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## AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MOTHERS' PERCEIVED GENDER ROLE AND MATERNAL GATEKEEPING BEHAVIOR<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract:

**Objective:** The purpose of this study is to examine whether there is a significant relationship between mothers' perceived gender role and maternal gatekeeping behaviors.

**Method:** In this study, in which mothers' perceived gender role and maternal gatekeeping behaviors were examined according to some variables, the relational survey model, which obtains information through comparison from quantitative research methods, was used. The study group of the research consists of 606 mothers with preschool children who were selected by simple random sampling method from many cities in Turkey. "Personal Information Form", "Bem Gender Role Inventory" and "Maternal Gatekeeping Scale" were used to collect the data.

**Findings:** There is a significant positive correlation between the participants' femininity scores and Two-Fold Responsible Maternity (TFM), Over-Committed Maternity (OCM) and Traditional Maternity (TM) scores at a moderate level, and a significant positive correlation with the scores belonging to all of Maternity Gatekeeping at a low level. Masculinity scores have a significant negative correlation with OCM and TM scores at a moderate level, and a significant negative correlation with the scores belonging to the entire TFM and Maternal Gatekeeping Scale (MG) a low level. As a result of the tests conducted in the sub-dimensions of the study, while there was a difference between the TFM, OCM, TM and MG scores of the mothers according to their educational status, age, place of residence and socioeconomic level; there was no difference between the Modern Maternity (MM) and Indirect Maternity (IM) scores according to their educational status, age, place of residence and socioeconomic level. While there was a statistically significant difference between child gender and OCM scores, there was no difference between the scores obtained from MM, TFM, TM, and Indirect Maternity (IM) sub-dimensions.

**Conclusion:** As a result of the analyses, a significant positive relationship was found between the gender roles of the study group and maternal gatekeeping behaviors. There were positive and negative significant relationships between the gender roles of the study group and maternity gatekeeping behaviors in sub-dimensions. According to these results, as the femininity scores of mothers with preschool children increased, their total maternal gatekeeping scores increased, and as their masculinity scores increased, their total maternal gatekeeping scores decreased.

**Keywords:** Gender role, Gender, Maternal Gatekeeping, Preschool period, Parent

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<sup>1</sup> This article was produced from the master's thesis with the same title prepared by first author under the supervision of second author

## INTRODUCTION

The family consists of systems and subsystems that mutually influence each other (Kulik & Tsoref, 2010). Recent studies on issues such as co-parenting, parenting-child relationship, and the ways in which spouses influence each other in child care reveal the importance of parenting roles within the family system (Fagan & Barnett, 2003; Trinder, 2008; Tu, Chang, & Kao, 2014).

While it is observed that mothers' being in the workforce increases fathers' involvement in childcare and family matters (Bonney, Kelley, & Levant, 1999; Linnenberg, 2012; Maume, 2011), it is stated that the spouses of non-working mothers may be reluctant by seeing only the mother as responsible for domestic chores and childcare (Roopnarine et al., 1995). The good aspects of cooperative behaviors between spouses are mentioned and it is emphasized that they lead to positive results in relationships with children (Allen & Daly, 2007). Some studies reveal that help from the father can lead mothers to have negative feelings towards fathers in matters such as childcare and communication (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997; Puhlman & Pasley, 2013). As a result, mothers may exhibit restrictive behaviors towards fathers, and this situation is evaluated with the concept of maternal gatekeeping.

The concept of "paternal gatekeeping" can be considered as the Turkish adaptation of the concept of "maternal gatekeeping", which has been studied in the literature for many years. The concept of gatekeeping was introduced in 1995 and defined by Allen and Hawkins in 1999 as "the mother's beliefs and attitudes that restrict the father and prevent the father from learning household chores" (Akgoz, 2017). Maternal gatekeeping is a topic that has been studied in a limited number of studies (Fagan & Barnett, 2003) and needs to be further clarified (Allen & Hawkins, 1999). It has been the subject of literature for the last two decades with the increasing involvement of fathers and changing roles of mothers. Maternal gatekeeping is also seen as a situation in which mothers assume responsibility in the family (Allen & Hawkins, 1999), react negatively to the father's involvement (Fagan & Barnett, 2003), and want to manage the process completely by themselves (Hawkins & Dollahite, 1997). Puhlman and Pasley (2013) define maternal gatekeeping as "the mother's behaviors to make the father's childcare and relationship with the child regular, appropriate and consistent by using controlled, facilitative or restrictive methods on the father" which develops with the mutual interactions of men and women in the family.

Kulik and Tsoref (2010) state that maternal gatekeeping behaviors cannot be due to a single reason, that they have a more complex structure, and that the behaviors also include gender roles. In line with gender roles, mothers prevent fathers from participating in childcare in many areas and try to control their bond with the child (Aytac, 2018). Frascaralo and Favez (2010) also state that these behaviors are more common in broken and frayed families. Puhlman and Pasley (2013) emphasized that these behaviors can be intentional or unintentional. Based on gender roles, mothers engage in these behaviors to keep their power in their hands (Makusha & Richter, 2016). With maternal gatekeeping behavior, mothers have difficulty in taking the responsibilities in the family completely on themselves, and at the same time, they do not want this situation to change because they feel on the strong side despite their difficulties (Hauser, 2015).

When we look at the concept of gender role, which is the concept most associated with paternalism, it is possible to see that it is defined as the behaviors and roles predetermined by society for the sexes (Gander & Gardiner, 2010). A gender role is a role that determines how men and women think and feel and is partially assigned by the environment (Kulaksizoglu, 2002). Gender roles are accepted by society within a certain period of time, but change over time depending on cultural, social, technological and scientific developments.

In some societies this change takes place very slowly, in others very quickly (Bayhan & Artan, 2004). Recently, the term gender roles has started to be used more widely instead of the term sex roles in view of the changing roles of women and men in daily life. Women and men are expected to behave in

certain roles in society as required by culture. Women are generally accepted as feminine and men are generally accepted as masculine (Dokmen, 2009).

Gender role is the individual's display or expression of sexual identity through culturally determined feminine or masculine characteristics and behaviors (Temel & Aksoy, 2001). As a result of this expression, mothers' behaviors towards their children are also shaped. It can be said that these shaping are effective in the emergence of the concept of maternal gatekeeping (Kulik & Tsoref, 2010). Although gender inequality is criticized in society, there are also women who unwittingly support this gender inequality (Radcliffe & Cassell, 2014). Mothers display a controlling attitude towards the father who wants to take care of the child. Mothers who prevent the father's involvement see themselves as primarily responsible for childcare and do not want the father's involvement (Cannon et al., 2008).

The purpose of this study is to examine whether there is a significant relationship between mothers' perceived gender roles and maternal gatekeeping behaviors. In addition, the aim of this study is to examine whether mothers' gender roles and maternal gatekeeping levels vary according to the variables of mother's age, educational level, socioeconomic level, and place of residence. This research is an important study because it examines an issue that has not been addressed much in the Turkish literature and actually describes the reasons underlying the maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers and the variables that may be related to these behaviors.

## METHOD

### Research Model

In this study, the relational survey model was used to determine whether there is a significant difference between mothers' perceived gender role and maternal gatekeeping behaviors. In relational survey, the aim is to determine the existence and degree of co-variation between more than one variable (Karasar, 2009).

### Sample

The population of the study consists of parents with preschool children. Measurement tools were delivered to many cities in Turkey. The study group of the research was determined by simple random sampling method from the population. Simple random sampling is a method in which all items in the universe have the same probability of being selected with the same chance, and it is a process in which the sample is formed with this method (Buyukozturk et al., 2018). The study group of the research consists of 603 mothers who volunteered to participate in the study.

### Data Collection Processes

Since the process of collecting research data coincided with the pandemic period, the measurement tools were organized online and delivered to mothers through preschool teachers working in various regions. The responses from the mothers were compiled in the virtual environment and included in the study. The measurement tools are answered in an average of 10 minutes for each person.

### Data Collection Tools

#### *Personal Information Form*

In the study, the Personal Information Form prepared by the researcher was used to determine the demographic data of the participants. The Personal Information Form includes variables such as age, education level, number of children, gender of the child, the nature of the settlement they live in and socioeconomic level.

### Bem Gender Role Inventory (BGRI)

In the study, the BCRE created by Bem (1974) to determine the gender role orientations of the participants was used. Since 20 items of the 60-item scale were social desirability, they were not included in this study as in many other studies in the literature. The 40-item scale is 7-point Likert-type. The scale has two sub-dimensions: femininity and masculinity. The scale was adapted into Turkish by Kavuncu (1987) and its psychometric properties were analyzed by Dokmen (1991). According to Kavuncu's (1987) study, the test-retest reliability of the scale is 0.75 for the femininity dimension and 0.89 for the masculinity dimension. According to Dokmen's (1991) study, the two-half reliability coefficient of the scale was .77 ( $p < .01$ ) for the femininity subscale and .71 ( $p < 0.01$ ) for the masculinity subscale (Dokmen, 1991).

### Maternal Gatekeeping Scale

The scale was developed by Donmez (2019) to measure mothers' inhibiting and enabling behaviors of fathers in areas related to childcare and housework. The scale has a 5-factor structure with 57 items. Within the scope of Convergent Validity; similar scale reliability was examined. Within the scope of Internal Consistency Reliability; Cronbach's Alpha values were calculated and item analyzes were conducted. The Cronbach's Alpha value was .89 for the Modern Maternity (MM) sub-dimension, .87 for the Two-Fold Maternity (TFM) sub-dimension, .85 for the Over-Committed Maternity (OCM) sub-dimension, .71 for the Traditional Maternity (TM) sub-dimension, .63 for the Indirect Maternity (IM) sub-dimension, and .90 for the whole scale (BSA).

### Data Analysis

SPSS 22.0 program was used for data analysis. Normality assumptions of the data were tested. As a result of the analysis, it was observed that the skewness kurtosis values were not between -1 +1 and according to Komolgorov Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk tests, it was determined that the data were not normally distributed. Since the data were not normally distributed, nonparametric tests (Mann Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis) were applied and correlation analysis was performed to determine whether there was a statistical relationship between the mean scores obtained from the measurement tools.

### Ethics

The research was evaluated by Sivas Cumhuriyet University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Social and Humanities Ethics Committee and scientific committee approval (29.09.2020-61513) was obtained. After the participants were informed about the purpose and content of the study at the beginning of the online measurement tool sent to the participants, their consent to participate in the study was obtained.

## FINDINGS

In this section of the study, the findings obtained by analyzing the data are presented.

**Table 1.** Spearman Correlation Coefficients Calculated Between the Scores of the Participants Obtained from the BGRI and the MGS

		MM	TFM	OCM	TM	IM	MG Total
Femininity	r	-0,22	0,38	0,52	0,47	0,01	0,25
	p	0,00**	0,00**	0,00**	0,00**	0,95	0,00**
Masculinity	r	0,19	-0,24	-0,37	-0,45	0,22	-0,10
	p	0,00**	0,00**	0,00**	0,00**	0,00**	0,02*

\* $p < 0.01$  \*\* $p < 0.05$

MM: Modern Maternity / TFM: Two-Fold Responsible Maternity / OCM: Over-Committed Maternity / TM: Traditional Maternity / IM: Indirect Maternity

As can be seen in Table 1, the participants' femininity scores have a significant positive correlation with TFM, OCM and TM scores at a moderate level and a low level with the scores belonging to the entire BTS ( $r_{F-TFM}=0.38$ ;  $r_{F-OCM}=0.52$ ;  $r_{F-TM}=0.47$ ;  $r_{F-MGT}=0.25$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). In other words, as the femininity scores of the participants in the study increase, the total scores of TFM, OCM, TM and MGT also increase. When we consider the MM and IM scores, while the participants' femininity scores have a significant relationship with their MM scores at a low level and in a negative direction ( $r_{F-MM}=-0.22$ ;  $p<0.05$ ), there is no significant relationship between the participants' IM scores and their femininity scores. In other words, as the femininity scores of the participants in the study increase, their MM scores decrease. However, the change in the participants' femininity scores does not cause any change in their DA scores.

When the results in Table 1 for the correlation coefficients calculated for the participants' scores from the sub-dimensions and the whole of the ITS are examined, it is seen that the masculinity scores of the participants have a significant negative relationship with the OCM and TM scores at a moderate level, and a low level with the scores belonging to the whole of the TFM and MGT ( $r_{F-TFM}=-0.24$ ;  $r_{F-OCM}=-0.37$ ;  $r_{F-TM}=-0.45$ ;  $r_{F-MGT}=-0.10$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). In other words, as the masculinity scores of the participants in the study increase, the total scores of TFM, OCM, TM and MGT decrease. When we consider MM and IM scores, the masculinity scores of the participants have a significant relationship with MM and IM scores at a low level and in a positive direction ( $r_{K-MA}=0.19$ ;  $r_{K-DA}=0.22$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). In other words, as the masculinity scores of the participants in the study increase, their MA and DA scores also increase.

**Findings from the Bem Gender Role Inventory (BGRI)**

**Table 2.** Comparison of BCRE Scores of the Participants According to the Categories of Age Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	Sd	Chi-squar e	p	Difference
Femininity	20-29	306	325,92	2	19,31	0,00 **	1>2, 2>3
	30-39	258	288,17				
	40 and above	39	205,78				
Masculinity	20-29	306	271,26	2	23,61	0,00 **	3>2, 2>1
	30-39	258	325,57				
	40 and above	39	387,27				

\*\* $p<0,01$

1: 20-29, 2: 30-39, 3: 40 and above

When the results of the Kruskal Wallis Test applied for the scores obtained from the BGRI in Table 2 are analyzed, it is determined that the femininity and masculinity scores of the participants show a statistically significant difference according to their ages.  $X_K^2(sd = 2, n = 603) = 19,31, pK=0,00$ ;  $X_K^2(sd=2,n=603)=23,61, pK=0,00; p<0,05$ ). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was determined that the femininity scores of the participants were the lowest at the age of 40 and above, the highest at the age of 20-29, and the masculinity scores were the highest at the age of 40 and the lowest between the ages of 20-29.

**Table 3.** Comparison of Participants' BGRI Scores According to the Categories of Education Level Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	sd	Chi-square	p	Difference
Femininity	Primary School	43	414,42	3	44,00	0,00 **	1>4,
	Middle School	70	355,64				2>4,
	High School	119	337,30				3>4
	Associate-License	371	267,53				
Masculinity	Primary School	43	250,33	3	14,76	0,00 **	4>3,
	Middle School	70	262,14				4>2,
	High School	119	279,30				4>2,
	Associate-License	371	322,79				4>1

\*\*p<0,01

1: Primary School, 2: Secondary School, 3: High School, 4: Associate-License

In Table 3, it was found that the participants' femininity and masculinity scores showed a statistically significant difference according to their level of education ( $X^2_K(sd = 3, n = 603) = 44,00, p_K=0,00; X^2_E(sd = 3, n = 603) = 14,76, p_K=0,00; p<0,05$ ). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was determined that the femininity and masculinity scores of the participants who graduated from primary school, secondary school and high school were similar and their femininity scores were higher and their masculinity scores were lower than the participants who graduated from associate's and bachelor's degrees.

**Table 4.** Comparison of Participants' BGRI Scores According to the Categories of Income Level Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	sd	Chi-square	p	Difference
Femininity	0-1000	36	492,88	3	77,79	0,00 **	1>3, 1>4,
	1001-3000	73	377,62				2>3, 2>4
	3001-5000	128	319,84				
	5001+	366	261,90				
Masculinity	0-1000	36	228,39	3	22,51	0,00 **	4>1, 4>2
	1001-3000	73	249,22				
	3001-5000	128	281,25				
	5001+	366	327,02				

\*\*p<0,01

1: 0-1000, 2: 1001-3000, 3: 3001-5000, 4: 5001 and above

In Table 4, it was found that the participants' femininity and masculinity scores showed a statistically significant difference according to income level ( $X^2_K(sd = 3, n = 603) = 77,79, p_K=0,00; X^2_E(sd = 3, n = 603) = 22,51, p_K=0,00; p<0,05$ ). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was concluded that the femininity scores of the participants with income levels between 0-1000 and 1001-3000 were higher than the participants with income levels between 3001-5000 and 5001 and above. As a result of another post hoc test, it was determined that the masculinity scores of the participants with an income level of 5001 and above were higher than the participants with an income level between 0-1000 and 1001-3000.

**Table 5.** Comparison of Participants' BGRI Scores According to the Categories of the Place of Residence Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	sd	Chi-square	p	Difference
<b>Femininity</b>	Village-town	43	416,37	3	60,22	0,00 **	1>3, 1>4, 2>3, 2>4
	District	178	359,02				
	City	180	278,82				
	Metropolitan	202	248,06				
<b>Masculinity</b>	Village-town	43	240,65	3	34,55	0,00 **	4>3, 4>2, 4>1
	District	178	268,35				
	City	180	286,66				
	Metropolitan	202	358,38				

\*\*p<0,01

1: Village-Town, 2: District, 3: City, 4: Metropolitan

In Table 5, it was found that the participants' femininity and masculinity scores showed a statistically significant difference according to the place of residence ( $X_K^2(sd = 3, n = 603) = 60,22, p_K=0,00; X_E^2(sd = 3, n = 603) = 34,55, p_K=0,00; p<0,05$ ). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was concluded that the femininity scores of the participants residing in the village-town and district were higher than the participants residing in the city and metropolitan area. As a result of another post hoc test, it was determined that the masculinity scores of the participants residing in the metropolitan area were higher than the participants residing in the city, town and village-county.

**Table 6.** Comparison of the Participants' Scores Obtained from the MGS According to the Categories of the Age Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	sd	Chi-square	P	Difference
<b>MM</b>	20-29	306	289,42	2	3,49	0,18	
	30-39	258	316,86				
	40 and above	39	302,40				
<b>TFM</b>	20-29	306	323,21	2	19,51	0,00 **	1>2, 2>3
	30-39	258	292,73				
	40 and above	39	196,87				
<b>OCM</b>	20-29	306	336,61	2	36,22	0,00 **	1>2, 2>3
	30-39	258	279,73				
	40 and above	39	177,71				
<b>TM</b>	20-29	306	335,33	2	47,35	0,00 **	1>2, 2>3
	30-39	258	287,08				
	40 and above	39	139,14				
<b>IM</b>	20-29	306	290,94	2	3,08	0,21	
	30-39	258	316,35				
	40 and above	39	293,81				
<b>MG Total</b>	20-29	306	317,84	2	10,96	0,00	1>2,

30-39	258	295,17	**	2>3
40 and above	39	222,92		

\*\*p<0,01

1: 20-29;1, 2: 30-39;2, 3: 40 and above

When Table 6 was analyzed, it was found that the total scores of the participants' TFM, OCM, TM and MGT showed a statistically significant difference according to the age of the participants (pTFM=0.00; pOCM=0.00; pTM=0.00; pMGT=0.00; p<0.05). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was found that as the age of the participants increased, the total scores of HRSA, OCM, TM and MGT increased. However, when the other Kruskal Wallis test results in Table 6 were analyzed, it was found that the scores of the participants in the MM and IM sub-dimensions did not show a statistically significant difference according to the age of the participants (p>0.05). In other words, MM and IM scores of the participants are similar regardless of their age.

**Table 7.** Comparison of the Participants' Scores Obtained from the MGS According to the Categories of the Level of Education Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	sd	Chi-square	p	Difference
MA	Primary School	43	333,31	3	2,23	0,53	
	Middle School	70	285,93				
	High School	119	308,23				
	Associate Degree-License	371	299,41				
TFM	Primary School	43	386,77	3	26,78	0,00**	1>4, 2>4, 3>4
	Middle School	70	335,49				
	High School	119	336,99				
	Associate Degree-License	371	274,63				
OCM	Primary School	43	376,36	3	13,14	0,00**	1>3, 1>4, 2>3, 2>4
	Middle School	70	335,81				
	High School	119	301,08				
	Associate Degree-License	371	287,30				
TM	Primary School	43	370,70	3	16,21	0,00**	1>3, 1>4, 2>3, 2>4
	Middle School	70	347,25				
	High School	119	310,21				
	Associate Degree-License	371	282,87				
IM	Primary School	43	289,16	3	2,62	0,46	
	Middle School	70	306,65				
	High School	119	323,62				
	Associate Degree-License	371	295,68				



<b>MG Total</b>	Primary School	43	368,58	3	16,14	0,00 **	1>4, 2>4, 3>4
	Middle School	70	330,39				
	High School	119	327,30				
	Associate Degree-License	371	280,81				

\*\*p<0,01

1: Primary School, 2: Secondary School, 3: High School, 4: Associate-License

When Table 7 is analyzed, it is found that the participants' TFM, OCM, TM and MG total scores show a statistically significant difference according to the education level of the participants ( $p_{TFM}=0,00$ ;  $p_{OCM}=0,00$ ;  $p_{TM}=0,00$ ;  $p_{MGT}=0,00$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was concluded that the TFM and MG total scores of the participants who graduated from primary school, secondary school and high school were similar and higher than the participants who graduated from associate's and bachelor's degrees. As a result of other post hoc tests, it was found that the OCM and TM scores of the participants with primary and secondary school graduates were similar to each other and higher than those of the participants with high school or associate's and bachelor's degrees. However, when the other Kruskal Wallis test results in Table 7 were examined, it was found that the scores of the participants from the MM and IM sub-dimensions did not show a statistically significant difference according to the educational level of the participants ( $p>0,05$ ). In other words, regardless of the educational level of the participants, their MM and DM scores are similar.

**Table 8.** Comparison of the Scores Obtained from the Participants' MGS According to the Categories of Income Level Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	sd	Chi-square	p	Difference
<b>MM</b>	0-1000	36	348,61	3	4,01	0,26	
	1001-3000	73	295,52				
	3001-5000	128	284,93				
	5001+	366	304,68				
<b>TFM</b>	0-1000	36	430,88	3	32,83	0,00 **	1>2, 1>3, 1>4, 2>3, 2>4
	1001-3000	73	349,71				
	3001-5000	128	309,23				
	5001+	366	277,28				
<b>OCM</b>	0-1000	36	402,76	3	21,59	0,00 **	1>3, 1>4, 2>3, 2>4
	1001-3000	73	351,58				
	3001-5000	128	283,46				
	5001+	366	288,68				
<b>TM</b>	0-1000	36	402,71	3	25,35	0,00 **	1>3, 1>4, 2>3, 2>4
	1001-3000	73	362,64				
	3001-5000	128	288,98				
	5001+	366	284,55				
<b>IM</b>	0-1000	36	321,76	3	1,25	0,74	
	1001-3000	73	310,51				
	3001-5000	128	308,57				
	5001+	366	296,06				
<b>MG Total</b>	0-1000	36	409,85	3	22,18	0,00	1>3, 1>4,

1001-3000	73	345,90	**	2>3, 2>4
3001-5000	128	296,02		
5001+	366	284,73		

\*\*p<0,01

1: 0-1000, 2: 1001-3000, 3: 3001-5000, 4: 5001 and above

When Table 8 is analyzed, it is found that the participants' TFM, OCM, TM and MG total scores show a statistically significant difference according to the income level of the participants ( $p_{TFM} = 0,00$ ;  $p_{OCM} = 0,00$ ;  $p_{TM} = 0,00$ ;  $p_{MGT} = 0,00$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was concluded that the HRSA scores of the participants with an income level between 0-1000 were higher than the participants with an income level between 1001-3000, and the HRSA scores of the participants in these two groups were higher than the participants with an income level of 3001-5000 and 5001 and above. As a result of other Post Hoc tests, it was determined that the total scores of OCM, TM and MG of the participants with income levels between 0-1000 and 1001-3000 were similar to each other and higher than the participants with income levels 3001-5000 and 5001 and above. However, when the other Kruskal Wallis test results in Table 8 were analyzed, it was found that the scores of the participants from the MM and IM sub-dimensions did not show a statistically significant difference according to the income level of the participants ( $p > 0,05$ ). In other words, regardless of the income level of the participants, their MM and IM scores are similar.

**Table 9.** Comparison of the Scores Obtained from the Participants' MGS According to the Categories of the Place of Residence Variable

Kruskall-Wallis	Group	N	Rank Mean	sd	Chi-square	P	Difference
MM	Village-town	43	327,55	3	10,33	0,02*	3>1, 3>4
	District	178	290,39				
	City	180	332,04				
	Metropolitan	202	280,02				
TFM	Village-town	43	386,19	3	59,01	0,00**	1>4, 2>4, 3>4
	District	178	326,80				
	City	180	340,44				
	Metropolitan	202	227,97				
OCM	Village-town	43	383,09	3	86,93	0,00**	1>3,1>4, 2>3, 2>4, 3>4
	District	178	362,70				
	City	180	322,55				
	Metropolitan	202	212,94				
TM	Village-town	43	381,37	3	92,90	0,00**	1>3,1>4, 2>3, 2>4, 3>4
	District	178	353,57				
	City	180	338,65				
	Metropolitan	202	207,00				
IM	Village-town	43	327,92	3	1,46	0,69	
	District	178	301,61				
	City	180	293,22				
	Metropolitan	202	304,65				
MG Total	Village-town	43	377,52	3	40,99	0,00**	1>4, 2>4, 3>4
	District	178	327,13				
	City	180	328,11				

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	Metropolitan	202	240,51
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\* $p < 0.05$  \*\* $p < 0.01$

1: Village-Town, 2: District, 3: City, 4: Metropolitan

When Table 9 is analyzed, it is found that the total scores of MM, TFM, OCM, TM and MGT of the participants show statistically significant difference according to the residential areas of the participants ( $p_{IKSA} = 0,00$ ;  $p_{OCM} = 0,00$ ;  $p_{TM} = 0,00$ ;  $p_{MGT} = 0,00$ ;  $p < 0,05$ ). As a result of the Post Hoc test applied to determine the source of the difference, it was concluded that the MA scores of the participants residing in the city were higher than the participants residing in the village-town or metropolitan area. As a result of other Post Hoc tests, it was determined that the OCM and TM scores of the participants residing in the village-town and district were higher than those residing in the city or metropolitan area, and those living in the city were higher than those living in the metropolitan area. As a result of another Post Hoc test, it was concluded that the participants residing in villages-towns, districts and cities had higher TFM and MG total scores than those residing in metropolitan cities. However, when the other Kruskal Wallis test results in Table 9 were analyzed, it was found that the scores of the participants in the IM sub-dimensions did not show a statistically significant difference according to the participants' settlements ( $p > 0.05$ ). In other words, the IM scores of the participants are similar regardless of their place of residence.

## DISCUSSION / CONCLUSION

### Results of the Analyses of the Relationship Between the Bem Gender Role Inventory and the Maternal Gatekeeping Scale

The femininity scores of the participants in the study have a significant positive relationship with o-Two-Fold Responsible Maternity (TFM), Over-Committed Maternity (OCM) and Traditional Maternity (TM) scores at a moderate level, and a low level positive relationship with the total scores of Maternal Gatekeeping Total (MGT). In other words, as the femininity scores of the participants in the study increase, the total scores of TFM, OCM, TM and MG also increase. When the Modern Maternity (MM) and Indirect Maternity (IM) scores were analyzed, it was found that the participants' femininity scores had a significant relationship with their MM scores at a low level and in a negative direction, while there was no significant relationship between the participants' IM scores and their femininity scores. In other words, as the femininity scores of the participants in the study increase, their MM scores decrease. However, the change in the participants' femininity scores does not cause any change in their IM scores.

The masculinity scores of the participants in the study have a significant negative relationship with the OCM and TM scores at a moderate level, and a low level with the scores belonging to the TFM and the entire MG. In other words, as the masculinity scores of the participants in the study increase, the total scores of TFM, OCM, TM and MGT decrease. When we consider MM and IM scores, the masculinity scores of the participants have a significant relationship with MM and IM scores at a low level and in a positive direction. In other words, as the masculinity scores of the participants in the study increase, their MM and IM scores also increase. When the literature was examined, studies on this subject were found. In the study conducted by Coban (2017), it was observed that father involvement and maternal gatekeeping had an effect on the child's ability to tell in detail the memories he/she had with his/her father depending on gender roles. Mothers may also be affected by gender roles and may avoid sharing their responsibilities due to their maternal identity (Hauser, 2015). The study conducted by Aytac (2018) reveals that there is a statistically significant relationship between MGT and TM. In addition, a positive relationship was also found between parental warmth and TM. Cannon et al. (2008) found that the mother's over-commitment to her maternal roles affected her exhibiting maternal gatekeeping behavior. In the study conducted by Gaunt (2008), the mother's dominant mothering attitude positively influenced maternal gatekeeping behaviors. According to the study conducted by Reed (2009), it was stated that mothers who are less committed to gender roles are more intimate with their

spouses and more willing to co-parent. Kulik and Tsoref (2010) found that mother's gender role attitudes were most related to MGT behavior. Zvara, Schoppe-Sullivan, & Kamp Dush, (2013) stated in their study that maternal gatekeeping would be low as long as it is independent from traditional gender roles. Radcliffe and Cassell (2014) stated that the cause of home-work conflict depends on gender and is resolved in different ways according to gender and also affects maternal gatekeeping. According to the results of the study conducted by Hauser (2015), it was found that mothers exhibit maternal gatekeeping behaviors with the responsibility of maternal thought. It was stated that the fact that mothers feel themselves to be primarily responsible for children, desire for motherhood and think that they are more experienced in parenting cause them to acquire gender-based tasks and exhibit maternal gatekeeping behaviors. In a study conducted by Sweeney, Goldberg, & Garcia (2016), it was observed that in heterosexual families, fathers were restricted in matters such as housework and childcare and women exhibited more MGT behaviors. Gaunt and Pinho (2017) found a positive relationship between MGT and mother's attitudes towards gender roles. The findings obtained in this study emphasize that there is a relationship between gender roles and maternal gatekeeping behaviors. These results are in line with the findings of the study.

It was found that the femininity and masculinity scores of the mothers participating in the study showed statistically significant differences according to their ages. It was determined that as the age of the participants increased, their femininity scores decreased but their masculinity scores increased. There are studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our research. In the study conducted by Bulut (2019), it was observed that the female gender role was more in the younger group between the ages of 18-26. Ozmete and Zubaroglu Yanardag (2016) conducted a study on gender roles with 780 participants and found that female gender role differed significantly according to age. In the young age group (25 years and younger), female gender role scores were significantly higher. In Erdem's (2019) study, a significant difference was found between gender roles and age. Accordingly, women show more masculine and feminine characteristics as they get older and adopt the "androgynous" gender role.

In the study, it was found that TFM, OCM, TM and MG total scores showed a statistically significant difference according to the age of the participants. It was determined that as the age of the participants increased, the total scores of TFM, OCM, TM and MGT increased. It was determined that the scores of the mothers who participated in the study on MM and IM sub-dimensions did not differ statistically significantly according to their ages. In other words, regardless of the age of the participants, their MM and IM scores were similar. There are studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our study. In the study conducted by Karabulut and Sendil (2017), it was found that as the age of the mother increases, father-avoidance behaviors decrease. In the study conducted by Donmez (2019), it was observed that young mothers exhibited more maternal gatekeeping behavior and were more attached to their children. Kulik and Tsoref (2010), on the other hand, did not find a relationship between maternal gatekeeping behaviors and the age of the mother. In this study, no difference was found in MM and IM dimensions. When the studies were examined, overly attached mother behavior was observed in younger mothers. This may be thought to be related to the fact that the first child coincides with the periods when the mother is young, inexperience and trying to be more careful.

It was determined that the femininity and masculinity scores of the mothers participating in the study showed statistically significant differences according to their educational level. It was determined that the femininity and masculinity scores of the participants who graduated from primary school, secondary school and high school were similar and their femininity scores were higher and their masculinity scores were lower than the participants who graduated from associate's and bachelor's degrees. There are many studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our research. In the study conducted by Bulut (2019), it was found that there was a significant difference between traditional gender role and mother's education level. It was observed that the group with middle school graduates had more traditional gender roles than the group with high school graduates. In addition, other studies have also found significant differences between educational level and gender roles (Atis,

2010; Erzeybek, 2015; Kamisli, 2018; Kodan, 2013; Kursun, 2016). These results are in parallel with the research findings.

It was determined that the TFM, OCM, TM and MG total scores of the participants showed a statistically significant difference according to the level of education. It was concluded that the TFM and MG total scores of primary school, secondary school and high school graduates were similar and higher than those of associate's and bachelor's degree graduates. It was found that the OCM and TM scores of the participants who graduated from primary and secondary school were similar to each other and higher than the participants who graduated from high school or associate's and bachelor's degrees. However, it was determined that the scores of the participants from the MM and IM sub-dimensions did not show a statistically significant difference according to their educational level. In other words, regardless of the educational level of the participants, MM and IM scores are similar. There are studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our research. In the study conducted by Donmez (2019), a significant difference was found on behalf of less educated mothers in the TFM, OCM, TM, and IM sub-dimensions and total score according to the mother's education level; no difference was found in the MM sub-dimension according to the mother's education level. In other words, mothers with lower levels of education are seen as mothers who feel themselves more responsible for childcare and housework, show MG behaviors, are very attached to their children, indirectly glorify their motherhood and try to hold on to the roles related to maternity. In the study conducted by Nakagawa (2010), it was stated that mothers' level of education affected maternal gatekeeping behaviors. It was stated that mothers with higher education level exhibited less maternal gatekeeping behaviors. In the study conducted by Reed (2009), it was observed that mothers with higher levels of education and less adherence to gender stereotypes were more willing to engage in joint work and intimate relationships and were more distant from maternal gatekeeping attitudes. Maslauskaite (2011) found that low educational level was effective in mothers' anti-father attitudes. In another study, it was stated that there was a negative relationship between mother's education level and BSA (Kulik & Tsoref, 2010). Hauser (2015) found that mothers with high educational level and good economic status exhibited MGT behavior and were more knowledgeable about child care than fathers. Similarly, the findings of this study overlap with the studies in the literature.

It was determined that the femininity and masculinity scores of the mothers participating in the study showed statistically significant differences according to income level. It was concluded that the femininity scores of participants with income levels between 0-1000 and 1001-3000 were higher than those of participants with income levels between 3001-5000 and 5001 and above. It was determined that the masculinity scores of the participants with an income level of 5001 and above were higher than the participants with an income level between 0-1000 and 1001-3000. There are studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our research. In the study conducted by Erdem (2019), a significant difference was found between gender roles and income level. In the study conducted by Menekse (2019), it can be said that as the total monthly income level of parents increases, they are less sexist and gender role perception increases positively. Karakas (2018) found that women included in the study had more egalitarian attitudes as the income level increased. In another study, a significant difference was found between income level and gender total score (Kodan, 2013).

It was determined that the TFM, OCM, TM and MG total scores of the participants showed a statistically significant difference according to the income level of the participants. It was concluded that the TFM scores of the participants with an income level between 0-1000 were higher than the participants with an income level between 1001-3000, and the TFM scores of the participants in these two groups were higher than the participants with an income level of 3001-5000 and 5001 and above. It was determined that the total scores of the participants with income levels between 0-1000 and 1001-3000 were similar to each other and higher than the participants with income levels 3001-5000 and 5001 and above. However, it was determined that the scores of the participants from the MM and IM sub-dimensions did not show a statistically significant difference according to the income level of the participants. In other words, regardless of the income level of the participants, MM and IM scores are similar. There

are studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our research. In the study conducted by Donmez (2019), it was found that non-working mothers were more attached to their TM roles, families and children and showed more maternal gatekeeping behavior. There was no difference in IM, MM and TFM sub-dimensions. According to the study of Formoso et al. (2007), it was stated that working mothers exhibited less maternal gatekeeping behaviors and had more positive relationships with their spouses. In another study, it was stated that mothers with low income level exhibited maternal gatekeeping attitudes (Sano, Richards, & Zvonkovic, 2008). In addition, in other studies, a significant difference was found between income level and MG behavior (Kulik & Tsoref 2010; Nakagawa 2010; Maslauskaitė 2011; Sweney et al., 2016).

It was determined that the femininity and masculinity scores of the mothers participating in the study showed statistically significant differences according to the place of residence. It was concluded that the femininity scores of the participants residing in the village-town and district were higher than the participants residing in the city and metropolitan area. It was determined that the masculinity scores of the participants residing in the metropolitan area were higher than the participants residing in the city, town and village-county. There are studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our research. In the study conducted by Gokcay (2018), the gender score of women living in the longest province was found to be higher than women living in towns and villages. Again, the results of Yasar's (2011) study are similar. In Ozcan's (2012) study, it was found that students residing in big cities had higher attitudes towards gender roles before education than students living in districts or villages.

It was determined that the total scores of MM, TFM, OCM, TM and MG of the participants showed a significant difference according to the place of residence of the participants. It was concluded that the MM scores of the participants residing in the city were higher than the participants residing in the village-town or metropolitan area. It was determined that the OCM and TM scores of the participants residing in the village-town and district were higher than those residing in the city or metropolitan area, and those living in the city were higher than those living in the metropolitan area. It was concluded that the participants residing in villages, towns, districts and cities had higher TFM and MG total scores than those residing in metropolitan cities. However, it was observed that the participants' scores in the IM sub-dimensions did not differ statistically according to their settlements. In other words, the IM scores of the participants are similar regardless of their place of residence. There are studies in the literature that support the finding obtained in our research. In the study conducted by Pedersen (2014), it was found that working mothers with children between the ages of 0 and 6 years experienced home-work conflict, which caused them to exhibit maternal gatekeeping behavior. While it was stated that mothers who showed less maternal gatekeeping behavior were flexible working mothers (Radcliffe & Cassell, 2014), it was stated that mothers who exhibited maternal gatekeeping behavior, were more attached to their children and adopted more traditional roles were non-working mothers (Donmez, 2019).

### **Implications for Practice**

-It is recommended that educators in schools be informed about the subject so that they can support parents when necessary, and that appropriate training programs including parent role transitions be prepared.

-Mothers usually participate in family involvement activities in schools. During these activities where mothers are easily accessible, it is recommended that teachers encourage father participation

-It is recommended that appropriate training programs be prepared for mothers so that they can acquire attitudes that support father involvement and learn ways to establish healthy relationships with their children.

- It is recommended that seminars, family trainings and supportive activities be organized for parents to raise awareness on raising healthy children.

- Instead of reinforcing gender roles in books, games and toys for children, it is recommended to prefer attitudes, practices and materials that support children to be free individuals open to choice and to be adults who take responsibility in the family.

### **Ethical Approval**

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards by the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

### **Informed Consent**

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

### **Conflict of Interest**

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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