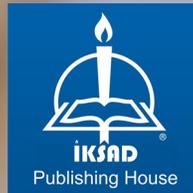


GENDERED DISCOURSES PRODUCED WITHIN THE CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY CONTEXT IN TURKEY

Dr. Çaęla GÜL ŞENKARDES

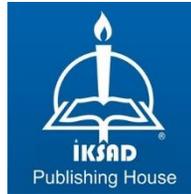


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ISTANBUL

2022



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(The Licence Number of Publicator: 2014/31220)
TURKEY TR: +90 342 606 06 75
USA: +1 631 685 0 853
E mail: iksadyayinevi@gmail.com
www.iksadyayinevi.com

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Iksad Publications – 2022©

ISBN: 978-625-8423-88-4
Cover Design: İbrahim KAYA
January / 2022
Ankara / Turkey
Size = 16 x 24 cm

FOREWORD

Sustainability refers to protecting the environment, and preserving the economic growth and development for the future. Current global political context of women empowerment is focusing on a sustainable economy and society. Although women empowerment is positioned as one of the solutions for sustainability, there is a debate on the results of the corporate-led empowerment agenda, where remains a discursive terrain of such initiatives. The publication purpose of this book is to present an empirical inquiry to bring up whether gendered discourses are produced by corporate companies in Turkey within the context of women empowerment for sustainable development. The presented research within this book offers insights into the power relations focusing on the gendered discourses. Taking the social, economic, political and historical context into consideration this book presents a discussion with a feminist Foucauldian attention to subjectivation and freedom. Findings of this research which emerge from the literature review, field research, and theoretical and empirical work all together. This research draws from all the approved CSR reports of Turkish companies and semi-structured interviews conducted with professionals renowned for their practice in sustainability reporting and management. The research findings provokes new directions for future research problematizing 'doing gender' through CSR practices and language with the new questions it calls over the power politics of gender equality.

The research and the findings presented within this book is a PhD dissertation prepared at Communications department of Istanbul Bilgi University. I would like to take the chance to thank my dissertation supervisor Professor İtir Erhart first of all for inspiring me with her knowledge and practices on the subject, and Associate professor Nazan Haydari Pekkan and Dr. Ali Alper Akyüz for being a part of my dissertation with their always challenging approaches and instructions.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BIST	Borsa İstanbul
CDA	Critical discourse analysis
EIRIS	Ethical Investment Research Services Limited
ESG	Environmental, social and corporate governance
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
ILO	International Labor Organization
IMA	Institute of Management Accountants
KSSD	Association of Corporate Social Responsibility Turkey
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PR	Public relations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSE	Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative
UN	United Nations
UNGC	United Nations Global Compact
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The term ‘sustainability’ refers to protecting the environment, and preserving the economic growth and development for the future. This interdisciplinary concept covers the sustainability of humanity that demands a rethinking on the economic system for allocation of scarce resources among alternative competing ends. Developing such a global entire economics system would require social, psychological, and moral desire with dedication. Considering the corporations as the drivers of the economy, undertaking a mission based on sustainability is one of the core expectations from them by their stakeholders. Sustainability conceptualized in this context includes considering the value generated by a company with strategies and actions in a way that the company can survive in the future. Sustainability with a holistic approach includes environmental, economic and social dimensions including long term planning and stakeholder engagement. The concept of responsibilities of a company for a sustainable world is contextualized as corporate social responsibility (CSR) or corporate sustainability referring to the idea of socially responsible behaviors including the idea of obligations, legal responsibilities and philanthropic actions. Evolution of the CSR construct is parallel to the change in the businesses’ way of thinking. Besides the financial success, companies are focusing on the intangible performances such as ethics, human rights, environmental policies, sustainable contribution to education, and women empowerment and publish CSR

reports according to globally accepted standards to state their strategy and actions on these issues in detail. Heightened attention to CSR practices is evident by companies taking the necessary initiatives to include sustainability in their strategy, investing in sustainability practices, using the concept for communication, and applying for sustainability ratings.

Empowerment of women for gender equality is included in the corporate sustainability activities of many companies. Considering both the needs of women and their contributions to society, women empowerment actions for a more sustainable economy and society aim to give power to women by positioning them with important roles in the economy and community. Considering the sustainability of the intended social transformation, companies all over the world are investing in this specific topic within their sustainability strategy. Considering gender beyond sex as the socially constructed roles that are assigned to individuals, corporate narratives of companies are considered as events within this construction. The purpose of this research is to analyze the discourses produced by corporate companies in Turkey within the context of women empowerment for sustainable development. The focus of my qualitative research will be the gendered discourses. I will be presenting an empirical inquiry to bring up whether gendered discourses are produced and communicated through the CSR reports of companies. The discussion that I present within this thesis proceeds in some steps. First, it begins from the recognition that women empowerment topic has its place in corporate

companies' sustainability agenda. The second step addresses the gendered dimensions of CSR practices and communication focusing on women empowerment. My discussion will uncover the gendered discourses produced for the communication of the strategies and actions around this specific topic deconstructing the producers of the text and the social context. CSR practices on women empowerment outgrow the concept of the struggle for gender equality at the workplace. My research will embrace a critical approach, which offers alternate readings in Turkish sustainability reports literature. I will be presenting and adopting a critical discourse analysis framework that I offer specifically for this research inspired by the works of Norman Fairclough. Data collected for this study draws from CSR reports and semi-structured interviews conducted with professionals renowned for their practice in sustainability reporting and management. The scope of the research will be the registered CSR Reports of Turkish corporations selected amongst the rated and listed ones on Borsa Istanbul Sustainability Index (BIST) since the founding date of the index.

There is a pervasive interest among corporations in embracing CSR in Turkey as well, however lack of empirical data and research conducted in this area. This research provides empirical data on the women empowerment initiatives of companies taking part within their sustainability strategy and agenda together with the communicative actions for those initiatives. This study focuses on communicative actions on women empowerment on the CSR reports in Turkey by

deconstructing the narratives, and the hidden ideas of companies behind their sustainability strategies referring to women empowerment. Bringing together gender, communication, and management studies to better understand the production and consumption processes of the gendered discourses, this research presents a discussion over its sub questions. Sub questions following this main research question will be as follows:

1. How are women represented in corporate discourses?
2. Does CSR strategies and statements of companies on women empowerment constitute and produce different (men and women) identities and groups?
3. How is the power politics of corporate companies on gendered groups in Turkey?

This thesis broadly situated within corporate sustainability, communications, and gender literature makes contributions to several subfields like organizational discourse, and feminism studies within communications literature. It aims to contribute to knowledge and the corporate language system in Turkey as a whole offering empirical data on the gender approach in the corporate language system in Turkey.

In addition, this research has been an attempt to understand communicative action around CSR strategy on women empowerment. Readers could gain insights and quantitative data about the approach to women empowerment by companies and the motives behind their

communicative actions. Considerable data to non-profit organizations and associations focused on women empowerment will be offered with this research by depicting how the knowledge on gender equality is produced and communicated by corporate companies.

Although both gender and CSR are popular research topics separately, a similar research on gendered discourses produced by companies within the CSR context covering Turkey has not been found. This qualitative research aims to contribute to knowledge on the gender sensitive language use of the corporate companies in Turkey. Thus, this research not only presents findings on the remaining discourses, but also is designed to offer a communication toolkit for companies investing in gender equality for improving the gender sensitive use of language.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Aiming to put a spotlight on the discourses produced by companies within the sustainability context that are addressed to women, it would be helpful to look at the relationship of sustainability and women empowerment. I will be presenting a literature review starting with the sustainability concept and the evolution of corporate sustainability vision in business followed by practices by corporate companies. My literature review will expand from the evolution of corporate sustainability to women empowerment within the sustainability context. Depending on one of the goals of sustainable development which focuses on gender equality the concept of empowering women will be defined and discussed with a review of theoretical approaches to empowerment.

Communication of women empowerment practices by companies constructs the social world around this concept by the use of language. A literature review on discourse with theoretical approaches will be presented highlighting the construction of meaning, knowledge and objects. The review on discourse will be followed by its relation with gender and gendered discourses. Starting with the definition of the gender concept, this chapter will present information on the theories of gender with two main perspectives. Gender as a process of doing, and gender as an articulation of ideas will both be presented and discussed. Referring to the conceptualization of gender as a doing and

the relations of doing gender with social and cultural assumptions, and dominance will also be detailed within this Chapter.

2.1 SUSTAINABILITY: ‘A new type of thinking for mankind to survive’

“A new type of thinking is essential if mankind is to survive and move toward higher levels.” – Albert Einstein

The idea of sustainability began to make its way into academic literature by the end of the 1900's and it has been expanding at a fast pace globally since then. Based on the idea that the resources on Earth are not indefinite, sustainability refers to consuming the resources considering the needs of the next generations. “The word sustainability originates from a fusion of two Latin words. These words are; ‘sus’ which means ‘up’ and ‘tenere’ which means ‘to hold’.” (Diwekar & Cabezas, 2012) Sustainability refers to a meaning as ‘hold up’ according to its roots in Latin Language. The World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) by the United Nations brings the definition to sustainability as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. (Thomsen, 2013)

Sustainability has three dimensions. The conceptualization of dimensions of sustainability namely the ‘three-pillars of sustainability’ is variously attributed to the report “*Our Common Future*” by the UN WCED (1987). These pillars are environmental, economic, and

social. In essence, sustainability refers to an approach that maximizes the positive environmental protection, supporting social sustainability, and sustains economic production while trying to maintain balance between all three pillars. I will be focusing on the sustainability concept from social and economic aspects within the business context since this research is discussing sustainable development and women empowerment.

2.1.1 Business Approach To Sustainability

The seventeenth-century French intellectual and philosopher Voltaire often remarked, *“If you would speak with me, define your terms.”* Social responsibility of business is unfortunately lack of a precise definition. Constructing the notion of corporate social responsibility starting with Bowen and Bowen (2003) as a concept of “obligations of businessmen to the society” has had no end in terms of definition. Evolution of the CSR construct is parallel to the change in the businesses’ way of thinking and today CSR is accepted to be the umbrella term for the concept of the responsibilities of a company for a sustainable economy, environment, and society covering entirely voluntary corporate-led initiatives. The literature on sustainability is expanding however it still remains hard to come up with a common definition on the concept and a conceptual framework for CSR throughout the diverse theoretical perspectives.

Economist Milton Friedman (1970) regards to the corporate social responsibility from a perspective arguing that the economic

contribution of business to its shareholders is its first and most fundamental responsibility. However the corporate social responsibility is beyond a companies' responsibilities to its shareholders in the business era of the 20th century. Regarding the above discourse on framing the responsibility on economic contribution by Friedman is not sufficient for a sustainable business. Addressing this challenge, Archie Carrol (1991) brings an analytic framework for CSR and defines the social responsibility as "economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time". This framework and definition regards businesses to be responsible for a larger society and a wider spectrum of issues and stakeholders. This new approach includes both the environment and the society to the economical responsibilities of businesses, covering the protection and sustainability for next generations.

Numerous definitions of CSR have been made following Carroll's, and all are related constructs such as the citizenship of business, social and environmental impacts, economic benefits of exchange, and the nature of stakeholder theory itself. Alexander Dahlsrud (2008) has studied definitions of CSR with a content analysis and his research covers more than 30 definitions of CSR from 27 different authors between the years 1980 to 2003. According to the research by Dahlsrud (2008) the common dimensions of CSR are environmental, societal, economic, stakeholder, and voluntariness. He acknowledges the responsibilities of business through these five main topics which

goes beyond the profit generation. Votaw (1972) argues on that problem stating that “the CSR term is a brilliant one; it means something, but not always the same thing, to everybody.” Despite the challenge of lack of one universally accepted definition, considering the social responsibility of businesses towards the lens of environment, economy and society is critical for building sustainable business strategies.

Referencing the definition put forth by Carroll (1991) and Dahlsrud (2008), CSR covers the strategies and activities of companies that consider the economy together with the society and it is “the corporate implementation of the concepts of sustainable development and stakeholder management”. (Beckmann et al., 2006) Starting with the beginning of the 1900's the term CSR has started to be used (Camilleri,2017, p.2) and there is a rapid awareness of global companies on CSR issues. Triggered by the irresponsible actions by companies during the financial crisis in 2007 and 2008, there is an increased attention to the sustainability and accountability of companies. (Thyssen & Hinrichs, 2015) CSR is now seen as a strategic tool for companies' business objectives. Throughout the years, several research studies have been performed to find the effect of CSR investments on financial performance and more than half of the empirical studies by Margolis and Walsh (2003) proves the evidence of the positive effects of CSR performance.

2.1.2 Corporate Sustainability Reloaded

The concept of CSR referring to the socially responsible behaviors of businesses conveys the idea of obligations, legal responsibilities, and philanthropic actions. Nonetheless CSR lacks a precise definition, it is a mainstreaming term in the 21st century's corporate world. Companies are publishing CSR Reports according to global standards offered by the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC). UNGC covers more than 170 countries and offers a framework for businesses as being the largest corporate sustainability initiative globally. UNGC globally encourages companies "to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation." (United Nations Global Compact [UNGC], n.d.) There has been an increase in the number of CSR reports in many developed world economies in the last 15 years (Larrinaga et al., 2008) and in relation to this increase Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative (SSE) is launched to contribute to sustainable development. The SSE initiative is a United Nations (UN) partnership programme and explains its vision as follows :

The SSE aims to provide a global platform for exploring how exchanges, in collaboration with investors, companies, regulators, policymakers and relevant international organizations, can enhance performance on ESG (environmental, social and corporate governance) issues and encourage sustainable investment, including the financing of the UN SDGs. (2019)

Besides these organisational and platform based collaborative actions and initiatives, local and global philanthropy and social responsibility activities are performed by companies. CSR initiatives are being

adopted voluntarily and an unlimited number of communication actions are performed regarding these CSR initiatives by companies.

The rapid changes in technology bringings new challenges and a dynamic environment for businesses. The 21st century has also challenged the ethical ideals of CSR despite its evolving nature as a contextual concept. New approaches and critiques are produced and argued referring to a need for a change in the way that CSR is perceived. Visser (2010) refers to a reformulation of CSR as CSR 2.0 basing on a more globally and culturally adoptable concept. Reformulated CSR 2.0 brings the ontological approach of CSR in terms of being “philanthropic, risk based, image driven, specialized, standardized, marginal, and Western” to being “collaborative, reward-based, performance-driven, integrated, diversified, scalable and global”. (Visser, 2010) The term sustainability integrated in the new era of CSR, can be contextualized as protecting the environment, preserving the economic growth and development. In its new form, CSR refers to a consistency in the added value to economical, social and environmental issues by the companies. The Institute of Management Accountants (IMA, 2008) also stresses these three factors included in the sustainability context of companies for them to run their operations successfully into the future.

Sustainability conceptualized in the corporate context with a holistic approach includes three dimensions as environmental, economic and social. It also includes long term planning, stakeholder engagement, a holistic view of voluntary action for economical, social and

environmental issues, and accountability. Despite having independent origins, the concepts of sustainability and CSR both refer to economic, social and environmental issues at different levels and have a close connection with each other in terms of the topics they cover such as; labor issues, human rights protection, environmental protection, and business ethics issues. Sustainability construct is described as a relativistic measure of CSR (Carroll, 1991). The major difference between the two theoretical frameworks is that sustainability can be conceived as the destination for businesses as an objective. Thus corporate social responsibility is the journey of a business to get to the destination of sustainability. There is a room for improvement for structuring the CSR initiatives implementing sustainability during the journey.

2.1.3 Sustainable Development

Mostly confused with the term ‘sustainability’, sustainable development is defined as “the process of change leading to harmonization of the use of natural resources, direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change and to increase the potential of satisfying human needs of present and future generations”. (UN Sustainable Development, 1987) According to the landmark report, *Our Common Future* (WECD, 1987) “Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Sustainable development concept “emphasises a positive transformation trajectory

anchored essentially on social, economic and environmental factors” (Mensah, 2019) and has its literature in management studies. From a corporate perspective, the strategic road plans for the main three dimensions of sustainable development concept includes the sustainability initiatives of companies. Put simply, “corporate activities that proactively seek to contribute to sustainability equilibria, including the economic, environmental, and social dimensions” (Sanchez & Prado-Lorenzo, 2013, p.2) leads to ‘sustainable development’ appears to be a much broader concept than the concept of ‘corporate sustainability’. Here drawing attention to the relationship between the two terms, the areas of corporate sustainability comprise areas that are main pillars of sustainable development such as equal opportunities and human rights.

The global sustainable development agenda contains Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) approved by the United Nations. Mostly referring to the human rights and equality for the survival of the planet, SDGs can be summarized as follows:

- “- Eradicate poverty and hunger, guaranteeing a healthy life
- Universalize access to basic services such as water, sanitation and sustainable energy
- Support the generation of development opportunities through inclusive education and decent work
- Foster innovation and resilient infrastructure, creating communities and cities able to produce and consume sustainably
- Reduce inequality in the world, especially that concerning gender
- Care for the environmental integrity through combating climate change and protecting the oceans and land ecosystems

- Promote collaboration between different social agents to create an environment of peace and ensure responsible consumption and production” (Mensah, 2019)

SDGs include 17 independent but interlinked topics as above. All the SDGs apply generally globally and UN emphasizes the universality of all considering the challenges for local adaptations “with a country-specific approach to the global goals.” (Allen et al., 2018 as cited in Mensah, 2019)

2.1.3.1 Sustainable Development Goal 5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”

“The true value of a human being is determined primarily by the measure and the sense in which he has attained liberation from the self.” - Albert Einstein

Corporate sustainability for sustainable development includes non-financial issues such as human rights, women’s empowerment for gender equality, education etc. accordingly with the 17 SDGs. Women empowerment as being one of the 17 goals, is positioned as one of the solutions for sustainability, and has its place in the corporate sustainability agenda of many companies. ‘Goal 5’ of the SDGs by the UN refers to the empowerment of girls and women to obtain gender equality. Established with the vision “gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world” this goal by UN (2020) targets the following:

- “5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
- 5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life
- 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences
- 5.A Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
- 5.B Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- 5.C Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels” (United Nations, 2020)

As can be seen on the above list in detail, 6 of the sub goals out of 9 are directly related to women empowerment for a more sustainable society and economy. Women empowerment philosophy depends on “increasing the capacity of women to make their own choices and to transform these choices into desired actions and results.” (Agrawal et

al., 2016) With a macro outlook to the empowerment of women, strategies developed should be covering all 3 dimensions of sustainable development however the current global political context of women empowerment according to the targets presented by UN (United Nations, 2020) focuses on a sustainable economy and society. Corporate companies' sustainability initiatives for gender equality "most often focus on the economic empowerment of individual women for the outcome of wealth accumulation" (Cornwall et al., 2007; as cited in McCarthy, 2017).

The term empowerment means to give lawful power or authority to act. (Agrawal et al., 2016) The definition put for empowerment is "the process of enhancing an individual's or group's capacity to make purposive choices and to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes" (Alsop et al, 2005 as cited in Cornwall et al., 2008). Simply put, empowerment means giving power to somebody and women empowerment means to give power to women to make their lives better. Feminism is "a broad-based theoretical perspective that attempts to demonstrate the importance of women, to reveal the historical reality that women have been subordinate to men and to bring about gender equality." (Delaney, 2005, p.202) Feminist theory supports the general movement to empower women worldwide. The conceptualization of empowerment offered by feminists more focuses on the individual and powering the strength developed within. Freedom is regarded to be the "ability to participate actively and purposefully in power relations" by Foucault (1987). Power given by

outsources turns the concept of empowerment to a controlled mechanism of action that is challenging this perspective to freedom. Empowerment considered from Foucault's perception of freedom is far from the concept of the given power from an outsource authority. Both the feminist theory and Foucault's conceptualization of empowerment stands for the emancipation of the self with the power within. Thus with this approach women empowerment as a concept goes far from the idea of supporting women to acquire wealth on their own. Although there are misconceptions on the term empowerment, strategies and initiatives on women empowerment are one of the focus areas of corporate sustainability management. Taking the power and freedom equation into consideration, the CSR programmes heading to equality for women at the workplace and society in general are required to focus on the emancipation of the individual to achieve success and lead to a potential change for equality.

2.2 'DOING GENDER' THROUGH LANGUAGE

In the sense of the Foucauldian-influenced definition of discourse, in that 'gendered discourses are the boundaries of social practice through which appropriate gendered behaviour is regulated. - Louise Mullany

The language we use while speaking or writing, forms the socially constructed meanings and knowledge whereby this is defined as discourse. Discourse considered as systematically organized statements, is the way how we represent events and actors from our

perspective. Using language for constructing our ideas into meanings, discourse shapes the minds. Corporate companies construct their reality through the produced narratives and discourses. Beyond the initiatives taken by the corporate companies, the knowledge constructed on their sustainability approach and women empowerment is driven by the discourses. Discourses addressed to women empowerment initiatives is challenged by the interchangeable use of ideas on sex and gender. Starting with the definition of discourse, I will be discussing the idea behind the gendering of the discourses. In order to present this discussion I will first define the terms gender and discourse followed by how gendering is done.

2.2.1 Discourse

The word discourse is defined by Oxford Learner's Dictionaries as “the use of language in speech and writing in order to produce meaning; language that is studied, usually in order to see how the different parts of a text are connected”. (Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, n.d.) Close to this definition, Stuart Hall (2001a) refers to the term discourse as a linguistic concept and states that “it simply means passages of connected writing or speech”. (p.72-73) Having many studies on discourse, Teun van Dijk (1997) regards discourse as a form of written or spoken language. Thus the definitions are many and varied, Cameron and Panovic (2014) consider discourse beyond linguistics and state the variations of discourse both as forms of language and forms of “social practices” constructed by language. Ruth Wodak (2014) also argues on considering discourse as a social

practice and states that it “implies a dialectical relationship between a particular discursive event and the situation(s), institution(s), and social structure(s) which frame it: the discursive event is shaped by them, but it also shapes them”. Researchers focusing on discourse beyond language conceptualises the notion of discourse as “cultural artefacts” (Pennycook, 2001), “socially constructed knowledges of (some aspect of) reality” (Machin and van Leeuwen, 2007), “social cognitions” (van Dijk, 1997). Reflecting the above definitions and discussion, discourse can be both spoken and written, and refers to language with context beyond the linguistics features. Beyond definitions of discourse by different researchers and different academic cultures as a linguistic concept, Michel Foucault, who has had an influence upon the social sciences and humanities, has defined it with a new meaning, and in a different concept. According to the definition put by Foucault (1972, cited in Foucault, 1980), “discourse is a set of statements that are systematically organized”. Within this concept, Foucault defines discourse not only about language but also as a practice about a particular topic. Norman Fairclough (1992) also defines discourse as “the use of language as a social practice can be regarded as ‘discourse’, which is a mode of action one form in which people may act upon the world and especially upon each other, as well as a mode of representation”. Fairclough (2003) focuses on the representation by discourse (p.124) and brings insights into discourse from Foucault’s works.

Taking the definition of discourse put by Foucault, within this research corporate sustainability report contents are considered as corporate discourses. With a Foucauldian view, in terms of social practices these discourses have a role in sustaining the hegemonic construction of social and economic empowerment of women within the scope of corporate sustainability practices. Beyond the initiatives taken by the corporate companies, the knowledge constructed on their sustainability approach and women empowerment is driven by the discourses. A central point discourse researchers make is that language is constructive and discourse builds objects, worlds, minds and social relations. (Wetherell et al., 2001) In that sense, the statements of corporate companies reflect their ideas and ideologies on the women empowerment issue. And yet the objects as well as the social world are built by those statements. Taking the definition of discourse beyond language as a social practice, corporate discourses can be considered to be constructions of the social world of companies through their ideas and realities. The socially constructed meanings and values of companies on women empowerment specific sustainability issues, have no physical existence but are knowledge.

2.2.2 Gender is a ‘Doing’

If we are no more than the sum total of the gendered expressions we perform, is there ever any chance to stop the performance for a while, to pull the curtain down, and let it rise only if one can have a say in the production of the play itself?

Isn't this what the struggle over gender is all about? - Seyla Benhabib

Before discussing the doing of gender, taking a glimpse of what gender stands for is a proper way within my literature review. Many of the related definitions of gender by Oxford English Dictionary refers to the categories mostly as female and male which are regardless of any connection with sex. The definition of gender as a noun is “the state of being male or female as expressed by social or cultural distinctions and differences, rather than biological ones.” (Oxford English Dictionary, n.d.) Although it is commonly used interchangeably, the term gender and sex are not replaceable. The distinction was defined for the first time by British feminist Anne Oakley in the 1970’s who defined sex as biologically based thing related to genes, gonad, hormones, and anatomy. (Jule, 2008, p.3) Gender roles are learned behaviours in a given society, community or other social group and condition activities, tasks and responsibilities perceived as male or female. (ILO, 2007, p.89) As gender refers to the learned norms depending on social, economic, and cultural factors thus gender is about socially constructed roles for individuals.

Teresa de Lauretis (1987) regards gender construction as a process which is held socially by individuals. Through this construction, individuals become members by being identified or by identifying themselves. Judith Butler argues the notion of gender in her book *Gender Trouble* (1990) and she refers to gender as a performance rather than a noun where she defines gender as a doing. Butler sees

nothing about gender as fixed and everything as discourse arguing that what is done to construct gender identity she calls as an illusion, grows from the cultural practices of sex lodged in discourse. (p.146) Inspired by the Butlerian perspective, conceptualising gender as a dynamic performance, gender is produced and reproduced as a social practice. Thus gendering is a process.

Paraphrasing Butler's argument on the consideration of gender as an act of doing, and gendering as a process, "an understanding of how gender is produced in social situations will afford clarification of the interactional scaffolding of social structure and the social control processes that sustain it". (West & Zimmerman, 1987) By talking and writing about gender "discourses are formed" resulting with the constructions of ideas and knowledge. (Hall, 1996) Although representations may not be a true reflection of reality, they construct a meaning. As Fairclough (1992) points out, subjects are socially pre constituted; there is no "free play of ideas in people's heads". (p.66) Thus, constructed gendered discourses sustain the construction of objects from ideas.

2.2.3 Gendered Discourses Addressed to Women

Gendered discourses are the boundaries of social practice through which appropriate gendered behaviour is regulated. -

Foucault

Gendering can be seen as a process and also as an idea articulated in and as discourse. (Sunderland, 2004, p.18) According to the

arguments presented by Lazar (2005) and Wodak (1997) social assumptions that construct social norms are manifested by language and they are discursively produced. As discussed at the previous section, Judith Butler (Gender Trouble, 1990) gender is a doing and women become the subject of doing through the gendered discourses addressed to women. Language as a way of speaking is an important resource where it is “associated with particular roles and stances which are culturally coded as gendered”. (Cameron & Kulick, 2003, p.57) Considering discourse above the sentence as a social practice and reproducing gendered roles in language and communicating it, arranges the roles assigned to women and men in a hierarchy. Gendering done through the patriarchal culture in which women are assumed to have the roles as the mother or wife who cares for the family, not only disempowers women but also privileges men over women in the business context. Wareing (2006, p.76) states that “sexist language represents women and men unequally, as if members of one sex were somehow less completely human and less complex and had fewer rights than members of the other sex”. Sexist statements by institutional structures reproduce the gendering of professions according to their sex. There are several studies within organizational and feminist theories on gendered occupations and professional identities. Britton (2000) argues that bureaucratic organizations, like corporate companies that are discussed within this study, are gendered. Cultural representations and unconscious bias about sexes provides cultural representations on professions. The common symbolic construct assuming men as the “burden of labor as

work” and women “as the burden of labor as childbirth” in the Western cultures (Gherardi, 1994) has affected the construction of norms of work life. However the industrial era we are living in today consists of cyber-physical systems and is far from the era of the first industrial revolution that required pure physical power and produced this construct. In many roles at work life a female marker is used for occupations held by women. It is generally assumed that some jobs are only performed by men, therefore women in such an occupation needs to be marked. Language that includes gratuitous premodifier “woman” used to mark the gender of the occupations, forms gendered discourses.

Considering gender as a performance and an act of doing according to my discussion referencing Butler (1990) at the previous section, continuous use of gendered language changes the relation between gender and occupations. “When discourses are formed, knowledge about a particular topic is produced” (Hall, 1996) and although representations may not be a true reflection of reality they construct a meaning. According to Foucault (2006) society often excludes the ones represented as different. Stereotyping is a practice of Foucault’s power-knowledge, classifying people according to norms and constructing excluded ones as the others. The practice of othering is one of the processes in the production of discourses. This process is where some specific subjects are assumed as being different from the constructed normal. Stereotyping and othering constructs assumptions and results with a grouping. Throughout history women have become

subject to othering in different contexts and othering has found a place within many scholars' works. Referencing Gherardi's study (1994) and Simone de Beauvoir (1949), feminist theories studying on othering women has reflected the inequality caused by gendering through language. According to van Dijk, when we perceive others we tend not to see what we have in common but exaggerate the differences which distinguish us and "during their evaluation we emphasise our good qualities and their negative features, and by contrast we overlook our negative aspects and their merits." (van Dijk, 1993, p.251) Stereotypes work through relationships of power and dominance and stereotypization creates an imaginary community where different ones are pushed away. According to Hall, stereotypical representations articulate what was not said or shown, what refers to the idea that is implied, but cannot be verbalized. (Hall, 1997, p.263) Such stereotypes are social constructs that are learned. Discrimination based on stereotypical roles targets both sexes equally, however "it is more likely to be perpetrated by men since it serves to maintain power inequities in society that favor men". (Burgess & Borgida, 1999)

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

Aiming to find out whether corporate narratives include gendered discourses together with the ideas they hold on the specific women empowerment context, this research focuses on the discourses. Thus the methodology for research is selected as discourse analysis. I will be presenting my research methodology together with the reasons underlying my choice of this method within this Chapter.

CSR reports are used by companies to communicate their strategies and performances on women empowerment. Analysing the narratives of corporate companies and the gendered discourses they include is related to linguistics as well as sociology, and requires questioning with both perspectives. Discourse analysis focuses on the socially produced meaning, understanding and interpreting the produced meaning and reality, so that it is considered to be the most appropriate methodology. A critical approach to discourses is also important to examine the ideas and hidden power relations constructed by the use of language in the narratives of corporate sustainability reports accordingly with the aim of my research. This leads to the deconstruction of the ideologies of the producers of the texts and highlights the untouched ideas of the companies towards gender equality.

Basing on the aim of the research, contextual reasons for the selected methodology will be presented in detail within this Chapter. The

philosophical thoughts of Fairclough and Foucault that guided my research process will also be discussed detailly. In the light of the provided information and arguments for adopting CDA, a framework designed specifically for this research will be introduced.

3.1 CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

'How do we recognize the shackles that tradition has placed upon us? For if we can recognize them, we are also able to break them.' - Franz Boas

The selected methodology for this research is discursive methods. Discourse analysis offers opportunities to understand how people think, interact, produce and reproduce ideas, societies, and cultures. Foucault being a decisive influence, sees discourse analysis as “the analysis of statements”, which he formulates as verbal performances and has a different approach on the concept of linguistic analysis. He regards discourse as “the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualized group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements”. As mentioned in detail at literature review at Chapter 2, discourse can be both verbal and written. Beyond initiatives taken by the corporate companies on women empowerment, CSR reports represent the performances of companies related to sustainability in written form. Their knowledge is constructed by the discourses produced within those reports. The interdisciplinary nature of discourse analysis will help to find out both the socially and ideologically constructed

knowledge by the companies through the discourses on their reports within this research. My intent with this research is to determine the gendered discourses and further understand whether these discourses create gendered groups and reproduce the gendered assumptions. Contents of the CSR reports are the statements of companies and they are used as data to be analysed. Content analysis providing a view on the dictionary meanings will be helpful for collecting the first set of data, in order to find out the discourses including gendered words. After collecting data with content analysis, CDA will be applied to this data. Considering discourse together with its social context, critical discourse analysis offers a more powerful and persuasive discussion with its detailed processes. Thus, a critical analysis to be applied to the corporate narratives will help to examine the power relations and find out the members of dominant groups discursively manipulating these relations.

Having its basis in social constructivism, discourse analysis considers the language to represent the world. The purpose of a discourse analysis is not to understand peoples' intentions when using language, but how discourses are constructed and what conceptions are contributed to (Winter, Jørgensen & Phillips, 2000). Parallel to the Foucauldian view, discourse analysis to be applied on the statements published open to public by corporate companies will include the texts in the context of sustainability and empowerment of women within this context beyond the linguistics. The output of this research will not only be to find the gendered discourses in statements but also the

general approach of the companies on this particular issue. Fairclough and Wodak (1997) offers that “discourses are always connected to other discourses” that are synchronically and subsequently produced. All the corporate sustainability reports include different sections like the forewords from the top management of companies, practices of CSR for the society, CSr approach for internal stakeholders, etc. In order to explore the social practice and the constructed reality, a detailed reading of the whole report has critical importance. Taking all the statements and texts in company reports to be studied connected with each other as a whole will help to provide insights both on the CSR strategies and the ideologies of the companies.

Considering the purpose of this research a discourse analysis for this particular topic covering gender, management and communication studies should be beyond text and linguistics but a multidisciplinary approach. CDA studies the social phenomena together with linguistics. “CDA is a problem-orientated interdisciplinary research programme, subsuming a variety of approaches, each with different theoretical models, research methods, and agendas.” (Wodak, 2014) “Critical research on discourse focuses primarily on social problems and political issues rather than the mere study of discourse structures outside their social and political contexts.” (van Dijk, 1997)) The notions of ideology, power, hierarchy, gender and sociological variables were all seen as relevant for an interpretation or explanation of text. (Weiss & Wodak, 2003) In order to deconstruct the narratives and find out the ideas and the context behind the strategies of

companies Fairclough's three dimensional and multi methodical CDA is selected.

The notion of CDA comes out of two major perspectives. The first perspective CDA holds as 'being critical' justifies itself "considering the historical context in which linguistic and social social interactions take place." (van Dijk, 1997) The term critical "influenced by the Frankfurt School, is nowadays conventionally used in a broader sense, and 'critique' is essentially making visible the interconnectedness of things." (Weiss & Wodak, 2003) Regarding the critical perspective included in the discourse analysis, Kress (1996) argues on its importance on the discussion of power and equality as follows:

"Critical studies of language, Critical Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) have from the beginning had a political project: broadly speaking that of altering inequitable distributions of economic, cultural and political goods in contemporary societies. The intention has been to bring a system of excessive inequalities of power into crisis by uncovering its workings and its effects through the analysis of potent cultural objects – texts – and thereby to help in achieving a more equitable social order." (p.15)

The second perspective CDA holds is 'discourse' itself and its relation with knowledge, power, and dominance. "CDA analyses the language use of those in power; those who are responsible for the existence of inequalities and who also have the means and the opportunity to improve conditions." (Weiss & Wodak, 2003) This interdisciplinary critical analysis of discourses of corporate companies will help to gain an understanding of how corporate language used by the powerful

group functions in constructing the knowledge on gender differences in organizing social institutions.

CDA mainly focuses on the relation between language and society. Foucauldian approach focuses on knowledge and how it is put to work through discursive practices. Foucault's works on the power relations and knowledge contributes to discourse analysis that "aims to investigate critically social inequality as it is expressed, constituted, legitimized, and so on, by language use." (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) Since my research is focused on the empowerment of women, it is important to reflect Foucault's studies. CDA takes a particular interest in the relationship between language and power. (Weiss & Wodak, 2003) Mostly remaining invisible, power is expressed by language, which plays an important role as a tool for hierarchical social structures though "language can be used to challenge power, to subvert it, to alter distributions of power in the short and the long term." (Wodak and Meyer, 2009) Power and dominance of groups are measured by their control over discourse. (Van Dijk, 2003, p. 257) Power relationship in a social structure and different segments of it has a deterministic role in the construction of discourse. Regarding this construction and its relation with power, Mumby and Clair (1997) states the following:

"Power is not simply expressed and reproduced through discourse; rather there is a complex and dynamic process of ideological struggle in which different and competing groups attempt to shape and influence the way in which social reality is constructed."

“Though CDA concentrates on social phenomena like ideology or power, scholars focus on different units of analysis – the way in which individuals mentally perceive, or the way social structures determine discourse.” (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) According to Phillips and Hardy (2002) “CDA aims to analyse the marginalization of individuals through discourse by defining the dynamics of power, knowledge and ideology”. (p.20-25) I will be focusing on the role of discourse considering the power relations while I study the communication of women empowerment initiatives and strategies of corporate companies through the discourses on their sustainability reports within this research. Since CDA is useful to find out the relation and connection of power and knowledge, social realities that are developed from social constructions can be better understood by this type of discourse analysis. Corporate women empowerment practices and discourses produced for the communication these practices are the representations of realities of the corporate companies. Special programs designed and offered for women only, are reported and presented by corporate companies as examples of their women empowerment efforts for gender equality. The strategy behind such activities is to empower women to have their abilities equal to men however they construct men as normal. The critique I will be presenting is over this norm. Thus “with language, we create representations of reality that are never mere reflections of a pre-existing reality but contribute to constructing reality.” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p.9) Fairclough and Wodak (1997) also states that “discourse is social action which constructs social reality.”

Considering that language constitutes corporate discourses of companies, it can be used to access the women empowerment reality constructed by them.

Meyer (2001) refers to CDA as it uncovers the notion of power where it is generally managed under the rose. (p.15) Teun A. van Dijk (1997) also refers to the notion of CDA in understanding the “power and domination” relation. Corson (2000) stresses the important contribution of CDA in “exploring the hidden power relations between a piece of discourse and wider social and cultural formations and uncovering inequality, power relationships, injustices, discrimination, bias, etc.” This property of CDA will be useful to my research in order to reveal hidden power relations and understand the strategies, and ideologies of corporate companies on women empowerment for gender equality. Women empowerment initiatives reported by companies include discourses produced about ‘women’ as a group that reproduces the representation of this group in organizations. My intent is to further find out whether and to which extent these discourses create gendered groups. The formation and role of gender in organizational structuring, are also problematized in this research. This analysis is interested in how everyday talk and statements constitute and produce feminine and masculine identities and groups. Critical analysis of the discourses produced by companies thus will provide insight on whether organizations privilege masculine ways of thinking and structuring and the process of it through which gendered groups are discursively shaped. Through this perspective

that is parallel to the Foucauldian tradition which considers the context while analysing the text by CDA, this research aims to find out how discursive activities structure the organizations through the constitution of concepts, objects, and subject positions. Due to the hierarchies within the organisational order in corporate companies the role of power distribution on dominance is also a challenge for the production processes of both the CSR practices and the discourses related to such practices. Power relations in corporate companies also needs to be analysed using CDA within this research in order to contribute to the findings. Mumby and Clair (1997, p.181) provides us a useful definition for ‘organization’ and ‘organizational discourse’:

“..we can define organization as a social collective, produced, reproduced and transformed through the ongoing, interdependent and goal-oriented communication practices of its members. In this sense when we speak of organizational discourse, we do not simply mean discourse that occurs in organizations. Rather we suggest that organizations exist only insofar as their members create a coherent social reality that frames their sense of who they are.”

With this research and CDA analysis applied on the corporate discourses I take a position to understand and expose whether there is an inequality of power domination on the production of ideas reflected to discourses.

Women empowerment initiatives reported by companies include discourses produced about ‘women’ as a group that reproduces the representation of this group in organizations. This analysis is

interested in how everyday talk and statements constitute and produce feminine and masculine identities and groups. Critical analysis of the discourses produced by companies thus will provide insight on whether organizations privilege masculine ways of thinking and structuring and the process of through which gendered groups are discursively shaped.

3.2 DESIGN OF THE FRAMEWORK

Norman Fairclough (1995) sees language as a social practice and suggests analysing texts from a perspective that is covering social and cultural practices. This research is performed with a qualitative perspective based on Fairclough's three dimensional critical discourse analysis. Corporate narratives within the CSR reports of companies are mainly used for communicating their performances on sustainability investments as discussed in detail at Chapter 2. Considering the CSR reports are the communicative events, according to Fairclough's arguments they consist of three dimensions and he suggests analyzing all three dimensions accordingly.

Fairclough offers a framework for the critical analysis covering three dimensions. (Fairclough, 1995) The framework he presents includes three levels of analysis namely text, discursive practice and social context. Figure 3.1 shows the three dimensional CDA framework by Norman Fairclough. (Fairclough, 1995, p.59)

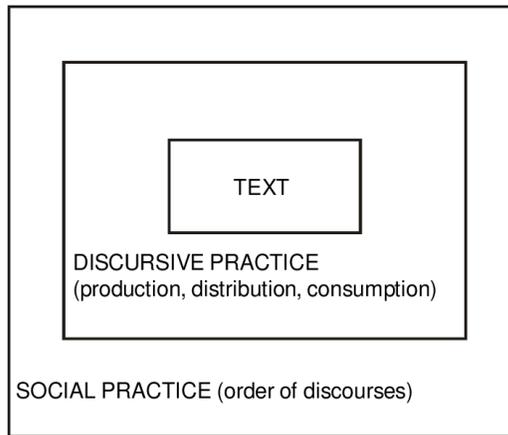


Figure 3.1 Fairclough's Three Dimensional CDA Framework

Within the presented framework the first level of analysis focuses on the properties of texts. Second level of analysis goes in for the processes of production in terms of stages covering the actors involved. The third level is concerned with the social context of the texts highlighting the ideas, ideologies and the social world behind the production of the texts. This selected framework is adopted specifically to my research with a newly designed flow of the three levels accordingly with the aim of this study. The framework prepared for this study is presented in Figure 3.2.

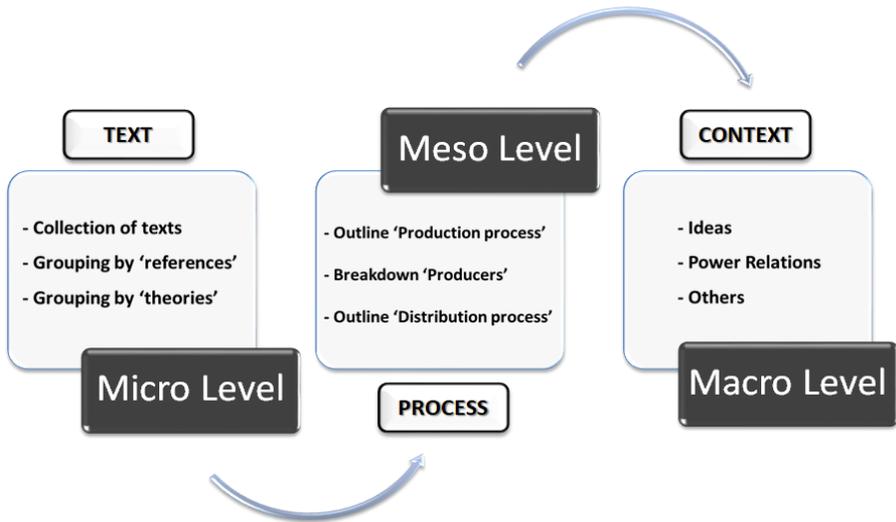


Figure 3.2 Framework of CDA analysis

This framework presented at Figure 2 constitutes three levels of analysis performed for this research. Inspired by Fairclough's works, the framework of analysis I present helps to deconstruct the discourses to better understand the production process of meanings together with the relations of power, social relations, politics, and ideologies with the use of language. The details of analysis for every level are given at the following sections.

3.2.1 CDA : Micro Level Analysis

The first level of CDA analysis, namely micro level, is also called as "description" by Fairclough (1989) and "is concerned with the formal properties of the text". Fairclough (1992) refers to discourse that it "contributes to the construction of social identities and subject positions" and at this level of analysis the cultural and social backgrounds of the texts are considered besides the linguistic

properties. Within the micro level of analysis “the characteristics of the texts, the communication strategies, the construction of thoughts, text-image cohesion, the pattern of presentation, and the cultural meanings of words” (Scharf & Fernandes, 2013) are covered in detail. Within the framework designed for this research, this micro level of analysis will be focusing on the texts with three main areas. These areas will be the construction of thoughts, stereotypes, and cultural meanings of the words.

This level of analysis will help to collect the main data of the research. Considering the three main areas mentioned above, discourses of companies will be collected and grouped. Main selection will be from the discourses that are addressed to women related to the corporate sustainability investments, initiatives and practices of companies that are reported. Collected texts will be clustered according to the ideas they hold. The classification will be performed by an interpretation of the texts according to two different guidelines to be used as references. Guidelines used as references are published researches by the United Nations Women Turkey Office and Kadir Has University Department of Gender Studies. ‘*Gender Sensitive Communication Guideline*’ is the first reference published by UNDP Turkey Office and ‘*Guide to Gender Sensitive Use Of Language*’ by Kadir Has University is the second reference to be used for the interpretation of the texts. UNDP Turkey office by the United Nations global development network, works for “advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help

people build a better life”. (UNDP, *Gender Equality*) Since 50 years the United Nations have been working in collaboration with the Turkish government, non-profit organisations and different institutions on gender equality. Aiming to increase the awareness and importance on the use of gender sensitive language, UNDP Turkey Office has prepared a *Gender-Sensitive Communication Guide* in 2019 and the guideline classifies the bias, stereotypes and assigned roles for women in Turkish language which reproduce gendered groups as a threat to gender inequality. Kadir Has University ‘Gender and Women's Studies Research Center’ aims to “create an intellectual locus for interdisciplinary research, teaching and institutional change related to gender equality by seeking to critically re-examine discussions of equality and gender as they pertain to the status of women.” (Kadir Has University, 2017) Besides different researches and reports, the center has published a research guide to gender sensitive language. Biased words, titles, labels and names causing inequitable representation of women in Turkish language are identified within this guideline. This guideline, namely *Guide To Gender Sensitive Use of Language*, is used to discover and classify the gendered discourses produced by corporate companies. (Kadir Has University, 2017)

This level of analysis will also provide quantitative data on the gendered discourse production and use of corporate companies. As well, the outputs of this level will provide data to be used during the in depth interviews. Real examples of gendered discourses produced by

companies will be used to discuss with interview participants during the interviews. Another use of the findings of this level will be as the input data for the third level of analysis. Data prepared at this level of analysis will be discussed according to ideas of Foucault and feminist theories in order to find out whether different identities are constructed by companies, how women are represented in corporate discourses, and to understand the power politics of women empowerment by corporate companies.

3.2.2 CDA: Meso Level Analysis

This second level is called as the ‘meso level’, and is concerned with ‘discourse practices’. This dimension of the framework discursive practice in Fairclough’s three dimensional framework involves a combination of micro and macro analysis and focuses on defining the production and distribution processes. The breakdown of the processes will be done considering the different social factors. According to Fairclough (1992, p.74) the production and interpretation of text is a multi level process. Understanding how the discourses in the corporate sustainability reports are produced requires finding out the levels of production of the texts. The production process of the texts involves identifying the producers. After the identification of the producers, within this level, the relationship of them with the consumers of the texts will be analysed.

The production process of the narratives of corporate reports has a complex structure with more than one producer. Different members of the inhouse and outsource teams working on the

production process at different hierarchical levels will be outlined with the information gathered by in depth interviews. The sources of information stated on reports, transformation process of this data into a draft report, decisions on the orders of information within the report, editions and proofreadings of the report narratives, and the confirmation process of the report will all be covered during the interviews. As most of the reports include information about the third parties involved during the production process, I will be including such third party members within the in depth interview participants. In order to understand the production process and breakdown by actors, hierarchies and sources in depth interviews will be performed with members of corporate companies preparing the reports as well as members of the third parties involved in the production of the reports. This will help to better understand the context of the production and interpretation process of the report narratives. After deconstructing the producer into a set of positions such as the author, the editor etc. sources of the producers will also be detailed. For example the author who is putting the words together might both be the corporate management team members or a source outside of the company. Analysing the production of texts at this level will include both of the sources. The levels of producers such as the secondary producer as the drafter and the primary producer as the approver will also be highlighted. The level of the production as well as the owner of the discourse will also be analysed.

Considering the distribution and consumption of the texts, there might be different social contexts and different types of consumers. Consumption may be individual as well as collective. (Fairclough, 1992) Texts produced within the corporate reports are read, analysed, transformed into other texts or used as data for other reports, and may change different stakeholders' attitudes, beliefs or practices towards the company. In depth interviews will also be used to collect information on the distribution and consumption processes of the reports and finding out the different members reproducing and transforming the texts from the reports. Thus, during the analysis of this level I will also try to understand and explore the social world in which corporate discourses are consumed.

3.2.3 CDA: Macro Level Analysis

The last and third level of Fairclough's CDA analysis is called 'social analysis'. At this level the "objective of analysis is to explain why social actors, events and organizations are represented and arguments are constructed in a specific way". (Beelitz & Merkl-Davies, 2012, p.105) Macro level analysis is performed taking account of the context in general together with the texts, their producers, the production process, and the social world of a whole. In the specific case of this research Fairclough's theory allows exploring the discourses from the aspects of language as well as the social structures that challenge them. Analysing the corporate narratives considering language together with social context will help to get insights into ideas held within this world. Ideas and ideologies of the producers will be

uncovered in order to find out the reasons behind the construction of the gendered texts.

Referring to my discussion at the literature review on the concept of women empowerment where the term empowerment is assumed to mean giving power to an individual. As well as the power relations within the context of sustainability management and communication might have an effect on the CSR practices and the way discourses on such practices are produced that might have effects on the way discourses are formed. So in order to put social analysis the framework of this study includes in depth interviews at the third level of analysis. Understanding the ideas, power relations, and other reasons behind the production of both corporate practices and gendered discourses related to those practices will be by understanding the social context. The three steps of analysis that will be performed are closely related with each other and I will be using the data analysed both at the micro level analysis and the meso level analysis for in depth interviews. Finding answers to my sub-questions will be through this macro level of analysis.

3.3. DATA COLLECTION

Women empowerment that is positioned as one of the solutions for sustainability has its place in the corporate sustainability and sustainable development agendas of businesses. With the aim of spotlighting the gendered discourses addressed to women that are produced by companies within the sustainability context, the main

data of this research will be collected from corporate sustainability reports. Turkish companies publishing CSR reports which are rated and succeeded to be listed in BIST Sustainability Index of Turkey are the main data source of this study. Narratives of companies about women empowerment published within the reports is collected with a detailed reading. This set of data is used to be analysed at the micro level of my analysis. For the analysis at the meso and macro levels, in depth qualitative interviews are adopted. Data collected from interviews provides the opportunity to explore ideas and concepts on the phenomena of produced gendered discourses by corporate companies that can not be observed from the narratives and disclosures on the reports. Texts collected from the reports which include gendered discourses according to the guidelines as references and discussed by involved theories explained at Chapter 2 are also used as complementary data for the interviews. Details of collection and classification of the first set of data, and details of the data from reports and the process of in depth interviews will be given at the following sections.

3.3.1 Data Set 1 : CSR Reports

“Profit for a company is like oxygen for a person. If you don’t have enough of it, you’re out of the game. But if you think your life is about breathing, you’re really missing something.” – Peter Drucker

Despite the different approaches to CSR, the most commonly and uncritically accepted dimension of it is “stakeholders”. (Dahsrud, 2008) In the evolution of CSR and for the good of the CSR initiatives, stakeholders have an important role to play. According to Stanley Deetz’s critical theory of communication stakeholders are defined as; “investors, employees, consumers, suppliers, host communities, and greater society and the world community”. (Griffin, 2000) Edward Freeman (2004) suggests that businesses are responsible to their owners and shareholders as well as their stakeholders. And he defines stakeholders as “any group or individual who can effect, or is affected by, the achievement of the organization’s objectives”. (Freeman, 2004) Both definitions from communication studies and management studies refers to the groups that are of critical importance on the sustainability of the operations of companies and to whom companies are responsible for. According to Freeman and McVea (2001), in order for the company to achieve its goals, the good relationship managed with the stakeholders through communication is the key. Companies investing in corporate sustainability projects, prepare a mapping of their stakeholders and build up their strategies according to their anticipating stakeholder groups. Most of the CSR reports include the stakeholders maps of companies as well the messages from the top management within the reports includes content referring to stakeholder expectations.

Considering the sustainability and added value of the CSR initiatives, two way communication with the stakeholders, getting feedback and

designing the CSR projects accordingly with stakeholder engagement would result with effective and sustainable results for the society, economy and environment. Regarding the communication of CSR, Podnar (2008) refers to this process as:

“CSR communication is a process of anticipating stakeholders’ expectations, articulation of CSR policy and managing of different organization communication tools designed to provide true and transparent information about a company’s or a brand’s integration of its business operations, social and environmental concerns, and interactions with stakeholders.”

As well as managing their corporate sustainability initiatives, companies are increasingly employing different methods to communicate their CSR strategy and investments with their stakeholders. One of the mostly used methods is reporting on corporate sustainability strategy and practices. The increased importance of the CSR activities and reporting of the companies resulted with the usage of CSR approach in marketing. Structuring the communication strategies for the CSR initiatives in the sustainability context would lead to increased awareness. CSR communication started by the end of 90s and advertising used to be the most commonly used method. Advertisements are still one of the easiest ways for targeted communication of CSR messages however, CSR reports are the most important communication tool having the advantage of communicating CSR activities and approach in detail. Ballou and Heitger (2005) defines the aim of CSR reporting as “reporting non-financial and financial information to a broader set of

stakeholders than only the shareholders”. According to the independent research conducted as a survey on CSR reporting by KPMG, 93% of the world’s largest 250 corporations are publishing sustainability reports and communicate transparently open to the public. (KPMG, 2017) CSR reporting is performed voluntarily as well as the CSR investment by socially responsible companies. CSR reporting by companies encourages accountability and transparency and “contributes to shareholders to keep their messages under control in data collection, analyzing and reporting for the companies to reduce the risks they may encounter”. (GRI, 2015). The content of the CSR reports includes companies’ strategies, vision, and plans for the future on sustainability management. And in order to prepare CSR reports companies need to make prior preparations on their sustainability strategies and mapping of stakeholders. Preparation of such detailed reports enlightens the companies on possible and unforeseen threads, risks and opportunities and enables them to be prepared with required actions. Besides providing information on sustainability management to their stakeholders, CSR reporting companies are “able to determine the steps easily for strengthening their position in the business world”. (BIST, 2014)

Since the year 2000, non profit organization Global Compact International (GRI) has been informing corporations on sustainability management and reporting standards. GRI standards provide a necessary framework for reliable reports on environmental, social and economical sustainability management of corporations and it is “the

most widely applied method for sustainability reporting worldwide” (Bergmans et al. 2014). CSR reporting standards prepared by GRI are used in many countries and in Turkey. Since the release of these standards the number of reports released by companies all over the world is increasing. Voluntary adoption of the framework and standards published by GRI has reached a number of 4.347 by the year 2016. (GRI SDD, 2020) Number of CSR reports prepared accordingly with the GRI reporting standards has reached 38.483 by 2020 where globally prepared sustainability reports have reached a number of 63.852. (GRI SDD, 2020) This attention to sustainability reporting with standards has triggered the funds based on sustainability. Sustainability indexes in the capital markets started to be established by 1999. The first sustainability index to lead the newly developed ones was Dow Jones Sustainability Index established by New York Stock Exchange and it was followed by other sustainability indexes to be established all over the world. Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative launched in 2009 has grown to 58 countries contributing to sustainable development (Sustainable Stock Exchanges 2016); local and global philanthropy and social responsibility activities are performed and voluntary CSR initiatives are being adopted as well as an unlimited number of communication actions are performed regarding the CSR initiatives. Following the global developments, Istanbul Stock Exchange (BIST) launched the Sustainability Index in Turkey by the year 2014. “Main objective of the BIST sustainability index is to create an index which will include companies which are traded in exchange and of which sustainability

performances are at a high level and increasing the understanding of knowledge and applications about sustainability”. (BIST, 2014) Borsa İstanbul cooperates with London based Ethical Investment Research Services Limited (EIRIS) company for the assessment of the listed companies according to global sustainability standards. According to the information retrieved from the web site of Istanbul Stock Exchange, there are 56 companies listed in the BIST Sustainability Index by the end of 2019 and all are reporting on their sustainability and CSR investments together with their strategies on the topics.

Accordingly with the scope of the research, corporate narratives within the sustainability context to be analyzed are collected from the registered reports. Turkish companies publishing CSR reports which are rated and succeeded to be listed in BIST Sustainability Index of Turkey are the data source of this study. The index period for the BIST Sustainability Index is November to October every year. Annual company assessments of each year are completed by the end of October. Constituent list and the list of stocks to be included in and excluded from the index to be effective from November 1 each year are listed on the Borsa Istanbul website. Constituents for each Index period starting from 2014 till 2019 determined by BIST Sustainability Index are selected for the data source of this research. The names of the companies were collected online from the BIST Sustainability Index web site. CSR reports of these companies are available for public consumption and collected from their websites. The data used are open to the public and do not contain any private information.

There are defined criterias for the selection of companies. Companies who have published a CSR report at least 2 or more times are selected to be included in the data of the analysis. Some of the companies' reports have not been reached but instead information on their sustainability initiatives have been found on their web sites. Companies that have not published a report, instead shared information about their CSR policies on different sources with limited details are excluded from the research data. The list of the 53 companies by company codes according to BIST Index to be analysed are listed on Table 3.1 at Appendix 1.

This data set consists of Turkish companies that are mainly in the manufacturing industry. The percentage of companies in the manufacturing industry is %52 within the CSR reporting companies. Second biggest percentage by industry is 'finance' and 'holding and investment companies' within the research data. Breakdown of the number of the companies according to their industries within the data set are presented at Table 3.2 at Appendix 2. Another breakdown of the companies according to their sub-sectors is given at Table 3.3 at Appendix 2. According this data, top 5 companies investing in CSR practices and publishing reports are from 'chemicals, petroleum, rubber and plastic products producers', 'financial institutions', 'fabricated metal, machinery and vehicles producers', 'holding and investment companies', and 'food, beverage and tobacco manufacturers'. This data refers to the manufacturing companies to be

the ones having a high awareness of sustainable development and mostly investing in CSR.

Research includes the collection of all reports by listed companies from their web sites. There are 181 reports published by the listed 53 companies between the years 2014-2019. All of the 181 reports are the main data set of this research. The list showing the breakdown of the reports by the publication years and company codes is given in detail on Table 3.4 at Appendix 3.

According to the scope of this research all companies that are rated by BIST and approved on their sustainability initiatives are collected as the first phase of data collection. Then all company web sites are searched to collect their CSR reports. Companies that have not published reports are excluded from the research data. Finally 181 reports as can be seen on Table 3.4 with a breakdown by years are defined as the research data.

3.3.2 Data Set 2: In-depth Interviews

Interviewing is the most widely used qualitative research method (King, 2004) Different levels of the CDA analysis of my research requires data on the social context to have a better understanding on the production and consumption of the discourses. After collecting data from corporate responsibility reports, in depth qualitative interviews are applied to find out the production processes of those discourses for the meso level of my analysis, and the social practice about the representation of women in corporate discourses under the

influence of cultural perceptions, and power issues for the macro level of my CDA analysis. King (2004) also states that a qualitative research interview is “ideal for the exploration of topics in which different levels of meaning need to be explored” and this suits my research where I will be discussing the new ideas rather than collected data on the meanings of the discourses. Data collected from interviews will provide the opportunity to explore ideas and concepts on the phenomena of produced gendered discourses by corporate companies that can not be observed from the narratives and disclosures on the reports.

Interviews can take three forms as structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. I will be adopting semi-structured interviews with open ended questions because it allows flexibility, has a certain degree of details to be presented to the interviewees and collection of specific data from all interviewees for a better comparison and discussion. Interviews in a semi-structured form will allow me to get detailed and rich insights from the participants who are selected from experienced managers on CSR reporting. Adopting the interviews with a semi-structured form, will help to provide information to the participants where necessary to make sure the keywords and concepts I raise are well understood. I will be giving examples from the data collected during the interviews to make sure the questions are clearly understood.

Texts collected from the reports which include gendered discourses according to the results of the micro level analysis of this research will

be discussed during the interviews in order to uncover the social world they are built in. Applying the in depth interviews will allow me to better understand and discuss how, and why gendered discourses are constructed by the producers. In order for the easier manageability of both the interview sessions to be more systematic and the data collection process, an interview guide is developed for this study. After the development of the interview guide a pilot study is conducted in order to have a final check to identify if there might be any difficulties to perform a productive interview.

Open ended questions prepared for the interviews focus on three main areas about the CSR reports. Understanding the production processes of the corporate narratives and the context, the motivation and strategy of companies to prepare CSR reports, and the knowledge and understanding of the gendered discourses. Main topics to be covered and questions asked to collect information are shown on the in-depth interview questionnaire at Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 In-depth interview questionnaire

Research topics	Questions asked
Involvement in the process of CSR report preparation	Can you tell me about your experience on preparation of CSR reports, and how much you are involved
Motivation and strategy behind CSR reports	What is the main purpose of publishing CSR reports?
Production process of the corporate narratives on the reports	How is the process for the decision making on discourses to be published?
Their understanding of the gendered discourses	What do you think about gendered discourses?
Awareness and idea on gendered discourses produced in corporate reports	Have you seen/realised gendered discourses on CSR reports?
	Do you think that gendered discourses are produced by corporate companies within the CSR context?
	(Give examples of the gendered discourses collected from reports) What do you think about these discourses?
Reasons for producing gendered discourses	Why do you think gendered discourses are produced?
	What is the involvement of parties for the decision making on gendered discourses?
Comments on the power politics of women empowerment in corporate companies	Do you think that CSR strategies and statements of companies on women empowerment constitute and produce different (men and women) identities and groups?
	What do you think about statements and strategies based on genders?
	Do you think such statements and activities reproduce gendered discourses?
	Do you think such empowerment activities will be constructed until reaching gender equality?

Interview participants are selected by a random and representative purposeful sampling. “Qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases selected purposefully.” (Patton, 1990) In order to learn more details about the production process and awareness regarding the gendered discourses and constructs about representation of women on the corporate reports, the sampling was made out from the people who have involved and experienced the process. Referring to the argument put by Patton (1990) on the credibility of the random and small size of sampling, participants of my research selected from experienced professionals on sustainability reporting will help to acquire credible and rich in content data from the interviews. Interview participants are selected from the producers of the corporate sustainability reports that are included in the research data. After having a detailed reading of the reports, it has been identified that reports are prepared by company representatives at different levels of hierarchies together with a third part consultancy company or an agency. The contact information on the reports mainly include a reference at corporate communications department or human resources department together with the third party agency. Contact emails are collected from reports and an email message explaining the purpose of the research including an invitation has been sent to invite the referenced people for the interview. The participants are selected from different levels of production process of corporate narratives like corporate sustainability managers, agencies, top management representatives of companies, and press members with a flexible design and emergent to change or add to the sample if

there might be a need as the data and insights unfolds. Excluding the sample interview performed with a corporate manager, there have been 8 in depth interviews performed with different participants. The breakdown of the in-depth interview participants according to their professions are shown on Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 The Breakdown of The Interview Participants And Their Occupations

Occupation	Number of Participants	Code for the Participant
Top Management level at companies	2	Participant 1 Participant 2
Corporate Sustainability Manager	2	Participant 3 Participant 4
Sustainability Consultant	2	Participant Participant 6
Pr/Advertising Agency Manager	1	Participant 7
Press Member	1	Participant 8

Having a lock down in the country due to the Covid-19 pandemics, interviews were conducted by telephone after getting the necessary confirmations from the participants by email. The detailed record on the dates of the performed interviews with the participants and the durations of the interviews are shown at Table 3.6, at Appendix 6.

Clear explanations about what to expect as part of the interview can ease the interview process (Patton, 2002). Before conducting the interviews all participants were contacted for a final confirmation of the appointments, reminded of the topic areas to be covered, the

format, and the purpose of the interview and asked if they had any questions to discuss before the interview. Reaching out to the participants prior to the interviews provides the participant to consider any questions they may have, and be prepared in advance of the interview. Preparing interview participants in advance addresses both pragmatic and ethical dimensions (Gillham, 2005). Providing a brief information to the participants helped them to have a clear understanding of what they are being asked to do, and how the information they share will be used and published. Regarding the ethical necessities of personal private data, a privacy information consent prepared and sent to the participants to get their consent. The consent includes topics on the process of the interview, information about their professional experiences, and mentioning their and their companies' names within the research results. The content of the privacy information consent is shown at Appendix 7. As another ethical consideration before starting the interview all participants were informed on the need to record the interview and their verbal consents were collected.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Potter and Wetterel (1992, p.172) suggests presenting the analysis and discussion together enables the reader “to assess the researcher’s interpretations”. I will be combining the results of my analysis and discussion elements of my qualitative research within this Chapter.

This Chapter includes two main parts. The first part presents the findings from the CSR reports and the findings of the CDA analysis. However the findings of the research will be presented together with discussions. Findings of the study includes the identification of the gendered discourses within the reports and critically analyzing these discourses. CDA includes the analysis on the texts, the production process and the social context. The second part of this Chapter presents the discussion of the major 3 topics arising from the findings. However the findings are discussed there still exists some comments to put on discussion. I will be presenting a discussion for the newly highlighted ideas by this research that need necessary attention. Most of the findings are related with the approach of corporate companies to women empowerment concept. I will be presenting a discussion on the approach of corporate companies to women empowerment. Gendered discourses defined and discussed with theories are are mostly under the influence of patriarchy, bias and stereotypes. Such discourses results with reproducing the cultural assumptions and harming the gender equality mission. However the construction of the identity of women is another result of gendered discourses produced

with such ideas that should not be overlooked. Problematizing this, I will be presenting a discussion on the identity of women constructed as empowerable subjects. The science of ignorance has different focus points. Many ideas triggering the production of gendered discourses as the findings of this study, are related to different perspectives of ignorance as a theory. I will be discussing the ignorance based production of gendered discourses together with the power politics of women empowerment initiatives within this section.

4.1 FINDINGS

Findings of the research consists of two main parts. The first part presents the findings from the CSR reports and the second part presents the findings of the CDA analysis. This part includes the identification of the gendered discourses within the reports. Before starting with the critical discourse analysis, this first analysis is performed for the preparation of the first set of data which constitutes of the gendered discourses addressed to women. In order to prepare this data 2 detailed readings of all reports was completed. During the first reading of the reports, it was identified that women empowerment practices and strategies of companies are presented at 5 different parts of the reports. The second reading of the reports is performed focusing on these topics and by collecting the narratives that include content on the women empowerment initiative and strategies of companies. Collected statements of companies are grouped according to these main topics. Second analysis performed at this part is the selection and classification of the gendered discourses according to the ideas they

hold. Decision making process on selecting the gendered discourses and grouping them will be presented in detail within this Chapter. The discourses defined to be gendered according at the first part of the analysis will be discussed and analysed with theoretical approaches to gender at the first level of the CDA at the second part in order to come up with an answer to whether Turkish corporate companies produce gendered discourses.

CDA analysis is performed on the classified data prepared from the findings of the CSR reports. CDA findings will be presented by the three consecutive levels of analysis results. Critically engaging with the findings at the first level of CDA, gendered discourses within the narratives of corporate sustainability reports are uncovered by the use of theories and approaches to gendering by the use of language. Second level of the analysis involves the deconstruction of the producers of the narratives of the CSR reports. As well, production process of the reports will be defined. Both the process and the actors involved in this process are the main findings of this level. A flow chart for the process is also prepared after presenting the levels of production in detail. Data collected from the in depth interviews is the main resource of data for this level. Discussion over the findings will also be presented depending on the insights gathered from the interviews. Finally the distribution and the consumption of the report narratives will be discussed in order to find out data for the third level of analysis. Identification of the producers provides the insights for the third level of social context analysis. The third level of CDA also

includes information collected from the in depth interviews and discussions over the findings of the first level and highlights the social world and its reflections on the gendering of the discourses.

4.1.1 Findings From The CSR Reports

CSR reports of Turkish companies selected and presented in detail at the previous Chapter, section 3.3.1 are the data source of this study. All of the 181 reports presented at Table 3.4, Appendix 3 are processed with a detailed reading. The first reading was performed to understand the structures, and contents of the reports and helped to cluster the company list to be analysed. Reports of the companies having statements and including content on women empowerment are selected as the set of data to be used. 42 companies out of the analysed 53 selected to be the data source are shown on Table 4.1 at Appendix 4. Remaining 11 companies have no statements on the specific women empowerment topic, so are excluded from the research data.

Most of the reports' outline is prepared according to GRI standards and they include main chapters to present their performances. During the reading of the reports, it was identified that women empowerment practices and strategies of companies are presented at 5 different parts of the reports. These parts are defined as follows:

- 1-CEO/Chairman foreword(s)
- 2-Managing Director foreword
- 3-Sustainability approach

4-Employee stakeholder

5-CSR initiative

The second reading of the reports is performed focusing on the above mentioned 5 main topics and by collecting the narratives that include content on the women empowerment initiative and strategies of companies. Collected statements of companies are grouped according to these main topics. Table 4.2 shows the narratives including information about ‘women’ and ‘women empowerment’ according to the above mentioned 5 groups. And this is the main data collected from CSR reports at the first phase of the research.

Table 4.2 Corporate narratives of companies, including information about ‘women’ and ‘women empowerment’ by groups

Company	CEO/Chairman Foreword(s)	Managing Director Foreword	Sustainability Approach	Employee Stakeholder	CSR Initiative
AKENR				+	
AKBNK				+	
ANACM				+	+
AEFES				+	+
ARCLK				+	+
AYGAZ				+	+
BRISA	+			+	+
CIMSA		+		+	
CCOLA				+	+
DOHOL			+		+

DOAS	+			+	
FROTO		+		+	+
GARAN	+			+	+
GLYHO	+			+	
ISCTR		+		+	+
KCHOL			+	+	+
KORDS		+		+	
LOGO			+	+	+
MGROS	+			+	+
OTKAR				+	+
POLHO	+			+	+
SAHOL	+			+	+
SKBNK			+	+	+
SISE		+	+	+	
SODA			+	+	+
HALKB				+	+
TSKB		+	+	+	+
TATGD				+	
TAVHL				+	
TKFEN					+
TOASO				+	
TUPRS				+	+
THYAO				+	
TTKOM				+	+
TTRAK				+	+

TCELL	+		+	+	+
ULKER				+	
VAKBN		+		+	+
VESTL			+		+
VESBE					+
YKBNK	+			+	+
ZOREN			+	+	+

The second reading was performed focusing on the narratives in order to select the gendered discourses. Decision making process on selecting the discourses and classifying them under ‘gendered discourses’ depends on the two different guidelines prepared for gender sensitive communication and use of language. Both of the research guidelines have been prepared specifically focusing on the Turkish language, and details about the guidelines are given at Chapter 3. In total 20 gendered discourses are collected from the reports according to the mentioned guidelines. These discourses are given at Appendix 8. There are recurring statements of companies with the same texts that include gendered discourses which are published in different years. One sample from each is included in the research data. There are also similar narratives in terms of the ideas they hold on gender, however similar discourses by different companies are also not included in the research data.

All of the selected 20 discourses are grouped according to the ideas they hold in the way they are determined to be gendered. There are 5

groups of ideas. The first group of discourses are produced with ideas built on cultural codes and biased roles assigned to women. Gender stereotypes that are the practical equivalent of general gender perception, can be defined as assumptions about the behavior of women and men. These assumptions acknowledge and impose a bisexual social structure and the superiority of one sex over the other. According to the UNDP Turkey Office “*Gender-Sensitive Communication Guide*” such stereotypes in Turkish language reproduce gendered groups and result with gender inequality. Gender stereotypes are reflected in language and all kinds of communication, especially in areas such as character, physical characteristics, roles and professions. While the man is positioned as the supporter of the family and the house, the woman is given the role of being the mother / wife who cares for the family. Guideline by UNDP states that physical characteristics and professions are also coded with femininity and masculinity patterns, independent of the characteristics of the individuals. The second group of discourses are produced with a language which dominates the empowerment instead of emancipation. The assessment made about the company's attributes and resources allocated for women empowerment reinforces the gendering. Clustering companies as “woman friendly” in a patronising manner strengthens the construction of structures according to genders. “*Gender Sensitive Writing Guide*” by Kadir Has University suggests trying “to find alternatives to language that omits, patronizes, or trivializes women, as well as to language that reinforces stereotyped images of both women and men.” (Kadir Has University, 2017)

Guideline provided by UNDP Turkey Office also classifies discourses that are ignoring the woman, arrogant, and trivializing as gendered discourses. Discourses including dominance of groups are classified under this group. The third group of discourses are produced with sexist language which reproduces the gendering of occupations and othering women with unequal assumptions. Gender marking by the use of gratuitous premodifiers - woman, female etc., to occupational terms is connected with sexist language. It is assumed by those companies that an engineer, an entrepreneur or a farmer is a man, therefore women in that occupation needs to be marked. According to the reference guideline by Kadir Has University, unconscious bias from cultural norms towards women embedded in the discourses produced by companies reflects unequal assumptions and “gender-fair language promotes more inclusive and equitable representations of both females and males, opening possibilities rather than restricting choices.” (Kadir Has University, 2017) Guideline also suggests to “identify men and women in the same way because the titles used to name people and occupations often reflect unequal assumptions about males and females.” (Kadir Has University, 2017) The fourth group of discourses are produced with an idea which is othering women as a group. *Guide To Gender Sensitive Use of Language* (2017) refers to “treating women and men in a parallel manner.” As well, according to the UNDP Turkey Office *Gender-Sensitive Communication Guide* gender-sensitive and equal language reinforces more equal representations and reveals underlying assumptions about gender. To make language more inclusive and ensure individuals are not

stereotyped choices of language has a critical role. The fifth group of discourses are produced with gendered biases. Gendered discourses under this group includes a language that reinforces stereotyped images of women by choosing names that consist of gender generic nouns that support the image of women as fragile, in need of help and hand their statement which reproduces the meaning that women are in need of external support to perform. Both of the discourses in this group includes stereotyped representations of women and UNDP “Gender-Sensitive Communication Guide” defines the stereotypes that are commonly used for characteristics and physical properties of women, as the roots of the unequal relationships between genders. Within the guideline, the negative effects of using stereotyped assumptions and ideas in communication repeatedly everyday is explained to limit the versatile and multi-dimensional structure of individuals with uniform perceptions as well as imposing a gendered social structure. For example, gentle, touchy, emotional, weak, graceful, and elegant are commonly used gender generic noun phrases for women according to the Gender-Sensitive Communication Guide published by UNDP in 2019.

Collected 20 discourses and the grouping of these discourses according to these ideas presented above are shown at Table 4.3. Producers of the texts as references are given by codes at Appendix 9. Findings of the first phase of analysis from the data collected from CSR reports provides the main data for the CDA. This new data set given at Table 4.3 will be used to find the answers of the research

questions of this study. However the discourses within this data set are defined to be gendered according to the guidelines referred in detail within this Chapter, in order to come up with an answer to whether Turkish corporate companies produce gendered discourses within the sustainability context, they will be discussed and analysed with theoretical approaches to gender.

**Table 4.3 Gendered Discourses Collected From CSR Reports And Grouped
According To The Ideas They Hold**

Discourses produced with 'gendered biases'	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.1 One of the workshops we offer especially to our women employees is the programmes for a better life training at Turkcell Academy. In this context, we provide contents such as Successful Child Raising, Work and private Life Balance, The Place of Women in Business and private Life, The Art of Being a Parent, Birth Preparation and Breathing Studies, and Being a Working Mother. 1.2 One of the main selection criteria for us while selecting our service provider companies is social competencies such as nursery opportunities provided for supporting women's empowerment, and investment in social development projects. 1.3 The aim of this programme is to reveal the leadership archetypes that also exist in women and support women to have them used in the business environment.
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<p>Discourses reflecting 'power domination'</p>	<p>2.1 In addition to providing global financing opportunities to our women entrepreneurs, we continue supporting by allocating approximately 600 mio TL from company resources in 2016.</p> <p>2.2 This year we have participated in HeForShe initiative in order to strengthen women's labor both in our company and throughout the business world, to provide women with equal opportunities in business life and to support women taking more place in top level management roles.</p> <p>2.3 In 2015, VakıfBank European Bank for Reconstruction and development (EBRD), the European Delegation to Turkey, Labor and Social Security Ministry and Turkey jointly launched by the Business Association "Women Business to Finance and Consultancy Support Programme" is aimed to increase its role in the economy of women entrepreneurs in Turkey.</p> <p>2.4 Supporting those who trust the power of women, TSKB offers loans to women-friendly companies' investment projects with a 100 million Euro loan obtained from the French Development Agency (AFD) at the end of 2016.</p> <p>2.5 Women-Friendly Companies: Capital magazine conducted a study to emphasize women's employment and encourage woman friendly companies in Turkey. Selected companies were awarded as women-friendly companies.</p>
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<p>Discourses that include 'gratuitous premodifiers'</p>	<p>3.1 In addition to providing foreign financing opportunities to our women entrepreneurs, we continued our support by allocating approximately 600 million TL from our own resources in 2016.</p> <p>3.2 As a result of our observations and studies on gender inequality in our country, we aim to create a pioneering and transformative effect for both our company and the automotive industry by developing a project for the employment of women engineers.</p> <p>3.3 With our special products we develop for women farmers, tradesmen and businesses, we provide financing for women entrepreneurs to bring their ideas to life, and we reach out to women in villages, towns and villages to increase women's entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas, and support their participation in education and workforce. In this context, we have provided more than 204 million TL of financing to approximately 4,000 women entrepreneurs with the works we have done within the scope of women's banking in the last year.</p> <p>3.4 The company steadily increases the number of female managers and female employees, and voluntarily participates in global initiatives in the field of gender equality.</p>
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<p>Discourses 'othering women'</p>	<p>4.1 We care about offering equal opportunities to all segments of society, and we take initiatives for women, disabled people and disadvantaged communities to participate in economic life as self-sufficient and happy individuals.</p> <p>4.2 Communication technologies play an important role in reaching and mobilizing disadvantaged groups in terms of easy accessibility, budget-friendly and access capacity. Financial support to our women entrepreneurs within the framework of activating information and communication technologies, which is one of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development in ensuring gender equality.</p> <p>4.3 Internet-easy life programme provided by our company aims to contribute to the digital transformation of the country. We will offer trainings for all adults over 35 years starting with women as our priority group to develop their skills.</p> <p>4.4 As of the end of 2014, the loans we provided to women entrepreneurs, whom we see as a special customer segment in our SME Banking platform, reached 2.1 billion TL.</p> <p>4.5 As in previous years, we continued to support SMEs and women entrepreneurs in 2017, while financing large-scale projects that are the basis for the development of the country with infrastructure loans.</p> <p>4.6 With special development programs such as "Design your favorite job / life", "Safe driving techniques", coaching support and volunteer mentoring, a work environment that preserves work-family life balance is created for women employees in Brisa.</p>
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Discourses including 'gender generic nouns'	<p>5.1 In 2016, within the scope of the "I Support Gender Equality for My Country" project, we focused on the "Miracles of the Filiz" social responsibility project, which we created with the belief that women in the sectors where TürkTraktör operates, that is, can create miracles, to raise awareness in the areas we do business and support gender equality.</p> <p>5.2 From this point of view, Garanti bank has been supporting "12 Giant Men" (A National Men's Basketball Team), "Fairies of the Pot" (A National Women's Basketball Team), ... since 2005.</p>
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4.1.2 Findings From The CDA

CDA analysis is performed according to the framework presented at Chapter 3, Figure 3.2. Within the presented framework findings from the analysis of each level are presented below. Referring to my explanations on the analysis details at Chapter 3, the first level of analysis focuses on the properties of texts and the selected texts will be discussed with related theories at this level. Theories on gender, discourse and power relations, and empowerment are used to classify and discuss the selected discourses. Analyses and discussions are held accordingly with the groups of ideas assigned to discourses. Second level of analysis goes in for the processes of production in terms of stages and the producers involved in all the stages. The third level of analysis will be focusing on the context and the social world highlighting the ideas, ideologies concerning with the production of the texts. Findings together with discussions will be presented separately for each level.

4.1.2.1 CDA Level 1 Findings

At this micro level of CDA analysis the discourses are analyzed through related theories and perspectives. According to the framework presented at Chapter 3, this level of analysis includes the discussion on texts and will discuss the ideas defined by the guidelines mentioned at the previous section. The gendered discourse data set prepared and shown at Table 4.3 will be used for analysis at this level. Each one of the 5 groups are analysed and discussed at the following sections.

4.1.2.1.1 Discourses produced with 'gendered biases'

The first group of discourses are produced with ideas built on cultural codes and biased roles assigned to women. These discourses are constructed with assumptions and ideas about the behavior of women and men that are defined as stereotypes. Referring to my discussion at Chapter 2 on stereotypes, stereotypical representations are un verbalized assumptions and perceptions about the behavior of women and men. Gender stereotypes assigned to women as the supporter of the family and the house, where the woman is given the role as the one who cares for the family are reflected within these discourses. Including nursery services within women empowerment strategy by companies, also has the idea of assigning the role of childcare to women. However such an initiative is assumed to support parents for their work life and private life balance, considering this service for women only is a similar way of gendering as discussed with the previous example.

Educational programmes offered by corporate companies to their employees which have the aim of supporting their social life and work life balancing and parenthood perfection can be considered within the social dimension of sustainable development. Thus, designing and offering such educational programmes for women only is a discriminatory approach basing on the genders of the employees. Besides investing in improving the parenthood abilities of women, assigning the role of perfection to women is a reflection of patriarchal ideas and culture and this reinforces the stereotypes.

The stereotypical representation and the social construct that defines men as the ‘normal’ in the workforce has its reflection in the discourse 1.3. It refers to the idea which regards leadership as an ability of businessmen. Highlighting that men is the norm and women can also achieve this level of leadership skill by support, is a gendered assumption. Referring to my discussion at Chapter 2 on the theory of Judith Butler (1990) that defines gendering as a performance, such gendered discourses disempowers women by privileging men over women in the corporate business system. Considering discourse above the sentence as a social practice and reproducing gendered roles in language and communicating them continuously causes gender to operate “as a set of hierarchically arranged roles in modern society which makes the masculine half of the equation positive and the feminine negative”. (Cranny-Francis et al., 2003)

Discourses produced with the stereotypical ideas as in this first group, reinforces such ideas by communicating. Sexist statements that are

regarded as “representing women and men unequally” (Wareing, 2006, p.76) by corporations, reproduce the gendering of business people according to their sexes. Communication of such gendered discourses also reproduces the stereotypes and bias which has the potential to enlarge the gender inequality gap between women and men in business organizations. According to my discussion at Chapter 2 over the arguments of van Dijk (1993), when we perceive others we tend not to see what we have in common but exaggerate the differences which distinguish us and this may result with overlooking their positive aspects. Stereotypes work through relationships of power and dominance, and stereotypization creates an imaginary community where different ones are pushed away. Whereas some aspects of the CSR practices communicated by these discourses are designed to empower business women, reflections of the biases reproduces the gendered roles which in the end may result with disempowering women as businesspeople.

4.1.2.1.2 Discourses reflecting 'power domination'

The second group of discourses are produced with a language which dominates empowerment instead of emancipation. Definition and misassumptions over the term empowerment has been discussed at Chapter 2.

Considering the unequal status of women at the male dominated workplace, it is important that corporations build the necessary strategies and take actions to support women on the way to reaching

the desired level of equality. Corporate companies investing in sustainability include women empowerment initiatives within their agenda to challenge this situation. The aim of women empowerment initiatives of companies is mostly defined on the CSR reports as providing women the necessary support in order to help them to gain equality with men. Focusing on the second group of gendered discourses, this aim of companies has the potential risk of two issues related to power. The first one arises from the misinterpretation of the term empowerment and the second one is the power domination over the initiatives and discourses. The term empowerment stands for giving power however the conceptualization of empowerment with a feminist lens focuses on the individual and developing the inner power for emancipation. Considering the demand side of the empowerment activity as well as focusing on emancipation of the individual is the proposed way of sustainable empowerment for equality. The critical strategy in order not to turn the concept of empowerment to a controlled mechanism of action would be the focus on emancipation rather than a dominant source power. The second discussion over the power issue is by implementing the concept of ‘doing power’ argued by Foucault discussed at the previous Chapters of this study. The idea of power is created and recreated as a doing both reflects in the strategies and discourses on the women empowerment initiatives. The idea which second group of discourses include and communicate is constructed with a controlling approach instead of giving women the freedom to bring the intended social transformation with the strength developed within. Taking Foucault’s approach to freedom as

discussed at Chapter 2, empowerment considered from his perception of freedom is far from the concept of the given power from an outsource authority. Thus empowerment strategies should not include domination for freedom. The potential of the CSR strategies for the desired change should take the power and freedom concepts into consideration. As well, necessary attention should be paid not to position women as the object that is being empowered through the CSR initiatives and programmes of companies. Questioning women empowerment within the sustainability context with a Foucauldian approach to power and freedom, the concepts and communication of the support provided by companies presented in the discourses of the second group fails by the idea behind empowerment which is domination. All three discourses 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 within this group are produced with an idea that presents the power domination over women by patronizing them as a group to be protected by an outsource power. The discourses 2.5. and 2.6 holds and reproduces the patronizing by men. Interpreting the discourses in the second group, the traditional gender ideology dictating a kind of patronage socially orders women as a disadvantaged group and initiates a support by power over them. The interpretation made about companies' attributes and communication of resources allocated for women empowerment reinforces the gendering. Clustering companies as "woman friendly" in a patronising manner strengthens the ongoing gendering process by patronizing which can be considered as doing of power referring to my discussion within this section. Taking the power and freedom equation into consideration, discourses which

include patronizing ideas continuously reproduces the doing of power. This results with reproducing the wrong assumptions on the concept of women empowerment and moving it away from the idea of individual emancipation to rather dominance by power.

4.1.2.1.3 Discourses That Include 'Gratuitous Premodifiers'

Discourses within the third group all include gratuitous premodifiers to mark the occupations of individuals. Each of the 5 discourses includes 'women' and/or 'female' premodifier together with the occupation. Gender marking by the use of gratuitous premodifiers to occupational terms is connected with sexist language. As discussed in detail at Chapter 3 referencing the guidelines by UNDP Women and Kadir Has University which are used for the grouping of the texts collected from reports, occupations are gendered by the use of such premodifiers related to sex. Gratuitous premodifiers reflects the unequal assumptions of occupations with a non-inclusive perspective. The third group of discourses are produced with a similar way of construction on the representation of businesspeople according to their gender. Wareing (2006) states that "sexist language represents women and men unequally, as if members of one sex were somehow less completely human and less complex and had fewer rights than members of the other sex". (p.67) Sexist statements by corporate companies reproduce the gendering of professions according to their sex. Litosseliti (2006) highlights the traditional assumption of occupational terms assigned to man, arguing the reason as "the use of

a female marker being adopted for instance in lady or female doctor”. (p.14) The same way as Litosseliti marks, all the discourses in the third group includes gratuitous premodifier ‘woman’ used to mark the gender of the occupations. Samples from the discourses are ‘women entrepreneur’, ‘women engineer’, ‘women farmer’, and ‘female manager’. It is assumed by those groups of discourses that an engineer, an entrepreneur, a manager, or a farmer is a man, therefore women in that occupation needs to be marked. Anker’s (1997) studies related to gendering of the occupations refers to the common stereotypical assumption of the abilities of women to have its reflection in occupational segregation. “Technical occupations tend to be perceived as ‘masculine’, whereas caring occupations are often labelled as ‘feminine’.” (Ginevra & Nota, 2015)

There are several studies within organizational theories and feminist studies on gendered occupations and professional identities as discussed at Chapter 2. Gender stereotyping with respect to occupations is one of the most pervasive biases that cuts across countries and age groups. (Madaan et al., 2018). Discourses within this third group reinforce prevailing gender ideologies of companies. This justifies gender hierarchies as natural within those companies. As well as holding the idea that occupations are gendered, by disclosing their idea, companies reproduce the gendering of professions. Such gendered discourses can also be discussed over the idea of grouping individual according to genders. Communication of such a grouping is an other way of gendering. The communicative

events through CSR reports which are open to public, expands the idea of gendered occupations and this comes with the challenge to negatively effects the gender equality messages given to the society in general.

Interpreting the strategies of companies through the discourses within this group the gendered discourses is complementary to their ideas and the discriminative perspective they own. Women who hold occupations that are socially constructed to be masculine are selected by companies to provide extra support. This strategy has its reflections by the gendered use of language. However this type of gendering by the use of a sexist language reproduces the gendering of occupations and reinforces grouping of women with unequal assumptions on professions. Reinforcing such stereotypes related to professions tends to resist the desired transformation for the equality of genders in the workforce. Thus the unequitable representations of men and women are constructed by the continuous communication with gendered discourses like the ones within this third group.

4.1.2.1.4 Discourses 'Othering Women'

The fourth group of discourses are produced with an idea which is othering women as a group. Throughout history in different times

women have become subject to othering in different contexts and othering has found a place within many scholars' works. Simone de Beauvoir, being the first woman to write publicly about the concept of othering by sex, argues on the representation of women in relation to men. The concept of "Othering" as a construction is defined by Simone de Beauvoir (1949) in *The Second Sex* as follows:

Man thinks himself without woman....Woman is determined and differentiated in relation to man. He is the Subject, She is the Other. The Subject posits itself only in opposition; it asserts itself as the essential and sets up the other as inessential, as the object. (De Beauvoir, 1949, p.42,43).

De Beauvoir argues on the idea that othering holds as a representation based on genders where the identity of men is constructed as powerful. According to van Dijk (1993) when we perceive others we tend not to see what we have in common but exaggerate the differences which distinguish us. During their evaluation we emphasise our good qualities and their negative features, and by contrast we overlook our negative aspects and their merits. (Van Dijk, T. A., 1993, p.251) The power concentrates in the representation of the other which is created as a construction through the use of language and is reproduced in gendered discourses.

Stereotypical representations of men is as the "normal" in the workforce as discussed in the previous section 4.2.1. Gendered discourses othering women socially reproduces that idea and constructs the identity of women as the 'other'. Othering women with

unequal assumptions and inclusion of women together with disadvantaged groups is an idea which is far from empowering women. Discourses produced by organisations with an idea of othering women and grouping them with disadvantaged, tends to see the differences with negative aspects.

From a Foucauldian perspective ‘othering’ also has its relation with stereotypes. Stereotyping is a practice of Foucault’s power-knowledge, which classifies people according to norms and constructs excluded ones as the ‘others’. Stereotypes work through relationships of power and dominance and stereotyping creates an imaginary community where different ones are pushed away. The others are used as a tool for determining ourselves that happens through their symbolic exclusion. The social construct that defines men as normal and the differences of the others from normal are naturalised and confirmed by the repetition of this othering in discourses. Constructed meanings and social identities produce different groups resulting with a practice of othering.

Corporate reports are social constructs communicating the ideas and initiatives related to these ideas. Analysing corporate discourses with this perspective, discourses within this group that are othering women as a group with the assumption of men as the normal. These discourses reflect the construct of the differences between gendered groups. Discourses in that group includes the assumption of women as the other. Women are grouped with the disabled and disadvantaged communities. As well, women are seen as a group and their skills are

seen as in need of development on specific topics like technology, digital capabilities, and driving skills. And all these discourses do not include information on the reason why not men but women are seen in need of this kind of support and development. This can be discussed through the lens of socially and culturally constructed beliefs about women and men. However the initiative taken by the companies that are communicated by these discourses may lead to a sustainable economy and society, discourses reproducing the gendered groups and differences is an obstacle for equal opportunities and the desired transformation.

4.1.2.1.5 Discourses Including 'Gender Generic Nouns'

Gendered discourses within the fifth group includes a language that reinforces stereotyped images of women. The gendering is done by choosing names that consist of gender generic nouns related to the image of women according to the stereotypical assumptions and bias. All of the discourses in this group includes stereotyped representations of women. Teresa de Lauretis (1987) regards gender construction as a process which is held socially by individuals and argues that gender is “a representation and the representation of gender is its construction”. Representations of women through such gender generic nouns are based on “beliefs about how males and females typically act, as well as beliefs about how males and females should act.” (Koenig, 2018) Commonly used generic noun phrases for women are classified by UNDP’s guide used as a reference is detailed at Chapter 3. Examples of the referenced gender generic noun phrases which are used

included in the discourses of this group are; gentle, touchy, weak, and fragile. Those gendered nouns are also similar to the stereotypical masculine and feminine traits according to “Bem Sex-Role Inventory” developed by Sandra Bem. Twenty feminine nouns that are presented on the inventory are: “affectionate, cheerful, childlike, compassionate, does not use harsh language, eager to soothe hurt feelings, feminine, flatterable, gentle, gullible, loves children, loyal, sensitive to the needs of others, shy, soft-spoken, sympathetic, tender, understanding, warm, and yielding”. (Prentice & Carranza, 2002) Gendered discourses often constitute such gender generic nouns without considering that there might be overlaps between genders and within gender variabilities. Burges and Borgida (1999) discusses the classification, grouping, and discrimination basing on the gendered stereotypes and argues on the equal engagement of both women and men equally however discrimination “is more likely to be perpetrated by men, because this type of discrimination serves to maintain power inequities in society that favor men”. They state on the discrimination based on stereotypes as follows:

“The descriptive component of stereotypes is posited to lead to discrimination when stereotypes of women are associated with the attribution of traits, abilities, and roles to the target that influence the way in which business women are evaluated and treated in the businesslife. Women who behave in an autocratic manner or who occupy traditionally male occupations are particularly likely to be negatively sanctioned.” (Burgess & Borgida, 1999)

So as in the discourse referenced as 5.2, men are represented by ‘strength’ where women are by ‘supportive and fragile’. Although

both men and women referred in the same discourse are holding the same positions in relation to their occupations and success, the chosen names are the reflections of the stereotypical assumptions by the use of gender generic nouns. Naming men as ‘giants’ and women as ‘fairies’ is a typical example of gendering by the use of gender generic nouns and grouping according to bias. Discourses within this group hand their statement which reproduces the meaning that women are in need of external support to perform. Women are viewed more in need of support as a result of continuous reproduction of the stereotyped generic nouns in discourses. Constructions of gendered discourses as in this group, might lead to the devaluation and discrimination of women who performs in male-dominated professions. Such reproductions of stereotypes that are commonly used for characteristics and physical properties of women, reinforces the ideas that are the roots of the unequal assumptions based on gender.

4.1.2.2 CDA Level 2 Findings

Fairclough’s (2003) approach to discourse consists of the meanings and representations and he refers to the production process and the producers involved within this process to have an effect on the different meanings and representation of discourses. The communicative process of CSR reports and the produced discourses within can position and represent people in different ways and “sustain and reproduce the social status quo”. (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). Fairclough’s approach helps to deconstruct the business environment by individuals and find out the grouping, discrimination

and dominance manifested by the language use. This second level of analysis is concerned with the ‘discourse practices’. This dimension of my framework involves a combination of micro and macro analysis and focuses on the context by defining the production and distribution processes.

During my micro level analysis I have defined, analysed and discussed the gendered discourses collected from CSR reports. Fairclough (1992) suggests deconstructing the “producer” when studying discourses critically. Understanding how these gendered discourses are produced requires finding out the levels of production and the actors of each level to be taken into consideration. Corporate sustainability reports are products of the publishing corporate company however there is not much details or statement included in the reports about the producers of the discourses. Information about the production process of reports is not provided on the reports and this information is not declared open to the public, however some of the reports include the information of the third party company which is mostly a consultant or an agency. Such information is no more than the contact details of the third party and does not include details of at which level of the process that party has its involvement. This meso level of analysis includes data collected from in depth interviews in order to identify the producers of the text and inference the relationship existing between them. Insights and information gathered by the in depth interviews which are used within this study are presented in detail at Appendix 10. One of the information collected

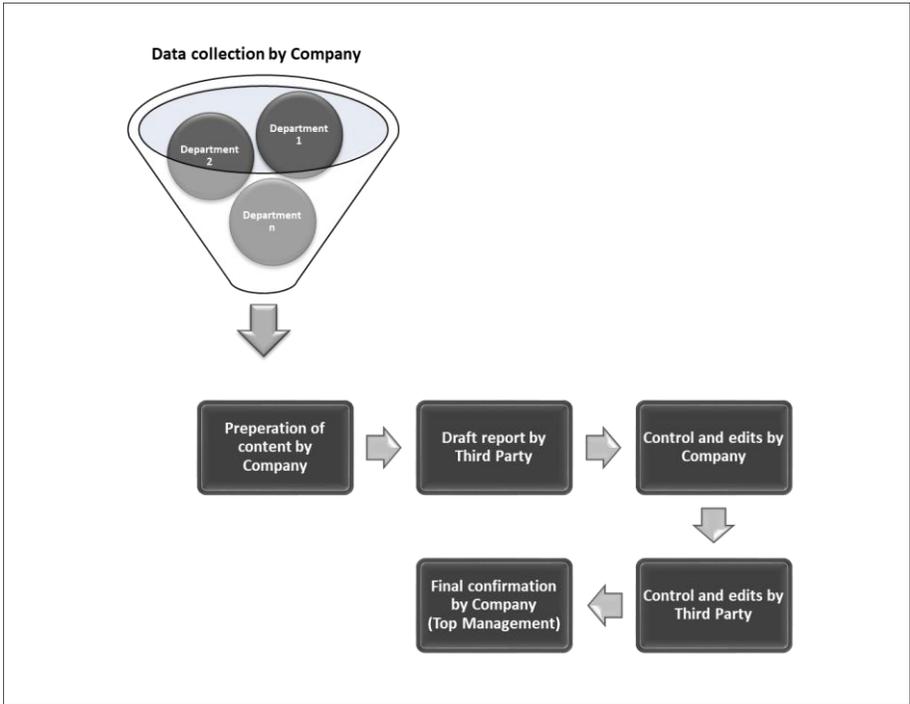
from the in-depth interviews is the set of positions of the producers of the discourses of the reports and the production stages. For a better understanding of those stages my analysis over the production of texts at this level includes information collected from both of the sources. The interview participants are selected both from third parties that have contributions for the production of reports and corporate companies that own the reports.

At this part of the findings, I am presenting the production process of the narratives. The process defined in detail in this section is prepared with the depending on the information and insights collected from all of the participants of the in depth interviews. According to the information collected from the representatives of CSR consultancy companies and creative agencies that have involved the production process of CSR reports as third parties, and representatives of the corporate companies, production of corporate narratives has a process of leveled stages. The first stage is the collection of the information about specific operations or initiatives by different department representatives. The stages of the production of texts after collecting the data from involved departments of the company is defined by all of the participants in the similar flow. Data collection starts from the operational departments. Each data of performance is confirmed by the involved teams' leader or departments' manager. Corporate communications or investor relations departments gather this data and transform it into a draft report. This draft is sent to the third party. The author who is putting the words together is both the corporate

management team members and a source outside the company. Most of the companies work with a third party and this party decides the orders of the information within the report and sends the report to the responsible department for a final check. After the approval of the content of the final draft report, the proofreading of the texts is finalized by the responsible team and the third party. The report is published after the final confirmation by the top management. The third party responsible for the report is allowed and required by the company to edit the headlines, texts and all narrative's content and order. The report is released after the final confirmation by the company.

The process of production of the narratives of reports has its importance on defining the producers and understanding the context. The detailed explanation of the process presented herein is also shown on a flow chart. The flowchart prepared specifically for the production stages of CSR reports according to the findings from the in depth interviews is presented at Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 The Production Process of CSR Report Narratives



The first finding of the meso level is the production process and the actors involved in the different stages of the process. However there are critical discussion points regarding this process of production. Although the report should be a transparent reflection of the sustainability initiatives of the company as well as the strategy, third parties are editing the original texts. The collective production process of corporate discourses involves the teams collecting the data from the source, another team preparing narratives to communicate the data and finally the third party editing the narratives. The stages performed by the third party and the final confirmation holder involves strategic implementations on the narratives. The pure data is adopted accordingly with the sustainability strategy of the company and the data becomes a communication tool where the communication

medium is the report itself. “An average of %80 of the texts are prepared by the third party agency.” (Participant 7) All participants who has management roles for sustainability at companies states that at some cases even though the agency requests changes on the texts and statements, the final decision is given by the company representatives, which might be at an opposite direction in terms of the texts as well as the ideas to be within the content of the report.

According to the information gathered from the interview participants, final confirmation of the report is dependent to company decision and may or may not be the responsibility of the top management. Thus all of the CSR reports collected for this research, has their forewords by top management responsible of companies. Participant 5, who is a sustainability consultant refers to the importance of the knowledge and attention of the top managers for the final confirmation of the report. Participant 5 mentions the importance of confirmation by top management as follows:

“Since the statements to be published on the report open to the public are corporate statements binding the company all has to be confirmed by the top management of the company before publication.” (Participant 5)

Participant 1 believes that the top management representative to lead and confirm the CSR report should have internalized the sustainability vision and strategy of the company, and the report should be transparent as much as possible. However Participant 2 who has held a

top management role for long years and been the responsible manager to confirm the CSR report of the company, refers to his experience and states that the responsibility for final confirmation is on the team preparing the report and corporate communications department to make sure the messages on the reports are conveyed properly.

According to Fairclough (1989) “Explanation is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context with the social determination of the process of production and interpretation, and their social effects”. (p.26) The production process of texts on CSR reports has two different techniques. The first one is the producing companies’ own texts using the data from operational results. The second one is the third party producing texts from the draft shared by the company. The form of text that is produced by the company is more dominated by the function of language as a medium of self-expression and communication of real data and business results. The two levels of producers are namely the company and the third party agency. The secondary producer which is a third party CSR consultant company or a creative agency is the drafter and the primary producer is the approver which is the company representatives. The collaborative production of the texts within the reports results with the construction of the ideas by different parties however the owner of the texts is the company. In this context, the activity of producing texts for reports is a manifestation of socio-cultural ideas of the company and the third party all together as the producers.

As Fairclough (1992) mentions on the consumption of texts which may change depending on the different social contexts, texts produced within the corporate reports are read, analysed, transformed into other texts or used as data for other reports that might affect stakeholders' attitudes, beliefs or practices towards the company. Companies communicate their investments and initiatives for their sustainability goals to their stakeholders through their CSR reports. The consumers of the texts on the reports are all the stakeholders of the company and reproducers of the texts like journalists are another group of consumers. Everytime the texts are consumed they are interpreted by the norms, values and the socio-cultural practices of the consumers. Participant 8 who is a journalist, states that the statements of companies on their sustainability reports are collected and converted to be published news with very minor changes.

“Most of the time journalists do not question the facts, nor change the texts. That is why during consumption of the texts journalists use the main text without interpretation and convey the message directly. This maintains the reproduction of gender inequality through the use and spreading of gendered discourses by different mediums.” (Participant 8)

Besides the consumption by the media, society in general is an other consumer who has the reach to the statements and performances of the companies on sustainability through media. According to the information acquired from the Participant 8, text are selected for news according to the popularity of the content, not the effective results. He states details as follows:

“Journalists usually take out the popular parts of the statements on the reports as they see more value in popular statements rather than effective data. They don’t give importance to the results or the investment amount of a CSR project rather choose the statements that would get more attention from the readers. Best example would be the dog story. It is never good news for a journalist if a dog bites a person, but it is always good news if a man bites a dog.” (Participant 8)

Expanding my analysis on findings to the meso level where I see the discourse as discursive practice, there are two main findings. The first one is defining the producers and levels of production of texts. The second one is finding out the factors that influence the production of the texts as well as the distribution and consumption. There are two main groups of producers that have different levels of hierarchies. The company as the owner of the report and the third party which may be a sustainability consultant and/or public relations and creative agency. They have different roles at different stages of the production. The producers at different stages of production interprets the data about CSR initiatives in relation to events, related other discourses (strategy of the company), orders of discourse (genres, social practices) and the power relations between people. Social practices, values, beliefs, power relations and social relations are all affecting factors in relation to the production of the corporate discourses. At the distribution and consumption level, the effect of the distributor has an important role however the statements of companies are directly conveyed to the society together with the ideas they hold.

4.1.2.3 CDA Level 3 Findings

The third level of my analysis is social analysis. At this level the analysis is done taking the social, economic, political and historical context into consideration in order to better understand the reasons for producing gendered discourses and the results of this two-way relationship which covers the reproduction of gender inequality. In the specific case of this research Fairclough's theory allows exploring the discourses from the aspects of language and the social structures that challenge them as two dimensions. In order to apply the social analysis to the finding of the micro level, now at this level, in-depth interview findings on the context will be used as complementary data. The three steps of my CDA framework are closely related with each other and I will be using the data collected at both 1st and 2nd levels of analysis together with the in depth interview data acquired for this macro level of my analysis. This level will help to better understand the context and the ideas behind the production of gendered discourses.

I have achieved to find out the produced gendered discourses within CSR reports and identify the producers of these discourses. Now at this level the research firstly focuses on the reasons of this production. Information and insights collected from the in depth interviews on this specific topic highlights the patriarchal unconscious reflections of cultural thoughts of producers on language. This is also defined by the participants as a part of the genetic codes of Turkish people depending on the long history of the country which is patriarchal dominant both

culturally and socially. Participants' comments on this specific reason and the effect of the culture as the generally agreed reason for using a gendered language is as follows:

“It is the verbal expression of the subconscious established in patriarchal societies. Turkey also is a country with patriarchal roots and this is the reason gendered and sexist language has been integrated into our language. It is something that is ingrained in our genetic code. As a society, we have spent 200 years in a sexist culture.” (Participant 5)

“Since we are from a patriarchal culture and society as a country, men have always been privileged and this has reflected the language we use.” (Participant 7)

“Sexist discourses culturally become a part of the individual's life depending on the environment in which he lives. A child who grows up with a certain philosophy and culture cannot easily change this.” (Participant 1)

“The awareness on gender sensitive use of language is increasing day by day. However there still exists a sexist language. It stems from the habits and the fact that the words used for many years are embedded in our language.” (Participant 3)

The concept of patriarchy within feminist thought addresses the oppression and subordination of women. One of the basic perspectives on the patriarchy concept defines it as being “the structural and ideological system that perpetuates the privileging of hegemonic

masculinities.” (Cynthia Enloe as cited in Santos, R.F., 2019) The works of Kate Miller (1969) argues on patriarchy to have its political existence in history and myths where the identity of women is constructed by male domination and she brings about different sciences dealing with patriarchy shows that it has an existence with longevity and globally. The patriarchal thought lies in different events and sciences from sociology where men is positioned as the father and “the father is the head of the family”, to economics where there still exist insufficient independence for women, and “woman’s work” status and education where “certain social sciences are assigned to women and science and technology, and engineering to men”. (Miller, 1969) Representation of identities under patriarchal and socially constructed prescriptions can be discussed through doing gender. As one of the findings of this study stands for the patriarchal thought to have its effect on the produced gendered discourses as Turkey has been a country with patriarchal roots in history and culture.

The term gender has been discussed to be used interchangeably with sex at Chapter 2. Problematizing the knowledge on the definition of the term gender and its uncommon usage in the Turkish language, this discussion is extended to the in depth interviews. One of the first questions on the topic gendered discourses is planned to get the confirmation of the participants that they know the meaning of the term. When all the participants were asked whether they knew what the term “gendered discourse” stands for, they were all confident to say ‘yes’. Considering that all the participants have a certain level of

knowledge on gendered discourses upon their responses, the following question is asked to understand if they are aware of the gendered discourses produced within sustainability reports in general. 9 participants out of 10 declared that they have not realized any gendered discourses within sustainability reports before. After verbally sharing the collected gendered texts from the reports as examples to the remaining 9 participants, they all agreed that these discourses are gendered but they have never realised before. Participant 5 who has been a consultant and has been editing and writing CSR reports since 15 years, declared on being aware of such discourses and referred to her experiences on the challenges she faced to change such discourses before being published.

“Many times I have experienced this bad experience. I tried to inform and convince the company representatives to change the gendered discourses on the report. Thus received the final confirmation from the company as rejecting my suggestion on the necessary change.” (Participant 5)

Participant 1 who is a former CEO and has been responsible for the final confirmation of company CSR reports for more than 10 years, shared his comments quoting Peter Drucker as:

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast. No matter how concrete strategies the leaders build on the way to empowering women for a more sustainable economy, the final product has the risk to be shaped by the culture. Both organizational culture and the cultural codes of the producers have an effect on the CSR initiatives. The way they are executed and the way they are presented.” (Participant 1)

He believes that the gendered discourses shared by me are the products of an unconscious incompetence level of the producers and they are produced within the context of their perception illusion. Gathering the information collected from participants where all of the participants agree that there is no intentionally produced gendered discourses however it can be discussed that producers of the texts lack knowledge on the gendered discourse as a context and so they are unintentionally producing the gendered discourses.

Top management level inclusion to the production of the texts is at a macro level. However as the final confirming authority is the top management, CSR reports are not of high importance on their agenda according to the information gathered from in depth interviews. Also having sustainability topic as one of the least important responsibilities on their agenda, confirming authorities may not be realising the language mistakes. All of the third party participants and a top manager participant argue on the insufficient time and attention spent on reports. One of the participants states that:

“The content is not effectively discussed or worked on. Most probably what happens is pasting the copied texts from previous year’s report again. I haven’t seen or experienced any report preparation where the involved parties from the company saves necessary time and pays the necessary attention to prepare texts, or to read and comment or discuss the texts with us. Since this sustainability report is not their priority, the reason may be that they overlook and do not notice the gendered or sexist sayings in the discourses or texts.” (Participant 5)

Besides the text within the report, top management gives more importance and attention to the CSR strategy of the company and the CSR initiatives invested that have a reputational value. As well most of the time, texts and discourses are perceived by the top management as positive outcomes although they are gendered discourses which reproduce gender inequality by creating different groups as man and woman. regarding the above Participant 5 states that;

“Contents in detail and texts are mostly overlooked by the top management. They are more focused on the data including financials, communication power and their own forewords when it comes to final check and confirmation state. The strategic term “social confirmation” is mostly used for getting the approval from the society and CSR reports are used for this target on marketing and communication by the company. The main medium of communication for sustainability investments of companies is CSR reports and one of the main motivations of companies’ for producing those reports is increasing the reputation and brand value by public relations and communication with their stakeholders and society in common. Besides I think that in Turkey most of the corporate managers are aware of gender inequality and this topic is included in their sustainability strategy. However because insufficient knowledge drives both the linguistic mistake and the strategic mistake of reproducing gender inequality through produced gendered discourses.” (Participant 5)

According to the idea shared by one of the participants, doing gender is a part of the public relations strategy. He states the following on this idea:

“Since there is a belief in our business culture that women are the second, other, disadvantaged group, most of the companies use this belief and invest in supporting women so that they can get a good reputation from the public as well as support sustainability strategies. However supporting women and diversity is important, but using this as a pr material to differentiate from competitors is the wrong” (Participant 8)

When it comes to the distribution and consumption of the texts Participant 8 states that the consumption of the texts on the reports are generally direct without interpretations over the texts. He states the following:

“Most of the time journalists are interested in popular news instead of social good and sustainability values of the topic with facts. And journalists do not change the texts on either reports or press releases and prepare their articles from the copied discourses from the reports.” (Participant 8)

This is also a driver for reproduction of gendered discourses and othering.

Power relations is also discussed and reflects on some of the findings in this level of analysis. Persuasion and dominance is discussed focusing on the doing of power considering the bias that the producers of the texts coming from the patriarchal culture hold. Undoubtedly supporting women in business is a central matter of concern to the companies that are dealing with sustainability reporting. Together with progressive initiatives by corporate companies in the sphere of gender equality, women empowerment topic have begun to be

promoted, mostly for supporting the reputation of companies in a positive manner. The problematic strategy to empower women by power is mostly caused by companies' strategies on clustering women as a group to be supported. Whereas the corporate sustainability practices communicated by these discourses aim to empower women, gendered discourses produced for communicating these practices place women in subject positions. A Foucauldian approach to the women empowerment initiatives and the way communicating them disables women to develop themselves besides reveals the idea to manage the empowerment of women over the status quo. In many ways then, it may be possible to refer to the argument of Ruth Wodak (1994) that has been discussed at Chapter 2, which states that “discourse normalizes social practice as well as being shaped by it”. One of the corporate manager participant sharing her experience states that:

“When a project to support women employees for their kids is spoken in a meeting, all managers clap this as it is such a good support and a good tool for communication. However the idea they hold is supporting women to stay in business life rather going back to home and taking care of their kids since this is the culturally learnt normal. They have no idea that announcing our support for women employees to be better mothers through our sustainability report, reproduces assigning the role of childcare to women.” (Participant 3)

Titscher et al, (2000, p. 148) argues that discourse is affected by power relations. “Society and culture are dialectically related to discourse: society and culture are shaped by discourse, and at the same

time constitute discourse”. The relation of discourse with power, and dominance results with the language gaining “power by the use powerful people make of it”. (Weiss & Wodak, 2003) This interdisciplinary critical analysis of discourses of corporate companies will help to gain an understanding of how corporate language used by the powerful group functions in constructing the knowledge on gender differences in organizing social institutions. When the question raised to the participants, whether such discourses would not be produced when gender equality is reached, the answers were all negative. The argument put by the participants regards to an understanding that the socially and culturally approved standards and roles assigned to genders must change not to have such gendered discourses to be produced anymore.

“We can not say that such gendered groupings or texts will end once gender equality in business life is reached. Besides in my opinion the the reason is since women is seen as the other and unfortunately women is seen as a lower class in business life as well as the cultural norm is that women is responsible of taking care of the family at the first level, such gendered approaches will not end so as the gendered discourses. Not the desired equality but necessary levels of education should be provided starting from primary school so that all individuals would grow up with a gender equal mindset. Then there is a chance that production of such gendered discourses may end.” (Participant 4)

“Initiatives should be taken starting from children for a desired change to stop the use of gendered discourses. It is not easy to change the habits of grown up people. And it is not possible to

start a cultural change through the initiatives of corporate companies. But you can change the philosophy and the culture starting with children.” (Participant 1)

Focusing on the style dimension of discourse, that is how people are represented or constructed in the discourse, will help to better discuss the representation of women in the corporate discourses produced within the sustainability reports. The construction of women as a social identity by the gendered texts concerns the values and cultural norms expressed by the producers of the texts. These are discussed in the previous sections of micro level and meso level analysis. Mainly what I refer to here as the style dimension of the order of discourse deals with is how the producers of the texts construct women and men as subjects. Fairclough (2003) argues that, “discourses, genres and styles are both elements of texts and social elements”. (p. 37) Focusing on genre entails looking at the kinds of subgenres the women empowerment initiatives fall within the wider sustainability genre. The analysis of the gendered discourse samples collected from the reports shows that they all produce different identities as men and women and constitute groups where women are represented as mothers, responsible ones for child care, disadvantaged, and rare minorities in the business ecosystem. All participants are asked for their opinion on the identities produced by these discourses and representation of women. Participants agreeing on the produced and grouped identities argues that the more corporate companies communicate their initiatives with gendered discourses, the more they reproduce different identities according to the sex of the individuals.

And this may be related to the unconscious by the statement of a participant as follows :

“Action and reaction rule applies once you start an initiative. The natural result of the positive discrimination initiatives and gendered discourses is the produced groups as men and women.” (Participant 1)

Another respondent states that:

“Absolutely gendered discourses create two groups. This is the part of the strategy. If not they would not produce those gendered texts on the reports. They first construct the groups and then categorize the group of women under the disadvantaged, so that they can empower this disadvantaged group and label this as a social responsibility initiative. All the public relations then is built on this initiative.” (Participant 3)

Findings of this macro level mainly focuses on four major ideas. The first one is the hidden influence of the patriarchal history and culture of the country on the thoughts and behaviors of the producers. The second major reason is caused by the confusion on the concept of gender and the unforeseen possible negative reflections of this lack of knowledge on language. The third one is the ignorance of the producers. Ignorance exists and appears in different ways and manners. These are generally reputation and public relations concerns and strategies of companies, insufficient time and attention paid on discourses, lack of knowledge on the context of gendered language, and unconscious competence level of the managers of the companies. The fourth one is the socially and culturally approved standards and

roles assigned to genders. This is also included in the reasons to have an affect on the discursive construction of women as a social identity and production of gendered discourses through this idea.

4.2 DISCUSSION

This research has its findings from a series of research that constitutes from the readings of 181 CSR reports, 2 reference guidelines and in depth interviews with business professionals from the field of sustainability. Hence the data includes both quantitative and qualitative findings. All findings are grouped under main 2 topics as; findings from the CSR reports and findings from the CDA analysis. Each topic has its sub groups and includes discussions over the findings. Influenced by the Potter and Wetterel (1992, p.172) suggesting on the necessity of presenting the findings together with a discussion in order to enable the reader to assess my interpretations, I have included my discussions within the findings. However the findings are discussed there still exists some comments to put on discussion. I will be presenting my discussion over 4 main topics which includes all the findings but needs necessary attention as they are newly highlighted ideas by this research.

I believe briefly summarizing the findings and discussions over them here. The first finding focuses on the main research question with quantitative data. 42 companies out of the 53 included in the research data have statements on their women empowerment initiatives. Most of the companies are from manufacturing industry and they have

women empowerment initiatives both for their internal and external stakeholders. Narratives collected from reports on this specific topic includes gendered discourses. The way discourses are gendered have main 5 ideas. According to the reference guidelines by UNDP and Kadir Has University Department of Gender Studies, gendered discourses are built on ideas as; gender bias, power domination, inclusion of gratuitous premodifiers, grouping and othering women, and use of gender generic nouns. Gendered discourses are collected by these 5 groups are used for the CDA analysis using the framework produced specifically for this research according to the three dimensional CDA offered by Norman Fairclough. Findings of the CDA analysis constitutes of 3 consecutive levels. The findings of the first level includes the discussions of the 5 group of discourses by relevant theories on gender, feminism and communication. Having the confirmation of the discourses to be gendered discourses by the discussion with theories the first finding answers the main research question. There are two findings of the second level of the CDA. The first one is the production process of the report narratives and the actors involved in the different stages of this process. The collective process of production together with different parties and actors is presented with a flow chart prepared. Referencing the details of the process basically the reports are the product of the owner company and the third party involved. The third party is generally a sustainability consulting company, a public relations agency, and a creative agency. Report narratives The two main groups of producers have different levels of hierarchies and roles at different stages of the

production. The discussion over this finding is held to find out the factors affecting the content of the narratives. Critically discussing the interpretation of the producers on the content, main factors are highlighted. Statements on CSR initiatives are prepared in relation to events, related other discourses, orders of discourse and the power relations between people. Social practices, values, beliefs, power relations and social relations are all affecting factors in relation to the production of the corporate discourses. The second finding of the second level of CDA is finding out the factors that influence the distribution and consumption of the discourses. At the distribution and consumption level, the effect of the distributor has an important role however the statements of companies are generally directly conveyed to the society together with the ideas they hold. The findings of the third level of the CDA focuses on the reasons of the production of gendered discourses. Findings of this macro level dealing with the context is related to power politics of the discourses on the specific women empowerment topic. Patriarchy, bias, and ignorance are the main findings over the discussion of power politics. The internalized ideas, beliefs, and ideologies of the producers depending on the patriarchal culture have their reflections on the discourses addressed to women. One of the major findings is the ignorance of the producers on the holistic approach to gender equality concept. Ignorance has its reflections in different manners. One of them is the lack of knowledge on the context of gendered language and the unconscious competence level of the producers depending on this. Building a positive reputation and strengthening it by the use of CSR initiatives through

public relations is an other major factor. The strategy built over this purpose which puts women to subject positions is the discussion point of this finding. s and as subjects, insufficient time and attention paid on discourses, lack of knowledge on the context of gendered language, and unconscious competence level of the managers of the companies. The socially and culturally approved standards and roles assigned to genders, bias and stereotypes are found to be another reason of this production. This is also problematized and discussed over its affects on the reproduction of gender roles and the identity of women.

Some of the findings are related with the approach of corporate companies to women empowerment concept. I will be presenting a discussion for this topic. Most of the gendered discourses are under the influence of patriarchy, bias and stereotypes. Such discourses results with reproducing the cultural assumptions and harming the gender equality mission. However the construction of the identity of women is another result of gendered discourses produced with such ideas that should not be overlooked. Problematizing this, I will be presenting a discussion on the identity of women constructed as empowerable subjects. The science of ignorance has different focus points. Many ideas triggering the production of gendered discourses are related to different perspectives of ignorance as a theory. I will be discussing the ignorance based production of gendered discourses together with the power politics of women empowerment initiatives within this section.

4.2.1 Women Empowerment Approach of Companies

Discursive constructs of sustainability initiatives of companies are through the narratives produced and communicated within their corporate sustainability reports. Discourses produced within women empowerment context are mostly statements of companies about their investments and projects on this specific issue. Considering the CSR practices of companies are performed with the aim of sustainable development, empowerment brings about an awareness on contributing to emancipation of women. Referring to my research results, it is very promising on the way to gender equality and lowering the gender gap as many of the companies in Turkey are taking actions for the empowerment of women. Research findings highlight the importance given to women empowerment within the sustainability agenda of corporate companies in Turkey. %80 of the CSR reporting companies have investments on women empowerment and this regards women empowerment as one of the topics which most of the companies account on their sustainability agenda and strategy on the way for sustainable development. 56 reports out of 181 highlights women empowerment as one of the focus areas of the companies' sustainability initiatives within their top management forewords and sustainability approach sections. Not only strategies are mentioned within the reports but also actions, programmes and different investments by companies are given in detail which can be considered as reflecting the high importance assigned to this topic. Out of 181 companies' reports that are analysed, 100 of them have

statements on women empowerment initiatives for their employees and 94 of them for the society in general. Relatively close number of initiatives are taken by companies for their internal and external stakeholders. This reflects the inclusive approach of companies on women empowerment. However there is a high number of practices on the specific women empowerment area, findings of my research illuminates particular areas of inquiry on women empowerment initiatives of companies that may have been ignored, while reflecting further their unforeseen negative results on gender equality.

Referring to my research findings presented at Chapter 4, gendered discourses are produced by corporate companies within the context of women empowerment for sustainable development. Gendered discourses within the sustainability context are the manifestation of ‘doing gender’ by women empowerment initiatives’ communication through corporate sustainability reports. Gendering by language mostly is the result of the culturally and socially constructed ideas, ideologies and assumptions of the producers of the texts. Reflections of the patriarchal culture and stereotyped images, beliefs, and assumptions made about women are involved in the CSR approach of companies. And this is reflected both by the construction of the strategies, and actions and the discourses produced with the aim of communicating these initiatives.

Inspired by the works of Foucault on the power problem he examines and the feminist scholars’ theories combined with the interpretations of his works that are discussed in detail at Chapter 3, the gendered

discourses on the published corporate sustainability reports include ideas of doing power. The approach to empowerment by dominance outside of the women themselves without considering the demand side connotes a controlling agent. Companies that are socially ordering women as a disadvantaged group initiate a support under the umbrella of sustainability and women empowerment by power over them. This leads the empowerment initiatives to move far away from the idea of emancipation of women. Thus it is necessary to keep women empowerment initiatives in the scope of providing the necessary for the emancipation of women. Some discourses of companies on their strategies and initiatives for women empowerment, reflects the practice of positive discrimination. Within my discussion, I am also problematising the notion of women empowerment by positive discrimination. This also gives rise to grouping and reinforces the idea of women as in need of support.

Referring to my research findings, within the argument I present depending on the reasons for the production of gendered discourses, there lies the motivation of companies for public relations through corporate sustainability reports. As mentioned detailly in Chapter 2, companies investing in corporate sustainability initiatives tend to communicate their performances on sustainability with their stakeholders. Results of this empirical study shows that one of the main motivations of companies for publishing CSR reports as the main medium of communication for their sustainability investments, is increasing the reputation and brand value of the company by public

relations and communication with their stakeholders, and society in common. The strategic term ‘social confirmation’ is mostly used for getting the approval from the society and corporate sustainability reports are used for this target on marketing and communication by the companies. Investing in sustainability and management of the activities is relatively new for most of the companies. It has not only changed the way businesses manage economic, societal and environmental issues but also their way of managing non-profit oriented intangible assets. The phenomenon of the pursuit of social acceptance comes with a challenge for companies to strengthen their reputation through their sustainability issues. Positive outcomes of the initiatives of the companies on women empowerment are interpreted for social good by the producers of the reports and communicated through their sustainability reports. Communication is problematized when the concern for public relations is the priority and the impact on sustainability is underestimated. Prioritized communication results with the discourses prepared by third parties in advertising or public relations language, however this affects the statements to be out of the scope of sustainability. Same applies when intentionally women are grouped as disadvantaged and then supported by the companies for social good with the aim of communication for social confirmation. However the approach of companies to women empowerment includes getting social confirmation from their stakeholders, the concern for public relations and the continuous gendering by language on this purpose, may result with negative effects on the empowerment of women as well as the gender equality perception.

There are many good examples and practices that support the empowerment of women. Details of the initiatives are not mentioned in detail since that is not considered in the scope of this research. However the gendered discourses produced for the communication of those initiatives challenges the idea of gender equality. Together with progressive initiatives by corporate companies in the sphere of gender equality, there is an opportunity to increase awareness on the knowledge of gendered discourses and their unforeseen negative results. An inclusive and gender sensitive use of language has the power to work the assumptions the reverse way and help change the bias on genders by the initiatives of corporate companies.

4.2.2 Constructing The Identity Of Women As 'Empowerable Subjects'

Taking the social, economic, and historical context into consideration while focusing on the style dimension of the discourses, I present an empirical inquiry on the positioning and representation of individuals by the communicative process of corporate sustainability reports. With reference to the gendered discourse samples collected from the reports, and the first two levels of my CDA analysis, I have shown that these discourses construct different groups and identities based on gender. It is dramatic evidence that gendered patterns of grouping people in two is a way of display only but lies in the constructed identities and sustainability approaches of companies. Discourses analysed within this research which are constructing different groups and identities based on gender, mainly include interpretations of

disadvantage. Such groupings spread by the discourses evokes and reproduces the culture based assumptions that women are less capable and placed as subordinates in many industries. Gendered discourses produced by organisations with an idea of othering women and grouping them with disadvantaged, tends to see men as the normal in the workforce. When the sustainability initiatives of companies on women empowerment are interpreted through the strategies and actions they hold, the approach to empowering women is through bringing them to the level of men. This social construct that defines men as normal and neutralizes the differences of the others from normal is confirmed by the repetition in discourses. Representations of women through gender stereotypes including stereotypical gender generic nouns reinforces the bias and leads to prejudice and discrimination. Women are positioned as subjects and evaluated with sexist assumptions that leads to devaluation and discrimination. Constructed groups according to genders as well as its unforeseen results, makes the sustainability initiatives all the more challenging. However this grouping is sometimes the outcome of a positive initiative by companies towards empowering women.

Women empowerment actions for a more sustainable economy and society, aim to give power to women by positioning them with important roles in the economy and community. Reflecting my findings, the problematic strategy to empower women by power is mostly caused by companies' strategies on clustering women as a group to be supported. Whereas some aspects of the corporate

sustainability practices aim to empower women gendered discourses produced for communicating these practices place women in subject positions. By talking and writing about gender through the language we use, constructed identity of woman as an empowerable subject is reproduced. Reproducing gendered groups and identities should also be considered on the basis of the challenge of normalizing these groups. There exists the risk that culturally formed identities may become internalized. Thus this brings a positive chance on normalizing gender equality by the initiatives of companies on sustainability management focusing on this specific issue. Managing the differences for diversity with a conscious and proper strategy would support dissolving the boundaries of the groups by genders.

Interpretation of the texts by the consumers plays an important role where every discourse has the possibility to carry the interpreted meaning to an unforeseen result. Sustainability approaches and strategies of companies on the certain gender equality topic are distributed by their reports. An inclusive and gender sensitive use of language has the power to work the assumptions the reverse way and help change the bias on genders and even the genders of organisational structures. In the reflection of the findings of my research, the role of power relations on discourse might have the necessary power to change this direction and end the production of gendered discourses. On the way to a sustainable economy and society, discourses reproducing the gendered groups and differences is an obstacle for equal opportunities and the desired transformation for

gender equality. And the sustainability initiatives of companies is the biggest opportunity to start this cultural change with some attention on the gender sensitive use of language.

4.2.3 Ignorance

Although women empowerment is positioned as one of the solutions for sustainability, considering the economics of investing in women, it still requires a discussion focusing on the main motivation of the investing companies. My findings over the reasons for producing gendered discourses reflects the ignorance on the gendered and sexist use of language. The ignorance I stress herein is about the state of knowledge. Hence “ignorance is socially constructed and cannot be understood as a mere absence or inversion of knowledge.” (Smithson, 2007) Inspired by the insights gathered by the in depth interviews, I consider it important to focus on the ignorance of the producers. Participants of the interviews having different roles at the production process of corporate narratives contributes on the ignorance with different perspectives. The touch points of the participants regarding ignorance are on three different issues. Referring back to the notes of the in depth interviews, these three references that needs to be reconsidered within the ignorance context are: lack of knowledge of the producers about the gender concept, leveraging women empowerment for strategically priorities of companies, and consciously taken actions by the inversion of knowledge are three ideas where it is necessary to discuss within the ignorance topic. Ignorance mostly considered by knowledge has its

roots in ‘agnotology’. The term is coined by Iain Boal and Robert Proctor in and it is the doctrine of things of which we are necessarily ignorant. (Proctor, 2008) The science of ignorance has different focus points. Many ideas triggering the production of gendered discourses are related to different perspectives of ignorance as a theory.

Ignorance exists and appears in different ways and manners within the CSR reports from the production of the narratives to the discourses of communication. Above mentioned three references and the issues they highlight should be discussed separately according to the states of ignorance. Lack of knowledge on the gender concept is about “the native state which is also referred as an innocent type of ignorance.” Calling back to my interview notes and the discussion on the knowledge and awareness of the participants on the gendered discourses. All participants were confident of their level of knowledge of gender concept however they were confused in terms of the information they have. An other example is the argument of Participant 1 who refers to the production of gendered discourses as the manifestation of unconsciously inefficient producers’ ideas. When ignorance is due to the lack of knowledge on a specific issue there is the chance to improve and change. Proctor (2008) names the ignorance at such a native state to be “caused by the naivety of youth or the faults of improper education- or simple fact that here is a place where knowledge has not yet penetrated.” This is also mentioned in the management studies as the level of knowledge “in which you don’t know what it is you don’t know” (Etherington, 2007, p.111)

Considered from the business approach to sustainability, companies can not risk the management of important tasks with unconsciously incompetent managers who are at this level of ignorance. Sustainability topics covering gender equality and women empowerment initiatives is a new phenomenon and a dynamic marketplace engaging with the society. Such empowerment practices are a cost of time and money for companies and the ignorance of the managers has an important role in the short and long term results of the practices. The blissfully ignorant state of managers has its reflection both on the design of the projects and the discourses produced. Thus this would undermine the risk of unforeseen negative results by reproducing gender discriminations to the society in general. Once the concept and value of gender equality for sustainability and the negative effects of doing gender is recognised and placed in the agenda of the companies, moving on to gender sensitive use of language is possible.

Some reasons underlying the gendered discourses are related with the power politics of women empowerment initiatives. These are generally reputation and public relations concerns and strategies of companies, insufficient time and attention paid on discourses, patriarchy, and bias. The concept of social confirmation through CSR practices as discussed in the previous section 4.2.1, is also path to doing good as well a tool for strengthening the reputation. Ignorance on the CSR report narratives includes manipulation on such kind of events. “This type of ignorance can be an actively engineered part of a

deliberate plan.” (Proctor, 2008) Referring to the interview notes, power politics of women empowerment initiatives depends on the strategic priorities which might not include the social good for gender equality. Exploring the initiatives on supporting women, they all are prepared to support women but no research has been deployed to measure the development provided through every single initiative. None of the reports includes information of the results of the specific initiatives of the previous reports. This kind of engineered or manufactured ignorance ideas are also included in the public relations and communication purposes of companies. Women empowerment initiatives that are grouping women with the disadvantaged is a construction for gaining the image of the ‘social good provider’ by supporting the disadvantaged. The phenomenon that companies are only committed to sustainability issues if this contributes to increasing their profits has started to change its direction. The driving force behind sustainability activities of companies is mainly the pursuit of social acceptance. (Schaltegger & Horisch, 2017) This social acceptance efforts of companies includes strengthening their reputation through their sustainability investments. The active construct of ignorance which is a selective one on the specific empowerment of women issue shifts the purpose of gender equality with a strategic priority of the company on image building. Van Dijk (1993) refers to the execution of modern power with a manipulation approach and states that changing and managing the minds of others is done through discourses. “The subjective reality becomes objectified and pervades within organisations.” (Michael, 2007). Accordingly

with the change of strategy, this type of ignorance will not be maintained. Such examples of selective ignorance are related to the power politics of women empowerment initiatives. They might be constructed according to the power relations and not necessarily be maintained.

I have discussed the patriarchal culture and thoughts, bias and stereotypes as one of the reasons underlying the production of gendered discourses. Findings of this research highlights these factors and their relation with the power politics of women empowerment as discussed within this Chapter. Ignorance also has its reflection on the balance of knowledge related to bias and stereotypes. Cultivation of ignorance which might as well be assumed as a way of construction of it. Socially and culturally approved standards and roles assigned to genders might be reproduced as a means of this construction of ignorance. All the parties involved in the production process of the discourses reflect their ideas through this constructed ignorance of bias. Thus the social world of the cultivated ignorance lies in the distribution of thoughts over the sustainability initiatives and discourses.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Current global political context of women empowerment is focusing on a sustainable economy and society. Inspired by the global movements, Turkish companies have been adding women empowerment topic to their CSR agenda. However there is a debate on the results of the empowerment agenda, there remains a discursive terrain of such initiatives. This research brings up an empirical inquiry

on gendered discourses produced by corporate companies in Turkey while presenting quantitative data on the initiatives taken for the empowerment of women. Focusing on the gendered discourses collected from reports with a critical view, women empowerment approach of companies is explained together with power politics over the issue. Representation of women which has the reflections of the produced discourses is also argued based on the findings of the research. The social context is also defined together with the production processes.

This research provides empirical data on the women empowerment initiatives and the discursive terrain of them addressing answers to several questions. Within this chapter, answers for the research questions will be presented highlighting the main discussions over the findings of this research. The major issues this inquiry deals with are as follows:

- 1- Research findings highlight the importance given to women empowerment within the sustainability agenda of corporate companies. Quantitative data provided by this research regards women empowerment as one of the topics which most of the companies account on their sustainability agenda and strategy on the way for sustainable development.
- 2- Gendered discourses are produced by Turkish corporate companies and communicated through their CSR reports.

- 3- Gendered discourses within the sustainability context are the manifestation of doing gender by women empowerment initiatives in corporate sustainability reports. And there several ideas that this gendering is performed on.
- 4- Corporate discourses on women empowerment strategies and initiatives construct identities as men and women. Men is the constructed norm and women are grouped as the other together with the disadvantaged.
- 5- Corporate sustainability reports are used as strategic tools for ‘social confirmation’. In order to get the approval from the society report narratives are interpreted for public relations and advertising purposes.
6. Ignorance of the responsible managers has a role to play at the preparation of the discourses.
- 7- Corporate-led and power driven women empowerment initiatives are far away from being the interpretation of emancipation ideas for women.

Considering these 7 major topics, I provide three contributions to corporate sustainability initiatives on women empowerment and gendered discourses literature with this research. First, I provide quantitative data on the place of women empowerment as a topic within corporate companies’ sustainability agenda. And together with this data I bring up the answer to whether corporate companies

produce gendered discourses within this context. Second, I contribute to the management of women empowerment within sustainability context unpacking the power driven corporate-led empowerment practices. These two contributions are related with the approach of corporate companies to women empowerment concept. I will be presenting a discussion for this topic within this Chapter. My third contribution is by turning the spotlight on the reasons for producing gendered discourses. The new perspective I bring may lead to creating awareness on the gender sensitive use of language. I refer to my research findings and open new doors for future research ideas. Thus there are limitations of this research. Future research ideas and the limitations will be presented within this Chapter.

5.1 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

“From the moment one begins to be unable to think things as one usually thinks them, transformation becomes simultaneously very urgent, very difficult, and altogether possible.” - M.

Foucault

Inclusion of women empowerment and gender equality topics to the sustainability approach of companies has mainly started within the last three years and is currently one of the top practices included within

the sustainability agenda of companies in Turkey. However women are mostly referred to as ‘subjects’ and ‘the others’ within the statements of companies for their initiatives on sustainability. Thus a sustainable gender equality will be reached when empowerment is considered as a process of emancipation of women to become able to manage the necessary power to control resources and not be grouped with the disadvantaged. Corporate sustainability initiatives and discourses on women’s empowerment employs gendered groups and in line with this gendering the mode of representation of women is based on the stereotypes and assumptions through patriarchal cultural codes in contrast to the efforts on closing the gap for gender equality. Using the feminist critique of Foucault’s thoughts on power, empowerment still reflects a controlling agent. Women treated as the subject of the act of power therefore this finds its reflection on language. Woman as the empowerable subject of the corporate-led practices is a construct initiated by the companies for social confirmation through public relations purposes.

I provide two contributions to corporate sustainability initiatives on women empowerment and gendered discourses literature with this research. First, I contribute to the discussion of women empowerment within sustainability context unpacking the power driven corporate-led empowerment practices. Current practices carrying brand communication and reputation building concerns are constructing women as an empowerable subject and ‘the other’ who is in need of support. My discussion and analysis through a feminist Foucauldian approach to power and freedom contributes to exploring the meaning

of empowerment for a sustainable economy and the unforeseen negative outcomes of the current practices of othering and grouping women with the disadvantaged. Thus there are valuable initiatives by companies on women empowerment on the way to gender equality that should be reckoned among. Initiatives of companies on women empowerment are tied to misunderstood and unconscious concepts of power that are translating empowerment to empowering women with a dominant power outside of the women themselves. However corporate companies focusing to empower women through corporate sustainability may not always reach the desired and expected outcome for gender equality unless the power and freedom context is well understood and reflected. My findings on women's empowerment with the notion of freedom, contributes to the management of communicating corporate sustainability initiatives and suggests ways to companies to reconsider their investments and programmes on women empowerment beginning with the necessary awareness and knowledge management. My second contribution is on the gendered narratives of corporate sustainability initiatives requiring women to remain within the gender roles according to assumptions reflecting the patriarchal culture and the stereotypes. The empirical evidence that my research brings turns the spotlight on the reasons for producing gendered discourses. My findings over the reasons for producing gendered discourses reflects the ignorance on the gendered and sexist use of language.

I bring a new perspective for companies investing in women empowerment by presenting an empirical inquiry for the to have a health check on their level of knowledge on the gender sensitive use of language. Such empowerment practices are a cost of time and money for companies, the ignorance of the managers who are responsible for sustainability strategy and who are the producers of the texts, has an important role in both the short and long term results of the practices. The findings of this research regards the importance of discourses on harming the investments on women empowerment and their way of reproducing gender inequalities. Narratives on corporate sustainability initiatives for women empowerment should be handled with care by companies and a framework of checklist may help to improve for gender sensitive use of language and strategy planning that would improve promoting gender equality. Continuously communication of constructed gendered groups and initiatives built upon, feeds the gap between individuals basing on genders and equality in a negative way instead of supporting women's empowerment. I refer to my research findings and open a new window for the companies to measure both their level of awareness and the results of their women empowerment initiatives. How power and patriarchal culture manifests in the construction of the identities and corporate sustainability strategies, needs attention on the way to long-term, sustainable, efficient, and measurable women empowerment initiatives. Taking the power and freedom equation into consideration, the CSR programmes heading to equality for women at the workplace and society in general, should focus on the

emancipation of the individual rather than domination. Encouraging gender sensitive use of language may lead to a step in the right direction for gender equality.

5.2 LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis critically examines the discourses produced by the Turkish corporations, bringing together gender, communication, and organizational studies focusing on the communicative actions of companies on women empowerment. The scope of the research is the registered corporate sustainability reports of Turkish corporations which are rated and listed by Borsa Istanbul Sustainability Index. This scope of the study is one of the limits of the research. Thus it opens new doors and provides data driven ideas for future research. Companies communicate corporate sustainability initiatives and strategies to their stakeholders through various channels like press releases, advertising, web sites, social media accounts and blogs. A future research to find out whether companies produce gendered discourses for communicating their women empowerment initiatives through the digital or social media communication would be complementary for my research. Finding empirical data on this topic would lead to different researches for the remaining commonly used communication channels to find out whether gendered discourses are produced in the narratives for different communication channels.

Another fruitful direction for future research would therefore employ the ignorance and unconscious incompetence framework to

investigate and map the level of producers of the texts. Referencing my research findings on the ignorance of producers of the texts on gender equality and gendered discourses, a detailed empirical data can be collected with the suggested complementary future research. Sustainability management and strategy building for the practices to be initiated with a necessary level of knowledge including the measurements of short and long term effects of the women empowerment projects would also lead to data driven effective and productive practices. Such a new institutional analysis of the actors behind the gendered discourses may lead to an improvement on the production of discourses with consciousness on gender equality. In particular, detailed analysis of the non profit organisations and associations which are collaborating with the women empowerment practices of companies can be added to the scope. The same contexts of empirical data should be collected from such platforms to have a better understanding on ignorance level. As long as women empowerment is a topic for companies and they prefer having collaborations with feminist platforms and NGO's, these partnerships demand greater feminist scrutiny. Thus such organizations can act to raise the awareness of gender equal use of language both at the producer level and society at large.

Within the scope and aim of this project, discourses addressed to women are analysed. Discourses are analysed with an approach to gender dealing with 'men' and 'women' only, however besides gender constitutes of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex. Considering this limitation over the findings, a direction for a future

research would be to analyse the gender perception of corporate companies who are having initiatives on gender equality. This would open new doors for investigating the initiatives on inclusive gender equality by corporate companies.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Listed companies on BIST Sustainability Index by Company Codes

Table 3.1 Listed Companies' Codes On BIST Sustainability Index Selected As Data Set

No	Company Name
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1	ADEL
2	AKBNK
3	AKENR
4	AKSA
5	ANACM
6	AEFES
7	ANELE
8	ARCLK
9	ASELS
10	AYGAZ
11	BRISA
12	CIMSA
13	CCOLA
14	DOHOL
15	DOAS
16	EREGL
17	FROTO
18	GLYHO
19	SAHOL
20	ISGMY
21	KCHOL
22	KORDS
23	LOGO
24	MGROS
25	NETAS
26	OTKAR
27	PEGSUS
28	PETKM
29	POLHO
30	SAFGY
31	SKBNK
32	SODA
33	TATGD
34	TAVHL
35	TKFEN
36	TOASO
37	THYAO
38	TTKOM

39	TTRAK
40	TCELL
41	GARAN
42	HALKB
43	ISCTR
44	TUPRS
45	TSKB
46	SISE
47	VAKBN
48	ULKER
49	VESBE
50	VESTL.E
51	VESTL
52	YKBNK
53	ZOREN.

APPENDIX 2: CSR reporting companies by industries and sub-sectors

Table 3.2 CSR Reporting Companies Breakdown By Industry

Industry	Number of Companies
Manufacturing	28
Finance	8

Holding and Investment Companies	8
Technology and telecommunications	4
Wholesale and retail trade	3
Logistics	2

Table 3.3 CSR Reporting Companies Breakdown By Sub-sectors Of Industries

Sub-sectors of Industries	Number of Companies
Chemicals, petroleum rubber and plastic products	8
Financial Institutions	8
Fabricated metal products, machinery and vehicles	7
Holding and Investment Companies	5
Food, Beverage and Tobacco	4
Electricity, gas and water	3
Telecommunication	3
Wholesale and retail trade	3
Brokarage Houses	2
Transportation and storage	2
Basic metal and fabricated metal products	2
Construction and public works	1
Defence	1
Non metallic mineral products	1

Other manufacturing products	1
Paper and paper products, printing and publishing	1
Technology	1

APPENDIX 3 : List of CSR reporting companies by years

Table 3.4 List Of CSR Reporting Companies By Years

No	Year	Company Name
1	2014-2015	AKBNK
2	2014-2015	ARCLK
3	2014-2015	ASELS
4	2014-2015	GARAN

5	2014-2015	SAHOL
6	2014-2015	KCHOL
7	2014-2015	MGROS
8	2014-2015	PETKIM
9	2014-2015	TAVHL
10	2014-2015	TOASO
11	2014-2015	TCELL
12	2014-2015	TUPRS
13	2014-2015	TTKOM
14	2014-2015	VAKBN
15	2014-2015	YKBNK
16	2015-2016	AKBNK
17	2015-2016	AKSA
18	2015-2016	AEFES
19	2015-2016	ARCLK
20	2015-2016	ASELS
21	2015-2016	BRISA
22	2015-2016	CCOLA
23	2015-2016	DOAS
24	2015-2016	EREGL
25	2015-2016	FROTO
26	2015-2016	SAHOL
27	2015-2016	KCHOL
28	2015-2016	MGROS
29	2015-2016	OTKAR
30	2015-2016	PETKIM
31	2015-2016	SAFGY
32	2015-2016	TSKB
33	2015-2016	TAVHL

34	2015-2016	TOASO
35	2015-2016	TCELL
36	2015-2016	TUPRS
37	2015-2016	THYAO
38	2015-2016	TTKOM
39	2015-2016	GARAN
40	2015-2016	ISCTR
41	2015-2016	VAKBN
42	2015-2016	ULKER
43	2015-2016	VESTL
44	2015-2016	YKBNK
45	2016-2017	ADEL
46	2016-2017	AKBNK
47	2016-2017	AKSA
48	2016-2017	AEFES
49	2016-2017	ARCLK
50	2016-2017	ASELS
51	2016-2017	BRISA
52	2016-2017	CCOLA
53	2016-2017	DOHOL
54	2016-2017	DOAS
55	2016-2017	EREGL
56	2016-2017	FROTO
57	2016-2017	GARAN
58	2016-2017	GLYHO
59	2016-2017	ISCTR
60	2016-2017	ISGMY
61	2016-2017	KCHOL
62	2016-2017	KORDS

63	2016-2017	MGROS
64	2016-2017	NORTEL
65	2016-2017	OTKAR
66	2016-2017	PGSUS
67	2016-2017	PETKM
68	2016-2017	SAHOL
69	2016-2017	SAFGY
70	2016-2017	SISE
71	2016-2017	HALKB
72	2016-2017	TSKB
73	2016-2017	TATGD
74	2016-2017	TAVHL
75	2016-2017	TKFEN
76	2016-2017	TOASO
77	2016-2017	TUPRS
78	2016-2017	THYAO
79	2016-2017	TTKOM
80	2016-2017	TTRAK.
81	2016-2017	TCELL
82	2016-2017	ULKER
83	2016-2017	VAKBN
84	2016-2017	VESTL
85	2016-2017	VESBE
86	2016-2017	YKBNK
87	2016-2017	ZOREN
88	2017-2018	AKEN
89	2017-2018	AKBNK
90	2017-2018	AKSA
91	2017-2018	AEFES

92	2017-2018	ARCLK
93	2017-2018	ASELS
94	2017-2018	BRISA
95	2017-2018	CIMSA
96	2017-2018	CCOLA
97	2017-2018	DOHOL
98	2017-2018	DOAS
99	2017-2018	EREGL
100	2017-2018	FROTO
101	2017-2018	GARAN
102	2017-2018	ISCTR
103	2017-2018	KCHOL
104	2017-2018	KORDS
105	2017-2018	LOGO
106	2017-2018	MGROS
107	2017-2018	NORTEL
108	2017-2018	OTKAR
109	2017-2018	PGSUS
110	2017-2018	PETKIM
111	2017-2018	POLHO
112	2017-2018	SAHOL
113	2017-2018	SISE
114	2017-2018	SODA
115	2017-2018	HALKB
116	2017-2018	TSKB
117	2017-2018	TATGD

118	2017-2018	TAVHL
119	2017-2018	TKFEN
120	2017-2018	TOASO
121	2017-2018	TUPRS
122	2017-2018	THYAO
123	2017-2018	TTKOM
124	2017-2018	TTRAK
125	2017-2018	TCELL
126	2017-2018	ULKER
127	2017-2018	VAKBN
128	2017-2018	VESTL
129	2017-2018	VESBE
130	2017-2018	YKBNK
131	2017-2018	ZOREN
132	2018-2019	AKEN
133	2018-2019	AKBNK
134	2018-2019	AKSA
135	2018-2019	AKSA
136	2018-2019	ANACM
137	2018-2019	AEFES

138	2018-2019	ANEL
139	2018-2019	ARCLK
140	2018-2019	ASELS
141	2018-2019	AYGAZ
142	2018-2019	BRISA
143	2018-2019	CIMSA
144	2018-2019	CCOLA
145	2018-2019	DOHOL
146	2018-2019	DOAS
147	2018-2019	EREGL
148	2018-2019	FROTO
149	2018-2019	GARAN
150	2018-2019	GLYHO
151	2018-2019	ISCTR
152	2018-2019	KCHOL
153	2018-2019	KORDS
154	2018-2019	LOGO
155	2018-2019	MGROS
156	2018-2019	NORTEL
157	2018-2019	OTKAR

158	2018-2019	PEGSUS
159	2018-2019	PETKM
160	2018-2019	POLHO
161	2018-2019	SAHOL
162	2018-2019	SKBNK
163	2018-2019	SISE
164	2018-2019	SODA
165	2018-2019	HALKB
166	2018-2019	TSKB
167	2018-2019	TATGD
168	2018-2019	TAVHL
169	2018-2019	TKFEN
170	2018-2019	TOASO
171	2018-2019	TUPRS
172	2018-2019	THYAO
173	2018-2019	TTKOM
174	2018-2019	TTRAK
175	2018-2019	TCELL
176	2018-2019	ULKER
177	2018-2019	VAKBN

178	2018-2019	VESTL
179	2018-2019	VESBE
180	2018-2019	YKBNK
181	2018-2019	ZOREN

APPENDIX 4: CSR reporting companies having statements about women empowerment initiatives

Table 4.1 Companies Having Statements About Women Empowerment On Their Corporate Sustainability Reports

1	AKENR
---	-------

2	AKBNK
3	ANACM
4	AEFES
5	ARCLK
6	AYGAZ
7	BRISA
8	CIMSA
9	CCOLA
10	DOHOL
11	DOAS
12	FROTO
13	GARAN
14	GLYHO
15	ISCTR
16	KCHOL
17	KORDS
18	LOGO

19	MGROS
20	OTKAR
21	POLHO
22	SAHOL
23	SKBNK
24	SISE
25	SODA
26	HALKB
27	TSKB
28	TATGD
29	TAVHL
30	TKFEN
31	TOASO
32	TUPRS
33	THYAO
34	TTKOM
35	TTRAK

36	TCELL
37	ULKER
38	VAKBN
39	VESTL
40	VESBE
41	YKBNK
42	ZOREN

APPENDIX 5 : In-depth interview questionnaire

Research topics	Questions asked
Involvement in the process of CSR report preparation	Can you tell me about your experience on preparation of CSR reports, and how much

	you are involved
Motivation and strategy behind CSR reports	What is the main purpose of publishing CSR reports?
Production process of the corporate narratives on the reports	How is the process for the decision making on discourses to be published?
Their understanding of the gendered discourses	What do you think about gendered discourses?
Awareness and idea on gendered discourses produced in corporate reports	Have you seen/realised gendered discourses on CSR reports?
	Do you think that gendered discourses are produced by corporate companies within the CSR context?
	(Give examples of the gendered discourses collected from reports)What do you think about these discourses?
Reasons for producing gendered discourses	Why do you think gendered discourses are produced?
	What is the involvement of parties for the decision making on gendered discourses?
Comments on the power politics of women empowerment in corporate companies	Do you think that CSR strategies and statements of companies on women empowerment constitute and produce different (men and women) identities and

	groups?
	What do you think about statements and strategies based on genders?
	Do you think such statements and activities reproduce gendered discourses?
	Do you think such empowerment activities will be constructed until reaching gender equality?

APPENDIX 6: In-depth interview dates and durations

Table 3.6 In-depth Interview Dates and Durations

Participant	Interview Date	Duration (mins.)
Participant 1	18.05.2020	37:53
Participant 2	11.05.2020	34:14
Participant 3	18.05.2020	31:03
Participant 4	17.05.2020	34:23
Participant 5	11.05.2020	42:04
Participant 6	10.05.2020	42:40
Participant 7	10.05.2020	31:47
Participant 8	12.05.2020	36:37

**APPENDIX 7 : The content of the privacy information consent
collected from in-depth interview participants**

Consent Content
Do you agree to participate in the in-depth interview?
Please confirm that you have experience in the production process of corporate sustainability reports.
Do you accept your name and/or company information to be published in the report and thesis that will be publicly available.

APPENDIX 8: Gendered discourses collected from the CSR reports

“One of the workshops we offer especially to our women employees is the programmes for a better life training at Turkcell Academy. In this context, we provide contents such as Successful Child Raising, Work and private Life Balance, The Place of Women in Business and private Life, The Art of Being a Parent, Birth Preparation and Breathing Studies, and Being a Working Mother.” [TCELL]

“One of the main selection criteria for us while selecting our service provider companies is social competencies such as nursery opportunities provided for supporting women’s empowerment, and investment in social development projects.” [TOASO]

“The aim of this programme is to reveal the leadership archetypes that also exist in women and support women to have them used in the business environment.” [DOAS]

“In addition to providing global financing opportunities to our women entrepreneurs, we continue our support by allocating approximately 600 mio TL from company resources in 2016.” [ISCTR]

“This year we have participated in the HeForShe initiative in order to strengthen women’s labor both in our company and throughout the business world, to provide women with equal opportunities in

business life and to support women taking more place in top level management roles.” [FROTO]

“In 2015, VakıfBank European Bank for Reconstruction and development (EBRD), the European Delegation to Turkey, Labor and Social Security Ministry and Turkey jointly launched by the Business Association “Women Business to Finance and Consultancy Support Programme” is aimed to increase its role in the economy of women entrepreneurs in Turkey.” [VAKBN]

“Supporting those who trust the power of women, TSKB offers loans to women-friendly companies' investment projects with a 100 million Euro loan obtained from the French Development Agency (AFD) at the end of 2016.” [TKSB]

“Women-Friendly Companies: Capital magazine conducted a study to emphasize women's employment and encourage woman friendly companies in Turkey. Selected companies were awarded as women-friendly companies.” [DOHOL]

“We care about offering equal opportunities to all segments of society, and we take initiatives for women, disabled people and disadvantaged communities to participate in economic life as self-sufficient and happy individuals.” [TCELL]

“In addition to providing foreign financing opportunities to our women entrepreneurs, we continued our support by allocating

approximately 600 million TL from our own resources in 2016.”
[ISCTR]

“As a result of our observations and studies on gender inequality in our country, we aim to create a pioneering and transformative effect for both our company and the automotive industry by developing a project for the employment of women engineers.” [FROTO]

“With our special products we develop for women farmers, tradesmen and businesses, we provide financing for women entrepreneurs to bring their ideas to life, and we reach out to women in villages, towns and villages to increase women's entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas, and support their participation in education and workforce. In this context, we have provided more than 204 million TL of financing to approximately 4,000 women entrepreneurs with the works we have done within the scope of women's banking in the last year.”
[GARAN]

“The company steadily increases the number of female managers and female employees, and voluntarily participates in global initiatives in the field of gender equality.” [ARCLK]

“Communication technologies play an important role in reaching and mobilizing disadvantaged groups in terms of easy accessibility, budget-friendly and access capacity. Financial support to our women entrepreneurs within the framework of activating information and

communication technologies, which is one of the Global Goals for Sustainable Development in ensuring gender equality.” [TCELL]

“Internet-easy life programme provided by our company aims to contribute to the digital transformation of the country. We will offer trainings for all adults over 35 years starting with women as our priority group to develop their skills.” [TTKOM]

“As of the end of 2014, the loans we provided to women entrepreneurs, whom we see as a special customer segment in our SME Banking platform, reached 2.1 billion TL.” [GARAN]

“As in previous years, we continued to support SMEs and women entrepreneurs in 2017, while financing large-scale projects that are the basis for the development of the country with infrastructure loans.” [ISCTR]

“With special development programs such as "Design your favorite job / life", "Safe driving techniques", coaching support and volunteer mentoring, a work environment that preserves work-family life balance is created for women employees in Brisa.” [BRISA]

“In 2016, within the scope of the "I Support Gender Equality for My Country" project, we focused on the "Miracles of the Filiz" social responsibility project, which we created with the belief that women in the sectors where TürkTraktör operates, that is, can create miracles, to

raise awareness in the areas we do business and support gender equality.” [TTRAK]

“From this point of view, Garanti bank has been supporting “12 Giant Men” (A National Men's Basketball Team), “Fairies of the Pot” (A National Women's Basketball Team), ... since 2005.” [GARAN]

APPENDIX 9: Discourse references by companies

Discourse Code	Reference Company
1.1	TCELL
1.2	TOASO
1.3	DOAS
2.1	ISCRT
2.2	FROTO
2.3	VAKBN
2.4	TKSB
2.5	DOHOL
3.1	ISCTR
3.2	FROTO
3.3	GARAN
3.4	ARCLK
4.1	TCELL
4.2	TCELL
4.3	TTKOM
4.4	GARAN
4.5	ISCTR
4.6	BRISA
5.1	TTRAK
5.2	GARAN

APPENDIX 10: In-depth interview notes

Participant 1

“Sustainability strategy should be internalized by all the employees of the company. Generally there are specific teams responsible for the reporting but from bottom to top many departments are involved. Confirmation process might change depending on the companies. But in my opinion the best way to manage such reports effectively is to include top management in the process. The final confirmation should also be by the top managers of the company.”

“CSR reports should be the reflection of the operations and initiatives taken. It must include real data so that you can use it to measure the effectiveness of the investments and improve where necessary”

“Sexist discourses culturally become a part of the individual's life depending on the environment in which he lives. A child who grows up with a certain philosophy and culture cannot easily change this.”

“There is a science dealing with social psychology and unconscious inefficiency level is discussed within that science. The production of gendered discourses is the manifestation of unconsciously inefficient producers natural habits and ideas in their mind that are internalized. I don't think they aim to harm but this is a habit that needs transformation and change.”

“Initiatives should be taken starting from children for a desired change to stop the use of gendered discourses. It is not easy to change the habits of grown up people. And it is not possible to start a cultural change through the initiatives of corporate companies. But you can change the philosophy and the culture starting with children.”

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast. No matter how concrete strategies the leaders build on the way to empowering women for a more sustainable economy, the final product has the risk to be shaped by the culture. Both organizational culture and the cultural codes of the producers have an effect on the CSR initiatives. The way they are executed and the way they are presented.”

“Action and reaction rule applies once you start an initiative. The natural result of the positive discrimination initiatives and gendered discourses is the produced groups as men and women.”

Participant 2

“Involved departments prepare the report texts, and this is their responsibility to collaboratively prepare the content. It should be a team work to cover all the initiatives with concrete messages. It is not necessarily the top management to read and confirm all the texts.”

Participant 3

“The awareness on gender sensitive use of language is increasing day by day. However there still exists a sexist language. It stems from the habits and the fact that the words used for many years are embedded in our language.”

“Absolutely it creates two groups. If not they would not produce those gendered texts on the reports. They first construct the groups and then categorize the group of women under the disadvantaged, so that they can empower this disadvantaged group and label this as a social responsibility initiative. All the public relations then is built on this initiative. ”

“When a project to support women employees for their kids is spoken in a meeting, all managers clap this as it is such a good support and a good tool for communication. However the idea they hold is supporting women to stay in business life rather going back to home and taking care of their kids since this is the culturally learnt normal. They have no idea that announcing our support for women employees to be better mothers through our sustainability report, reproduces assigning the role of childcare to women.”

Participant 4

“We can not say that such gendered groupings or texts will end once gender equality in business life is reached. Besides in my opinion the the reason is since women is seen as the other and unfortunately

women is seen as a lower class in business life as well as the cultural norm is that women is responsible of taking care of the family at the first level, such gendered approaches will not end so as the gendered discourses. Not the desired equality but necessary levels of education should be provided starting from primary school so that all individuals would grow up with a gender equal mindset. Then there is a chance that production of such gendered discourses may end.”

Participant 5

“Reporting applies with this transparency rule of sustainability. The main motivation of CSR reporting should be transparency and accountability however in Turkey this is different from the general process compared globally.”

“Since the statements to be published on the report open to the public are corporate statements binding the company all has to be confirmed by the top management of the company before publication.”

“Many times I have experienced this bad experience. I have tried to inform the company representative to change the gendered discourses on the report however received the final confirmation from the company as rejection of the change.”

“It is the verbal expression of the subconscious established in patriarchal societies. Turkey also is a country with patriarchal roots and this is the reason gendered and sexist language has been

integrated into our language. It is something that is ingrained in our genetic code. As a society, we have spent 200 years in a sexist culture.”

“Contents in detail and texts are mostly overlooked by the top management. They are more focused on the data including financials, communication power and their own forewords when it comes to final check and confirmation state. The strategic term “social confirmation” is mostly used for getting the approval from the society and CSR reports are used for this target on marketing and communication by the company. The main medium of communication for sustainability investments of companies is CSR reports and one of the main motivations of companies’ for producing those reports is increasing the reputation and brand value by public relations and communication with their stakeholders and society in common. Besides I think that in Turkey most of the corporate managers are aware of gender inequality and this topic is included in their sustainability strategy. However because insufficient level of knowledge drives both the linguistic mistake and the strategic mistake of reproducing gender inequality through produced gendered discourses.”

“The process should start with performing for the outcome according to the strategy defined by the company. The priority focus areas first should be defined by the company and the report content should be prepared based on the outcomes of the initiatives and investments on the priority areas. The statements and the report basically are formed

by the data input according to the focus areas. The report should be audited by an independent company.”

“The content is not effectively discussed or worked on. Most probably what happens is pasting the copied texts from previous year’s report again. I haven’t seen or experienced any report preparation that, the involved parties from the company saves necessary time and pays the necessary attention to prepare texts, or to read and comment or discuss the texts with us. Since this sustainability report is not their priority, the reason may be that they overlook and do not notice the gendered or sexist sayings in the discourses or texts.”

Participant 6

“For global companies, it used to be a necessity for financial investment opportunities, but nowadays CSR reporting is also seen as a social investment by the companies. Increasing awareness of the consumers and the increase in information technologies is triggering companies for social investments. As well companies takes the chance to report on sustainability for competition.

“Since the report should include a story behind the strategies, consultancy companies or the agencies has the role of constructing this story during the preparation. All companies aim to disclose the ‘good’, the ‘better’, and this is where the story is in action.”

Participant 7

“Since we are from a patriarchal culture and society as a country, men has always been privileged and this has reflected the language we use.”

“Since there is a belief in our business culture that women are seen as the second class, other, disadvantaged group, most of the companies use this belief and invest in supporting women so that they can get a good reputation from the public as well as support sustainability strategies. However supporting women and diversity is important, but using this as a pr material to differentiate from competitors is the wrong part of it”

Participant 8

“An average of %80 of the texts are prepared by the third party agency.”

“Most of the time journalists are interested in popular news instead of social good and sustainability values of the topic with facts. And journalists do not change the texts on either reports or press releases and prepare their articles from the copied discourses from the reports.”

“Journalists usually take out the popular parts of the statements on the reports as they see more value in popular statements rather than effective data. They don't give importance to the results or the investment amount of a CSR project rather choose the statements that

would get more attention from the readers. Best example would be the dog story. It is never good news for a journalist if a dog bites a person, but it is always good news if a man bites a dog. And most of the time they do not question the facts, nor change the texts. That is why during consumption of the texts journalists use the main text without interpretation and convey the message directly. This maintains the reproduction of gender equality through the use and spreading of gendered discourses by different mediums.”



IKSAD
Publishing House



ISBN:978-625-8423-88-4