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**The Advertised, the Deceived, the Silenced, and the Avoided:**

**Organizational discourses on equality, diversity and inclusion in the Turkish context**

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**Abstract**

This study investigates the organizational discourses on equality, diversity and inclusion in Turkey – a highly relevant, yet understudied context. More specifically, we combine the arguments by discourse analysis and institutional theory to scrutinize how societal power relations in the Turkish context are (re)produced at the workplace. Based on our findings from website analyses and interviews with EDI actors, we present a conceptual framework that portrays the social construction of EDI subjects at work, along the dimensions of legitimized acceptance and political instrumentalization. Therewith, this study sheds light on EDI at the intersection of its institutional and political environment and provides directions for future research on contextualizing EDI.

**Keywords:**

Inclusion, diversity, equality, discourse, Turkey

**Introduction**

Ironically, research on equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) is “not very diverse” (Jonsen et al., 2011: 35) but is rather dominated by the lens of “Western” concepts (Findler et al., 2007; Tang et al., 2015) and tends to overlook the role of the broader societal context in the “making of inclusion” (Ortlieb and Sieben, 2014). Yet, a contextualization of EDI is critical to understand how (context-specific) social structures and power relations are reproduced in the workplace (Ahonen et al., 2014; Calas et al, 2009; Proudford and Nkomo, 2006). Further, context-sensitive analyses are needed to explain why EDI efforts often fail to be transferred to other countries (Kemper et al., 2016; Nishii and Özbilgin, 2007; Prasad et al., 2010). Several critical diversity scholars have previously used discourse analysis as a methodological philosophy (e.g. Calas et al, 2009; Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012) that allows to analyze EDI rhetoric in context (e.g. Cukier et al, 2017; Klarsfeld, 2009; Mahadevan and Kilian-Yasin, 2017; Meriläinen et al., 2009). However, while these earlier context-specific analyses of EDI discourses immensely contributed to a much needed contextualization of EDI discourses, many fell short on explaining *how* the context matters (Ahonen et al., 2014).

We attempt to address this gap by combining arguments from discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003; Foucault, 1984) and institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Meyer and Rowan, 1977) when investigating the organizational EDI discourses in Turkey. More specifically, by analyzing the relationships among discourse and institutions (Phillips et al., 2004), we scrutinize how the Turkish context reproduces societal power relations in Turkish workplaces. Based on our analysis, we present a two-dimensional framework to explain the social construction of EDI subjects along legitimized acceptance at work (Tatli, 2011) and political instrumentalization (Ferdman, 2018).

This study seeks to make the following contributions: First, we follow the calls for more context-specific analyses of EDI (Farndale et al., 2015; Jonsen et al, 2011; Klarsfeld et al., 2016a, 2016b) and show how inclusion is not per se a uniform ideal promoted across different contexts. Second, we provide a more thorough analysis of the context and demonstrate how EDI discourses relate to power and politics (Ahonen et al., 2014; Bendl et al., 2014; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2011). In particular, we develop a framework that puts legitimacy and politics in direct relation to each other. Finally, with Turkey we chose a non-Western country whose EDI discourses are of particular relevance in light of its recent internal political developments. Given the centralization of power around the country’s president including the silencing of the opposition (Parkinson and Peker, 2016) and the growing influence of religion on the state (Gözaydın, 2008; Somer, 2015), we argue that shedding light on EDI in Turkey is an urgent matter and asks for the global community’s attention.

**Diffusion of equality, diversity, and inclusion discourses**

As the latest discursive trend in EDI research, attention has shifted from ‘diversity’ to ‘inclusion’ in recent years (Oswick and Noon, 2014). Following the normative goal to become inclusive, organizations seek to provide an inclusive climate and inclusive practices that encourages contributions by all employees, regardless of their background and appearance (for a review see Shore et al., 2018). From a critical perspective however, the essence of the inclusion concept – that *everybody* feels appreciated and valued – has been criticized for promoting a blindness to differences that was already found to be problematic during the era of the equal opportunity ideology, specifically in the USA of the 1960s (Nkomo and Hoobler, 2014). Thus, critical scholars view inclusive organizations as sensitive to historical inequalities, existing power relations and hence, as actors that put in efforts into changing the status quo (Dobusch, 2017).

However, there seems to be an agreement across diversity scholars that all three concepts – equality, diversity and inclusion – are “distinctive and temporally embedded approaches to addressing aspects of under-representation and discrimination in the workplace” (Oswick and Noon, 2014: 24). Further, the discourses on equality, diversity, and inclusion have been described as “competing discourses” with potentially “different representational and political consequences” (Ahonen et al., 2014: 271). To account for these potential differences and parallels in conceptualizations and consequences, we consider all three concepts in the present study, i.e. equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and their related discourses in Turkey.

A basic assumption of discourse analysis is that “discourse transmits and produces power” (Foucault, 1984: 100). Hence, a critical reflection of EDI discourses in organizations is particularly relevant because it reveals how organizational language sustains and recreates established patterns and existing power relations, with material consequences for people. To develop a more refined understanding of how organizational discourse on EDI infuses relationships between identities and power in organizations with ideology, many critical diversity scholars adopted discourse analysis as a methodological philosophy (e.g. Metcalfe and Woodhams, 2012; Zanoni and Janssens, 2015).

In particular, several researchers used discourse analysis to investigate how EDI rhetoric is adapted and plays out in countries outside the USA, for example, in France (Klarsfeld, 2009), Finland (Meriläinen et al., 2009), in UK (Tatli, 2011), Canada (Cukier et al, 2016), Portugal (Barbosa and Cabral-Cardoso, 2010), Sweden (Kalonaityte, 2009), or Germany (Mahadevan and Kilian-Yasin, 2017). For instance, Meriläinen et al. (2009) analyzed the discourse on Finnish corporate websites and showed how the diversity discourse in Finnish companies has institutionalized gender equality, but silenced inequalities based on race or ethnicity. They further explain how “ethnic homogeneity combined with the strong tradition of full-time labor force participation for both sexes provides a particular vantage point for the Finnish case” (Meriläinen et al., 2009: 234).

In order to explain how the context matters for EDI discourses (Ahonen et al., 2014; Prasad et al. 2010), we draw on the core idea of neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Kostova et al., 2008; Meyer and Rowan, 1977; Scott, 1995), namely that an organization’s survival is dependent on its legitimacy – the “generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions” (Suchman, 1995: 574). In order to acquire legitimacy, organizations adapt to their institutional environment, and therewith facilitate the diffusion of organizational structures, practices, and language. Importantly, being conceptualized as such “institutions are not just social constructions but social constructions constituted through discourse” (Phillips et al., 2004: 638). This view highlights the importance of power and politics in institutional processes (see also, Bendl et al., 2014; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2011) and puts organizational discourse in a central role, mirroring institutional pressures that shape it and that helps constructing it at the same time (Phillips et al., 2004).

**EDI in the Turkish context**

In Turkey, discrimination and unequal treatment of minorities is prohibited by the country’s constitution. According to Article 10; “everyone is equal before the law without distinction as to language, race, color, sex, political opinion, philosophical belief, religion and sect, or any such grounds’ (Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 1982). Only in 2004, it was added that ‘men and women have equal rights’. Article 5 of the Turkish Labor Act (2003) is the country’s most extensive provision on the prohibition of discrimination at the workplace and covers the same dimensions as the Constitution. Additionally, Turkey has ratified International Labor Organization conventions (e.g., C111 – Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation) and international regulations from the United Nations (e.g., the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW). Furthermore, as a candidate country, Turkey has revised its labor legislation based on various European Union directives (e.g., Directive 2002/73/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women) in order to prevent discrimination at the workplace. However, scholars report that, in practice, EDI considerations are not very common in Turkish companies (Özyaka et al., 2008; Sürgevil and Budak, 2008) and rarely go beyond the legal requirements (Gündoğdu, 2016). At the same time, MNCs seem to play a leading role in pushing the debate and the diffusion of EDI in Turkey (e.g. Acar Erdur and Sayılar, 2017 ; Özbilgin et al.,2010).

The most openly discussed issue of EDI at work in Turkey, is gender-based discrimination. For example, in an effort to promote gender equality, the “Equality at Work Platform” was created in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF) under the auspices of Turkey’s Ministry of Family and Social Policies in 2013. However, still in 2017, female labor force participation rate was 33.8%, with a 29.3% share of women in employment (TURKSTAT, 2017). Further, like most other countries, Turkey is facing a gender pay gap, yet, unlike most other countries, the Global Gender Gap Report ranked Turkey as 130st out of 144 countries in 2018 (an even worse position compared to 2006, when the country ranked 105th).

Also with regards to people with disabilities (PWD) (6,9 % or the country’s population) (TURKSTAT, 2013) Turkey implemented legislative requirements and signed international conventions, for instance, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that was adopted in 2006. More specifically, within the scope of Article 30 of the Labor Law No. 4857; employers with fifty or more workers are obliged to employ 3% PWD (4% in the public sector), consistent with their occupational skills, physical and mental capacities. However, approximately 92.5% of employable PWD are still unemployed in Turkey (TMMOB, 2018).

Considering religion, freedom of religion and conscience is guaranteed by the Turkish Constitution and stated explicitly in a separate Article 24. Apart from that, Article 5 of the Labor Act protects employees against religious discrimination. Nevertheless, discrimination at the workplace is reported towards distinct religious groups such as Alevis (e.g. Alp and Taştan, 2011; Uygur et al., 2015) and against people showing religious symbols such as headscarves (e.g. Tanyeri-Erdemir et al., 2013).

Ethnic minorities are one of the less legally protected minority groups in Turkey. Ethnicity is not mentioned explicitly in any of the regulations on the prohibition of discrimination (Çarkoğlu and Toprak, 2006). Several studies report that Kurds, as largest ethnic minority group in Turkey with nearly 18% of the population (Konda, 2011), are forced to work under poor conditions and with low wages (e.g. Alp and Taştan, 2010). There are also studies stating that Romani people are exposed to discrimination at the workplace in Turkey (Marsh, 2008) and their unemployment rates are nearly 85% (Sıfır Ayrımcılık, 2015).

The least legally protected minority groups in Turkey are LGBT+ individuals. The fact that Article 5 of Turkish Labor Act does not explicitly include sexual orientation or gender identity prevents them benefiting sufficiently from the protection against discrimination (Güner et al., 2011). In fact, scholars have attested Turkey a “heterosexist culture of hate” towards the LGBT+ community (e.g., Özturk, 2011).

**Methods**

***Data collection***

As we seek to provide holistic and contextualized insights into the nature of organizational EDI discourses we combine different sources of data in our research approach (for a similar approach, see Klarsfeld, 2009). First, we analyze 19 company websites to provide an overview of the diffusion of concepts and diversity dimensions in the Turkish corporate world. Second, we use nine qualitative interviews with EDI actors to help us develop a deeper understanding of the broader context and how this relates to the social construction of EDI and related dimensions.

Company websites are important channels for companies to communicate with their external stakeholders and to present themselves. Previous studies show how the textual material displayed on corporate website is a useful source when analysing how EDI issues are (re)constructed and how they mirror the power relations in a society (Benschop and Meihuizen 2002; Meriläinen et al. 2009; Singh and Point 2006). Inspired by Meriläinen et al. (2009), we selected large Turkish companies (in terms of revenue) including companies from various industries and with national and multinational orientation. In total, 19 Turkish companies were identified based on the “DS100 – Top 100 Companies of the OIC Countries” – a ranking of the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Conference (see Table 1).

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Insert Table 1 about here

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We proceeded as follows to obtain the analyzed text material. First, we started off reading the subsections of the websites on career and/or human resources in order to explore how companies portray the way they deal with their own employees. However, in the course of screening the websites, we realized that many Turkish companies specify their approach towards their employees in subsections on sustainability or corporate social responsibility (CRS). Following methodological contextualization (Marschan-Piekkari and Welch, 2004; Welch and Piekkari, 2017), we included texts from these sections into our analysis as this seemed appropriate for the Turkish context. Second, in addition to the website texts, we also accessed sustainability or CRS reports and analyzed the sections on employees or human resources within these reports. When no sustainability or CSR report existed, we accessed annual reports instead. We always used the most recent version of the report, preferably in English in order to provide transparency for non-Turkish speaking readers of the paper. However, in some cases the English version was outdated, so that we referred to the Turkish version instead.

In order to further contextualize our findings from the website analysis, we conducted nine semi-structured interviews with different EDI actors in Turkey. First, we interviewed actors from the Turkish employer side, more specifically two representatives from professional associations of HR managers and one head of department of an employer representation. The selection was based on the assumption that these interviewees are rather close to the mainstream organizational discourse and might be reproducing it (Zanoni and Janssens, 2004), i.e. reflecting and further feeding our results. Second, we conducted interviews with actors whose perspectives on the mainstream organizational discourse and EDI practices are somewhat more distanced. More specifically, we interviewed three HR managers from foreign multinational companies (MNCs) (headquartered in Germany, France and UK) and three program managers from non-governmental EDI organizations who work towards improving human rights and the conditions of particular minority groups at the workplace. EDI organizations as well as MNCs are highly pro-active in advocating the value of diversity in organizations and society in Turkey (Özbilgin et al., 2010) and may thus contribute different perspectives and reflections that go beyond the reproduction of dominant discourses.

Interviews were executed by all members of the research team and were conducted in English or Turkish depending on the language skills of interviewer and interviewee. The interview guideline included questions on the personal background of the interviewee, the role of the organization for promoting EDI issues and the Turkish context of EDI. The latter section covered questions on, for instance, the public discourse on EDI, governmental and organizational programs and practices, and the perceived relevance and meaning of different diversity dimensions.

***Data analysis***

All collected material from the websites as well as interview transcripts were then imported into the software NVivo to help us code and structure the large amount of text. Following critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003; Foucault, 1984), we explored the representations of meaning conveyed through the texts, whilst being sensitive to aspects of power in that we moved “back and forth between text and social and political formations” (Cukier et al., 2016:1037).

In a first step, we sought to get an overview over the concepts and diversity dimensions used on the corporate websites (illustrated in Table 2 for each company). While we coded deductively for the more general concepts specifically looking for notions of “equality” or “equal opportunities” and “diversity (management)” and “inclusion”, we coded inductively for the different diversity dimensions in order to mirror the wording used by the companies and to display which dimensions are more or less visible in the discourse. That way we were also sensitive to themes that remained invisible on the website – following scholars who suggest that silences are an important part of the discourse, especially to understand its power effects (e.g. Benschop and Meihuizen 2002; Meriläinen et al., 2009).

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Insert Table 2 about here

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In a second step, we analyzed the discourse that appeared around the concepts and diversity dimensions in more depth. For instance, we paid specific attention to the location of statements about EDI (e.g. career site vs. CSR site) because this tells us something about the target group of these statements and how topics are understood and conveyed by the company (Singh and Point, 2006). Furthermore, we sought to understand underlying problematizations (i.e., how a subject is constructed as a problem) and rationalitizations (i.e., how companies justify their approach) (Vaara et al., 2004). In doing so, we paid specific attention to the various diversity dimensions and the ways in which they were constructed in the texts.

In a third and final step, we included the interviews in our analysis and coded them with the same code system as developed in the website analysis, i.e. according to “equality”/”equal opportunities”, “diversity and “inclusion” and according the diversity dimensions specified in Table 2. This enabled us to compare different statements around the same discourse across interviewees and website material and helped us provide contextually embedded interpretations. This approach proved to be particularly useful to enlighten our analysis around topics or dimensions that remained invisible or silent on the websites.

**Results**

This section is structured into two parts. In the first part, we elaborate on our findings on EDI concepts while the second part is focussed on the social construction of various diversity dimensions.

***Organizational discourse on EDI concepts***

The organizational discourse on Turkish websites is very much dominated by the notions of equality or equal opportunities – 16 out of 19 companies refer to these concepts whilst the remaining three companies are completely silent about EDI issues. At the same time, large parts of the analyzed texts are based on CSR or sustainability reports indicating that the underlying rationale of Turkish companies to deal with equal opportunities is their social and moral responsibility. Furthermore, the discourse on equal opportunities is very much interconnected to and problematized through the notions of non/anti-discrimination. For example, İşbank’s approach is explained under the heading “Equal Opportunity and Diversity”:

“Equal opportunity and diversity form the foundation of İşbank’s corporate culture. This foundation is based on non-discrimination towards employees regarding factors such as gender, religion, political views, race, culture or social origins from the recruitment process to human resources applications” (İşbank, sustainability report 2017: 57).

It is interesting to note that İşbank mentions diversity in the heading, but only refers to it indirectly by speaking of the different “factors” and does not elaborate on its meaning or how it is managed. Mentioning diversity in the heading or as a standardized criteria for global reporting standards (e.g., Vakıfbank) seems to be common practice on the websites of the investigated companies. However, the notion of diversity remains rather detached from the subsequent text that is mostly about ensuring equal opportunities and preventing discrimination. In contrast to this, only very few companies elaborate on their understanding of diversity and those who do, embed their arguments in a business rationale. One example is Koç Holding who declare the following in their sustainability report:

“Diversity and inclusion cover many dimensions, but all are good for business. Diverse organizations outperform those that are less well-balanced. And organizations where everyone feels valued have higher employee engagement scores, which in turns results in higher productivity.” (Koç Holding, sustainability report 2017: 31).

These statements show how Koç Holding makes a strong case for diversity arguing that diversity is a competitive advantage that goes along with better performance. Furthermore, they are one out of the three companies in our sample that also refer to inclusion – a concept that seems to be widely under-represented in the discourse on corporate websites in Turkey at this point in time. The other two companies mentioning inclusion are Erdemir and Enka: Erdemir talks more broadly about the development of an inclusive organization through values like respect and trust with the aim to ensure that all employees may bring in their full potential. Enka relates inclusion more directly to people with diverse backgrounds and that they should be valued and treated fairly, connecting this discourse to cross-cultural communication and the international orientation of the company. As such, the discourse and rationalizations around inclusion seem to be rather heterogeneous depending on the company’s approach and international orientation.

Drawing from our interviews with EDI actors, we found support for these interpretations, especially when it comes to the international orientation of a company. For instance, one HR manager from an MNC explained:

“Companies, especially if they have international connections, mention diversity within their code of ethics. Because they have to show [to their international partners] that they respect employees' rights, that they treat their employees equally, that they do not discriminate against language, religion, gender, etc.” (HR manager, MNC 2).

This quotations illustrates how Turkish companies with an international scope of action are influenced by their international cooperation partners and may feel more pressure to show that they adhere to “international business norms where (…) diversity is seen as a strength” (Koç Holding, sustainability report 2017: 31).

**Organizational discourse on diversity dimensions and their social construction**

Table 3 illustrates the frequency and wording of the diversity dimension as used on the corporate websites. In the left column, we specify the heading under which we summarize and contrast related dimensions in the following section[[1]](#footnote-1).

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Insert Table 3 about here

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***Gender***

‘Gender’ clearly dominates the organizational EDI discourse in Turkey as it is mentioned by all companies from our sample. This discourse is largely shaped by a problematization around the low labor market participation of women and how it can be increased. While several companies only mention the share of women employees within their workforce without further elaborating on the topic, others – above all Koç Holding - document their efforts in more detail by mentioning respective practices (e.g. mentoring, talent management), initiatives, and declarations that they have implemented and signed to enhance the inclusion of women in the workplace and increase their share in managerial roles (e.g., Declaration of Equality of Work by the Turkish Ministry for Family and Social Policies). However, the discourse around gender and women’s employment is closely intertwined with the dimensions ‘family status’, ‘pregnancy’ and ‘marital status’. Interestingly, marital status was mentioned explicitly by two companies (Enka and Turkcell) who emphasized that no discrimination occurs based on this category. Yet, the fact that this is mentioned at all indicates that this dimension has a certain relevance in the Turkish context as also reflected in the following statement by Doğuş Holding:

“(…) a mentoring program was initiated in order to draw attention to the importance of gender equality at workplace. The aim of this program is to support our female employees, wearing a spouse, mother and manager hat, to climb the career ladder quickly in Doğuş Holding and our subsidiaries”(Doğuş Holding, sustainability report, 2015:33)

As such, women employees are socially constructed in their role as spouses with additional obligations that must to be balanced in accordance with the requirements on the job. In addition to that, those companies that elaborate further on their gender equality efforts view women in their reproductive role as mothers and for instance, offer lactation rooms, child development seminars for mothers, child care services and flexible work arrangement. As an exception, Sabanci Holding relates ‘maternity’ also to men and mentioning that “the rate of male employees who completed their maternity leave and came back to work is 100%” (Sabancı Holding, sustainability report 2017:23). However, besides the somewhat confusing terminology, we could not find any information on how long this ‘maternity leave’ for men is or how many men actually made use of this opportunity.

The dominance of gender issues and especially women’s labor market participation is also reflected in our interviews. All the interviewees suggest that this dimension enjoys priority by companies, but also by their own organizations. Some interview partners referred to economic pressure and untapped potential of women to rationalize this prioritization, for instance, one representative from a professional association of HR managers explained that

“As a human resources association our aim is to develop human resources capability of Turkey. That’s why we focus on the other half of our human resources who are female and they have great potential, but we are not benefiting from this potential. Most of time when they get married, when they have a baby, they may stop working for the company or when the promotion is an issue employers prefer to promote the male partner instead of females. (…) that’s why we chose gender equality rather than age or ethnicity or other things.” (representative, professional association 1)

This quotation not only illustrates the reasons for prioritizing gender over other dimensions, but reflects how the interconnection of gender and maternity/marital status as discussed above is also reproduced by interviewees on the Turkish employer side. However, program managers from EDI organizations focus more on the social embeddedness of gender-related inequalities and for instance, emphasize that a higher employment rate of women in the labor market is not the cure-all:

“Yes, we definitely need more women in the labor market. But it does not necessarily mean that you have more women in the labor market with empowerment. (…) So in our society, we have many cases where the woman is the only breadwinner of the family, but they take the money, their salary, and give it to their husband or their dads or their brothers or whatever, the male figures. And they do not even have a voice or say on how this money will be spent. (…) we have to find another base and mechanisms to empower her on a social basis, on the power relations within the society and within the family.” (program manager, EDI organization 3)

This quotation suggests that women are politically and economically instrumentalized in their role to serve others. Therefore, the organizational discourse on gender is centred around the paradox of increasing women’s employment and economic independency while preventing this from colliding with women’s socially prescribed roles as mother and dependent wife.

***Age***

Age is mentioned on ten of the analyzed corporate websites. The discourse around age is very much shaped by the relationship between younger and more senior employees and several companies describe the need for specific efforts to ensure harmony between these groups. For example, Turkcell who state that they have recruited 225 young talented people in 2017 declares that this process is managed through the leadership development and mentoring program that has the following objective:

“We aimed to create a synergy with information sharing by mentoring at the level of CXO [= corporate executives] and General Manager to the young generation under the age of 27 with the reverse mentality process which we have put into practice this year and call it as GNCMNTR [= genç mentor; Turkish for ‘young mentor’] ” (Turkcell, sustainability report 2017:43).

This statement reflects that companies see the need to facilitate a better dialogue between generations with a special emphasis on younger employees. According to our understanding, the “reverse mentality process” suggests that the mentality within the organization needs to be changed towards embracing the values of younger people. Furthermore, they gave the program an abbreviated name omitting all vowels, presumably to sound appealing to the young target group.

These interpretations are broadly reflected in the statements from interviewees representing the Turkish employer side. For instance, one interviewee summarizes as follows:

“There is a Gen X that is trying to understand the Gen Y. We give trainings to explain the generations and differences between them (…) there is a serious effort to include them in business life and create satisfaction for them by carrying out flexible practices that will respond to their communication styles, working styles etc..” (representative, professional association 2)

This quote illustrates how generational differences in values are problematized and how potential solutions are suggested with a special emphasis to please the younger generation. At the same time, more senior employees are largely neglected in the discourse.

***Religion***

‘Religion’ or related dimensions are mentioned by nine companies on their corporate websites. In several instances, companies use the term ‘belief’ or ‘faith’ in addition to, or instead of religion. In one case a company speaks of ‘sect’. One possible explanation for this variety in the wording is that Turkey is rather homogeneous when it comes to religion as 99% of the population are Muslim, while there are different religious groups and variations in the extent to which this religion is practiced or not (Çarkoğlu and Toprak, 2006; Gözaydın, 2008; Kayabaş and Kütküt, 2011). The term “belief” is broader in a sense that is may capture these variation and address the protection of a large variety of people from discrimination. Yet, the corporate websites remain silent with regards to who actually needs protection and what they do to eliminate exclusionary tendencies towards certain groups.

Our interviewees provide further insights into these questions and explain how religion needs to be contextualized in Turkey. One interview partner from an EDI organization suggested:

“Turkey is a place that is subject to heavy censorship mechanisms, and when you look at the education curriculum, it is very strictly constrained by the norms of Turkishness-Sunninism-heterosexuality, meaning it does not allow any identities other than Sunni-Muslim.” (program manager, EDI organization 1)

This quotation indicates that being a Sunni-Muslim is the societal norm and that deviations from that norm are less accepted. One HR manager from an MNC shared his experiences with how norm deviations are perceived:

“The headquarters of the MNCs can have diversity projects, but here [in Turkey] problems may arise – even based on the appearance reflecting religious variations. For example one of our female employees was labelled as Alevi because of the style of her hair knit and she was obviously excluded by other employees. Or round-bearded males, they may also become ‘the unwanted’. So in Turkey, you cannot do certain things even if you want to. Because we [people in Turkey] can't accept these things, everybody is polarizing between different groups.” (HR manager, MNC 2)

As such, differentiation occurs along visible religious symbols that signal the belongingness to a specific religious group and may lead to exclusion of those who seem to deviate from the Sunni norm. However, representatives of the Turkish employer side and HR managers from MNCs also pointed out that differentiations are not only made based on different religious groups, but also based on the extent to which the religion is actually practiced. Our interviewees suggested that on the one hand, there are more conservative people who have a certain idea of how “a real Muslim should behave” (head of department, employer representative) and on the other hand, there are people, in particular so called ‘white collar people’, who see religious symbols like a headscarf as a threat to secularism. This becomes particularly evident in the following statement from a HR manager:

“If I recruit someone with a headscarf, even if her educational level and competencies are good enough, I will damage social peace within my company. Here, as HR manager, I also have the task to protect social peace within the company. I think that our corporate culture does not accept and endure this. Why? Because the headscarf is used as a political symbol mostly and I know that most of our white-collar employees are against that use of symbol. So the issue here is what is acceptable within the social environment.” (HR manager, MNC 1)

These quotations demonstrate that religion and especially visible religious symbols are a highly politicized and contested issue in the Turkish society and fuel the debates on the intersections of political ideologies, education, and class.

***Disability***

Out of 16 companies only seven mention ‘disability’ (often in combination with ‘physical’ or ‘mental’) and one mentions ‘health status’ as a dimension to be protected from discrimination. Yet, only few companies specify how many PWD work in their company and none explain what steps they take to improve the situation for them within the organization. Furthermore, there is the extremely exclusive case of Halkbank who specify certain ‘qualifications’ based on which they recruit employees, among others, the following:

“Except for those who will be employed within the scope of the requirements set out by the Labor Law on the employment of disabled persons, being in good health as required by the position of employment and not having any mental or physical disabilities that may prevent the individual from doing permanent work in any part of Turkey.” (Halkbank, annual report 2017: 106)

Through this statement, Halkbank clearly signals that the underlying rationale of dealing with disability is merely the need to comply with the law. Furthermore, they are problematizing PWD in way that neglects their capabilities to engage in work. Although such explicit statements about the exclusion of PWD are an exception, the organizational discourse around disability in other Turkish companies seems to be rather exclusive, too, but in a more subtle way. For instance, Turkcell and Sabancı Holding, more specifically Sabanci foundation, initiated projects on the ‘social inclusion’ and ‘disabled rights’, however, they do not relate this to their own organization and workplace inclusion for PWD. As such, issues around disability are framed as a social problem that should be solved through donations and philanthropic actions while being detached from the corporate world and working life.

In the interviews, disability was not a very controversial issue in a sense that everyone framed the exclusion of PWD as a problem, for instance, one interviewee from a professional association of HR managers explained:

“When I entered this association, I saw how big their [PWD] problems are. Because, they cannot find people to talk to, little attention is paid to their problems, they do not actually appear in social life. I used to act just for obeying the rules of the state for disabled workers. But after I started working in this association, I started to give them a chance, and I saw that they can do a really good job. Creating accessible workplaces and matching these people with the right jobs can work very well” (representative, professional association 2).

This quotation reflects a certain change in mind set from the mere compliance with laws towards a more proactive approach reflecting a more positive framing of workplace inclusion of PWD. In a similar vein, one of the program managers of an EDI organization emphasized that problems still exist, but suggesting that different actors are working on improvements:

“So, I mean, and none of them, very limited number of companies are really disabled friendly. So for them [PWD] it is difficult to find a job first and it is difficult to go to a job by using public transport and even find a decent place for them in the companies, you know. So we have several attempts to work on that. And it is definitely in our program. We will be doing something on this, with the different ministries.” (program manager, EDI organization 3)

She continues to elaborate on different programs they have implemented to enhance the inclusion of workers with disability in the labor market. Interestingly, this is done in cooperation with governmental bodies, supporting the notion that a more general political and societal support for the inclusion of PWD exists and is rather undisputed in the Turkish context, despite remaining challenges.

***Ethnicity***

Dimensions we arranged under the thematic umbrella of ‘ethnicity’ are rather diverse and cover - beyond ‘ethnicity/ethnic origin’ - also ‘race’, ‘language’, ‘nationality’, ‘color’ and ‘culture’. Turkish Airline even mentions several of these dimensions in a row emphasizing the value they see in employees coming from “diverse cultures and various countries” (Turkish Airlines, sustainability report 2017: 86). This discourse is more about employees of different nationalities and how this creates advantages for an internationally operating company. However, when it comes to certain ethnic groups living in Turkey, there is silence on the websites.

Interview partners of the Turkish employer side mirror and partly reproduce this silence. For instance, one of the representatives from a professional association explained that they do not see the danger of discrimination based on ethnic origin:

“Yes, in Turkey we have minorities. Kurdish people we have, Laz people Çerkez people and several people here, but when we are promoting someone or providing a job we do not care their minority, their ethnicity. We just say he is a good fit or not. We are not interested in their ethnic roots, so again I will repeat that the main diversity issue is that unfortunately females are not provided equal rights.” (representative, professional association 1)

These perspectives from the Turkish employer side stand in sharp contrast to the statement of interviewees from MNCs and EDI organizations. All interviewees from EDI organizations see severe discrimination of certain ethnic groups:

“But when it comes to the discrimination based on ethnicity, it receives also a higher public attention, but not always very progressively, from a very nationalistic perspective. We hear so many cases that Kurdish workers are isolated, are marginalised at the workplaces, are even harassed by other Turkish workers because they are Kurdish” (program manager, EDI organization 3).

All interviewed HR managers from MNCs explained that these problems are deliberately neglected in companies due to their political sensitivity, especially when it comes to Kurdish people, for instance:

“Due to the internal situation in Turkey we cannot do certain things. For example, because of the situation of the Kurds, etc... We need to be very sensitive there. We're trying not to get into that issue to avoid the reaction. I mean, how to say, we need to be on the safe side there.” (HR manager, MNC 3)

This quote indicates that even HR managers from MNCs refrain from addressing issues around ethnicity because they are “politically dangerous” (HR manager, MNC 1).

To sum up, the discourse around ethnicity is highly complex and multi-layered and takes various forms depending on the political sensitivity of the topic in question.

***LGBT+***

Sexual orientation is one of the least visible dimensions on the companies’ websites. Only three companies, namely Enka, Koç Holding and Turkcell, list ‘sexual orientation’ or ‘sexual tendency’ as one dimension they do not discriminate against. However, they do not go beyond listing this aspect and remain silent about measures or specific practices. Furthermore, gender identity is not included as a relevant category to begin with, but instead ignored altogether in the organizational discourse. This finding is mirrored in the interviews with experts from employer representatives and professional associations of HR managers who remain rather silent about this topic. However, one HR manager from an MNC talked more openly about these issues and explained the silence as follows:

“In Western cultures, it is no problem to talk about your sexual orientation, but this is not like that in our society. (…) in Turkey, this issue is a taboo, a social sensitivity. In fact, it is difficult to employ someone who reveals his or her sexual orientation not only in our company, but also for all companies in Turkey. You can say social rejection, unacceptance.” (HR manager, MNC 2).

That this topic and the situation of LGBT+ people is widely neglected in the Turkish context is also supported by the interviews with the program managers from the EDI organization. One of them explained:

“I mean, this LGBT issue is seen as kind of abnormal by so many people and by the public institutions. (…) no one really accepts that there is an LGBT issue. (…) They [LGBT+ people] are really more and more vulnerable compared to, for example, women, compared to disabled people because the bias and the prejudice against them is huge because we are living in a very, let us say, conservative country. (…) and they see them as a kind of really/ they should be excluded from the society and they should live in a very isolated way.” (program manager, EDI organization 3)

Further, the program manager from the EDI organization specifically working to improve the rights of LGBT+ people provides several examples of how this topic is tabooed in the public discourse. For instance, she referred to a politician who always said ‘excuse me’ before using the word ‘lesbian’ or ‘gay’ in a speech or explained that in the seminars of certain, more conservative universities in Turkey, you could not use the word ‘homosexuality’ explicitly. She further elaborates on severe problems LGBT+ people face as they are frequently victims of hate crimes and openly discriminated in the labor market and in political life (e.g., the AKP openly stated that they do not nominate homosexuals).

**Discussion**

In this study we combined the methodological philosophy of discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003; Foucault, 1984) with institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Meyer and Rowan, 1977) in order to provide insights on how societal power relations in the Turkish context are (re)produced at the workplace. Just looking at the numbers of our website analysis, we found that, out of 19 companies, three remain entirely silent about EDI issues, four refer to equality alone, 12 mention diversity (mostly in combination with equality), and three mention inclusion, out of which only one actually explained what they mean by this. Whereas only very few companies elaborate on their understanding of EDI concepts, this count demonstrates that, the labels of equality and diversity are being adopted by most of the here targeted companies, but inclusion is not (yet) part of the mainstream organizational discourse in Turkey.

Most importantly, we found great differences in the way diversity dimensions are socially constructed and, more specifically, how individuals with different socio-demographic identities are reproduced as subjects in subordinate ways (Zanoni et al., 2017; Zanoni and Janssens, 2015; Zanoni et al., 2010). Based on these findings from the Turkish context and our theoretical framing, we suggest a two-dimensional framework (see Figure 1) that portrays a web of power arrangements and subject positions by showing how EDI subjects are legitimized and politically instrumentalized in context.

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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The first dimension, *legitimized acceptance at work,* reflects the extent to which EDI subjects are legitimated to access organizations and to effectively participate as members of these organizations (De Clercq & Voronov, 2009; Tatli, 2011). This is grounded in the assumption that whether or not people enjoy legitimized acceptance at work is reflected in organizational discourses that in turn mirror a society’s norms and values, cognitive frames and regulations, i.e., the institutional environment (Meriläinen et al., 2009; Phillips et al., 2004; Prasad et al., 2010). The second dimension, *political instrumentalization*, refers to the political nature of EDI in context (Bendl et al., 2014; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2011; Phillips et al., 2004). In particular, it reflects the extent to which EDI discourses and their subjects are used as an instrument to serve the agenda of political decision makers (e.g. Ferdman, 2018). Based on these two dimensions and their interrelation, we identified four different positions of socially constructed EDI subjects. In the following, we elaborate on these positions and their underlying dimensions.

*The Deceived.* At the intersection of high political instrumentalization and high legitimized acceptance, we located *the Deceived.* In the Turkish context, this applies, for instance, to EDI subjects related to gender and religion. Gender was the most visible dimension on the websites reflecting the fact that a certain type of gender discourse is legitimate and accepted by society, namely the one around enhancing women’s career opportunities and increasing their labor market participation. At the same time, our interviewees supported our reading of the websites indicating that this topic is highly politicized through discourses on the highest political levels primarily promoting women in their role as mothers and wives. Public statements from Erdogan such as “women are not equal to men, our religion has defined a position for women: motherhood” (The Guardian, 2014) are noteworthy in this respect showing how women are portrayed to primarily serve men and the family. This quote also illustrates the interconnection between the discourse on gender and religion. Religion or belief were rather visible on the websites compared to other dimensions indicating the legitimized acceptance to treat people of various belief systems equally. However, especially visible religious symbols seem to be a highly politicized and contested issue in the Turkey. For instance, the meanings attached to headscarf for women (the distinction between traditional loosely bound headscarf and a tightly bound version) turned it into a political symbol perceived as a threat to secularism by some parts of the population (Tanyeri-Erdemir et al., 2013). The comprehensive changes in liberating women wearing headscarves realized by AKP strengthened the social-political polarization, increased the governmental authoritarianism, and in turn, contributed to consolidate its power (Somer, 2015).

*The Silenced.* EDI subjects positioned as *the Silenced* are highly politically instrumentalized while they are denied legitimized acceptance in organizational discourses. In the Turkish case, this was particularly obvious for LGBT+ people and certain ethnic groups like Kurds. Regarding LGBT+, our findings are in line with previous studies suggesting that Turkish organizations are highly homophobic places (e.g., Özturk, 2011) that prefer to remain silent about this topic reflecting the societal denial of the mere existence of LGBT+ people. At the same time, this taboo is instrumentalized in the political discourse to serve a more conservative-religious political position (e.g. through constructing LGBT+ individuals as abnormal or shameful).

Regarding the second example of Kurds, it is particularly striking how the historically and politically tense situation of Kurds in Turkey turns into a fear by HR managers to risk a potential political backlash for themselves or for their organization if they address this topic. As a result, Kurds are subject to little legitimized acceptance in organizations in Turkey and the problems they face in the labor market are largely marginalized (e.g. Alp and Taştan, 2011; Somer, 2002; Ergin, 2014).

*The Advertised.* We labelled the position of those subjects in the EDI discourse with high legitimized acceptance but little use for political ruler’s agendas *the Advertised.* In the context of Turkey, age, and in particular the group of younger employees serves as a good example. Age is the second most frequently mentioned diversity dimension on the websites which reflects a relatively high level of legitimized acceptance towards age issues at work. At the same time, our interviews suggest that age is not a hot topic around which controversial political discussion arise. As such, younger generations are constructed as politically rather harmless and hazard-free while other contextual aspects like the demographic change (Demirkaya et al., 2015; Özkan, 2017) seem to play a greater role in framing this topic, e.g., around the business rationale with a specific focus on young talent that needs to be attracted and retained.

*The Avoided.* On the intersection of low legitimized acceptance and low political instrumentality, we located *the Avoided*. In the Turkish case, disability was a good example to illustrate how dimensions can be framed as unrelated to organizational life and without much acceptance at workplaces. This is reflected on the websites where disability is one of the less visible dimensions at least when it comes to framing PWD as legitimate members in organizations and specific practices to create, for instance barrier-free work environments. It seems that the still existing severe discrimination of PWD at work is mostly constructed as a social problem and the responsibility to solve it is shifted to philantrophic activities or to other actors. As such, this dimension is not very contested in a sense that no conflicting interests exist about the question whether or not barriers for PWD should be dealt with in Turkish society. Instead, the discourse reflects a certain scepticism regarding the specific question of *workplace* inclusion and whether PWD are capable of doing certain jobs.

***Limitations and future research directions***

Many EDI scholars have previously done critical discourse analysis of websites, however, very few have combined this website analysis with other data sources like interviews (one exception are Klarsfeld, 2009; Mease and Collins, 2018). Following calls from Tatli (2011), we have conducted interviews with EDI stakeholders inside and outside of employing organizations in order account for the contextualized nature of EDI and its embeddedness in the political environment. Paradoxically, it is precisely due to the political developments in recent years in Turkey and increased political sensitivity on EDI topics that the number of interview partners we could acquire for this research project was rather limited. Future studies could certainly benefit from a larger interview sample and more stakeholders’ perspectives (such as e.g., employees themselves) in order to provide a more encompassing picture on how different EDI actors construct subjects of their interest.

Furthermore, in the course of writing this paper, we felt somewhat trapped in the “dilemma of recognizing and simultaneously affirming difference” (Dobusch, 2017: 1658). Yet, in light of our findings, we believe that it is necessary to recognize difference in order to disentangle how social groups are constructed and affected in systematically different ways by societal power relations and politics. Especially in view of increasing nationalism and rise of right-wing populism in many countries (Muis and Immerzeel, 2017, Wodak and Krzyżanowski, 2017), our theoretical framework may be fruitfully applied to other national contexts.

Finally, to make our findings traceable for the international scholarly community, we decided to use the English version of the companies’ websites and reports, except for the case when the most recent version was only available in Turkish. Yet, the quality of the English translation varied and in some cases seemed to have resulted in rather unusual phrases and wording (e.g., “reverse mentality process” to describe the effects of age differences). In these cases, we went back to the Turkish original and discussed the words’ meaning carefully within the research team, to ensure a common understanding of the text.

**Conclusion**

Following the calls for more context-specific analyses of EDI (Farndale et al., 2015; Jonsen et al, 2011; Klarsfeld et al., 2016), we investigated the organizational EDI discourse in the context of Turkey and found that, inclusion is not (yet) an ideal promoted by Turkish employers. Moreover, whereas earlier contributions to contextualize EDI fell short on explaining how the context shapes EDI discourse (Ahonen et al., 2014), this study presents a theoretical framework that differentiates the social constructions of EDI subjects along the dimensions of legitimized acceptance and political instrumentalization. Hence, this framework demonstrates the crucial role of politics for EDI discourses (Ahonen et al., 2014; Bendl et al., 2014; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2011) and may serve future work to contextualize the location of EDI subjects in a web of societal power relations.

With Turkey we chose a country that is undergoing drastic political changes in the recent years that attract the global community’s attention. These developments risk to create a toxic climate for EDI, with many people pushed to the margin or out of the labor market altogether. Thus, we hope that our study inspires more context-sensitive research on EDI to consider a country’s political environment, in particular during these times of increasing right-wing populism (Muis and Immerzeel, 2017, Wodak and Krzyżanowski, 2017).

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Table 1. Top 19 Companies in Turkey

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Industry | Company | Revenue in 2012[[2]](#footnote-2) in million US$ |
| Banking | Türkiye İş Bankası A.Ş. (Isbank) | 9,310 |
|  | Ziraat Bank | 8,271 |
|  | Halkbank | 4,765 |
|  | Vakıf Bank | 4,612 |
| Holding | Koç Holding | 45,354 |
|  | Sabancı Holding | 13,418 |
|  | Eczacıbaşı Holding | 6,867 |
|  | Doğuş Holding Co. | 5,486 |
|  | Borusan Holding | 4,266 |
| Telecommunications | TurkTelekom | 6,545 |
|  | Turkcell | 5,170 |
| Airline | Turkish Airlines | 6,529 |
| Food processing | Ülker Gıda Sanayi ve Ticaret A.Ş (Yıldız Holding) | 6,255 |
| Energy | Elektrik Üretim A.S. | 5,610 |
| Building and  construction | Enka | 5,037 |
| Metal | Erdemir | 4,929 |
| Retail | BIM Birlesik Magazalar A.S. | 4,523 |
| Automobile | Tofas Türk Otomobil Fabrikasi A.S. | 4,019 |
| Electronics | Vestel | 3,855 |

Table 2. Concepts and diversity dimensions mentioned per company

A Age

B Belief

Co Color

Cu Culture

Di Disability

Di(p) Physical disability/capacity

Di(m) Mental/neuropsychiatric disability

En Ethnic origin/ethnicity

FS Family status

F Faith

G Gender

H Health status

L Language

MS Marital status

N Nationality

P Pregnancy

Po Political opinion/thought/view

R Race

Re Religion

S Social origin

Se Sect

Sex Sex

SO Sexual orientation

V Veteran status

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Company  website | Name subsections of website / report | Concepts EDI[[3]](#footnote-3) | Diversity dimensions |
| Isbank,  www.isbank.com.tr/EN | Sustainability   * Our Approach   Sustainability Report 2017 | E & D  Ø | B, Cu, Di(m), Di(p), G, P, R, Re, S |
| Yıldız Holding,  english.yildizholding.com.tr/ | Our vision   * Talent Sustainability   Sustainability Approach   * Sustainability Report 2017 | E & D  E & D  E | A,G |
| Koç Holding,  koc.com.tr/en-us/ | Human Resources  Sustainability   * Sustainability Report 2017 | D  E & D & I | A, B, Di, En, F, G, L, R, Re, SO |
| Sabancı Holding, www.sabanci.com/en | Career  HR Policies  Our Sustainability Reports   * Sustainability Report 2017 | Ø  E & D  E & D | A, B, Di(p), G, L, P, R, Re |
| Turkish Airlines  turkishairlines.com/en-int/ | Career  Corporate Governance   * Sustainability Report 2017 | Ø  E & D | A, Co, Cu, Di, FS, G, N, Re, R |
| Ziraat Bank  http://www.ziraat.com.tr/en/Pages/default.aspx | Human Resources  Sustainability   * Sustainability Report 2017 | Ø  E | G |

Table 2. Concepts and diversity dimensions mentioned per company (continued)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Company  website | Name subsections of website / report | Concepts  EDI | Diversity dimensions |
| Enka  http://www.enka.com/ | Human Resource  Sustainability   * Employees * Sustainability Report 2017 | E & D  D & I  E & D | A, Co, Di, G, L, MS, N, P, R, Re, Sex, SO, V |
| BIM  http://www.bim.com.tr/default.aspx | Investor Relations   * Annual Report 2017 | Ø |  |
| Borusan Holding  http://www.borusan.com.tr/en/ | Career  Corporate Responsibility  Sustainability   * Sustainability Report 2017   (Turkish version) | Ø  E  E & D | G |
| Vestel  https://www.vestel.com.tr | Social Responsibility  Human Resources | E Ø | Di(m), Di(p), G |
| Doğus Holding  https://www.dogusgrubu.com.tr/en | Career  Corporate Social Responsibility   * CSR Policies * Sustainability, CSR Report 2015 (Turkish version) * CSR Strategy | Ø  E  E  Ø | A, G |
| Eczacibaşi Holding  http://www.eczacibasi.com.tr/tr/anasayfa | Human Resource  Sustainability   * Sustainability Report 2017 | Ø  E & D | G |
| Tofas Turk  Otomobil  Fabrikasi  http://www.tofas.com.tr/en/Pages/default.aspx | Career  Sustainability   * Corporate Sustainability Policies * Corporate Social Responsibility * Sustainability Report 2017 | Ø  Ø  Ø  E & D | A, B, En, G |
| Turk Telekom  https://www.turktelekom.com.tr/en/Pages/default.aspx | Investor Relations   * Socially Responsible Investing * Annual Report 2017 | E  E & D | A, G |

Table 2. Concepts and diversity dimensions mentioned per company (continued)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Company  website | Name subsections of website /report | Concepts  EDI | Diversity dimensions |
| Turkcell  http://www.turkcell.com.tr/en/aboutus | Corporate Social Responsibility   * Sustainability Report 2017 | E & D | A, B, Di(p), En, G, H, MS, N, Re, Sex, SO |
| VakıfBank  https://www.vakifbank.com.tr/English.aspx?pageID=977 | Investor Relations   * Sustainability Report 2017 * Human Rights and Employee Rights Policy | E & D  E | A, B, E, G, L, P, Re, Se, Sex |
| Erdemir  https://www.erdemir.com.tr/homepage/ | Career  Sustainability   * Our Employees * Sustainability Report 2017 | Ø  E & I  Ø | En, G, N, Re, R |
| Halkbank  https://www.halkbank.com.tr/en/ | Investor Relations   * Annual Report 2017   Social Responsibility Policies | Ø  Ø |  |
| Elektrik Üretim | Corporate   * Annual Report 2017  (Turkish version) | Ø |  |

Table 3. Overview of diversity dimensions as mentioned on corporate websites

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Organizational discourse | Inductively coded diversity dimensions from websites | Number of companies mentioning this dimension |
| Gender | Gender | 16 |
| Marital status | 2 |
| Family status | 2 |
| Sex | 2 |
| Pregnancy | 1 |
| Age | Age | 10 |
| Religion | Religion | 8 |
| Belief | 6 |
| Faith | 1 |
| Sect | 1 |
| PWD | Disability | 3 |
| Physical disability/capacity | 4 |
| Mental/neuropsychiatric disability | 2 |
| Health status | 1 |
| Ethnicity | Race | 6 |
| Ethnic origin/ethnicity | 5 |
| Language | 4 |
| Nationality | 4 |
| Color | 2 |
| Culture | 2 |
| LGBT+ | Sexual orientation | 3 |
| Political opinion | Political opinion/thought/view | 2 |
| Social origin | Social origin | 1 |
| Veteran status | Veteran status | 1 |

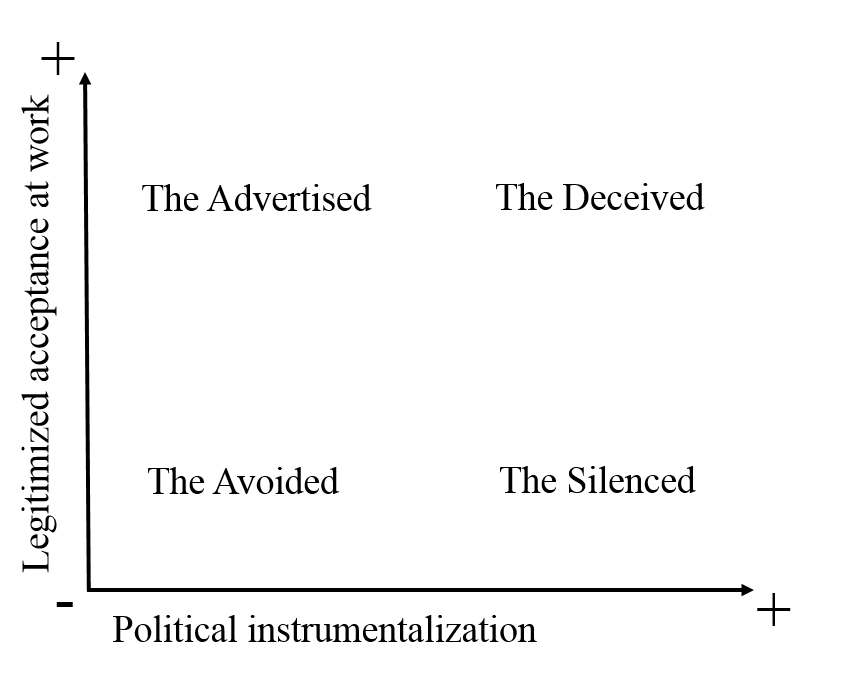
**

Figure 1: The social construction of EDI subjects at Turkish workplaces

1. Notably, as they have been mentioned on some corporate websites, the dimensions political opinion, social origin, and veteran status are listed in the Tables, however, we do not present them in more detail because no further information on these dimensions was provided on the websites nor in the interviews. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The latest version of the DS100 ranking is from 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. . E refers to “equality” or “equal opportunities”, D to “diversity” or “diversity management” and I to “inclusion. Ø indicates that neither of these concepts were mentioned in the respective subsection or report. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)