

How are Women and Men Perceived? Structure of Gender Stereotypes in Contemporary Turkey

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ABSTRACT

Although gender stereotypes is a popular topic in social psychology, research on gender stereotypes in Turkish culture is limited. Therefore the purpose of the study was twofold: (1) to present how people describe women and men, and (2) to generate the underlying themes of the descriptions for each gender in order to present the structure of gender stereotypes in Turkish culture. By using free response method, undergraduates ($N = 491$) were asked to write down 10 adjectives to describe women and men. Frequencies showed that women were mostly described as emotional, jealous, easily-offended, faithful, delicate, self-sacrificing, warm, intelligent, sensitive, gossipy, ambitious, compassionate, beautiful, considerate, hardworking, attractive, and fragile; whereas men were mostly described as jealous, strong, selfish, emotional, ambitious, angry, rude, childish, rational, hardworking, intelligent, honest, brave, and protective. Further, these stereotypes were combined under four basic themes (appearance, personality, gender roles and power) and their subthemes to present the structure of gender stereotypes. Women's stereotypes were structured mostly under their personality traits (warmth, selfishness, fragility, agency, and sociability) followed by gender roles (motherhood, and faithfulness), appearance, and power (strength, and weakness) themes, respectively. Men's stereotypes were structured mostly under their personality traits (selfishness, agency, emotionality, irresponsibility, sociability, emotionlessness, and womanizer), but differently followed by power (manhood, and dominance), gender roles (fatherhood/breadwinner, and faithfulness), and appearance. Findings were discussed in the light of the existing literature on gender stereotypes, sexism, and manhood.

Keywords: gender stereotypes, sexism, manhood, free response method, Turkey

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Kadınlar ve Erkekler Nasıl Algılanır? Günümüz

Türkiye’inde Toplumsal Cinsiyet

Kalıpyargılarının Yapısı

ÖZ

Cinsiyet kalıpyargıları sosyal psikolojinin popüler araştırma konularından biri olmasına rağmen, Türkiye’de bu konuda yapılmış araştırma sınırlıdır. Bu nedenle bu çalışma Türkiye kültüründe (1) kadın ve erkeklerin nasıl tanımlandığını ve (2) bu tanımlamalardan üretilen temalarla cinsiyet kalıpyargılarının yapısının gözler önüne serilmesini açıklamaktadır. Serbest cevap yöntemi kullanılarak, 491 üniversite öğrencisinden Türkiye’de kadınları ve erkekleri tanımlayan 10 sıfat yazmaları istenmiştir. Frekans analizine göre, kadınlar en çok duygusal, kıskanç, alıngan, sadık, hassas, fedakar, sevecen, akıllı, duyarlı, dedikoducu, hırslı, şefkatli, güzel, düşünceli, çalışkan, çekici ve kırılgan sıfatları ile tanımlanırken; erkekler en çok kıskanç, güçlü, bencil, duygusal, hırslı, sinirli, kaba, çocuksu, mantıklı, çalışkan, zeki, dürüst, cesur ve koruyucu sıfatları ile tanımlanmıştır. İlâveten, elde edilen kalıpyargılar, dış görünüş, kişilik, cinsiyet rolleri ve güç olmak üzere dört temel tema ve onların alt temalarına göre sınıflandırılarak toplumsal cinsiyet kalıpyargılarının yapısı gösterilmeye çalışılmıştır. Buna göre, kadınlarla ilgili kalıpyargılar sırasıyla kişilik özellikleri (sevecenlik, bencillik, kırılganlık, amil, sosyallik), cinsiyet rolleri (annelik ve sadakat), görünüm ve güç (güçlülük ve zayıflık) ile ilgili temalarla yapılandırılmıştır. Erkeklerle ilgili kalıpyargılar ise, sırasıyla, kişilik özellikleri (bencillik, amil, duygusallık, sorumsuzluk, sosyallik, duygusuzluk, çapkınlık), güç (erkeklik ve baskınlık), cinsiyet rolleri (babalık/ev reisliği ve sadakat) ve görünüm ile ilgili temalarla yapılandırılmıştır. Bulgular kalıpyargılar, toplumsal cinsiyetçilik ve erkeklik yazınının ışığı altında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: toplumsal cinsiyet kalıpyargıları, toplumsal cinsiyetçilik, erkeklik, serbest cevap yöntemi, Türkiye

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Gender stereotypes are attributes related to gender characteristics (Spence & Helmreich, 1978; Williams & Bennett, 1975). Understanding gender stereotypes and their structure is important because these stereotypes may shape perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals as well as legitimizing men's power and status in societies. Knowledge about stereotypes may give a chance to describe, understand, and predict how people perceive women and men in their society; what kinds of behaviors are expected from women and men in their cultures; and how people react when they observe stereotypically non-traditional women/men (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly & Mladinic, 1989). Considering the importance of gender stereotypes, the present study aimed (1) to show how people describe women and men in Turkey, and (2) to generate themes of these descriptions for each gender in order to present the structure of gender stereotypes in Turkish culture where unequal gender roles (Kandiyoti, 1995), and high level of sexism (e.g., Sakallı-Uğurlu, Yalçın, & Glick, 2007) rule over social norms. This study may contribute to the literature by presenting current gender stereotypes and their structure activated in individuals' minds in Turkish society. Further, the study may be helpful to both Turkish and non-Turkish researchers who study sexism, gender roles, masculinity, femininity, and manhood to understand how women and men are perceived, described, and evaluated in Turkish culture where there are strong influence of honor and Islamic views on both women' and men' attitudes and behaviors (e.g., Glick, Sakallı-Uğurlu, Akbaş, Metin Orta, & Ceylan, 2016).

Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes have been examined under different perspectives. For example, descriptive (i.e., what women and men are), prescriptive (i.e., what women and men ought to be) and proscriptive (i.e., what women and men ought *not* to be) elements were examined extensively in the literature (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly, 1987; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). Researchers have shown that descriptive gender stereotype contents in American society present women as having *communal* characteristics (Spence & Helmrich, 1978; Wood & Eagly, 2010) such as being warm, sensitive, kind, patient, weak, submissive, attentive to appearances, and clean. On the other hand, men are defined as having *agentic* characteristics such as being fearless, independent, strong, active, ambitious, risk-taker, rational, self-reliant, and competitive (Ashmore, Del Boca, & Wohlens, 1986; Bem, 1974; Ellis & Bentler, 1973; Rudman, Greenwald, & Mcghee, 2001; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1975). In terms of prescriptive and proscriptive gender stereotypes, women are expected to be warm, kind, interested in children, sensitive, clean, attentive to appearances, patient, polite, and cheerful while they are never

expected to be rebellious, stubborn, controlling, cynical, promiscuous, and arrogant. On the other hand, men are expected to have business sense, high self-esteem, leadership ability, and to be athletic, self-reliant, ambitious, risk-taker, assertive, decisive, rational, competitive, and aggressive. However, they are socially forbidden to be emotional, approval seeking, impressionable, yielding, shy, and naive (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Male gender role ideology is also grounded on these assumptions that self-reliance, emotional restriction, aggression, and avoidance from femininity are inherent to masculinity ideology defining a set of standards about an ideal man in the society (Levant et al., 2007; for review see Thompson & Bennett, 2015).

Researchers have argued that this communal-agentic distinction may result from societal perception that women have lower status than men (Glick & Fiske, 1996), and that women are inferior to men and hold lower job positions (Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Eagly & Wood, 1982). Further, role norms about manhood describe men based on status, anti-femininity and toughness that inherently require agentic characteristics (Thompson & Pleck, 1986). Similarly, some descriptions of men are associated with Precarious Manhood Thesis (Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford, & Weaver, 2008; Vandello & Bosson, 2013), which suggests that manhood is a social status and an acquisition rather than a biological condition and ascriptions to it. For example, being brave, macho, angry, and aggressive are the ways to prove manhood in the eyes of others to be called as a real man. Therefore, stereotypes of men may highly reflect the nature of manhood. Also, stereotypes of women are not independent from traditional womanhood expectations which create stress and health problems such as depression (Gillespie & Eisler, 1992) and eating problems (Bekker & Boselie, 2002). Women feel gender role stress about not being nurturant, physically attractive, emotional in relationships as above-mentioned proscriptive stereotypes creates tension about being judged by others (Gillespie & Eisler, 1992).

In addition to health problems, gender stereotypes may lead to prejudice and discrimination against each gender, especially against women (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002; Wilson, 1996). Gender stereotypes also work actively in maintaining system-level gender inequalities by justifying the existing norms and using complementary stereotypes. Accordingly, using communal and agentic gender stereotypes together creates a sense of justice and balance in the existing gender system that women are flattered with being warm, considerate, happy while at the same time they are degraded by being not intelligent, assertive or competent (Jost & Kay, 2005).

Furthermore, in the literature on gender stereotypes, researchers have investigated them under different dimensions based on their representations in the

societies. For example, it is common to see stereotypes such as independent, competitive, warm, and emotional under *personality traits*; economic provider, child care, and protector under *role behaviors*; muscular, bellied, and having thick voice under *physical appearance*; teacher, physician, firefighter, and police officer under *occupational roles* (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1979; Deaux, 1984; Deaux & Lewis, 1984); and aggressive, push-over, tough guy under *power* (Carpenter & Trentham, 1999). Similarly, Diekman and Eagly (2000) investigated the change in the perception of gender stereotypes under the dimensions of personality, cognitive, and physical characteristics based on the categorization of Deaux and Lewis (1984). In that sense, examining stereotypes under different categories helps to understand the ways how people contextualize those stereotypes in a given culture. Following this logic, we also examined university students' general stereotypes about women and men under culturally representative dimensions such as appearance, personality traits, gender roles, and power. We do not argue that gender stereotypes are completely different from Western-produced ones, rather, they share many common characteristics with Turkish culture. However, Turkish culture also has some peculiar representations about gender especially changing after marriage (see Sakallı-Uğurlu, Türkoğlu, Kuzlak & Gupta, 2018 for detailed information). Thus, studying and presenting current stereotypes of women and men and their structure under certain themes in Turkey may be helpful for researchers to understand sexism, manhood and existing gender system in Turkish culture in a more detailed sense.

Turkish Studies on Gender Stereotypes Content and the Purpose of the Study

Gender stereotypes have not been studied extensively in the Turkish literature. Few social psychologists have used predetermined adjective lists or scales to define women's and men's gender roles. For example, Kandiyoti (1978) developed 22-item Gender Roles Stereotype Scale (e.g., being emotional, loyal, self-sacrifice, warm, independent, tough, dominant, aggressive, and ambitious) which taps limited number of gender stereotypes in Turkish culture. In addition, Sunar (1982) compared American and Turkish samples in terms of gender stereotypes by using a semantic differential scale. The study revealed cultural differences in gender stereotype perceptions in which Turkish female respondents rated women as more dependent, irrational, and weaker as compared to American female respondents. Further, Bem's Sex Role Inventory was translated into Turkish (Dökmen, 1999). Finally, researchers have also examined how Turkish media (e.g., newspapers) represents gender roles of women and men (Hortaçsu & Ertürk, 2003; İmamoğlu & Yasak-Gültekin, 1993).

After examining the previous Turkish studies, we found that Turkish researchers usually use stereotypes related to personality traits, and power relations but they have hardly covered gender role behaviors and physical characteristics. Some sub-dimensions of stereotypes such as role behaviors and physical characteristics have not been covered sufficiently because previous Turkish studies have always provided participants with a list of adjectives generated in the American society instead of extracting existing cultural stereotypes by using free response method. By following Eagly and Mladinic (1989) who suggest that free response method is more valid than giving a trait list, we used free response method to find how participants describe “women” and “men” with their own adjectives and traits. The free response method may provide the full domain of traits associated with women and men. It may help to uncover a number of new stereotypes. Thus, we let the participants write what comes to their mind about women and men in Turkey without any gender-subtype limitation as we purposefully targeted to see general stereotypes about women and men. We investigated this comprehensive data in two ways. First, we applied frequency analysis to see the most commonly used stereotypes for each group. Second, we also present this data under different dimensions after applying thematic analysis recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006). We wanted to present patterns in the responses and a more coherent picture of women and men in Turkish society. Combining stereotypes under certain themes with their frequencies would provide researchers with a knowledge about how prevalent the certain types of stereotypes and what dominant category defines women and men in Turkish society.

In short, the present study aimed (1) to present the contemporary pictures of men and women in Turkey via free response method rather than the difference between male and female participants, and (2) to present latent themes of the given adjectives by using a thematic analysis in order to demonstrate the structure of gender stereotypes in Turkish culture.

Method

Participants

A total of 491 undergraduate students (197 male and 294 female) from various departments of a Turkish University participated to the study. The participants were single and their age ranged from 18 to 24.

Measure and Procedure

The data were collected in the classroom environment. Students were instructed to write down ten adjectives separately for women and men as well as their age, marital status, and gender. First, frequencies of each adjective were calculated (see Table 1). Then, a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was applied to the data to identify themes and subthemes representing some level of patterned response. Adjectives that were written by one or few participants were eliminated on the assumption that these adjectives or traits represented personal perception as previously done by Deaux, Winton, Crowley, and Lewis (1985). Few adjectives were also eliminated because we were not able to cover them under any themes or subthemes that we generated from the data. We ended up presenting only adjectives that were written by at least 15 participants.

First, all three researchers came together after the first reading of whole data without any interference with the data; while we are discussing about the nature of the data each of us spoke out the similar themes and we all agreed that our data is compatible with the existing categorization (themes) in the literature. Second, we re-read and listed the existing themes used in both US and Turkish studies conducted before. These are personality traits, role behaviors, appearance, occupational roles (Ashmore & Del Boca, 1979; Deaux, 1984; Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Diekman & Eagly, 2000) and power (Carpenter & Trentham, 1999; Sunar, 1982). We purposefully included power theme especially to identify “attempts or actual exhibitions of strength/control/dominance” (Carpenter & Trentham, 1999, p.688) because Sunar (1982) also discussed how important power relations to determine gender stereotypes in both American and Turkish cultures. Third, each rater categorized adjectives under these themes. During the categorization of the adjectives under main themes, subthemes have emerged naturally. We all agreed that it would be beneficial to present them since two researchers came up with such consistent subthemes. Few differences among raters were resolved by discussing each of them in detail with the third researcher. At the end of these discussion, we finalized the content of the analysis in the given form (see Table 2 and Table 3). The final version was translated from Turkish to English by the authors of the article, and checked by a bilingual researcher from the field of psychology.

Results

Frequency Analyses

Frequency analyses showed that 491 participants wrote down 2770 adjectives for women and 2079 adjectives for men. The frequency of stereotypes exceeds the number of the participants because each participant had a chance to write down more than one word to describe both genders. Results demonstrated that men were mostly described as jealous, strong, selfish, emotional, ambitious, angry, rude, childish, rational, hardworking, intelligent, honest, brave, protective, inconsiderate, and tough; whereas women were mostly described as emotional, jealous, easily-offended, faithful, delicate, self-sacrificing, warm, intelligent, sensitive, gossipy, ambitious, compassionate, beautiful, considerate, hardworking, attractive, and fragile (see Table 1). Looking at the first four most-mentioned stereotypes, both women and men categories include *emotional* and *jealous* stereotypes yet with different frequencies. Although men are described mostly as jealous, the frequency of “jealous” for women is almost twice more than men’s. These results are discussed in the discussion section in detail.

Thematic Analyses

As mentioned in the procedure part, we generated several subthemes of Turkish gender stereotypes under main themes, as well as listing frequencies of adjectives within each subtheme. As Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest, we looked at thematic relationships between words. Our purpose was to present general structure of women and men stereotypes rather than the difference between male and female participants. Each themes and subthemes were presented below and discussed in detail in the discussion section.

Themes and Subthemes of Women Stereotypes

Appearance. The theme for women consisted of beautiful, attractive and well-groomed. As seen on Table 2, this theme is the least-frequently mentioned theme suggesting that people’s perceptions about women are relatively less dependent on their appearance.

Table 1

Frequencies of Women and Men Stereotypes (N = 491)

Women Stereotypes		Men Stereotypes	
Adjectives	Frequency	Adjectives	Frequency
Emotional (Duygusal)	287	Jealous (Kıskanç)	144
Jealous (Kıskanç)	184	Strong (Güçlü)	140
Easily-offended (Alıngan)	105	Selfish (Bencil)	100
Faithful (Sadık)	104	Emotional (Duygusal)	90
Delicate (Hassas, narin)	96	Ambitious (Hırslı)	86
Self-Sacrificing (Fedakar, özverili)	94	Angry (Sinirli, asabi)	72
Warm (Sevecen, sevgi dolu)	92	Rude (Kaba)	62
Intelligent (Zeki, akıllı)	88	Childish (Çocuksu)	57
Sensitive (Duyarlı)	87	Rational (Mantıklı)	55
Gossipy (Dedikoducu)	67	Hardworking (Çalışkan)	54
Ambitious (Hırslı)	65	Intelligent (Zeki, akıllı)	53
Compassionate (Şefkatli, merhametli)	64	Honest (Dürüst)	52
Beautiful (Güzel)	62	Brave (Cesur)	50
Considerate (Düşünceli)	60	Protective (Koruyucu)	48
Hardworking (Çalışkan)	57	Tough (Sert)	44
Attractive (Çekici)	57	Trustworthy (Güvenilir)	43
Fragile (Kırılgan)	52	Funny (Komiki esprili)	40
Capricious (Kaprisli)	47	Liar (Yalancı)	40
Neat (Titiz)	47	Authoritarian (Otoriter)	37
Rational (Mantıklı)	45	Wominazer (Çapkın)	37
Stubborn (İnatçı)	45	Self-sacrificing (fedakar)	37
Responsible (Sorumlu, sorumluluk sahibi)	44	Easy-going (Rahat)	35
Skilful (Becerikli)	44	Possessive (Sahiplenici)	35
Talkative (Konuşkan, geveze)	42	Inconsiderate (düşüncesiz)	34
Graceful (İnce, incelik)	40	Impatient (Sabırsız)	32
Naïve (Saf)	39	Stubborn (İnatçı)	31
Selfish (Bencil)	39	Coldblooded (Soğuk kanlı)	31
Shy (Utangaç, çekingen)	39	Messy (Dağınık)	30
Strong (Güçlü)	38	Lazy (Tembel)	29
Understanding (Anlayışlı)	34	Helpful (Yardıms sever)	28
Tidy (Düzenli)	33	Responsible (Sorumlu)	27
Honest (Dürüst)	33	Insensible (Duyarsız, anlayışsız)	27
Nurturing (Anaç)	32	Reckless (Umursamaz)	24
Helpful (Yardıms sever)	32	Carefree (Vurdumduymaz)	22
Well-groomed (Bakımlı)	31	Irresponsible (Sorumsuz)	21
Patient (Sabırlı)	31	Decisive (Kararlı)	21
Kind (Nazik, kibar)	29	Leader (Lider)	20
Trustworthy (Güvenilir)	28	Social (Sosyal)	20
Romantic (Romantik)	28	Emotionless (Duygusuz)	20
Mother (Anne)	27	Faithful (Sadık, sadakat)	19
Weak (Güçsüz, zayıf)	26	Macho (Maço)	19
Coward (Korkak)	23	Assertive (Girişken)	19
Shrewd (Kurnaz)	23	Sensitive (Duyarlı)	19
Liar (Yalancı)	21	Dominant (Baskın)	19
Curious (Meraklı)	20	Aggressive (Agresif)	19
Indecisive (Kararsız)	19	Kind (Kibar)	18

Table 1 (cont*)
Frequencies of Women and Men Stereotypes (N = 491)

Women Stereotypes		Men Stereotypes	
Adjectives	Frequency	Adjectives	Frequency
Thrifty (Tutumlu)	18	Affectionate (Sevecen)	18
Spoiled (Şımarık)	18	Independent (Bağımsız)	18
Angry (Sinirli)	18	Shrewd (Kurnaz)	18
Sly (İçten pazarlıklı)	18	Fighter (Kavgacı)	17
Interested (İlgili)	17	Superior (Üstün)	17
Dependent (Bağımlı)	17	Mature (Olgun)	16
Mature (Olgun)	17	Attractive (Çekici)	15
Social (Sosyal)	16		
Tolerant (Hoşgörülü)	16		
Skeptical (Şüpheli)	15		

Note. The total frequency of stereotypes represented in the table may exceed the sample size since each participant mentioned more than one stereotype for each group.

Personality Traits. Five different subthemes emerged for personality traits of women. These are warmth (e.g., emotional, warm, and sensitive), selfishness/negativity (e.g., jealous, gossipy, and capricious), fragility (e.g., easily-offended, delicate, fragile, and graceful), agency (e.g., intelligent, ambitious, and hardworking), and sociability (e.g., considerate, understanding, and helpful) (see Table 2 for more detail). As the numbers depict, personality traits theme is the most crowded theme involving both positive and negative stereotypes of women. Women were mostly mentioned with stereotypes referring warmth and this result is quite compatible with Stereotype Content Model in Turkish culture (Aktan & Bilim, 2016). It is followed by selfishness and negativity theme including stereotypes such as jealous, gossipy, selfish and etc.

Gender Roles. The theme included two subthemes as motherhood (e.g., self-sacrificing, and neat) and faithfulness (e.g., faithful, honest, and trustworthy).

Power. Stereotypes such as weak, coward, indecisive, and dependent were gathered under the subtheme of weakness. Women were also defined as strong outweighing their definition as weak.

Table 2
 Themes and Subthemes of Women Stereotypes

Themes	Subthemes	Contents	Frequencies / Total
Appearance		Beautiful	62
		Attractive	57
		Well-groomed	31
Personality Traits	<i>Warmth</i>		1976
			574
		Emotional	287
		Warm	92
		Sensitive	87
		Compassionate	64
	Romantic	28	
	Tolerant	16	
	<i>Selfishness/Negativity</i>		537
		Jealous	184
		Gossipy	67
		Capricious	47
		Stubborn	45
		Talkative	42
		Selfish	39
		Shrewd	23
		Liar	21
		Angry	18
		Spoiled	18
		Sly	18
		Skeptical	15
<i>Fragility</i>		400	
	Easily-offended	105	
	Delicate	96	
	Fragile	52	
	Graceful	40	
	Naïve	39	
	Shy	39	
Kind	29		
<i>Agency</i>		292	
	Intelligent	88	
	Ambitious	65	
	Hardworking	57	
	Rational	45	
<i>Sociability</i>		173	
	Curious	20	
	Interested	17	
	Considerate	60	
	Understanding	34	
Gender Roles	<i>Motherhood</i>	Helpful	32
		Patient	31
		Social	16
			521
			356
		Self-sacrificing	94

Table 2 (cont')
 Themes and Subthemes of Women Stereotypes

Themes	Subthemes	Contents	Frequencies / Total	
Power		Neat	47	
		Skillful	44	
		Responsible	44	
		Tidy	33	
		Nurturing	32	
		Mother	27	
		Thrifty	18	
		Mature	17	
		<i>Faithfulness</i>	Faithful	104
			Honest	33
	Trustworthy		28	
			123	
	<i>Strength</i>		38	
<i>Weakness</i>	Strong	38		
	Weak	26		
	Coward	23		
	Indecisive	19		
	Dependent	17		

Note. The total frequency of stereotypes represented in the table may exceed the sample size since each participant mentioned more than one stereotype for each group.

Themes and Subthemes of Men Stereotypes

Appearance. For men, the appearance theme only included attractive adjective. Relative to the same theme for women, men were not described on the basis of their appearance and this gives the idea that men are not stereotyped in terms of being handsome or groomed.

Personality Traits. Men were defined with selfishness/negativity (e.g., jealous, self-sacrificing, and liar), agency (e.g., ambitious, rational, and hardworking), emotionality (e.g., emotional, childish, and sensitive), irresponsibility (e.g., easy-going, messy, and lazy) sociability (e.g., funny, helpful, and social), emotionlessness (e.g., inconsiderate, insensible, and unemotional), and womanizer subthemes, respectively. It is an outstanding result that people use negative-loaded stereotypes for men in the first hand.

Gender Roles. The theme consisted of two subthemes as fatherhood/breadwinning, and faithfulness. Men were seen as being protective, self-sacrificing, and mature. They were also described as honest, faithful and trustworthy.

Table 3

Themes and Subthemes of Men Stereotypes

Themes	Subthemes	Contents	Frequencies / Total	
Appearance Personality Traits		Attractive	15	15
				1201
	<i>Selfishness/Negativity</i>	Jealous	144	365
		Selfish	100	
		Liar	40	
		Impatient	32	
		Stubborn	31	
		Shrewd	18	
		Agency		
		Ambitious	86	
		Rational	55	
		Hardworking	54	
		Intelligent	53	
		Assertive	19	
	<i>Emotionality</i>	Emotional	90	184
		Childish	57	
		Sensitive	19	
		Affectionate	18	
	<i>Irresponsibility</i>	Easy-going	35	161
		Messy	30	
Lazy		29		
Reckless		24		
Carefree		22		
Irresponsible		21		
Sociability			106	
	Funny	40		
	Helpful	28		
	Social	20		
<i>Emotionlessness</i>	Kind	18	81	
	Inconsiderate	34		
	Insensible	27		
	Emotionless	20		
	Womanizer		37	
Gender Roles	<i>Womanizer (Flirty)</i>		37	242
	<i>Fatherhood/breadwinning</i>	Protective	48	
		Self-sacrificing	37	
		Responsible	27	
		Mature	16	
				114
	<i>Faithfulness</i>	Honest	52	
		Trustworthy	43	
		Faithful	19	

Table 3 (cont')

Themes and Subthemes of Men Stereotypes

Themes	Subthemes	Contents	Frequencies / Total
Power	<i>Manhood</i>	Strong	140
		Angry	72
		Rude	62
		Brave	50
		Tough	44
		Coldblooded	31
		Aggressive	19
		Macho	19
	Ready to fight	17	
	<i>Dominance</i>	Authoritarian	37
		Possessive	35
		Decisive	21
		Leader	20
		Dominant	19
Independent		18	
	Superior	17	
			621 454
			167

Note. The total frequency of stereotypes represented in the table may exceed the sample size since each participant mentioned more than one stereotype for each group.

We again covered faithfulness issues under the theme of gender roles because they were highly relevant to honor system in Turkish culture.

Power. Manhood and dominance were the subthemes. Men were defined as macho, strong, angry, rude, brave, tough, coldblooded, and ready to fight as reflecting manhood. They were also described as authoritarian, possessive, decisive, leader, dominant, independent and superior, reflecting their authority and superiority in Turkey.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was twofold. Firstly, we aimed to present how women and men are perceived. Secondly, we provided a structural map to show themes and subthemes for stereotypes of each gender.

Gender Stereotypes in Turkish Culture

Overall, the frequencies of stereotypes demonstrated that most of the stereotypes reported for men and women are in line with the previous Western studies

that women are associated with communal stereotypes while men are associated with agentic stereotypes (Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). Further, consistent with earlier Turkish studies (Kandiyoti, 1978; Sunar, 1982), we found similar adjectives such as self-sacrificing, tough, warm, ambitious, emotional, strong, weak, childish, dependent, independent, dominant, and aggressive. Results also presented that stereotypes about women were mentioned more than men's. The results may show that stereotypes related to women are more dynamic in individuals' mind than stereotypes related to men (Diekman & Eagly, 2000). It is also possible to argue that women's roles and traits may be varying for certain subcategories of women such as educated/uneducated, or single/married (see Sakallı-Uğurlu et al., 2018), and so more adjectives were written to describe women.

Further, different from earlier studies, women were depicted with some agentic stereotypes such as *intelligent* and *ambitious* with high frequencies. There might be several reasons for this finding. Firstly, it is possible that the pictures of women may be changing. Women may be perceived to be more actively involved in the society by university students. Research validates this assumption that stereotypes related to women are more dynamic over time and is highly affected from the increasing concern about nontraditional roles (Diekman & Eagly, 2000). Second, some participants might have focused on some subcategories of women such as university students or career women while describing women. The findings may not be surprising because our participants consisted of university students who tend to value autonomy, self-respect, and achievement (İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, 1999), and are typically secular, leftist, and liberal in general (Dalmış & İmamoğlu, 2000). The cultural values such as autonomy and achievement may lead our participants to perceive both women and men as intelligent and ambitious. The finding may also support the argument of Cuddy et al. (2015) that cultural values of the participants may moderate gender stereotype content.

Our findings also showed that people see women and men with similar characteristics such as emotional, jealous, strong, ambitious, self-sacrificing, intelligent, rational, and hardworking. However, the frequencies of these common stereotypes were different for men and women. For example, *emotional* was the most prevalent stereotype for women while it was in the fourth order for men. Similarly, *self-sacrificing* is in the sixth order for women whereas it was in the twenty second order for men. That is, in accordance with previous studies, women and men are sometimes evaluated with similar stereotypes but with different degrees (Rudman et al., 2012). Being emotional is considered as a prescriptive stereotype for women while

it is proscriptive for men (Rudman et al., 2012). In that sense, it may create some gender role stress among women that they feel themselves obliged to be emotionally responsive. Gillespie and Eisler (1992) conceptualized this as a fear of unemotional relationships. Being self-sacrificing may also be evaluated as a precondition for being nurturant and it also creates some fear among women. These stereotypes eventually coincides with gender norm expectations and creates health problems among women (Gillespie & Eisler, 1992). Interestingly, *jealousy* was listed first for men and second for women. There might be various reasons for the participants generating jealousy at the same level for both genders. It is possible that Turkish people might perceive both genders as jealous. However, the meaning of the adjective may differ for the target defined. Men may be perceived as jealous because they are traditionally expected to control, dominate, protect, and provide for their families and wives. Men's jealousy may be more relevant to dominance, manhood, and aggression against women (Frederick & Fales, 2016; O'Leary, Smith Slep, & O'Leary, 2007). In fact, jealousy is part of honor culture that people from other honor cultures (e.g., Chile and Brazil) tolerate men's violence when it is related to jealousy of women (Vandello & Cohen, 2003; Vandello, Cohen, Grandon, & Franiuk, 2009). On the other hand, women may be considered as jealous because they may be considered as trying to control their partner's or husband's sexual behaviors (e.g., infidelity) with the motivation of protection. This brings female status quo promised by benevolent sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996). In fact, this argument may also be supported by the adjectives written for defining men (e.g., flirty/womanizer, and liar) which reflect cheating, infidelity or sexual behavior of men.

The study also revealed some stereotypes that were not mentioned thoroughly in the literature. Different than previous studies (Kandiyoti, 1978; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012; Sunar, 1982), the current results showed that men are described with *womanizer*; and women with *jealousy*. In addition, the study uncovered new stereotypes such as macho, shrewd, ready to fight and coldblooded regarding men; stereotypes such as gossipy, jealous, neat, shrewd, and thrifty regarding women in Turkey. Finding different stereotypes in addition to existing ones may also stem from the methodological difference. Instead of giving a list of adjectives, we asked participants to write traits/adjectives freely. In addition, it is also possible that some stereotypes might have changed through the time as suggested by Twenge (1997).

Thematic Structure of Gender Stereotypes in Turkish Culture

In terms of thematic structure of the adjectives, we used the same four themes (i.e. appearance, personality traits, gender roles, and power) for both women and men. The themes and frequencies showed that participants predominantly describe women and men in terms of their personality. However, there was a change in the order of the themes for each gender. For women, gender roles represented the most crowded theme after personality traits followed by appearance and power. However, for men, power, gender roles, and appearance followed personality traits respectively. First of all, this result may indicate that traits, gender roles, and power relevant adjectives were more important than appearance-related ones. When participants were asked to describe women and men, they do not focus on their appearance too much. This might be due to the fact that people do pay more attention traits and gender roles to describe them because these themes may provide valuable information for understanding and making attribution. As Stereotypes Content Model (Fiske et al., 2002) suggest, traits and also gender roles in our study, may help people to perceive where the groups (e.g., women and men in this case) stand in the society, and how they may intent to act.

The findings also support the existing sexist ideology in Turkey, representing men with power and women with traditional gender roles. Indeed, it especially supports macho ideologies (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984) and honor culture view (Cohen & Nisbett, 1994) by referring power-relevant adjectives as necessary traits for being a man. Because both male honor and masculinity ideologies favor being strong, tough, brave and aggressive to protect their name, reputation and their family members (Sakallı-Uğurlu & Akbaş, 2013) as well as being called as a real man (Thompson & Bennett, 2015; Vandello et al., 2008).

Themes and Subthemes of Women Stereotypes

In terms of personality traits of women, fragility, sociability, and warmth subthemes are highly consistent with literature in western cultures (Rudman et al., 2012), and Turkey (Kandiyoti, 1978; Sakallı Uğurlu et al., 2018; Sunar, 1982). It also confirms the tenets of benevolent sexism that women are seen as naïve, fragile, delicate, easily-offended and so weak in order to be protected by men (Glick & Fiske, 1996). In a current Turkish study (Sakallı Uğurlu et al., 2018), similarly, being fragile and pure is mostly attributed to single women rather than married women. Looking at the outstanding frequency of fragility ($N = 400$), we may speculate that our participants might have pictured a single woman while referring to women in general as their age group may shape their stereotypes. Thus, fragility subtheme may also feed

weakness and dependence of women mentioned under the power theme. Fragility characteristics may cause women to be weak and dependent on others, usually men such as father, husband and brothers.

Different from previous studies, *agency*, and *selfishness/negativity* subthemes may reflect the other side of women characteristics in Turkey. Some of the agentic characteristics may be relevant to domestic jobs of women because Turkish women are expected to be hardworking and interested at home in order to take care of household and family (Çelik & Lüküslü, 2012). In fact, similar to our finding, Sunar (1982) also found that women are more industrious than men. She argued that this may be due to the fact that women work harder and longer than men in traditional Turkish society, even though their works carry less social prestige. Another explanation of this finding may be related to the women/men type that the participants imagined while they were writing the adjectives. If they imagined university student, they may easily write hardworking and interested because college education requires these traits.

In terms of the *selfishness/negativity*, our data showed that women are described as stubborn and selfish. It is possible that women who are not conforming to gender system may be perceived as selfish and stubborn stemming from *feminist* stereotype. Thus, the stereotypes may either reflect the undesirable characteristics of women or some subcategories of women. Gossipy may be indicated because women are usually perceived as talkative. The talkativeness issue may turn into being gossipy in our sample.

Gender roles theme for women included motherhood and faithfulness subthemes. As in other cultures, women were associated with motherhood characteristics. As Turkish culture requires, women are obliged to sacrifice themselves and complete their duties for their families and children. A Turkish proverb explains mothers' self-sacrificing and literally means using her hair to clean home (in Turkish; *Saçını süpürge etmek*). Women are supposed to be responsible and nurturing mothers because Turkish culture value children and family (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1981; 1982). The motherhood subtheme also presents evidence that womanhood is perceived to be equal to motherhood. Turkish people may believe that every woman should have a child and they may have negative attitudes toward childlessness (Çopur & Koropecj-Cox, 2010; Husnu, 2016). The prejudicial attitudes may be an extension of benevolently sexist views and high level of religiosity in Turkish culture (Husnu, 2016). In order to fulfill their family responsibilities and gender roles, they have to be mature. Further, under gender roles main theme, women are described as

honest, trustworthy, and faithful, labelled as faithfulness subtheme. As an earlier Turkish study suggested (Sunar, 1982), women's honesty may stem from interactions with their roles as mother and faithful wife, and so the subtheme gender roles relevant to honor concerns in Turkey. As known, in honor cultures, women are prescribed to be faithful wives (see Sakallı-Uğurlu & Akbaş, 2013) because they have valuable domestic roles as being a good mother and a wife.

Finally, consistent with the existing literature on sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996), women were described as weak, dependent, indecisive and coward under the power theme. Many participants pictured women in a subordinate position. On the other hand, women were also described as strong. This strength issue may be due to whom the participants imagined while they were describing women. They may focus either on educated women who are both conforming to traditional gender roles and achieving an agentic role (working hard to get an education and a job) or traditional women who are successfully fulfilling gender roles relevant to motherhood, and family, reflecting benevolently sexist view. Turkish people may value both the newly arising achievement related universal values, traditional benevolence and interrelatedness (İmamoğlu & Karakitapoğlu Aygün, 1999). Further, we may argued that these opposite descriptions for women (e.g., weak versus strong) may be because of some social changes in Turkish culture. Parallel to the study of Diekman, Goodfriend, and Goodwin (2004), people may see women as getting more powerful in several dimensions of social life. Thus, even though they were, in general, seen as weak and dependent, Turkish women were also perceived as being strong to deal with any social changes in their lives.

Themes and Subthemes of Men Stereotypes

Focusing on stereotypes of men, negative (emotionless, irresponsible, womanizer, and selfishness/negativity) and positive (agency, sociability,) personality traits were indicated. Agency-related adjectives were very frequent. The personality traits were consistent with previous studies (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012). Interestingly, participants also indicated emotionality in men. They frequently mentioned emotional and childish. The stereotypes are consistent with the findings of Sunar (1982) that men in Turkish society are reported as childish (vs. mature) by women. Ambivalence toward men (Glick & Fiske, 1999) may be also helpful to discuss the findings. According to Glick and Fiske (1999), maternalism may lead the perception that women must take care of men in the domestic realm because most men are really like children. Seeing men as childish may create a positive image

of men and give women a reason to support existing sexist gender system (Glick & Fiske, 1999).

In terms of gender roles of men, fatherhood/breadwinning issues were mentioned with the adjectives such as protective, mature, responsible (dutiful), and self-sacrificing. Men were also described with honesty, faithfulness, and trustworthiness, reflecting honor-based culture. Men were perceived as the protector of the family with 52% of respondents in a previous Turkish study compared to 34% for women (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1981). Same study also showed that men are expected by 62% of the respondents as being honest, trustworthy, obedient, responsible, and moral. The consistent results may be a proof that breadwinning status of men and desire for modesty and faithfulness are still valuable in Turkish society. Being honest and trustworthy also defines traditional Turkish masculinity. A recent research (Bolak Boratav, Okman Fişek, & Eslen Ziya, 2017) shows that one of the dimensions that men define their masculinity is being able to keep a word and be trusted by others. In addition, as we discussed earlier, parallel with fatherhood, we generated motherhood subtheme for women. These subthemes included similar adjectives for both gender, however, by looking at the frequency numbers, it seems that consensus is higher for women than men. This may be due to the fact that motherhood are highly valued in Turkish culture (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1982), and participants remember the issues easily (Sakallı-Uğurlu et al., 2018).

Looking at the frequencies of *power* theme for both categories, we can say that people used more power-related stereotypes to define men. Power (especially over women) is a part of men's prescriptive gender role norms, which is mostly accompanied by dominance –related norms (Mahalik et al., 2003). Manhood, as a subtheme of *power*, has the most crowded content. This suggests the importance of manhood status in Turkish culture. Our manhood categorization including being strong, brave, aggressive, tough etc. is in line with Precarious Manhood Thesis arguing manhood as an acquired social status. Accordingly, men are always anxious about losing that status in the eyes of others and thus they use aggression, violence, bravery, and risk-taking to re-build their threatened status (Vandello & Bosson, 2013; Vandello et al., 2008). Congruent with previous studies (Ashmore et al., 1986; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Rudman et al., 2001), frequently used manhood stereotypes imply that people think Turkish men are superior in the society. All these adjectives show the existence and importance of manhood, sexist view, macho ideologies, and honor culture view in Turkish culture (Elgin, 2016; Sakallı-Uğurlu & Glick, 2003), by presenting power related adjectives as existing or necessary traits for being a real man (see Thompson & Bennett, 2015 for a review).

Conclusion, Limitations, and Future Directions

The current study may provide researchers with valuable insights about current gender stereotypes in Turkey. It reveals a knowledge intersecting with the existing gender stereotypes in Western literature that men are mostly dominant, strong, rigid, aggressive, and active whereas women are emotional, sensitive, dependent, weak, affectionate, and submissive (Ashmore et al., 1986; Bem, 1974; Ellis & Bentler, 1973; Rudman et al., 2001; Spence et al., 1975). It also demonstrated some different stereotypes which may be specific to Turkish culture. Further, compared to earlier Turkish studies, some new stereotypes emerged. The reasons of the new stereotypes might be due to social changes in Turkish culture or to the free response method used in the study. By generating themes and subthemes of these stereotypes with the help of the existing literature on sexism, manhood, and gender stereotypes, we were also able to present the structure of gender stereotypes of Turkish culture.

The present research may have some limitations. One may criticize our sample, consisting of only university students. Future studies should collect data from non-student sample to find how uneducated and older people perceive men and women in Turkey. Our expectation is that using non-student sample would increase the chance of finding more sexist and conservative descriptions of women and men. Another limitation would be focusing on only descriptive stereotypes but not covering prescriptive and proscriptive stereotypes. However, the descriptive frequency analyses may give some clues about the desirability or expectancies of these stereotypes in Turkish society because descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes usually overlap (Burgess & Borgida, 1999). For example, aggressive was one of the most reported stereotypes for men but one of the least reported ones for women. The findings might indicate that it is okay or desirable to be aggressive for a man but not for a woman. Future studies may directly focus on prescriptive and proscriptive stereotypes in Turkish culture. Further, one may argue that gender of the participants may affect what adjectives were written. However, literature on gender stereotypes shows that especially descriptive stereotypes, but not prescriptive stereotypes, are not affected by participant gender (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Deaux & Kite, 1993), even when implicit measures are used (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Blair & Banaji, 1996). That is why we did not aim to analyze how participant gender affects woman and man stereotypes. Final limitation may be asking the participants to write down only ten adjectives. This could have forced and limited some participants to choose certain stereotypes regarding women and men. However, after examining the data, we recognized that some students could not even write down ten adjectives,

demonstrating that asking them to write down ten adjectives was not the problem in our data.

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