

## Examination of The Relationship Between Fear of Negative Evaluation, Gender Role Stress, and Gender Equality Of Female University Students

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**Abstract.** The purpose of current study is to investigate the predictive effect of gender equality on gender role stress, and fear of negative evaluation of female university students. Thus, the participants of the study designed in line with the relational survey method consist of 598 female students. The findings of the study indicate that female university students' gender equality, gender role stress, and fear of negative evaluation do not significantly vary depending on students' age, grade level, and father's education level. On the other hand, it was found that all three variables vary significantly depending on mother's education level of the students. It was revealed that the increase in the gender equality of the female university students as the mother education level increases; female university students whose mothers are high school graduates have more gender roles than primary and secondary school graduates; female university students whose mothers are primary school graduates have more fear of negative evaluation than secondary school graduates. In addition, a negative significant relation was found between gender equality and gender role stress, a low level positive significant relation was found between gender equality and fear of negative evaluation. At the end of the study, it was found that gender equality significantly predicted gender role stress and low degree fear of negative evaluation.

**Keywords:** Gender equality, feminine gender role stress, fear of negative evaluation

## INTRODUCTION

Gender roles are associated with whether people perceive themselves as male or female, and whether they act in accordance with the behavioral patterns expected from them regarding their gender. Gender roles are taught to people from an early age in accordance with the values, wishes, expectations and rules of the society they live in, and they are expected to behave accordingly (Aydm & Kavuncu, 1991).

With regard to gender roles, girls are attributed to being quieter, dignified and more emotional compared to boys, while boys are attributed more self-expression, more outgoing and more sociable characteristics than girls. Along with the changes in the traditional understanding in society, there occur paradoxes between these patterns that are taught to individuals from childhood and the new roles offered by the changing living conditions. This situation is thought to cause negative consequences on the mental health of individuals

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(Ümme, 2007). It is thought that owing to the tension arising from gender roles, individuals might experience the likelihood of stress related to gender roles and fear of negative evaluation in social context.

While gender roles express the behavioral patterns that society expects from women and men to satisfy, gender equality naturally refers to equality in all institutions, also in this role sharing and before the law (Sheehan & Dooley, 2013). These gender roles and gender inequality in male-dominated societies cause immense stress and fear upon women. The reasons for the created stress and fear can be counted as associated with the men's holding power in these societies, inequality in gender roles, and women's expected behaviours regarding the gender (Baltaş & Baltaş, 2010). The stress level of women against these roles imposed by the society may increase and they might experience the fear of negative evaluation by others (Sungur, 1997). There are very few studies internationally and domestically on women's gender role stress. Therefore, this study, aims to examine the gender role stress experienced by women and the fear of negative evaluation regarding with gender equality.

While gender is defined by emphasizing the creation feature of the individual as the name of a separate role in the biology-centered reproduction process (Turkish Language Institution [TLI], 2011), gender is the explanation of responsibilities in the social context as well as the roles assigned to men and women in the society (Zeyneloğlu and Terzioğlu, 2011). Additionally, gender evaluates people psycho-socially and characterizes them as masculine or feminine (Dökmen, 2004). Gender roles signify that people look for the answer to the question of what it means to be a man and a woman in the culture and community they live in. Therefore, whatever this means, gender roles call for compliance with it (Dökmen, 2004). Gender equality, on the other hand, refers to sharing these roles in an equal way, sharing advantages and responsibilities assigned by these roles equally (Sheehan & Dooley, 2013).

Individuals are born with a male or female gender. Besides, they become male or female by being influenced by the geography they live in, by witnessing and learning the gender roles expected in societies (Terzioğlu, & Taşkın, 2008). These roles can occur in four different ways: femininity, masculinity, androgynous, and indeterminate. While society's roles for men are competence, competitiveness, assertiveness and independence, this situation can be defined as caring, benevolence, compassion and emotional attachment to their spouse for women (Brase, Adair, & Monk, 2014). These roles expected of men and women, on the one hand, force women to be in the house and make it difficult for them to take part in the involvement in social life, on the other hand, escalates men to a higher position since men become more empowered in society and in the house (Powell & Greenhouse, 2010).

When we consider the case in the framework of gender equality, it is thought that women are with disadvantage compared to men. According to Akın and Demirel (2003), in societies that do not have equal roles, it is observed that women be exposed to negative evaluations by men while women are made to give constant approval to men about their location, and the necessity of not expressing their discomfort due to their roles is exposed in the social context. In addition to this, the social so-called status of women is shown as if they are important and childcare and housework are blessed. As a consequence of these roles, women are tried to be pacified, and as a result of this case, the stress which is caused by the gender roles and which women experience increases more (Bekker & Boselie, 2002).

The stress experienced by women as a result of the attitudes that do not apply to the equality of gender naturally makes an immense impact on their mental health in a negative way. Baltaş and Baltaş (2010) stated that stress negatively affects the psychological well-being of the individual and may cause impairment of mental health. When stress is considered as an existential reaction physically and mentally, it is a response to traumatic experience (Öztop, 2000). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) stated that if we are to talk about the responses of people to all kinds of stress, they give responses to deal with affective and behavioral stress to put up with them.

Because of their gender roles in society, women are exposed to inequality compared to men in many issues and they cannot reach the social status they desire. When individuals face with the absence of equality due to their gender roles, they may experience negative feelings towards this situation; hence, these negative emotions can cause gender role stress. The responsibilities women feel obliged to fulfill due to their gender roles, the impositions imposed on women by the society, and the expectations of women cause stress on them (Kazmierczak, 2010; Pınar, Taşkın, & Eroğlu, 2008; Uçman, 1990).

Eisler and Skidmore (1987) also mentioned that the expectations in gender roles are high and if people do not live up to these expectations, they end up with gender role stress. When women encounter inequalities regarding gender roles, they are faced with negative judgments by the society and if this situation gets continuous, women may develop a fear of negative evaluation as a result (Leary, 1983). Gender equality is considered to be a necessary argument in the distribution of these roles; it is observed that situations deprived of this equality have negative effects on women.

Fear of negative evaluation is also known as social anxiety or social phobia. In DSM-IV, it is defined as a clearly visible fear that occurs in environments where the individual is obliged to show his/her social skills or performance or in front of people he/she is not acquainted with (APA, 2000). People who fear of negative evaluation feel embarrassed in environments that require social skills; they are afraid of embarrassment in social gatherings, and in presentations that need their self-expressing or when they meet people they did not know before. While doing ordinary activities, such as writing, eating, talking to others, they may have fears specific to these situations, or they may experience an uncertain fear of embarrassing themselves. These individuals have problems starting to speak, timing, participating in group activities or social meetings, and talking with authority figures (Demir, 1997). WHO (1993) stated that people try not to be an attention point and they fear of negative evaluation as a way of handling stress in these situations.

In the light of all this theoretical information, it is thought that gender equality of women affects the gender role stress and fear of negative evaluation. Therefore, in this study, it is aimed to explain the gender role stress experienced by female university students and their fear of negative evaluation in terms of gender equality. The sub-objectives of this study are to examine the extent to which it predicts the fear of negative evaluation and whether there is a relationship between gender equality of female university students and gender role stress and fear of negative evaluation, whether these variables differ according to demographic variables (age, grade of school, parents' education status), gender equality, gender role stress.

## **METHOD**

### **Research Model**

This study is carried out in relational scanning model in order to point out the relationship between gender role stress and fear of negative evaluation and gender equality of female university students. Relational survey models are research models aiming to determine the possible relationships between two or more variables and the degree of these relationships (Büyüköztürk & Demirel, 2017).

### **Participants of the Study**

The scope of this research consists of women who continue their education in Istanbul and Adana in the Fall Semester of 2017-2018. The sample of the research involves 598 women who continue their education in Çukurova University, Marmara University and Yıldız Technical University. Of the women taking part in the study, 300 (52.2%) are under 20 years old and 298 are above 20 years old; 205 (34.3%) are in 1st grade, 192 (32.1%) are in 2nd grade, 93 (15.6%) are in 3rd grade, and 108 (18.1%) are in 4th grade. Besides, the academic departments of the female university students participating in the study includes 88 (14.7%) Midwifery, 54 (9.0%) Mathematics, 29 (4.8%) Health (Physiotherapy-Nurse), 9 (1.5%), Turkish and Literature Teaching, 163 (27.3%) Psychological Counseling and Guidance, 131 (21.9%) Child Development and Preschool Teaching, 54 (9.0%) Engineering, 37 (6.2%) Social Studies Teaching and 33 (5.5%) International Trade and Politics. Convenience Sampling, which is an easily accessible sampling method, was used in the selection of the sample of the study. Convenience Sampling, thanks to the limitations in terms of time, money and labor, is chosen from easily accessible and applicable units (Büyüköztürk & Demirel, 2017).

### **Data Collection Instruments**

The Demographic Information Form, which has been created by the researcher in the light of the literature in order to obtain the demographic information of the participants in the study, the Gender Equality Scale (GES) to measure the gender equality level of the participants, The Feminine Gender Role Stress Scale (FGRSS) to measure the gender role stress level, and others. The Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (BFNE) was used to measure the level of fear of evaluation.

### **Informed Consent Form and Personal Information Form**

The demographic information form created by the researcher was made to include the demographic information of female university students. In this form, it is aimed to collect information that is thought to affect the gender role stress, fear of negative evaluation and gender equality levels of female university students. Accordingly, in this form, questions were asked for information such as age, grade level, and mother and father education level.

### **Gender Equality Scale (GES)**

It was developed by Gözütok, Toraman, and Acar-Erdol (2017) for the purpose of measuring people's gender equality thoughts. 396 students took part in the research. The two-factor 13-item Gender Equality Scale (GES) took its final form at the end of the application of the 45-item trial form by the validity and reliability studies being conducted. Whereas one of the

factors provided information on "understanding that considers male as superior" (UtCMS), the other factor provided information on "understanding that subjects females to males" (UtSMF). 5-point likert scale was configured to have five degrees to option from 'I totally disagree' to 'I totally agree'.

Cronbach Alpha internal consistency reliability level was determined as 0.889. Bartlett test result  $\chi^2 = 2072,965$ ;  $df = 78$  ( $p < .01$ ). The significance of this value showed that factor analysis can be performed. As a consequence of the analysis, it was determined that the Gender Equality Scale (GES) was proved to be a valid and reliable tool that was possibly useful to be an asset to collect data in the field studies to be applied in the literature.

### **The Feminine Gender Role Stress Scale (FGRSS)**

The validity and reliability studies of the (FGRSS) developed by Koç, Haskan-Avcı and Bayar (2017) were conducted on 721 female university students. The data were analyzed with SPSS 23.0 and LISREL 8.8 software. The reliability of (FGRSS) was tested with the Cronbach Alpha coefficient ( $\alpha = .926$ ) and the test half-way method (.97).

This scale, whose validity and reliability studies were carried out, consists of 20 items in total. There is no reverse scored item in this scale. The scale is a five-point scale kind (1 = Not stressful for me, 2 = Stressful for me, 3 = indecisive, 4 = Stressful for me, 5 = Very stressful for me). The score that can be obtained from (FGRSS) varies between 20 and 100. High scores indicate that the individual experiences gender role stress.

Validity and reliability study results signify that (FGRSS) can be used validly and reliably for the purpose of measuring the gender role stress level of female university students.

### **The Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (BFNE)**

It is a self-report style scale developed by Leary (1983) in order to measure an individual's tolerance to negative or hostile evaluation by others. Adapted into Turkish by Çetin and others (2010) (BFNE) consists of 12 items that include expressions of fear and anxiety.

The items of the scale have a 5-point likert type rating as "(1) Not Suitable at all, (2) Not Appropriate, (3) Appropriate to Some Extent, (4) Appropriate, (5) Fully Suitable". High scores from the scale point out that fear of negative evaluation is high. 8 items of the scale consist of expressions of fear and anxiety about negative evaluation (eg "I am afraid that people will notice my faults most of the time"). The remaining 4 items consist of expressions such that there are no fears and worries about negative evaluation and are reversely scored. It was observed that the item total correlation value (-.03) and factor load of the fourth item (I rarely worry about how I make an impression on a person) and factor load were not at an acceptable level, and the analyzes were repeated by removing the item in question. Accordingly, (BFNE), unlike the original 12-item form developed by Leary (1983), it became an 11-item measurement tool.

325 (124 female, 201 male) university students studying at Sakarya University participated in the study. The psychometric properties of the scale were examined in the light of test-retest,

internal consistency, test halving, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, and criterion-related validity methods. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency co-efficient for ODCA was found to be .84. The test-retest reliability coefficient is .82 and the reliability co-efficient calculated by the test halving method is .83.

### Data Analysis

The data collected in accordance with the aims of the study were subjected to statistical analysis with the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) Program. In comparison of the scores obtained from the scales in terms of independent variables, independent groups t test and one-way analysis of variance were carried out for Kolmogorov-Smirnov  $p > 0.05$  and Skewness-Kurtosis (those within the range of -1, +1) in accordance with normally distributed data. Pearson correlation analysis and regression analysis were conducted to evaluate the relationships between the scores obtained from the scales. The reliability coefficients of the scales were calculated with the Cronbach's Alpha method (Büyüköztürk & Demirel, 2017).

### FINDINGS

The statistical analyzes applied in the light of the purpose of the study and the findings obtained as a result of the analysis are included in the fourth part of the study.

#### Analyzes for the Gender Equality Scale

Analyzes of the dependent variable of the research, Gender Equality Scale, are included in this section. In this context, the difference analyzes and interpretations made to determine whether the Gender Equality Scale scores of female university students who make up the sample differ according to the discrete variables of the study (age, class, and parental education level of female university students) are presented below.

**Table 1. Independent Group t-Test Results for Gender Equality Scale Scores According to Age**

Scores	Groups	n	$\bar{x}$	SS	Sh $\bar{x}$	t Test		
						t	Sd	p
Gender Equality	Age minus 20	300	19.38	6.29	.36	-	596	.078
	Age over 20	298	20.24	6.47	.37	1.764		

As can be seen in Table 1, the difference between the arithmetic average of the groups was not found significant as a result of the independent groups t-test performed to determine whether the scores of the female university students in the sample group from the Gender Equality Scale differ significantly according to the age variable ( $t = -1.764$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Consequently, gender equality of female university students does not Show differences depending on age.

**Table 2. ANOVA Test Results of Gender Equality Scale Scores According to Class Level**

$f, \bar{x}$ ve SS Values					ANOVA Results					
Score	Group	n	$\bar{x}$	SS	KT	Sd	KO	F	P	$\eta^2$

				<b>B. Groups</b>							
Gender Equality	1st Grade	205	19.60	6.08	114.00	3	38.002	.927	.427	.005	
	2nd Grade	192	20.18	6.80	24342.85	594	40.981				
	3rd Grade	93	18.94	5.92	24456.86	597					
	4th Grade	108	20.10	6.63							
	Total	598	19.77	6.40							

As seen in Table 2, as a result of the ANOVA performed to determine whether the scores of the female university students in the sample group from the Gender Equality Scale differ significantly according to the grade level variable, the difference between the arithmetic averages of the groups was not found significant ( $F = .927$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Consequently, gender equality does not differ depending on the class level. In addition to this, the calculated effect size ( $\eta^2 = .005$ ) is found to be small according to Cohen (1988). In the light of this value, gender equality can be explained with a class level variable of % 5.

**Table 3. ANOVA Results of Gender Equality Scale Scores According to Parents' Education Level**

<i>f</i> , $\bar{x}$ ve <i>SS</i> Values					ANOVA Results						
Score	Group	n	$\bar{x}$	<i>SS</i>		<i>KT</i>	<i>Sd</i>	<i>KO</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>	$\eta^2$
Gender Equality (Mother)	At most Primary School	115	20.37	6.76	<b>B. Groups</b>	345.19	3	115.06	2.835	.038	.014
	Secondary School	185	20.10	6.43	<b>W. Groups</b>	24111.67	594	40.59			
	High School	170	19.37	5.80	<b>Total</b>	24456.86	597				
	Bachelor and above	128	17.97	6.03							
	Total	598	19.77	6.40							
Gender Equality (Father)	AtmostPrimary School	115	20.09	6.21	<b>B. Groups</b>	172.02	3	57.34	1.403	.241	.007
	Secondary School	185	20.37	6.83	<b>W. Groups</b>	24284.83	594	40.88			
	High School	170	19.51	6.18	<b>Total</b>	24456.86	597				
	Bachelor and above	128	18.97	6.16							
	Total	598	19.77	6.40							

As can be seen in Table 3, the one-way analysis of variance was performed to determine whether the scores of female university students in the sample group from the Gender Equality Scale differ significantly according to the father's education level variable, and the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was not found to be significant ( $F = 1.403$ ;  $p > .05$ ). As a result, gender equality does not differ depending on the father's education level. In addition to this, the calculated effect size ( $\eta^2 = .007$ ) is found to be small according to Cohen (1988). In the light of this value, gender equality can be explained with the father's education variable of % 7.

As can be seen in Table 3, the difference between the arithmetic means of the groups was found significant as a result of the one-way analysis of variance, which was carried out to

determine whether the scores of female university students in the sample group from the Gender Equality Scale differ significantly according to the variable of mother's education level ( $F = 2.835$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Moreover, the calculated effect size ( $\eta^2 = .014$ ) is found to be small according to Cohen (1988). In the light of this value, gender equality can be explained with the mother's education variable of % 14. After this result, complementary analyzes were launched in order to determine the sources (reasons) of the differences. For this reason, firstly the homogeneity of the variances was checked and it was proved to be homogeneous ( $L = 1.75$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Because of this reason, the Scheffe Test was preferred (Kirk, 1968). As a result of the Scheffe Test, it was determined that the difference in question was  $p < .05$  in favor of the primary school graduate group, between the group whose mother was the most elementary school graduate and the group whose mother was a graduate or having a higher degree. The difference between the arithmetic means of the other groups was not regarded as significant ( $p > .05$ ).

### **Analysis Between the Women's Gender Role Stress Scale and the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale and the Gender Equality Scale Scores**

The result of Pearson Moments Multiplication Correlation analysis which was conducted for the purpose of revealing the relationship between Gender Role Stress Scale and Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale, and the result of Regression Analysis carried out in order to reveal to what extent Gender Equality predicted Gender Role Stress and Fear of Negative Evaluation are included here.

**Table 4. The Relationship Between Gender Equality and Women's Gender Role Stress Scores**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>r</b>	<b>p</b>
Gender Equality	598	-.469	.000
Women's Gender Role Stress			

As seen in Table 4, the relationship between the variables was found to be moderately significant as a result of the Pearson analysis, which was conducted to determine whether there was a significant relationship between the scores obtained from the Gender Equality Scale and the Gender Role Stress Scale by female university students in the sample group ( $r = -.469$ ;  $p < .001$ ). As a result, there is a moderately significant negative correlation between gender equality scores of female university students and gender role stress. As the gender equality scores of female university students increase, their gender role stress scores decrease, and as the gender equality scores decrease, the gender role stress scores increase. As a consequence of the case that the analyses were meaningful, regression analysis was conducted to reveal to what extent gender equality predicts gender role stress score.

**Table5. The Summary of Regression Analysis Model of Gender Equality and Women's**

GRS	Statistical Values				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	P
Fixed	103.148	1.796		57.445	.000
Gender Equality	-1.120	.086	-.469	-12.962	.000

**Gender Role Stress Scores**

R= .469    R<sup>2</sup>= .220    F=168.021    p <.001

As seen in Table 5, there are values regarding the explanation of gender role stress in gender equality. Gender equality moderately predicts gender role stress ( $\beta = .47$ ;  $t = -12.962$ ;  $p <.001$ ). As the idea of gender equality increases in female university students, stress levels arising from gender roles increase. Furthermore, in the regression model presented, the coefficient of determination (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>), gender equality as the independent variable, predicts the gender role stress as the dependent variable at a rate of 22. As a result, gender equality of female university students is an important predictor of gender role stress.

**Tablo 6. The Relationship Between Gender Equality and Fear of Negative Evaluation Scores**

Variables	n	r	p
Gender Equality <i>Fear of Negative Evaluation</i>	598	.249	.000

As seen in Table 6, the relationship between the variables was found to be low as a result of the Pearson analysis having been conducted to determine whether there was a significant relationship between the scores obtained from the Gender Equality Scale and the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale by the female university students in the sample group ( $r = .249$ ;  $p <.001$ ). Consequently, there is a low level of positive correlation between the gender equality scores of female university students and the fear of being negatively evaluated by others. As the gender equality scores of female university students increase, their fear of negative evaluation scores increases, and as their gender equality scores decrease, their fear of being negatively evaluated scores also decrease. As a result of the significance of the analysis, regression analysis was carried out in order to reveal how much gender equality predicts the fear of negative evaluation score.

**Table7. Table5. The Summary of Regression Analysis Model of Gender Equality and Fear of Negative Evaluation Scores**

Fear of Negative Evaluation	Statistical Values				
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	P
Fixed	23.606	.982		24.036	.000

Gender Equality	.296	.047	.249	6.272	.000
R= .249	R <sup>2</sup> = .072	F=39.333p <.001			

As seen in Table 7, there are values regarding the explanation of gender equality in fear of negative evaluation. Gender equality predicts fear of negative evaluation ( $= .25$ ;  $t = 24.036$ ;  $p < .001$ ) at a low level. As the idea of gender equality decreases among female university students, the fear of negative evaluation increases. Moreover, in the regression model presented, the coefficient of determination (adjusted R<sup>2</sup>), gender equality as the independent variable, predicts the fear of negative evaluation, which is the dependent variable, with a rate of .072. As a conclusion, gender equality of female university students does not have a significant effect on the fear of negative evaluation.

## DISCUSSION

According to the analysis in which the scores of female university students from the Gender Equality Scale were examined by age variable, gender equality does not bring out indications about a significant difference according to age. According to the research findings of Ergüt and Camkiran (2018) on the awareness of gender inequality; it was jumped into the conclusion that gender equality did not change depending on age. Additionally, Günay and Bener (2011) worked with women aged 15-55 in their study in which they examined women's perception of domestic life within the framework of gender roles. Similar to our research findings, they concluded that the gender equality level of women did not change according to their age levels. The reason why women's gender equality thought did not change depending on age may be due to the fact that women are exposed to role inequality arising from gender roles in developmental tasks at all age levels and that women at all age levels call for gender equality. Regarding human rights, it is also an expected issue that women want equality in gender issues.

The scores obtained by female university students from the Gender Equality Scale do not show significant differences according to their grade levels. This situation is the indicator of the assumption that the idea of gender equality does not change according to the class level of the students. Similar to this finding, Aylaz, Güneş, Uzun, and Ünal (2014), in their research findings after having examined the views of university students on gender role, concluded that gender equality did not change depending on the class level. Dusmez (2016) investigated gender role attitudes in a study that he carried out with 302 female university students. According to the research findings, gender roles and egalitarian attitudes of female university students do not differ significantly depending on the grade level. The reason why women's gender equality thought does not change depending on the class level may mostly cause from the lack of any gender education during their university education.

The scores obtained by female university students from the Gender Equality Scale do not crucially differ according to the education level of the father. This situation indicates that the idea of gender equality does not change according to the education level of the students' fathers. Aylaz, Güneş, Uzun, and Ünal (2014), in their research findings examining university students' views on gender role, stated that similar to this finding, gender equality did not change depending on the educational level of the father. In the study conducted by Çetinkaya (2013) with university students, it was jumped into the conclusion that the education status of the fathers had no effect on gender roles. According to the findings of the research conducted by

Düşmez (2016) on female university students, the gender role and egalitarian attitudes of female university students do not show significant changes according to the education level of their fathers. This may explain why the father's education level is not influential on children's gender ideas, as the role of parenting in traditional societies is attributed to mothers.

According to the results of the analysis examining the scores of female university students from the Gender Equality Scale according to the variable of mother's education level, a significant difference was found only among one group. The difference in question was found to be in favor of the primary school graduate group between female university students whose mothers were primary school graduates at most and female university students whose mothers were undergraduate and above graduates. Accordingly, it can be said that female university students whose mothers are primary school graduates have more thoughts about seeing men as superior to women and that women are dependent on men than students whose mothers are undergraduate and graduates. In the light of this case, it is concluded that as the education level of the mother increases, the gender equality opinion of women increases. Supporting our research findings; Aylaz, Güneş, Uzun and Ünal (2014) in their research findings examining the views of university students on gender role, they stated that gender equality may vary depending on the education level of the mother. According to the results of the research, it was observed that as the education level of the mothers increased, the traditional attitudes of the students got into declined. Similar to our research results, Çetinkaya (2013) found in his study on university students that as the education levels of the students increase, their attitudes towards gender roles are positively affected. This situation may be associated with the fact that the child spends more time together with the mother since birth and the gender role played by the mother in the house has more influences on the child. At the same time, as the education level of the mother increases, it may be possible to become more role models in egalitarian attitude and to contribute to the awareness on this issue in the process of bringing up her child.

A moderately important correlation was found between the points that female university students got from the Gender Equality Scale and the scores they got from the Gender Role Stress Scale. Consequently, there is a moderately significant negative correlation between gender equality scores of female university students and gender role stress ( $r = -.469$ ;  $p < .001$ ). According to the study, in this case, as the scores obtained from the gender equality scale (considering men superior to women and thinking that women are dependent on men) increase, gender role stress decreases. In other words, the more egalitarian thinking increases, the higher the stress gets. Additionally, gender equality implies gender role stress by 22%. Bayar and friends (2017) ended up with the results that support our research findings, as a consequence of their research examining gender role stress, understanding of dignity(honor) and gender role attitudes among female university students. He also stated that the stress of the female gender role was associated with the traditional gender role, egalitarian gender role, egalitarian understanding of dignity (honor), and traditional understanding of dignity(honor). According to the United Nations Human Rights Council (2014), positive or negative judgments might be formed against the roles that the gender role imposes on people. Even if gender roles are egalitarian expressions in a society in which traditional roles are dominant, the process of reflecting these roles to real life may cause women to face with difficulties and stress. Sherman (2010) discussed the relationship between gender, gender role stress, anger and anxiety

variables in his study on university students. The relationship between gender scores and stress was found to be significant according to the research findings, which also supports our study.

The relationship between the scores obtained by female university students from the Gender Equality Scale and the ones they obtained from the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale was found to be important at a low level. As a result, there is a low level of meaningful positive correlation between the gender equality scores of female university students and the fear of negative evaluation ( $r = .249$ ;  $p < .001$ ). According to the research, as the idea of gender inequality increases, the fear of negative evaluation increases. It can be put forward that the women who regard men as superior to women and who think that women are dependent on men tend to act more in line with the expectations of the society and take other people's comments more into consideration. Furthermore, gender equality gives insight into the fear of negative evaluation by 7%. Yet, this rate is very low. Ümmet (2007) studied the relationship between university students' social anxiety and gender roles in a study with university students. In the findings of his study, similar results were revealed as in our study, and it was concluded that social anxiety levels differ at a considerable level according to gender roles.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The main purpose of this study is to examine the predictive effect of gender equality of female university students on gender role stress and fear of negative evaluation.

As a consequence of our research; the scores of female university students from the Gender Equality Scale do not significantly differ regarding the age variable, grade level, and father education level. Nevertheless, the scores obtained by female university students from the Gender Equality Scale show significant differences for only one group according to the variable of mother's education level. The difference in question is in favor of the most primary school graduate group among female university students whose mothers are mostly primary school graduates and female university students whose mothers are undergraduate and higher degrees.

As a result of our research; the scores obtained by female university students from the Gender Role Stress Scale do not show a significant difference according to the age variable, grade level, and father's education level. However, the scores obtained by female university students from the Gender Role Stress Scale significantly differ between the two groups according to the variable of mother's education level. The difference in question is in favor of the high school graduate group among female university students whose mothers are mostly primary school graduates and secondary school graduates, and female university students whose mothers are high school graduates.

As a result of our research; the scores obtained by female university students from the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale do not differ significantly according to the age variable, grade level, and father's education level. Yet, the scores obtained by female university students from the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale differ significantly between only one group according to the variable of mother's education level. The difference in question is in favor of the group whose mother is the most primary school graduate and the group whose mother is secondary school graduate.

As a result of our study, a moderately crucial relationship was found between the scores of female university students obtained from the Gender Equality Scale and the scores they obtained from the Gender Role Stress Scale. Gender equality predicts gender role stress by 22%.

As a result of our study, a low level important relationship was found between the scores of female university students obtained from the Gender Equality Scale and the scores they received from the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale. Gender equality predicts fear of negative evaluation 7%.

### **Suggestions for Future(Prospective) Studies**

1. Research findings were attained with students studying at Çukurova University, Marmara University and Yıldız Technical University. Repeating these and similar studies with sample of from different provinces, universities and departments may increase the likelihood of generalizing the results.
2. Whether gender equality of female university students predicted gender role stress and fear of negative evaluation was investigated in this study. With a different analysis, the mediating effects of women's gender equality, gender role stress and fear of negative evaluation can be examined and a model proposal can be presented for the formation of the concept of gender.
3. In the study, gender role equality, gender role stress and fear of negative evaluation were examined only through the female sample. As stated in the literature, women are not the only ones affected by gender equality and inequality. Men may experience negative emotions due to the gender roles imposed on them, and this may have negative effects on their mental health. Therefore, it may be suggested that a similar study be conducted on men.
4. Conducting studies using experimental method can reveal new perspectives. It may be beneficial to carry out experimental studies aimed at raising awareness of gender equality and increasing the level of gender equality among female and male university students, or examining the effect of gender equality education on the relationships of married couples.

### **Suggestions for Implementation**

Psychological well-being and mental health of individuals living in communities are the two vital factors for the continuity of these societies. Organizing seminars, radio and television programs, and public service ads may contribute to emphasize the impact of gender roles on individuals and gender equality. Services such as marriage schools and family counseling can be expanded to ensure equality between men and women in marriages.

The stress of women resulting from gender equality implies that men should also have this egalitarian view. Furthermore, studies to raise awareness on gender equality in universities and in state schools with national education might be crucial.

Activities and guidance activities based on gender equality can be organized in educational institutions to make sure that women and men receive gender equality much earlier.

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