, women were historically regarded as a part of 'family reunion' migration as they were more likely to join their spouses working in another country compared to men, especially in an economic system which is based on a bread-winner male model (Dumont et al., 2007: 9, Gerber and Wanner, 2019:7). Despite

this gap in the literature regarding highly skilled women immigration, some recent studies start to investigate the role of highly skilled immigrant women in job market. For instance, the analysis of highly skilled immigrant women in Australia by Carangio et al. (2020) suggests that White privilege and racism have a significant impact on the career choices of highly skilled immigrant women. Similarly, Khattab et al. (2020) examine the integration of highly skilled immigrant women to the labor market of Qatar and highlight the intersectional aspects of immigration by claiming that social, cultural, national and geographical categories need to be considered while investigating the impact of highly skilled women immigration.

The rising feminization of the highly skilled migration creates some concerns for the countries that experience brain drain and where women have less access to higher education. While high-income countries enjoy the foreign talents to create and sustain some of their sectors, lower income countries that already have a lack of highly skilled labor might even more suffer from the loss of talented highly skilled people (World Bank 2018: 233). Although highly skilled immigration might be beneficial for sending countries especially in form of remittances, the loss of educated people is a general loss of a country's human capital, and the loss of educated women is even worse. When developing countries lose the highly educated women, the number of which has already been scarce in the country even before the emigration, the gender inequality especially in education in the country is under risk of increasing. And the lost that caused by gender inequality in 'social gains' has been estimated as from 0.1 to 0.3 for income growth per capita (Naghsh Nejad 2013: 2). In their research Dumont et al. (2007) found out that the more women overweight the brain drain of the country, the more negative impact sending countries is experiencing. The impact on development found to be significantly negative on differential emigration of highly skilled women in comparison to men. This impact is not significant in women emigration at lower educational levels. This shows the importance of loss of highly skilled women for developing countries. Brain drain of women has a greater impact for developing countries than any other countries, since the labor participation of women is significantly associated with the economic growth in these countries (Naghsh Nejad 2013: 8). The

result of Dumont et al.'s research (2007) also emphasizes the importance of studying and researching on gender differences of highly skilled immigration, whereas the field and literature usually only focuses of total highly skilled migration.

When gender related aspect of brain drain is considered, GDP seems an important factor. Dumont et al. (2007) found in their research on gender dimension of brain drain that, the coefficient of the absolute value of GDP per capita is higher for women in comparison to men. This tells, when countries get poorer, highly skilled women tend to migrate more than men. In other words, poor countries face with brain drain of women more severely. This could be explained by the common higher gender inequalities for women in poorer countries. So, in terms of finding more opportunities and receive higher returns from their education and skills; highly skilled women migrate more often than men from poor countries with high gender inequalities. The economic development in the target country is also a decisive factor for highly skilled women, as economic pull factors play a significantly positive role in highly skilled immigration (Okumuş, 2020).

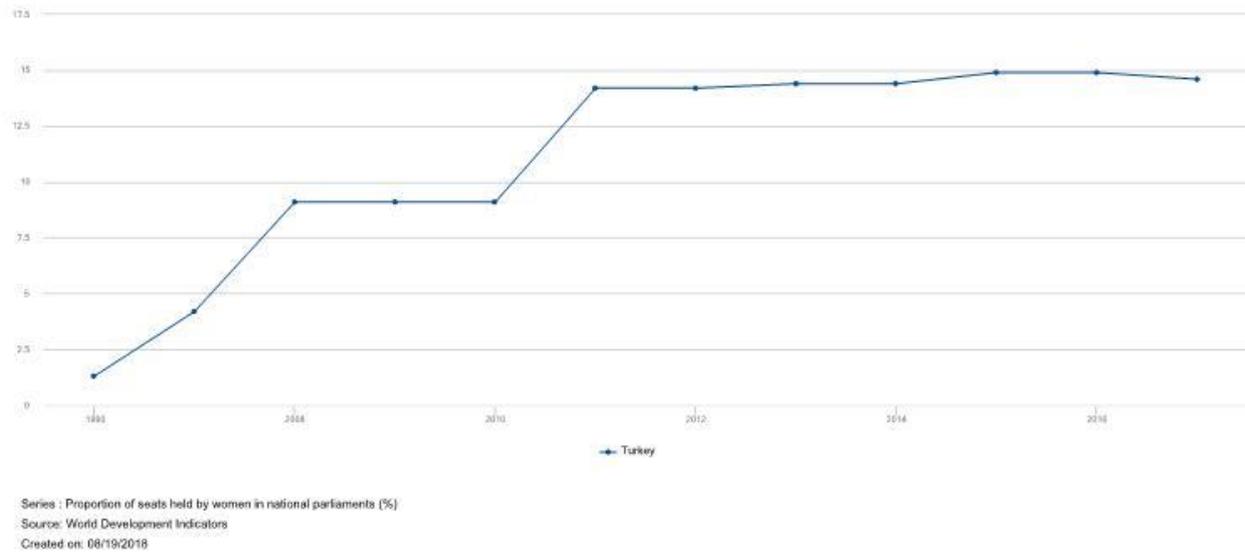
Another important factor related with gender aspect of brain drain is the women's right. Women rights at low levels are highly related with high levels of ratio of female brain drain (Naghsh Nejad 2013: 1). When women's rights reach higher levels, the ratio of female brain drain becomes negative. Inequality among genders, decrease the benefits a woman can receive in return of her education and skills. This theory is also supported by empirical data. For example, a significant gender gap has not been found among the highly skilled emigrants of European countries, where women rights are more improved compared to most of the other parts of the world (Dumont et al 2007). Gender inequality and lack of women's rights could work as push factors and motivates highly skilled women to migrate.

## **2.2. Current Situation and Problems Regarding to Women's Rights in Turkey**

In the previous chapter, it is discussed that the situation of women's rights is an important aspect of female brain drain. While there is no country in the world that fully closed its gender gap, Turkey's gender gap score is worse compared to developed countries. World Economic Forum (2017) has ranked Turkey 131<sup>st</sup> country among 144 countries in terms of global gender gap with the score of 0.625 from 0 to 1. This shows clearly that the environment of Turkey is not favorable for women to study and work in equal conditions with men. In 2006, Turkey scored 0.585 at the same report and ranked as 105th country among the 144. During the last decade, the gender gap in Turkey has widened.

In this context, political empowerment of the women is chosen one of the indicators of gender gap in both UNDP's Gender Inequality Index and World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report. Chart 1 shows, the proportion of the women in the Turkish national parliament is persistently increasing. Also, unlike many other countries, there was a female Prime Minister in Turkey, Tansu Çiller, between the years 1993-1996. However, it is also noted that it is not very common for women to hold seats in the cabinet. And when women hold a seat at the cabinet, it is Minister of Family and Social Policies most of the times, which is changed to Minister of Labor, Social Services and Family recently. In World Economic Forum (2017)'s Global Gender Gap Report Turkey ranked 118 with the score of 0.088 in regard of political empowerment.

**Chart 1: Proportion of Seats Held by Women in National Parliament in Turkey %**



*Source: World Bank Data*

In the same report (World Economic Forum 2017), Turkey's highest ranking, which is 59, from health and survival with the score of 0.977. Some highlights from this category are related with birth. The percentage of women that die during giving a birth is 16. Abortion is allowed in Turkey in the case of need to preserves woman's health. And when family related issues are considered, it is seen that paternal leave is only allowed for women. While this shows the traditional gender role of the women in the society as a caregiver and nursing is still solid, it also creates some inequality in the workplaces for women. Women hold legal guardianship of their children during marriage and in case of divorce they hold the right for custody over their children (World Economic Forum 2017: 325).

In previous chapter it is mentioned that one of the reasons of high rates of highly skilled women emigration is the increasing rates of women with tertiary education and labor market that is not responsive to this situation. In Turkey, this situation is easily observable. OECD data (2017) shows, in 2015 more women have been graduated from higher education compared to men and it has been increased in the last years. The percentage of new entrants to tertiary education was 74% among women as the same data report shows. A balance between genders has also been observed

among various different study fields. The rate of women new entrants in information and communication technologies field is 29% which is higher than OECD average of 19%. Earlier version of the same report (OECD 2016: 3) also stated that women graduates in the areas such as engineering, computing, and science (the sectors that consists majority of highly skilled migration) were higher than OECD average. For example, science, mathematics and computing the rate of women graduates were 50%, whereas OECD average was only 39%. However, the same report also states that women receive less earning and lower employment rates in comparison to men. Whereas 76% of men with tertiary education are employed, the employment rate among women with tertiary education is only 58%. The gender gap in employment remains higher in Turkey than OECD average. In addition to that, a woman with higher education earns only 84% of earnings of a man with higher education.

Turkey's authoritarian, conservative and religious turn in the last decade also rises a lot of concerns about women's rights in Turkey. Some examples from the Turkish media has been selected for the paper in order to demonstrate some of the concerns of the women which could be considered as motivation for migration. There have been two incidents that received considerable attention from public and high media coverage in the last two years in Turkey. First incident happened in September 2016 in Istanbul. A woman who tried to go home after work got attacked in a bus from a stranger man because she wore a mini short ("Şort giyen genç kadına tekme", 2016). The second incident happened in June 2017 again in Istanbul, the biggest city of Turkey. Another woman got attacked in a minibus for wearing mini shorts ("Şort giydiği gerekçesiyle saldırıya uğrayan", 2017). In both incidents, attackers made a statement of their discomfort and anger caused by 'inappropriate clothing of woman contrary to society's norms'. After these two incidents many women expressed their concerns about the increasing lack of freedom of their simple everyday choices such as choosing their clothing. And Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum: 2017: 325) also shows that prevalence of gender violence in lifetime is 42% in Turkey. This means almost half of the women

in Turkey is experiencing sexual and/or physical violence from an intimate partner at least one time in their lives and reported it. In comparison to Germany, another OECD country, the prevalence gender violence rate in lifetime is 22%, almost half of Turkey.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Methodology of Gender Gap Measurement**

Parallel to the methodology of Global Gender Gap Report (2017) which has remained unchanged since its original conception in 2006, the gender gap will be measured by three main variables, namely (a) economic participation and opportunities, (b) social aspects regarding to political empowerment, and (c) health and survival. Since the intention of this investigation is to understand the gender-related aspects behind immigration decisions of highly-skilled individuals, educational attainment variable, which consists of one of the four main variables of the original gender gap analysis, will be excluded, as the target group will be composed of university students or graduates and the original variable deals with already existing aspects for highly-skilled individuals such as differences in literacy or primary school enrollment.

Besides that, the conceptualization of this paper for the following aspects will be slightly different from the subgroups of the Global Gender Gap Report (2017). Originally, economic participation and opportunity variable includes five elements, these are: (i) the ratio of female labor force participation over male value, (ii) wage equality between women and men for the same work on a 0-to-1 scale, (iii) the ratio of estimated female income over male value, (iv) the ratio of female legislators, senior officials as well as (v) technical workers over male value. In this investigation, the economic participation and opportunity consist of five subgroups, namely (I) higher wage expectations, (II) career options, (III) job opportunities, (IV) job prestige and (V) life standards. Furthermore, original Global Gender Gap Report (2017) takes political empowerment of women as one of the four main focuses of analysis, which takes the ratio of women in the parliament, the ratio of women at ministerial level and the number of years with a female head of state into account. However, this analysis has expanded the empowerment of women beyond the political domain and provided a social level of analysis that includes the degree of gender segregation, freedom of speech, thought and other basic

human rights, representation of women in the society, the degree of religious oppression and security of life. Considering the adverse situation of women's rights and human rights in Turkey, these aspects are inherently political, as, for instance, religious oppression is institutionally supported by Turkish state (Öztürk, 2016), or systematic violence against women appears as a socio-political matter rather than physical health-related issue (Kabasakal, 2018). Finally, the last domain in the analysis of Global Gender Gap Report (2017) is health and survival, which considers sex ratio at birth and female life expectancy. Similar to previous two domains, the conceptualization of this paper slightly changed the health-related factors, by taking sexual and psychological health as the center of analysis. Under this title, there are four main issues that will be evaluated, namely (1) comfort while applying for the sexual health related services, (2) sexual freedom, (3) probability of being harassed in daily life and (4) the degree of self-censor for clothing. It should be noted that, this study does not measure the gap based on some provided index, rather it will measure the differentiation between the answers of female and male participants.

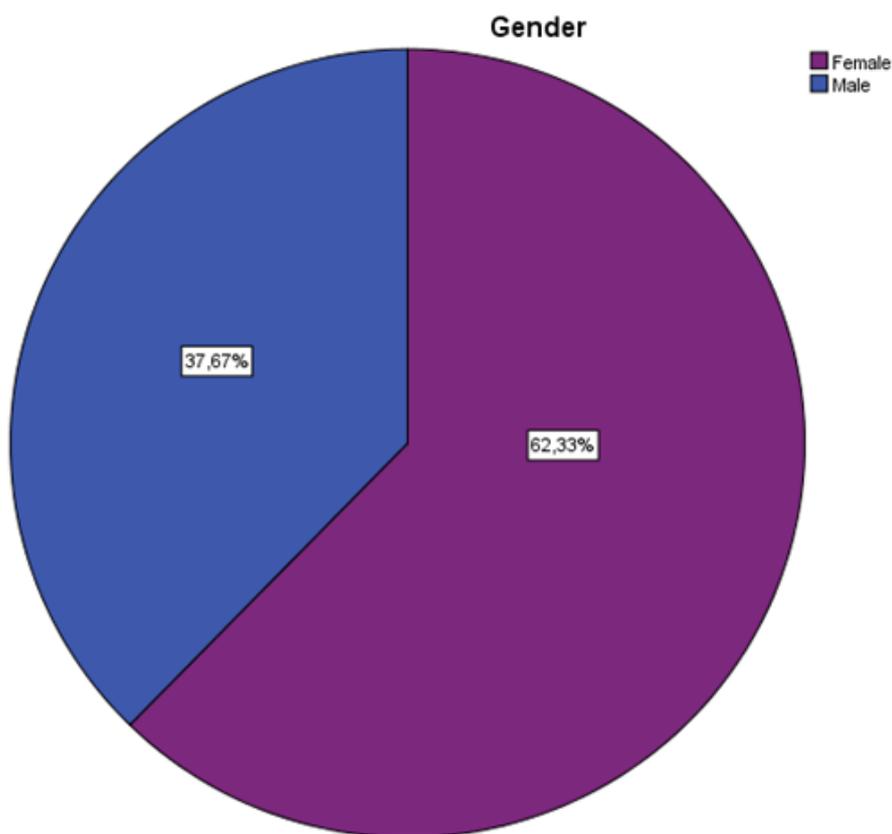
### **3.2. Methodology of the Study**

An online survey is prepared in Google Forms. The survey starts with questions regarding to general information about participants, such as the educational level, country of birth and reason to come to Germany. Next, the survey provides 14 questions which assess the degree of economic, social and health-related aspects for the arrival of respondents into Germany, in the form of 6-points Likert scale, in order to avoid from neutral answers and provide an orientation whether the mentioned impact is effective or not. Lastly, the survey asks demographic information including gender and age level. The survey is posted to Turkish community groups on Facebook, which are highly populated by highly skilled individuals, namely New Wave in Berlin and Ötekilerin Berlin Dalgası (Berlin Wave of Others – founded as a reaction against the former group) and member of these groups are asked to participate in the survey in one week. Finally, the collected data are analyzed in IBM SPSS Statistics 20 package program, by using between samples t-test and one-way ANOVA, with respect to significance level  $p < 0.05$ .

#### 4. Results

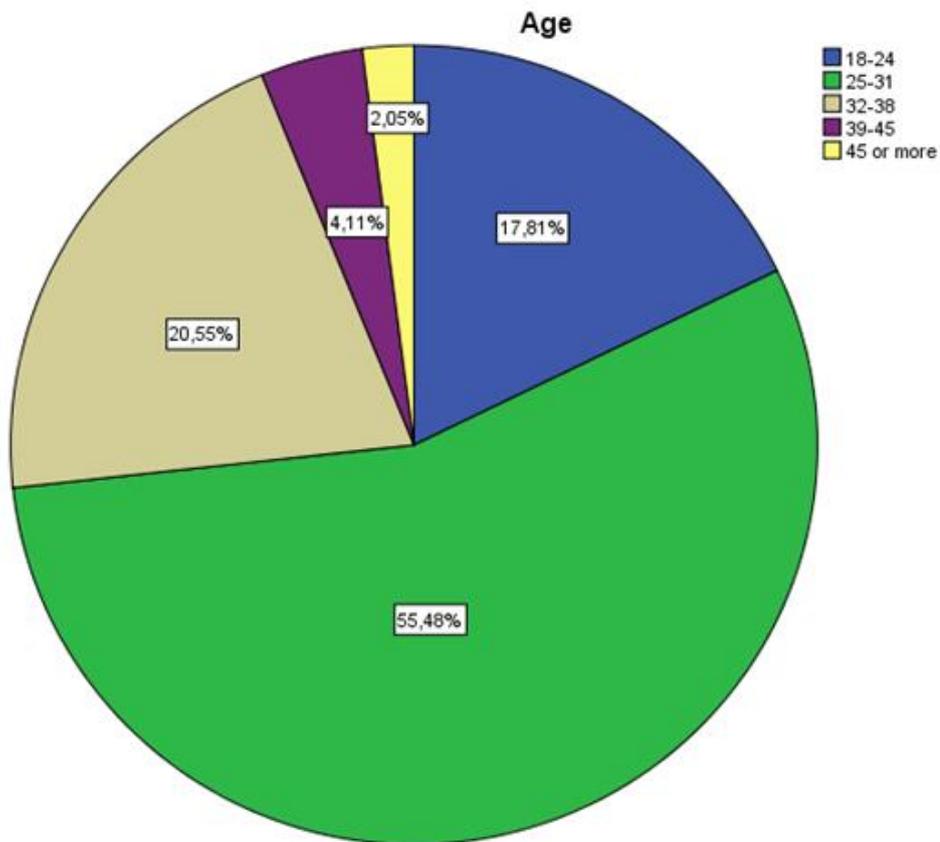
A total 150 data entry has been made to online survey; however 2 data were excluded due to repeated entries, and another 2 data were excluded because of missing variables. For that reason, 146 participants' data were used for the main analysis (N = 146). Starting with the demographic aspects, 66.33% of total participants declared themselves as female (n = 91) and 37.67% of participants declared themselves as males (n = 55). The pie chart distribution can be seen in Figure 3.

*Figure 3: Gender Distribution*



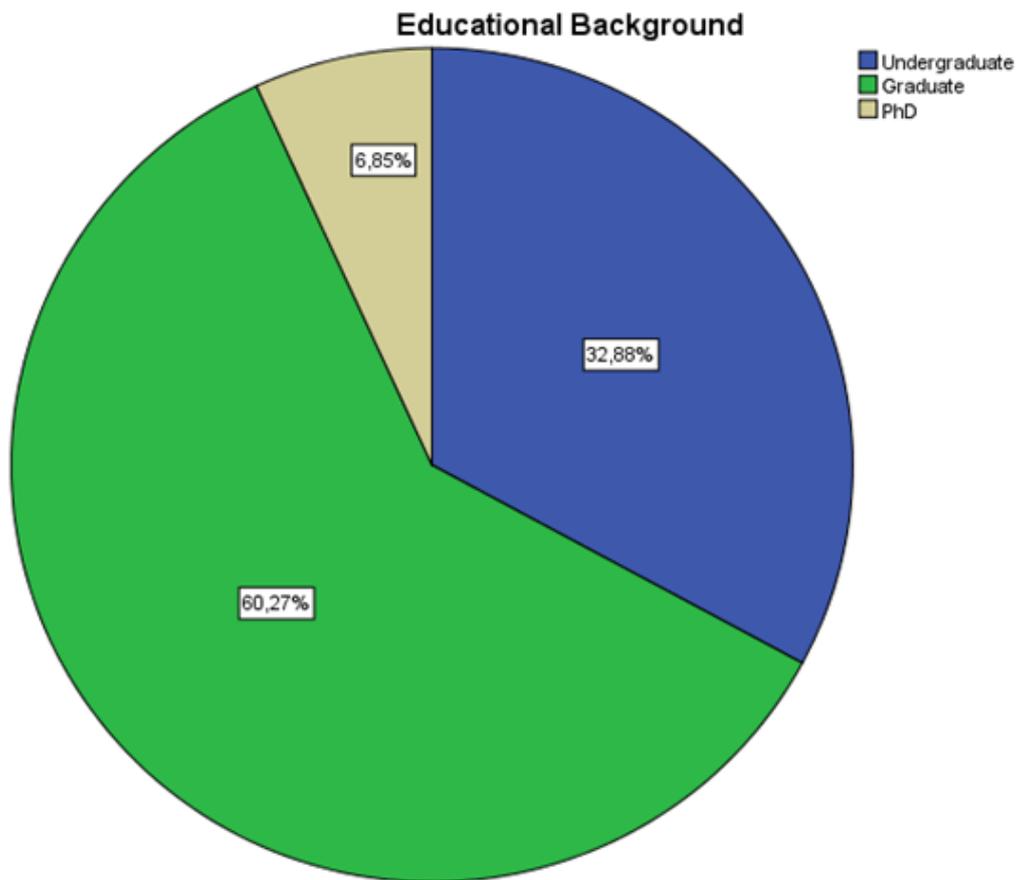
Furthermore, the age group distribution of participants reveals that 17.81% of participants belong to the 18-24 age group (n = 26), 55.48% in 25-31 age group (n = 81), 20.55% in 32-38 (n = 30), 4.11% in 39-45 (n = 6) and finally, 2.05% are 45 or older (n = 3). Figure 4 depicts the pie chart distribution for the age groups.

*Figure 4: Age Group Distribution*



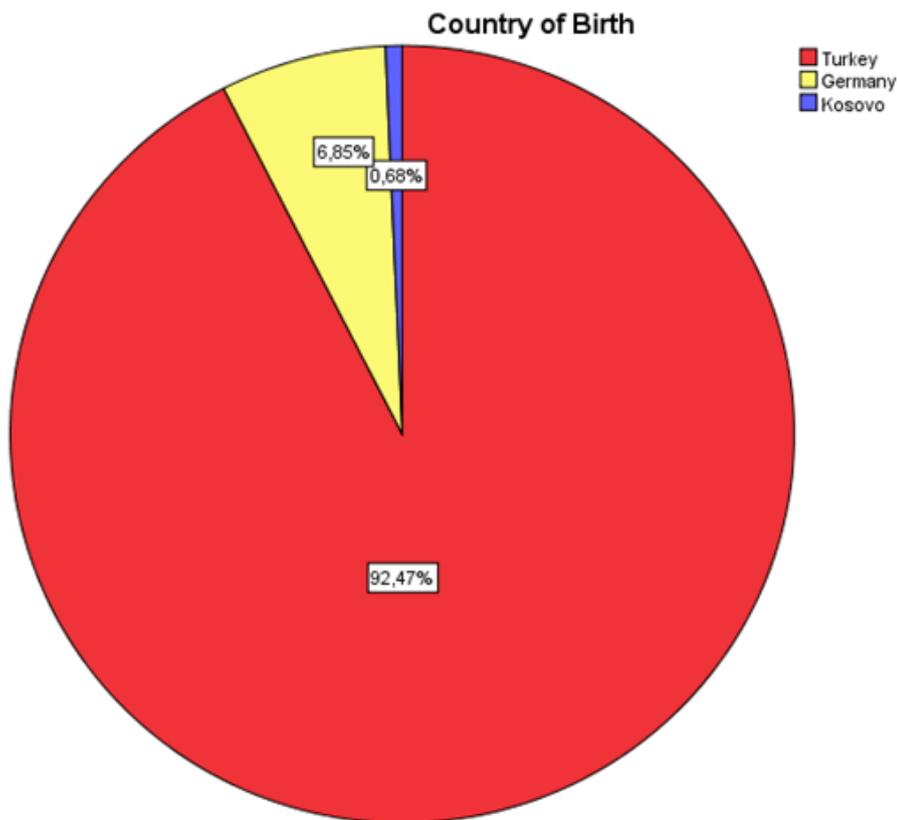
Moreover, educational background analysis showed that majority of participants is currently studying or graduated from graduate school (60.27%,  $n = 88$ ), which is followed by undergraduate level students or graduates (32.88%,  $n = 48$ ) whereas PhD students or graduates accounted for 6.85% of participants ( $n = 10$ ). The complete pie chart for the distribution of educational background can be found in Figure 5.

*Figure 5: Educational Background Distribution*



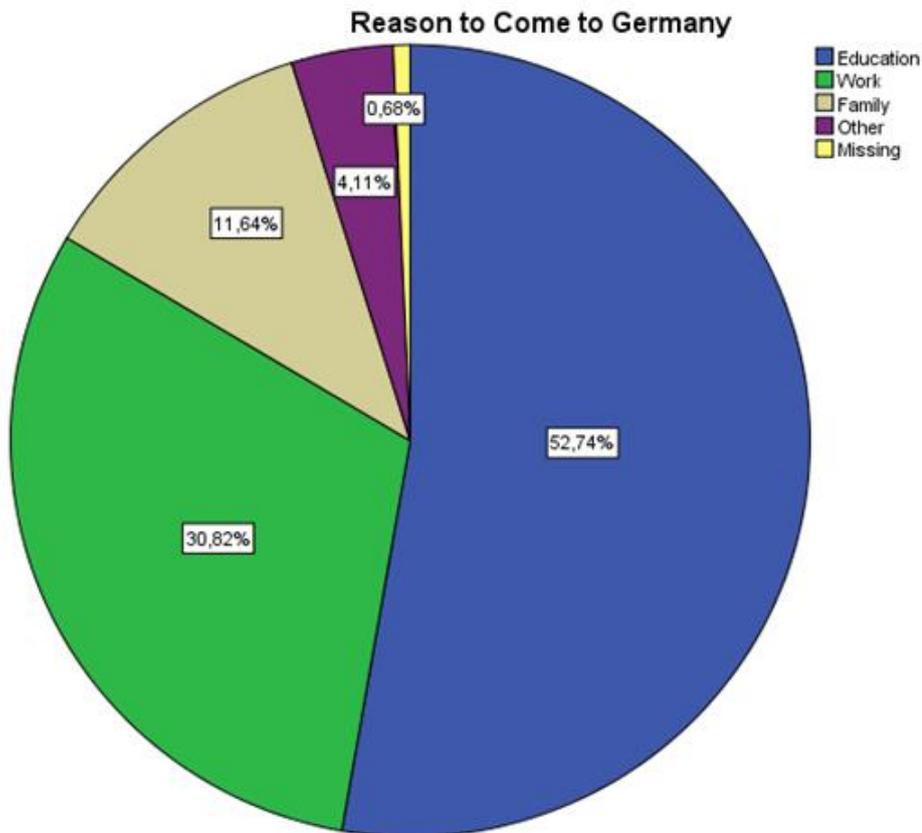
The demographic analysis also revealed the distribution regarding to country of birth. As expected, great majority of participants were born in Turkey (92.47%,  $n = 135$ ) while 6.85% born in Germany ( $n = 10$ ) and 0.68% in Kosovo ( $n = 1$ ). Figure 6 depicts the distribution for the country of birth in the form of pie chart.

*Figure 6: Country of Birth Distribution*



Finally, the reason of participants to come to Germany was asked. Results showed that 52.74% of participants came to Germany for educational purposes including higher education, language schools, and so forth ( $n = 77$ ) whereas 30.82% of participants came to Germany for professional purposes such as employees, employers or interns ( $n = 45$ ), and 11.64% for family-related issues ( $n = 17$ ). 4.11% of participants were recorded as "Other" ( $n = 6$ ), where the answers indicating freedom, better life opportunities, establishment in Germany and even explicitly "brain drain". One participant fails to answer this question; therefore, the distribution has 1 missing answer. Figure 7 displays the distribution.

*Figure 7: Reason to Come to Germany*



Having analyzed the demographic data, a t-test analysis was conducted in order to compare the impact of economic, social and health-related factors on the respondents. The results suggest that social factors, including gender segregation, freedom of speech, thought, etc., representation of women in the society, religious oppression and sense of life security played the most important role in the migration decisions of participants ( $M = 5.07$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ), followed by physical and psychological health-related factors such as sexual health, sexual freedom, probability of being harassed in daily life and the degree of self-censor for clothing ( $M = 4.55$ ,  $SD = 1.35$ ). Finally, economic factors including income expectations, career options, job opportunities, job prestige, and life standards and purchasing power appear as the least effective reasons for immigration ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ). Yet, all of these factors, namely economic ( $t(145) = 4.09$ ), social ( $t(145) = 19.32$ ) and health-related ( $t(145) = 9.38$ ) appeared as significantly effective on migration decisions ( $p = 0.00$ ). Table 1 and Table 2 summarize the one-sample statistics results for three main groups.

**Table 1: Descriptive Analysis for Main Groups**

**One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Econ_Mean	146	3,9068	1,20256	,09952
Social_Mean	146	5,0685	,98104	,08119
Health_Mean	146	4,5497	1,35272	,11195

**Table 2: t-Test Analysis for Main Groups**

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 3.5					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Econ_Mean	4,088	145	,000	,40685	,2101	,6036
Social_Mean	19,318	145	,000	1,56849	1,4080	1,7290
Health_Mean	9,376	145	,000	1,04966	,8284	1,2709

Considering the sub-groups, the statistical analysis reveals that need for freedom (M = 5.43, SD = 1.11) and security of life (M = 5.41, SD = 1.01) are the most effective factors on the migration decisions of participants, followed by another social factor, religious oppression (M = 5.06, SD = 1.38) and an economic factor namely availability of higher life standards (M = 5.01, SD = 1.28). Comfort while applying sexual-health services ( $t(145) = 2.69$ ;  $p < 0.1$ ), job prestige ( $t(145) = 2.46$ ;  $p < 0.5$ ) and all other factors ( $p = 0.00$ ) have a significant positive impact on migration decisions except job opportunities ( $p > 0.05$ ) and higher income expectations. Table 3 and Table 4 summarize the one-sample statistics results for sub-groups.

*Table 3: Descriptive Analysis for Sub-Groups*

**One-Sample Statistics**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Higher income expectations	146	3,22	1,436	,119
Career options	146	4,03	1,683	,139
Job opportunities	146	3,42	1,575	,130
Prestige	146	3,84	1,680	,139
Higher life standards	146	5,01	1,281	,106
Gender segregation	146	4,45	1,536	,127
Freedom	146	5,43	1,107	,092
Representation of women in the society	146	4,99	1,318	,109
Religious oppression	146	5,06	1,376	,114
Security of life	146	5,41	1,015	,084
Sexual health	146	3,90	1,813	,150
Sexual freedom	146	4,53	1,678	,139
Harassment	146	4,80	1,507	,125
Clothing	146	4,96	1,544	,128

**Table 4: t-Test Analysis for Main Groups**

**One-Sample Test**

	Test Value = 3.5					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Higher income expectations	-2,363	145	,019	-,281	-,52	-,05
Career options	3,835	145	,000	,534	,26	,81
Job opportunities	-,578	145	,564	-,075	-,33	,18
Prestige	2,463	145	,015	,342	,07	,62
Higher life standards	14,277	145	,000	1,514	1,30	1,72
Gender segregation	7,489	145	,000	,952	,70	1,20
Freedom	21,075	145	,000	1,932	1,75	2,11
Representation of women in the society	13,624	145	,000	1,486	1,27	1,70
Religious oppression	13,716	145	,000	1,562	1,34	1,79
Security of life	22,752	145	,000	1,911	1,74	2,08
Sexual health	2,693	145	,008	,404	,11	,70
Sexual freedom	7,447	145	,000	1,034	,76	1,31
Harassment	10,435	145	,000	1,301	1,05	1,55
Clothing	11,416	145	,000	1,459	1,21	1,71

Finally, an ANOVA conducted in order to measure the differences between main groups and sub-groups with respect to gender variable. Starting with the differences between main groups, health-related factors appeared as significantly more effective for women (M = 4.82, SD = 1.21)

compared to men ( $M = 4.10$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ ) ( $F = 10.381$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). There has been no significant impact of gender found for other main groups, although men scored higher in economic factors and women scored higher in social factors ( $p > 0.05$ ). Table 5 and Table 6 depict the descriptive and ANOVA results respectively.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics for ANOVA**

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Econ_Mean	Female	91	3,7978	1,23702	,12967	3,5402	4,0554
	Male	55	4,0873	1,13122	,15253	3,7815	4,3931
	Total	146	3,9068	1,20256	,09952	3,7101	4,1036
Social_Mean	Female	91	5,1758	,88485	,09276	4,9915	5,3601
	Male	55	4,8909	1,10810	,14942	4,5913	5,1905
	Total	146	5,0685	,98104	,08119	4,9080	5,2290
Health_Mean	Female	91	4,8214	1,20778	,12661	4,5699	5,0730
	Male	55	4,1000	1,46692	,19780	3,7034	4,4966
	Total	146	4,5497	1,35272	,11195	4,3284	4,7709

*Table 6: ANOVA for Main Groups*

**ANOVA**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Econ_Mean	Between Groups	2,872	1	2,872	2,000	,159
	Within Groups	206,821	144	1,436		
	Total	209,693	145			
Social_Mean	Between Groups	2,783	1	2,783	2,930	,089
	Within Groups	136,772	144	,950		
	Total	139,555	145			
Health_Mean	Between Groups	17,842	1	17,842	10,381	,002
	Within Groups	247,486	144	1,719		
	Total	265,327	145			

Further analysis for the health-related subgroups revealed that the impact of the degree of self-censor for clothing is significantly higher for women ( $M = 5.32$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ) than men ( $M = 4.36$ ,  $SD = 1.80$ ) ( $F = 14.317$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ). Similar to this, the probability of harassment also appears as a significantly more important factor for women ( $M = 5.20$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ) compared to men ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = 1.71$ ) in terms of their migration decision ( $F = 18.768$ ,  $p = 0.00$ ). Moreover, a significant difference is also observed for sexual freedom ( $F = 4.863$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between the scores of women ( $M = 4.77$ ,  $SD = 1.59$ ) and men ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = 1.76$ ). However, there is no significant difference found for the level of comfort while applying for the sexual health related services ( $p < 0.05$ ). Table 7 and Table 8 depict the descriptives and ANOVA results for the health-related subgroups.

*Table 7: Descriptives for Health-Related Subgroups*

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Sexual health	Female	91	4,00	1,814	,190	3,62	4,38
	Male	55	3,75	1,818	,245	3,25	4,24
	Total	146	3,90	1,813	,150	3,61	4,20
Sexual freedom	Female	91	4,77	1,592	,167	4,44	5,10
	Male	55	4,15	1,758	,237	3,67	4,62
	Total	146	4,53	1,678	,139	4,26	4,81
Harassment	Female	91	5,20	1,213	,127	4,95	5,45
	Male	55	4,15	1,715	,231	3,68	4,61
	Total	146	4,80	1,507	,125	4,55	5,05
Clothing	Female	91	5,32	1,246	,131	5,06	5,58
	Male	55	4,36	1,799	,243	3,88	4,85
	Total	146	4,96	1,544	,128	4,71	5,21

**Table 8: ANOVA for Health-Related Subgroups****ANOVA**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Sexual health	Between Groups	2,221	1	2,221	,674	,413
	Within Groups	474,436	144	3,295		
	Total	476,658	145			
Sexual freedom	Between Groups	13,339	1	13,339	4,863	,029
	Within Groups	394,990	144	2,743		
	Total	408,329	145			
Harassment	Between Groups	37,964	1	37,964	18,768	,000
	Within Groups	291,276	144	2,023		
	Total	329,240	145			
Clothing	Between Groups	31,268	1	31,268	14,317	,000
	Within Groups	314,486	144	2,184		
	Total	345,753	145			

Based on these findings, the study rejects its null hypothesis (H0) which asserts that there is no significant impact of gender gap on highly skilled women's migration decisions compared to men. Furthermore, the study also rejects H1, indicating the economic factors result in significantly more positive role on highly skilled women's migration decisions than men, as well as H2, which suggests social factors play a significantly more positive role on highly skilled women's migration decisions compared to men, although in two subgroups the results have appeared as significant, namely the degree of gender segregation and the representation of women in the society. Lastly, the study fails to reject H3, which claims that health-

related factors are significantly more effective on the migration decision of women compared to men.

## 5. Discussion

Starting with the significant main impact, health-related issues appear as significantly more effective for women than men, specifically on the basis of the degree of self-censor while clothing, the probability of being harassed in daily life and sense of sexual freedom. Considering the previous literature, Elveren and Toksöz (2017) claim that it is reasonable to connect educated women's desire to migrate with their risk of facing violence in Turkey as well as the sexist rhetoric of public authorities (p.22), which eventually decreases the psychological well-being along with increasing the physical health related concerns of women in Turkey. The daily incidents that took coverage in the media as mentioned in the previous chapters, explains this fear of facing violence.

On the other hand, the degree of gender segregation and representation of women in the society also resulted in significant difference for the migration decisions of women compared to men, reflecting the need of women for more equal social conditions. This finding is consistent with the existing literature on highly skilled women migration, since it has been claimed that highly skilled women are more likely to migrate into one country, if the level of women's rights higher in the destination country than in the country of origin (Nejad & Young, 2014). Moreover, the study of Ruysen and Salomone (2018) indicates that women are inclined to migrate into other countries when they perceive that they are not treated with dignity and respect in their home countries.

When gender gap difference between Germany and Turkey is compared, it is seen that empirical evidence supports this research like existing literature does. In World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2017), Turkey ranked as 131<sup>st</sup> among 144 countries in regard of gender gap, while Germany ranked at 12<sup>th</sup> place. This explains the motivation of highly skilled women of Turkey for migrating into Germany. Parallel to the results of this research, the lack of representation of women in social and communal life is a significant 'push factor' for highly skilled Turkish women. One example for that could be political empowerment of women in two countries. In the Global Gender Gap Report, Germany's score is 0.447, whereas Turkey could only score 0.088. When the proportion of the seats at the

national parliament that women held is compared between two countries the difference is become even more visible. In 2017, in Turkey only 14.6% of the seats at national parliament is held by women, while in Germany women held the 37% of the national parliament seats (World Bank Data, Date?). Highly skilled women, who can overcome the obstacles and costs of migration easier than low-skilled women, choose to move to countries where women are properly represented in order to create themselves a more prosperous life with enhanced opportunities. Elveren and Toksöz (2017: 4) also pointed this out by claiming that even though the women from all skills have intention to move out the countries where they suffered from gender discrimination, the highly skilled ones more often turn their intentions to actions (p.4).

Another remarkable finding of the study is that the need for freedom and security of life appeared as the highest among other variables, although there is no significant difference between women and men in these domains. As discussed previously, the current oppressive conditions in Turkey have a great influence on highly skilled individuals regardless of their gender and make them seek ways to migrate into developed countries, as in the case of Turkish brain drain into Germany. The economic factors, however, do not appear as effective as social and health-related factors on the migration decisions of highly skilled individuals. This finding is also compatible with the present literature, which claims that the social factors such as political instability, lack of academic freedom, dissatisfaction with general science policy and higher education system of Turkey have become the major impacts in the decisions of emigrants to stay abroad, compared to economic factors such as wage differentials between the residents' countries and Turkey and in terms of life standards (Elveren & Toksöz, 2017:7). In addition to this, as the findings of study conducted by Güngör and Tansel (2008) revealed that female students are less inclined to go back to Turkey compared to men, due to gender gap in the labor market of Turkey and lack of freedom for women in social life. The result of this study also supports the idea that migration decisions of women are significantly affected by the degree of gender segregation and representation of women in the society, along with the lack of freedom for both men and women.

## **6. Limitations**

There are some limitations in the study, which needed to be reconsidered and improved in further analysis. For instance, some of the participants indicated their gender as male-bisexual or LGBTI-male, and their score distribution is similar to those of women. Considering the conditions of LGBTI+ individuals in Turkey, it can be expected that the motivation behind the migration decision of non-heterosexual / trans men may stem from similar social or health-related concerns with women. Yet, conceptualization of paper reduces the analysis to the men-women duality, although the survey enables the indication of gender with an open-ended question, instead of a multiple-choice question which limits the gender into two options. For that reason, the lack of conceptualization which considers the conditions of cis-heterosexual men and non-heterosexual / trans men as equal downgraded the reliability of comparison with respect to gender. Furthermore, the unbalanced ratio between women and men may have led to erroneous results in overall evaluation, since the domination of women in number manipulated the mean scores on behalf of women's average. A controlled selection of respondents to balance the number of men and women would lead more reliable results. Nevertheless, as the intention of paper is to compare the scores between men and women, this limitation did not distort the general results.

## **7. Concluding Remarks**

In conclusion, this study aims to evaluate the degree of differentiation between the reasons behind the migration decisions of women and men. In the light of previous migration studies regarding to highly skilled women migration in the existing literature along with empirical findings provided by Global Gender Gap Report (2017), the impact of economic, social and health-related factors has been investigated in this study. The results indicate expected outcomes, such that physical and psychological health-related factors are significantly more effective in the migration decisions of highly skilled women compared to men, along with some social factors namely the degree of gender segregation as well as the representation of women in the society. Considering the conservative turn of Turkey under Erdoğan's oppressive governance, women encounter more and more economic, social and health-related challenges day by day, and highly skilled women, who have the means to mobilize such as language proficiency,

professional skills and so forth compared to low skilled women, are more inclined to relocate into other countries than men, where they can establish themselves a better life with more equal conditions in the society and improve their economic and psychological well-being. As the gender gap comparison between Turkey and Germany suggests, it is rational for women to migrate into Germany with some expectations regarding to improvement in their social and psychological life conditions.

However, the results of the study also revealed that freedom and security of life are two major requirements of highly skilled individuals coming from Turkey to Germany, regardless of their gender. Recent social and political difficulties characterized by Syrian refugee crisis, numerous terrorist attacks, failed coup attempt and consequent state of emergency conditions in which academicians, journalists, politicians and so forth have been arbitrarily taken into custody or arrested for months, or at best lost their jobs, created an immediate need for freedom and security of life especially for highly skilled individuals. Combined with the incoming economic crisis as of 2018 summer, more and more highly skilled individual immigration from Turkey is expected on the grounds of economic, social and health-related factors. Nonetheless, it must be reminded that; with SARS-CoV-2 and global restriction issued because of the pandemic changed the predictions for year 2020 independent from push and pull factors. All in all, problems arose from the combination of a social conservative but economic liberal government with corruption where people with lack of qualification are in power and appoint their relatives who also lack of qualification to important positions causes to decay of educational system, social well-being, international relations and economic conditions, and these problems cannot be resolved by oppressive governance which further result in brain drain, loss of educated population, which then decreases the possibility of resolution, hence becoming a vicious cycle, as in the case of Turkey.

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Harriet Taylor Mill-Institut der  
Hochschule für Wirtschaft und Recht Berlin  
Badensche Straße 52  
10825 Berlin  
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