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## Development of Maternal Gatekeeping Scale for Mothers with Preschool Aged Children

*Okul Öncesi Dönemde Çocuğu Olan Annelere Yönelik Babasavar Annelik Ölçeği'nin Geliştirilmesi*

Özlem DÖNMEZ<sup>1</sup> | Ozana URAL<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

Family is the first social group in which a child interacts. Both mothers and fathers have an impact on the development of children. However, the involvement of the mother and father in the child's life varies according to the roles culturally attributed to motherhood and fatherhood and the interaction between the spouses. The aim of the research is to develop a valid and reliable measuring instrument to investigate the maternal gatekeeping of mothers and examine maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers according to demographic variables. In this research

### Öz

Aile çocuğun etkileşime geçtiği ilk sosyal gruptur. Çocuğun gelişimini desteklemede hem annelerin hem babaların kritik etkisi bulunmaktadır. Ancak anne ve babanın çocuğun yaşamına katılımı kültürel olarak anne ve babalığa atfedilen rollere ve eşlerin birbiri ile olan etkileşimine göre farklılık göstermektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, annelerin babasavarlık düzeylerini belirlemeye yönelik geçerli ve güvenilir bir ölçme aracı geliştirmek ve demografik değişkenlere göre babasavar annelik düzeylerini incelemektir. Bu kapsamda

<sup>1</sup> Özlem DÖNMEZ, Dr. Öğr. Üyesi, Trakya Üniversitesi, Temel Eğitim Bölümü, ozlemdonmez@trakya.edu.tr, 0000-0003-3881-3448

<sup>2</sup> Ozana URAL, Prof. Dr., Marmara Üniversitesi, Temel Eğitim Bölümü, oural@marmara.edu.tr, 0000-0001-7627-5236

“Relational Screening Modal” was used. The sample of the research was randomly selected 524 mothers of 36-72 from 24 preschools of 6 districts. The data was collected via “Maternal Gatekeeping Scale” and “Family Information Form” developed within the study. Reliability and validity analysis of the scale were conducted, and it is seen that the scale is comprised of 5 sub-scales and 57 items. As the results of the comparison tests, there are differences found according to duration of maternal care, mothers’ working status, working hours, education levels, ages, fathers’ working hours, education levels, whether there is a support in childcare, number of children, school type, and duration of marriage. The results of the study were discussed considering the relevant literature.

**Keywords:** *Scale development, preschool, maternal gatekeeping, parental interaction behaviors*

“İlişkisel Tarama Modeli” kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın örneklemini 24 anaokulu ve 6 farklı ilçeden okul öncesi eğitime devam eden çocuğu olan 524 annedir. Veriler, bu çalışma kapsamında geliştirilen “Babasavar Annelik Ölçeği” ve “Aile Bilgi Formu” ile toplanmıştır. Geçerlik ve güvenirlik çalışmaları yapılmış, ölçeğin 5 alt boyut ve 57 maddeden oluştuğu görülmüştür. Annenin çocuğa bakım süresine, çalışma durumu ve saatine, eğitim durumuna ve yaşına, babanın çalışma saatine, eğitim durumuna, çocuk bakımında destek alıp almamalarına, çocuk sayısına, çocuğun devam ettiği okul türüne ve evlilik süresine göre babasavar annelik düzeylerinin farklılık gösterdiği görülmüştür. İlgili literatür kapsamında elde edilen bulgular tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Ölçek geliştirme, okul öncesi, babasavar annelik, ebeveyn etkileşim davranışları*

## **Introduction**

Family is the intimate environment and first social group in the child's life. Although the size, structure and functions of the family vary, the influence of the parents on the development of the child prolongs. Parents are among the most effective and important educators of their children. Therefore, child-family interaction and communication are one of the subjects that capture the interests of the researchers in early childhood education.

Family communication includes verbal and non-verbal behaviors, messages, and reactions among the family members (Güngör Aytar & Kaytez, 2014). Family provides a framework for the behavior of the members by restricting, prohibiting, criticizing, and encouraging the behavior of the individuals who make it up (Özgün, 2017). Spouses' perception of the roles of mothers, fathers, women, and men plays an active role in determining parental communication (Güngör Aytar & Kaytez, 2014).

It is thought that some factors that come from culture, society, mother, father, and child may be important in differentiation of parental interaction behaviors. Modern parents act in a shared manner and encourage each other's active participation (Fagan and Barnett, 2003). In this type of parenting which is called "parental gate opening", there may be a transition between roles. In another words, parental roles are open to the spouse. Whether or not parents are open to role transitions is an issue that needs to be examined in family-child studies.

In traditional families, on the other hand, the mother takes care of domestic tasks such as doing housework and taking care of children; the father is known for his roles such as working outside and bringing bread home (Adamsons, 2010). Parents who internalize the socially drawn roles exhibit some conservative behaviors to keep these roles and try to prevent the spouse from taking their own roles (Allen and Hawkins, 1999). "Parental gatekeeping" means protecting the roles of the parents they adopt and not allow the other spouse to take the role in his/her hands.

Parental gatekeeping/gate closing is defined as the parental attitudes and behaviors that prevent and close the doors to the spouse's participation (Austin, Fieldstone, & Pruett, 2013; Trinder, 2007). While the mother's attitudes and behaviors that inhibit and prevent the father's involvement in child and home issues are defined as "Maternal Gatekeeping" (Wang, Xu, & Jiang, 2024; Fagan & Barnett, 2003; Allen & Hawkins, 1999), the father's attitudes and behaviors that restrict the mother's behavior are expressed as "Paternal Gatekeeping". Recent literature says that maternal gatekeeping is more common in many cultures than paternal gatekeeping due to the perceived maternal roles (Aytac & Schoppe-Sullivan, 2024; Hauser, 2015; Hauser, 2012; Roy & Dyson, 2005). In this study, it was investigated how spouses interacted, under which situations and conditions they allow the role transition, and which variables influence interactions of the family members. It is aimed that this research will enlight on new studies on that topic. This study contribute the literature via drawing attention to common behaviors and discourses related with maternal gatekeeping which affects father involvement, looking a broader perspective to mother and father interaction behaviors, and developing of a scale that is appropriate for Turkish culture. The aim of the research is to develop maternal gatekeeping scale and examine maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers of preschool aged children. The sub-aims of the research are:

1. What is the validity and reliability of the "Maternal Gatekeeping Scale?"
2. Do the maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers differ according to some variables (duration of maternal care, mothers' working status, working hours, age,



fathers' education levels, age, living together with a relative or not, number of children, duration of marriage, and school's types)?

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

Quantitative Research Method is used in this study. In order to develop Maternal Gatekeeping Scale and examine maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers of preschool aged children, Causal Comparative Research Method was used. Relational Screening Model aims to find out the presence and/or degree of interchange between two or more variables (Cresswell, 2017a; Cresswell, 2017b; Karasar, 2016).

### **Population and the Sample**

The population of the research is mothers of 36-72 months' children who attend early education institutions in private and state preschools in Istanbul.

The sample of this research is chosen from 6 districts of Istanbul (3 from Asian side and 3 from European side). It is looked for a criterion which reveal the differences of socioeconomic and cultural life. To determine diverse socioeconomic and cultural groups, Graded Districts Groups in Life Satisfaction Study is used (Şeker, 2011). In this study, there are 5 grades of the districts. First grade represents "the top", third grade represents "middle", and the fifth grade represents "the lowest" socioeconomic and cultural groups. In the first and fifth grades, the first two districts; in the third grade, the middle two districts for the sample group. Kadıköy and Beşiktaş from the top, Eyüp and Ümraniye from the middle, and Sultanbeyli and Gaziosmanpaşa from the lowest life satisfaction are chosen. With random sampling, 24 preschools are chosen and 100 forms for each school – totally 2400 forms are distributed by the researchers. The study is limited with 524 mothers who gave answers and send the scales back out of 2400 forms.

The **sample** of the study is 524 mothers who have 36-72 months' preschool children from 24 preschools. According to the literature, 300-500 sample size is sufficient for the development of a scale (DeVellis, 2017; Seçer, 2015; Şeker & Gençdoğan, 2014). In this research, it is thought that 524 participants are sufficient, and it is supported with KMO value.

According to the demographic characteristics of the sample, majority of mothers in the sample group are married (f=508), not receiving support in child rearing (f=321) and having a relative living together (f=452). Majority of mothers are the ages of 30-39 (f=360), and fathers are 30-39 ages (f=260). Majority of mothers are housewife (f= 332) whereas majority of fathers work 9 hours and above (f=184). Majority of the sample have 2 children (f=268). According to educational status, huge number of the mothers and fathers have undergraduate degree (116 mothers, 74 fathers). Most mothers live in European side (f=334) and send their children to schools in the same side. Most of the children receive education in public preschools (f=375). Majority of the mothers and fathers are married for 5-10 years (f=285). Most of the mothers in the sample look after their children in 0-3 years after birth (f=227).

Study group for parallel form reliability and test-retest analysis involves 54 mothers chosen from Maltepe and Gaziosmanpaşa in Istanbul according to easy accessibility and voluntary principles. 200 forms are distributed to mothers from 2 preschools and 54 forms turned back (41 from Maltepe and 13 from Gaziosmanpaşa). According to the demographic characteristics of the mothers, majority are married and live together (f=53), has no support in child rearing (f=38), no relatives live with them (f=46), majority of the mothers and their spouses are at the ages of 30-



39 ( $f_{\text{mothers}}=37$ ,  $f_{\text{fathers}}=23$ ), majority of the mothers are not working ( $f=38$ ) whereas all the spouses are working, majority of them have 2 children ( $f=29$ ), majority of mothers and fathers are undergraduates ( $f_{\text{mothers}}=16$ ,  $f_{\text{fathers}}=8$ ), majority of their marital duration is 5-10 years ( $f=28$ ), duration of maternal care for the majority is 0-3 years ( $f=22$ ).

### Data Collection Tools

Data was collected via “Family Information Form” and “Maternal Gatekeeping Scale” which were developed by the researchers.

**Family Information Form:** This form was prepared by the researchers to take demographic information about 36–72-month-old children and their families. In this form, ages of mother, father and children, genders of the children, district where the child lives, school type, mother’s and father’s education levels, occupations of mothers and fathers, working status and working hours of mothers and fathers, duration of marriage, duration of maternal childcare, support in childcare, whether mothers or fathers have a chronic disease or not. Written information was given to the participants at the beginning of the Family Information Form and their informed consent was obtained.

**Maternal Gatekeeping Scale:** This scale was developed by the researchers to assess restrictive and supportive behaviors of mothers toward fathers. In accordance with the relevant literature, 5 Likert type (1 "Never", 2 "Rarely", 3 "Sometimes", 4 "Generally", 5 "Always") question pool with 80 items and 5 sub-scales were created. The subscales are:

- “*Modern Motherhood*” subscale includes gate opening behaviors of mothers toward fathers. In other words, mothers in that group facilitate fathers to be involved in child and home related issues. It involves 17 items and contributes 18.71% to the total variance.
- “*Double Responsible Motherhood*” subscale includes attitudes of mothers who are unhappy due to the lack of involvement of fathers and take more responsibilities to compensate it. It involves 13 items and contributes 10.31% to the total variance.
- “*Over-attached Motherhood*” subscale includes attitudes of mothers who are over-attached their children, spouses, and household chores like addicted. Mothers feel children as a part of themselves. It involves 14 items and contributes 5.17% to the total variance.
- “*Traditional Motherhood*” subscale includes mothers who have traditional maternity roles attributed to them by the society (gender roles) and try to prevent father to take responsibility for home and the child. It involves 5 items and contributes 3.61% to the total variance.
- “*Indirect Motherhood*” subscale includes mothers who seem like praising their spouses but in fact they want to imply that their spouses are inadequate, and they are as a super-mom and super-spouse compensate them. It involves 8 items and contributes 3.49% to the total variance.

The maximum point that can be taken from the total scale is 285 and minimum point is 57. The higher points indicate higher maternal gatekeeping whereas lower points show lower maternal gatekeeping. When the total “Maternal Gatekeeping” point is calculated, “Modern Motherhood” points must be reversed.

### Data Collection

After taking permission from MoNE, the researchers visited the preschools and took permission from school principals and teachers. Volunteer mothers who gave consent were the sample of the study. Anonymity of the sample is protected. Researchers provided 100 scales per school (totally 2400 forms to 24 preschools). The forms were delivered to the mothers through preschool teachers. The forms filled by the volunteer mothers and delivered to the teachers within 1-2 weeks. Afterwards, the researchers went to the schools and collected the forms by hand.

### Data Analysis

The data were entered in the statistical package program and analyzed through the program. Within the scope of the validity and reliability studies of the scale, the stages of DeVellis (2017), Seçer (2015), Şeker & Gençdoğan (2014) have been used. The process stages are given in the below:

#### Validity Analysis:

- *Content Validity:* Expert opinions were taken from 9 experts for the created item pool. Lawshe and Davis Techniques used after receiving expert opinions, CVR (Content Validity Ratio) and CVI (Content Validity Index) values were examined. CVI value founded as .84 (Lawshe Content Validity Criterion=.75, Davis Content Validity Criterion=.80). Extraction of no item was made in line with expert opinion, arrangements have been made on the items.
- *Construct Validity:* Compatibility test for factor analysis (CVR and Bartlett) and Exploratory Factor Analysis were performed (CVR=.89, Bartlett= $\chi^2=17482,95$ ,  $p=.00$ ). As a result of factor analysis, the scale consists of 57 items and has 5 sub-dimensions. It explains 41.31% of the total variance.

#### Reliability Analysis:

- *Internal Consistency:* Cronbach Alpha values were calculated, and the item analyzes were done. Cronbach Alpha value for the "Modern Motherhood" sub-dimension is .89, for the "Double Responsible Motherhood" is .87, for the "Over-attached Motherhood" is .85, for the "Traditional Motherhood" is .71, for the "Indirect Motherhood" is .63, and for the entire scale is .90.
- *Test-Retest:* Within the scope of test-retest study, correlations and differences between two tests were examined. 54 mothers attended the test-retest. When it is looked at the test-retest scores of subscales and total scale, there is a statistically meaningful correlation which is strong and positive way.

After validity and reliability analysis, it can be said that "Maternal Gatekeeping Scale" is valid and reliable scale with 57 items and 5 sub-dimensions.

After the scale development process, percentage and frequency calculations for descriptive analysis of demographic variables is made. Normality tests are performed to see the data is normally distributed or not. The results of the Kolmogorov Smirnov Test were examined, and it is observed that the data is normally distributed ( $p > .05$ ) and appropriate difference (ANOVA, independent groups t test) and correlation test (Pearson Correlation) were performed.

### Ethical Considerations

In the study, all the rules specified to be followed within the scope of "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive" were compiled with. None of the

actions specified under the heading "Actions Contrary to Scientific Research and Publication Ethics", which is the second part of the directive, have been taken. The study was carried out on a voluntary basis. The individuals participating in the research were informed about the study in advance and their consent was obtained for their participation in the research. The data obtained from the people participating in the study were used for research purposes only and were kept confidential.

## **Findings**

### **Findings of the Validity and Reliability Analysis**

The validity and reliability findings of the scale developed in the study are given below:

#### **Validity Analysis**

For the content validity of the scale, expert opinions were taken from 9 experts for the created 80 items question pool. Lawshe and Davis Techniques used after receiving expert opinions, CVR (Content Validity Ratio) and CVI (Content Validity Index) values were examined according to the formula (Veneziano & Hooper, 1997; cited by Yurdagül, 2005):

$$\text{Content Validity Ratio (CVR) item} = \frac{\text{Number of Experts who indicated that the item is "Suitable or Necessary"} - 1}{(\text{Number of experts who gave opinions to the item} / 2)}$$

According to the formula, CVI value was founded as .84 for the scale. According to literature, Lawshe Content Validity Criterion should be .75 and Davis Content Validity Criterion should be .80 for 9 experts (Veneziano & Hooper, 1997; cited by Yurdagül, 2005). Extraction of no item was made but arrangements on the items have been made according to the opinions of the experts.

For the construct validity of the scale, compatibility test for the sample for explanatory factor analysis, KMO and Bartlett were performed, and the result of the test is given in Table 1.

**Table 1. KMO and Bartlett Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sample		.89
Bartlett Test	Chi-Square	17482.95
	p	.00

According to Table 1, it is seen that the sample is suitable for explanatory factor analyses (KMO=.89, Bartlett= $\chi^2=17482.95$ ,  $p=.00$ ). According to literature, if KMO is higher than .80, sample is enough and explanatory factor analysis can be performed (Seçer, 2015; Büyüköztürk, 2007). After checking the sample suitability, the factorization phase was started. In exploratory factor analysis, the rotated principal components analysis factorization technique was used among many factorization techniques.

First, a free Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted on the 80-item pool, and it was seen that the items were included in 5 factors according to their distribution. Then, it was fixed to 5 factors and the items were started to be sorted. In the factor analysis, in order to sort out the items that did not measure the same structure; items with eigenvalues below 1, items included in more than one factor, factors consisting of less than 3 items, items with strong correlations (over .75), items with factor loadings below .35, items included in more than one factor, items with a difference of less than .10 between the high loading value of each item on a single factor and the high loading value on other factors were removed. The Factor Structure of the Maternal Gatekeeping Scale after Rotated Principal Component Analysis is given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** The Factor Structure of the Maternal Gatekeeping Scale after Rotated Principal Component Analysis Result

Items	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
I1					.649
I2: "I want my child to play only with me in play times"					.612
I3: "I share my negative views about my husband with my child"					.601
I4					.529
I5			.654		
I6			.643		
I7			.629		
I8			.619		
I9					.486
I10					.439
I11			.613		
I12			.594		
I13: "I say the last word if we want to give about my child"		.700			
I14			.581		
I15					.387
I16					.369
I17: "I pretend as if I accept my husband's view, but I do whatever I want to do"		.675			
I18		.662			
I19: "My husband cannot assume and do any household chores and child-care"				.691	
I20		.632			
I21		.622			
I22		.615			
I23		.605			
I24		.567			
I25		.561			
I26		.525			
I27		.517			
I28		.402			
I29: "I do all the household chores rather than teaching my husband"				.670	
I30		.398			
I31			.577		
I32: "Women and men have different responsibilities"			.565		
I33			.557		
I34: "Household chores and child-care are my maternal responsibilities"			.556		
I35			.514		
I36				.637	
I37				.430	



Items	Factors				
	1	2	3	4	5
I38				.415	
I39			.483		
I40			.406		
I41	.693				
I42	.682				
I43	.658				
I44	.656				
I45	.653				
I46	.633				
I47	.630				
I48	.606				
I49	.594				
I50	.591				
I51: "I expect my husband to assume responsibilities at home"	.584				
I52	.563				
I53	.530				
I54	.518				
I55	.493				
I56	.488				
I57: "We explain the rules to our child with my husband and want him/her to follow"	.404				

Variance explained:

Factor 1: Modern Motherhood: 18.710 %

Factor 2: Double Responsible Motherhood: 10.312 %

Factor 3: Over-attached Motherhood: 5.175 %

Factor 4: Traditional Motherhood: 3.615 %

Factor 5: Indirect Motherhood: 3.495 %

Total: Maternal Gatekeeping Scale: 41.310 %

As a result of the explanatory factor analysis, Table 2 shows the scale which consists of 57 items and has 5 sub-dimensions. Factor 1 contributes 18.710 %, factor 2 contributes 10.312 %, factor 3 contributes 5.175 %, factor 4 contributes 3.615 %, factor 5 contributes 3.495 % to the total variance of the scale. It explains 41.31% of the total variance. Table 3 shows the sub-dimensions determined as a result of factor analysis and the total number and distribution of items loading on these dimensions.

**Table 3.** Sub-dimensions determined as a result of factor analysis and items loading on these dimensions

Factors	Total Number of Items	Items
1	17	41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57
2	13	13, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30
3	14	5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 39, 40
4	5	19, 29, 36, 37, 38
5	8	1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 15, 16

According to Table 3, the scale includes 5 sub-dimensions. The first sub-scale, which is named as Modern Motherhood should be reverse coded while the total point is calculated for the scale.

#### **Reliability Analysis**

For the internal consistency of the scale, Cronbach Alpha values were calculated for the sub-scales and total scale and showed in Table 4.

**Table 4. Cronbach Alpha values**

		Cronbach Alfa
1. Sub-scale: Modern Motherhood	17	.894
2. Sub-scale: Double Responsible Motherhood	13	.873
3. Sub-scale: Over-Attached Motherhood	14	.851
4. Sub-scale: Traditional Motherhood	5	.710
5. Sub-scale: Indirect Motherhood	8	.632
Total: Maternal Gatekeeping	57	.901

According to Table 4, Cronbach Alpha value for the “Modern Motherhood” sub-dimension is .89, for the “Double Responsible Motherhood” is .87, for the “Over-attached Motherhood” is .85, for the “Traditional Motherhood” is .71, for the “Indirect Motherhood” is .63, and for the scale is .90.

Correlations between sub-scales are calculated. It is seen that the sub-dimensions are related to each other and to the total score ( $p < .05$ ). The modern motherhood sub-dimension is strongly negatively related to the other sub-dimensions. The other sub-dimensions are positively related to each other and maternal gatekeeping total score. Therefore, when calculating the maternal gatekeeping total score, the items in the modern motherhood sub-dimension were reversed and after, the total score was calculated.

Within the scope of test-retest study, correlations and differences between two tests were examined. 54 mothers attended the test-retest. When it is looked at the test-retest scores of subscales and total scale, there is a statistically meaningful correlation which is strong and positive way.

### ***Findings of the Comparison Tests***

Results of the difference tests of maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers according to different variables are given below:

Firstly, ANOVA test is conducted to see whether maternal gatekeeping behaviors differentiate according to the duration of maternal care after birth. In over-attached motherhood and traditional motherhood subscales and total maternal gatekeeping point, there is a significant difference. According to see the groups that there is difference between, Scheffe Test was conducted. There is a significant difference in double responsible motherhood subscale between 0-3 years and 8 years and above and 4-7 years and 8 years and above in favor of 8 years and above. In over-attached motherhood subscale, there is a significant difference between 0-3 years and 4-7 years in favor of 4-7 years and 0-3 years and 8 years and above in favor of 8 years and above. In traditional motherhood subscale, there is a significant difference between 0-3 years and 8 years and above. In maternal gatekeeping total point, there is a significant difference between 0-3 years and 8 years and above in favor of 8 years and above. This result indicates that mothers who take care of their children for longer indicate more maternal gatekeeping behaviors.

Independent samples t test were conducted to see whether there is a difference in maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers who are working and not working. There is a significant difference in double responsible, over-attached, traditional motherhood sub-scales and total maternal gatekeeping in favor of mothers who are not working.

ANOVA test is performed to see whether maternal gatekeeping behaviors differentiate according to the mothers' working hours. In over-attached motherhood and traditional motherhood subscales and total maternal gatekeeping point, there is a significant difference. According to see the groups that there is difference between, Scheffe Test was conducted. There is a significant difference in over-attached motherhood subscale between not-working mothers and 1-8 hours and between not-working mothers and 9 hours and above workers in favor of not-working mothers. There is a significant difference in traditional motherhood subscale between not-working mothers and 1-8 hours working in favor of not-working mothers. There is a significant difference in total maternal gatekeeping scale between not-working mothers and 1-8 hours working and between 1-8 hours working mothers and 9 hours and above workers in favor of 9 hours and above workers.

ANOVA test indicates whether maternal gatekeeping behaviors differentiate according to the duration of maternal care after birth. In over-attached motherhood and traditional motherhood subscales and total maternal gatekeeping point, there is a significant difference. According to see the groups that there is difference between, Scheffe Test was conducted. It is shown that there is a significant difference in favor of the lower educational status (for example in over attached motherhood subscale, there is a difference between primary school and high school graduates in favor of primary school graduates).

ANOVA test shows whether maternal gatekeeping behaviors differentiate according to the ages of mothers. In over-attached motherhood subscale and total maternal gatekeeping point, there is a significant difference between 20-29 ages and 30-39 ages and 40-49 ages in favor of 20-29 ages.

Independent Samples test shows whether there is a difference in maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers whose spouses are working 0-8 hours and 9 hours and above. There is a

significant difference in over-attached motherhood sub-scale and total maternal gatekeeping in favor of 9 hours and above workers.

ANOVA test indicates whether maternal gatekeeping behaviors differentiate according to the fathers' education levels. In all the subscales and total maternal gatekeeping point, there is a significant difference. According to see the groups that there is difference between, Scheffe Test was conducted. It is shown that there is a significant difference in favor of the lower educational status (for example in over attached motherhood subscale, there is a difference between primary school and high school graduates in favor of primary school graduates).

Independent samples t test shows whether there is a difference in maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers whose spouses are 20-39 ages and 40 ages and above. There is no significant difference in any subscales and total maternal gatekeeping point ( $p>.05$ ).

Independent samples t test indicates whether there is a difference in maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers who lives with a relative or not. There is no significant difference in any subscales and total maternal gatekeeping point ( $p>.05$ ).

Independent samples t test indicates whether there is a difference in maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers who takes support or not in child rearing. There is a significant difference in over-attached, traditional, indirect motherhood subscales and total maternal gatekeeping point in favor of mothers who are not taking any support in child rearing.

ANOVA test shows whether maternal gatekeeping behaviors differ according to the number of children. In over-attached motherhood and traditional motherhood subscale and total maternal gatekeeping point, there is a significant difference in favor of having more children. In other words, mothers who have more children show more gatekeeping behaviors.

ANOVA test shows whether maternal gatekeeping behaviors differentiate according to the duration of marriage. In modern motherhood subscale, there is a significant difference between 5-10 years and 11-15 years of marriage in favor of 5-10 years and there is a significant difference between 16 years and above and 11-15 years in favor of 16 years and above. In over-attached motherhood subscale, there is a significant difference between 16 years and above and 5-10 years in favor of 16 years and above.

Independent Samples t test shows whether there is a difference in maternal gatekeeping behaviors of mothers whose children are at state and public preschools. There is a significant difference in over-attached, traditional motherhood and indirect motherhood subscales and total maternal gatekeeping in favor of mothers whose children at state preschools.

### **Conclusion and Discussion**

According to the findings of the study, "Maternal Gatekeeping Scale" is found as a valid and reliable measurement tool. The "Maternal Gatekeeping Scale" developed in this study explains 41.31 % of the total variance and shows a 5-factor structure. The Cronbach Alpha values calculated for the sub-dimensions and total score of the scale are as follows: .89 for the Modern Motherhood, .87 for the Double Responsible Motherhood, .85 for the Over-Attached Motherhood, .71 for the Traditional Motherhood, .63 for the Indirect Motherhood, and .90 for the total of the scale.

According to the relevant literature, 9-item "Maternal Gatekeeping Scale" developed by Fagan and Barnett (2003) in the USA was first translated and applied by Karabulut and Şendil for fathers in 2017. In the same year, Çoban adapted and applied Fagan and Barnett's scale for

mothers. When the validity and reliability analysis of the scale adapted by Çoban and Karabulut and Şendil in 2017 was examined. The scale adapted for fathers by Karabulut and Şendil (2017) measured 41.35% of the total variance and the Cronbach's Alpha value was found to be .82 (Karabulut & Şendil, 2017). The scale adapted for mothers by Çoban (2017) measures 68.72% of the total variance and the Cronbach Alpha value was found to be .94 (Çoban, 2017). Both showed a single-factor structure.

When the developed scales in the world were examined, it was thought that they included items that were not appropriate to Turkish culture (For example, items related with baseball) and were not comprehensive enough to measure the subject. There is a 9-item adaptation study of a scale that was addressed on this subject in Turkey. However, parental interaction behaviors show a multidimensional and complicated structure. Since the "Maternal Gatekeeping Scale" did not offer different sub-dimensions and the item content was not fully clear (in line with expert opinion), a scale development study was conducted that was appropriate for the culture and the relevant literature. As a result of the statistical tests conducted, it was seen that the developed scale was a valid and reliable measurement tool.

In this study, maternal gatekeeping behaviors are also investigated according to duration of maternal care, mother's working situation, working hours, educational status, age; father's working hours, education status, age, whether there is a person living with them in the family, whether taking support in childcare, number of children, duration of marriage and type of school.

According to the results, it is observed that mothers who take care of their children longer, feel more responsible, are overly attached to their children, are more traditional and exhibit more maternal gatekeeping behavior. In the study conducted by Gaunt and Pinho (2017) with mothers of 0-6 years, a bidirectional and positive relationship was found between maternal gatekeeping behaviors and duration of maternal care. Mothers who take care of their children longer exhibit more gatekeeping behaviors. Study results support these research findings. In the studies conducted by Ainsworth (1979) and Bretherton (1992), it was observed that mothers felt themselves more responsible than fathers in the mother-child relationship. This research and the results of the research are overlapping. The longer mothers care for their children when they are born, the stronger their bonds with their children, their devotion to traditional maternal roles, and they consider themselves responsible for their children and their homes compared to their husbands. It is thought that this situation plays an important role in maternal gatekeeping behaviors.

It was found that unemployed mothers internalized traditional roles more. It was observed that unemployed mothers and mothers who work 9 and above hours were over attached and gatekeeper. According to the study conducted in Mexico by Formoso, Gonzales, Barrera Jr Dumka (2007), working mothers positively affected the father involvement and spousal relationship, while it was found to be negatively related to maternal behaviors. It has been observed that unemployed mothers exhibit more paternal behavior. Sano, Richards, and Zvankovic (2008) stated that low-income mothers living in rural areas display paternal attitudes. Kulik and Tsoref (2010) examined the paternal behavior of mothers with children between the ages of 2-6 in Israel and stated that there is a negative relationship between financial income and maternal gatekeeping. Nakagawa (2010) stated that unemployed mothers with children under 12 years old in Japan showed more maternal gatekeeping attitudes. Maslauskaitė (2010) also

emphasized the education and income levels of mothers in Lithuania to adopt a paternal attitude. He found that mothers with low economic income were more gatekeepers. According to the research conducted by Sweeney, Goldberg, and Garcia (2016), it was stated that low labor force and not being economically autonomous increased gatekeeping behaviors of mothers. Aydın and Akgöz Aktaş (2017), contributed that the economic status and working status of the mother influenced non-paternal maternal behavior. When this study and studies in the literature are examined, it can be said that mothers who are unemployed and low-income mothers are overly dependent on their children and maternal roles and exhibit gatekeeping behaviors.

On the other hand, in the study conducted by Pedersen and Kilzer (2014), it was found that mothers, who have preschool children and working, think that they have a work-house conflict, causing them to display gatekeeper behavior. Similarly, Radcliffe and Cassell (2014) examined the effect of flexible working hours of mothers on home-work conflict. It has been observed that mothers with flexible working hours have less gatekeeping. In this study, not only unemployed mothers, but also mothers working 9 hours and above display more gatekeeping behaviors. These findings are compatible with this research.

Mothers with low education levels feel twice as responsible for home and child issues, are overly attached to their children, try to keep their traditional maternal roles, indirectly glorify their motherhood and display gatekeeping behaviors. Reed (2009) stated that parents who are more educated and less dependent on gender stereotypes are more prone to be cooperative and warm in relationships and distant from gatekeeping. Kulik and Tsoref (2010) stated that there is a negative relationship between maternal education status and gatekeeping. In the study conducted by Nakagawa (2010) in Japan, it was found that the education level of mothers affected their maternal gatekeeping attitudes. It was observed that mothers with higher education levels exhibited less gatekeeping behaviors. Similarly, Maslauskaitė (2011) underlined the importance of education level and said that low-income mothers display more gatekeeping in Lithuania. The findings of the studies in different cultures overlap with the research.

It was observed that younger mothers were more attached to their children and display more maternal gatekeeping behaviors. In the study conducted by Karabulut and Şendil (2017), a negative relationship was found between the age of the mother and maternal gatekeeping behaviors. It was found that young mothers displayed more gatekeeping behaviors, but it decreased in later years. The results of the study conducted by Karabulut and Şendil (2017) are in line with the results of this study. In this study, overly attached mother attitude was observed in young mothers. The children of these young mothers are most likely their first child. For this reason, the situation can be explained by the mothers trying to be more meticulous in their first experiences.

It was found that fathers who worked 9 and above hours are overly attached to their children and displayed gatekeeping behaviors more. It was observed that mothers with low educated spouses were overly attached to their children and internalized traditional, indirect and maternal gatekeeping behaviors. In the study conducted by Karabulut and Şendil (2017), although they do not find a difference according to fathers' working hours, they indicated that fathers with high school or higher degree were less likely to encounter gatekeeping behaviors than primary school graduates. Akgöz Aktaş (2017) also emphasized that as the father's education level increases, the father's participation increases and the mother's gatekeeping behavior decreases.

These studies agree with the results of this research. In addition, no difference was found according to father's age. No matter how old fathers are, they may be exposed to maternal gatekeeping behaviors or actively participate. It can be said that other variables that affect mothers' gatekeeping behaviors (parental education status, employment status, etc.) more.

No difference was found according to whether there was a relative living together or not. However, it is found that mothers who do not receive support are overly attached to their children, more traditional and display gatekeeping behaviors. In a study conducted in Switzerland by France, Mark and Nicholas (2016), it was stated that not only mothers but also all individuals living in the family may have a positive or negative effect on father's participation. In the study conducted by Kulik and Tsoref (2010), mothers of 2-6 years in Israel were studied and the relationship between support from extended family for childcare and gatekeeping was examined. The more support mothers perceive from the extended family, the less maternal gatekeeping behaviors. However, the less support mothers perceive from the extended family, the more gatekeeping behaviors they display. The research conducted and the findings of this study coincide. Family members may influence each other positively or negatively. If mother do not receive any support from other members of the family, she may strengthen the traditional gender roles and control paternal involvement by closing the doors.

It can be said that families with more children are overly attached, traditional and display gatekeeping behavior. In the study conducted by Akgöz Aktaş (2017), it was found that as the number of children increased, father participation decreased, and maternal gatekeeping behaviors increased. The results of this study conducted by Akgöz Aktaş (2017) and the results of the study are consistent.

It is seen that families who are newly married are over attached to their children. In the study conducted by Kulik and Tsoref (2010), no difference was found according to duration of marriage. However, in this study it is seen that families that have been married longer have been found to be overly dependent on their spouses and maternal roles. This causes them to display more gatekeeping behaviors.

Mothers who have children in public preschools exhibit over attached, more traditional, indirect and gatekeeping behaviors. In other words, it can be said that mothers who have children in public schools are overly attached to their children and traditional motherhood roles and are mothers who glorify their own motherhood indirectly.

Considering the findings of the study, some suggestions were presented to families, institutions and organizations and researchers:

It is recommended to prepare and implement appropriate family education programs that include parental role transitions so that parents can develop better interaction behaviors with their children and spouses. Family trainings, supportive activities, seminars, and practices are recommended to increase the awareness of parenting in mothers and fathers. It is recommended to prepare appropriate education programs that mothers can acquire attitudes that support father involvement for the healthy development of children and learn ways to establish a secure attachment with their children.

It is recommended for institutions and organizations to emphasize gender equality and supportive attitudes of parents. It should be emphasized in posters and advertisements that both parents are responsible spouses in the family. This enables transitions in gender roles and

responsibilities. Instead of reinforcing stereotypical gender roles in child books and toys, it is recommended to internalize attitudes, practices and use materials that support them to be open-ended and supporting the idea that everybody can take equal responsibility. This may lead preschool children to adopt the modern, cooperative, and responsible spouse in adulthood.

It is suggested for future studies to study with different samples and different variables. It is suggested to conduct qualitative, mixed-model and longitudinal studies on parental gatekeeping and gate opening. In this study, maternal gatekeeping was discussed. In another study, it is recommended to conduct a scale development study to examine paternal gatekeeping. If there are family members such as grandparents who are effective in childrearing. It is suggested to examine the effect of this interaction on parental gatekeeping and gate opening behaviors.



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