

Chapter 8

The Impact of Digital Transformation on the Quality of Work Life of Female Professionals In the Industry 4.0 Environment

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ABSTRACT

The digital transformation, which has been implemented with the term of Industry 4.0, provides great advantages for the manufacturing industries, while also creating effects on the employment structure and therefore on social life. While current statistical data paint a negative picture on women's participation in the workforce and career development, it is critically important how this new age will affect women's business life. The aim of this study is to seek an answer to the question of how digital transformation affects the quality of work life of women professionals in the Industry 4.0 environment. According to the findings, digitalization reduces the pressure and stress felt by women professionals while improving their career satisfaction, general well-being, power to control the job, working conditions, and family-work-life balance. Thanks to digital transformation tools, the quality of work life of women professionals increases, and this situation positively affects their quality of life and happiness.

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INTRODUCTION

Industry 4.0 is a popular term used to describe recent changes in the manufacturing industry and industrial environment of the developed world (Brettel, Friederichsen, Keller & Rosenberg, 2014: 56). It is not an easy task to find a definition that will accurately describe what Industry 4.0 is, because this new industrial revolution is defined depending on the technologies and process components put into practice (Carvalho, 2017), and it varies over a wide area.

There are expectations that Industry 4.0 will provide many advantages such as reducing the need for labor in business life, improving quality, increasing efficiency, reducing errors and losses, providing effective energy use, and improving profitability. The way the work is done, the effective use of resources and the expectations regarding the output to be obtained are directing businesses to technological investments within the scope of Industry 4.0, and important studies are carried out within the scope of digital transformation in business life. However, the effects of these impacts in business life on social life are also discussed and researched. The impact of this technological transformation, which is being experienced and will continue to be experienced by developing, on the social structure with its effect on the labor market is also important to be investigated and suggestions should be developed.

In this new business life, where change is felt in every field, the position of women must be defined correctly. Many cultural or structural constraints, such as limited access to education, the burden of housework and childcare on women, cultural norms regarding the jobs women will work, barriers created by labor laws, and barriers to women's mobility, also negatively affect women's participation in employment (McCloughlin, 2013). Will this new age turn into an opportunity for women who are constantly struggling to balance their obligations to their families and the expectations of the workplace (Delina & Raya, 2013: 281)? Or will all the injustices experienced in the traditional business life also protect itself in the technological business life? The answers to these questions are very important for the economic and social development of all societies and are the source of motivation for this study.

In this study, the issue of women's participation in employment has been examined within the scope of the change in the quality of work life within the framework of Industry 4.0. In this direction, the aim of this study is to seek an answer to the question of *how digital transformation affects the quality of work life of women professionals in the Industry 4.0 environment*.

Within the scope of the study, firstly, the effects of Industry 4.0 on business life were mentioned. Then, the titles of women in business life, Industry 4.0 and women and quality of work life were defined conceptually, and studies in the literature were included in the scope of the subject. In the application part, an answer to the research

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