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**FACULTY OF SPORTS SCIENCES FEMALE ACADEMICS THROUGH THE
EYES OF STUDENTS: A METAPHOR RESEARCH***

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Abstract: Metaphors are mental constructs that underlie a person's awareness and serve as a cognitive tool for analogical framing and description of experience in order to derive meaning. This study aimed to reveal the thoughts of sports science students about female academics with the help of metaphors. The study group consisted of 144 students studying sports sciences. As a data collection tool, a metaphor form was prepared to determine the participants' perceptions of female academics. Data were analysed using content analysis method to create categories and themes. It was observed that participants produced 53 types of metaphors. The metaphors produced were gathered under the theme of female academics in four categories: as a parent, as a guide, as professional knowledge and as a fighter. As a result, it was concluded in this study that they had a positive perspective on female academics and created metaphors that evoked positive connotations towards female academics. Female academics who can communicate well with sports science students, value their students, and earn their respect by teaching their lessons efficiently have caused students to develop positive metaphors.

Keywords: Metaphor, Female, Student

**SPOR BİLİMLERİ FAKÜLTESİ ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN GÖZÜNDEN KADIN
AKADEMİSYENLER: BİR METAFOR ARAŞTIRMASI**

Öz: Metaforlar, bir kişinin farkındalığının altında yatan ve anlam elde etmek için analogik çerçeveleme ve deneyimin tanımlanması için bilişsel bir araç olarak hizmet eden zihinsel yapılardır. Bu çalışmada spor bilimleri öğrencilerinin kadın akademisyenler hakkındaki düşüncelerini metaforlar yardımıyla ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmıştır. Çalışma grubu spor bilimleri alanında öğrenim görmekte olan lisans düzeyindeki 144 öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Araştırma da veri toplama aracı olarak katılımcılara kadın akademisyenlere ilişkin algılarını belirlemek için metafor formu hazırlanmıştır. Veriler içerik analizi yöntemi ile analiz edilerek, kategoriler ve temalar oluşturulmuştur. Katılımcıların 53 çeşit metafor ürettiği görülmüştür. Üretilen metaforlar kadın akademisyen teması altında ebeveyn olarak, yol gösterici olarak, meslek bilgisi olarak ve mücadeleci biri olarak olmak üzere dört kategoride toplanmıştır. Sonuç olarak bu çalışmada kadın akademisyenlere ilişkin olumlu bir bakış açısına sahip oldukları ve kadın akademisyenlere yönelik olumlu çağrışım yapan metaforlar oluşturdukları sonucuna varılmıştır. Kadın akademisyenler, spor bilimleri öğrencileri ile iyi iletişim kurabilen, öğrencilere değer veren, dersini verimli bir şekilde işleyerek öğrencilerin saygısını kazanabilen özellikleri sayesinde öğrencilerin olumlu metaforlar geliştirmelerine neden olmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Metafor, Kadın, Öğrenci



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INTRODUCTION

In addition to being a current research topic, gender inequality can be encountered in every field from sports to politics, education to art. Unfortunately, although almost half of the world's population is female, women are subjected to discrimination in areas such as income, status and social relations (Tahtaloğlu, 2016). In recent years, policies have been developed to ensure that all components of universities such as academics, administrative staff and students work and live in an egalitarian environment, and although sometimes individual, sometimes institutional efforts and established solidarity networks try to advance these studies, gender equality cannot be said to be achieved (Göker and Polatdemir, 2019). In addition to the fact that the number of female academics working in higher education in Türkiye is less than that of male academics, employment rates indicate the existence of gender inequality (Sezgin and Hobikoglu, 2022). In a study conducted in 2023, the importance of evaluating institutional factors and procedures from a multidimensional perspective in planning and implementing the institutional change process in terms of gender inequality was emphasized (Özerim et al., 2023).

Academics who carry out human education, which is the cornerstone of society, play an important role in the construction of the future and the shaping of society (Hotamışlı, 2011). In higher education studies, the aim is on identifying barriers that prevent females from advancing in academic organizations, maintaining hegemonic masculine leadership, and promoting them to leadership positions (Burkinshaw and White, 2020). The volume of studies on female academic careers in universities have increased (Tight, 2012; Maheshwari, 2021). Studies that consider specific aspects of female's careers in academia focus on issues such as work-life balance (Rosa, 2022), its impact on professional identity (Mula-Flacón et al., 2021), and female's leadership in higher education (Maheshwari, 2021).

Studies on gender inequality in particular seem to be attracting more attention. There is distinction in the gender situation in the academic hierarchies of higher education institutions, and females are underrepresented in senior positions (Ronksley-Pavia et al., 2023). The gender instability in higher education creates a worldwide problem that no country has unfixed (Diezmann and Grieshaber, 2019). These studies in the literature consent us to visualize females as an bring out phenomenon and present the picture of female's careers in higher education institutions. Various metaphors are used in the literature and media to refer to female academics, their careers, and experiences (Araneda-Guirriman et al., 2023; Block and Tietien-Smith, 2016; Yanar and Akpınar, 2023). Metaphors are intellectual structures that underlie a individual cognizance and serve as a mental device for analogic trimming and definition of tentative to obtain meaning (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Massengill Shaw and Mahlios, 2008) and mental models that allow personal to comment one phenomenon through the other (Ceylan and Kozak, 2021; Moratti, 2018; Şaban, 2008).

It is important to determine through metaphors how female academics have a place in the eyes of undergraduate students in terms of embodying the students' thoughts. Also, there are no studies in the literature on how female academics are perceived by students. It is important to consider the metaphors and images used to describe female academics in higher education. Therefore, it is thought that this research, which purpose to investigate the thoughts of sports science students towards female academics through metaphors, will benefit the literature.

METHOD

Research Model

The study was prepared in the phenomenology pattern among qualitative research methods. In this research aim to show up and evaluate the personal's perceptions about a certain phenomenon (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). To define the research group of the study, norm illustration technique, that is one of the intentional sampling methods, as used (Johnson and Christensen, 2017). Criterion sampling involves the selection of situations that meet certain predetermined importance criteria (Marshall and Rossman, 2014).

Research Group

A total of 144 (female: 72, male: 72) volunteer students studying at the Faculty of Sports Sciences of Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University participated in the research. The average age of the participants is (20.5±1.8), and 35.4% of the participants are first grade, 43.1% are second grade, 13.2% are fourth grade and 8.3% are third grade.

Data Collection Tools

In the research, the metaphor questionnaire (I liken it to a female academics..... because.....) used by Hanin and Stambulova (2002) in their study was prepared as a data collection tool. Participants were wanted to write a metaphor for female academics, explain why they wrote it and why this concept had this association to them.

Data Analysis

Content analysis was used on the settlement of the data obtained in study. Ingredient analysis consists of collecting like data under a particular theme or nation component and presented to the reader (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2016). The assessment and exposition of the metaphors received from the contributors through content analysis are as follows; (1) codification and ranking scheme, (2) reference metaphor sight compilation state, (3) category improvement stage, (4) validity and reliability providing state and (5) transporting the data to the Jamovi 2.0.0 statistical software program for quantitative data analysis. In order to produce the credibility of the study, the data were examined by three range experts to define whether the national categories achieved as a result of the data analysis represented the topics obtained; the obtained codes and the predicament represented by the codes were compared. Afterwards the study data were encoded respectively by three researchers, the resulting list of codes and categories was concluded. The reliability of the data settlement acquired in this way was calculated using the formulation $[\text{Unanimity} / (\text{Unanimity} + \text{Disagreement}) \times 100]$ (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

RESULTS

Table 1 is examined; it is seen that the participants created a total of 53 types of metaphors for female academics and expressed 142 views about them. The metaphor with the highest frequency was *mother* (25), *strong person* (14) and *successful person* (12).

Table 1. Metaphors Developed by Participants Related Female Academics

Number of Metaphors	Metaphor Name	F	Number of Metaphors	Metaphor Name	F	Number of Metaphors	Metaphor Name	F
1	Mother	25	19	Civilization	2	37	Perfect	1
2	Strong people	14	20	Stair	1	38	Plate	1
3	A Successful Person	12	21	Merciful	1	39	Moon	1
4	The Educator	6	22	Scientist	1	40	Book	1
5	Leader	6	23	Savior	1	41	Lodestar	1
6	Older Sister	6	24	Comandder	1	42	Talented	1
7	Flower	4	25	Ant	1	43	Göksu Üstaş	1
8	Jewellery	6	26	Bee	1	44	Dignty	1
9	Sun	4	27	Lamp	1	45	Family Elder	1
10	Determined Person	3	28	Guide	1	46	Owl	1
11	İdol	3	29	Tree	1	47	Devoted	1
12	Lion	3	30	Hero	1	48	Future	1
13	Idealistic Person	3	31	Light	1	49	Statue of Liberty	1
14	Queen	3	32	Clover	1	50	Sabiha Gökçen	1
15	Candle	2	33	King	1	51	Imam	1
16	Warrior	2	34	Pomegranate	1	52	Sea Water	1
17	Mountain	2	35	Wise	1	53	Pencil	1
18	Republican woman	2	36	Good Person	1	Total Metaphors		142

The metaphors produced by sports science students under the theme of female academics consist of 4 categories (Table 2). The categories and explanatory statements between Table 2 and Table 3 are given below.

Table 2. Distribution of metaphors developed by participants regarding female academics by themes and categories

Topic	Category	F	Metaphors (n)
Female Academicsians	A female academic as a parent	34	<i>Mother (25), Older Sister (6), Merciful (1), Family Elder (1), Good Person (1)</i>
	A female academic as a guide	24	<i>Republican Woman (2), Civilization (2), Idealist (2), Light (2), Leader (2), Future (2), Savior (1), Successful (1), Guide (1), Educator (1), Statue of Liberty (1), Sabiha Gökçen (1), Lion (1), Moon (1), Lodestar (1), Candle (1), Idol (1), Plate (1)</i>
	A female academic as a professional knowledge	18	<i>Successful people (3), Sun (3), Leader (2), Queen (2), The Educator (1), Pomegranate (1), Jewellery (1), Candle (1), Lamp (1), Tree (1), Owl (1), Wise (1)</i>
	A struggling female academic	41	<i>Strong people (14), Successful people (9), Warrior (2), Lion (2), Comandder (1), Ant (1), Bee (1), Idealist (1), Devoted (1), Leader (1), Determined (1), Hero (1), Stair (1), Idol (1), Hardworking (1), Jewellery (1), Educator (1), Perfect people (1)</i>
	Other (uncategorized)	25	<i>Pencil (1), Book (1), Priceless (1), Flower (4), Wather Sea (1), Mountain (1), Idol (1), Göksu Üstaş (1), Dignity (1), Sample quote (1), Loyal people (1), Beauty (1), Equal (2), Same (1), No difference (1), Academician (1), Step (1), Normal (1), Better (1), Queen (2)</i>

In accordance with Table 3, 34 metaphors were created in the category of female academics as parents. According to the description sentences given as examples, female academics can act as protectors and advocates of those under their care in the academic world as well as in family dynamics by likening them to metaphors such as mother, sister, and elder. They can advocate for gender equality and inclusion in academic settings, working to remove barriers and create opportunities for marginalized groups. Like a mother or sister looking out for the well-being of her loved ones, female academics can work to create a supportive and equitable environment for all members of the academic community.

Table 3. Metaphors and explanation examples in the category of “Female academics as parents”

Topic	Category	F	Metaphors (n)
Female Academician	A female academic as a parent	34	<i>Mother (25), Older Sister (6), Merciful (1), Family Elder (1), Good Person (1)</i>
<i>Excerpts from examples of explanations from sports science students;</i> <i>Mother; "Both compassionate and devoted" (P29);</i> <i>"She is both a protector and merciful" (P46);</i> <i>"They are more compassionate than male academics" (P67);</i> <i>"They seem very compassionate and very loving" (P76)</i> <i>Sister; "They have a closer, more intimate and protective nature than male academics" (P27);</i> <i>"She has a sincere and warmer approach" (P112).</i>			

According to Table 4, 24 metaphors were created in the category of females academics as a guide. In accordance with the explanation sentences given as instances, females academics were likened to various metaphors that provide information and support such as the future, candle, idol, light.

Table 4. Metaphors and description examples in the category of “Female academics as a guide”

Topic	Category	F	Metaphors (n)
Female Academician	A female academic as a guide	24	<i>Republican Woman (2), Civilization (2), Idealist (2), Light (2), Leader (2), Future (2), Savior (1), Successful (1), Guide (1), Educator (1), Statue of Liberty (1), Sabiha Gökçen (1), Lion (1), Moon (1), Lodestar (1), Candle (1), Idol (1), Plate (1)</i>
<i>Excerpts from examples of explanations from sports science students;</i> <i>Candle; "illuminates the surroundings" (P34)</i> <i>Light; "females can do whatever they set their minds to and will enlighten us in life" (P72)</i> <i>Idol; "I think it is an example for many females and paves the way for them" (P139)</i> <i>Plate; "shows the way" (P142)</i>			

According to Table 5, 18 metaphors were produced in the category of female academics as professional information. In accordance with the explanation sentences given as examples, they concretized their professional knowledge in various ways by likening female academics to metaphors such as lamp, owl, sun.

Table 5. Metaphors and explanation examples in the category of “female academics as professional knowledge”

Topic	Category	F	Metaphors (n)
Female Academician	A female academic as a professional knowledge	18	<i>Successful people (3), Sun (3), Leader (2), Queen (2), The Educator (1), Pomegranate (1), Jewellery (1), Candle (1), Lamp (1), Tree (1), Owl (1), Wise (1)</i>
<i>Excerpts from examples of explanations from sports science students;</i> <i>Lamp; "It gives light to both itself and us" PK36)</i> <i>Owl; "it evokes wisdom" (P43)</i> <i>Success; "Well-educated, self-developed, strong" (P89)</i> <i>Sun; "It enlightens us with its knowledge" (P135)</i>			

According to Table 6, 41 metaphors were created in the category of struggling female academics. In accordance with the explanation sentences given as examples, female academics were likened to metaphors such as warriors, lions, commanders, ants, and bees, and it was mentioned that they had to work harder to prove themselves and overcome prejudices.

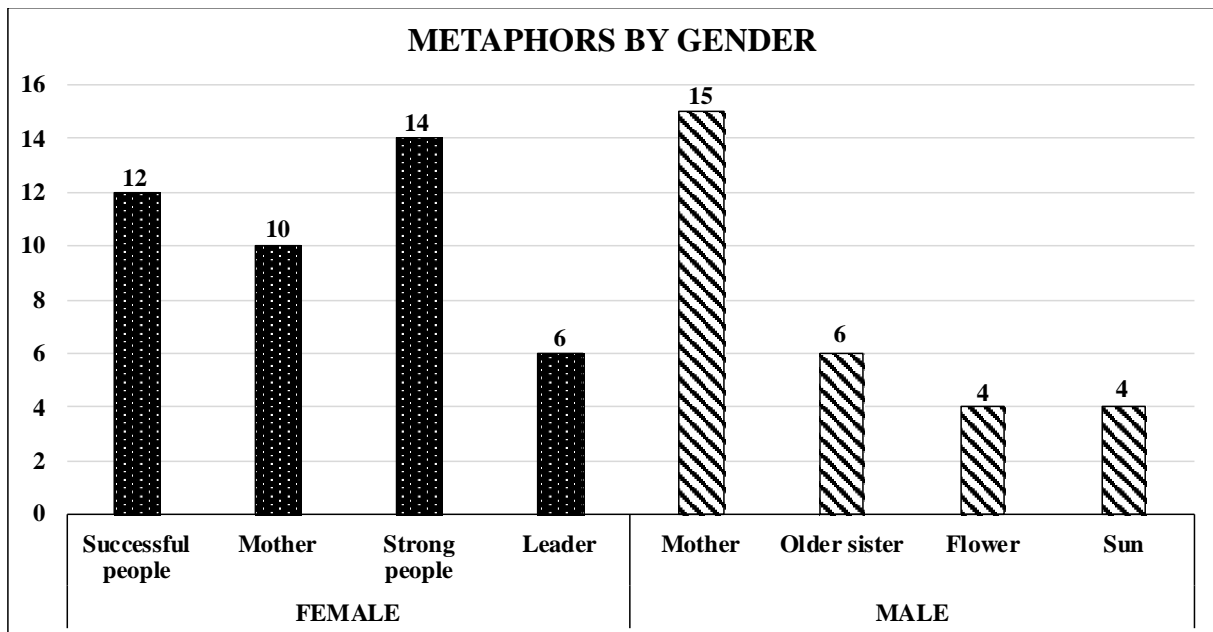
Table 6. Metaphors and explanation examples in the “struggling female academic” category

Topic	Category	F	Metaphors (n)
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Female Academician	A struggling female academic	41	Strong people (14), Successful people (9), Warrior (2), Lion (2), Comandder (1), Ant (1), Bee (1), Idealist (1), Devoted (1), Leader (1), Determined (1), Hero (1), Stair (1), Idol (1), Hardworking (1), Jewellery (1), Educator (1), Perfect people (1)
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Excerpts from examples of explanations from sports science students;
 A strong person/female; "In a male-dominated community, a female being an academic creates a strong perception in my eyes" (P32)
 Warrior; "It is not only work but also the home that females take care of" (P56)
 Ladder; "It is difficult to go further as a female" (P70)
 Lion; "Females who stand on their own two feet" (P86)

When graph 1 is examined, it is seen that women and men produce the metaphor of "strong person" (n:14) and "mother" (n:15) the most out of the participants



Graph 1. Metaphors by gender of participants

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Students' views on female academics are quite diverse and may reflect various experiences and perceptions. In the study in which we aimed to examine the metaphors of sports science students regarding female academics, 53 metaphors were obtained and consist of four categories. In the category of female academics as parents, they are often likened to metaphors such as mother and sister. In the study of Cirit and Başpınar (2021), it is seen that the metaphors used by students towards physical education teachers are similar. It can be said that the participants used these metaphors due to the loving and friendly approach of female academics. As a matter of fact, in few studies, it was established that students defined the teacher who is friendly, cooperative, loving, democratic (Avşar, 2009; Avşar and Sağlam, 2008) and values them (Karataş, 2022) as the ideal teacher.

It was found that the meanings that the participants most intensely attributed to the metaphors they advanced regarding *female academics as a guide* were republican females, civilization, light, leader and guide. Çar (2022) It is seen that the metaphors they used regarding physical education and sports teachers are subjective thoughts like role model, guide, compass, director, life coach. In the study executed by Egüz and Öntaş (2018), students' concept of physical education teachers was described with guiding and directing metaphors. Ensher and Murphy

(2011) emphasized in their study that female academics often serve as important mentors and role models for students. They also reported that their presence significantly influenced students' academic choices and career paths. Many female academics/teachers can be said to guide students and younger colleagues by providing guidance, support and encouragement. Therefore, it can be said that female academics are likened to these metaphors because they are seen as mentors who give valuable advice and support.

In terms of *professional knowledge*, it was observed that in the female academic category, success was likened to metaphors like 'sun', 'leader', 'candle'. In the study of Avşar and Yanar (2023), it was seen that the meaning that students intensely attributed to the metaphors they advanced were sources of information and educational qualities. In similar studies, students expressed the directive role of their teachers approvingly physical education teachers to metaphors like 'instructor', 'sun', 'life coach', 'book', 'candle', 'captain' and 'stair' (Cirit and Başpınar, 2021; Egüz and Öntaş, 2018; Görücü et al., 2016). Female academics are often viewed as highly authoritative in their fields, perhaps because they are styled as "subject matter experts" or "knowledge leaders."

In the category of struggling female academics, success was likened to metaphors such as warrior, lion, commander, altruist, determination and hero. In the study by Wolfinger et al. (2009), it was emphasized that female academics were generally perceived as resilient and capable of overcoming significant obstacles. In the study by Yanar and Akpınar (2023), female academics were generally seen to have remarkable resilience in coping with and overcoming systemic challenges and prejudices in academia. Their perseverance in pursuing research and professional goals despite obstacles is a defining feature.

As a result, it was concluded in this study that sports science students have a positive perspective on female academics and accordingly produce metaphors with positive connotations. Female academics who can set up structural contact with their students, worth their students, teach their lessons effectively, and gain their students' regard by showing that they are learned on the issue can develop positive thoughts in their students.

Suggestions

In order for students to recognize the metaphor, the use of metaphor can be included in the lessons. Awareness of future research on the experiences of female academics can be raised through workshops, seminars, and academic forums. The opinions of the academic staff working at the faculties of sports sciences can also be obtained for the studies to be carried out after this. In addition, in addition to the use of metaphors about women academics, students' attitudes towards women academics can also be determined with auxiliary scales and mixed studies can be conducted.

Ethics of Research

The necessary permission to start the study was received from the Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University Rectorate Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee on 21/05/2024 (Document No: E-75732670-050.04-194411).

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