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## **DETERMINING THE GENDER ROLE ATTITUDES OF ACADEMIC STAFF AND THE AFFECTING FACTORS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The aim of research is to determine the attitudes of academicians towards social gender role and the factors affecting it. The research was carried out in the Cumhuriyet University. As the number of population is known in the sample of the research, 304 participants were included in the study. The data of the research was collected by using Personal Information Form and Gender-Roles Attitude scale (GRAS). The data was analyzed with SPSS 22 program. While %74.3 of Academic Staff state that men and women do not have equal rights in Turkish society, % 67.1 suggest this inequality is caused by biological features and %60.9 note that they have experienced social gender discrimination. Total average scores of GRAS of male academicians have been found out to be statistically significantly higher than those of female academicians ( $p < 0.05$ ). There is also statistically significant difference between the subscales of egalitarian gender, female gender and gender in marriage by the educational status of academicians' parents ( $p < 0.05$ ). When it comes to the subscales and total average scores by the age and family type of academicians, there is no statistically significant difference ( $p > 0.05$ ). It has been revealed that the academicians in the research have a general attitude of traditional social gender role. A crucial number of them do not have knowledge about the term of social gender, and more than half state that this is because of biological features while one-fourths point the reason as illiteracy. The academicians who have not experienced social gender discrimination have an egalitarian perspective than those who have. Male academicians can be said to have more egalitarian attitude towards social gender role than female ones.

**Keywords:** Gender, gender roles, gender attitude, academicians.

## INTRODUCTION

As a biological concept “gender” indicates genetic, biological and physiological characteristics and differences as a man or woman. Social gender covers the social status of men and women, their appropriate roles, tasks and responsibilities, and the society’s perception and expectations over individuals (Öngen and Aytaç, 2013). While the gender is determined by the nature, social gender is determined by culture. Contrary to the biological gender, social gender difference is shaped by social structure and can be altered (Öngen and Ayta., 2013; Giddens, 2008). The concept of social gender is related to socially built masculinity and femininity concepts, and it does not necessarily have to be the direct outcome of the biological gender. Social gender inequality forms lives of men and women and at the end of the day, this diversity means more than difference. Therefore, the participation manner, ratio and presence of men and women into the life is significantly affected by the social gender perception of the society (Bal, 2014). Besides deepening the gap between genders, social inequality emerges because of the norms and values towards gender (Sezgin, 2015). Male dominant culture, which has been present in many societies for ages, created discrimination against women in many aspects (Çelik, et. al. 2011).

There are two main approaches over social gender roles: traditional approach and egalitarian approach. Within the traditional roles, the roles that are imposed to women are being responsible for household work and not being active in business; and the burden of men is responsibilities such as earning money and being head of the family. Within the egalitarian roles, however, men and women share the responsibilities as much as possible in terms of family, profession, marriage, social life and education (Aydin, et. al., 2016; Esen et. al., 2017).

In the literature, various studies could be found which were carried out in order to determine social gender role and approaches. The studies were mainly carried out with student participants and it was determined that the participants had egalitarian role attitudes (Aydin, et. al., 2016; Esen et. al., 2017; Kahraman, et. al., 2015; Daşlı and Sarıçoban, 2016). Although the studies which were carried out in order to determine social gender roles of academicians are limited, the studies within the literature reveal that academicians have relatively egalitarian role attitudes (Çelik, et. al., 2011). However, it is notable that the studies towards academicians are very limited. In the context of forming the social gender roles in accordance with their opinions, studying the academicians’ perspective on social gender roles of men and women and revealing their thoughts over social gender equality is of high significance. On the other hand, in order to pioneer the policies that should be redesigned to prevent gender inequality and discrimination, social gender roles must be reevaluated in educational institutions, and determination of attitudes towards social gender roles and values is required. This study is carried out with the aim of determining the attitudes of academicians on social gender roles and the factors that are affecting academicians’ social gender attitudes.

## METHOD

The study was designed in a descriptive and cross-sectional pattern. It was carried out in Cumhuriyet University, which is located in a city of Middle Anatolia Region, with the academic staff of the university, from 01.03.2018 to 31.05.2018. The population of the study consists of 1542 academic staff who are employed in the main campus of the university. The number of the academicians that will be included in the study was calculated with  $n = \frac{N \cdot t^2 \cdot p \cdot q}{d^2(N-1) + t^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$  equation ( $p=0.50$ ,  $q=0.50$ ,  $d=0.05$ ,  $t=1.96$ ). As the population of the study was known, sample was calculated to be 304 participants. For the sampling method, a limited sampling method was chosen by creating homogenous sub-groups in accordance with the determined variables within the main group, and by picking a number of groups according to their significance within the main group (Bayram, 2009; Karagöz, 2015; Özdamar, 1999). Within the limited sampling, some layers are determined, and by picking units, the sample is created in accordance with the ratio of the chosen layer in the population (Zeyneloğlu and Terzioğlu, 2011). In accordance with the total number of academic staff, the number of academic staff to be included into the study from faculties and vocational schools is determined by following the simple randomization method.

The data of the study was gathered via Personal Information Form and Gender Roles Attitude Scale. The Personal Information Form was developed by the researcher and consists of 13 questions concerning personal information (gender, age, marital status, etc.) and education level of the participants. Social Gender Roles Attitude Scale (SGRAS) was developed by Zeyneloğlu (2008) in order to determine the social gender attitudes of university students. SGRAS, which consists of 38 questions, includes 5 sub-dimensions. The sub-dimensions are as follows: egalitarian gender role, feminine gender role, gender roles in marriages, traditional gender role and masculine gender role. Scale consists of 5 Likert Scale. The highest score is 190 and it shows that the participant has fully egalitarian attitude in terms of social gender roles. The lowest score is 38 and it shows that the participant is of traditional attitude in gender roles. Cronbach alpha reliability score of the scale is calculated to be 0.92 (Seçgin and Tural, 2011). The scale was developed for students but it was later applied to other groups and proven to be reliable (Bekleviç Çelik, 2017; Özden and Gölbaşı, 2018). In our study, Cronbach alpha score is 0.91 and it is of high reliability.

At the application phase of the study, researchers were interviewed and informed about the study. To the academicians, who accepted to participate in the study, data gathering forms were delivered and they were wanted to fill the forms. The participants filled the forms fully without giving their I.D details. The survey took 10 to 15 minutes.

After receiving ethical committee approval (No:60263016-050.06.04-E.286086) the legal permit was received from the university before the initiation of the study. Before beginning the study, participants were informed that only the volunteers will be included into the study, the gathered data will only be used for this specific study, personal information will be secured after delivering to the researcher, and they were also informed about the aim and length of the study and written approval was taken from the participants.

The gathered data was evaluated through SPSS 22 software. Personal characteristics of the academicians were presented in numbers and percentages. SGRAS score is given as average standard deviation. Suitability to standard range is evaluated via Kolmogorov Smirnov test and it was found out that it does not correlate to egalitarian gender role, marriage gender role and masculine gender role sub-dimensions ( $p < 0.05$ ); it correlates to feminine gender role and traditional gender role and it was also found out that SGRAS total scores correlate to standard range ( $p > 0.005$ ). Within the comparison of SGRAS score averages in accordance with the characteristics of academicians, t test and variance analysis were utilized when the parametric test assumptions were realized in dual and triple groups respectively; when the parametric test assumptions were not realized, Mann-Whitney and Kruskal Vallis test were used for dual and triple groups respectively and for the statistical significance level  $p$  was regarded as  $< 0.05$ .

## FINDINGS

In Table 1, distribution of the academicians are presented in accordance with some personal and family characteristics. 45.7% of the participants are females and 54.3% are males. 51.3% of the academicians are over 35 years old, 70% have PhD degrees, 87.2% have small families and 92.4% live in cities. It was also noticed that 52% of the academicians' mothers are primary school graduates and 58.9% of their fathers have university degrees.

**Table 1.** Distribution of Academic Staff According to Personal and Family Characteristics

Characteristics	Number (%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	139(45.7)
Male	165(54.3)
<b>Age</b>	
18-35	148(48.7)
35 and over	156(51.3)
<b>Education</b>	
BA	10 (3.3)
MA	81 (26.6)
PhD	213 (70.1)
<b>Family Type</b>	
Small Family	265 (87.2)
Extended Family	39(12.8)
<b>Residence</b>	
City	281 (92.4)
Town	13 (4.3)
Village	10 (3.3)
<b>Education Level (Mother)</b>	
Primary School	158 (52.0)
High School	85 (10.9)
University	61(37.2)
<b>Education Level (Father)</b>	
Primary School	90(29.6)
High School	35(11.5)
University	179(58.9)

Table 2 includes distribution of academic staff in accordance with their opinions about social gender inequality. 74.3% of the academicians stated that women and men do not have the equal rights and 67.1% of them think that the inequality exists because of the biological differences. It was found out that 60.9% of the academic staff experience gender inequality. 79.3% of the academicians confessed that both genders must take responsibility in order to maintain the social gender equality.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Opinions of Academicians About Social Gender Inequality

Characteristics	Number (%)
<b>There is social gender inequality in Turkish society</b>	
Yes	67 (22.0)
No	237(78.0)
<b>Reasons of Inequality*</b>	
Biology	204(67.1)
Family Structure	67(22.0)
Social Structure	65(21.4)
Lack of Education	86(28.3)
Economical Reasons	21(6.9)
Political Resaons	14(4.6)
Religion	18(5.9)
<b>Experienced Gender Discrimination (Yes/No)</b>	
Yes	119(39.1)
No	185(60.9)
<b>Gender equality can be achieved with</b>	
Women	10(3.3)
Men	53(17.4)
Both	241(79.3)

\* More than one option is marked.

When the Table 3 is examined, it is obvious that the total score average of academicians is  $74.00 \pm 20.81$ . Egalitarian gender role sub-dimension score average is  $38.89 \pm 4.76$ , female gender sub-dimension score average is  $18.52 \pm 6.30$ , marriage gender role sub-dimension score average is  $12.27 \pm 4.18$ , traditional gender role score average is  $18.48 \pm 6.21$  and male gender sub-dimension score average is  $11.26 \pm 4.18$

**Table 3.** Total SGRAS Scores and Sub-Dimension Score Averages of Academicians

Total SGRAS Score and Sub-Dimension	Minimum	Maximum	X(SD)
Egalitarian Gender Role	34.00	39.00	38.89±4.76
Female Gender Role	8.00	38.00	18.52±6.30
Marriage Gender Role	8.00	28.00	12.27±4.18
Traditional Gender Role	8.00	33.00	18.48±6.21
Male Gender Role	6.00	26.00	11.26±4.18
<b>Total</b>	39.00	125.00	74.00±20.81

When the Table 4 is examined, it is seen that in accordance with the gender, there is significant statistical difference in SGRAS sub-dimensions egalitarian gender role, marriage gender role and male gender role between total average score ( $p < 0.05$ ); the total average score ( $65.99 \pm 17.31$ ), egalitarian gender role and male gender role averages of the women participants are significantly lower than the total score average of men participants ( $80.75 \pm 21.16$ ). Upon examining the SGRAS sub-dimension and total score averages of the academic staff in

accordance with their age and family types, no statistically significant difference is noticed between sub-dimension scores and total score averages ( $p>0.05$ ). It was also found out that, according to the education level of the academic staff, there is statistically significant difference between male gender sub-dimension and education level ( $p<0.05$ ); male gender role score of the PhD graduates ( $26.00\pm 10.89$ ) is higher than those of MA ( $10.89\pm 4.13$ ) and BA ( $9.80\pm 4.56$ ) graduates. It was determined that, in accordance with the education level of the parents of the participants, there is statistically important difference in score averages of egalitarian gender role, female gender role and marriage gender role sub-dimensions ( $p<0.05$ ). While there is not any significant difference related to mothers' education level, in accordance with the fathers' education level there is statistically significant difference between traditional gender roles and total scale score averages ( $p<0.05$ ).

Table 4. SGRAS Sub-Dimension and Total Score Averages of Academic Staff According to Characteristics

Variables	SGRAS Sub-Dimension and Total Score Averages					
	Egalitarian Gender Role	Female Gender Role	Marriage Gender Role	Male Gender Role	Traditional Gender Role	Total
	X± SD	X± SD	X± SD	X± SD	X± SD	X± SD
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	37.82±4.86	16.41±5.43	10.98±3.29	10.15±3.56	16.20±5.50	65.99±17.31
Male	39.80±4.48	20.30±6.45	13.36±4.54	12.20±4.43	20.40±6.14	80.75±21.16
<b>Statistical Analysis</b>	z= -4.924 p=0.000	t= -5.627 p=0.055	z= -4.943 p=0.000	z=-4.124 p=0.000	t= -6.213 p=0.40	t= -6.574 p=0.002
<b>Age</b>						
18-35	38.54±4.49	18.10±6.37	11.96±4.26	11.39±3.93	18.24±6.26	72.77±20.58
35 and over	39.23±4.99	18.91±6.23	12.57±4.10	11.14±4.40	18.71±6.17	75.16±21.03
<b>Statistical Analysis</b>	z= -1.213 p= 0.225	t= -1.118 p=0.265	z=-1.583 p= -0.973	z=-0.973 p= 0.331	t= -0.656 p=0.512	t= -1.000 p=0.318
<b>Education Level</b>						
BA	39.20±3.96	20.80±6.52	12.00±3.36	9.80±4.56	20.30±8.13	76.50±21.00
MA	39.38±5.13	19.35±6.73	11.96±3.86	10.89±4.13	19.45±6.39	78.32±22.01
PhD	38.69±4.65	18.09±6.09	11.96±3.86	26.00±10.89	18.02±6.01	72.24±20.17
<b>Statistical Analysis</b>	Kw=1.049 p= 0.592	F=1.855 p=0.158	Kw=2.117 p= 0.347	Kw=11.891 p= -0.003	F=2.007 p=0.136	F=2.603 p=0.076
<b>Family Type</b>						
Small Family	38.83±4.64	18.45±6.32	12.23±4.10	11.23±4.10	18.57±6.16	73.84±20.43
Extended Family	39.33±5.52	19.00±6.23	12.58±4.77	11.48±4.48	17.87±6.55	75.05±23.47
<b>Statistical Analysis</b>	z= -0.341 p=0.733	t= 0.505 p=0.624	z= -0.179 p=0.858	z=-0.088 p=0.930	t=-0.658 p=0.511	t=0.336 p=0.737
<b>Residence</b>						
City	38.818±4.81	18.412±6.23	12.227±4.20	11.185±4.18	18.313±6.236	73.501±20.85
Town	39.230±3.58	19.307±6.08	13.153±4.52	12.538±4.35	20.769±4.901	79.384±18.35
Village	40.600±4.57	20.600±8.66	12.600±3.50	12.000±3.82	20.300±26.717	81.100±22.49
<b>Statistical Analysis</b>	Kw=2.964 p= 0.224	F= 0.684 p=0.505	Kw=1.379 p=0.532	Kw=2.089 p=.352	F=1.417 p=0.244	F=1.098 p=0.335
<b>Edu. Level (Mot.)</b>						
University	39.2848±4.59	19.575±6.36	12.810±4.07	11.632±4.32	18.829±6.20	76.702±20.490
High School	38.6000±5.10	17.270±6.14	11.8588±4.59	10.905±4.42	18.494±6.54	21.543±2.336
Primary School	38.2951±4.66	17.541±5.99	11.4918±3.72	10.836±3.357	17.573±5.737	19.965±2.556
<b>Statistical Analysis</b>	Kw=6.283 p= 0.043	F= 4.732 p=0.009	Kw=9.124 p=0.010	Kw=2.740 p=0.254	F=0.898 p=0.408	F=2.870 p=0.058
<b>Edu. Level (Fat)</b>						
University	40.311±4.61	20.9444±6.51	13.777±4.20	12.055±4.22	20.500±5.96	82.3667±20.78
High School	38.609±4.75	17.5429±6.10	12.152±4.46	10.990±3.84	17.685±5.99	71.4571±19.35
Primary School	38.000±4.65	17.467±5.80	11.165±3.50	10.889±4.35	17.587±6.28	69.550±20.35
<b>Statistical Analysis</b>	Kw=20.252 p= 0.000	F=9.988 p=0.000	Kw=22.428 p= 0.000	Kw=4.998 p=0.082	F=7.009 p=0.001	F=11.258 p=0.000

According to Table 5, the total score average of the academic staff, who did not personally experience gender discrimination and think there is gender inequality in our country, is significantly higher than those who does not think there is gender inequality and did not experience gender discrimination ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 5.** SGRAS Sub-Dimension and Total Score Average of Academic Staff According to Their Opinions on Social Gender Inequality

Opinions On Gender Inequality in Turkey			
Scale and Sub-Dimensions	Agree	Disagree	Analysis
Egalitarian Gender Role	39.895±4.89	38.611±4.69	$z = -2.175 / p = 0.030$
Female Gender Role	21.910±5.93	17.565±6.08	$t = 5.188 / p = 0.000$
Marriage Gender Role	13.537±4.83	11.924±3.92	$z = -2.428 / p = 0.015$
Male Gender Role	12.626±3.96	10.886±4.17	$z = -3.410 / p = 0.001$
Traditional Gender Role	21.537±5.06	17.620±6.24	$t = 4.714 / p = 0.000$
<b>Total</b>	<b>84.313±19.60</b>	<b>20.249±1.31</b>	$t = 4.753 / p = 0.000$
Personal Experience on Social Gender Discrimination			
Scale and Sub-Dimensions	Experienced	Not Experienced	Analysis
Egalitarian Gender Role	38.084±4.38	39.416±4.92	$z = -2.539 / p = 0.011$
Female Gender Role	17.689±6.42	19.059±6.15	$t = -1.857 / p = 0.064$
Marriage Gender Role	11.798±4.00	12.589±4.28	$z = -1.651 / p = 0.099$
Male Gender Role	10.579±3.79	11.713±4.36	$z = -2.129 / p = 0.033$
Traditional Gender Role	17.247±6.10	19.281±6.16	$t = -2.823 / p = 0.005$
<b>Total</b>	<b>69.823±20.23</b>	<b>76.691±20.79</b>	$t = -2.841 / p = 0.005$

## DISCUSSION

Social gender inequality is a problem that is being experienced in our country and in the world at different scales. With this study, it was aimed to determine the academic staff's attitude towards social gender roles. Previous studies that aimed to determine attitudes towards social gender roles were mainly carried out with the participation of students and other occupational groups. As the number of the studies that analyze academicians' attitude towards social gender roles is limited, so is the literature about this topic. Thereby, this study is thought to arise individual awareness about social gender roles with academic staff and to contribute to the knowledge in the field.

More than half of the participants stated that there is gender inequality in the Turkish society and the inequality stems from biological differences, and one fourth of them confessed that the reason is lack of education. Except the egalitarian gender role score of the academicians, when sub-dimension score average and total score average were evaluated according to the maximum score, it is a notable finding that academic staff have traditional attitude in terms of social gender role. However, social gender is not the outcome of the biology, it is a result of socialization. It would be naive to expect the academicians, who are not aware of the concept of social gender, to present a gender based service to the society and make it adopted. In this field, number of the studies analyzing SGRAS and sub-dimensions is very limited. In the study that was carried out with candidate teachers

by Seçgin (2011), in the study that was applied to health-care staff by Özden and Golbasi (2018) and in the study that was done with the participation of health-care services students by Güneş and Gökçe (2015), it was found out that the participants adopted egalitarian social gender roles. In order to achieve more objective results, more studies must be carried out with larger scale populations. As it was mentioned above, within the studies that were carried out with students and health-care staff, it is obvious that the participants had relatively egalitarian gender role attitudes. Academicians' not having the sense in terms of social gender roles, poses a risk to the professionals that are educated and trained by the academic staff in the sense of supporting gender egalitarianism and giving egalitarian service.

While half of the participants expressed that they did not experience any kind of gender inequality, two third of the sample stated that both genders must have responsibility in the context of eliminating the inequality. Having relatively higher scores in egalitarian social gender roles dimension may mean that those participants adopt egalitarian social roles. While the academic staff think that men and women must share roles and responsibilities without any kind of gender discrimination; they also think that the responsibilities burdened to the women by the society, the responsibilities burdened to both genders by marriage, the responsibilities burdened to both genders in life and the responsibilities burdened to men must be traditional. These findings show that academicians are not aware of social gender inequality and the academicians who are conscious of the gender equality adopt the non-egalitarian social gender roles.

In this study, it was found out that male academicians are of higher egalitarian attitude when compared to female academicians. While the results of Önder, Yalçın and Gölbaşı's (2013) research show similar results to ours, within Öngen and Aytaç's (2013) study, women were determined to be of higher egalitarian attitude than men. The reason behind the difference can be being grown up with privileges, which arise social gender inequality and result in extra burden on the shoulders of women, in traditional Turkish families.

Our study showed that the higher is the education level of the participants' parents, the higher is the egalitarian social gender role attitude. In another study on medical students by Seyitoğlu, Güneş and Gökçe (2015), it was found out that the attitude was more egalitarian with the students whose mothers were of higher education, but there was no correlation with the education level of the fathers of the participants and their attitudes. Similar outcomes were observed with the study that was carried out on education faculty students by Kodan Çetinkaya (2013). Even though there is not any statistically significant correlation between the results and the education level of the participants' mothers, there are significant differences within the sub-dimensions. The higher is the education level of the parents, the more egalitarian is the attitude in terms of social gender roles. Similarly to our study, in the results of Seyitoğlu, Güneş and Gökçe's study (2015), the higher is the education level of the participants' parents, the more egalitarian is the attitude in social gender roles. These results reflect the importance of attitudes and roles in the family and in raising children.

According to the participants' age, education level and family type, deviation in the SGRAS score averages was found to be statistically insignificant. While Özden and Gölbaşı's study (2018) showed that egalitarian attitude became stronger with age, Seyitoğlu, Güneş and Gökçe's study (2015) showed that younger groups had more egalitarian attitudes in comparison with the elderly groups. The difference in results could be explained by different sample groups.

Having an egalitarian perspective towards social gender sense is of high significance. In this study it was found out that the academicians, who think we have social gender inequality in our country, have moderate level of egalitarian attitude while the academicians, who have not experienced any gender discrimination, have higher level attitude of egalitarianism than the ones who have experienced it. In order to arise awareness with their relations in terms of social gender equality, academicians must be sensitive to social gender roles and train their students without any discriminative attitude.

## RESULT

It was found out that the participants generally have traditional social gender role attitude. The majority of the participating academicians confessed that they do not have much knowledge about the concept of social gender roles, more than half of them stated that the inequality stems from biological difference and one fourth said the reason behind the problem is lack of education. It was also found out that the academicians, who think social gender inequality exists in our country, have moderate level of egalitarian attitude while the academicians, who have not experienced any gender discrimination, have higher level attitude of egalitarianism than the ones who have experienced it. It can be put forward that male academicians have higher levels of egalitarian attitudes in terms of social gender roles than women. Age, education level, family type and residence of the participants have no effect on egalitarian social gender role attitude. It is remarkable that mothers' education level has significant effect on egalitarian gender role, female gender role and marriage gender role while education level of fathers have effect on all egalitarian gender roles.

Organization of activities for academicians with the aim of increasing the awareness level on social gender inequality and its reflections, and in order to evaluate social gender roles and attitudes, carrying out researches with bigger and more varied populations is recommended.

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