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Gender perception and affecting factors: Example of Mardin

Toplumsal cinsiyet algısı ve etkileyen faktörler: Mardin örneği

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim was to determine the perception levels and affecting factors on the gender roles of individuals who are between the ages of 20 and 65 in Mardin, a province in southeastern Turkey. **Methods:** In the study, the sampling was calculated as 1055 people in the range of 20-65, 990 people were contacted, and a questionnaire that consisted of 2 parts was applied face to face. There was a Socio-Demographic Characteristics form in the first part, and a "Gender Perception Scale" in the second part. The score obtained from the scale is in the range of 25-125, and high scores indicate a positive perception of gender. **Results:** The mean age of the individuals was 33.27 ± 10.70 , 67.2% were female, and 15.4% were illiterate. A total of 56.7% of individuals had arranged marriages, and 1.6% were married through the "bride exchange" tradition. The rate of individuals who married one of their relatives was 36.3%. The mean scale score of the individuals who were included in the study was 79.34 ± 15.32 . Factors such as working status, being a woman, being single, being young, being born in a city, having a good economic situation, and having a high level of education of individuals and their families affect gender perception positively, while having children, being related to spouses, living in rural areas, being etc. factors affect negatively. **Conclusion:** The mean gender perception score was found to be lower compared to similar studies. Various socio-demographic factors affect the perception levels of individuals. Studies should be conducted to improve gender perception in cooperation with public institutions, civil society, and media institutions considering the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of the area.

Keywords: Gender, gender perception, Turkey

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ÖZ

Amaç: Türkiye'nin güneydoğusunda bir il olan Mardin'de 20- 65 yaş aralığında yer alan bireylerin toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine ilişkin algı düzeylerini ve etkileyen faktörleri saptamaktır. **Yöntem:** 20-65 aralığında 1055 kişi olarak hesaplanan araştırmada 990 kişiye ulaşılmış ve bu kişilere 2 bölümden oluşan anket, yüz yüze uygulanmıştır. Birinci bölümde; sosyo-demografik özellikler ikinci bölümde ise "Toplumsal Cinsiyet Algısı Ölçeği" kullanılmıştır. Ölçekten alınan puan 25-125 aralığında olup, yüksek puanlar toplumsal cinsiyet algısının olumlu olduğunu ifade etmektedir. **Bulgular:** Bireylerin yaş ortalaması 33.27 ± 10.70 olup %67.2'si kadındır; %15.4'ü okuryazar değildir. Bireylerin %56.7'si görücü usulü ve %1.6'sı berdel yoluyla evlenmiştir. Akrabası ile evlenen bireylerin oranı %36.3'tür. Araştırma kapsamına alınan bireylerin ölçekten aldıkları puan ortalaması 79.34 ± 15.32 'dir. Kişinin çalışma durumu, kadın olma, bekârlık, genç yaşta olma, doğum yerinin kent olması, ekonomik durumunun iyi olması, bireylerin ve ailelerinin eğitim seviyesinin yüksek olması gibi faktörler toplumsal cinsiyet algısını olumlu yönde etkilerken çocuk sahibi olma, eşlerin akraba olması, kırsal bölgede yaşıyor olma vb. faktörler olumsuz yönde etkilemektedir. **Sonuç:** Toplumsal cinsiyet algı düzeyi puan ortalaması yapılan benzer çalışmalara göre düşüktür. Bireylerin algı düzeylerini çeşitli sosyo demografik faktörler etkilemektedir. Bölgenin sosyoekonomik ve kültürel şartları da göz önüne alınarak; kamu, sivil toplum ve basın yayın kuruluşları ile iş birliği içerisinde toplumsal cinsiyet algısını geliştirmeye yönelik çalışmalar yürütülmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplumsal cinsiyet, toplumsal cinsiyet algısı, Türkiye

Introduction

Gender is a multidimensional and social phenomenon, which has been historically based on culture, changing constantly. It refers to the socially foreseen and experienced dimensions of the "femininity" or "masculinity" roles in society. Gender relations refer to how individuals interact with others based on gender roles attributed to them.¹ Gender relations have significant impacts at all levels of society and may restrict or bring opportunities for individuals.² Gender relations emerge in the race, ethnicity, class, ability, sexual orientation, and other social fields reflecting gender roles between men and women.³ Although the role concept has more than one definition, it can generally be defined as behavioral patterns expected from a person with a certain status or position in a certain context. However, gender roles can be defined as behavioral patterns expected from the individual in areas of interest, skills, work distribution, clothing, etc. based on his/her gender. The attitudes or opinions of the society regarding the roles considered

appropriate for men and women may be labeled with different terms, such as "gender role attitudes" and "gender ideology."⁴

Attitudes facilitate the emergence of gender roles within the society determining the roles and responsibilities of men and women. There are beliefs and values promoting the stereotypes and discrimination at the very heart of these attitudes.⁵ Although gender roles are widely visible in all areas, they become evident via variables such as age, gender, and education level.⁶ These roles are related to the expectations of the society regarding the "place" that it considers appropriate for individuals as men and women. Gender roles are shaped by various cultural, religious, and normative lenses that are specific to each area, and are passed through generations with generally defined socialization and suggestion.⁷ It is reported in the literature that factors affecting the development of attitudes regarding gender roles are family environment, the level of education of parents, and the working status

of the mother, friends, school, and means of mass media.⁸

Gender differentiates men and women, and gives them different roles and responsibilities with a different value to each breaking the equality between men and women against women. In this way, gender perception becomes gender inequality. The biggest victim of gender inequality has always been women almost everywhere globally.⁹ There are studies conducted almost everywhere in the world showing that women are deprived of their economic, social, political rights, and access to education and healthcare.¹⁰ According to the World Economic Forum 2020 Gender Discrimination Index created based on educational data, economic participation, political representation, and health, Turkey ranks 130th among 153 countries. Iceland, Norway, Finland, and Sweden are at the top of this list, in which the countries of the world are ranked according to gender equality.¹¹

Studies conducted on gender perception in Turkey focus mostly on the young population, especially on university students, in other words, on groups with high educational levels; and studies related to the adult population are limited. The purpose of the present study was to contribute to the gap in the literature by identifying the perception levels and influencing factors on gender roles of individuals between the ages of 20 and 65 in Mardin, which is a city in southeastern Turkey. The fact that this study is the first one to the best of our knowledge conducted in the Southeastern Anatolian Region adds originality to the study.

Material and Methods

The present study is a descriptive study of cross-sectional study design. The population of the study consisted of 86.245 individuals who were between the ages of 20 and 65 living in Artuklu District of Mardin and who enrolled in family healthcare centers. The Open Epi.com program was used to calculate the sampling size. A total of 1055 people were calculated for the expected prevalence range of 50%±3% and within

95% confidence interval.¹² A 2-part literature-based questionnaire form was used as the data collection tool in the study. The socio-demographic data of people such as age, gender, and educational status were included in chapter one, and the "Gender Perception Scale" developed by Altınova and Duyan (2013) was used in the second part to measure the gender perceptions of people.

The Gender Perception Scale was developed by Altınova and Duyan (2013), and its validity and reliability studies were conducted to allow it to be applied especially to adults. The scale consists of a total of 25 items. One of the statements of "I strongly agree", "I agree", "I am indecisive", "I do not agree", "I strongly disagree" is selected for each item, and is scored between 1 and 5. When the total scale score is calculated, some items are scored in reverse (2nd, 4th, 6th, 9th, 10th, 12th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 24th, and 25th). The lowest score that can be received from the scale is 25, and the highest score is 125. High scores indicate a positive perception of gender.¹³

The necessary permissions were obtained from Mardin Artuklu University Ethics Committee Evaluation Commission and Mardin Public Health Directorate before the study was commenced, and the fieldwork was completed between August 2017 and February 2018.

The limitations of the study are that the study was carried out during working hours, that a significant part of the men was not present at home due to work etc., and some men did not accept the interview. This situation led to the emergence of proportional differences between men and women in our study.

Individuals who would be surveyed with systematic sampling were selected after weighting according to the family healthcare center population in the study. The number of individuals was 990 (participation rate was 93.8%).

The data were recorded in SPSS 19 Statistical Package Program; and error checks, tables,

and statistical analyses were made with this program. Frequency distribution, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, and percentages were also calculated. In line with the purposes of the study, the t-test and One-Way Variance Analysis (ANOVA) were used to identify whether the total scores of the scale differed according to the independent variables. The Tukey Test was applied to determine the difference between the groups, and $p < 0.05$ was accepted as significant. In the multiple regression analysis, the total scale score as a continuous variable was determined as $p = 0.105$ in the normality test.

Results

The mean age of the individuals who were included in the study ($n = 990$) was 33.27 ± 10.70 (min.: 20. max.: 65) within the 20-29 age group with a maximum of 45.9%. A total of 67.2% of the individuals are women and 15.4% of the individuals participating in the research are illiterate. According to their statements, 61.2% stated that their economic conditions were "moderate", and 1.2% said "very good"; and 69.7% of the individuals who were included in the study were married, and the mean age of first marriage was 21.18 ± 4.72 (min.: 11, max.: 45). A total of 56.7% were married with an arranged

marriage, and 1.6% were married with a bride exchange. The rate of individuals who married one of their relatives was 36.3%. When the educational status of the spouses was evaluated, the rate of non-literate people was 12.3%, and the rate of those who were university and above graduate was 20.1%; the most populous group being primary school graduates with a rate of 26.9% (Table 1). The distribution of the individuals who were included in the study according to some demographic variables is given in Table 1.

When the family characteristics of the individuals who were included in the study were examined, it was found that 67.0% of the mothers and 29.3% of the fathers were illiterate. A total of 28.0% of individuals spoke Turkish at home, 43.3% spoke Kurdish, and 28.7% spoke Arabic (Table 2). The family characteristics of the individuals who were included in the study are given in Table 2.

The agreement status of the individuals who were included in the study in Gender Perception Scale (GPS) is given in Table 3 (Table 3).

The mean score of the individuals who were included in the study according to GPS was

Table 2: Family characteristics of the individuals

		n	%
Mother's educational status (n=990)	Illiterate	663	67.0
	Literate	81	8.2
	Primary school	192	19.4
	High-school	44	4.4
	University	10	1.0
Father's educational status (n=990)	Illiterate	290	29.3
	Literate	193	19.5
	Primary school	332	33.5
	High-school	122	12.3
	University	53	5.4
Family type (n=990)	Elementary	671	67.8
	Extended	319	32.2
Language spoken at home	Turkish	277	28.0
	Kurdish	429	43.3
	Arabic	284	28.7
Living in own house (n=990)	Yes	330	33.3
	No	660	66.7
Residential Area*	^a Yenişehir	432	43.6
	^b Old Mardin	213	21.6
	^c Village	345	34.8

Table 1: Demographic variables of individuals

Demographic variables		n	%
Gender	Female	665	67.2
	Male	325	32.8
Age group	20-29 years of age	454	45.9
	30-39 years of age	280	28.3
	40-49 years of age	153	15.5
	50-65 years of age	103	10.4
Place of birth	City	390	39.4
	County	269	27.2
	Village	331	33.4
Educational status	Illiterate	152	15.4
	Literate	63	6.4
	Primary school	297	30.0
	High school	212	21.4
	University and above	266	26.9
Places lived until the age of 12	City	390	39.4
	County	226	22.8
	Village	374	37.8
Working status	Yes	350	35.4
	No	640	64.6
Economic status of family (n=990)	Very bad	12	1.2
	Bad	134	13.5
	Moderate	606	61.2
	Very good	12	1.2
Total income of family (n=990)	Equal income-expenses	518	52.3
	More income than expenses	119	12.0
	Less income than expenses	353	35.7
Social security (n=990)	Social security agency	627	63.4
	Green card	124	12.5
	No social security	239	24.1
	Total	990	100.0
Marital status (n=990)	Single	290	29.3
	Married	690	69.7
	Widow(er)	10	1.0
First marriage age (n=700)	10-17 years of age	356	50.9
	18-25 years of age	322	46.0
	26 years of age and above	22	3.1
Marriage duration (n=700)	1-10 years	327	46.7
	11-20 years	169	24.1
	21 years and above	204	29.2
Marriage type (n=700)	Arranged marriage	397	56.7
	Willingly-lovingly	290	41.4
	Betrothed in the cradle	2	0.3
	Bride exchange	11	1.6
Kinship status (n=700)	Yes	254	36.3
	No	446	63.7
Educational status of spouse (n=700)	Illiterate	86	12.3
	Literate	65	9.3
	Primary school	258	36.9
	High school	151	21.6
	University and above	140	20.1
Working status of spouse (n=700)	Yes	404	57.7
	No	296	42.3
Having Children	Yes	651	93.0
	No	49	7.0

Table 3: The agreement status of the individuals in gender perception scale (GPS)

Gender perception scale	I do not agree		I am indecisive		I agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Marriage does not hinder a woman's working.	235	23.7	55	5.6	700	70.7
A woman should only work if her family has economic difficulties.	523	52.8	61	6.2	406	41.0
A working woman may also spend enough time with her children.	417	42.1	114	11.5	459	46.4
Women should not work after becoming mothers.	482	48.7	110	11.1	398	40.2
Female politicians can also succeed.	161	16.3	97	9.8	732	73.9
Women should not work after marriage.	630	63.6	59	6.0	301	30.4
Work life does not disrupt household chores of a woman.	441	44.6	109	11.0	440	44.4
A working woman enjoys life more.	201	20.3	167	16.9	622	62.8
Women should always be protected by men.	242	24.4	61	6.2	687	69.4
A woman should not work if her husband does not allow her.	325	32.8	93	9.4	572	57.8
Women can become managers.	109	11.0	73	7.4	808	81.6
A working woman should give the income she earns to her husband.	547	55.3	127	12.8	316	31.9
A working woman becomes a better mother for her children.	328	33.1	183	18.5	479	48.4
Men should also do household chores like washing dishes and washing-up.	348	35.2	43	4.3	599	60.5
A woman without husband looks like an unclaimed house.	367	37.1	66	6.7	557	56.3
Men should provide the income of a family.	351	35.5	49	4.9	590	59.6
Women should not open places like commercial places on their own (cafe, market, realtor, etc.).	564	57.0	74	7.5	352	35.5
The first duty of women is to undertake household chores.	399	40.3	54	5.5	537	54.2
A woman should not make more money than her husband.	602	60.8	98	9.9	290	29.3
A man should always be the head of the house.	367	37.1	46	4.6	577	58.3
The leadership of the society should generally be in the hands of men.	531	53.6	65	6.6	394	39.8
Girls should be given as much freedom as boys.	131	13.2	38	3.8	821	82.9
A woman must be able to oppose her husband if needed to have her own rights.	339	34.3	123	12.4	528	53.3
A woman must be younger than her husband.	383	38.7	97	9.8	510	51.5
Men should make important decisions within the family.	535	54.0	49	4.9	406	41.0

79.34 ± 15.32 (min.:32; max.:123); and the comparison of the mean GPS scores of individuals according to demographic variables is given in Table 4.

It is seen that the mean score of individuals in GPS differed according to working status, having children, gender, marital status, working status of spouses, and relation status, age groups, place of birth, economic status, language spoken at home, educational status, mothers' and fathers' educational status, and location ($p < 0.05$).

Multiple regression analyses of the factors that affected the total scores of the scale in terms of gender, employment status, marital status, kinship status in marriage, social security, and employment status of the spouse are given in Table 5.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was made to predict the scale total score according to gender, employment status, marital status, kinship status in marriage, social security, and employment status of the spouse ($F=29.599$, $p < 0.001$). All the variables explained 76% of the variance of

Table 4: Comparison of mean gender perception scale scores according to demographic variables

		n	\bar{x}	SD	p	Tukey	p*
Gender	Female	665	81.65	14.91	0.000		
	Male	325	74.60	15.09			
Age Group*	^a 20-29 Years of age	454	80.95	15.35	0.000	a-d	0.000
	^b 30-39 Years of age	280	79.82	15.69		b-d	0.001
	^c 40-49 Years of age	153	77.92	13.97			
	^d 50-65 Years of age	103	73.02	14.51			
Place of Birth*	^a City	390	83.44	14.56	0.000	a-b a-c	0.030 0.000
	^b County	269	80.47	15.60		b-c	0.000
	^c Village	331	73.59	14.21			
Educational Status*	^a Illiterate	152	70.51	11.52	0.000	a-c a-d a-e	0.006 0.000 0.000
	^b Literate	63	73.06	14.10		b-d b-e	0.002 0.000
	^c Primary School	297	75.16	12.37		c-b c-d c-e	0.006 0.000 0.000
	^d High School	212	80.30	14.77		d-e	0.000
	^e University and above	266	89.77	15.02			
Working Status	Yes	350	79.86	16.96	0.043		
	No	640	79.05	14.35			
Economic Status*	^a Very Bad	12	86.08	16.68	0.000		
	^b Bad	134	74.28	15.21		b-c	0.012
	^c Moderate	606	78.91	15.37		c-d	0.008
	^d Good	226	82.82	14.17		d-b	0.000
	^e Very Good	12	85.25	16.60			
Marital Status	Single	290	79.86	15.72	0.000		
	Married	691	77.35	14.76			
Kinship Status with Spouse	Yes	254	73.83	13.68	0.000		
	No	446	79.51	14.97			
Working Status of Spouse	Yes	404	81.11	14.22	0.000		
	No	296	72.45	14.01			
Having Children	Yes	651	77.13	14.67	0.034		
	No	49	81.75	15.31			
Mother's Educational Status*	^a Illiterate	663	76.87	14.91	0.000	a-b a-c a-d	0.000 0.000 0.000
	^b Literate	81	84.02	16.17			
	^c Primary School	192	83.42	14.12			
	^d High School	44	87.84	16.02			
	^e University and above	10	89.60	14.03			
Father's Educational Status*	^a Illiterate	290	73.79	13.88	0.000	a-b a-c a-d a-e	0.001 0.000 0.000 0.000
	^b Literate	193	79.17	16.01		b-e	0.000
	^c Primary School	332	81.23	15.02		c-e	0.001
	^d High School	122	83.12	14.66		d-e	0.048
	^e University and above	53	89.79	13.08			
Language Spoken at Home*	^a Turkish	277	86.00	14.26	0.000	a-b a-c	0.000 0.000
	^b Kurdish	429	79.19	15.47		b-c	0.000
	^c Arabic	284	73.07	13.30			
Residential Area*	^a Yenişehir	432	83.85	16.25	0.000	a-b a-c	0.000 0.000
	^b Old Mardin	213	78.90	14.22		b-c	0.000
	^c Village	345	73.96	12.82			

*Only the groups with statistically significant differences are shown.

Table 5: Multiple regression analyses of the socio-demographic factors that affected the scale total score

F=29.59; R ² =0.76					
Demographic Variables	B	Beta	95.0% CI of B		
			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	p
Constant	108.21		99.48	116.94	0.000
Gender (Ref: Male) Female	-7.78	-0.23	-10.25	-5.31	0.000
Working status (Ref: not working) Yes working	-5.27	-0.16	-7.54	-3.01	0.000
Marital status (Ref:Single) Married	-2.30	-0.07	-6.86	2.25	0.321
Kinship status (Ref:Yes) No	3.15	0.17	1.12	5.17	0.002
Social security (Ref:Yes) No	-2.37		-4.53	-0.22	0.031
Working status of spouse (Ref:No) Yes	-6.53		-8.86	-4.20	0.000

ref: Referans; Dependent Variable: Total point; CI: Confidence Interval

the total score. The gender, employment status, kinship status in marriage, having social security, and employment status of the spouse variables predicted the total score of the scale ($p < 0.05$). The order of importance to predict the total score was the employment status, gender, kinship status in marriage, and employment status of the spouse.

Discussion

In our study, the average GPS score was lower than in other studies, based on the cultural and social differences between Ankara and Mardin. In a study conducted with university students in Ankara, the GPS score was 92.45, while in a study conducted with adults it was 87.01, in our study it was found to be 79.34.^{14,15} However, higher GPS scores in university

students and the increase in educational levels show that traditional perspectives may change.

Studies, which covered all of Turkey, repeated in the years 2016, 2017, and 2018, reported that women were more egalitarian than men.¹⁶ Similar results were reported in studies conducted abroad.^{17,18} Studies conducted with university students in our country and in other countries reported that female students have more egalitarian perceptions than male students.^{14,19,20,21,22,23} In this sense, the findings of our study are consistent with other studies reported in the literature. Women are the section of the society most harmed by sexism. For this reason, women may be developing "egalitarian perceptions" more easily than

men. The egalitarian attitudes of men will mean that they share power with women; and therefore, lose many advantages, which might be playing roles in their more traditional attitudes towards gender roles than women.

The mean GPS score of individuals who had children was 77.13 in our study; however, the mean score of individuals who did not have children was 81.75. It was found in a study conducted with adult men in our country that those who did not have children adopted more egalitarian attitudes in terms of gender roles when compared to those who had children.²² Another study reported that having children had a traditionalizing effect on women.²⁴ In this sense, it can be speculated that having children encourages men and women to maintain traditional attitudes.

The mean GPS scores of married individuals were lower than the mean scores of single individuals. Similar results were reported in similar studies^{25,26}, which shows that the gender perception levels of individuals decrease after marriage. However, it is necessary to consider that age, educational status, modernization, economic conditions, etc. are also involved in different perception levels. It can be argued that individuals plan the roles and responsibilities they undertake after marriage according to their gender roles; and do not or, cannot leave the established work section between spouses. For this reason, it can be considered that their egalitarian conceptions when they are single goes backward after marriage, a kind of adversity, and there is acceptance by both men and women.

The gender perception scores of individuals whose spouses worked were higher than those of people whose spouses did not work. A similar study reported that working individuals had more egalitarian attitudes towards gender roles.²⁷ It was determined in this respect that men and women try to take egalitarian attitudes depending on their participation in business life.

One of the factors that affect gender perception is kinship relations in marriages. The presence of a certain pre-acceptance notation in marriages between relatives can be considered as the underlying reason for the decrease in the mean scores. In other words, both men and women say, "There is nothing I can do, I am who I am, and so is my spouse. Things will not change after this stage".

As age increases, gender perception decreases in reverse. Similar studies conducted in our country and abroad show that young people take more egalitarian approaches compared to the elderly.^{16,17,22,28} The findings of the study are consistent with the literature data.

It is understood that the individuals whose birthplace is the city are more egalitarian compared to those whose birthplace is the village. The developmental levels between cities can have effects on gender perception levels. It was reported in a study conducted with married individuals that individuals living in Erzurum had more egalitarian attitudes compared to those living in Bayburt, and this result was explained by the fact that Erzurum is more developed than Bayburt.²⁷ A study conducted with university students reported that students born in rural areas were more traditionalist in terms of their attitudes towards gender roles than students born in urban areas.^{29,30} As we move from rural areas to city centers, the gender perception levels of individuals increase. It is seen that individuals who are born in the city and who live in city life have more conscious attitudes about individual rights than individuals who are born in villages and who live in villages until the age of at least 12.

The economic condition is an important variable affecting the perception. It was found that the mean scores of individuals who had poor economic conditions on the gender perception scale were also lower. Individuals who had "very good economic conditions" have higher mean scores. It is an indisputable fact that economic condition

plays important role in gender equality, if it is not the only variable in this respect. Studies conducted in different cities and areas support this idea.^{31,32} As the economic condition becomes higher, the perception scores also become higher.

The language spoken at home is another factor affecting the gender perception of individuals. The perception levels of individuals speaking Turkish at home have higher perception levels than those speaking Kurdish and Arabic. The cultural diversity of Mardin includes ethnicity, religion, language, traditions, kinship relations, and geographical location. In this respect, the social structure determines gender roles with multiple factors. It can be argued that gender is often established in cultural terms by traditional methods in Mardin, which indicates that the control and self-control systems established by traditions continue to exist under different names.³³

Education is an important factor in changing gender perception in society. The educational level is below the average of Turkey. Parallel to the rise of the educational level, it can be considered that the traditional perceptions of individuals regarding gender roles are beginning to change. Studies showed that receiving more education can change the attitudes of individuals towards gender roles positively. When the literature was reviewed, it was found that similar results were reported in studies conducted with different segments of the society in different areas.^{15,16}
^{24,34} Education is an important phenomenon shaping attitudes, values, and beliefs of individuals, and supports an enlightened worldview as well as the cognitive and intellectual development of individuals.

The educational status of parents is also effective in the development of gender perception levels of individuals. In similar studies that were conducted with university students in different areas, it was determined that the relation between mothers' educational levels and gender perception was significant.^{35,36} It was determined in many studies conducted abroad that significant relations were detected between

the education level of the mother and the equalitarian attitude of children.^{37,38,39} It is considered that the child spends more time with his/her mother from the moment of birth, and the gender role the mother exhibits within the house is more influential on the child. Similar studies conducted with university students showed that gender perception is affected positively as the fathers' educational levels rise.^{35 36 37} It was reported in a study conducted abroad that children of parents who have higher educational levels were also more equalitarian.⁴⁰ The family environment where individuals are raised plays a role in the development of positive or negative perceptions. The high educational levels, which parents have, cause positive differences in gender perception.

The area where individuals live affects gender perception levels. In our study, the mean gender perception scores of the residents in the city center (Yenişehir) were higher than that of those living in the village (Table 4). Studies conducted abroad on gender roles show that Korean young people have more traditionalist views than Japanese counterparts, and Saudi Arabian young people have more traditionalist attitudes than Egyptian counterparts.^{4,42} It was determined in a study conducted in three districts of Ankara that the mean gender perception score of individuals living in Çankaya district in Ankara city center was higher than those living in Sincan and Gölbaşı districts, which can be considered relatively rural.¹⁵

Conclusion

In general, the individuals who live in Mardin Artuklu District have low-to-moderate socioeconomic levels. When compared with similar studies, the mean gender perception scores of the individuals living in Mardin is low. The mean GPS score is affected by socio-demographic factors, such as the working status of individuals, having children, gender, marital status, working status of the spouse, kinship status with spouse, birthplace, economic status, language spoken at home, educational status, educational level of parents, and residential area. Considering the socio-economic and cultural

conditions of the area; Educational programs and materials related to gender roles and gender equality should be developed and implemented as part of the curricula at all levels of education starting from primary education, including higher education.

Academic activities related to this subject should be supported, and studies should be conducted in cooperation with civil society, public and media institutions to raise awareness about gender discrimination.

Educational opportunities should be increased for individuals living in rural areas, and policies should be developed to increase the opportunities for individuals for working in income-generating jobs.

Educational programs targeting to improve gender perception of parents should be organized by the experts in this field.

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