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The Place of Honour Code in Middle-Class Women's Leisure in Turkey: A High-Security Estate Case Study from Bursa

Türkiye'de Orta Sınıf Kadınların Serbest Zaman Faaliyetlerinde Namus Kodunun Yeri: Bir Yüksek Güvenlikli Site Örneği, Bursa

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Abstract

This paper investigates the role of gender in women's everyday leisure practices in a high-security estate in Bursa, Turkey. Defined as a new type of sub-urbanisation, such residential areas have emerged in Turkey towards the end of the 1990s, and, to date, social class has been the central area of inquiry about high-Esecurity estates in Turkey. Drawing on the findings from qualitative research, the current paper argues that gender plays a central role in middle-class women's access to and use of neighbourhood leisure spaces. Even though the community values and the middle-class rhetoric of gender equality advocate individuality and the equal use of public leisure spaces, family-level male control shaped by honour code is still dominant, in varying degrees, in preventing women from practising the leisure activities they choose.

***Keywords**: gender, class, high-security estates, Turkey, honour code, civility code.*

Öz

Bu makale Türkiye'nin Bursa ilinde bir yüksek güvenlikli sitede kadınların gündelik leisure (serbest zaman) faaliyetlerinde toplumsal cinsiyetin rolünü incelemektedir. Bir alt-kentleşme olarak tanımlanan bu gibi yerleşim alanları Türkiye'de 1990ların sonunda ortaya çıkmaya başlamış ve bugüne kadar, Türkiye'de yüksek güvenlikli site olgusu sosyal sınıf kavramı etrafında çalışılmıştır. Niteliksel bir araştırmadan elde edilen bulgular üzerine yapılandırılmış bu makale orta sınıf kadınlarının mahallelerindeki serbest zaman mekanlarına ulaşmaları ve bu mekanları kullanmalarında toplumsal cinsiyetin merkezi bir rol oynadığını savunmaktadır. Orta sınıf topluluk değerleri ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliği retoriği bireyselliği ve kamusal serbest zaman alanlarının eşit kullanımını desteklese bile, namus kodu etrafında şekillenen aile içi erkek kontrolü hala kadınların istediği serbest zaman faaliyetini seçip pratik etmesi önünde engel oluşturmaktadır.

***Anahtar Kelimeler**: toplumsal cinsiyet, yüksek güvenlikli site, Türkiye, namus kodu, medenilik kodu*

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Introduction

The existing literature on high-security estates is extensive both in terms of the aspects studied and regions covered. Adding up to the classical Western literature (Blakely & Snyder, 1997; Davis, 1992; Low, 2003), the examples from Asia, Latin America and the Middle East (Shirley & Neill, 2013; Breitung, 2012) provide valuable insights on how local and regional aspects of societies do have an impact on how a global housing type finds its place in those specific contexts.

To date, class has been the central area of inquiry about high-security estates in Turkey (Perouse & Danış, 2005; Ayata, 2002; Kurtuluş, 2005; Keyder, 2005; Öncü, 1999; Geniş, 2007; Aydın, 2012); gender dynamics is under-researched in this context (see also Datta, 2014). Focusing mostly to the cities of İstanbul and Ankara, the literature has interrogated the residential profile of the high-security estates (e.g. typically, the old and the new middle-classes), the consequences of such trend in housing and urban policies (e.g. the increasing socio-spatial segregation and the displacement of disadvantaged populations from their neighbourhoods). Some studies have also focused on residential satisfaction and the possibilities of community in these estates (Bektaş Ata, 2016; Karaarslan & Karaarslan; Akyol Altun, 2010). While the majority of the studies focus on the middle-class social behaviour code, i.e. civility code, in examining the estate life in Turkey (see Ayata, 2002), the feminist literature on the middle classes in Turkey, on the other hand, emphasises the continuing gender inequality concerning women's roles (e.g. Ataca & Sunar, 1999; Sümer, 1998; Bolak, 1997; Beşpınar, 2010) despite a discourse of gender equality as an expression of civility of middle-classes.

This paper aims to contribute to the summarised gap by investigating women's access to and use of leisure spaces and networks in a high-security estate in Bursa, Turkey. Drawing on the analysis of the empirical material collected via a qualitative study, the article argues that it is crucial to understand the historically developed gendered codes of respectability in Turkish context for an evaluation of the gendered use of leisure spaces in a middle-class context like a high-security estate. The roots of honour code are still existing within middle-classes which determines how women are controlled in their leisure behaviour.

Gendered Codes of Respectability: Honour vs. Civility?

Respectability is a concept used by Skeggs (1997: 32) as a way to understand how multiple social divisions, such as class, gender, age, and race intersect and mediate each other. The concept simultaneously allows the researcher to make sense of her participants' "continued identifications, dissimulations and resistances". Respectability embodies dominant social behaviour codes which hold moral authority and, thereby, power. "It contains judgements of class, race, gender and sexuality and different groups have differential access to the mechanisms for generating, resisting and displaying

respectability" (Skeggs, 1997: 2). The socially recognised judgements and standards label the 'right' practices, which become the measures of respectability, and people recognise and produce themselves as subjects in alignment with them (Skeggs, 1997: 66). "Recognition of how one is positioned is central to the processes of subjective construction. These recognitions enable women to navigate themselves through classificatory systems and measure and evaluate themselves accordingly" (Skeggs, 1997: 4). Skeggs points out that 'responsibility' is a key signifier of gendered respectability. "[Responsibility] is demonstrated through self-performances, such as conduct and manners, or through the care and obligations to others (e.g. familial, voluntary and occupational caring)" (Skeggs, 1997: 56). Concurrently, she emphasises that women rarely accommodate these classificatory positions with comfort.

The current paper argues that the dominant codes of respectability in the Turkish context, the honour code and the civility code, creates a hybrid form in regulating the contemporary middle-class masculinities and femininities in today's fragmented society. The insightful study by Sencer Ayata (2002), on which much of the analysis in this paper is based, provides a framework for the middle-class values shaping social relations in high-security estates. Ayata highlights that estate life in Turkey is organised around a civility code, which is understood as a driving force of cultural homogeneity, despite the unique codes and styles which separate the inhabitants as individuals, families and status categories- and a marker of middle-class identity. The main principle of civility is mutual self-respect and respect for other people's privacy. He argues that this emphasis on the individual and its place in middle-class values enhances the processes of personal individuation. 'The truly civilised are regarded as those who have developed individualities, those who can think and act autonomously, who have powerful mechanisms of internal control, people with self-restraint who know how to behave in public' (Ayata, 2002: 38). In their social behaviours, individuals are more distant and reserved, and everyone is expected to mind his or her own business. Leisure is central to the lifestyle of the autonomous middle-class individuals and families. As he emphasises, the middle-classes enjoy the many comforts of modern life. They wear sports clothes; actively seek the varied pleasures of modern life (holiday resorts, cinema, high culture, food and drink). The most significant feature of middle-class civility during those leisure moments is that it does not exclude women from domestic and public entertainment (Ayata, 2002: 38).

The empirical evidence and analysis presented in the following pages of this paper challenge Ayata's class-oriented framing by illustrating a different, more nuanced and complex reality regarding interrogating gender dynamics in the new middle-class milieu of the high-security estate under investigation. Despite the recognition of gender equality in regulating residents' rights to use leisure spaces, the ongoing male control over women's bodies and their use of leisure spaces is still visible at the family level as a reflection of concerns regarding

family honour. Therefore, the civility code is not the only code of social organisation of life in the high-security estates.

In the broader sense, the concept of honour refers to 'clusters of meaning which serve as cultural "maps" for individuals [that] enable persons to find a path in their own culture' (Sirman, 2014: 4). Concerning gender, the significance of the concept relates to women's roles, status and capabilities lying at the heart of the idea of honour. A preoccupation with women's chastity is central to the honour code. Since female misconduct results in the loss of honour for men and the whole family, 'women carry the burden of safeguarding group identity and group honour' (Özyeğin, 2009: 111). In that sense, the maintenance or loss of women's sexual honour is a 'social affair' (Sunar & Fişek, 2005: 172) mirrored in communal opinion, which is different from an understanding of honour as individual 'self-respect' (Meeker, 1976a: 268). The honour code, which attributes the family honour to women's chastity, result in the social and spatial segregation of sexes and women's secondary status in using public spaces.

The modernisation project in Turkey aimed to replace the honour code with Western ideals of the gender order, i.e. the civility code. Under the civility code, the participation of women in the public sphere, equal rights with men, and mixed socialisation are all recognised as ideals of social conduct. However, the image of the "modern" woman remained subordinated due to the recognition of their primary roles as wives and mothers. It has been widely argued that despite the many advances in women's legal rights, 'Kemalist reforms neither aimed at nor led to the dissolution of the patriarchal structure that had been infused into the private and public spheres. Instead, the reforms were instrumental in the transformation of the mode of patriarchy to a republican texture' (Coşar, 2007: 117).

The honour code, for long decades, has been the topic of feminist studies largely among the studies on rural villages and small towns and urban areas drew scholarly interest primarily in relation to rural-to-urban migration and gecekondu housing. Even then, the low-income and rural segment of the population remained at the centre of these studies. Ataca and Sunar (1999) state that for long periods in Turkey, the urban middle classes were not seen as a significant segment of the population due to their low percentage in the overall population[1], therefore, research on the middle classes in Turkey only increased gradually after the 1980s. Kandiyoti states that this result may be a joint legacy both of a society that, in demographic terms, remained predominantly rural until the 1990s and of modernisation theory, which privileged the rural/urban split (as a proxy for "tradition" and "modernity"), which has led to a relative neglect of urban stratification (Kandiyoti, 2002: 5). This paper, in that sense, also aims to contribute to the feminist studies on gendered relations in middle-classes.

Research

This paper is derived from a PhD project, which aimed to interrogate women's everyday experiences of leisure in two differently-classed

neighbourhoods of urban Turkey. A qualitative approach is chosen as the most suitable methodology since it provides a sustained focus on the context and foregrounds a detailed understanding of human experience by exploring the complexities on the ground (Rossman & Rallis, 2012: 6-8). In studying the everyday, the local settings and lives constitute the interest of this research in which the everyday and locality form the understanding of diversity in women's experience.

The data is collected via two-month pilot research between July-August 2014 and six-month main fieldwork between March- October 2015. The aim of a closer look at everyday life in the neighbourhood space inspired the researcher to use geographical research methods which are particularly useful in locating people in places. One of the methods used to collect data was the walk and talk interviews, which can be defined as a hybrid form of an interview and participant observation. Compared with sit-down interviews, walk and talk interviews encourage interviewees to focus closely on the place in question, highlighting different levels of knowledge about an area (Evan & Jones, 2011: 856). The decision on time and the choice of route in the neighbourhood were left to the interviewees. This way, the researcher could grasp their mobility decisions and reactions in an environment that was familiar to them, rather than force them to walk in places in which they feel uncomfortable.

The second method used was focus group meetings. The aim was to grasp the "group interaction" (Kitzinger, 1995: 299) to reveal diversity in meanings and experiences. Mapping strategies were used to support group interaction. There are several advantages of using maps in focus groups, e.g. participants can better organise their thoughts through the graphical representation of experience; or a map could influence the depth and detail of individual reflections (Wheeldon, 2011: 510). The focus groups were divided into two parts. In the first part, the participants were asked to draw actual maps of their neighbourhoods, consisting of places they know and spend time in during an ordinary day. In the second part of each focus group, the participants were asked to draw a mind map of their everyday routines. After each mapping exercise, the group was asked to talk about their drawings. The use of maps was expected to facilitate more detailed and in-depth reflections of participants' experiences of leisure and their use of the places for leisure. Once again, the decision of time and place were left to the participants regarding the requirements of their daily responsibilities and unpaid labour.

The third method used was the participant observation in places and spaces for leisure, intending to access individuals' tacit practical knowledge, which cannot be grasped by simply asking questions. As Zahle (2012: 55) emphasises, individuals may be unable to adequately articulate and underscore the non-verbalised aspects of their practices. Unlike interviews and focus groups, participant observation provides the researcher with a chance to have spontaneous encounters with a larger number of people and observe their interactions, gestures, and words, as well as the atmosphere in which they occur. While there are two components to the method, namely participation

and observation, there are different degrees to which the social researcher may participate in the social setting. For instance, she may do so in the weaker sense of simply hanging around or in the stronger sense of engaging actively in the activities under study (Zahle, 2012). This study implies participant observation in terms of hanging around, observing and trying to participate in conversations as little as possible.

In both of the main data collection methods, the open-ended interviewing technique is used to provide a space for participants to 'share ideas, thoughts, and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher' (Reinharz, 1992: 19-20). Nonetheless, interview questions and focus group themes were drafted to keep the researcher's ideas in order. The thematic analysis is used in this research where the data were sorted into codes and certain regularities were highlighted from which the themes emerged. In the presentation of the data, the pseudonyms are used to protect the anonymity of participants. Finally, beside the unique insights provided by the case study, the potential limits of generalising the analysis to overarching national patterns are recognised for this research.

Setting the Scene: Yasemin Park High-Security Estate

The high-security estate under investigation is located in the suburbs of Bursa which is located in the Marmara region, a centre of industry and trade in Turkey. The rationale behind choosing the city and the field site is their familiarity with the researcher. Additionally, being part of one of the earliest gated town projects in Turkey, the story of Yasemin Park is representative of contemporary Turkey, especially in terms of the shift of capital from manufacturing to the construction sector, the changes in urban land use and the evolution of high-security estates in Turkey (see also Demirbaş, 2018).

The Yasemin Park is a high-security estate constructed in 1996 as part of the big gated-town project called Yeşilşehir (Greencity), referring to the "greencity" nickname of Bursa. Greencity was designed with a capacity to hold 15,000 flats on a 2,400-square metre area of land and a host of public facilities, such as schools, and was advertised as "the project of the 21st century" (Küçükşahin et al., 1997). In 1998, shortly after the first stage of the gated town project, which is Yasemin Park high-security estate, was completed, the Savings Deposit Insurance Fund confiscated the Greencity Project as part of the owner's properties, after his prosecution due to allegations of corruption. From 2005 to 2007, the flats of Yasemin Park were sold to people at a lower price than initially planned. This had certain impacts on the resident profile of the estate. It allowed families who rely on one wage and with occupations like technicians, customs employees or teachers to move into the estate. In 2007, the real estate investment trust decided to cancel the whole project and design a new real estate project for the rest of the land- Bursa Modern. This meant that residents of Yasemin Park would no longer benefit at no charge from the facilities of the later stages of the Greencity project. In short, Yasemin Park, initially planned as an elite gated community lacked many of the leisure

facilities and turned out to be a gated estate for the middle-classes and not necessarily for elite residents.

The estate is built on 121,500m^2 of land, consisting of 1,676 flats and 55 blocks in total. The population of the estate is approximately 6,000 residents. High fences covered with razor wire (and all covered with green grass) surround the estate. It has a picnic area, a kindergarten, a basketball court, a football pitch, a walking trail, abundant green spaces, a couple of ornamental fountains with gazebos next to these fountains, two drinking fountains, a tea garden, several benches scattered across the estate, parking lots and parking garages. The estate is designed in U-shaped block clusters. In each cluster, one sees a parking lot with bike rack spaces and a playground in the middle. There are also four 23-floor residences on each corner of the ornamental pool in the middle of the estate.

I recruited 32 women from Yasemin Park. The majority of my participants held university degrees (18 out of 32, two of whom had post-graduate degrees). There were ten high school graduates, among whom five were currently in university education. A small number of women in my sample from Yasemin Park (three) had a primary school degree. Most of the women in my sample held various professions, such as being a doctor, a mechanical engineer, an architect, etc. The age range of my sample went from 18 to 70. I recruited 5 single university students within the 18-25 age category. The largest segment of my sample (22 women) is aged between 26-44. Following the expected average life events in a lifecycle approach, the majority of this group were married (19- and 3 divorced), mostly with small children under fifteen years of age. Most of them had a university degree or a high-school diploma. Among the fifteen women holding university degrees, four defined themselves as non-employed and not actively looking for a job. Twelve of these women were married and three professional women were divorced. Seven women in this category had reached levels of education lower than university. The last age category is aged 46 and over, which I recruited 5 women in this category. Three of the women had university degrees and held professional positions such as teacher or data processor. One had a primary school diploma, and the other had a high-school diploma. Both were housewives.

'Gender Equality' in Yasemin Park

The estate mainly attracts middle-class nuclear families, whose reasons for moving to Yasemin Park are usually the proximity of the estate to men's jobs and the appeal of the estate as a safe and child-friendly environment. It is designed and marketed as a residential environment for comfortable and peaceful family life. Its features are described as offering a solution for middle-class families wishing to escape from the inadequacies of the city, such as disorder, pollution, congestion and inadequate social services. The outdoor places of the estate are almost exclusively dedicated to leisure purposes. With its extensive green areas, some women described the estate as 'heaven'; a picnic area with all the necessary equipment, including

barbecue pits, a fountain and tables, children's playgrounds for each apartment block and benches to sit around on, and the tea garden and the gazebos next to the ornamental fountains all make leisure easily accessible for the women of Yasemin Park. In addition to these places, children can play on football pitches, basketball and tennis courts, in a chess area, and a sandpit. The two estate managements also organise leisure events. Except for the family-related events organised at weekends, such as barbecue parties, most of the events are organised for the women residents, especially housewives and mothers, who stay in the estate during the day. For instance, women participate in handicraft courses and celebrations of special days, such as Mother's Day.

All leisure places are accessible for every resident in the estate, regardless of their gender. It is important to remember that the socialisation of the middle classes is perceived as "civilised", especially in its recognition of gender equality at a public level. Therefore, men manifesting civilised behaviour would prefer not to limit "their" women's behaviours, at least not formally, in public life. The estate provides many facilities for women's leisure practices. Leisure venues create opportunities for women to escape isolation and establish new friendships. Helin describes the advantages of having a tea garden: 'In any case, you will meet somebody; somehow, you will become close. You will greet each other even if you don't know them. This summer, for example, I met two or three new people here.' The estate is also perceived as a safe space for leisure. Mira emphasises the advantages of having the walking trail, where one can have a walk without being disturbed by anybody:

> You can even cycle here, there are a walking trail and a cycling trail here [it is mainly the same trail]. Are you familiar with the estate? … We have a very nice walking trail for instance; you can have walks without anyone disturbing you …

In the use of leisure spaces, the order is the essential rule. The common living rules of the estate, which residents are expected to commit to, are formally imposed by the estate management. With each bulletin published by the estate management, residents are reminded of the rules, such as throwing the rubbish out at certain times, not disturbing neighbours with noise, not leaving shoes and other objects on the doorstep, not hanging out clothes or shaking carpets or tablecloths from the balcony, not littering the public spaces, and so on. The "appropriate" behaviour in using leisure spaces is also part of the same culture of order. Sibel, a housewife with two children, describes the culture of civility and rule-boundedness as a class signifier:

> The fees that are paid keep the resident profile more decent. For instance, here you don't leave shoes on the doorstep, it is a culture, residents warn the ones who leave them out. Here the thing is about not disturbing people, following the rules. Nobody sits on the grass here, although we have extensive green areas. If we had had these

> areas in my previous neighbourhood, they would have been packed with women, children, families, drinking tea, eating seeds, and so on.

The different uses made of the green areas for leisure are perceived to reflect residents' social class and to contrast the estate life with other ways of living in other neighbourhoods (e.g. the working-class lifestyles).The dominating role of mutual respect for each other's privacy and everybody minding his/her own business creates a certain level of freedom for women in their behaviours in the neighbourhood. For example, Beste, a young single woman who had moved to the estate ten years ago, compares the estate with her previous gecekondu-like neighbourhood: 'At least I'm at ease here; nobody interferes in other people's lives.' The distinction between gecekondu and estate life is also reflected in Arya's comment. Arya has a hairdressing salon in a gecekondu neighbourhood, where she had lived for 28 years before moving to Yasemin Park seven years ago. She goes there every day and her customers are mainly the female residents of that gecekondu neighbourhood. She compares both neighbourhoods in terms of gossip:

> You are at ease in Yasemin Park; nobody minds who comes to your house, and so on. But here, it is a bit more gossiped about. I don't pay attention to this gossip so I expect nobody talks about me. But women here complain about the gossip. In Yasemin Park, although it has a small population, people tend not to know each other and don't care what other people do.

Together with the dominance of privacy in "respectable" social behaviour in the relations among inhabitants, the absence of the "family circle of kin and villagers" makes life easier for female residents to practice their leisure in the community. This is because it creates a community in which women's behaviours are less surveilled and controlled, and this, in turn, enables women to exercise their autonomy and practice leisure activities as they want to. Alara, a 20-year-old university student has both the experience of living among relatives in her previous residence and living away from them in Yasemin Park. She describes the changes in her leisure as follows:

> We have become quite social. Previously, we were living in Istanbul. It was a family apartment. It wasn't possible to act like this, like going out for dinner, or going to my father's friends' houses or they come to ours… We didn't have that kind of social life. As I said, a family apartment, so like: 'What would our uncle say?', 'What would our aunt-in-law say?' … Because of them, we didn't have such a social life, but it's changed since we moved here.

Anonymity is the dominant rule in the estate to maintain the privacy of and mutual respect among the residents. This less controlled environment reduces the potential level of anxiety residents may feel of losing honour and emanating from the forms of everyday tensions and struggles to control and maintain honour. It provides a larger leisure space, both in the physical

and metaphorical sense, for women, who are relatively less limited by their male partners or fathers.

Although middle-class discourse recognises gender equality in terms of the inclusion of women in domestic and public entertainment, this is not full equality which recognises women's autonomy in their leisure decisions, particularly in their access to and use of public leisure spaces in the neighbourhood, and in the city in general. Analysis of the data shows that there are differences among middle-class families in terms of male control over women's leisure in public spaces.

Residents of Yasemin Park experience less anxiety of being judged by other community members; however, the overarching social pattern of the female and male separateness in leisure is highly visible, only in a moderated form, blended with modernity. As is evidenced in research on Turkey, the separate social networks and same-sex socialisation patterns are only 'moderated in dual-income and highly educated urban families' (Sunar & Fişek, 2005). Therefore, I argue in this paper that looking at the idealised picture of the civilised community (see Ayata (2002) above) might be illusory to a certain extent. Although the middle-class rhetoric of gender equality is dominant in the common living rules of the estate (particularly in regulating residents' rights to use leisure spaces), male control at the family level still constrains middle-class women's leisure.

How Women Negotiate Male Control of their Leisure in the Estate

One of the clearest examples of men's control over women's leisure is the latter's use of the estate swimming pool. Yasemin Park does not currently have a swimming pool. Therefore, most of the residents go to the other gated estate next to Yasemin Park, Bursa Modern, which has an indoor pool in its sports complex. Due to the high demand from residents, the Yasemin Park estate management has been working on a project to build a swimming pool in the estate. Almost every participant I interviewed raised the issue as a necessity; yet, they demand the pool be mostly for children. Women state that they are either not allowed by their husbands to swim there or they do not want to do so because of the danger of being subjected to the male gaze and sexual harassment. As Buse states, 'Even if we had a swimming pool, I would not go there because my husband doesn't allow me to swim in an open space like here... My child would use it. I take him to [another district] swimming pool every day.' Meltem and Alara, two young university students, also expressed similar views on the swimming pool. Meltem emphasised their families' "happiness" about not having a swimming pool in the estate. When I asked the reason, Alara replied, 'Well, if there were one, then it would be mixed, for both sexes.' Such an explanation implies that the families would not consent to their children using the swimming pool. Alara herself would not swim in a pool of the estate due to the potential stares and harassment. She elaborated on what she means by that:

> Here… [Name], a woman was going to a sports centre. Her husband was speaking with his friend, and this friend said to him: 'You should come to the sports centre in Bursa Modern, really hot women come here.' So then, the husband came home and told his wife: 'You won't go to that gym anymore.' Therefore, as long as there are people with this mentality, even if my parents allowed me, I wouldn't swim here.

In the excerpt above, one sees how the honour code is applied to women's leisure in Yasemin Park; how the female body is perceived as "belonging" to her man and the bearer of male honour. Because the husband hears of other men staring at female bodies in the swimming pool, he resolves that the only way to prevent this from happening to his wife is to ban her from going to the swimming pool. Gaye, who is a 37-year-old married woman with a small child, raised similar concerns. Despite being a sports trainer, she does not prefer to use the swimming pool due to the danger of sexual harassment:

> I don't prefer this place [swimming pool in the neighbour estate]. Why? Because… imagine I will swim there, the men around me will also swim. Maybe I won't get disturbed, but I hear stories from my friends who used that pool. For instance, there is a man got obsessed with my friend, who is married and have a little child. He disturbs her in wherever he sees. As far as she described, this man is not busy; he hangs out in the sports centre all day. Since I heard this, I told myself that this is not a place I would go.

These findings challenge Aydın's (2012) interpretation of an estate owner's statements in her research. According to the estate owner's survey, women residents do not want to use the swimming pool together with men. Aydın, without asking women directly, interprets this as an expression of Islamic motives on estate design. Whereas, in this research, it is clear that the danger of sexual harassment and losing family honour prevent women from using the swimming pool.

Alev also describes her disappointment with her husband in terms of his control over her leisure and mobility. Alev, a 38-year-old, married woman with an 8-year-old son, is a mechanical engineer and her husband is a construction engineer. She is not allowed to go out alone at night:

> Alev: No, I would like to go out, but my husband doesn't want that, he doesn't allow…
> Ahu: Even it is not very often…
> Alev: no, it doesn't matter often or not…
> Alev: But what he could do is that. Let's say I mentioned it for a couple of times, he organises something immediately, so we go out together… We go out very often together… it would be nice to go out separately, with my own friends… If he would leave the decision to me, I would like to meet some friends at night outside and alone. Yes, of course, we meet with other mothers from the estate during the days or some other friends. But I have also many friends from other networks, they don't have time and they go out in the evenings, but I'm not able to join them. So, if I could make my own decision, I would like to join them.

This male control is once again generated from the understanding that men have a right to control their women's leisure. Another example is given by Meltem, a single university student from Yasemin Park. Meltem saw the leaflet for a tango dance course and asked her family about attending the course:

> I called my mum and said that I'd go to tango course. I never expected that she wouldn't allow it. I just wanted to tell them. And she said: 'What? Tango? Will you dance the tango with strange men?'… She told me to go to belly dance class instead. I was pissed off. Imagine! With ladies, 50 years old… will I do belly dance? She said: 'Ask your dad.' And my dad usually allows me to do many things… In the morning, I called my dad, I said: 'I'm going to take a tango course.'… He replied: 'If I was your partner, then it would be fine.' So, I couldn't go and I was very sad.

Meltem is single and until she gets married, her body has to be protected from close intimacy with men and this protection is seen primarily as the responsibility of the family. Her parents think that the limits of physical proximity with a male stranger are exceeded in tango, therefore, it can be practised only with "acceptable" partners, such as a father, brother or husband. Although Meltem finds her parents' ban on tango unfortunate, she seems mostly in mutual agreement with her parents' restrictions on her time and space use:

> For instance, I'm in Istanbul. They let me stay out until a certain time at night… But I can understand because in time I can start to have empathy. So I tell myself: 'It's quite normal. If I had a child, probably I wouldn't let them either.' Therefore, we have started to overcome these issues slowly.

Of particular interest in Meltem's excerpt is how she finds her parents' rules and restrictions normal. Dilara appears to have a similar perception:

> My father approves of anything possible. He doesn't put up barriers. For instance, I'm going to France in February… But I also don't remember if I've ever asked for anything impossible from him… If I think again… My dad intervenes for instance; I can't come home late around 11-12 pm every week. This can be an example. From time to time, if there is an important event, such as a birthday celebration and so on, then the return time can be stretched.

The narrative of the benevolent father and the understanding daughter who never disappoints her father is explicit from the excerpts above.The examples provided evidence of the relevance of the honour code even in a middle-class estate, especially when the protection of women's bodies and sexuality is the matter in hand. Even though the community values and the middle-class rhetoric of gender equality advocate the equal use of public leisure spaces, family-level male control may prevent women from practising the leisure activities they choose.

Conclusion

Focusing on the relationship between the individual, family and community, this article has investigated how gender plays a role in women's leisure experiences in high-security estates. The existing analyses on everyday social relations within high-security estates in urban Turkey are mainly class oriented and the gendered aspects of social life in this type of residential environment are under-researched. This article has argued that the gender-based constraints on leisure is not a pattern peculiar to lower-classes and this is particularly important for the interest on social life in high-security estates, as the new middle-class milieu in Turkey. Designed and marketed as a residential environment for a comfortable, leisurely and peaceful family life, the high-security estates offer the potential for new, relatively more egalitarian, gender norms and negotiation patterns in one's everyday living environment. These opportunities emerge from its dominant set of social relations, which are reproduced around the civility code (the marker of middle-class identity) and this code recognises the equal rights of women and men to use public leisure spaces. The dominating rule of mutual respect creates a certain level of freedom for women in their behaviours in the neighbourhood and women feel less anxious about the potential harm to family reputation, gossip or other forms of community pressure. Despite the recognition of gender equality in regulating residents' rights to use leisure spaces, the ongoing male control over women's bodies and their use of leisure spaces is still visible at the family level as a reflection of concerns regarding family honour. While Ayata's (2002) framing of estate life offers a description of middle-class lifestyle broadly, it oversees gender dynamics which differ women's experiences from male inhabitants. The findings of the current research foreground the necessity of further research on gender relations in high-security estates in Turkey.

Notes

[1] For instance, university graduates constituted as little as 1.6 percent of the population of adult women aged 25 and older in 1980 and remained an exception as they were absorbed into professional employment, with a large share in the public sector (Ilkkaracan, 2012:9).

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