

Evaluation of Gender Roles in Turkish Society: Cultural Impact on Education Perspective

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Abstract—Study 1 indicates that men tend to display still stereotypes in society. In study 2, the eight domains related to masculinity such as achievement, rationality, objectification of sex, self-reliance, emotional restriction, avoidance of femininity, focus on toughness and aggression, and homophobia was grounded to ask the relevant questions to participants. Interestingly, married men have slightly changed the views in emotional restriction, avoidance of femininity, dominance of economy and being strong on psychology. Single men generally do not have any difficulties in showing their feelings. In the domain of achievement, masculinity still remains with the culture. Additionally, women's education levels and active participation in life rise, their self-confidence rises. In light of interviews, cultural teaching in Turkish society indicates that professions and responsibilities of gender have been beginning to react differently, even though there is a belief that equality in working should be changeable for gender. The research discussed the depth of gender roles respectively.

Keywords—gender; culture; Turkish; emotion; education

I. INTRODUCTION

Gender roles in society are changeable based on cultural and social views. It definitely affects on thinking and behavior of individuals [1]. These cultural roles are to shape gender responsibilities in society [2,3]. Along with these views, gender differences in psychology are due to a complex interplay of biological, developmental, and cultural factors. Differences have been found in a variety of fields such as mental health [4], cognitive abilities [5], personality [6] and the tendency toward aggression [7]. In addition, differences in socialization of males and females may have the effect of decreasing or increasing the magnitude of sex differences. There are such social stereotypes for both genders in culture. For instance, 'meals are prepared and the house is cleaned by women' and 'men make a proposal, women don't'. However, women's engagement and commitment increases in society including their level of education increases, some of the traditional roles are going to be reviewed.

In particular, Turkish culture-oriented with Islamic values points clearly gender differences [8-10]. There are still understanding women should do light works, spend much time with kids at home, avoid public places and keep herself private to her family/partner. This can be viewed as inferior for women, however, within the cultural context, it can be

understood as an acceptable life perspective. This might be better viewed in psychological view to make individuals especially women to be happy, life satisfied and self-actualized. This is also not viewed women are lower than a male partner in society. Probably such a perspective or act toward women causes big problems for individual and social life. While considering gender roles, it is always better to view both cultural and individual development together.

The aim of this paper is to investigate the role of gender in Turkey using two qualitative studies. Researchers focus on generally the eight domains related to gender roles such as achievement, rationality, objectification of sex, self-reliance, emotional restriction, avoidance of femininity, focus on toughness and aggression, and homophobia were grounded to ask the relevant questions respectively [11,12].

II. METHOD

A. Study 1

In this study, ten women and ten men were tested to understand different ideas on gender about gender stereotypes oriented with women. Their ages were 18-29 years old. They are generally university students and closed-ended questions directed to them. For example, "Can women handle financial matters such as paying bills?" and "Should women always wash, fold and put away laundry?" For ethical purposes, participants have given their consents on the subject of research. Interview results were evaluated the coding in the process of segmenting text from the data.

B. Study 2

This research has been applied to 12 men that 6 of them married and 6 of the single. Their ages between 25 and 47 years old. Method of this research is a semi-structured interview. Ten questions have been prepared to be asked accordingly. The questions' themes are generally about roles of the males in culture. The questions are about "achievement, rationality, objectification of sex, self-reliance, emotional restriction, avoidance of femininity, focus on toughness and aggression, and homophobia". The questions to participants "Does it bother you if your barber/your close friend is homosexual? Why?" and "Does a man have to care about himself? Does weight change affect your mood?" For ethical

purposes, participants have given their consents on the subject of research. Interview results were evaluated the coding in the process of segmenting text from the data.

were responded similarly by women. There were slightly different ideas. In general, women believe that they can achieve things for which society doesn't see possible (see Table 1).

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

1) *Study 1:* There are 14 questions prepared related to gender stereotypes. It indicated that most of the questions

TABLE I. THOUGHTS OF WOMEN AND MEN ABOUT STEREOTYPES ABOUT WOMEN

Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency			
		Female		Male	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Can women do hardwork?	Toughness	10	0	10	0
Can women drive a car while man and woman have a journey?	Self-reliance	10	0	9	1
Should woman always prepare the meal at home?	Toughness	0	10	3	7
Can women propose marriage?	Self-reliance	10	0	3	7
Can women perform basic maintenance of vehicle such as changing the oil?	Toughness	8	2	8	2
Can women handle financial matters such as paying bills?	Self-reliance	10	0	9	1
Should women always perform household cleaning?	Toughness	0	10	2	8
Should women always wash, fold and put away laundry?	Toughness	0	10	2	8
Can women purchase groceries?	Toughness	10	0	9	1
Can women work to earn most of the money to support the family?	Toughness	10	0	9	1
Should women always wrap gifts?	Toughness	1	9	5	5
Should women always decorate the house?	Toughness	3	7	4	6
Can women shovel snow to clear driveways and sidewalks?	Toughness	9	1	6	4
Should women always stay at home with the child who is sick?	Toughness	0	10	0	10

Table 1 indicates that Turkish men toward women tend to display cultural roles such as men proposing marriage and women wrapping gifts. Similarly, women have the understanding to work light jobs such as changing oil is not preferred by some women. This seems accepted as education and cultural roles by men and women in society, men tend to divide light works to women. For this reason, women sometimes can be limited to house works only, doing housework such as decorating house, looking after the house, and cleaning. On the other hand, if there is serious case at

home such as sickness, both genders actively involve respectively.

2) *Study 2:* It is aimed to find out whether the male roles are affected by culture. Married men seem comfortable to display their emotional feelings. On the other hand, they are not willing to wear opposite sex representative colors such as pink and purple. It means they are in line with masculine resistance. This can be clearly understood they are not preferring homosexual barbers compared to single men.

TABLE II. MARRIED AND SINGLE MEN THOUGHTS ABOUT STEREOTYPES

Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Married - Male	Frequency	Single - Male
Do men have difficulty showing their feelings?	Emotional Restriction	6	Feel Restricted	4	Feel Restricted
		0	Not Feel Restricted	2	Not Feel Restricted
					Feel Restricted
Is it proper that men wear pink and red or womanish clothes? Why?	Avoidance of Femininity	4	Avoidance	6	Avoidance
		2	Not Avoidance	0	Not Avoidance
Which gender plays roles in professions that require hardness and rudeness? Why?	Focus on Toughness and Aggression	2	Both Genders	2	Both Genders
		4	Male	4	Male
Does a man have to care about himself? Does weight change affect your mood?	Self-reliance	6	Important	6	Important
		0	Not Important	0	Not Important
Which gender is more appropriate as the CEO of a very large company? Why?	Achievement	2			
		2	Both Genders	4	Both Genders
		2	Male	0	Male
Do you act with your rationale or your emotions? Why?	Rationality	2	Female	2	Female
		2	Rationale	2	Rationale
		2	Emotions	2	Emotions
Does it bother you if your barber/your close friend is homosexual? Why?	Homophobia	2	Both Genders	2	Both Genders
		4	Uncertain	0	Uncertain
		0	Uncomfortable	2	Uncomfortable
Does a man have to earn much more than his wife/partner?	Dominance of Economy	2	Comfortable	4	Comfortable
		4	Both Genders	4	Both Genders
		0	Male	0	Male
Should women always perform household cleaning?	Being Strong on Psychology	2	No Comment	2	No Comment
		4	Female	2	Female
		0	Male	2	Male

B. Discussion

1) *Study 1:* There is still a slightly different understanding of gender roles in Turkish society. As to closed-ended questions, women are line with light works, although they tended to do works including heavy duties exactly what men do actively. This again might not be understood wrongly within the cultural context as long as it doesn't cause individuals depressed or involved crisis. As women's education level increases, women get a job, their self-confidence increases, they success doing something and provide changing stereotypes in society.

Related to achievement, men believe that that a big company can be run by both a woman and a man. They say that gender is important, but the most important thing is the idea. If you have a creative and decisive idea and you step coherently about it, gender should not be considered. However, some men say that women can run better because they say women are cleverer and more hardworking than man and it is the point of running a business and according to the research [13], it is to focus on performance, management practices, goals, and strategies. There are elder men still think that a business should be run by a man. It might be still a cultural impact when a person gets older. They say "men are more honest and reliable than women so, they are good at running a company". From this point of view, elder men have slightly perception to continue man superior over women.

There is an equality understanding, despite their marital status. There is a belief that women are more emotional than men about thinking, however, it is proved that men could be described as more emotional than women, [14]. It depends on the type of emotion, how it is measured, where it is expressed, and lots of other factors. It therefore appears consistent gender differences in emotionality would not mean the differences are evolved, even if the gender differences have neurological substrates (gender role socialization may change the brains of boys and girls).

2) *Study 2:* According to the result, all of the married men think that they feel restricted about showing their feelings. They say that if they show their feelings, they become embarrassed and believe that it is not proper behavior. Single men generally do not have any difficulties in showing their feelings. Their thought is generally that women should leave freedom to show their feelings. There are a few single men who think restricted about feelings and generally, men feel uncomfortable about showing their feelings due to cultural impact. According to the Turkish culture, it does not seem decent that a man shows his feeling, being upset or cry. According to the interview, married men think that they have an emotional restriction. They are experiencing different life understanding. They are older than other group and they have still a responsibility for their children or wife. That might be a cause of restriction. They are naturally driven to be the best at what they do, and they practice this from the moment they are born like "Look, I can jump higher". Men are born to be champions. The cultural role makes them be in that circumstance. They are grown up to be a hero, not afraid of

anything. They use simple and unpretentious ways to show their positive feelings inside of saying "I love you."

Additionally, men usually say that they avoid feminine clothes or colors because of society. Especially single men are afraid of seeming like a woman. They think that because of the dressing, they can be marginalized from society. They are shown to be attractive and think that masculine clothes like shirts, ties, pants make them feel confident and that makes them wear these kinds of things. Married men mostly say that if the color befits, it can be worn. However, it should be in moderation.

In career perspective for men, they are given some professions like carpenter, guardian, police officer, building worker, and other occupations and considered these professions better. The companies usually choose males because they think that women have mercury about some tough things like being a guardian. For other occupational groups, they say that it is proved that the male body is stronger than the female body as physically and it does not seem good to see a woman carrying heavy things.

About self-reliance, all of the men think that physical appearance is important for men. It is the essence of looking good, it causes confident. They want to wear good, be fit and be attractive. This also affects the selection of a spouse. There is a big prejudgment about homosexuals about homophobia. They are generally marginalized by society and humiliated. Therefore, generally married men say that they feel uncomfortable when his close friend or barber is homosexual. The explanation of this is they are afraid of the interest of the person who is homosexual. In contrary, a few single men say "it is their personal opinion and I have to regard them like that".

The dominance of economy changes upon marital status. Married men say the responsibilities of the domestic economy is mainly men. If his partner/wife earns much more than him, he feels embarrassed and depressed like he can not manage the money. Single men think that there is no difference in economical income between men and women. The important part is being together, so the money is not important. Even though all around the world it is discussed that men earn more than women. For instance; regardless of sector, position or number of working hours, women continue to earn less than men. In Turkish society, general thought about women's profession is a housewife. A spouse, especially old spouse, believes that women do not work, men earn, however, this thought has been changed the beginning of the 21st century and as it seems in the results, single men support of equality of economy. In light of strong on psychology, married men believe that they rationalize and act out with it. There are a few of men believing that women are stronger on psychology than men. It is even thought for men, women are counselors and they have their own problems in life too. It is a really big deal to overcome. Single men have three different views about it. Some view it is all about the character of the person and personality and some believe that it is dependent on psychology and physical differences.

C. General Discussion

Interestingly, married men have slightly changed the views in emotional restriction, avoidance of femininity, dominance of economy and being strong on psychology. Single men generally do not have any difficulties in showing their feelings. In the domain of achievement, masculinity still remains with the culture. According to men generally, the stereotypes still continue in society. Additionally, women's education levels and active participation in life rise, their self-confidence rises. Social stereotypes oriented with women was therefore strict beforehand, is now slightly changing positively. In light of interviews, cultural teaching in Turkish society indicates that professions and responsibilities of gender have been beginning to react differently, even though there is a belief that equality in working should be changeable for gender.

In general, there are differences in the mental functions and behaviors of the sexes and are due to a complex interplay of biological, developmental, and cultural factors. As the culture of Turkey, generally, women complain about men do not show their feelings to them and their children. It is because of the cultural leader effect, the principle of "father, son or boy should be a hero." This still can be seen as emotional restriction and avoidance of femininity. For focusing on toughness and aggression, there is still belief about the professions about men and women do in Turkey. Women should be a teacher, nurse, housewife, tailor, and other related occupations. Men should be a soldier, prison guard, carpenter, driver, and other related works. Therefore, some companies inform the preferred gender in their announcements. This term is involved in achievement too. However, today, the belief of equality in working is discussing and changing the restricted ideas about professions.

IV. CONCLUSION

To sum up, there is equality in being strong in psychology and rationality. It is because of the fact that women play an active role in daily life than before and society is getting used to it. Turkey is a developing country and trying to keep up west countries about equality of genders. Therefore, for professions and responsibilities have been beginning to divide into two pieces for genders and even some cultural effects of the past have been continuing, most of them have been changed and men do not have weighty responsibilities as before. This study limited to only a group of university students and married and single men. As for the underlying points, further research empirically includes cultural factors and gender stereotypes to receive relatively greater attention. In fact, this study contains a clear limitation; especially the omission of tested/psychometric ability data will give more accurate

direction and magnitude. Therefore, the result should be cautiously interpreted. The research discussed the depth of gender roles respectively.

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