

Essay on income inequality and policies of reduction in turkey

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Introduction to Income Inequality

Income inequality is one of the fundamental economic problem with social and economic consequences. Income inequality might influence many areas in social life and individual lives such as politics, social changes, psychology, criminology and public health (Adler et. al., 1993; . When individuals do not have equality in opportunities of accessing labor market, health and education services, businesses environment, and other important areas in social life will influence individuals' lives and create social classes with different settings (Benhabib and Rustiching, 1991): Some people will be able to have access all the opportunities in the social life and they will be getting more things from economy and social life while others stay away from these opportunities. Income inequality might cause a poverty cycle which is truly hard to cope with for individuals, and they need help to develop themselves. A child from a poor family will probably not have access to some public services such as education, health etc, and actually that will make him poor also and this cycle continue until government or another strong institution intervenes with some policies to fight inequality.

What We Observe in Turkey

Turkey is a middle eastern country as well as a candidate country to enter the European Union with a small land in the Europe Geographically.

Compared to the other middle eastern countries, it is a more modern country and there is a democratic government.

Even though Turkey is more developed country relatively to the other middle eastern countries, there is an inequality problem among people. Two main

groups who are suffering from the inequality are women and the Roman people.

Turkey is a traditional developing country and women's social status is still not developed well. Monitoring the statistics shows us that the women in Turkey have had a traditional life inside a male dominant family structure and in the modern Turkey, these women could not take their place in the working life. In average, they make less money than men. Connecting this results from statistics gives us that women are having difficulty to develop themselves because of some cultural and social barriers in the society. The statistics before 1990 shows us that women are receiving enough education and in a male dominant family structure, the women do not have the opportunity to access to the financial resources to start neither for a life by themselves nor neither for starting their own businesses (Eissenstat, 2013). The Roman people in Turkey have a life away from the community geographically and socially. In most of the cities, the Roman people neighborhoods are mostly separated from other neighborhoods and there are worse living conditions in their neighborhoods. Most of the Roman people are not educated and finding a regular job is very difficult for these people because many employers discriminate against these people. Most of the employers believe that the Roman people do not have the skills necessary to do the available jobs at their workplace. The discrimination against these people is pushing them out of the society more and more in time. We observe that their attendance to the schools are decreasing everyday and more drugs addiction incidence in the Roman neighborhoods.

Both, women and the Roman people, has similar problems. Maybe the

Roman people are more discriminated relatively, women and the Roman people have barriers to reach education, job opportunities and access to the financial resources. These barriers are creating an income inequality for these people and income inequality making the situation worse and their social status creating more inequalities for them.

Consequences of Income Inequality

Social inequality might bring some negative consequences to us; Health problems, social cohesion problems, crimes depending on poverty (Doyle et. al., 1999), inefficient use of resources, economic growth problems based on poverty, housing problems, and undeveloped consumption behaviors (Persson and Guido, 1994). we can observe that the Roman people in Turkey suffers from poverty and as the literature explains to us, their poverty is bringing the health problems and social adaptation problems. Many Roman people survives on the government grants. These government supports provide many public services to them for free, however, in the application, they face a discrimination in the hospitals and in the other public places. Finally, we can say that the Roman people faces a social adaptation and acceptance problem and that creates a big stress on them. Social adaptation or social acceptance problems and the stress on these people causes them involve some crimes.

Income inequality causes many social problems and social integration problems might cause political and economical problems. Beside higher social tension problem, another problem might be higher crime rates.

Studies show that there is a correlation between crime rates and inequality

in opportunities and income inequality is one of them (Simpson, 1990).

The women in Turkey faces income inequality and the results for them differs from the Roman people. Inequality might create a negative influence on social health physiologically or psychologically (Judge et. al., 1998). We observe that most of the women in a male dominant family structure, the women faces a trust problem and discrimination. That causes negative changes in women's lives. If the women cannot reach education and job opportunities, they have to survive on their fathers or husbands income as an unproduction individual who has to obey them. If they have an opportunity to get education and jobs, then they are mostly trying to be away from their families and we observe that the women who has started making money after getting married are mostly divorcing. However, some of the women feel that they have to stay in the male dominant family structure because they have children or because of other cultural reasons. Not following cultural codes might cause negative results for women (Lubliner, 2002).

An important negative consequence of income inequality is to use economic resources inefficiently in economy. That inefficiency occurs because of not being able to distributional inefficiency in economy. Under income inequality conditions, there might occur some social classes and instead of providing access to economic resources for everybody, economic system might allow only one social group to access them. Consequently, some people who could use resources more efficiently relative to other people might not get this opportunity. Limiting people's opportunities in economy always will cause

inefficiency and to get rid of this, equal opportunities should be provided to everybody.

Policies Implemented by the Governments to Prevent Income Inequality

The most important issue to prevent income inequality, social inequality, inequality in public services and poverty is to understand dynamics of inequality. Without having this information of how inequality occurs in the society, policy makers cannot make the right decisions. In Turkey, the governments have implemented fighting poverty policies including grants and other clothing, housing and similar supports. However this policy implemented in Turkey has been not efficient, because the poor in Turkey does not develop themselves and consequently the poverty continues. That proves that the Turkish Government could not comprehend poverty dynamics and could not develop proper policy. The Roman people have been the largest group applying to receive these grants. However their social status has not changed and they are still suffering from the poverty. A similar situation holds for the women in Turkey also. Until 1980s, there was no certain policies to develop the women in Turkey. After 1980s, the governments have implemented some policies for developing women, however, each government has implemented a different strategy and these strategies were not completing each other. The worst thing about these policies, not was changing in the social structure about women. The last government have become aware that they need to support women sociologically and psychologically also, only financial supports do not help women develop. Recently, better women development policies have begun

in Turkey.

Understanding these dynamics will help us create proper policy responses to inequality problems. Because of this, this country should implement some research projects to learn; 1) How inequalities are occurring, 2) Which dynamics in society, governmental system and other factors are feeding inequality and 3) Which tools can be used more efficiently to fight against inequalities. Results of these projects will provide us required information to create policies.

Two Essential Policy Suggestion

I would suggest two main policies to prevent inequality; 1) Develop an education system for the disadvantageous groups who are the people suffering the most from inequality (Acemoglu, 2000; Park 1996), and 2) Create job opportunities and access to financial resources for disadvantageous groups.

1) Developing an education system for disadvantageous groups:

The people who are suffering from the inequalities mostly do have lower level of education or less years to attend education institutions, because mostly they have an economic or social barriers to go to school. Because they stay away from schools, they stay away from important information about labor markets, skills and other relevant things. This problem deepens their disadvantageous and inequality discrepancy increases.

The government should develop a new system for disadvantageous people and make them access to the education opportunities. That will help us transform the disadvantageous people into more productive and self-survival

individuals.

2) Creating job opportunities and access to financial resources for disadvantaged groups:

One of the most important barrier for disadvantageous people is to access to job markets and find jobs for themselves. If they could cope with this problem, they could develop themselves economically. Then they could get more from society. The government should create job opportunities for disadvantageous people by making some legal regulations and special social designs supported by education system and social services.

Also the government should create opportunities for disadvantageous people to create their own businesses. The most important thing to create your own business is to access to financial resources. As we know, Mohamad Yunus in the Far Eastern countries have started microfinance movement and microfinance applications have somehow successful. It is not a perfect system, however, a government supported microfinance might be a strong tool to fight against inequalities.

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