

Editorial on Women in Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Companies

Hatice Zeynep Inan*

Early Childhood Education Department Chair, Dumlupinar University, Turkey

In recent years, researchers and policy makers have been interested in research and practical solutions for energy efficiency and environmental technologies and its impacts on the labour market in particular for women. One of the Study Visit tours to Germany, organized by LIFE e.v. and sponsored by Centre for European Union Education and Youth Programmes, widened my view in terms of women participation in technical jobs toward energy efficiency and environmental technologies. I don't want to talk about numbers or research but one of the projects they conduct every year throughout the country called "The Girls' Day!"

The Girls' Day, emerged from the idea of "equal opportunities between women and men in science, engineering and technology; integration of environmental issues and renewable energies in education and vocational training; development of new learning methods and settings." They do that in cooperation with schools and youth centers by motivating girls for technical and craft subjects and trying to discover competencies without stereotypes. To accomplish that, they do vocational training in handcraft: electricity, plumbing and two-wheel-vehicles mechanic with modules on sustainable development and renewable energy. They work on solar energy, geothermal energy, district heating, waste water heat recovery, fuel cell, power column for electric vehicles, heat and cold insulation, glass roof over the inner courtyards and so on.

In 2001, the Girls' Day was invented in Germany nationwide to motivate and encourage girls to seize their career options. They give attention to the manifold skills and fortes of girls combining regionally limited initiatives as nationwide event with far-reaching effects. Nearly 30% of engaged organizations declare that they have received applications for practical training from participants afterwards. Based on the German model, a Girls' Day is organized almost all over Europe, such as Austria, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Estonia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Kosovo, France, Switzerland, Belgium.

Ryan [1] states, "Gender and identity should be important concerns

for energy researchers, though the topics remain understudied. Sufficient evidence exists to conclude that millions of women are exposed to pollution from substandard energy sources; that still more are excluded from decision-making about private and community resources; that local, state, and international laws often fail to protect the rights and advance the energy interests of women, children, minorities, and future generations; and that women occupy fewer positions in university STEM departments and energy enterprises." (p. 102). On the other hand, Baruah [2] warns us "Although women's access to green technologies is limited by inadequate purchasing power and low social status, there is tremendous potential to create livelihoods for women in the energy sector. However, women can gain optimal traction from green initiatives only within the context of wider socially progressive pro-women policies." (p. conclusion).

In order to attract women to the sector of energy efficiency and environmental Technologies, the Girls' Day is a great idea! Fraune [3] states that beyond individual preferences and investment attitudes, social, cultural and political factors can also influence an individual's agency to take part in citizen participation schemes in renewable electricity production (RES-E) operated by citizens' associations. as a result, we can concluded with what Alokian [4] states, "By educating girl-child, one sets in motion the process of empowering women who will be able to not only defend their rights but also to contribute to the development of entire society." (p. 25).

References

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*Corresponding author: Hatice Zeynep Inan, Associate Professor, Early Childhood Education Department Chair, Dumlupinar University, Turkey, Tel: +90 274 265 2031; E-mail: haticezeynep@hotmail.com

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