RESEARCH ARTICLE

'MORE RIGHTS AND MORE FREEDOM': COMPARATIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF GENDER ROLES FROM TURKISH WOMEN IN LONDON.

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Abstract
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Migration to another country can change everyday cultural texture significantly, including dominant gender roles. Increasingly commonplace in an age of migration, such change is relevant to the under-researched topic of why migrants settle or move elsewhere. This paper reveals awareness of the cultural shaping of gender roles and practices by highly-educated Turkish immigrant women in London, England. Based on fifteen semi-structured interviews, results show that through lived comparisons of gender and patriarchy fore-grounded strongly contrasting roles. England was depicted as a land of minimal patriarchy and much opportunity, migrants feeling more independent, free and self-confident as women than in Turkey. They felt they could be assimilated relatively easily, aided by their high educational level and English proficiency. In contrast, Turkey was defined as almost wholly discouraging, overwhelmingly patriarchal and male-dominated, rigid in attitudes and sharply gendered. Such comparative assessments, no matter how naively idealized, provide insight into why the reasons (some) migrants settle are not always directly explicable from logics underpinning initial relocation. Migration, in other words, must be acknowledged as continuous relational process more than one-off act of relocation.

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Introduction:-
an Age of Migration, Settlement and Gender Roles

In 1993, Stephen Castles and Mark Miller announced an *Age of Migration*. Their now classic text in a 5th edition (Castles *et al*. 2014) has fed into an emerging tendency across the social sciences to foreground movement, in this case international flows of people, as a defining *zeitgeist* (e.g. Sheller and Urry, 2006; Urry, 2007). The early 21st Century has consolidated this perspective, albeit not without critiques, with news near daily replete with tales of people on the move.

These widely ongoing forms of human migration involve for migrants much more than simple relocation from Point A to Point B (Barcus and Halfacree forthcoming). From biographical sensitivity (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993), migrants can be recognized as 'interpretive subjects of their own mobility... [operating within] webs of socially negotiated meanings... constantly negotiated' (Silvey and Lawson, 1999: 124-5). Interpretation of their mobility is

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informed by present contexts or circumstances but also by past experiences and future anticipations. Consequently, migration shifts from representing a relatively discrete, focused and tightly bounded action to being a more distributed, indeterminate and relationally entangled process. It is 'a search, a project, rather than an act' (Benson and O'Reilly,2009: 610), at times 'not a single [action]… but a life-long process' (Castles, 2000: 16).

Within this depiction of migration as entangled contextual process, economic factors clearly play a central role. However, a more–than-economic element is increasingly also being recognized within all migration (Barcus and Halfacree forthcoming). This draws attention, *inter alia*, to the 'cultural texture' of migrant's places of origin and destination, defined as the predominant and discernible interwoven, multi-dimensional but largely taken for granted ways of living in a country.

Placing migration within cultural texture draws attention to how lives can change through migration in terms of how migrants perceive place, position, opportunities and obstacles within daily life. Through a focus on changed lives, researchers can understand better why migrants do or do not settle relatively independently of the otherwise extremely important economic factors, such as suitable employment, and political or institutional factors, such as permission to remain. Indeed, with talk of an age of migration it is easy to overlook the very obvious fact that most people most of the time are not migrants. Instead, they are more-or-less settled in place. Moreover, settlement at times appears 'irrational', especially through an economic lens and for people who have already demonstrated willingness to relocate. Greater academic attention needs paying to 'the ones that stay' (Halfacree and Rivera, 2012).

One reason why staying put, or settlement in a particular country for international migrants, has been neglected is an implicit neo-Heideggerian assumption of sedentarism (Cresswell, 2006). This asserts 'boundedness and authenticity-in-place is foundational to human life' (Halfacree and Rivera, 2012: 94). To test such an assumption and probe the reasons migrants do not migrate (again), Halfacree and Rivera (2012) presented six families of such reasons. All are compatible with a more process-based conception of migration that enfolds post-relocation lives. Such lives may be as anticipated (family 1), reasons for moving thus directly indicating settlement. Alternatively, the existential and practical challenges of moving again (family 2) or sustained hope that the migration's aim can work out (family 3) can prompt staying. But migrants' lives can change, with varying levels of anticipation (families 4-6), and these changes also prompt settlement. Such changing lives may involve acculturation that sees migrants embrace elements of the receiving society's cultural texture (Idema and Phalet, 2007). One element of change may be gender roles.

Gender roles are 'the expected attitudes and behaviours a society associates with each sex… plac[ing] gender squarely in the sociocultural context' (Lindsey,2015: 5). Shaped through numerous experiences and institutions and not least by patriarchy, they are both performed within everyday life and perceived by individuals (Halfacree, 1995). International migration, though, can see individuals relocated to socio-cultural environments where very different gender roles are the norm to those experienced and at least partly socialized into in their origin country. Indeed, this is likely as gender roles vary considerably globally and are often important for immigrant community identity (Idema and Phalet, 2007; Röder and Mühlau, 2014; Goulahsen, 2015). Moreover, while a geography of gender roles may have been perceived prior to migration, actually living somewhere with a different cultural texture can foreground differences in a more forceful embodied manner. Important research questions include the extent to which difference is perceived and encountered, how it is evaluated, and whether it is embraced or resisted through acculturation.

International migrants' perceptions of and attitudes towards gender roles and practices, and their differentiation between countries, thus form this paper's focus. The next section reprises the importance of gender perspectives within migration, again moving from a numerical relocation emphasis to focusing on the extended process of migration. Next, the research on highly-educated Turkish women migrants in London is introduced. The term 'highly-educated' refers to persons who have completed tertiary education (OECD 2016). The heart of the paper follows, outlining several dimensions of the women's comparative gender perceptions between Turkey and England, all with implications as to whether the women stay in England, move elsewhere, or return to Turkey. The conclusion reiterates the value of seeing migration as ongoing relational process.

Migration and Changing Representations of Gender Roles:-
To summarize, 21st Century migration scholarship now near universally recognises that women migrate as well as men! Yet, this was not an easy state to reach. Before the 1970s, little migration research examined men and women separately, women being comprehensively neglected (Pedraza, 1991). Despite Ravenstein's (1885) foresight that 'women are more migratory than men', both empirical studies and migration theories overwhelmingly focused on men. Women were demoted to support and dependent status of family followers, tied movers, secondary or associational migrants (Balan, 1981; Bielby and Bielby, 1992; Halfacree, 1995). There was little appreciation of how women might migrate independently from and in different ways to men. An 'add women and stir' approach supposed men and women migrated in the same way (Kofman*et al.* 2000) and had similar post-migration experiences.

From the early1980s, however, feminist-influenced scholarship increasingly drew attention to the neglected gender-migration nexus (Pedraza, 1991). Women's reasons for migration merited focus in their own right (Morokvasic, 1983; Simon and Brettel, 1986). Results showed the importance of economic reasons, as for men, but configured differently, implicating experiences of poverty, debt, sex slavery and unemployment. Distinct non-economic reasons, such as risk of honour killing, marital discord, marriage, education, gender discrimination, violence, divorce and religious and political repression also emerged as prominent (Jolly and Reeves,2005; Kofman *et al.* 2000).

Through the 1990s studies on 'women and migration' were thoroughly reformulated as 'gender and migration' (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2000; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Cranford, 2006). Increasing attention was paid to how factors such as hierarchies of power, authority and resources affected women's migration. Topics expanded from focus on familial decision-making processes to embracing the gendered nature of family and communities, occupational sex segregation and gender relations post-migration (Erel, 2009; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; Repak, 1995). Whilst consolidating appreciation migration as highly gendered, scholarship also began to note reverse relationships of gender relations changing through migration (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2000).

Migration can change gender relations in practice through the roles a woman comes to adopt, such as becoming a breadwinner and head of household. Gender representations may also change (Davis, 2013). A study of Georgian immigrant women highlighted their changing sense of self after moving to London (Curro, 2012). They felt more independent and as having more decision-making power. A similar survey conducted among Brazilian immigrant women in the USA (Assis, 2014) emphasized a sensation of greater autonomy, feeling more secure, free and independent. This stemmed from reconfiguration of gender roles following migration that broke with 'traditional' roles very apparent within the origin country (Chubachi, 2009). In wider geographical analysis of European Social Survey data, Röder and Mühlau (2014) also found immigrants' gender beliefs tending towards those of the host country. This was not only evident for the second generation (*cf.* Idema and Phalet, 2007) but also for the migrants themselves, especially women.

International migration not only affects the practices and representations of women who move individually but also has potential consequences for marital roles and relationships. Immigration can present major life course challenges and changes in terms of gender roles within couples and families. For example, research conducted with Iranians in Canada examined how post-immigration experiences affected marital roles: men lost power and authority, whereas women experienced liberation from traditional patriarchal social systems (Shirpak *et al.* 2011). Some men stated difficulty in accepting the freedom of wives to dress, socialize and make decisions for themselves in Canada. The women were more approving! Also in Canada, Ethiopian immigrants in Toronto recognised conflict arising post-migration when couples were unable to renegotiate new gender roles and responsibilities (Hyman *et al.* 2008). Most participants who were divorced or separated agreed that gender conflicts featured in their separation.

International migration can create 'gender discrepancies' (Idema and Phalet, 2007: 72) between first and second generation immigrant women. The former may note the changed gender context but conservatively want to maintain cultural values from their homeland. In contrast, and with less direct experience of the latter, second generation women often seek new everyday gender realities from within what the host society offers (Idema and Phalet, 2007). Of course, although assimilation theorists have tended to assume 'generational succession' (Röder and Mühlau, 2014: 5) marks significant cultural shifts, first generations may change too, or at least encourage change for the second generation even if not embodying it themselves.

In summary, post-migration experience has much potential to change gender role representations and post-migration lives of immigrant women. And this may be both largely unanticipated and feed into a desire to settle. Importantly, this all largely depends on the cultural textual position of women in the origin country. If more patriarchal than in the destination, the gender roles sharply differentiated, migrant women will undoubtedly note the contrast and sometimes avail themselves of the opportunities and relative freedom of the host county. Representations of loosened patriarchy, equality, human rights, social policies enhancing roles of women in society, and higher social visibility can facilitate potential opportunities. Moreover, representations may be partial, idealised or even false but, as in life generally, frequently acted on, including when deciding whether to stay. It is thus perhaps rather surprising that to date 'comparatively little research systematically explores the gender-role attitudes of migrant men and women" (Röder and Mühlau, 2014: 1).

Finally, to reiterate the importance of investigating these questions we note women's increasing profile within global migration (Castles *et al*. 2014). In 2013, the UN estimated the number of international migrants at 232 million, women comprising 48% (UN 2013). Prominent within this push towards gender parity are two trends: a rising proportion of women from lower income countries relocating to richer countries and a rising proportion of women migrants being highly skilled and/or educated (Docquier *et al*. 2009; Dumont *et al*. 2007). Analysing OECD data, Dumont and colleagues found relatively equal numbers of highly skilled men and women immigrants. This suggested women's relative over-representation, since they still generally have fewer opportunities to pursue higher education in home countries so that relatively parity in numbers with men suggests special attraction to richer countries. Gender role contrasts may play a role in explaining this. In this article, we seek to explore to what extent perception of gender roles change after migration by taking the example of Turkish women migrants in London.

Researching Highly Educated Turkish Women Migrants:-
Turkish women migrants in England:-
The United Kingdom attracts substantial numbers of international migrants. Numbers for the year ending December 2015 reached 630,000 (ONS, 2016), around half recognised as long-term immigrants. From the 2011 census for England and Wales, 13 per cent (7.5 millions) of usual residents were born outside the UK, up from 9 per cent (4.6 million) in 2001 (ONS, 2014a). Just over half were female, with their most prominent age-groups 25-34 (25%) and 35-44 (27%) years: key working and child-bearing ages (Krausova and Vargas-Silva, 2014).

Whilst relative numbers of male and female UK immigrants is reasonably well known, research focusing on gender aspects of the broader migration process remains far from comprehensive. The ONS, for example, states main reasons why the UK is chosen as destination, as in other research stressing economic and labour market factors (Czaika and Haas, 2013; ONS, 2016). However, there is little focus on gender differences or the significance of relocating to a country with a different cultural texture. It is from this perspective that the present study engages.

Turks comprise a small minority of immigrants in England, with nothing like their high profile elsewhere in Europe, notably Germany (Erel, 2009). Nonetheless, migration from mainland Turkey has a long history, notably from the 1960s and the 1970s with migrants arriving principally to labour. A second wave accompanied the divisive political situation of Turkey in the 1980s and a third in the 1990s, when increasing terrorism in Turkey caused many Kurds with Turkish nationality to migrate.

According to ONS (2014b), the number of Turks resident in England in 2012 was between 77,000 and 120,000. Of these, 41,000-63,000 were male and 36,000-57,000 female. Producing exact numbers is not possible due to existence of Turks from Northern Cyprus and the Balkans, prompting ONS to give two separate statistics. Both figures, though, demonstrate women comprising near half the total. There is little on socio-economic and other characteristics but they originate from many backgrounds and undertake diverse jobs.

Researching highly educated Turkish women in London
This small project deployed semi-structured interviewing to listen to the voices, experiences and ideas of members of the female Turkish immigrant population. Interviewing allowed production of data on life course narratives and on how respondents evaluated their new English cultural worlds (Miller and Glassner, 2004). It allowed gender sensitivity (Bryman, 2012). Semi-structured interviews enabled investigation of the range and significance of ages of female migrants, their social, political or cultural reasons for moving from Turkey, their reasons for staying in England, and the importance of gender in the migration experience.

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with 15 'highly educated' Turkish women stayers living in London. Highly educated women - also the focus of Erel's (2009) ten 'life-stories' of Turkish women in London and Germany - were selected because of their increasing profile within international migration flows and perceived prominence amongst Turks who stay, observed by the researcher from personal experience. Choice of London was pragmatic as it has England's largest Turkish population (60,000). Interviewees were selected by snowball sampling (as did Erel, 2009) those aged 25 to 44 years, the modal female age-group for non-UK born population (Krausova and Vargas-Silva,2014). Participants were recruited from Turkish community centres, local groups and foundations. All were Turkish citizens (single or dual).

Interviews took place face-to-face or via internet video link, audio-recorded and then transcribed promptly. They were undertaken in English and Turkish. The interviewer found it relatively easy to recruit participants because of her own position as a Turkish woman of same age and education (although not resident in London). Indeed, given the project's resource constraints, this was a further reason this narrowly defined group was selected. Interestingly, the overall topic of migration and gender was one migrants were keen to discuss, suggesting relatively high profile and significance within their lives.

Analysis of the interviews addressed (changing) gender role representations among women of Turkish origin in England. It established context by discovering the reasons for migrating from Turkey to England. All acquired data were categorised by five themes to facilitate subsequent analysis: Reasons for migration, changing perception of gender roles, gender (in) equality in practice, parental roles and raising children and freedoms in being a woman. These now feed into presentation of the findings.

Research Findings:-
Reasons for Migration:-
Fourteen of the fifteen Turkish women interviewed migrated to England by themselves. However, whilst formally therefore not dependant, tied movers or family followers, this should not overemphasise their 'freedom'. Instead, situating their movements within the biography or life course of the person involved draws attention to both opportunities and constraints shaping the exact migration as practiced (Barcus and Halfacree forthcoming; Halfacree and Boyle, 1993). Factors such as education level, representations of places and opportunities, levels of self-confidence and independence and language proficiency shape international migration beyond more 'objective' factors, especially related to economic opportunity, expected to underpin most 'independent' migration.

This relational complexity was apparent within the reasons given for coming to England. Overall, the country's attractiveness as a migration destination was strongly iterated. Many respondents mentioned ability to find a good job, others a perceived higher quality of life, whilst positive views of the education system and levels of human rights, noted later, were also credited. Not all migration had been carefully thought through and planned, however. Largely unanticipated opportunities as life developed could prompt relocation:

After graduation from the university, I came to England to improve my English. For about three months I went to an English course. During my English course I decided to stay here after having a good job. With my university diploma it was very hard for me to find a job in Turkey. I had to take many exams and wait for years for an appointment. I had no hope in my country. But now everything is changed. I'm happy here. I married a British man and have two children (GH, 37, married, employee, dual citizen).

More frequently, migration followed the offer of what was perceived as a good job. Important in shaping both receipt of these opportunities and the subsequent decision to relocate, however, was often presence of existing family links between Turkey and England. Reflecting significance of networks within international migration (Barcus and Halfacree forthcoming), having relatives residing in England was noted:

I opened a hand craft shop after graduation from the fine arts faculty. But earning so little money! I called my relatives in England to give me a job in their shops. After a few years we formed business partnership (KL, 36, single, self-employed, dual citizen).

A feeling that the origin country failed to satisfy life course expectations, not least articulated through gender inequalities, also proved a vital push factor. For instance:

I was feeling oppression from my family and relatives around. I wanted to feel independent and free. The bank where I was working opened a branch in London. My director offered me a very good position that I could never get in my country and of course I accepted. Now, I work here for 5 years (HN, 37, single, employee, Turkish citizen).

Interacting with such reasoning was experience of education and desire for self-improvement (also noted by Erel, 2009). These were also positively associated with coming to England:

After graduation from the university my father sent me to England to study Masters and PhD. He said that the international language is English and I can find a better job if I educate here and learn English. I wanted to stay here after finishing all grades. Opportunities and human rights are better here (SZ, 25, single, student, Turkish citizen).

In summary, an often-entangled mixture of an imagined potential for a better life, higher income, further education and more equality between sexes brought the Turkish women to England. As a result of their migration, they had hopes and expectations not just of monetary rewards but also of greater self-confidence, independence and equality of treatment as refracted through gender. This supports Erel's (2009: 38) suggestion that 'interconnection of economic and other motivations for migration is particularly significant for women'. How gendered experiences of the migration then played out comes next via an account of migrants' representations of being a woman in Turkey and England.

Gender Roles:-
A central issue was interviewees' representations of gender roles in Turkey and England. Socially, politically and culturally, gender ideology is widely recognized to shape identities and appropriate behaviour and to naturalize hegemonic expressions of masculinity and femininity. Gender enters into how people perceive themselves, how they behave and, centrally here, how they observe others in different places (Lindemann, 1996; Wharton, 2005; Zarkov, 2015).

The women gave strongly consistent answers concerning how they perceived gender roles in Turkey. They mentioned, first and foremost, woman as firmly emplaced within the space of the home, positioned predominantly as wife and mother. Emphasized were roles of homemaker, doing household chores, taking care of children and supporting men. Illustrating this understanding:

Women in Turkey are obedient, extremely creative and intelligent. However, these skills are only used for being a housewife, mother, and domestic worker (SA, 44, married, employee, dual citizen);

Traditionally, women are responsible for taking care of children and household. They sacrifice themselves for their husbands and kids (CS, 26, single, student, Turkish citizen);

They are the homemakers. Looking after kids, being a good wife and mum, doing all the household chores such as cooking, cleaning, washing up the dishes, washing, sewing and ironing are seen as women's responsibilities. Although there are more and more working women, they are still expected to fulfil their roles as mum and wife (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

Further, gender roles were closely linked to conceptions of morality (*ahlak*). Overall morality was seen as strongly focused on women in Turkey. However, precise meaning and likely consequences of transgression were seen as changing as cultures, societies or traditions evolved and as also varying spatially. For example, pre-marital sex, dressing immodestly and sometimes even having a boyfriend were all sharply noted as inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour for women, but especially so in some regions. It was argued that women were expected to be untouched, morally pure and willing to express obedience to a future husband. Deeply ingrained, these 'popular' beliefs, traditions and customs were simply regarded as the rules of 'common-sense' within everyday life.

DS summarized:-
Honour is defined according to a woman's body. Women's bodies are seen as sacred. As a result, things like having sex before marriage, living with your boyfriend before marriage, going out on your own at night can be seen as un-ladylike. That narrows down women's ability to manoeuvre and live freely within society. When women don't behave according to these roles, which are defined by the society, sometimes this could be described as

'bringing shame on the family' and they can be target of 'honour killings' in rural areas (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

Interviewees' virtually taken-for-granted inappropriate behaviour for women (or men) in Turkish culture seemed fairly seamlessly repositioned as equally normally acceptable within English culture. First, migrants regarded gender roles for women in England as weaker than in Turkey, even though (universal) mother roles remained:
I think mother roles are the same with Turkey, but much softer (AS, 26, student, single, Turkish citizen).

Second, consequently, gender roles were more equal if not totally equivalent. This was explained not least by women having greater economic independence, including on account of government support, such as child benefit, jobseeker's allowance and payment for childcare:

Women are seen as homemakers. They are mostly responsible for house chores and looking after kids but these responsibilities are shared by their husbands. Unlike in Turkey, the British government supports mothers. It pays for nurseries and childminders. It is so good you do not need to worry for nursery or childminder pay (MA, 32, married, housewife, dual citizen).

Third, the female body was not regarded so sharply the centre and focus of morality in England. This allowed women much more behavioural freedom:

There are no taboos associated with a woman's body. They can freely have sex before marriage; wear what they want, they can go out at night on their own (HN, 37, single, employee, Turkish citizen).

Interviewees also recognized men's gender roles as differing between cultures. Patriarchy associates masculinity, the set of physical, behavioural, and attitudinal roles that symbolise a man, with dominance, aggression and control. Consequently, men are expected to be head of the family and main breadwinner. This kind of representation was expressed strongly for Turkey:

Turkish men are generally independent, head of the family, aggressive and dominant (SZ, 25, single, student, Turkish citizen);

A wife's, daughter's or sister's morality is very important for Turkish man. They think a woman's body is man's property. They always want to control the movement of female family members (DF, 32, married, employee, dual citizen).

With features such as more women in the labour force, legal protections and greater freedom of speech all seen to lessen male-domination in England, explicit patriarchy was also seen as strongly undermined. From what the reader might consider a very optimistic perspective:

Men in England are not dominant or aggressive. Patriarchy is not strong here. There are no crimes against women such as honour killing. Meaning of morality (*ahlak*) or honour (*namus*) is not just for women contrary to Turkey (GH, 37, married, employee, dual citizen).

From both representations of women's and men's roles, therefore, England was associated with much greater practiced gender equality than Turkey. This is examined further.

Gender (In) Equality in Practice:-
Formal gender equality occurs when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society: education, share of seats in parliament, economic participation, decision-making (UNESCO, 2011). According to the World Economic Forum's *The Global Gender Gap Report 2014* (WEF, 2016), of 142 countries assessed in terms of aspects of gender equality, Turkey ranked 132 in economic participation, 113 in political empowerment and 105 in educational attainment. Overall, with low human development level, Turkey ranked just 125of the 142. This poor impression was not repudiated by interviewees when discussing practical enactment of gender roles. All stated there was no equality between the sexes in Turkey with respect to sexuality, education, decision-making or self-expression. Three comments demonstrate perceived inequality:

There is no equality between men and women in Turkey due to cultural factors. In some places, women are not allowed to go out in the evenings with friends, but men do. Also in villages and small towns they have to dress up in cultural acceptance. A simple act of going to the coffee shop is not acceptable for women in society as they should instead be at home fulfilling their housewife duties (SA, 44, married, employee, dual citizen);

Having a boyfriend is weird in Turkey. You have to hide your feelings and boyfriend from your family. Fathers are very strict on this issue. When I was in the university, my landlord prohibited bringing men to the flat and my neighbours were so curious about my visitors. Social pressure is so much on youth especially on girls (MA, 32, married, housewife, dual citizen);

Rhetorically, we have the same rights [in Turkey]. It is compulsory to take primary, secondary and high school education for both sexes. But legally, there is no control or punishment for the parents who do not send their daughters to school. Job opportunities are rhetorically open to anyone. But in practice, even if you look at the parliaments, only few among them are women. Also, because of the strict job conditions, once women have a baby, some of them feel they have to quit their jobs. On another point, men freely speak about their sexual relationships, but women cannot (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

At the most extreme, violence was a critical concern:-
Violence against women is so common in Turkey. It means that Turkey is not a developed country. Many precautions are taken by the government to protect women from male violence but it still continues (HN, 37, single, employee, Turkish citizen).

Equality and inequality are not only practiced in the public or wider family sphere but also between spouses. When asked how spouses treat one other in Turkey, all respondents expressed the idea that couples frequently did not give each other opportunity to act beyond the limits of dominant gender roles. This was especially the case in rural areas in KL's experience, where patriarchal control was seen as especially strong:

In Turkey married couples don't give each other much space to breathe. Husbands and wives intervene in each other's life too much. In rural areas she is the servant of husband and kids. She has no life or space for herself. However, it is completely different in urban areas. If husband is educated and well-mannered, he lets wife breathe. She has more space for herself (KL, 36, single, self-employed, dual citizen).

Besides often tightly circumscribed spousal roles, freedom for women in Turkey was also seen as curtailed further by lack of realistic life options and dependence on a husband. This extended to the potential for divorce. According to DS, divorce is a great challenge. If a woman is weak financially, uneducated, and has no good job it is hard for her to take the decision to separate:

Lack of education and unemployment makes wife dependent on her husband. Even she may not divorce in the case of violence. Spousal maintenance [alimony] is not enough in Turkey. She cannot survive her life with that money (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

In contrast to Turkey, *The Global Gender Gap Report 2014*(WEF, 2016) ranked the UK 46 in economic participation, 32 in educational attainment and 33 in political empowerment out of 142 countries in gender equality terms. In total, the UK with high human development level is ranked 26. Again, respondents corroborated this absolute and comparative situation. They described how they had observed greater equality in England and talked mostly about the legal rights of women asserted by government. These rights were seen demonstrated in practice. Thus, although one might again take issue with her representation, DS noted:

Maternity leave in England is better than Turkey. Government gives 52 week leave. It has lots of benefits. They pay you and reduce the tax after maternity leave. You are not afraid of losing your job after maternity contrarily to Turkey. Laws do not protect pregnant women in Turkey. I have a friend in Turkey, she got pregnant after ten years. She was very happy. She was working in a private bank. Her boss told her to start job after childbirth. She could not start her job after eight weeks and she was fired. This thing happens in Turkey. But, you cannot do it here. Laws protect women (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

Gender equality differences between countries were thus recognized as partly reinforced by their laws. If these treat sexes equally, gender gaps should decrease. This extended to sexuality. England's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality Action Plan gave legal recognition to same-sex marriage and promoted gender identity rights in family, work and schools (Government Equalities Office, 2011). This context framed observations such as:

I have some lesbian or gay friends in the university. They are just like us, no difference between us. They express their feelings and ideas freely. However, in Turkey they have to be invisible. In some places if they understand that you are a gay or lesbian, you might be abused (KA, 27, single, student, Turkish citizen).

Inequalities between the sexes in the UK were, nonetheless, observed by some respondents. In terms of political representation, for example, women were recognized as under-represented overall but especially in top positions ('glass ceilings'):

Up to a certain point there is still inequality between men and women in England. There are less women ministers or parliament members. 148 are women and 502 are men MP's. It's not because they are not allowed, but it is because there is still a common view of politics being more suitable for men. Although there are women at high-level jobs such as director of a company, head of a department, it is more common to see men doing high-level jobs than women (CS, 26, single, student, Turkish citizen).

Turning to equality practices between spouses, it was felt that husbands and wives in England generally treated each other more equally than in Turkey.

They mutually gave greater freedom to one another:-
Men in UK are not strict on their wives, girlfriends or other female members of the family. Their traditional role is softer than Turkish men. As I observed they have joint responsibility for taking care of the children or household. The thing I like here is they do not interfere in their partner's clothing. They respect each other's freedom. My husband is strict on me in Turkey but here he gives me space (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen);

Husbands and wives have private space at home or outside. They do not limit themselves freedom (CS, 26, single, student, Turkish citizen).

Participants stated several reasons indicating the importance of recognizing the relationship between gender equality and roles. Empowering women in social, political and economic fields can facilitate women breaking out from their encultured and taken-for-granted status as passive, dependant or supportive. The women observed that strong gender inequalities at home, in the workplace and in society at large must be solved in Turkey. They felt it a priority of the Turkish government to take legislative measures to empower women. Civil society and non-governmental organizations were also seen as having responsibility to promote gender equality and diminish existing social pressures on women.

Parental Roles and Raising Children:-
Gender beliefs and corresponding roles and practices do not, of course, simply transfer 'naturally' from cultural texture to the individual but are inculcated through institutional mediation, not least when children. Crucial are experiences from family and school. Children learn from parents in particular what is acceptable and appropriate behaviours for women and men (Wharton, 2005). Participants were asked about mother and father roles in Turkey and England.

All depicted Turkish parents as having considerable control over their children and as treating sons and daughters very differently. Daughters, in particular, were expected to be obedient and dependent. This is firmly in line with what Yaman *et al*. (2010) termed Turkey's 'collectivist' authoritarian and controlling practices of parenting, with its aim to emphasise interdependence and control individuality. Interviewees acknowledged this approach:

Turkish parents are extremely protective for their kids. Rather than letting their kids make mistakes and learning for themselves, parents always would like to decide on behalf of them. They do not encourage their kids to try new things (GH, 37, married, employee, dual citizen);

Mother role in a Turkish family is nurturing. Fathers are strict on their daughter or female relatives. Ninety per cent fathers do not let their daughter have a boyfriend. But sons are freer. Parents are proud of him in the case of having a girlfriend (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

As a result of migrating to England some participants stated that behaviour toward their own children had changed considerably. They claimed to have become more easy-going with them and to grant them more responsibility. They had embraced Britain's more 'individualistic' culture of parenting, with stress on developing autonomy and self-interest (Yaman *et al*. 2010). For example:

Parents' roles are completely different between Turkey and England. Parents do not give responsibility to their children and they make their children dependent on them even after marriage. There is always gender distinction in a Turkish family. But, here it is completely different. Before moving here, I was thinking that son and daughter should be treated in different ways. But, after observing how families behave towards their children, I also decided not to make gender distinction, give responsibility and freedom to my children. I let them make mistakes (AS, 31, married, employee, dual citizen).

Interviewees were further asked which country they would prefer their son/daughter to live in for a better future. This reflected Erel's (2009) observation of migration justified in part by desire for better education for daughters. All respondents agreed they would want to raise their children in England rather than Turkey. They mostly stressed problems related to education opportunities: every year a changing education system, excessive homework from teachers, poor quality of government schools and the content of the curriculum:

Nobody is happy with the education system in Turkey. Every year its curriculum is changing. Teachers give too much homework to study at home. Home should not be the place for studying (AS, 26, student, single, Turkish citizen).

They saw things very differently in England. DS put it thus, again in terms that may raise a few eyebrows:

Education in England is better. Children enjoy a lot for going to school. Teachers do not give homework they just give reading at home. They learn how to respect each other in schools. However, in Turkey people judge each other according to their belief, identity, religion, culture or clothing(DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

Explicitly gendered concerns also influenced respondents' ideal choice of country for their children to live. In contrast with Turkey, gender problems in England for children were perceived as relatively minor. There were strong differences in freedom and happiness, especially for daughters:

I would like my daughter/son to live in England, because they would feel freer. They wouldn't be judged by their gender (MA, 32, married, housewife, dual citizen);

Comparing between Turkey and England, I want my daughter to live in England. She would be happier here I think. There is more equality between man and women. Women have more rights and more freedom (FM, 28, student, Turkish citizen).

Freedoms in Being a Woman:-
Being a moral and appropriately behaved woman depends very much on the society in which she lives. Women may face very real everyday difficulties if they do not obey patriarchal rules in an androcentric society in particular. Respondents were thus asked about any difficulties they perceived overall in being a woman in Turkey and England.

A common concern expressed was that one female disadvantage in Turkey is neighbourhood pressure to marry and have children at a relatively early age. The reason suggested was that society assumes getting married to a 'proper' man becomes much harder for a woman who reaches middle age. This attitude is rooted in the assumption that men desire young and beautiful women:

If you are a woman in Turkey, there is so much pressure on you for marriage. Parents, relatives or people around always force you to marry and have children before it is too late. They think that after some age no man will want an old woman for marriage (DF, 32, married, employee, dual citizen).

Another issue was how social pressure, culture and traditions were regarded as constraining clothing choices for a woman in Turkey. This again depended on social codes that vary according to location. For example, in some conservative rural areas it was thought not practically possible to wear décolleté, as doing so would make a woman overwhelmingly the object of intensive male gaze.

Respondents recollected:-
My family in Turkey live in a small town. I cannot wear a mini skirt, short or sleeveless clothes when I visit them. The locals might gossip about me. Though, if I go to Turkey for holiday [to the touristic Southern regions] it is free. I can wear whatever I want if I go to seaside or big cities (AS, 31, married, employee, dual citizen);

People judge you by your appearance. If you are a public official such as school teacher, employee, doctor or lawyer you have dress appropriately according to dress code. It limits your freedom of clothing (DS, 38, married, employee, dual citizen).

Asked about experienced difficulties and expectations from being female in England, all respondents saw no significant difficulties according to gender:

I have never experienced difficulties. As a woman in England, I feel safe, secure and supported (CS, 26, single, student, Turkish citizen);

Three years ago I divorced from my husband. Now I have boyfriend and we live together. I do not want to marry again. But I cannot do such a thing in some places in Turkey. People around force you to marry. They think a woman cannot survive without a male partner (SA,33, divorced, self-employed, dual citizen).

Overall expression of respondents' freedom in Turkey and England was influenced by experiences, lifestyles and representations of freedom. Consequently, a wide range of answers were given. However, the common impression was that they did not feel free in Turkey as women, attributed to social pressures for conservative conformism (Yaman *et al*. 2010):

I don't feel free in Turkey. I only experience freedom when I am away from social pressure. I should be able to express myself freely wherever I want. Unfortunately, being creative, wearing different clothes, participating in unusual activities isn't accepted in Turkey. If you wear shorts in winter, you will be abused. If you are blonde, you will attract attention wherever you go. If you are a woman, you are not safe (SA, 44, married, employee, dual citizen)

Another perceived component of potential lack of freedom was again not having financial power to enable decision-making without depending on a man. GH emphasized the importance of women's financial independence:

A woman should be economically independent. Women in my family are mostly housewives. They were economically dependent on father first, after marriage they became dependent on their husbands. This makes them weak, subordinate and incapable. Being away from decision making process, they cannot fight for their rights (GH, 37, married, employee, dual citizen).

Other issues noted were sex and safety:-
Unfortunately, sexual freedom is only for men. I never understand this tradition which makes women to be property of men (AS, 31, married, employee, dual citizen);

If you are safe in the streets as a woman then you are free. I don't feel safe in public transport, buses or in a crowd place in Turkey (MA, 32, married, housewife, dual citizen).

Finally, when asked how they felt overall in England, all respondents gave simple answers such as 'I feel freer in England than in Turkey'. Some elaborated:

I feel that wishes and life choices are respected and supported. I am able to evolve into who I want to be, not what society wants me to be" (SA, 44, married, employee, dual citizen);

I feel freer than in Turkey. I feel that if something happens, the law would protect my rights. This is a precious feeling (AS, 26, single, student, Turkish citizen);

Absolutely free. For example, women here are independent, she has right to apply for Jobseeker's allowance if she doesn't have a job. She doesn't need a male partner to survive. She stands on her own feet (MA, 32, married, housewife, dual citizen).

In summary, interviewees shared the idea that Turkey signifies social pressure, strong patriarchy, dependence and tradition. England, alternatively, is defined as free, less patriarchal, more relaxed for a woman, secure and equal. Experience from international migration of living in two differentially gendered everyday environments has brought out these contrasts strongly. The net result has been development of strong desire to stay living in England for the foreseeable future amongst all interviewed.

Conclusions:-
Differences Migration Can Make:-
This small piece of research highlights one relatively little-noted consequence of international migration, namely changing perceptions of dominant cultural textures and attendant practices. In this case, focus was on gender roles as articulated by highly educated Turkish women migrants in London. The paper thus contributes to the growing body of mature work interrogating the place of gender within migration studies.

Highly notable was very strong consistency in the perspectives and perceptions expressed by the 15 interviewees. Whilst in part this may reflect a weakness with the snowballing recruitment approach, it still suggests presence of a socially coherent body of opinion on the issues raised. In summary, respondents consistently portrayed Turkey as a hotbed of patriarchy, almost all areas of women's life severely constrained and regulated. In contrast, England was recognized as consistently egalitarian in gender terms, with some qualifications, to a degree probably surprising to many readers. Moreover, these very binary representational contrasts clearly fed into their evaluative palette for deciding whether or not to remain in England. This was evidenced most clearly in positive comments on their own experiences in London and in the opportunities England was seen to present (potential) children. England was portrayed in no uncertain terms as giving more rights and permitting more freedoms to the women than their Turkish homeland. Thus, whilst employment factors overwhelmingly explained migration to England, to understand why the women now stay (Halfacree and Rivera, 2012) implicates representational geographies of gender.

Considering the broader implications of these research findings, respondents' welcomed acculturation towards more egalitarian gender roles at first sight bodes well for assimilation. It also speaks, however, of potential gender segmentation within the assimilation process generally (Röder and Mühlau,2014: 22). Both points merit attention.

As noted, the Turkish women's representations of gender relations and practices between the two countries were startlingly contrasting. They reproduced 'dichotomous ethnicized gender images' (Erel, 2009: 52) of 'tradition' (Turkey) *versus* 'modernity' (England) (Erel, 2009: 110) or 'collectivist' (Turkey) *versus* 'individualist' (England) (Idema and Phalet, 2007: 618). One clearly needs to be wary of such essentialist simplification. For Turkey, it should also be noted how respondents saw many aspects of patriarchy as very geographically uneven, much stronger in rural areas than the cities. This suggests a more heterogeneous gender culture texture than represented. For England, even rudimentary feminist analysis would challenge strongly the idea that patriarchy is relatively weak, even for professional women. One might therefore ask quite why respondents had such a positive gender representation of England, which leads to the issue of assimilation.

To understand interviewees' highly positive representations of England, attention must consider their migrations' biographical contexts (Halfacree and Boyle, 1993; Barcus and Halfacree forthcoming). As suggested by the complex(ity) of entangled factors that brought about their relocations to England, migration is always situated within multiple strands and currents of lives lived. Present here may well have been strongly idealised positive representations of gender relations in England, and probably Europe generally, learnt from education, upbringing, news reports and so on. Such representations are unlikely to be erased completely post-relocation, especially if then reinforced by other experiences.

Following Röder's and Mühlau's (2014: 2) observations on international migrants in richer countries, whilst post-migration experience for Turkish men may often be downward occupational mobility, for highly-educated women –

demonstrated in this study – it is often one of upward occupational and social change. Educationally-rooted self-confidence and labour market engagement provide new and enhanced socio-economic resources and positions in society. Thus, as Röder and Mühlau (2014: 22) further observed, gender differences in assimilation trajectories 'point to interest- and power-based explanations, as women have a particular self-interest in embracing more egalitarian ideas and are frequently empowered by shifts in the control of resources'. More than this, however, a potential desire 'to escape gendered social control' (Erel, 2009: 38) may well already be present within the complex of biographically entangled reasons for moving to England. This can now move from latency to central consideration in post-relocation playing out of the migration. Thus, one does not need to be second generation to assimilate a normative gender role culture.

Concluding, this paper has shown via the example of gender roles how the differences that migration can make may only be appreciated when migration is conceptualised and studied as process rather than action. Whilst 'objective' factors, from labour market opportunities to anti-immigrant prejudice, work to shape this migrant experience, attention must also be paid in this context to how the migration 'works out' within the migrant's biographical life project.

Acknowledgements:-

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