Breaking the Power Dynamics Behind the Scenes of Turkish Cinema: A Head-count Research

Aybike Serttaş, İstanbul Aydın University, aybikeserttas@aydin.edu.tr

Tugay Sarıkaya, İstinye University, tugaysarikaya@gmail.com

Abstract: In this research, gender representation and equity in the Turkish cinema industry are investigated through a comprehensive analysis of the top 99 films based on ticket sales, utilizing data from Box Office Turkey. Drawing upon Foucault's concepts of power dynamics and discourse, Althusser's notion of ideological state apparatuses, and Laura Mulvey's concept of the "male gaze," the research compiles and categorizes the set crews of these films based on roles such as director, producer, and art director. By examining the gender composition of set crews across various departments, the study aims to illuminate patterns of representation and identify areas for improvement in fostering inclusivity and diversity within the Turkish cinema industry. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of gender dynamics in Turkish cinema and provide insights for shaping future policies and initiatives to promote gender equality and equitable opportunities for all genders, aligning with an emphasis on power relations and ideological reproduction within societal institutions. The study comprehensively analyzes the gender imbalance within the Turkish cinema industry and emphasizes the need to address systemic barriers and promote inclusivity to enrich storytelling and contribute to broader social justice and equality efforts.
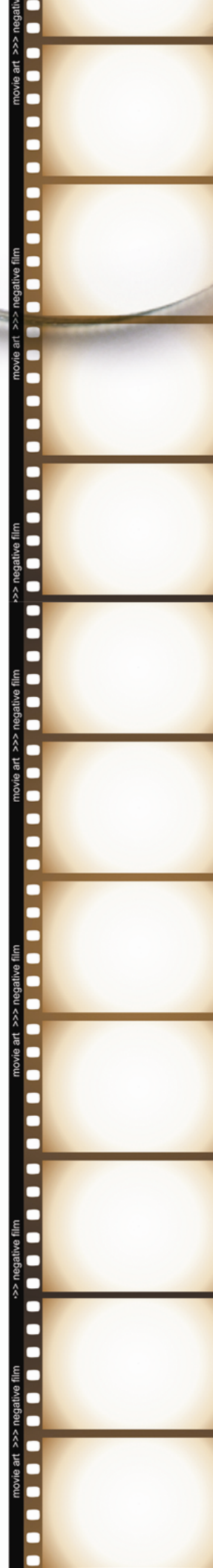
Keywords: Turkish cinema; gender equity; intersectionality; power dynamics; ideology; diversity; inclusion

Breaking the Power Dynamics Behind the Scenes of Turkish Cinema: A Head-count Research

Aybike Serttaş

Tugay Sarıkaya

Introduction

The cinema industry serves as both a mirror and a participant in societal norms, values, and power dynamics. Within this intricate landscape, gender inequality remains a pervasive challenge, with patriarchal hegemony exerting its influence through established power structures and discourse. The theories of power dynamics and discourse by Louis Althusser and Michel Foucault provide critical insights into how societal norms are regulated and knowledge is produced. Furthermore, Laura Mulvey's critique of the male gaze offers essential perspectives on how cinematic representations reinforce patriarchal power dynamics. This paper aims to deepen our understanding of patriarchal hegemony within the cinema industry by examining the unequal distribution of roles behind the scenes and the continued perpetuation of gendered representations. Such analysis reveals the systemic barriers that contribute to gender work inequalities in film.

Althusser's concept of ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) elucidates the mechanisms through which power operates within institutions to disseminate dominant ideologies and maintain social control (Althusser, 1971). In the context of cinema, the patriarchal system functions as an

ISA, perpetuating norms and values that uphold male dominance while marginalizing women. This is particularly evident in the unequal distribution of roles behind the camera, where women are frequently relegated to supportive positions. Such dynamics reinforce patriarchal power structures and limit women's agency (Althusser, 1971).

Foucault's concept of discourse highlights how power operates through the production and dissemination of knowledge, shaping societal norms and individual subjectivities (Foucault, 1972). In filmmaking, this discourse manifests through practices that perpetuate patriarchal ideologies. For instance, the representation of women through the male gaze, as discussed by Mulvey, objectifies and sexualizes female characters, reinforcing patriarchal power dynamics (Mulvey, 1975). This not only reflects dominant patriarchal ideologies but also contributes to their perpetuation by reinforcing gender binaries and constraining women's agency within film narratives. Moreover, Foucault's notion of disciplinary power elucidates how societal norms and behaviors are regulated, shaping individual subjectivities and perpetuating power differentials (Foucault, 1977). In the cinema industry, disciplinary power is evident in the hierarchical structures that confine women to subordinate roles, thereby restricting their agency and perpetuating gender inequalities.

As Foucault elucidates, creating social discourse, shaping collective memory, and fostering a common ideology are central to understanding societal power dynamics. His insights into discourse, knowledge production, and power relations provide valuable perspectives on how these processes operate and influence societal norms and ideologies, particularly in the context of gender work inequalities.

Recreating Power Dynamics Behind the Scenes: Gender Inequality in Cinema

As a powerful medium of communication and representation, cinema plays a crucial role in producing and disseminating discourse. Michel Foucault's analysis of power relations highlights how discourse operates through various institutions to regulate and shape knowledge, norms, and identities within society (Foucault, 1977). As a cultural institution, cinema contributes to this process by generating narratives, images, and representations that reflect and reinforce dominant ideologies. Through its storytelling, visual aesthetics, and character portrayals, cinema constructs and perpetuates societal norms, values, and beliefs, thereby solidifying existing ideologies.

Foucault's examination of disciplinary power further underscores how institutions exert control over individuals and shape their subjectivities through surveillance, discipline, and normalization (Foucault, 1977). In this context, cinema functions as a disciplinary mechanism by regulating and standardizing representations of gender, race, class, and other social categories. By

promoting certain narratives while marginalizing others, cinema normalizes dominant ideologies and silences dissenting voices, particularly those of women and marginalized groups.

Moreover, Foucault's concept of biopower illustrates how institutions govern populations and regulate bodies through mechanisms of control (Foucault, 1978). By portraying societal norms, behaviors, and values, cinema not only regulates bodies but also constructs identities. Idealized representations reinforce societal expectations and normalize specific ways of being and knowing, often sidelining diverse gender identities and experiences.

Within cinema production, the industry itself can be viewed as an ideological state apparatus (ISA), playing a central role in shaping societal norms, beliefs, and values through the creation and dissemination of films. Louis Althusser's concept of ideological reproduction posits that dominant ideologies are perpetuated through various institutions, including cultural forms such as cinema (Althusser, 1971). According to Althusser, ISAs disseminate and reinforce the ruling class's ideologies, maintaining social order and control. In the cinema context, this includes the family, education, religion, and media, all of which are instrumental in shaping individuals' beliefs, values, and identities.

Films often reflect and perpetuate the values, norms, and ideologies of the societies in which they are produced. Through narrative structures, character portrayals, and visual aesthetics,

cinema constructs and reinforces dominant ideologies, contributing to the reproduction of social norms and power structures. Gender roles and stereotypes are frequently depicted, with women often portrayed in subordinate or stereotypical roles while men are depicted as powerful or heroic figures. These representations not only reflect but also reinforce broader societal gender norms and power dynamics, thereby perpetuating patriarchal ideologies.

Furthermore, the production and distribution processes within the film industry are governed by economic and power dynamics that further entrench dominant ideologies. Major film studios and distribution channels wield significant influence over which films are produced, financed, and widely distributed. Consequently, films that challenge or deviate from dominant ideologies often struggle to secure funding or reach audiences, further entrenching existing power structures.

Althusser's framework of ideological reproduction helps contextualize the role of cinema in perpetuating dominant ideologies. During the production phase, elements such as scriptwriting, casting, directing, and editing serve as mechanisms through which these ideologies are constructed. For instance, the selection of scripts and casting decisions often reflect prevailing societal norms, prioritizing certain narratives and representations that align with dominant

ideologies. Directors and producers, as key agents in the industry, wield significant power in shaping the discourse surrounding societal issues and influencing audience perceptions.

Gender Discrimination and Inequality in Cinema

Gender identity significantly influences life opportunities, determining the relative advantages individuals experience and their ability to live free from violence or discrimination. The pursuit of gender equality is essential for fostering inclusive societies, eradicating harmful stereotypes, and amplifying the voices of marginalized groups. To achieve this, it is crucial to empower women and girls, ensure equal access to justice, and establish transparent, inclusive institutions at all levels.

Gender pay disparities are prevalent and stem from various factors. Firstly, the feminization of cultural sectors often leads to lower pay rates, as these fields predominantly employ women. While disparities may not exist within specific industries, they frequently arise between cultural sectors perceived as financially lucrative and those deemed less economically viable. Secondly, there are inconsistencies in compensation for equivalent work. Lastly, the informal and low-paying nature of many roles in the creative economy complicates efforts to address gender pay gaps, especially in environments where low or unpaid work is common.

Consequently, discussions about gender pay disparities are challenging to initiate and even harder to monitor and rectify (Breidenbach 2020; Noonan and Brock 2022).

The concept of intersectionality highlights how various dimensions of inequality—such as gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and age—intersect in individuals' lives, particularly for those in minority groups. This intersection can exacerbate experiences of gender inequality, compounding the challenges faced by marginalized individuals.

Discrimination against women and girls manifests in numerous ways, including societal perceptions of female inferiority and exclusion from spheres of power across cultural, political, economic, social, and religious domains. Such discrimination encompasses harmful practices, stereotypes, coercive marriages, modern servitude, human trafficking, and various forms of violence and exploitation. Furthermore, it includes systematic deprivation of educational and employment opportunities, infringement upon sexual and reproductive health rights, objectification in media representations, and devaluation of artistic contributions (Akser 2021).

According to UNESCO, gender equality is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for sustainable development. Since 2007, UNESCO has focused on gender equality through its Gender Equality Action Plan (2014-2021), which defines gender equality as the equitable distribution of rights, responsibilities, and opportunities among all individuals, regardless of

gender. This framework recognizes the diversity within demographic groups, including ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, indigenous communities, and persons with disabilities. Gender equality is not merely a "women's issue"; it concerns society as a whole, encompassing men, women, girls, and boys. It involves granting equal standing to all genders and enabling them to realize their full human rights and potential, thereby contributing to national, political, economic, social, and cultural advancement.

In the cultural sphere, the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions mandates parties to implement policies that support women in the cultural and creative industries. Effective policies aimed at fostering gender equality in these realms depend on robust, comprehensive data and inclusive dialogues among stakeholders from public, private, and civil sectors. Inadequate information can hinder the effectiveness of these policies.

A focused analysis by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) in 2017 revealed that, on average, women constitute 47% of individuals employed in artistic and creative industries across 72 countries. Despite variations among regions, these sectors are crucial for developing innovative policies to address the root causes of gender disparities. Like other professions, cultural work should adhere to equal opportunity policies, employment rights, and protections outlined in the

1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist. However, since cultural work is often categorized as 'non-standard'—characterized by freelance, part-time, project-based, precarious arrangements—these rights and protections are not consistently applied to individuals in creative occupations.

Connecting Theories and Approaches to Gender Work Inequality

Foucault's analysis of power relations reveals how discourse shapes societal norms and identities, regulating knowledge and behaviors within institutions, including cinema. The film industry serves as a disciplinary mechanism that normalizes representations of gender, often marginalizing women and reinforcing patriarchal ideologies. This aligns with Althusser's concept of ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), which perpetuate dominant ideologies through institutions like cinema. The unequal representation of genders in film production reflects broader societal power dynamics, where decision-making authority often rests with men, thereby limiting women's contributions and reinforcing existing inequalities.

Laura Mulvey's concept of the "male gaze" further illuminates how cinema perpetuates gender inequality. According to Mulvey, mainstream film often presents women as objects of visual pleasure for male spectators, reducing their roles to mere visual stimuli rather than fully realized characters. This objectification not only reinforces traditional gender roles but also

marginalizes women's narratives and experiences. By prioritizing male perspectives, cinema contributes to a culture that devalues women's contributions and perpetuates gender stereotypes.

Moreover, the intersectionality framework highlights how multiple forms of discrimination compound gender inequalities, particularly for women in marginalized communities. The cinema industry must address these systemic barriers to create a more equitable environment for all genders.

In conclusion, the interplay of Foucault's, Althusser's, and Mulvey's theories provides a comprehensive understanding of how gender discrimination and inequality manifest in the cinema industry. By recognizing the structural imbalances in work contributions and advocating for inclusive practices, the industry can begin to dismantle the entrenched power dynamics that perpetuate gender inequality and foster a more equitable cultural landscape

Diverse Voices: Women's Engagement in Cultural Expression and Representation Theory

Representation theory in cinema is a critical framework that explores how various social groups, identities, and experiences are portrayed in films (Hooks, 1992). It examines the implications of these representations for understanding cultural norms, power dynamics, and social justice issues (Gaines, 1996). This theory is essential because it shapes audience perceptions,

influences societal attitudes, and can either reinforce or challenge stereotypes and biases (Butler, 1990).

One key aspect of representation theory is the analysis of diversity and inclusion in cinema. This involves scrutinizing how different racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and other marginalized groups are depicted in films (Ahmed, 2012). Representation theory emphasizes the importance of authentic and multifaceted portrayals that genuinely reflect the diversity of human experiences (Hooks, 1992). It advocates for platforms that amplify underrepresented voices and challenge stereotypes that perpetuate inequality and discrimination (Gaines, 1996).

Moreover, representation theory addresses the power dynamics inherent in the production and consumption of cinema. It explores questions of authorship, agency, and the politics of representation within the film industry (Mulvey, 1975). By critically examining who has the power to create and control narratives, representation theory reveals issues of privilege, cultural hegemony, and the pressing need for more inclusive and equitable practices in filmmaking (Ahmed, 2012).

In the context of gender work balance, representation theory highlights the significant disparities in how women and diverse genders are represented both on-screen and off-screen. While women have made strides in cultural and creative sectors, their contributions often remain

marginalized or stereotyped. The film industry must address these imbalances to ensure that women's voices and experiences are authentically represented, thereby fostering a more equitable cultural landscape.

Representation theory also delves into the impact of stereotypes on marginalized communities. Stereotypical portrayals in cinema can perpetuate harmful narratives and reinforce existing biases, leading to the marginalization and stigmatization of certain groups (Merskin, 2011). Conversely, nuanced and authentic representations can challenge stereotypes, foster empathy, and promote social change (Davis, 2008). This is particularly relevant in the context of gender, where women's roles in film often reflect broader societal expectations and limitations.

The role of filmmakers and industry practices in shaping on-screen narratives is another crucial aspect of representation theory. Decisions made by directors, writers, and producers regarding casting, storytelling, and character development directly influence the diversity and inclusivity of cinematic representations (Diawara, 1993). Issues of authorship, cultural appropriation, and the gaze are central to discussions within representation theory, underscoring the complexities of power dynamics in the film industry (Hooks, 1996).

Additionally, representation theory extends beyond individual films to examine broader trends within cinematic discourse. Scholars analyze how dominant ideologies and cultural values

are reflected and contested through cinematic representations (Mulvey, 2009). This critical approach provides a deeper understanding of how cinema shapes societal attitudes toward identity, difference, and social justice issues (Hall, 2013).

Cultural Engagement and Gender Equity

When assessing cultural engagement, data reveals a nuanced picture. Cultural participation is often evaluated by national or regional governmental entities, with informative datasets typically including gender breakdowns. Despite women and diverse genders gaining visibility in the cultural and creative sectors, substantial work remains to be done to achieve gender equity in representation.

Reliable data is essential for informing cultural public policies aimed at fostering gender equity in the film industry. By collecting comprehensive data on gender distribution within specific roles and sectors, stakeholders can monitor progress and identify areas for improvement. "Headcount" data, which tracks the number of individuals employed across different roles and sectors, offers valuable insights into gender distribution and the effectiveness of gender equality initiatives. The film and television production sectors have emerged as leaders in adopting and enforcing gender equality measures. However, ongoing efforts are necessary to ensure that these initiatives translate into meaningful change. Collaborative efforts between civil society

organizations and international entities are vital for developing robust methodologies and generating shareable data. A regional perspective allows for a comprehensive assessment of the cultural landscape, considering both commonalities and disparities among countries.

In summary, the intersection of representation theory in cinema with the importance of generating reliable data and fostering gender equity underscores the need for comprehensive approaches to assessing participation and representation within cultural and creative sectors. By leveraging data-driven insights and collaborative efforts, stakeholders can work towards achieving greater gender equity and fostering more inclusive cultural environments in cinema and beyond. Representation theory not only highlights the significance of authentic portrayals of diverse identities but also serves as a call to action for the film industry to address gender imbalances in both representation and professional opportunities.

Methodology and Analysis

In this study, we analyzed Box Office Turkey data to identify the 99 films that attracted the largest audiences in the history of Turkish cinema. We compiled a comprehensive list of the crew members from these films using IMDB, categorizing them into various departments. These categories include:

- *Director*
- *Art Director*
- *Producer*
- *Sound Team*
- *Camera Team*
- *Casting Director*
- *Cinematography*

- *Composers*
- *Costume Designer*
- *Editor*
- *Regional Manager*
- *Make-up*
- *Script*
- *Set Decoration*
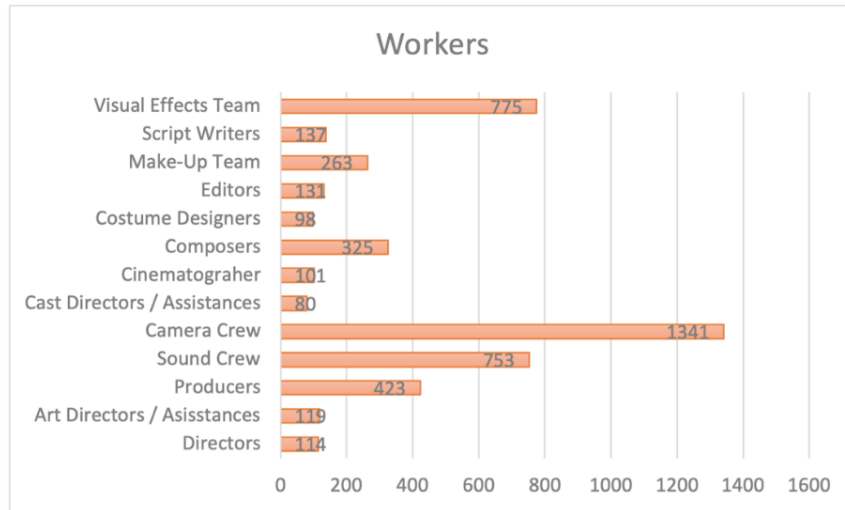- *Special Effects*
- *Visual Effects*

This approach allowed us to identify the total number of male and female employees working on the sets of the 99 films, resulting in a total of 4,660 crew members. Additionally, we recorded the year and genre of each film, enabling us to analyze the data based on these two variables. The movies on our list are ranked from the most-watched to the least-watched in Turkish cinemas.   Data. Source: All Time (Accessed: January 10, 2024)

All data were analyzed using the content analysis method, which encompasses both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The findings were organized into various categories, creating a cohesive and meaningful framework. This analysis will determine the ratio of men to women in Turkish cinema crews and draw conclusions based on the collected data. Quantitative content analysis facilitates the interpretation of data by converting it into statistical formats. In this study, we employed various analytical methods, including frequency analysis, standard deviation, mean calculations, T-tests, chi-square analysis, regression, and percentage calculations (Gündüz

et al., 2017, p. 713). The quantitative content analysis technique is crucial for minimizing bias in the research, aiming for more objective results. This approach was particularly suited for tabulating data and utilizing various graphs in the analysis section. Additionally, since the data will be analyzed through averaging and percentage calculations, it supports the validity of the research. Given that the categories discussed in this research are standardized based on the departmental roles required on a film set, the likelihood of data discrepancies or inconsistent results upon repetition is reduced. In summary, consistency and objectivity were prioritized in the use of quantitative content analysis, establishing a strong connection between the research framework and the analysis conducted.

Findings: Each category was presented as a subheading in the findings of this research. Both the internal dynamics of each category and their interrelationships were examined and analyzed. A total of 4,660 employees were identified across the 99 films. The distribution of these employees by department is shown in the table below. Table 1 – Film Crews by Departments

Workers

- Visual Effects Team: 775
- Script Writers: 137
- Make-Up Team: 263
- Editors: 131
- Costume Designers: 98
- Composers: 325
- Cinematograher: 101
- Cast Directors / Assistances: 80
- Camera Crew: 1341
- Sound Crew: 753
- Producers: 423
- Art Directors / Asisstances: 119
- Directors: 114

Director: 114 directors were detected in the data from 99 films. As some films have more than one director, the total number of directors is higher than the number of films. The rate of male directors in films is significantly higher than the rate of female directors. Only 3 out of 99 films had female directors, and the first directors of 97 films were male. Out of the 114 directors, only 4 were women. Table 2 - Gender Distribution of Directors:
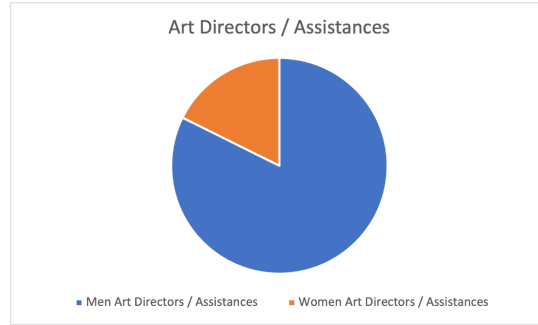

Directors

- Women Directors
- Men Directors
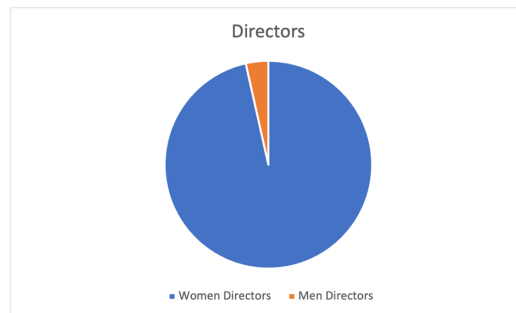
To present the situation more strikingly, the ratio of male directors to female directors in the data obtained is 96.49%. These figures show that male directors dominate the film industry. The data clearly illustrates a significant gender imbalance in the film industry, with male directors

overwhelmingly dominating the field. The ratio of 96.49% male directors to 3.51% female directors is a stark reminder of the challenges women face in gaining recognition and opportunities in filmmaking. Addressing this imbalance is essential for fostering a more inclusive and representative film industry, where diverse voices and perspectives can thrive. As the industry evolves, it is crucial to implement strategies that not only elevate female directors but also enrich the narratives presented on screen, ultimately contributing to a more equitable cultural landscape.

From a theoretical perspective, Laura Mulvey's concept of the "male gaze" illustrates how mainstream cinema often prioritizes male viewpoints, contributing to the underrepresentation of women. Additionally, Michel Foucault's theories on power dynamics reveal how societal structures perpetuate the dominance of male voices in filmmaking. Together, these frameworks underscore the urgent need for strategies that promote gender equity and diverse narratives in the film industry.

Art Directors / Assistants: 119 art directors/assistants were identified in the 99 films. Art directors are found more than one for some films. For some films, no art director has been identified. Art director information could not be found for eight films. In 16 films, there were several art directors and assistants. Out of the total, 98 were male and 21 were female. Table 3 Gender Distribution of Art Directors and Assistants:

Art Directors / Assistances

■ Men Art Directors / Assistances   ■ Women Art Directors / Assistances

It was found that there is a significant difference between men and women in the category of art directors and assistants. The ratio of men to women in this category is 82.35%, indicating a male dominance. Only 14 films have female art directors, and all of these belong to the drama or comedy genre. On the other hand, in the remaining 85 films, men predominantly serve as art directors.

The data highlights a significant gender disparity among art directors and their assistants in the film industry, with a ratio of 82.35% male to 17.65% female. This imbalance not only reflects the challenges women face in gaining recognition in this field but also has broader implications for the diversity and richness of cinematic storytelling. Addressing these disparities is crucial for fostering a more inclusive film industry, where diverse artistic voices can contribute to the visual storytelling that shapes cultural narratives. Moving forward, it is essential to implement strategies that support and empower women in art direction roles, ultimately enriching the artistic landscape of cinema.

Producers: 97 films were analyzed, which had a collective count of 423 producers. The producers included executive producers and all other types, who were considered under the same category. It was found that almost all movies had more than one producer. Out of these 97 films, only 59 had female producers, while all of them had at least one male producer. No film was found where all the producers were women. The gender distribution of producers in these 97 films was 320 men and 103 women. This data has been proportionally presented in the table. Table 4 – Gender Distribution of Producers:
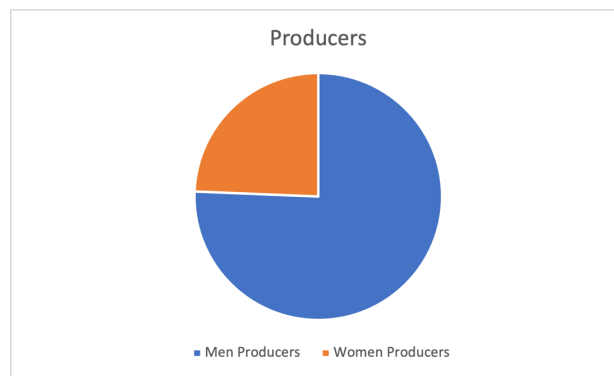
Proportionally, the ratio of female producers to male producers was found to be approximately 1 in 4. Surprisingly, only male producers were involved in 39 films. Not a single movie had exclusively female producers. The gender distribution among producers in the analyzed films reveals a significant imbalance, with 320 male producers compared to 103 female producers, resulting in a ratio of approximately 1 female producer for every 4 male producers. This stark disparity underscores the prevailing male dominance in production roles, which not only

influences the types of stories being told but also the perspectives through which they are presented. The absence of any films with exclusively female producers and the fact that 39 films featured only male producers highlight entrenched gender hierarchies and systemic barriers that limit women's participation in key decision-making roles within the industry.

Sound Crew: A total of 97 films were examined, and their sound crews were identified. However, the sound crews for two movies could not be found. Across the 97 films, a total of 753 employees were identified as working in the sound departments. Out of these, 719 were men and only 34 were women. The proportional appearance of men and women in the sound departments can be seen in the table. Table 5 - Gender Distribution of Sound Crew (Men and Women)

Sound Crew

■ Men ■ Women
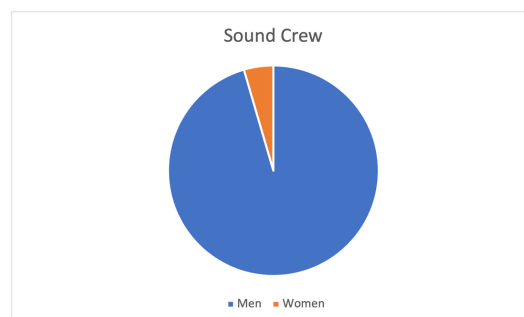
In all 97 films, there were male crew members present, but in 71 of these films, only male sound crews were detected. Unfortunately, there is not any sound crew that is made up entirely of women that has been identified yet. However, 26 films did have female employees included in their sound crews. Although 26 films incorporated female employees within their sound crews, the absence of

any all-female sound crew underscores ongoing systemic barriers that limit women's participation in key technical roles in the industry.

Camera Crew: Out of the 99 films, camera crews were identified in 94 films. However, in 5 films, camera crews were not identified, and among those 5, only 2 were animated films. Therefore, there was no meaningful camera crew in those two animated films. Male employees were present in all 94 films for which camera crews were identified. Female employees were present in 47 of those 94 films, working alongside male employees. In the other 47 films, camera crews consisted only of men. 1341 people were part of the camera crews in the 94 films where camera crews were identified. Out of these, 1252 were male employees, while only 88 were female employees. To summarize proportionally, the data can be represented in a table. Table 6 - Gender Distribution of Camera Crew:
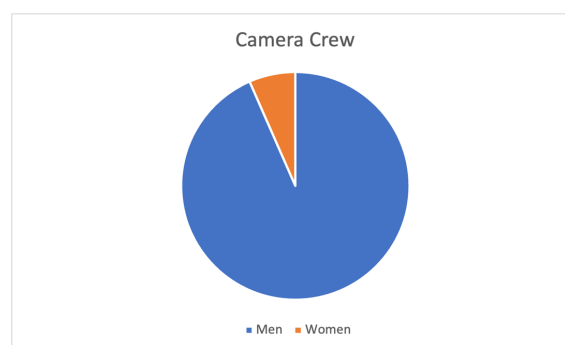
When evaluated as a percentage, only 6.5% of camera crew workers are women, while 93.5% are men. This stark disparity not only highlights the challenges women face in accessing

roles within the camera department but also raises concerns about the diversity of perspectives and creativity in visual storytelling, which are essential for a more inclusive cinematic landscape.

Casting Director: In 40 out of 99 films, the casting director or assistant was not found. However, in the remaining 59 films, one or more people were identified for this category, making 80 workers identified. Out of these 80 workers, 30 are men and 50 are women. The proportional distribution is as follows. Table 7 - Gender Distribution of Cast Directors and Assistants:
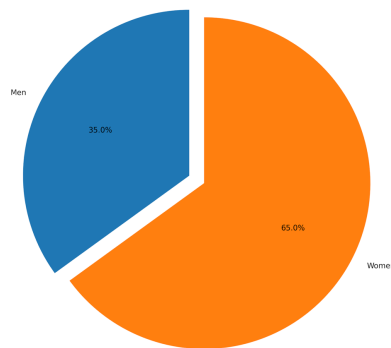
It has been determined that among the casting directors and assistants, women are more prominent than men. On the other hand, it can be said that the importance of casting in films generally remains in the background. The casting team of many films could not be accessed. It can be said from the data obtained that castings are not taken seriously, even in Turkey's most-watched films. From a theoretical perspective, this situation can be examined through representation theory, which emphasizes the importance of diverse voices in shaping narratives. While the presence of women in casting roles is encouraging, the lack of visibility and recognition for casting teams,

particularly in Turkey's most watched films, suggests that their contributions are not fully acknowledged. This oversight can perpetuate a cycle where casting is seen as ancillary rather than integral to storytelling, undermining the potential impact of diverse casting choices on audience perceptions and cultural narratives.

Furthermore, the difficulty in accessing casting team information across many films raises questions about transparency and accountability within the industry. This lack of access may reflect systemic barriers that hinder the acknowledgment of casting as a critical component of film production. Overall, while the representation of women in casting is a positive development, it is essential to elevate the importance of casting in the filmmaking process to ensure that diverse perspectives are recognized and valued in shaping cinematic narratives.

Cinematographers: 100 men identified in this area. This single woman shares the task with the man. Apart from that, men are dominant in all 94 films. At this point, there is no need for any tables or proportional values. This overwhelming dominance of men not only reflects the systemic barriers that women face in gaining recognition and opportunities but also underscores the need for critical evaluations of the power dynamics at play.

Furthermore, the fact that men dominate in all **94 films** indicates a pervasive culture that prioritizes male perspectives and narratives, limiting the diversity of voices and stories represented

in cinema. This situation calls for an urgent reassessment of industry practices and policies to promote gender equity, ensuring that women are not just present but are empowered to contribute meaningfully to the creative process.

Composers: Data was collected on the music composers for 94 films. The company names were not counted, and individuals behind the music production companies were not included in the data. A total of 325 people were identified, with 300 men and 25 women. Women were only involved in the composition teams of 17 films, with only two films having exclusively women composers. Men outnumbered women in all 92 films. The percentage of men among composers was 92.31%, while women constituted 7.69%. Table 8 - Gender Distribution of Composers:
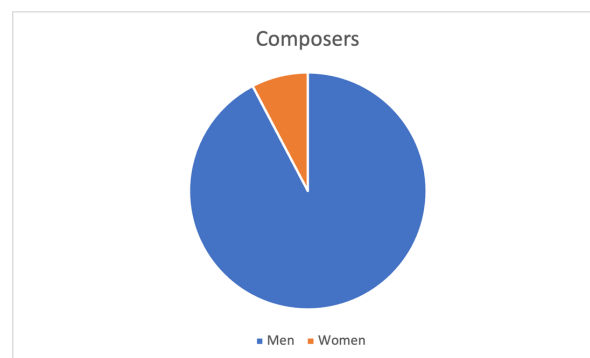
Costume Designers: Costume design film crews could be accessed for 74 films. Costume design data for 25 films could not be determined. A total of 98 people were reached through the detected films. Of the people reached, 14 were men and 84 were women. Although all of the people involved in costume design in 8 films are men, there is at least one female costume designer in all

the remaining 66 films. In 60 films, costume designers are only women. When we consider the 99

films, it can be seen that female costume designers are at the forefront of Turkish cinema, contrary

to the general situation. At this point, with the casting director discussed in the previous categories,

it constitutes two areas where women are at the forefront. The proportional distribution is given in

the table. Table 9 - Gender Distribution of Costume Designers:
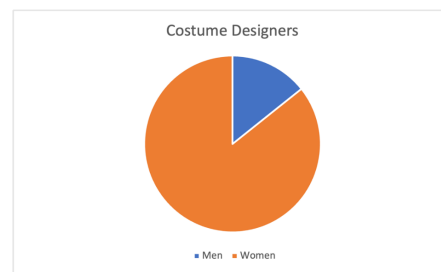

According to the data obtained, the percentage of women in the field of costume designers

is 85.71%. For men, the rate is 14.19%.

The data reveals a striking gender disparity in the field of costume design, with women

comprising **85.71%** of costume designers compared to just **14.19%** for men, indicating that this

area of film production is predominantly female-dominated and reflects a unique dynamic within

the industry where women's contributions are significantly more recognized and valued.

Editors: In total, information about the editors of 94 films was obtained. In the data, the superiority

in the number of men is noteworthy. In total, information about 131 editors was obtained for 94

films. Of the identified editors, 120 are men, and 11 are women. However, there are five films in

which only women were editors. Male editors edit for the remaining 126 films. The proportional distribution is shown in the template below.

The analysis of the editing roles across 94 films reveals a significant gender imbalance, with 120 male editors compared to only 11 female editors, underscoring the persistent dominance of men in this critical area of film production. From a theoretical standpoint, this disparity can be examined through gender theory, which explores how societal norms and structures perpetuate unequal representation in various professions, including film editing. The fact that only **five films** featured exclusively female editors further highlights the systemic barriers women face in gaining recognition and opportunities in editing roles, suggesting a need for initiatives that promote gender equity and support diverse voices in the editing room. Table 10 Gender Distribution of Editors
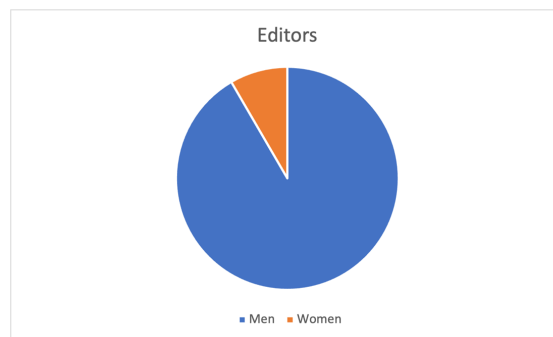

Make-up Artists: Among the 99 films, the make-up team could not be identified in 29 of them. One or more people were reached from the remaining 70 films. A total of 263 people were identified under this category. Of this number, 113 are men and 150 are women. Eighteen films

whose makeup team consisted only of women were identified. Similarly, the number of films in which the makeup team consists only of men is 13. In the remaining 39 films for which data was determined, both men and women work. Unlike all other departments, make-up teams are one of the few crews where a balance between men and women is achieved. The proportional distribution is as follows. Table 11 - Gender Distribution of Make-up Team:
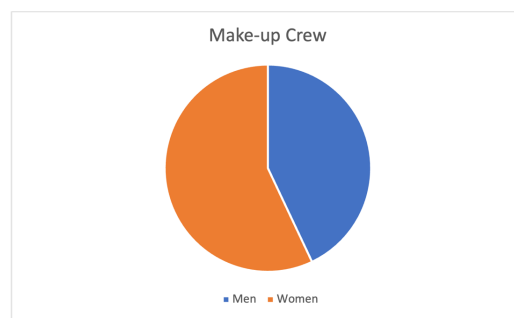
Screenwriters: One or more screenwriters were obtained for all 99 films. In total, this number is 137. Among the 137 script writers obtained, the rate of female script writers is 18. The number of male screenwriters is 119. 10 films were identified where only women were screenwriters. There is at least one male script writer in the remaining 89 films. The number of films written only by men is 82. In light of the data, it would not be wrong to say that men have a say in most of the scripts written in the cinema industry. The proportional distribution is as in the template below.

Table 12 – Gender Distribution of Script Writers:

■Men ■Women
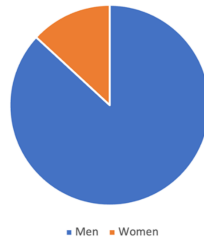
The distribution of men and women among script writers is significantly parallel to that of other crews. The analysis of screenwriters across 99 films highlights a significant gender disparity, with only 18 female screenwriters out of 137 total, indicating that men predominantly shape the narratives in the cinema industry. From the perspective of representation theory, this imbalance suggests that the stories being told are largely filtered through male experiences and viewpoints, which can limit the diversity of narratives and perspectives represented in film. The presence of 10 films with exclusively female screenwriters contrasts sharply with the 82 films penned solely by men, reinforcing the notion that male voices dominate the scripting process. This lack of gender diversity in screenwriting not only affects the types of stories that are told but also perpetuates a cultural narrative that may overlook or misrepresent women's experiences, underscoring the need for greater inclusivity in the creative processes of filmmaking.

Visual Effects Artists: Information was obtained about the visual effects supervisors who worked on 96 films in total. The total number of employees is 775. 713 of these people are men, and 62 are women. No crew that only women could be identified. There are male workers in all the films.

However, there are 57 films in which only men worked. The proportional distribution is as follows.

Table 13 - Gender Distribution of Visual Designers:
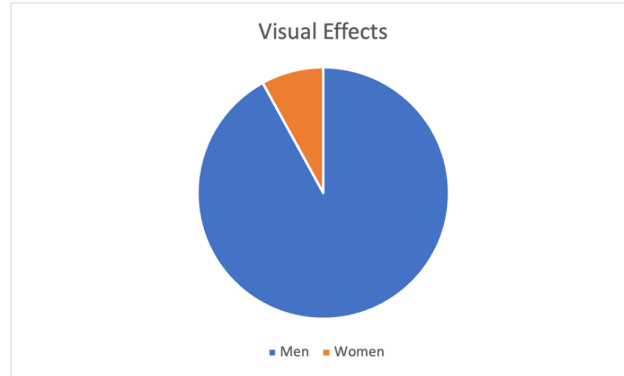
Others: While preparing the data set, special effects, set decoration, and regional management staff were also tried to determine. However, the data could not reveal a meaningful difference between men and women. The data obtained from movies for these categories is relatively low. However, data suggests that men dominate the fields for the area management and special effects categories, but it is insufficient. For this reason, these categories have been excluded from the study.

Comparative Analysis of Data

As a result of the above analyses, the power of men in the Turkish cinema industry is evident. Women's influence seems to be greater in only three divisions of labor. It is not easy to obtain data on whether women will increase their influence or equalize it with men in all other departments in the short term. Below, you can compare all labor divisions according to their male and female ratios. In total, 4009 male and 651 female employees were identified in all crews.
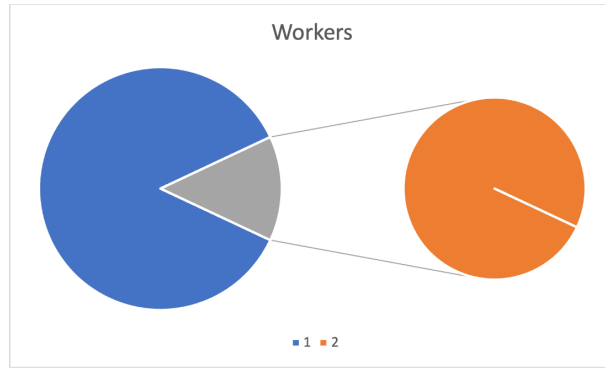
Table 14 – Film Crew Numbers

In addition, the distribution of men and women according to departments is as follows.
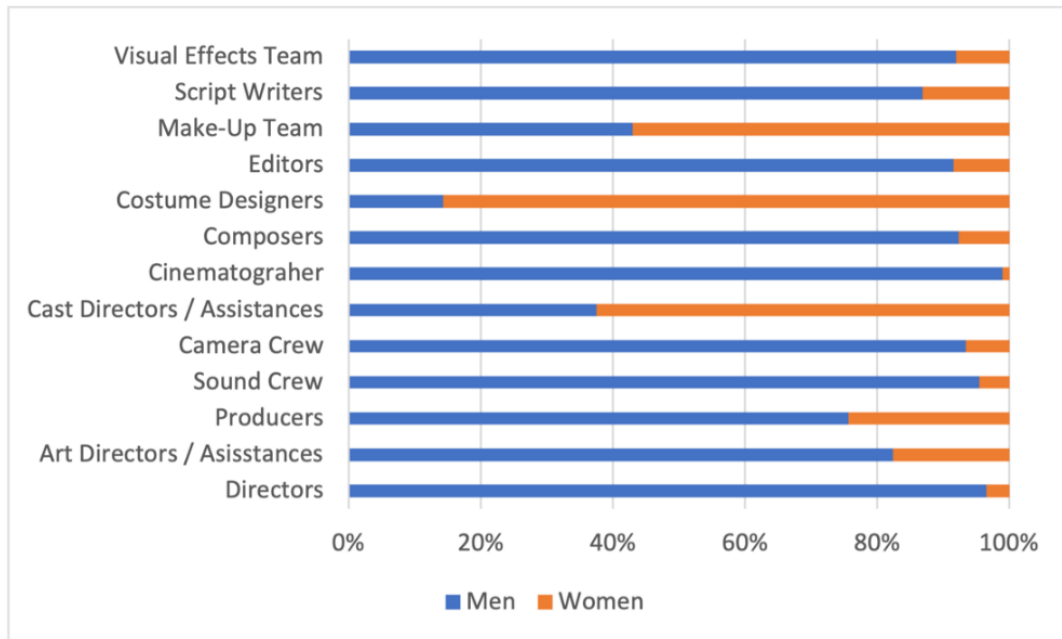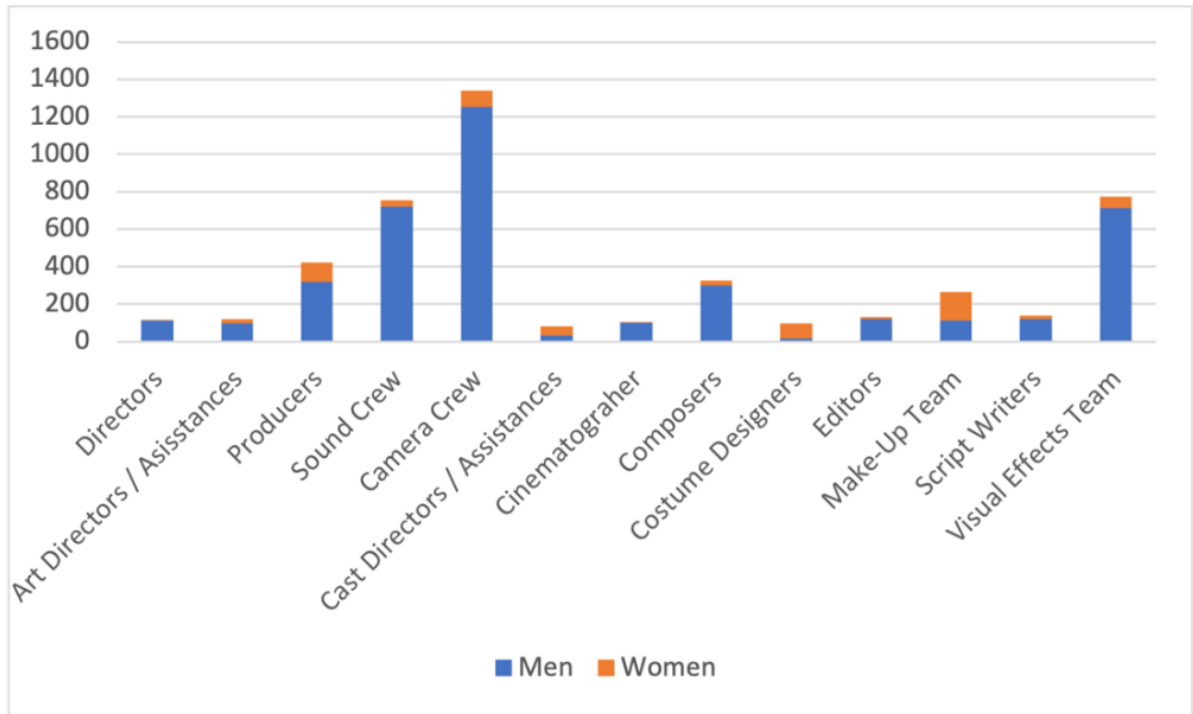

Table 1 - Gender Distribution

Table 2 - Gender Distribution of Crews

It was determined that men were more effective in 10 of the 13 categories and women in 3

categories. However, in the big picture, men overwhelmingly dominate the cinema industry in

Turkey. The analyses clearly illustrate the dominance of men in the Turkish cinema industry, with

85.89% of employees being male and only 13.95% female, reflecting a significant gender

imbalance across various labor divisions. This disparity can be understood through Foucault's

theory of power, which posits that power is not merely held by individuals but is distributed across

societal structures and institutions, influencing how roles and identities are constructed within the

industry. While women have a more substantial presence in three specific divisions, their overall

influence remains limited, indicating that the existing power dynamics perpetuate male dominance

and marginalize women's contributions. The fact that men are more effective in 10 out of 13 categories further reinforces these power relations, which can create barriers to women's full participation and recognition in the filmmaking process. In light of these findings, it is crucial to implement targeted initiatives and policies aimed at increasing women's representation and influence across all departments to foster a more equitable and diverse cinematic landscape.

Conclusion

Examining gender representation behind the camera in the Turkish cinema industry reflects a familiar global pattern, where women remain relegated to stereotypical roles such as make-up and costumes despite advancements in various sectors. Drawing on Foucault's theories of power and discourse, we see how men dominate positions of influence, shaping meaning and images within the industry, while the underrepresentation of women in key creative roles perpetuates gender stereotypes and limits the diversity of narratives depicted on screen. This aligns with Laura Mulvey's notion of the male gaze, which highlights how women are often objectified and marginalized in both production and representation, further underscoring the need to critically examine power dynamics and inequalities within the film industry.

Moreover, the significance of generating reliable data is paramount for fostering gender equity initiatives within cultural and creative sectors. The headcount data provides valuable

insights into gender distribution, serving as a tool for monitoring progress and identifying areas for improvement. Collaborative efforts between stakeholders, including civil society organizations and international entities, are essential for developing robust methodologies that promote inclusivity and equity.

Improving working conditions and fostering inclusivity in the film industry is imperative to ensure a safe environment for all genders, including marginalized groups. Encouraging their participation in film production, policymaking, and decision-making processes is vital for addressing existing disparities and promoting diversity. By integrating a gender perspective into filmmaking and recognizing the prevalent misogyny within the industry, we can dismantle harmful stereotypes and foster a culture of respect and collaboration.

Foucault's emphasis on discourse and power dynamics, combined with Althusser's concept of ideological state apparatuses, provides valuable insights into cinema's role in shaping societal norms and ideologies. Cinema functions as a social device for creating and perpetuating ideology through its production and dissemination, reflecting and reproducing dominant ideologies via institutional practices. The hierarchical structures within the industry replicate broader power dynamics, regulating bodies and shaping subjectivities, ultimately normalizing specific ways of being and knowing.

In conclusion, the persistent gender imbalance behind the camera in the Turkish cinema industry underscores the importance of addressing systemic barriers and promoting greater representation and inclusion. By embracing diverse perspectives and supporting initiatives to empower women in creative roles, the industry can enrich storytelling and contribute to broader efforts toward social justice and equality, fostering a more inclusive and equitable cultural landscape.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Duke University Press.

Akser, M. (2021). Diversity and Inclusion in Film, Television and Media Sector: Policy Alternatives for an Inclusive Film Industry and Training. *CINEJ Cinema Journal*, *9*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.5195/cinej.2021.414

Althusser, L. (1971). Ideology and ideological state apparatuses. In Lenin and philosophy and other essays *Monthly Review Press*, (pp. 127-186).

Bielby, D. D. (2013). Gender inequality in culture industries. In *The routledge companion to media & gender* (pp. 137-146). Routledge.

Breidenbach, A. (2020). Festival Mamas Building the Women's Club: A Case Study. *Journal of Film and Video*, *72*(1–2), 73–79. https://doi.org/10.5406/jfilmvideo.72.1-2.0073

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Routledge.

Davis, J. (2008). Moving Images of Stereotypes: Representations of Race in Films. *Journal of Media Studies, 12(3), 45–62.*

Diawara, M. (1993). The Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance. *Screen,*

34(2), 175–189.

Dinç, E., & Akser, M. (2019). *Four Women in the Harem* (1965) by Halit Refiğ: The Construction of "National Cinema" in Turkey. *Journal of Film and Video*, *71*(4), 51–64. https://doi.org/10.5406/jfilmvideo.71.4.0051

Dyer, R. (1997). *White*. Routledge.

Ehrich, M.E., Burgdorf, K., Samoilova, Z. *et al.* The film festival sector and its networked structures of gender inequality. *Applied Network Science* 7, 20 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1007/s41109-022-00457-z

Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge*. Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punishment: The birth of the prison*. Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality: An introduction*. Vintage Books.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, 1972-1977. Pantheon Books.

Gaines, J. (1996). White Privilege and Looking Relations: Race and Gender in Feminist Film Theory. *Screen*, 37(4), 369–379.

Gürkan, H. (2019). The experiences of women professionals in the film industry in Turkey: A gender-based study. *Acta universitatis sapientiae, film and media studies*, (16), 205-219.

Gündüz, M., Başpinar, Z., & Büyükkarci, A. (2017). 2000-2015 Yılları Arasında Değer Eğitimi Üzerine Yapılan Doktora Tezlerinin İçerik Analizi. *Dicle Üniversitesi Ziya Gökalp Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, (31), 705-718.

Gül, S. S., & Nizam, Ö. K. (2021). Sosyal bilimlerde içerik ve söylem analizi. *Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi*, (42), 181-198.

Hall, S. (1997). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Sage Publications.

Hall, S. (2013). Encoding/Decoding. In *Media and Cultural Studies: KeyWorks*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Hooks, B. (1996). *Reel to Real: Race, Sex, and Class at the Movies*. Routledge.

Hooks, B. (1992). *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. South End Press.

Merskin, D. (2011). *The SAGE Handbook of Gender and Communication*. Sage Publications.

Mulvey, L. (1975). Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. *Screen,* 16(3), 6–18.

Mulvey, L. (2009). *Visual and Other Pleasures*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Noonan, C., & Brock, M. (2022). Screen agencies as cultural intermediaries: Delivering gender equality in the film and television sectors? *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *26*(3), 408-427. https://doi.org/10.1177/13675494221134342

Park, M. M.-W. (2022). Othering New Women: A Multimodal Approach to The Hymn of Death. *CINEJ Cinema Journal*, *11*(1), 289–315. https://doi.org/10.5195/cinej.2023.481

Uğur Tanrıöver, H. (2017). Women as film directors in Turkish cinema. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, *24*(4), 321-335. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506816649985

All times (no date) *Box Office Türkiye*. Available at: https://boxofficeturkiye.com/tumzamanlar

(Accessed: 10 January 2024).

UN Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner, "International Women's Day Statement by United Nations Human Rights Experts," 6 March 2020, available at www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/ DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25673&LangID=E (Accessed: 10 January 2024).

UNESCO, "Priority Gender Equality Action Plan (2014/2021)", 2014, p.11, available at

https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000227222/PDF/227222eng.pdf.multi (Accessed: 10 January 2024).

UNESCO Institute for Statistics, "Precarious situation for women working in the field of culture", September 2017, available at fs47-precarious-situation-women-working-fieldculture-2017-en.pdf (unesco.org) (Accessed: 10 January 2024).

UNESCO, "1980 Recommendation concerning the Status of Artist", available at https://en.unesco.org/ creativity/governance/status-artist (Accessed: 10 January 2024).

UNESCO, "Freedom and Creativity: defending art, defending diversity", 2005 Convention Global Report series, 2020, available at https://en.unesco.org/ creativity/publications/freedom-creativity-defending-artdefending (Accessed: 10 January 2024).