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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Interpersonal Communication and Gender Equality: A Study on Public Relations and Advertising Students

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Abstract

People communicate by conveying their emotions, thoughts, beliefs, and behavior through verbal, written, and non-verbal means. This communication facilitates interaction and information sharing among individuals, organizations, and societies and plays a significant role in human socialization. Communication reflects experience and knowledge accumulation and can effectively change thoughts and behavior. The content of communication can either reinforce gender inequality or promote gender equality. Through communication, individuals share their emotions and thoughts, engaging in mutual interaction, and as a result of these interactions, they can reshape both their perspectives and those of others. Gender discrimination and stereotypes lead to discrimination and gender inequality. Communication that aligns with ethical values and is free of gender bias increases trust and respect, thus forming an essential foundation for effective communication. This study aims to determine students' attitudes toward interpersonal communication and gender roles in the Department of Public Relations and Advertising. Research results reveal that interpersonal communication has a positive impact on gender perspectives. As interpersonal communication strengthens, positive attitudes towards gender roles increase. Moreover, there is no significant difference between gender and perspectives on gender roles. The view of gender roles is similar between men and women and does not vary significantly by gender. This study is expected to provide valuable insights for future research in related fields.

Keywords: *Communication, Interpersonal Communication, Gender, Equality, Gender Equality*

Öz

İnsanlar, duygu, düşünce, inanç ve davranışlarını sözlü, yazılı ve sözsüz yollarla aktararak iletişim kurar. Bu iletişim, bireyler, kuruluşlar ve toplumlar arasında etkileşim ve bilgi paylaşımını sağlar ve aynı zamanda insanın toplumsallaşma sürecinde önemli bir rol oynar. İletişim, kişinin deneyim ve bilgi birikiminin bir yansımasıdır ve düşünce ile davranışların değişiminde etkili olabilir. İletişim sayesinde bireyler, duygu ve düşüncelerini paylaşarak karşılıklı etkileşimde bulunur ve bu etkileşimler sonucunda da hem kendi bakış açılarını hem de başkalarının bakış açılarını yeniden şekillendirebilirler. İletişim içeriği, cinsiyet eşitsizliğini güçlendirebilir veya toplumsal cinsiyet eşitliğini teşvik edebilir. Cinsiyet ayrımcılığı ve stereotipler, ayrımcılığa ve toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizliğine neden olur. Etik değerlere uygun ve cinsiyetçi olmayan bir iletişim, güven ve saygıyı artırır, bu nedenle etkili iletişim için önemli bir temel oluşturur. Bu çalışma, Halkla İlişkiler ve Tanıtım Bölümü'nde öğrenim gören öğrencilerin kişilerarası iletişime bakış açılarıyla toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine ilişkin tutumlarını belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma sonuçları, kişilerarası iletişimin toplumsal cinsiyet perspektifleri üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Kişilerarası iletişim güçlendikçe toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine yönelik olumlu tutumlar artmaktadır. Ayrıca, cinsiyet ile toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine bakış açısı arasında anlamlı bir fark yoktur. Toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine bakış kadın ve erkekler arasında benzerdir ve cinsiyete göre anlamlı bir farklılık göstermemektedir. Bu çalışmanın, ilgili alanlarda gelecekte yapılacak araştırmalar için değerli bilgiler sağlaması beklenmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İletişim, Kişilerarası İletişim, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Eşitlik, Cinsiyet Eşitliği*

Introduction

One of the most important factors in transforming a human from a biological being into a social being is the ability to communicate. People spend a significant portion of their time and energy establishing and maintaining relationships with others. Berelson and Steiner (1964) defined communication as the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, and skills through symbols, while Gerbner (1972) defined communication as social interaction through messages. These two definitions of communication encompass two different approaches to the concept of communication. The first approach addresses the transmission aspect of the communication process, explaining how an idea, emotion, or attitude is transferred from one person to another through the sender-message-channel-receiver linear model. The other approach emphasizes elements such as reciprocity, mutual perception, and sharing (Mutlu, 2008, pp.141-142). Communication, which is the process of producing, transmitting, and perceiving information, arises from the need for individuals to express themselves and be heard. Communication has also been defined as the conscious transfer of a message from the source to the target with the aim of creating an effect and consequently causing a behavior (Tutar and Yilmaz, 2003, pp. 5-7). Linguistic style is a person's unique way of speaking. Linguistic style is described through a series of culturally learned signals. In all communities known to linguists, the patterns that constitute linguistic style show relative differences for men and women. What is natural for most men speaking a particular language can be different from what is natural for most women in some situations. In this respect, men and women often use different ways to say what they want to say out of habit; therefore, their mutual conversations resemble intercultural communication (Tannen, 2011, pp. 68-69).

Communication is integral to the construction, perpetuation, and transformation of gender roles. It serves as a mechanism through which disparities and inequalities between individuals and social groups are formed and maintained. However, due to its dynamic nature, communication also offers the potential for social change. Therefore, its central role in the analysis of gender is significant in academic discourse (Palczewski et al., 2019, p. 60). In educational institutions, both genders face systemic challenges, expectations, and biases rooted in gender constructs. At the collegiate level, peer cultures often perpetuate traditional gender norms, constraining both personal and professional development. Despite advancements in mitigating discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity, gendered dynamics continue to shape experiences across all levels of education, affecting both students and faculty (Fixmer-Oraiz and Wood, 2019, p. 171).

This study has the potential to significantly contribute to our understanding of these crucial issues by measuring the level of interpersonal communication and perspectives on gender equality among students in the Department of Public Relations. The research was conducted using the online survey technique with the quantitative data collection method. It was based on voluntary participation, and no questions requiring personal information were asked. The survey was prepared based on Zeyneloglu's (2008) 'Attitude Scale for Gender Roles" (ASGR) questions and tested the relationship with gender roles using Campbell and Akdemir's (2016) Interpersonal Communication Scale. The findings of this study could potentially inform and shape future strategies and policies in the field of public relations and advertising, making it a highly relevant and impactful area of research for all stakeholders.

1. Interpersonal Communication

Human relations encompass interactions, connections, collaborative efforts, and group relationships. Communication is at the core of human relations and enables individuals to understand themselves and others. Therefore, communication is the connection of people (Reece & Reece, 2018, pp.15). Communication is transferring information or understanding from one person to another. It includes the processes of generating, transmitting, and perceiving information. Communication is a system forming

the foundation of society, a tool facilitating the functioning of organizational structures, a technique influencing individual behavior, and an art necessary for social harmony (Tutar & Yılmaz, 2003, p.5). According to Gerbner (1972), communication is social interaction through messages, while Rogers and Kincaid (1981) define it as a process where participants create information and share it to reach mutual understanding (Mutlu, 2008, p.141). Among the definitions of communication, two approaches stand out. The first emphasizes the transmission aspect of the communication process, highlighting how an idea, emotion, or attitude is conveyed. At the same time, the other approach focuses on elements such as reciprocity, mutual perception, and sharing (Mutlu, 2008, pp.141-142).

Communication activities can be categorized as personal, interpersonal, group, or organizational communication. People use personal communication the most to sustain daily life (Tutar & Yılmaz, 2003, p.53). Interpersonal communication is where individuals convey messages to each other using words and body language. This can occur face-to-face or through a tool such as a telephone. It is a form of communication that creates a high feedback opportunity (Görpe, 2001, p. 52). Tubbs and Moss (1974) stated that three criteria are necessary for communication to be considered "interpersonal communication":

- Participants in interpersonal communication must be face-to-face within a certain proximity.
- There must be a mutual exchange of messages between participants, not one-way.
- The messages in question should be verbal and non-verbal; communications other than these two types, such as written correspondence, are not considered interpersonal communication (Dökmen, 2001, p. 24).

In societies composed of individuals who lack the ability to speak and discuss, people do not fully understand how to approach each other and do not develop the ability to solve problems through dialogue. Conflict, friction and chaos therefore arise, preventing the development and progress of society (Işık, 2008, p. 11). Based on this, it can be said that effective communication methods can contribute to the formation of concepts such as a sense of equality, mutual understanding, and tolerance in people.

2. Gender Equality in Communication

Every society has socio-cultural values that distinguish between men and women and define their societal roles. These values dictate how men and women should behave and what their responsibilities are. Gender roles are the attitudes and behavior expected by society from individuals, and each individual is expected to act according to these roles (Saraç, 2013, p. 27). Gender refers to the relationship between women and men within the framework of socially and culturally constructed roles and responsibilities. These roles and responsibilities are culturally determined rather than a result of the natural division of labor and can change over time (Aksoy, 2006, p. 29).

It is thought that the emergence of the patriarchal order and language occurred at the same time, and therefore they influenced each other. Men's dominance in the public sphere socially led to the development of language in favor of men. As culture became more masculine, language also became more masculine. This situation is addressed in feminist studies and linguistic research with the concept of 'sexist language.' Sexist language is defined as a set of expressions that reflect men and women unequally and exclude women, and it is stated to be more effective against women (Guden, 2006, pp. 18-19). Based on the assumption that some professions, words, and expressions are exclusively for men, it is necessary to avoid expressions that marginalize women by unnecessarily emphasizing 'woman' before such words. Examples include woman prime minister, woman manager, woman parliamentarian, woman writer, and woman journalist (O'Neil et al., 2017, p. 2).

Gender stereotypes are among the strongest prejudices that cause gender inequality in society. Stereotypes lead to prejudices, and prejudices lead to discrimination. Discrimination is the behavioral

expression of prejudices and stereotypes (Saraç, 2013, p. 28). Gender stereotypes in communication are observed in four principal areas: character, physical attributes, roles, and professions. Men are typically represented as aggressive, competitive, and assertive, while women are portrayed as passive, cooperative, and shy. Men are depicted as the breadwinners, while women are shown as the mother/wife who cares for the family. Physical attributes and professions are also coded according to gender stereotypes (Koç Holding, 2017, p. 10). Women are expected to be more involved with their children, spouses, and household chores, to be dependent on men, emotionally quiet, calm, self-sacrificing, patient, understanding, and sensitive, while men are expected to provide for their families, establish external connections, perform physically demanding tasks such as repairs, protect and care for their spouses and children, and be emotionally stronger, brave, tough, and logical. These expectations are defined as gender stereotypes (Sarac, 2013, p. 28). However, discussing gender relations solely in terms of women's oppression and subjugation is not sufficient to analyze the ideological determination, mutual interaction, and power relations within the structure of gender roles. Moreover, it is also insufficient to identify this network of relationships (Akca and Tonel, 2011, p. 11).

Gender bias (sexism) refers to discrimination based on gender. When employers make hiring, promotion, assignment, and compensation decisions based on a person's gender, human relations and productivity will suffer (Reece & Reece, 2018, p. 352). Gender bias acts as a filter that hinders effective communication between people. These communication barriers are tied to language style. Language style includes features such as whether a person speaks directly or indirectly, quickly or with pauses, their choice of words, and their use of elements like jokes, metaphors, questions, and apologies. Language style is a set of culturally learned signals to convey what we want to communicate (Reece & Reece, 2018, p. 368). Visual, verbal, and written language set the boundaries of thoughts and behavior. It is possible to manage the change in thoughts and behavior by

controlling the content of these communication tools. The visual, verbal, and written language used has the power to reinforce and reproduce gender inequality, as well as the potential to embed gender equality in society (Koç Holding, 2017, p. 7).

Gender, culture, and communication are intrinsically interconnected, making it challenging to comprehend any one of these concepts in isolation from the others. While sex is a biological classification, gender is a socially constructed concept expressed through cultural norms and expectations. Gender identity refers to an individual's internal self-perception, gender expression is the external manifestation of this identity, and gender roles reflect societal expectations associated with a person's perceived gender. Sex and gender may not be the same for every individual (Fixmer-Oraiz and Wood, 2019, p. 19). Examining gendered forms of communication in education is necessary because education affects identity formation, self-esteem, gender and determination. First, the ways of gendering should be made visible by exploring information politics and biases in education. Next, examine elements such as teacher stereotypes, microaggressions, peer pressure and gender-based violence. Finally, it is necessary to explore the emancipatory potential of education at the micro and macro levels through teaching changes and legislation (Palczewski et al., 2019, p. 251). The conceptualization of gender has sparked significant debates in the social sciences, with Judith Lorber asserting that gender operates as a social institution categorizing individuals as "women" and "men." This viewpoint emphasizes that gender extends beyond biological distinctions, being deeply shaped by social and cultural contexts. As a dynamic construct, gender influences individual behaviors, attitudes, and identities, acting as a relational and variable framework for analyzing issues such as unequal gender hierarchies and gender-based violence. This structural approach enhances the understanding of how gender identities and expressions are negotiated in interpersonal interactions and how social norms are perpetuated. To fully grasp gender's complexities,

it is essential to look beyond individual identities and consider the broader social structures and power dynamics involved (Alıcı and Daşlı, 2019, pp. 35-36).

3. A Study on Public Relations and Advertising Students

There are 992 students in the Erciyes University Communication Faculty Department of Public Relations and Advertising, divided as follows: 239 first-year students, 241 second-year students, 218 third-year students, and 294 fourth-year students.

3.2. Method

The Ethics Committee of the Social and Humanities Sciences at Erciyes University approved the study, application number 132, on March 26, 2024, and granted permission for its implementation. The study employed a quantitative data collection method, utilizing an online survey technique. The research was conducted voluntarily, and no personal information such as addresses or identity details was required. The research was conducted in April 2024 at the Faculty of Communication building.

Table 1. Number of Students in the Department of Public Relations and Advertising

	First-Year Male Students	First-Year Female Students	Second-Year Male Students	Second-Year Female Students	Third-Year Male Students	Third-Year Female Students	Fourth-Year Male Students	Fourth-Year Female Students	Total
Public Relations and Advertising Regular Education	43	60	32	63	32	66	40	86	422
Public Relations and Advertising Evening Education	47	45	45	54	35	44	77	61	408
Public Relations and Advertising Distance Education	20	24	27	20	23	18	16	14	162

research was conducted via an internet link, and 321 students from the Department of Public Relations, Erciyes University Faculty of Communication participated in the study.

3.1. Objective

This research aims to evaluate the interpersonal communication levels of students in the Department of Public Relations and their views on gender equality, as well as the connection between these two factors. The hypotheses of the study are as follows:

H1: Interpersonal communication is influenced by gender.

H2: There is a significant difference between gender and interpersonal communication.

H2a: There is a significant difference between gender and perspectives on gender equality.

All students attending courses in the Public Relations department were asked whether they would like to participate in the research. The department's medium of instruction is Turkish, so the research was also conducted in Turkish. The survey questions were developed using the "Gender Roles Attitude Scale" (GRAS) created by Zeyneloğlu (2008) to determine students' attitudes towards gender roles. The relationships between these attitudes and interpersonal communication were tested using the Interpersonal Communication Scale developed by Campbell and Akdemir (2016). Necessary permissions were obtained for the use of the scales.

3.3. Findings

In the study, the independent variables are gender, age, class, and type of education. To conduct hypothesis tests and chi-square analyses, it was ensured that the number of participants (N) in each group met the minimum requirement for

representation. Specifically, each group had at least 20 participants.

Table 2. Personal Information

		Number	Percent
Gender	Female	225	70,1
	Male	96	29,9
Date of Birth	Born in 2000 and Before,	72	22,4
	Born in 2001-2002	121	37,7
	Born in 2003-2004	107	33,3
	Born in 2005	21	6,5
Total		321	100,0

70.1% of the participants are female, and 29.9% are male. Regarding age distribution, 22.4% were born in 2000 or earlier, 37.7% were born in 2001-2002, 33.3% were born in 2003-2004, and 6.5% were born in 2005.

Table 3. Educational Information

		Number	Percent
	First-Year	112	34,9
	Second-Year	72	22,4
	Third-Year	73	22,7
Year	Fourth-Year	64	19,9
Type of Education	Regular Education	164	51,1
	Evening Education	123	38,3
	Distance Education	34	10,6
Total		321	100,0

Regarding the distribution of participants by type of education, 51.1% are enrolled in regular education, 38.3% in evening education, and 10.6% in distance education. The distribution by class level is as follows: 34.9% are first-year students, 22.4% are second-year students, 22.7% are third-year students, and 19.9% are fourth-year students.

Table 4. Research Scale

| 5	**Strongly Agree**	Indicates disagreement and dissatisfaction.
4	**Agree**	
3	**Undecided**	Indicates partial agreement, and scores above 3 represent participation and are considered positive.
2	**Disagree**	Indicates participation and elevated levels of participation and is interpreted as positive.
1	**Strongly Disagree**	

A 5-point Likert scale was used in the research, and the scale values are as follows.

Table 5. Scale Participation Levels and Reliability

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
S1 - I encourage people in my social environment to understand their feelings.	321	4,03	0,827
S2 - My friends say that it is easy to communicate with me.	321	3,93	1,021
S3 - Even people I haven't met find it easy to communicate with me.	321	3,75	1,069
S4 - My friends say that I am a good listener.	321	4,31	0,815
S5 - I enjoy being honest with others about my thoughts and feelings.	321	4,22	0,938
S6 - I have an unwavering belief that communication will increase productivity.	321	4,36	0,810
S7 - I like to use examples to make my communication process more transparent.	321	4,28	0,824
S8 - Girls should be able to live separately from their families when they gain economic independence.	321	4,12	1,051
S9 - A man's every word should be followed in the household.	321	1,55	0,843
S10 - The professions women pursue should differ from those men pursue.	321	2,24	1,162
S11 - A woman's value is increased by having two children.	321	1,41	0,894
S12 - Household chores should be equally shared between spouses.	321	4,51	0,891
S13 - A woman's husband should make decisions regarding her life.	321	1,47	0,862
S14 - In marriage, the man's level of education should be higher than the woman's.	321	1,84	1,064
S15 - Both girls and boys should benefit equally from the family's financial resources.	321	4,64	0,859
S16 - The teachers at my schools treated everyone equally, regardless of gender (female/male).	321	3,59	1,272
S17 - The administrators at my schools treated everyone equally, regardless of gender (female/male).	321	3,55	1,259
S18 - My friends at the schools I attended treated everyone equally, regardless of gender (female/male).	321	3,38	1,269
S19 - I can step outside the roles assigned to me by society based on gender (female/male).	321	3,74	1,122

When examining the scale averages, items 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14 have been perceived as negative statements and carry meanings contrary to the general framework.

Table 6. Scale Chart
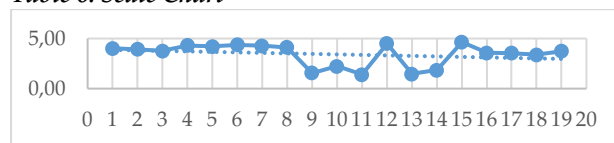
Following the initial scale scores, a crucial step was taken to reverse the scores. This process, detailed in Table 7, was essential for conducting subsequent analyses based on these adjusted

scores, ensuring a comprehensive and accurate evaluation.

Table 7. Adjusted Scale Participation Levels and Reliability

	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
S1 - I encourage those in my social environment to understand their feelings.	321	4,03	0,827
S2 - My friends say that it is easy to communicate with me.	321	3,93	1,021
S3 - Even people I don't know find it easy to communicate with me.	321	3,75	1,069
S4 - My friends say that I am a good listener.	321	4,31	0,815
S5 - I enjoy being honest with others about my thoughts and feelings.	321	4,22	0,938
S6 - I have an unwavering belief that communication will increase productivity.	321	4,36	0,810
S7 - I like to use examples to make my communication process more transparent.	321	4,28	0,824
S8 - Girls should be able to live separately from their families when they gain economic independence.	321	4,12	1,051
S9 - A man's every word should be followed in the household. (Reverse: Joint decision)	321	4,45	0,843
S10 - The professions women pursue should differ from those men pursue. (Reverse: They can be the same)	321	3,76	1,162
S11 - A woman's value is increased by having two children. (Reverse: I disagree with this statement)	321	4,59	0,894
S12 - Household chores should be equally shared between spouses.	321	4,51	0,891
S13 - A woman's husband should make decisions regarding her life. (Reverse: The woman herself should make the decisions)	321	4,53	0,862
S14 - In marriage, the man's level of education should be higher than the woman's. (Reverse: It should be equal)	321	4,16	1,064
S15 - Both girls and boys should benefit equally from the family's financial resources.	321	4,64	0,859
S16 - The teachers at my schools treated everyone equally, regardless of gender (female/male).	321	3,59	1,272
S17 - The administrators at my schools treated everyone equally, regardless of gender (female/male).	321	3,55	1,259
S18 - My friends at the schools I attended treated everyone equally, regardless of gender (female/male).	321	3,38	1,269
S19 - I can step outside the roles assigned to me by society based on gender (female/male).	321	3,74	1,122

The scores in the statements have been reversed, and the scale statements have been adjusted to be interpreted similarly to the other statements.

Table 8. New Scale Chart
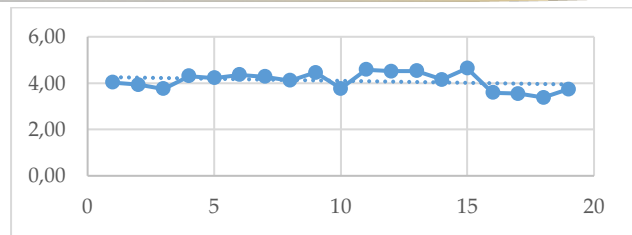
The study utilized two distinct scales: the first to measure interpersonal communication and the respondent's agreement with self-descriptive statements, and the second to assess gender equality. With the first scale comprising seven items and the second 12, this design allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the research topics. When calculating the Cronbach's Alpha for scale scores:

If $0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$, the scale is considered unreliable. If $0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$, the scale has low reliability. If $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$, the scale is quite reliable. If $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$, the scale is highly reliable.

Table 9. Interpersonal Communication Scale

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,747	,751	7

In the Interpersonal Communication Scale, Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.74, indicating that the scale is reliable and sufficient for measuring the current situation.

Table 10. Interpersonal Communication Scale Items

|	Mean
S6 - I have an endless belief that communication will increase productivity.	4,36
S4 - My friends say that I am a good listener.	4,31
S7 - I like to use examples to make my communication process understandable.	4,28
S5 - I enjoy being honest with others about my thoughts and feelings.	4,22
S1 - I encourage people in my social environment to understand their feelings.	4,03
S2 - My friends say that it is easy to communicate with me.	3,93
S3 - Even people I haven't met find it easy to communicate with me.	3,75
Average Participation Score for the Interpersonal Communication Scale	4,13

The statements and values related to the Interpersonal Communication Scale are outlined in the table above. The interpersonal

communication scale consists of seven items, with an average participation score of 4.13, which falls between '4 Agree' and '5 Strongly Agree,' indicating a very high level of participation. When we examine the scale items, the highest participation is 4.36 for the statement 'I have complete faith that communication will increase productivity,' showing the importance of communication and the high agreement of participants with this statement.

When we examine the scale items in order, the second highest participation is 4.31 for the statement 'My friends tell me that I am a good listener,' indicating a positive external perspective on individuals and the importance of listening in communication. The third highest participation is 4.28 for the statement 'I like to use examples to make my communication process clear,' showing that participants place great importance on exemplification in communication and frequently prefer to use examples in their communication activities.

The fourth highest participation is 4.22 for the statement 'I like to be honest with others about my thoughts and feelings,' showing the importance of being honest with others about thoughts and feelings and indicating that participants express their thoughts and feelings honestly in their communication.

Table 11. Interpersonal Communication Level
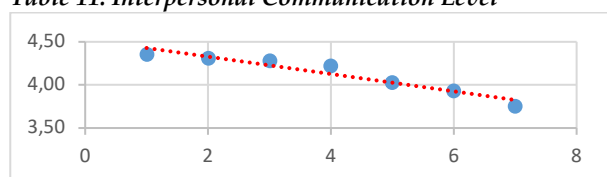
The proportions related to participants' interpersonal communication levels are shown in Table 11. The fifth highest participation is 4.03 for the statement 'I encourage my social circle to understand what they are feeling,' showing the high importance of social environment and communication with the social environment in communication.

The sixth highest participation is 3.93 for the statement 'My friends tell me that it is easy to communicate with me,' with a participation level

below 4 but between partial agreement and agreement.

The item with the lowest participation level in the table is 3.75 for the statement 'Even people I have not met do not have difficulty communicating with me, ' indicating that the difficulty of communicating with people they have not met has the lowest score among the scale items but is above partial agreement. The scale score close to agree indicates that the most important issue to be developed in communication experts is communication techniques with people they have not met.

Table 12. Gender Scale Statements

| Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
,744	,759	12

In our Gender Scale, Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.74, indicating that the scale is reliable and sufficient for measuring the current status.

Table 13. Gender Scale Level

	Mean
S15 - The family's financial resources should be equally available to both male and female children.	4,64
S11 - A woman's value increases if she has 2 children. (I disagree with this statement)	4,59
S13 - Her husband should make decisions about a woman's life. (The woman herself should make the decisions)	4,53
S12 - Household chores should be equally shared between spouses.	4,51
S9 - A man's every command should be followed at home. (It should be a joint decision)	4,45
S14 - In marriage, the man's level of education should be higher than the woman's. (It should be equal)	4,16
S8 - Girls should be able to live separately from their families once they gain economic independence.	4,12
S10 - The professions that women and men can pursue should be different. (They can be the same)	3,76
S19 - I can step outside the roles that society assigns based on gender (male/female).	3,74
S16 - Teachers at my schools treated everyone equally regardless of gender (male/female).	3,59
S17 - Administrators at my schools treated everyone equally regardless of gender (male/female).	3,55
S18 - My classmates at my schools treated everyone equally regardless of gender (male/female).	3,38
Average Participation in Gender Scale	4,08

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The statements and values related to the Gender Scale are specified in the table above. The statements and values related to the gender scale are indicated in the table above. The scale consists of twelve items, with an average participation score of 4.08. The highest score on the scale is 4.64 for the statement 'Both boys and girls should equally benefit from the family's financial resources' and the lowest participation score is 3.38 for the statement 'My friends at the schools I attended treated everyone equally regardless of gender (female/male).'

Table 14. Gender Scale Levels
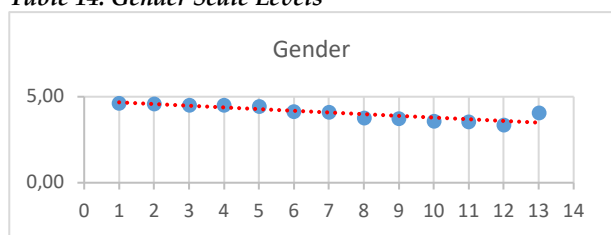
Participants' gender equality levels are shown in Table 14. The average participation score of the gender scale is 4.08. Among the statements above the average, the highest participation is 4.64 for the statement 'Both boys and girls should equally benefit from the family's financial resources' followed by 4.59 for the statement 'A woman's value increases with having 2 children (reverse statement).' This item is taken in reverse, showing that there is no relationship between a woman's value and having children. The participation level for this statement, taken in reverse, is 0.41. The third highest participation is 4.53 for the statement 'Decisions about a woman's life should be made by her husband (reverse statement).' The participation level for this statement is 0.47, and when the scale is reversed positively, it shows that participants do not agree with the statement that decisions about a woman's life should be made by her husband, with a high participation level of 4.53.

The fourth highest participation score is 4.51 for the statement 'Household chores should be equally shared between spouses,' indicating a high level of participation. The fifth highest participation is 4.45 for the statement 'Everything a man says at home should be done,' with a participation level of 0.55.

When the scale is reversed, the participation score for the statement 'There should be equality between men and women at home' is 4.45.

When we look at the sixth and seventh items with the same score as the average, the sixth item is 'The educational level of the man should be higher than that of the woman in marriage' with a participation level of 0.84, indicating that there is no importance in one side being superior or equal in the educational level of men and women, with a participation score of 4.16. The seventh item is 'Girls should be able to live independently from their families when they gain economic independence,' with a participation level of 4.12.

There are five items with participation levels below the average, with the eighth item being 'The professions that women and men will do should be different (they can be the same)" with a participation level of 3.76. This is a reverse item, and the participation level for the statement 'The professions of men and women can be the same' is 3.76. The ninth item is "I can go beyond the roles that society assigns to me based on gender (female/male)' with a participation score of 3.74. The tenth item is 'The teachers at the schools I attended treated everyone equally regardless of gender (female/male)' with a participation score of 3.59, which is below the expected level and falls between partial agreement and agreement. The eleventh item is 'The administrators at the schools I attended treated everyone equally regardless of gender (female/male)' with a participation level of 3.55. The last item is 'My friends at the schools I attended treated everyone equally regardless of gender (female/male)' with a participation score of 3.38. The last three items with the lowest participation scores in the gender scale reflect the experiences and observations of the participants during their educational processes. The participation scores regarding gender discrimination by teachers, administrators, and friends at the schools they attended range between 3 and 4, closer to partial agreement.

Table 15. Gender Equality Levels

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		,707
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	472,036
	Df	15
	Sig.	,000

The KMO Bartlett test suitability value is 0.70 (above 0.60), and the Sig value is less than 0.05, indicating that factor analysis is appropriate.

increase productivity,' 'I like to be honest with others about my thoughts and feelings,' 'I like to use examples to make my communication process clear,' and 'My friends tell me that I am a good

Table 16. Total Variance Explained by the Interpersonal Communication Scale

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a]
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	2,626	43,774	43,774	2,626	43,774	43,774	2,405
2	1,236	20,598	64,372	1,236	20,598	64,372	1,861
3	,764	12,736	77,108				
4	,563	9,390	86,498				
5	,455	7,590	94,088				
6	,355	5,912	100,000				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.

When we look at the factor analysis, the interpersonal participation scale, which originally consisted of seven items, was reduced to six items as a result of the analysis and consists of two factors.

Table 17. Interpersonal Communication Scale Pattern Matrix[a]

	Component	
	1	2
S6 - I have an unwavering belief that communication increases productivity.	,807	
S5 - I enjoy being honest with others about my thoughts and feelings.	,762	
S7 - I like using examples to make my communication process clear.	,708	
S4 - My friends say that I am a good listener.	,695	
S3 - Even people I haven't met find it easy to communicate with me.		,927
S2 - My friends say that it is easy to communicate with me.		,869

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

The first factor of the scale includes the items: 'I have complete faith that communication will

listener." The second factor of the scale consists of two items: "Even people I have not met do not have difficulty communicating with me," and "My friends tell me that it is easy to communicate with me."

Initial Eigenvalues indicate that there are two factors with values above 1. In factor analysis, an explanation of more than 50% is expected. With two factors, our scale explains 64% after removing the 1st item from the scale. After removing item 1 from the scale, factor analysis was performed again because it loaded on both factors.

Table 18. Gender Equality Scale KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		,750
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1491,519
	Df	55
	Sig.	,000

The KMO Barlett test suitability value is 0.75 (above 0.60), and the Sig value is less than 0.05, making it suitable for factor analysis.

Initial Eigenvalues consist of 3 factors above 1. In factor analysis, it is expected to explain over

Table 19. Gender Equality Scale Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings[a]
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	3,269	29,719	29,719	3,269	29,719	29,719	3,034
2	2,619	23,809	53,528	2,619	23,809	53,528	2,609
3	1,150	10,450	63,978	1,150	10,450	63,978	2,095
4	,855	7,772	71,750				
5	,720	6,542	78,292				
6	,666	6,058	84,350				
7	,544	4,949	89,299				
8	,480	4,362	93,661				
9	,324	2,947	96,608				
10	,281	2,554	99,162				
11	,092	,838	100,000				

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
a. When components are correlated, sums of squared loadings cannot be added to obtain a total variance.

50%, and with 3 factors, our scale explains 63.9%. When we look at the factor analysis results of the gender scale, we see that it consists of eleven items and three factors.

The items of the first factor consist of 5 items: 'Decisions about a woman's life should be made by her husband,' 'A woman's value increases with having 2 children,' 'Everything a man says at home should be done,' 'The educational level of the man should be higher than that of the woman in marriage,' and 'The professions that women and men will do should be different.' These items are reverse statements and are fundamentally aimed at measuring the level of gender equality, grouped under the same factor load.

Table 20. Gender Roles Scale Pattern Matrix[a]

	Component		
	1	2	3
S13 - A woman's husband should make decisions about her life.	,863		
S11 - A woman's value increases if she gives birth to 2 children.	,849		
S9 - Everything a man says should be done at home.	,686		
S14 - A man's education level should be higher than a woman's in marriage.	,676		
S10 - The professions that a woman and a man will pursue should be different.	,481		
S16 - The teachers at the schools I attended treated everyone equally without gender (female/male) discrimination.		,945	
S17 - The administrators at the schools I attended treated everyone equally without gender (female/male) discrimination.		,945	
S18 - The friends at the schools I attended treated everyone equally without gender (female/male) discrimination.		,873	
S8 - Girls should be able to live separately from their families when they achieve economic independence.			,838
S19 - I can break free from the roles that society assigns to me based on gender (female/male).			,774
S12 - Household chores should be shared equally between spouses.			,487

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

The items of the second factor consist of three items: 'The teachers at the schools I attended treated everyone equally regardless of gender,'

'The administrators at the schools I attended treated everyone equally regardless of gender,' and 'My friends at the schools I attended treated everyone equally regardless of gender.' When we examine the sub-items of the factor, we see that individuals consider their educational, administrative, and friendship relationships in terms of gender throughout their educational process.

The items of the third factor consist of three items: 'Girls should be able to live independently from their families when they gain economic independence,' 'I can go beyond the roles that society assigns to me based on gender,' and 'Household chores should be equally shared between spouses.' When we look at the sub-items of the factor, we see that the roles and task distributions of men and women in society and economic independence are grouped under one factor.

Table 21. Communication and Gender Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Communication	4,1268	,57087	321
Gender	3,0026	,42644	321

In the factor analysis, item 15 was removed because it had high loadings on two scales.

Table 22. Correlations

		Communication	Gender
r	Communication	1,000	,304
	Gender	,304	1,000
p	Communication	.	,000
	Gender	,000	.
N	Communication	321	321
	Gender	321	321

A regression analysis was conducted to measure whether interpersonal communication affects gender views. There is a meaningful relationship between interpersonal communication and views on gender.

The Sig value (p=0.00) is less than 0.05,

Table 23. Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	SSig.	95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	T Tolerance	VIF
Constant	2,905	,217		13,415 ,000	2,479	3,331					
Com	,407	,071	,304	5,699 ,000	,266	,547	,304	,304	,304	1,000	1,000

a. Dependent Variable: Communication

indicating that interpersonal communication positively affects gender views.

As interpersonal communication improves, the positive perception of gender views increases.

Table 24. Group Statistics for Communication and Sex

	D3-Your Gender:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Communi cation	Female	225	4,1930	,46598	,03107
	Male	96	3,9717	,74234	,07576

There is a significant difference between gender and interpersonal communication. Hypothesis H2 is accepted.

Table 25. Independent Samples Test for H1

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	12,530	,000	3,226	319	,001	,22129	,06859	,08634	,35624
Equal variances not assumed			2,702	128,092	,008	,22129	,08189	,05926	,38331

The homogeneity test is less than 0.05 with p < 0.05 (sig2 tiled 0.008), indicating a significant difference in interpersonal communication between genders. According to the group statistics table, the participation rate in interpersonal communication is 4.1 for women and 3.9 for men. Therefore, Hypothesis H1 is accepted.

Table 26. Group Statistics for Gender and Sex

	D3-Your Gender:	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean
Gender	Female	225	3,0241	,39191	,02613
	Male	96	2,9523	,49674	,05070

There is a significant difference between gender and views on gender roles.

Table 27. Independent Samples Test for H2a

gender	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	4 ,108	,044	1,383	319	,167	,07182	,05191	-,03032	,17395
Equal variances not assumed			1,259	147,742	,210	,07182	,05703	-,04089	,18453

A significance value of less than 0.05 indicates a homogenous distribution. However, because P > 0.05 (sig2 tiled = 0.21), there is no significant difference between gender and views on gender roles. Views on gender roles do not vary according to gender and exhibit similar characteristics for both women and men. Hypothesis H2a is rejected.

Conclusion

Human relationships encompass interaction and cooperation, with communication central to these relationships. Interpersonal communication is a process involving mutual exchange of messages and feedback. Effective communication is hampered in societies where speaking and discussion skills are underdeveloped, complicating problem-solving and creating chaos.

Effective communication methods contribute to developing concepts such as equality, understanding, and tolerance. Socio-cultural values that distinguish between men and women in societies determine gender roles and expect individuals to behave according to these roles. Gender roles are socially and culturally constructed responsibilities that can change over time. Gender stereotypes lead to gender inequality and discrimination, manifesting in character, physical attributes, roles, and professions. Gender bias affects human relationships and productivity negatively. Language styles and communication tools can reinforce or promote gender equality. The study conducted on Public Relations Department students aimed to identify levels of interpersonal communication, perspectives on gender equality, and the relationship between these two factors.

The studies in the literature generally focus on gender perceptions, and this study is significant because it addresses both gender perceptions and interpersonal communication skills together. A

similar study was conducted to examine the effect of role-playing scenarios on university students' gender perceptions and their awareness of conflict and violence. The population of the study, which was conducted using a quasi-experimental model, consisted of 246 students enrolled in the Women's Health and Diseases Nursing course at a Faculty of Nursing during the 2018-2019 academic year. No sampling method was used, and all students in the population were included in the study. The final sample consisted of 187 students who agreed to participate. Data were collected using the Personal Information Form, the Gender Perception Scale, and the Conflict and Violence Awareness Scale. The study concluded that role-playing scenarios had no significant effect on students' gender perceptions or their awareness of conflict and violence (Kılınç et al., 2021, p. 65).

In this study, 70.1% of the participants were female and 29.9% were male. Two scales were used: one measuring interpersonal communication and personal statements and the other assessing gender roles. The first scale consists of 7 items, while the second scale comprises 12 items. Hypotheses were tested, and the following results were obtained: H1: Interpersonal communication influences gender perspective.

Results: Hypothesis H1 is accepted. Interpersonal communication has a positive effect on gender perspective. H2: There is a significant difference between gender and interpersonal communication.

Result: A significant difference has been found between gender and interpersonal communication. H2a: A significant difference exists between gender and perspectives on gender roles.

Result: Hypothesis H2a is rejected. No significant difference was found between gender and perspectives on gender roles. Women and men view gender roles similarly.

Thus, interpersonal communication has a positive effect on gender perspectives. As interpersonal communication strengthens, positive views on gender roles increase. There is no significant difference between gender and perspectives on gender roles. Perspectives on gender roles do not vary by gender and are similar for both women and men. This study is anticipated to contribute to future research in similar areas.

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