Gender as Symbolic Capital and Violence: The Case of Corporate Elites in Turkey

Abstract

Based on a Bourdieusian approach, drawing on qualitative analyses of 63 life interviews, our study demonstrates that gender is performed as both symbolic capital and violence by corporate elites within the dominant ideologies of patriarchy and family in Turkey. Our analysis reveals that, in the male-dominated context of Turkey, female elites appear to favour male alliances as a tactical move in order to acquire and maintain status in their organizations, whereas male elites appear to remain blind to the privileges and constraints of their own gendered experience of symbolic capital and violence. Our study also illustrates that gender order is still preserved, despite beliefs to the contrary that equality in education, skills, experience and job performance may liberate women and men from gender-based outcomes at work.

Keywords: Gender, Corporate Elites, Bourdieu, Symbolic Capital, Symbolic Violence, Turkey

Introduction

Business elites have been relatively well studied in terms of gender representation. In particular, recent years have witnessed an explosion of research on gender equality in the corporate boardroom from different perspectives (Sayce and Özbilgin, 2012; Seierstad and Opsahl, 2011; Terjesen, Sealy and Singh, 2009; Torchia, Calabro and Huse, 2011). However, there have been recent calls to transcend head counting and to reassess and reveal hidden bases of power, resources, procedures, disadvantage and courses of action that lead to gendered organizational outcomes (Broadbridge and Simpson, 2011), as these intersect with other aspects of social and personal lives (Özbilgin et al., 2011).

In order to address this demand, we mobilize Bourdieusian notions of symbolic capital and violence with a view to framing gendered outcomes at work among corporate elites. Previous literature on gender at work has been rather polarized in framing gender either as a resource, referring to male privilege in accessing sources of power (Collinson and Hearn, 2005; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Kerfoot and Knights, 1998; Mumby, 1998), or as female disadvantage in accessing resources, due to various structural and organizational considerations (Acker, 1990; Gherardi and Poggio, 2001; Hultin and Szulkin, 1999; Kumra and Vinnicombe, 2008; Phillips, 2005). The theory of Bourdieu helps us to bridge these disparate discourses and demonstrate how gender is presented in relation to patriarchy and family relations. Hence, rather than analyzing how gender is practised in different organizational contexts, we draw on a relational perspective in order to explore the varied ways in which gender serves as a resource (capital) and as a form of penalty (violence) concurrently. A large proportion of studies informed by a Bourdieusian approach that consider the gendered aspect of symbolic violence, including Bourdieu's own work (Bourdieu, 2002), presuppose that this is mainly a female experience towards a well-established patriarchy. Although we totally agree that women's dominated position in the patriarchal structures is a meticulously documented fact, we underline that this gendered violence covers not only women, but also men, even if they occupy privileged and elite positions, as was the case in our research. Hence by using the concepts of symbolic capital and symbolic violence our study contributes to extending Bourdieu's arguments to the field of gender, work and organization in relation to corporate elites. It does this by exposing the social and cultural dynamics which impact on the gendered experiences of business elites, both male and female, in the context of Turkey where conventionally gender is thought to only apply to women. We also aim to understand how elites as 'people holding positions of dominance in business organizations and who may under certain circumstances have certain

additional powers available to them' (Scott, 2008: 37) experience work and life at the interplay of patriarchy and family relations in the Turkish context.

Turkey is a developing country with a high growth potential, ranked as the eighteenth biggest global economy. As a successor to the Ottoman Empire, Turkey has aspirations to embrace European values since its foundation. Unsurprisingly, the Turkish Republic has been experiencing oscillations between traditional and modern values that also shape business and gender relations. Although the main challenges to gender equality are still valid (Müftüler-Baç, 2012: 14), Turkey presents a polarized case of gender equality, in which there is a correlation between level of education and access to gender equality (Özbilgin, 2000). Moreover, there is a growing sense of retrenchment in terms of gender equality in Turkey, owing to the ongoing retraditionalization of gender roles in the country over the last two decades (Coşar and Yeğenoğlu, 2011: 567-568). Turkey therefore provides an important context in which to study continuity and change in gender issues that could lead to further questions regarding the position of gender among Turkish corporate elites.

We first provide discussions on symbolic capital and violence and their interplay with gender to develop the contribution of Bourdieu to organization studies (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008; Everett, 2002; Özbilgin and Tatli, 2005), focusing on gender and elites. We then discuss the business and cultural context of Turkey, and demonstrate the importance of the family and its relationship to professionalism. In the next section, data drawn from a large qualitative field study on corporate elites is presented. Finally, we illustrate the utility of studying gender as symbolic capital and violence through a study of gender among corporate elites in Turkey. We suggest that, in relation to the peculiar conditions affecting Turkish governance mechanisms, gender represents both symbolic capital and violence for male and female members of corporate elites in the Turkish business context. Therefore efforts for

gender equality should be tailored to capture different choices and chances of women and men in the gender order of Turkey.

Gender as a Symbolic Capital and Violence: The Case of Corporate Elites

Taking the *domination* phenomenon as the main axis of his theoretical framework, Pierre Bourdieu made considerable contributions to contemporary social theory. Bourdieu's originality stems from the fact that he was able to reconfigure Marxist concepts in a more culture-oriented analysis, and meticulously nuance them to distil a theory much more adapted to the complexity of facets of social life in the twentieth century. He argued that the most effective domination takes place in the appropriation of culture for its exploitation as a strategy, instead of its mechanical determination by the economic infrastructure.

Initially, Bourdieu reinterpreted the concept of capital, which was considered in Marxist debates exclusively as an economic asset, having the power to determine social forms (Bourdieu, 2003). Consequently, Bourdieu (1980) not only reinterpreted the notion of capital in terms of a pluralistic reading, but also distinguished forms of capital on the basis of their social function, from which a system of reciprocal actions develops. Bourdieu (1980) hence provides an understanding of capital in relation to the field of social, economic and political relations (Özbilgin and Tatli, 2011).

In Bourdieu's theorization, economic capital (money as an accumulated and market-oriented asset), and culture (non-material acquisitions, such as knowledge acquired through family, social environment, school, etc.) may be accumulated and mobilized as a strategy of domination at an individual, as well as a class level. Moreover, social capital, being the networks of relationships enjoyed by an individual, also plays a crucial role in his/her social positioning. Although every individual is born into a culturally determined circle of socialization (habitus), he/she continuously adds new elements to enrich the cultural capital in both structured (class or layer characteristics) and specific (individual) ways. The latter

refers to a system of cultural acquisitions, including reputation and prestige, which can be mobilized as symbolic tokens for attaining more varied and prolific resources (Bourdieu, 2003). Bourdieu stresses that all kinds of capital also function symbolically, due to their capacity to be converted into symbolic forms of domination.

Within this framework, Bourdieu (1994, 1998) defines symbolic capital as the collection of resources and the sum of an individual's symbolic cultural acquisitions (diplomas, titles, affiliations, etc.), which are mobilized to accrue meaning, value and power. Symbolic capital in the case of a zero sum social game, in which there are clear winners and losers, results in symbolic violence, a form of penalty that losers experience in the game.

Bourdieu (2001) defines symbolic violence as the downgrading of one's symbolic value, worth, resources and skills. He stresses that symbolic violence is an omnipresent ideology, which is deeply embedded in social action. In other words, symbolic violence is an alternative tool in understanding and analyzing legitimate domination (Robinson and Kerr, 2009: 881).

In the words of Bourdieu, 'the effect of symbolic domination, whether it is based on ethnic, gender, cultural or linguistic distinctions, is exerted not in the pure logic of consciousness but through the schemes of perception, appreciation and action that are constitutive of habitus and which, below the level of the consciousness and the controls of the will, set up a cognitive relationship that is profoundly obscure to itself' (Bourdieu, 2001: 37). Drawing on interviews with the women and men in corporate elites, this paper demonstrates the schemes of perception, appreciation and action that are constitutive of macro patriarchal ideology and taken-for-granted structure of the elites as part of symbolic violence. It reveals how such structures are reproduced and maintained, as well as the threads that link broader social structures (such as ideology) to cognitive structures of gender in terms of symbolic arrangements (Everett, 2002).

Both women and men accrue symbolic capital to arrive at, or to retain their elite status in the corporate echelons. At the same time, for women and for men, the structure of domination seems natural, self-evident and legitimate as a result of the operation of symbolic capital and violence (Emirbayer and Johnson, 2008: 31). Furthermore, the concept of symbolic violence enables us to explain how even the dominated may maintain and reproduce such structures by their actions in the field (Bourdieu, 2001). It also demonstrates how the dominated act, the way domination affects them, and how they comply or maintain these values intentionally or unintentionally (Corsun and Costen, 2001; Forbes, 2002).

Accordingly, we frame gender as symbolic capital and violence, which both men and women experience to varying degrees depending on the nature of the context and relations in their pursuit of elite status in corporate circles. Therefore, in line with feminist research, we assume a relational perspective where relations and context take precedence in understanding gender issues (Husso and Hirvonen, 2012; Karataş-Özkan and Chell, 2015; Ross-Smith and Huppatz, 2010; Tatli, 2011). In particular, we focus on familial ties as the core of our relational approach, in order to give meaning and dynamism to gender relations in the unique context of Turkey. Turkish society is characterized by a patriarchal culture which assigns explicitly different gender roles to women and men, and which institutionally and systemically undervalues and relegates women's work to a status lower than that of men (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1981; 1986; Kandiyoti, 1995; Tatli, Özbilgin and Küskü 2008). Patriarchy is defined as 'a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women', and is particularly reflected in different social institutional settings, such as work, capitalism, the state, violence, sexuality and culture (Walby, 1990: 20). Whilst patriarchy provides a crucial explanatory institutional and cultural scheme regarding gender relations, it should be used cautiously as a fixed term in gender studies, since it may promote totalizing and monolithic understanding, and overstress the broad pattern, which would miss

the opportunity to explain variety and change under patriarchy (Alvesson and Billing, 2009: 34). Hence, by taking into account the peculiar nature of patriarchy in Turkey, we underline the emergence of symbolic violence as a strategy of, and for power in the most economically influential families of Turkey. A study such as ours constructs a kind of ideal type of symbolic violence reproduced, in the familial relations, which are, by definition, the source of the strongest of feelings and ties. A Bourdieusian focus on these relations reveals that the social structure (gendered order of the masculine domination) imposes itself most strongly and essentially in the family, where paternalistic values are primarily reproduced. The domination process and the symbolic violence that is necessary for applying it become much more visible, and its techniques much more subtle, when the size of the capital grows. According to Bourdieu, even when the domination is based on the brute force of money, the violence has always a symbolic dimension, which thus mobilizes cognitive structures that are applicable to all things of the world, particularly to social structures (Bourdieu, 2003: 97). The underlying 'incorporated' legitimacy of sexual division of labour emerges from such a universal acknowledgement of the symbolic violence by both the dominated and the dominating (Bourdieu, 2000: 289).

Examining Gender and Symbolic Capital and Violence in a Turkish Context

Turkish business structure is traditionally based on family dominated ownership and management, which upholds family and family-related values above and beyond demands of professionalism (Çolpan, 2010). Families own and actively control the majority of trading companies (Yamak and Ertuna, 2012; Yurtoğlu, 2003). Due to patriarchal nature of family businesses, where men have easy access to the upper echelons, gender has a fragmented nature in terms of symbolic violence and symbolic capital.

In addition to patriarchal characteristics, it is also important to mention the paternalistic features of Turkish management culture (Aycan, 2001). As a cultural characteristic, paternalism determines the relationship between the superior and the subordinate. Accordingly, it is expected that superiors will make decisions concerning their subordinate's welfare. In return, subordinates are expected to obey and to show commitment and respect to their superiors (Aycan, 2006). Roots of paternalism can be located in patriarchy and feudal relationships. It may be argued that state-dependent growth of family businesses (Buğra, 1994), and the role of the patrimonial state tradition, reinforce paternalistic approaches to business management in Turkey (Berkman and Özen, 2008). Paternalism is also directly related to family ideology in Turkish organizations, where the superior is likely to be a father, a close friend, or a brother (Aycan, 2006).

However, due to the nature of Turkish family business groups, and their growth since the 1970s, there has also been a need for family businesses to professionalize, and hence recruit professional management (Yamak, 2006). This may create a controversial situation in which the family has a tendency to keep management control, whilst expecting the professional manager to run the business. Hence, managers are generally recruited from among those who are well known by, or close to the family, due to their long tenure (Yıldırım-Öktem, 2010). Even where there appears to be a non-family CEO or manager in charge of the business, the father/founder (or the family) always has an impact on the managerial processes (Çolpan, 2010). Although, family is a crucial asset for the elites, this also demonstrates the unique structure of family ideology and its conflict with professionalism and governance in big businesses in Turkey (Selekler-Gökşen and Yıldırım-Öktem, 2009). As a solution to this conflict, education plays an important role in becoming a professional manager, and serves as an important form of capital, which one can mobilize in order to join the professional elite in Turkish business groups (Yamak, 1998; Yamak and Üsdiken, 2006). That is why the senior

owners or founders of Turkish holding companies traditionally want their children to have a graduate degree (Yıldırım-Öktem, 2010), and also explains the importance of symbolic capital among the elites.

At this point, it is particularly important to remember the call of Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) to examine the relationship between gender, hierarchy and power whilst uncovering seemingly neutral and legitimate gendered practices embedded in the values and traditions in the context of Turkey. While most studies on gender at work in Turkey have focused on the paradox of women on either side of the educational spectrum (Tatli, Özbilgin and Küskü, 2008), little attention has been paid to the privilege and penalty accorded to both men and women in the Turkish boardroom and corporate elites. We address this gap and focus on gender privilege (capital) and penalty (violence), rather than ignoring the complexity of gender by simply attributing privilege to men and disadvantage to women.

Methodology

Data collection

Drawing on a study of 63 in-depth life interviews with Turkish business elites, we explore gender capital as a form of symbolic capital and symbolic violence. The study used stratified random sampling for the interviews. We took into consideration a regional breakdown of the largest 500 companies in Turkey. Our sample included participants from three main industrial zones in Turkey, as identified by Pamuk (2008), together with the remaining periphery zones. About 45% of the participants run companies that originated in Istanbul, and the remaining 55% from the rest of the country, reflecting the regional distribution of the largest companies in Turkey. Stratified sampling proved to be useful to locate female and male respondents (which for the former it is difficult given their small number) and to gain access to different understanding and practices of patriarchy across the regions. During the study, we gathered a triangulated qualitative data set, including interviews, non-participant observation and

documentary searches (Eisenhardt, 1989). A total of 65 open-ended interviews were conducted with key informants holding executive roles such as CEO, chair, or vice-chair of the board in each company. Two participants had to leave early and could not reply to all of the questions, so 63 of the interviews were used in the study. The data collection started in 2009 and ended in 2011. Out of 63 business elites, 57 were male and only 6 were female, which corresponds to about 10% of the sample, and matches the relatively low representation of women among corporate elites in Turkey and internationally. The attributes of the sample are given in Table 1 and 2 below.

INSERT TABLE 1 AND TABLE 2 AROUND HERE

We designed questions of our semi-structured interviews based on our literature review and feedback from the pre-testing that we had conducted with five corporate elites from different parts of Turkey. We used life stories as specified by Boyatzis (1998). Life stories, biodata, or autobiographical data have been used by social scientists as rich sources of data in myriads of ways (Boyatzis, 1998: 67). We asked open-ended questions about major events in the life of our interviewees, about the people who most influenced them and the reasons behind the choices, successes and failures in their lives. Semi-structured interviews included some pre-defined questions, but strict adherence to these was not expected. We recognized that new questions 'might emerge during the conversation and such improvisations are encouraged' and that we needed to preserve consistency across interviews (Myers, 2009: 124). We were careful not to direct the replies of the informants, and we tried to get the maximum amount of information by asking for details when necessary. Semi-structured interviews helped respondents to express themselves better and provided us the different examples for each case. Our interviews were structured along two axes (Bacharach, Bamberger and McKinney, 2000): (1) The informant's background, knowledge, work and family context, and (2) Descriptions of individual cases as life stories.

To assess gender as symbolic capital or symbolic violence at work and in the family, we asked questions about major events in the interviewees' lives, with particular reference to their father/mother/grandfathers/grandmothers and other siblings in the family and business, the career path of children and their spouses, if any. Life stories of corporate elites were collected through questions focusing on the factors influencing major turning points in their lives, such as marriage, education, family relations and business involvement. For example, the question about how she or he married her/his spouse tended to reveal whether gender acted as symbolic violence or capital. In some instances the marriages were arranged by the families, particularly in the case of male informants for whom gender appeared to be subject to symbolic violence due to the patriarchal nature of this context. An appropriate spouse who would take care of the family and the house was often designated by the parents. Furthermore, each informant was asked to report about male and female members of the family (i.e. grandparents, mother, father, siblings and children).

The respondents were assured that their replies would be kept confidential. A non-disclosure agreement was signed when requested. Anonymity was used to protect the respondents. Numbers were used to identify the participants, whose names were disguised during the analysis and in the reports. At least two researchers were present at each interview, except in two cases. Interviews typically lasted from two to three hours. They were tape-recorded and then transcribed. This resulted in 651 pages of single spaced notes. In two cases, where tape-recording was not permitted, detailed notes were taken separately by both researchers during the interviews. Each transcription was sent to the informant to check for any flaws or misspelling.

Interviews took place at the offices of the informants. Observation field notes were also taken by each researcher concerning the buildings, offices, organizational symbols and artifacts in order to better place the individual. Field observations also provided important information

about the relative status of the interviewees, his/her relations, ideological tendencies and overall context. For example the photographs of the ancestors, especially that of the father or their words on the walls were important clues about the patriarchal relations. Similarly, the corners or even halls dedicated to the father, publications about him were among important organizational symbols and artifacts.

In addition, a wide range of archival documentary materials was collected regarding each interviewee and the company. By using the name of the interviewee and the name of the company as keywords, extensive searches were conducted on the Internet and in the library resources. Annual reports of each company were also checked. Archival data was mostly used to cross-check individual accounts concerning life stories and companies. Observation field notes and archival searches contributed significantly to our understanding of the context surrounding the participants, and to better comprehend the content of the interviews.

Data analysis

Table 3 summarizes the major steps of our data analysis. This is an interpretive study, exploring how symbolic capital and violence operate on gender. Thematic analysis was applied to the interview data in order to see the patterns of symbolic capital and violence related to gender. Thematic analysis involves the encoding of qualitative information by using explicit codes (Boyatzis, 1998). Themes which are patterns identified in the information can be manifest (directly observable) or latent (categorizing issues underlying the phenomena) (Boyatzis, 1998). In line with the life stories, we used a mostly data driven approach, and developed themes and codes using the inductive method. We prepared a list of inclusion and exclusion criteria for each label, and identified typical and atypical examples, as described by Bernard and Ryan (2010).

For reliability, two different researchers independently coded the data. The inter-rater reliability was around 83%. When an agreement could not be reached between the two

researchers, the theme was dropped from the analysis or reconstructed until full agreement between the researchers was arrived at (Boyatzis, 1998). The research and authoring team involves both men and women of Turkish origin from different age groups and theoretical leanings. Yet the team is cohesive in terms of its commitment to gender equality. Having both demographic diversity and common commitment to gender equality has facilitated a more nuanced study, analyses and discussion of gender disadvantage as presented in the paper.

<div align="center">**INSERT TABLE 3 AROUND HERE**</div>

Findings

The findings of the thematic analysis display the influence of the complex interplay of patriarchy, family ties, work aspirations and education on gender dynamics and representation among corporate elites. Contextual forces influence whether gender is a matter of symbolic capital or violence. We identify a number of concurrent corporate trends, such as a need for firms to professionalize their corporate ranks, together with cultural patterns, such as patriarchy and preference shown to sons, which are interwoven in ways that reproduce and redistribute power along gendered lines amongst corporate elites in Turkey. Hence, our analysis shows how continuity in the imbalance of power for gender among corporate elites also depends on the characteristics of the context. However, our study counter-intuitively demonstrates how men may also be subject to symbolic violence, due to the need to obey and comply with the existing social and organizational structure, whilst the women also maintain that structure. In fact, this aspect is one of the most important contributions of our study, as the analysis below demonstrates how men have become blind to their own gendered experience. Whilst our interviews were based on understanding gendered dynamics, the men mostly talked about women, but not about their own gendered practices. Indeed, the male elites in our case could not see that the gendered nature of their positions directly contributed

to their being exposed to symbolic violence and symbolic capital. Rather they associated gender with 'the women' and their problems (Whitehead, 2001: 79). In such a context, where gender perception is based on women, while we provide excerpts from women participants (n=6) to reveal their perception of gendered practices in association with symbolic capital/violence, it becomes crucial to demonstrate how the men, who represented the majority of our interviewees (n=57), are gendered as well, as they are subject to symbolic violence. Accordingly, in congruence with the gathered data and findings, we provide a summary table (Table 4) in order to compare the gendered nature of symbolic capital and symbolic violence for corporate elites, outlining how women and men experience symbolic capital and symbolic violence differently.

INSERT TABLE 4 AROUND HERE

Patriarchy, Gender and Symbolic Capital/Violence

While patriarchy systemically and traditionally underrates the social conditions of women in Turkish society, it also forces men to assume pre-identified roles, and reduces their career choices. Hence, the interplay of patriarchy and family relations appears as a source of symbolic violence, which is not confined solely to women, but also affects men.

This situation suggests that there is male preference among families in Turkey, particularly with regards to access to power in family firms. Four female respondents who were able to attain the position of chairperson in their family business group had no brothers to challenge them. However two of them shared the power with their husbands later in their career. One participant who had a brother never made it to the top. On the other hand six male respondents reported that their sisters were employed in the family business, but none of them had reached the position of chairperson. Similar sharing of power with female members of family was not evident among male corporate elites in our study.

In the analysis, we see the emergence of a pecking order in terms of families' response to female and male siblings. Female siblings are clearly placed at the bottom of this pecking order, relegated to secondary status when there is a male sibling, in terms of access to prestigious positions in family businesses. Sons and sons-in-law are considered to be part of the family firm, while daughters and daughters-in-law are often viewed as leavers and outsiders, respectively. We found that hiring the daughter-in-law occurs only under very exceptional circumstances. Very often sons-in-law are employed in the upper echelons of the companies, while only a few of daughters-in-law are able to take part in management.

In such a context, gender explicitly functions as symbolic capital, in other words, as a reference to an ideologically-woven order of merit in professional life, which transcends not only formal institutional power structures, but also effectively defines parental relationships.

The patriarchal pecking order dictates that fathers, sons and sons-in-law are prioritized over daughters, mothers and daughters-in-law. Two quotes below are remarkable in illustrating the common nature of this pecking order:

> "My son could not complete his university education. My daughter studied Y in X University. She works in one of our companies headed by her brother as an aide to him". (Male chairperson, 65 years old)

> "My father gave me 10% of the shares of the company.... My sister also works in the family business.... She does not have any shares". (Male CEO, 40 years old)

Such systematic undervaluing of female family members is a clear indication of the well-established (historically rooted, ideologically admitted, psychologically internalized) state of male domination. Therefore being male emerges as a symbolic capital that both keeps control of the relations of production and reacts, when necessary, as a sufficiently effective system of reproduction of the dominant gender order. As a result, the daughter is placed rather low in the patriarchal gender order in family firms, and only as a better alternative to a non-family professional manager. The pecking order signifies not only the entrenched nature of gender

order, but also the low status that professionals have among Turkish corporate elites. Therefore, in the case of professionals 'being male' does not have the same symbolic power over female family members. Hence context and relations appear to be important constituents of whether or not gender is a symbolic capital.

Symbolic violence through gender is not a simple one-way form of domination of men over women. Although men seem to be the dominant actors in the gender order, men are also subject to gendered forms of symbolic violence, which we find to be noteworthy. Most of the male interviewees stated that they had been obliged to take on responsibilities given to them by their fathers, when they were selected as the keepers of the family business. Dialectically, the male members of the family who acceded to the most powerful positions in business were those whose life choices were the most limited.

> "Since my brother left the family business, I had to fill this void. As the tradition requires I helped my father in the family business and married the girl that he thought was appropriate. I had to sacrifice my life for the family". (Male chairperson, 56 years old)

Highlighting the interplay between patriarchy, gender and career choice, both female and male elites reported that their fathers played a pivotal role in their career choices. The father presents a central figure in the patriarchal organization of family firms in Turkey. Our observation field notes included an interesting case where the director, who was the son of the founder, presented us with the business card of his father, who had been deceased for several years, claiming that he was still the president. A similar example from another company described how the office of the deceased founder was preserved as it was. Thus, living or dead, the father is still an influential figure. He is able to offer or limit access to resources, enhancing and shaping the career choices of his children at will. The paternalist management culture in Turkey supplies the father with powers to decide the future of his heirs and the family business. As such, the father is an important authority figure, who has

access to both symbolic capital and symbolic violence. One participant explained the father's access to symbolic resources and penalties in a traditional Turkish family firm.

> "We have the tradition that the father decides on what to do in family and business. I was studying in Istanbul but my father requested that I should go back to my hometown to take care of the business". (Male chairperson, 61 years old)

Both men and women, even those in powerful positions, are subject to such institutionalized domination, which operates through a systematic instrumentalization of symbolic violence. We can thus argue that there is a double-layered structure of gender. The explicit form of symbolic violence that shapes gender is without doubt men's domination over women. A multitude of studies confirm this well-known power asymmetry. But on a second level, an implicit form of symbolic violence makes men, also, subjects of domination, placing patriarchy in a cross-gender situation, as a transcendental social fact.

Bourdieu analyzed gender as male domination, thus hypothesizing women and femininity to be structurally secondary and subjugated, while masculinity was equated to symbolic capital. In our study, we propose, to extend Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital as a two-sided acquisition, for both men and women, since they are both subject to patriarchal domination. More explicitly, we stress that gender is constructed as symbolic capital, through which men and women are submitted to diverse forms of symbolic violence. In sum, gender emerges as a dynamic process of acquisitions (*capital* in the Bourdieusian sense) in which domination involves men and women as subjects in the same power game, by the tactical use of symbolic violence.

Women are not only passive recipients of gender inequality. Some women in the study colluded with patriarchal norms and supported patriarchal values. Spouses are also important in understanding continuity and change in the distribution of symbolic capital and violence. Among our participants, we identified that, while a husband may be rapidly promoted in his spouse's company, a wife is rarely able to reach a top position in her husband's company. In

fact, only a few wives were employed in the companies we investigated. In one case, a female entrepreneur had established the company. When the company became large enough, she invited her husband to join her there. After a while she relinquished her chairperson role in the company to her husband.

> "We complement each other very good. I initiate the projects but he trusts in them and pursues them. At certain point I am afraid because of feminine (womanish) fears [….] At this point, there is a need for male courage. Men are really visionary, I admit this. Women may be missionary but not visionary". (Female chairperson, 59 years old)

This particular case is important in illustrating that patriarchal norms are not only upheld by men, but also by women in family firms. In fact, as demonstrated in some of the previous gender studies (Gherardi and Poggio, 2001; Forbes, 2002), female participants are sometimes the stronger supporters of patriarchal ideology. Patriarchy is not only a domain of everyday life practical issues. It is, rather, an underlying ideology that transcends actors' mindsets and shapes their thinking in subtle ways. As women achieve success in this patriarchal system, they tend to turn their back on the possibilities of promoting greater gender equality, lending support to the patriarchal gender order, which demonstrates the internalization of patriarch ideology (Hearn and Piekkari, 2005; cf. Huffman, Cohen and Perlman, 2010). While the male participants never reported curbing their male identity, female participants explained how they often concealed, tamed and even punished their female identity and bodily functions. For example, one participant explained how she managed to ignore her own pregnancy in an effort to fit in at work, while another female director claimed that she returned to work immediately after giving birth.

Ironically, women appear to be fervent defenders of the ideological structure that makes them dominated, secondary citizens, even when occupying positions of power. This is not a purely psychic process, but also a socially constructed tactical setting of the action. By constantly

favoring male alliances, women assure the continuity of their career, albeit in the slow lane, together with a considerable enhancing of their gender as symbolic capital. This construction of gender as symbolic capital is aligned around an axis of the dialectics of domination, pivoting between profit-watcher and dominated subject. In fact, this slow lane/secondary status may be further observed in the narratives of both male and female directors, who praised their spouse's contribution to their success. While some female directors mentioned the professional contribution of their spouses, male participants referred to spousal support not in the form of professional contribution to the company, but rather in a way that was limited to their contribution to household and family. Very few men recognized their wife's professional contribution, which was limited to gender stereotypical fields, such as social responsibility activities. Although stemming from a well-intentioned enlightened tendency, such promotion of the wife in a purely secondary role represents an indirect and hidden form of symbolic violence, which functions as a multiplying ingredient of gender as symbolic capital.

At the intersection of business and family life, while men appear to enjoy less freedom, women in family firms seem to enjoy a form of tacit power in deciding the shape and content of certain social and professional relations. One participant pointed out that his wife decides with whom he can conduct social meetings.

> "I do not spend time with my colleagues beyond the business activities, because our wives decide on with whom we will travel and have fun. If she dislikes your colleague's wife then she will not let you develop that kind of relationship". (Male chairperson, 67 years old)

All these examples demonstrate how the cultural context of patriarchy and paternalism in Turkey creates a gendered context for the elites and the framework of gender as symbolic capital and violence changes along with different types of relations.

Family Relations, Work Aspirations, Gender and Symbolic Violence

Among Turkish business elites and their wider families, while sons and husbands are expected to pursue their career in family businesses, there is no such expectation from women in the family. Men's choice of career is more rigidly controlled in family firms. They do not question this limitation on their career paths, and seem to be subject to symbolic violence that they have internalized. In their mindset the role distribution in the family is clear. They perceive raising a child as a wifely duty. The accounts of several directors delineated this fact:

> "I owe much to my wife. I could focus on my work since she agreed to quit her job to be the one to take care of the children and family". (Male CEO, 54 years old)

> "My wife worked in our business for 3 years. She had to quit when we had children". (Male director, 34 years old)

> "I have a very happy marriage. My wife took care of the family and did her best to handle every problem of the kids without I sense anything". (Male chairperson, 63 years old)

They claimed that a harmonious family life was essential to their success. However, they also regretted that they could not spend much time with their family. Thus, men seem to have experienced violence by being denied an active part in parenting. It is also worth noting that female elites also think that it is their task to take care of the house and the children, so, when they choose to work, they end up with a double career: one in business, the other at home (Karataş-Özkan, Erdoğan and Nicolopoulou 2011). However, such multitasking is not just related to work/ home balance; it is also expected of women elites to multitask at work. As such, their success is contingent upon their ability to accommodate various competing demands at the same time. For example, while lending support to the idea of their daughters taking up careers, mothers of the female participants also insisted that their daughters should continue to hold on to their traditional female roles in the family. Working female elites claimed to have hired help for such traditionally female roles as cleaning of the house,

cooking, serving food and taking care of the children. However, they were still responsible for the overall organization of these tasks. The paradox of continuity and change has fostered a context of dual shifts between work and home for most female participants:

> "My mother insisted that we had a university degree and profession. She wanted us to work. However, she also insisted that we should also fulfill our traditional female roles. She says: '"When you come home from work you should also serve the coffee to your husband"'. (Female chairperson, 48 years old)

Consequently, female participants cited endurance, commitment, continuous learning, and hard work as their key personal qualities, suggesting that they had to strive hard to maintain their positions.

Here, again, in terms of family roles and business expectations, we see a gendered and fragmented pattern of managerial work in family businesses. The family ideology and gendered responsibilities at home serve as a form of symbolic violence for women, whilst liberating men to focus on the family business. However, it should also be noted that this gender order can be mobilized by women as symbolic capital at the same time, as women's experience of fragmentation between work and life can provide them with skills and networks to cope with the dynamism and fragmentation of the world of work. Hence, it could be argued that a multiple role enriches the work experience for the women elites particularly as they have positive feelings regarding their role in the family and in society (Rothbard, 2001).

The framework of gender displays interesting insights in terms of symbolic capital and violence when we consider the marriage patterns of elites. There was a counter-intuitive divergence between female and male members of the corporate elites concerning their experiences of marriage. While arranged marriage was a common experience for men, all of the female participants had chosen their spouses freely, mostly from among their schoolmates or colleagues. The family appeared to be influential in the selection of spouse for the male

participants in our study. Out of 57 male participants, 25 had arranged marriages while there were no such instances amongst female participants. The accounts of many male participants pointed to this reality:

> "I got married through an arranged marriage at birth (*beşik kertmesi*) by my family". (Male chairperson, 46 years old)

> "A family close to ours introduced us to each other". (Male, chairperson, 39 years old, referring to how he met his wife)

Among these male elites there were also those who had university degrees and who were supposedly better placed to act independently from family decisions both in terms of career and marriage. However, they conformed to the existing pattern that they had internalized.

Education, Gender, and Symbolic Capital

Education is highly valued, and is considered an important route for social and economic class mobility in Turkey. The Turkish case presents a good contrast to Western Europe, where elite status cannot be easily achieved through education alone. Therefore, education is considered important for corporate elites in their pursuit of holding on to corporate power. Our participants were proud if they had parents who had a university degree.

The educational background of corporate elites also helps them to achieve career success. All women interviewees in our study had at least an undergraduate degree, and had graduated from prestigious educational institutions, as identified by Yamak (1998), at either high school or university level. On the other hand, out of 57 men, 42 had a university diploma, and only 37 had attended prestigious educational institutions at either high school or university level. For female elites, higher education in prestigious institutions appears to be a requirement, whilst male elites may attain such positions without a university degree. In fact, four out of the 57 males had only a primary school education which does not seem to be an option for female elites. This demographic aspect of our study supports the cliché that women need to

be more educated and perform better than men to access corporate elites. Therefore, while gender represents capital for men, compensating them for lack of academic credentials, it serves as symbolic violence for women, allowing only highly qualified women to access prized positions among corporate elites. From the interviews, it may be observed that sons and daughters of the elite are increasingly given equal chances for education. However, the probability of studying abroad is higher for men.

> "Now the third generation is getting ready to get in charge of the company. I have tried to convince my youngest brother to allow his daughters to study abroad like the sons of my older brother. However, he replied that he wants his daughters to study in Turkey before starting their career in the company". (Male chairperson, 65 years old)

> "All my children studied business. My son studied abroad. My two daughters got their degrees in Turkey". (Male chairperson, 63 years old)

It is also worth noting that female participants were free to choose the subject they would study. Men seemed to be constrained to subjects related to business. This was partly because they were conditioned to choose thus, but that was the expectation of the family as well. Hence, education becomes an important capital both for men and women, whilst it is also used as a tool for professionalization of family businesses. The female participants seemed to enjoy the freedom to choose any educational subject or profession, compared to the male participants, whose future appeared to be strongly tied to the family business.

Conclusion

We have demonstrated that gender capital gains shape in conjunction with the dominant ideologies of patriarchy and family in Turkey, and illustrated the utility of Bourdieu's (2001) framing of symbolic capital and violence in explaining how the dominant ideologies that underpin gender order shape perceptions of normality and reality across all domains of work and life.

Whilst highlighting the paradox of continuity and change regarding gender relations in Turkish society, we make three significant theoretical contributions. First, framing gender as symbolic capital is not only a peculiarity attributed to and monopolized by men, but it is tactically conceived and constantly reconfigured by all actors involved in struggles of power. Second, symbolic violence functions here not only as a one-way relation of domination, but rather as a tactical move for ultimately establishing a hidden status quo, where women are clearly placed in the inferior ranks. More importantly, through our fieldwork in Turkey, we contest the common expectation that a greater number of women in elite positions may help combat the patriarchal organization of relations at work and family and challenge the existing dominating structures. Instead, we show that, in the absence of other gender equality measures to foster cultural change, the patriarchal gender order continues to relegate women to secondary status, even among elite business families, where men are still given the first choice of access to senior posts. Third, as another important contribution of this study, this does not mean that men do not suffer from patriarchal domination, even though they seem to be the main perpetrators of it (Connell, 1995). In fact, our study illustrates that the men holding the most powerful positions are the ones who suffer the most from patriarchal pressure to organize their private as well as their professional lives. Male executive managers had to follow the strictly designed and firmly imposed route already traced for them, usually by their fathers. In sum, although gender is associated with male domination, by placing men in apparently superior positions, both sexes are subject to entirely dissimilar processes of subjugation to a systemic use of symbolic violence. As such, symbolic violence serves as a tactical tool for ensuring reproduction of the gender order among men and women in the upper echelons.

As a result, gender is not only a predetermined situation or state, but rather a symbolic capital, which contains both socially constructed instructions related to its acquisition, and a

set of individual strategies that serve to mobilize the actor within the established power structures of patriarchal relations (Bourne and Özbilgin 2008). Symbolic violence functions in such double-sided domination dialectics as a multi-purpose instrument that both represses the actor in his/her gendered social position, and procures for him/her a tactical field of action for being articulated into (and avoiding total exclusion from) the existing system of patriarchal domination.

Nevertheless, the comprehensive social change in Turkey may have an effect on gender norms in the country. Instead of a unique and linear modernization process, we observe in the data of our study, that the social status of women and men is imbued with ambivalences and contradictions in Turkey. Yet, businesswomen also implicitly suffer from male-dominated structures of patriarchy and paternalism, forming a kind of golden cage (Ross-Smith and Huppatz, 2010). Similarly, we notice that businessmen in Turkey often find themselves locked into the rigid structure of patriarchy and paternalism, as the glass lifts of privilege that take them to the top at the same time serve to constrain their ability to make alternative life choices.

Women in top executive positions are often condemned to share their power with men, even though men in similar positions do not suffer from the same pressure to share power with women. Furthermore, fathers, brothers and, more frequently, husbands play a significant role in sharing or limiting the positional power of women among corporate elites. It would be unfair to argue that female directors owe their position entirely to the men in their families, as men in similar positions are more likely to enjoy their positions because of the often unrecorded and unpaid support and goodwill of their female family members.

The family ideology in Turkey allows women to be selected for senior business roles in elite business families over and above non-family members with professional qualifications. Therefore, the juxtaposition of patriarchy, and family ideology creates a pecking order in

symbolic value associated with gender capital, and offers us interesting boxes where these two dominant ideologies positions intersect. Our study contradicts the summative approaches to intersectional analyses of gender (as explained in Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012). Instead, we demonstrate that gender capital gains complex and surprising meanings at the intersection of patriarchy and family ideology in Turkey, where both women and men suffer the consequences.

Our findings may initiate future research questions about the position of men and their neglected gendered experiences in societies such as Turkey where gender or gendering is mostly perceived as women's issue. Future studies may focus on the details of the social, cultural and organizational dynamics which make men feel or think that they are free of such gendering structures or relations. While such studies would challenge the allegedly gender neutral assumptions around the male elites, they would provide an alternative framework to further problematize the mechanisms of reproduction of power relations around gender in the axes of cultural and social institutions. Finally, our study has some limitations. While the Turkish context provides us with an interesting realm to study the gendered experiences of both male and female elites, there is limited access to female elites due to their small number, which is a pattern internationally. The presence of more women in the upper echelons of companies would provide more detail regarding their particular gendered experiences but locating and studying elite women continues to present a challenge. Nevertheless despite this caveat, a multi-country comparative study would shed further light on how men and women are exposed to symbolic violence and capital which operate concurrently in different cultural contexts

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Table 1: Attributes of participants from Istanbul							
Interviewee	Ownership	Birth Date	Education	Gender	Position	Business activity sectors	Type of firm
1	Shareholder	1945	Master	M	Chairperson	Finance, Retail, Construction	Group of companies
2	Shareholder	1954	Bachelor	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing	Group of companies
3	Professional	1945	PhD	M	Chief Executive Officer / Director	Manufacturing, Services, Airlines	Group of companies
4	Shareholder	1951	Bachelor	F	Chief Executive Officer / Director	Manufacturing, Tourism	Group of companies
5	Shareholder	1953	Master	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing	Group of companies

6	Shareholder	1942	Bachelor	M	Chairperson	Textile	Single business
7	Professional	1967	Bachelor	M	Chief Executive Officer / Director	Steel	Single business
8	Shareholder	1931	Primary school	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing, Tourism, Mining	Group of companies
9	Shareholder	1955	Master	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing, Construction, Tourism	Group of companies
10	Shareholder	1959	Bachelor	M	Chairperson	Packaging	Single business
11	Shareholder	1946	High school	M	Chairperson	Chemicals	Single business
12	Shareholder	1970	Bachelor	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing, Services, Agriculture	Group of companies
13	Professional	1953	Master	M	Chief Executive Officer / Director	Finance, Manufacturing, Construction, Tourism	Group of companies
14	Professional	1946	Master	M	Chief Executive Officer	Services, Construction, Manufacturing	Group of companies
15	Shareholder	1949	Master	M	Chairperson	Services, Manufacturing, Construction, Finance	Group of companies
16	Shareholder	1955	Master	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing	Group of companies
17	Shareholder	1966	Bachelor	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing	Group of companies
18	Shareholder	1963	Bachelor	M	Director	Services, Construction, Manufacturing, Tourism,	Group of companies
19	Shareholder	1957	Master	M	Chairperson	Chemicals	Single business
20	Professional	1943	Master	M	Chief Executive Officer / Director	Energy, Manufacturing, Construction	Group of companies
21	Professional	1949	Bachelor	F	Vice President	Agriculture, Services	Group of companies
22	Professional	1957	Bachelor	M	Chief Executive Officer / Director	Energy, Manufacturing	Group of companies
23	Professional	1939	Bachelor	M	Chairperson	Chemicals	Single business

24	Shareholder	1950	PhD	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing	Group of companies
25	Shareholder	1941	High school	M	Chairperson	Textile	Single business
26	Professional	1945	Bachelor	M	Chairperson	Manufacturing	Group of companies
27	Shareholder	1957	Bachelor	M	Chief Executive Officer / Director	Manufacturing	Single Business
28	Shareholder	1965	Master	F	Chairperson	Energy, Manufacturing, Media, Finance	Group of companies