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Roles and Family Functions: Turkey Case Study**

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Investigation of the Relationship between Gender Roles and Family Functions: Turkey Case Study

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Abstract

Changing structure of family at society can lead some change at women and man' roles. Some individuals can easily adapt to these changes while some individuals experience some problems especially in marriage life. Problems that family face and developing solutions to these problems are among the main goals of social work. Rapidly changing structure of society, differentiation of man and women roles, and changing gender perception of individuals affect the family. This situation affects the family problem-solving and communication skills among couples. Thus, perceptions about gender roles of men and women reflect to the marriage life. Especially, relations among perceptions about gender roles and problem solving, communication, roles, affective involvement, affective responsiveness, behavior control effect family life. In this study, in order to determine the reflection of gender roles of married couples to family function has reached 371 married men and women in the capital of Turkey -Ankara-. In this study, interview form prepared by the researcher and Family Assessment Device is used. This research is conducted by survey model and 1st and 8th grade students of Ahmet Vefik Paşa Primary and Middle School has reached. After that, addresses of families are collected with the help of students and teachers. 371 married couple has agreed to join the research. Sociodemographic form prepared by the researcher and Family Assessment Device were used in interviews. In research, it has been seen to be a significant relation between sub-dimensions of Family Assessment Device (problem solving, communication, roles, affective involvement, affective responsiveness and behavior control) and gender roles.

Keywords: Gender Role, Family Functions, Family

Introduction

Family is the fundamental and core of the society. Family is a social institution existed with human history. Family has importantly changed like other social structures in the history. Structure, types and sizes of families has changed a lot (Kır, 2011). Changing social structures, women's higher education levels and better jobs opportunities for women has affected women and men roles in the families. Also living in larger cities has brought some changes in roles of women and men. All of these cause some role changes in the families.

According to Rice (1996) gender roles are the expressions of womanhood and manhood in social environments. Gender is so called features and behaviors attributed to women and men. Marshall states that gender roles show how women and men behave and also gender roles defines different duties expected from men and women (1999).

Eagly (1983) states that cultural structure of the society attributes different roles to men and women. This differentiation causes difference in status of men and women. Hence it effects society's expectation from men and women. But recently this status difference is becoming unclear because of role sharing among men and women.

Changing in living conditions, increasing needs and chances in the society have started to change traditional family structure which gives men a responsibility of supporting family economically and gives women a responsibility of family organization and keeping family together. According to Fortin (2005) this caused transition of gender roles towards the structure which roles of women and men are shared. İmamoğlu (1993) states that changes in sharing housework overshadows the changes in role of earning money.

There are some features shaped gender roles. These are sex, family, school, family type, media, working life and having siblings.

Sex and Gender

In order to understand how gender roles and role perceptions affect women and men in the family, first terms of sex and gender should be known. Sex, biologically separates being men and women (Alle-Corliss and Alle-Corliss, 1999). This separation is caused by differences on fertility, genitalia and reproduction (Suğur, 2006, p. 3). But gender depends on culturally defined roles, expectations and behaviors about being women and men. Generally, gender includes psychological aspects of being women or men (Dökmen, 2010). According to Oakley (1972) sex separates being biologically men and women while gender defines socially constructed differences between man and women.

Gender is a universal term since it situated in every culture in the World. But also gender is a very complex and different structure which changes according to one culture's own aspects (Taş, 1994). Therefore, every society defines different life styles for women and men. Society and its culture shapes different worlds for men and women and these worlds

have varied attitude, behaviors and values. All of these affect relationship between women and men and also communication between spouses.

Effect of Socialization on Gender Roles

Society and culture in which individuals live affect behaviors of men and women. These behaviors start to shape by birth and with the help of socialization individuals learn and interiorize these behaviors.

Socialization is a process which a baby slowly grows up in particular culture and learn about skills of those culture and in the end he/she becomes conscious member of those culture and society (Giddens, 2000).

Family has a great importance on individuals' thoughts about gender roles. Parents are significant role models for their children. Therefore, roles in the family and how individuals transfer them to their children affect society's point of view on gender roles.

Gender and Family Functions

Every individual in the family has different features and role expectations. In the family roles of women and men are taken in a specific way. Perceptions of gender roles of family members effect family functions. Habits, believes and values from stem family of individuals are very important for gender roles and they effect newly started family and functions of that family. According to Bulut (1993), living a healthy life is possible by having proper family functions. Ronnau and Poertner (1993) defines family functions as the needs which should be met for every family member. As Sanay (1990) has stated that family functions have physical, biological, emotional, economic and social dimensions (cited in İşmen, 2004).

Dewess analyses family functions in 8 groups. These are:

- To create effective environment for child nutrition and socialization,
- To meet economical needs,
- To provide emotional support and trust for family members,
- To provide protective living conditions for family members,
- To enable significant social relations for family members,
- To provide continuity of cultural legacy,
- To enable continuation of generation,
- To provide socially defined identities (2006).

Confliction between perceived gender roles of spouses and their not-adopted active roles effects family negatively. In this context unclear roles and role borders; conflictions between learned and adopted roles also affects family functions. According to Yavuzer (2011), family order can be maintained only by role adaptations of family members.

Role flexibility, openness for new roles and clear role borders for men and women effects family functions positively.

Consequently, the family has a great importance for development of the individual and the society. Gender roles which are changing according to social construction of society, is especially important for family social work practices to determine negative and positive aspects of these changing roles. Hence protective and preventive precautions towards families should be increased; families' awareness should be raised, the needs of families should be determined and solutions should be proposed. All of these can be done with social work interventions.

Research Questions

The main aim of this research is to determine factors affecting family functions of married men and women and also to determine whether socio-demographical features of the family and gender roles affect family functions. According to this aims this research tries to answer these questions:

- What are socio-demographical features of married men and women?
- What are the perceptions of married men and women about gender roles?
- Is there any relation between married women and men's gender roles and family functions?

Research Methods

Procedure

This research, named as Investigation of the Relationship Between Gender Roles and Family Functions is conducted by survey model. Target population of the study consists of men and women who live in Ankara, legally married and doesn't live as stem family (nuclear family). Families with 6-12 aged children is accepted for this research. Because these families at second stage of family life cycle which is "family with little children". This age range of children is defining as concrete operational stage according to Piaget's theory of cognitive development. Also this age range is considered as latency stage of Freud's psychosexual stages. Erikson defines this age range as psychosocial stage of "industry vs. inferiority". The reason of choosing this age range for children is to control the effect of puberty on family functions. The study group for this research is consist of 371 volunteers who are married men and women living in Çankaya district of Ankara city in Turkey. These volunteers are chosen in Ahmet Vefik Paşa Primary and Middle School. The reason for that is the school is the only school situated in same neighborhood with Family Consultancy Center. It has been considered that families who use and do not use free services of Family Consultancy Center could be reached at the same time.

Measures

Data is collected with survey developed by the researcher and McMaster Family Assessment Device which has been adopted Turkish by Işıl Bulut in 1990. Interview form prepared by the researcher consists of information about participants' sociodemographic, roles of them and their spouses.

Family Assessment Device (FAD) was developed in Family Research Program conducted by Brown University and Butler Hospital in USA. The device has been adopted to Turkish by Bulut (1990) and validity and reliability study has been conducted by her. FAD has 7 sub-scales and consists of 60 items. 6 of them are considered as McMaster Family Functioning Model and every subscale considers one family dysfunction. 7th subscale was added to evaluate the health of family generally. Subscales are;

1. Problem Solving (PS): 2,12,24,38,50, 60
2. Communication (COM): 3, 18, 22, 29,35, 43, 52, 59
3. Roles (ROL): 4, 8, 10, 15, 23, 30, 34, 40, 45, 53, 58
4. Affective Responsiveness (AR): 9, 19, 28, 39, 49, 57
5. Affective Involvement (AI): 5, 13, 25, 33, 37, 42, 54
6. Behavior Control (BC): 7, 17, 20, 27, 32, 44, 47, 48, 55
7. General Functioning (GF): 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36, 41, 51, 46, 56 (Bulut, 1993).

Data Analysis

Data is collected in 2013. Data collected by measures entered SPSS 15.00. After t test is conducted to compare mean points; variance analysis (ANOVA test) and correlation analysis is used for investigate relations between variables.

Findings

In this part of the research information about sociodemographic aspects and gender roles of volunteers. Also information about the relation between gender roles and family assessment measure is given.

Table 1. Sociodemographic Aspects

Sex	Number	Percentage (%)
Woman	201	54,2
Man	170	45,8
The Place lived the longest		
Province	319	86
District	23	6,2
Village	29	7,8
Duration of Marriage (Years)		
6-10	128	34,5
11-15	211	56,9
16-20	27	7,3
21 and more	5	1,3
Total	371	100

In this study there are 201 married women (54, 2%) and 170 married men (45, 8%).

The most of the participants have lived the longest in providences (86%). 6, 2% have lived in districts and 7, 8% have lived in villages the longest.

There are no illiterates in study group. Education levels of women are given; literates have 0, 5%, primaryschool graduates have 14, 4%, middle school graduates have 8%, high school graduates have 25, 9% and college graduates have 42, 3%, women with master's degree have 8% and women with doctoral degree have 0, 5%. Education levels of men are given; primary school graduates have 11, 8%, middle school graduates have 11, 8%, high school graduates have 21, 2% and college graduates have 47, 6%, men with master's degree have 8, 8% and men with doctoral degree have 3, 5%.

Percentages of married duration of participants are given. 6-10 years marriages have 34, 5%, 11-15 years marriages have 56, 9%, 16-20 years marriages have 7, 3% and 21 and more years marriages have 1, 3%.

When examined to distribution of educational status of female and male who are university graduate, it is seen to be higher rates (women 42,3% and man 47,6%).

Table 2. Information about Gender Roles

Performed Roles and The Person Performed that Roles	Man		Woman		Both	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Earning money	128	34,5	4	1,1	239	64,4
Determining the needs of household	8	2,2	81	21,8	282	76
Deciding how to spend income	35	9,4	16	4,3	320	86,3
Child Care	4	1,1	164	44,2	203	54,7
Paying the bills	207	55,8	27	7,3	137	36,9
Purchasing high-cost items	112	30,2	9	2,4	250	67,4
Purchasing low-cost items	51	13,7	88	23,7	232	62,5
Deciding who to meet as a family	23	6,2	12	3,2	336	90,6
Preparing Breakfast	13	3,5	244	65,8	114	30,7
Cooking	7	1,9	300	80,9	64	17,3
House cleaning	6	1,6	288	77,6	77	20,8
Doing ironing	10	2,7	310	83,6	51	13,7
Washing the dishes and laundering	9	2,4	307	82,7	55	14,8
Repairing	290	78,2	25	6,7	56	15,1
Enabling communication between family members	12	3,2	43	11,6	316	85,2
Deciding how to spend spare time	17	4,6	25	6,7	329	88,7
Taking care of children and playing with them	10	2,7	58	15,6	303	81,7
Being the humble side in cases of arguments	61	16,4	106	28,6	204	55
Feeding the children	9	2,4	193	52	169	45,6
Shopping for food	57	15,4	64	17,3	250	67,4
Deciding the	14	3,8	27	7,3	330	88,9

schools which children study						
Deciding where to go for holidays	22	5,9	18	4,9	331	89,2

As findings on family aspects and gender roles of married men and women, doing ironing has 2,7% for men; 83,6% for women; 13,7% for both, paying the bills has 55,7% for men; 7,3% for women; 36,9% for both, cooking has 1,9% for men; 80,9% for women; 17,3% for both, washing the dishes and laundering has 2,4% for men; 82,7% for women; 14,8% for both, preparing breakfast has 3,5% for men; 65,8% for women; 30,7% for both, repairing has 78,2% for men; 6,7% for women; 15,1% for both, house cleaning has 1,6% for men; 77,6% for women; 20,8% for both and feeding the children has 2,4% for men; 52% for women; for both 45,6%. Half of the women and men thinks that all other roles, apart from above mentioned roles, should be performed by both men and women.

Table 3. *The Relations between Gender roles and Family Functions*

Gender Roles	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	r	P
PS	371	1,73	0,56	-0,250	p<0,05
COM	371	1,66	0,50	-0,286	p<0,05
ROL	371	1,90	0,38	-0,345	p<0,05
AR	371	1,61	0,54	-0,379	p<0,05
AI	371	2,21	0,31	-0,177	p<0,05
BC	371	2,02	0,33	-0,248	p<0,05
GF	371	1,55	0,49	-0,389	p<0,05
Gender Roles	371	29,79	4,91	1	

When we analyzed the relation between gender roles and Family Assessment Device scores, it has been seen that there was statistically significant relation between gender roles and problem solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, behavior control and general functioning. It can be said that higher gender roles score increases healthy family functions.

Results

Results on Sociodemographic Aspects of Married Men and Women

According to sex, women participants are 54,2% of total participants. It can be said that women are more interested in gender roles and they would like to relieve themselves about problems caused by gender roles. It's very likely to have this result because the research participation is voluntary. It's seen that 74,7% of married men and women are at the age of between 31 and 40. If it's considered that participants have 6-12 aged children, the age of being a parent are not too early or too late for participants. According to birth place 58,5% of married men and women were born in provinces. It can be said that stem families of participants also live in provinces. Therefore, it can be deducted that participants have values of provinces and they can be more flexible about gender roles than individuals born in villages and counties. Also 86% of participants longest live in provinces. It can be said that women and men who live longest in provinces are more informed and knowledgeable about gender roles and also they may share roles more. participants are mostly graduated in universities (42,3% of women and 47,6% of men). The numbers of women and university graduates are very close. 28,6% of married men and women are civil servant. It's showed that they have regular wages and job security. Also they have regular working hours. Therefore, it can be said that these families have more regular family life and this maybe brings more positive family functions.

Results on Gender Roles in Families of Married Men and Women

According to results on gender roles in families of married men and women, it is seen that participants thinks that except the roles of paying the bills (55,7% for men; 7,3% for women; 36,9% for both), doing ironing (2,7% for men; 83,6% for women; 13,7% for both), cooking (1,9% for men; 80,9% for women; 17,3% for both) , washing the dishes and laundering (2,4% for men; 82,7% for women; 14,8% for both), repairing (78,2% for men; 6,7% for women; 15,1% for both) , preparing breakfast (3,5% for men; 65,8% for women; 30,7% for both) , feeding the children (2,4% for men; 52% for women; for both 45,6%) and cleaning (1,6% for men; 77,6% for women; 20,8% for both) all roles should be shared between men and women. If it's considered that changing social structure, increasing women's education level and women's working in income-generating jobs, it can be said that work load of women is increasing. Because of that it can be said women may experience problems like burn out and depression. According to research findings women has more responsibility on child care than men (1,1% for men, 44,2% for women). Therefore, it can be concluded that mothers are more effective about children's behaviors, attitudes and believes. Also if it's considered that women have more effective role to transfer traditional roles to children, pregnant women and young mothers should be educated about gender roles.

Results on Relationship between Gender Roles in Families of Married Men and Women and Family Assessment Device

According to results of relationship between gender roles in families and family functions, it can be seen that when gender roles score is higher, problem solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, behavior control and general functioning scores are declining. It means that family incline to healthy family functions. Changing social structures, women and men's having higher levels of education, women's working in income generating jobs and adopting provinces' values can cause men and women to differentiate from their stem families' values. It can be said that in this research married men and women are more flexible about sharing roles and they can view gender roles from a wider perspective. Therefore, it can be concluded that families had wider perspective have open communication, they are being more sharing, they can Express their feelings, they can show affection and love to each other. On contrary in families where there are no gender roles sharing; problem solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, behavior control and general functioning can incline to be unhealthy.

Conclusion and Discussion

This study is aimed to determine the relationship between family functions and gender roles and also to determine the relationship between gender roles and sociodemographic aspects of married individuals.

There are more women participants (54, 2%) than men in this study. It's shown that participants have lived the longest in providences (58, 5%). Married individuals living in providences and districts have better social and educational opportunities, hence it can be anticipated that they have healthier family functions. Women college graduates have 42,3% and men college graduates have 47,6%. A lot of researches show that higher education levels of spouses is related to higher marriage satisfaction (Duvall, 1972 cited in Çamur Duyan, 2000, p. 15). In "Woman and Man Identities in Gender Culture" research conducted by Ersoy (2009) showed that higher education levels affected spouses traditional point of views about stereotypes. Yang, Thornton and Fricke (2000) also reached similar conclusion. They stated that individuals had higher education levels lessened traditional point of views about gender stereotypes and also they stated that individuals became more liberating about gender roles.

This study shows that the most of the women participants performed doing ironing, cooking, washing the dishes and laundering, preparing breakfast, house cleaning and feeding the children roles. The most of the men participants performed repairing and paying the bills roles. This results shows that there is still gender perspective on these roles. According to one study conducted by Günay and Bener (2011) with 575 married women, women thinks that women should do household works (ironing, cleaning, washing the dishes etc.). But women also think that men and women should have a say together in social and economic issues.

When we analyzed the relation between gender roles and Family Assessment Device scores, it has been seen that there were statistically significant relation between gender roles and problem solving, communication, roles, affective responsiveness, affective involvement, behavior control and general functioning. Changes in social construction, social, economic and interpersonal factors have brought some changes in family structures. This new changing status of society and family creates the view that men and women should share roles in the family. Also role sharing affects family in a positive way (James and Wilson, 2002).

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