

**International ELINET Symposium 2018**  
**“Literacy in the 21st Century: Participation – Inclusion – Equity”.**

July 23-24, 2018, Cologne, Germany



**Section V Adult literacy programmes. New practices and perspectives**

**Chair:** Aydin Durgunoglu, University of Minnesota Duluth

Monday, July 23, at 16.00–17.30 **Location:** Seminar Building / Room S 24

LITERACY CHANGES LIVES.

**Addressing the needs of young women in Turkey not in employment, education or training**

**Presenter:**

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with

**Duygu Aşık, Ayşegül Şahinkaya, Ece Öztan** (Mother Child Education Foundation, Turkey) and **Aydın Yücesan Durgunoğlu** (Mother Child Education Foundation, Turkey, University of Minnesota Duluth, USA)

**Abstract:**

According to the latest OECD figures (<https://data.oecd.org/youthinac/youth-not-in-employment-education-or-training-neet.htm>) Turkey has the highest percentage of women aged 15-29, not in employment, education or training (41.5%, compared to the OECD average 16.4%). This represents a significant number with unfulfilled potentials. More significantly, for the society, this is a large segment of the population with very limited participation and contributions.

AÇEV (Turkish acronym for Mother Child Education Foundation) has recently developed a lifelong development and empowerment program for young women aged 15-35, with support from UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality and in collaboration with KA.DER (an organization advocating for women's representation in the democratic processes). The basic approach of our program is to facilitate women's empowerment at individual, relational, organizational and societal levels. The women are encouraged to choose their own goals and learn about ways to achieve their goals. The goals could be continuing with formal education, finding a job, becoming a better parent, improving oral and written communication skills, participating more fully in the democratic processes. The program provides a foundation to accomplish these goals: basic literacy, numeracy, technology and life skills, with a critical lens towards gender roles in the society and the understanding of legal rights and societal participation mechanisms.

This program has been piloted and revised and is currently implemented in three cities, reaching approximately 1500 women. Its textbook covers topics such as continuing with education, finding a

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job, human rights, protecting children, respecting differences. Women meet in small groups for two months. They read the content provided in the 17 sessions of the book as the starting point for open discussions about their experiences, life goals and ways to achieve them.

In this presentation we will introduce this program and provide some evaluation data to describe how it is promoting the societal participation and inclusion of this population.

**Bio Note:**

**Meltem Cantürk** graduated from Psychology Department of Istanbul University and continues her post graduate studies in Institute of Social Sciences Women's Studies in the same university. She is the Director of Women's Empowerment and Literacy Education Department in ACEV (Mother Children Education Foundation). She has been working in ACEV since 1995. Between 1995 and 2016, she contributed to and coordinated the “Functional Adult Literacy Program” (FALP) which focuses on the functional literacy needs of individuals with very low literacy and “Advanced Literacy and Access to Information Program” as a continuation of FALP, for individuals to use literacy skills more effectively and efficiently as a way of accessing information in their everyday lives. Additionally, she has actively taken part in civil society organizations in Turkey. She is the Founding Member of the Society of Friends of Schizophrenia, Member of Association for Supporting Women Candidates (KA.DER) between 2010 and 2012; Member of the Board of Directors in Human Rights Initiative in Mental Health Initiative since 2015.