Ambivalent Sexism and Gender as Predictors of Turkish College Students' Attitudes toward Women Managers

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore how ambivalent sexism (hostile sexism/benevolent sexism) and gender predict attitudes toward women managers in Turkish college students, where the societal culture can be identified as a mixture of modern and traditional values. Turkish undergraduate students (N = 145) who were enrolled in Leadership Theory and Practices course from Anadolu University completed scales of Ambivalent Sexism, and Attitudes toward Women Managers (ATWoM). Results of the research suggest that men participants experienced less positive attitudes toward women managers than did women participants. Furthermore, regression analysis revealed that hostile sexism and gender were the predictors of attitudes toward women managers. Participants who scored high on hostile sexism also endorsed less favorable attitudes toward women managers than did those lower on hostile sexism. The contribution of benevolent sexism on the attitudes of women managers was insignificant. Implications of the findings are discussed for future research.

Keywords: attitudes, hostile sexism, gender role stereotypes, women managers

Introduction

There is an extensive research indicating the unbalanced representation of women in managerial roles. Regardless of developed or developing countries, underrepresentation of women in positions of authority is a global phenomenon (Schein et al., 1996), and is partly due to gender typing of management role and sexism. To fully understand the roots of gender discrimination or workplace discrimination, it is necessary to evaluate attitudes toward women in managerial roles. As Duehr and Bono (2006) stated, the increased rate of women in managerial positions and increased focus on diversity in organizations render the need to review gender stereotypes. The purpose of the present study was to investigate how ambivalent sexism predict attitudes toward women managers in a sample of Turkish college students, where the national culture carries both traditional and modern characteristics. Additionally, gender, as an important predictor affecting many issues such as occupational preferences or occupational stereotypes, would also be examined in present study.

New conceptualization of sexism possesses a peculiar characteristic that involves a mixture of hostile and benevolent types. Female and male stereotypes, based on a perspective that strengths and weaknesses of both complement each other, foster ambivalent attitudes toward disadvantaged group of women (Glick and Fiske; 1996, 2001). Besides, role justification which depicts unequal division of labor also rationalize system justification which creates balanced benefits and status quo in societies (Jost and Kay, 2005). Gender stereotypes may actually bias judgments in female incompetence and portray women as lacking of relevant qualities required for managerial positions.

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As a non-Western country, Turkey has a cultural/political context which is under the authoritarian tendencies of religious conservatism (Kömeçoğlu, 2013), and also embraces a privilege importance to familialism acting as a source of support and conflict for working women (Aycan and Eskin, 2005). The prominent unique aspects of the Country highlights the need to understand the issues with an emphasis on attitudes toward women managers. Firstly, the major contribution of the present study was to determine the relationship between ambivalent sexism, gender and attitudes toward women managers. Secondly, the present study provides to compare the effects of sex difference and ambivalent sexism on attitudes toward women managers. The results of the study are specifically expected to shed light on the discussions like workplace discrimination, gender diversity or workplace sexual harassment and etc.

Draw upon these highlights, the present study firstly discusses conceptual linkages between ambivalent sexism and gender typing of managerial roles. Under the explanation of Turkish context and women manager profile in Turkey, the present paper empirically investigates the research questions that assume a relationship between sexism, plus gender and attitudes toward women managers.

Ambivalent Sexism Theory and Evaluations of Women for Managerial Positions

Ambivalent sexism was first conceptualized by Glick and Fiske (1996) to understand sexism is a form of prejudice, which encompasses two independent types of sexist attitudes, namely benevolent sexism and hostile sexism. Not only hostile sexism, but also benevolent sexism produce and justify gender inequality between men and women. The benevolent sexist attitude and belief that women ought to be protected helped and adored stems from the dyadic power of women (men have to rely on women as caretakers/nurtures of children and fulfillment of sexual needs). The dual dependency of men on women provides a rationalization to perceive women have a positive trait that complements those of men, and best conventional for traditional gender roles. Thus three underlying source of benevolent sexism can be summarized as protective paternalism, complementary gender differentiation, and heterosexual intimacy (intimate feeling toward women) (Glick and Fiske, 1996).

Hostile sexism presents the tendency that women are incompetent to rule or govern important social institutions. It has three dimensions, namely dominative paternalism, competitive gender differentiation and hostile sexuality (Glick and Fiske, 1996). Dominative paternalism, which justifies patriarchy, views women as incomplete individuals who need to be supervised and dominated by males.Competitive gender differentiation highlights man power and devalue women competencies. The last dimension hostile sexuality sees women as sex objects and as threatening for male dominance. (Glick and Fiske, 1996).

Cross-cultural analysis of the model verifies that benevolent sexism and hostile sexism as a distinct constructs, are complementary and positively correlated with each other (Glick and Fiske, 1996; Masser and Abrams, 2004). They can be simultaneously endorsed in varying degrees by the same individuals. At first look, benevolent sexism can be regarded as a subjective favorable attitude, but the outcomes point out that benevolent sexism as a stereotypical attitude, generates a positive evaluation of traditional women subtyped as homemakers (Glick and Fiske, 1997; Barreto and Ellemers, 2005), and legitimates male dominance ideology which is based on the belief that women are weak and incompetent (Glick and Fiske, 2001). There is also a relationship between benevolent sexism and the country's gender inequality degree (Glick et al., 2000). Where the national culture promotes men's hostile behaviors and attitudes, women prefer to accept men's protection and admiration as a self-protection to cope with hostile sexism (Fischer, 2006; Glick et al, 2000). Thus, in sexist nations like Turkey, as long as men prefer to endorse hostile attitudes, women prefer to endorse benevolent attitudes (Glick et al., 2002, Sakallı-Uğurlu and Glick, 2003).

Multidimensional forms of sexism also take place in organizational settings, and lead to gender discrimination, glass cliff and gender inequality in workplace. In the early 1970s Schein's empirical investigations of managerial sex role stereotyping revealed that societies perceive women and men's qualifications and capabilities are different from each other (Schein, 1975). Leadership as a male-dominance occupation is more subtle to men's qualifications in global context (Schein, 2001; Heilman et al, 1989). As a result of both types of sexism, women are evaluated negatively for managerial positions (Masser and Abrams, 2004), or for promotion (Rudman and Glick, 1999; Feather and Boeckmann, 2007). When the female candidates are perceived as a threat for a masculine-typed positions, hostile sexism creates lower employment recommendation for female candidates, and serves to foster glass ceiling for masculine-typed positions (Masser and Abrams, 2004). The individuals who have a higher score on hostile sexism, have less favorable attitudes toward women managers. Both types of sexism also promotes negative evaluations for nontraditional female subtypes for career women (Sakallı-Uğurlu and Beydoğan, 2002; Özkan, 2006). They have perceived as less competent and less suitable for managerial positions (Fiske et al., 2002).

Gender-Typing of Managerial Roles

Role congruity theory, grounded in social role theory (Eagly, 1987), assumes that gender roles attributed to women are inconsistent with leadership roles (Eagly and Karau, 2002). As Duehr and Bono (2006, pp.816) stated "gender stereotypes are categorical beliefs regarding the traits and behavioral characteristics ascribed to individuals on the basis of their gender". The information about status and role generates stereotypical attributes (Eagly and Steffen, 1984). Descriptive aspects of stereotypes are called as traits and attributes that are thought to uniquely describe men/women. Communal characteristics which describe primarily a concern with the welfare of other people, such as kind, helpful, caring, gentle, sentimental and affectionate are ascribed to women, whereas agentic (masculine) characteristics like assertive, active, dominant, confident, forceful, independent and ambitious are attributed to men (Bakan, 1966). Communal traits, as important predictors of family roles, are found unrelated with occupational roles. On the other hand agentic traits are an important contributor of career success (Abele, 2003).

Despite the fact that the disparity of agentic traits exhibited by women and men are getting smaller (Spence and Buckner, 2000), major sex inequalities persist at in access to certain favored occupations (Özbilgin and Woodward, 2004). It is important to mention that managerial roles primarily contain schemas which women are seen as a poor fit. There is a natural/inevitable intention to stereotype men as authority figures and to show prejudice against female authorities (Rudman and Kilianski, 2000). Because of the fact that management is aligned with agentic characteristics, women are less favorably stereotyped than men for managerial roles, and the agency related behaviors enacted by women to fulfill the prescriptions of leadership role are negatively evaluated (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Sümer, 2006; Cuadrado et al., 2015). *Prescriptive bias,* stemming from inconsistency between female sex roles and managerial roles is occurred when women adopt a masculine type of managerial behaviors and the others perceive them negatively (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001, Elsesser and Lever, 2011; Johnson et al., 2008).

However, the positive changes in perception of gender stereotypes have occurred, still men tend to view women as possessing fewer of the qualities aligned with successful managers (Duehr and Bono, 2006). In line with this view, Haslam et al. (2010) found that investors expect a decline in organizational performance when the company board is represented by women. As a reflection of lack-of-fit model (Heilman, 2001) which results in *descriptive bias*, men's stereotypical beliefs related to women's being incompetent and unsuitable for leadership role underlie negative expectations in future poor performance of organizations. Unless there is fit between gender type of the job and the gender stereotype of the individual, incongruence or mismatch assures negative expectations about the performance of the individual. It is noteworthy to mention that the matching process mostly work against women and in favor of men in working settings (Heilman, 2012). Thus, this understanding reinforces the belief that "good managers are men" (Sümer, 2006).

The Turkish Context and Women Managers in Turkey

Turkey is a salient country with a secular democratic state which has a predominantly Muslim population (Esmer, 2008; Bolak-Boratav, 2009). Turkish Republic was founded in 1923. The founder of Atatürk envisioned a modern country and in line with the principles of nationalism, secularism and republicanism, he has broken new ground in the secular reforms, such as Civil Code in 1926 (adapted from the Swiss Civil Code), Educational Reform Act in 1924, women full suffrage in 1934.

Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve KalkınmaPartisi-AKP), which swept into power in the general elections of 2002 and won 34 percent of the votes, rules the country. The party has emerged with Islamic discourse in public life and it has continued to encounter criticism and suspicion from Turkey's secular political institutions. Turkish society has got a more inclination towards conservatism and religiousness. AKP experience in Turkey has provided a conservative value domain which results in widening of political, cultural, societal polarization (Keyman, 2010). The government carried some sort of legal reforms such as Article 41 of the Constitution which provides balanced role responsibilities between spouses, or Labor Code (No:4857) which is clearly indicated "sexual harassment in the workplace" were enacted. It can be stated that the period of societal modernization has fallen back on religious discourse, and has created Turkish women "modern but modest" (Bolak-Boratav, 2011, pp.27).

Family-centered society and perception of women as mother-wife have resulted in a persistent lack of female power in labor market (Sancar and Bulut, 2006). According to the data of 2013, women employment rate in Turkey is 27.1 %. This rate is dramatically below when compared with EU-18 (58.2 %) and EU-28 (58.7 %). Through the World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap (2014), Turkey ranked 125th among 142 countries. On the economic participation and opportunity subindex, Turkey is one of the lowest ranking countries (132th). 2014 Human Development Report states that Turkey places in high human development category and ranked 69 out of 187 countries in human development index. This high human development standard cannot be reflected to the index of gender inequality. Turkey has a place as 69th among 187 countries.

The number of women in total workforce was 30.2 % in April, 2014 (Turkish Statistical Institute, 2015). Relevant to the gender role stereotype, women in Turkey especially work in the areas of education, health. The percentage of women employed in agriculture is 37 %, in industry 15.3 %, and in service sector is 47.7 % in 2013. With respect to the working role, only 1.2 % of women worked as an employer in 2013. According to the Women in Business and Management Global Report of International Labour Organization (ILO), percentage of senior and middle level women managers in Turkey was %14.4 (2012).

When we consider academic literature, the results about gender role stereotypes are also worth to take into consideration. Gender stereotypes have a closed relationship with the differences in value orientations of female and male individuals. For example, a study conducted on Turkish college students (Dirilen-Gümüş and Büyükşahin-Sunal, 2012) mentioned that females had higher scores on universalism, benevolence and security values than males. The role of birth-giving and caring children and elders may support women to hold more benevolent type of values. Also their lower social and economic status lead them to show sensitivity to the issues like justice, therefore justifies an important attribution to universalism. Female's dependence on male's protection may also express a desire for security to compensate for the imbalanced of dependency based relationship. As Bardiand Schwartz (2003) mentioned individuals tend to cherish values like benevolence or security to satisfy their defensive needs or to build non-threatening relations.

Sakallı (2002) pointed out the strong relationship between hostile sexism and negative attitudes toward homosexuality. Under the view of ambivalent model, Turkish male college students were more sexist and held more negative attitudes toward them. In line with this study, Glick et al. (2002) also stated hostile sexism was the most powerful predictor of attitudes toward wife abuse in Turkey and Brazil. Benevolent sexism also legitimized violence against wives. After all, all these studies have mentioned that managerial role is evaluated as a masculine stereotype and therefore is thought as more favorable for men. This evolution and perception reinforces barriers for women to build a career life in advance. In line with this view, it is a need to understand the attitudes toward women in managers, while the numbers of the studies are restricted.

The Purpose of the Present Study

Present study have explored the influence of ambivalent sexism and gender on attitudes toward women managers in a sample of Turkish college students. The participants were fromFaculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences due to the fact that they will be employees and managers in the future. The assumption here is to analyze and accumulate information about attitudes toward women managers will help us to foresee future behaviors and perceptions towards them and able us to take precautions. As Schein, Müller and Jacobson (1989) declared in their research, there is a similarity in the pattern of attitudes between management students and managers in corporations.

On the bases of the preceding review, the research questions of the present study can be stated as:

1. *How do gender influence hostile (HS) and benevolent sexism (BS)? What are the correlations between gender, HS; BS and attitudes toward women managers (ATWoM)? It is expected that women to embody more positive attitudes toward women managers than men.*
2. *How would gender and hostile and benevolent sexism predict attitudes toward women managers? It is specifically expected that gender and hostile sexism would be the most important predictors of attitudes toward women managers (ATWoM).*

Materials and Methods

Participants and Procedure

The participants were 145 (83 women, 62 men) Turkish undergraduate students from Anadolu University who were enrolled in Leadership Theory and Practices course (elective) in Fall Semester (2014). Their mean ages were 21.30 years (SD = .997) for women, and 21.60 years (SD = 1.152) for men. Education level of the mothers are relatively weak; 62.8 % of them were graduated from primary and secondary school. 49 % of the fathers were graduated from primary and secondary school. The sample was of the middle and upper class, and mostly from urban backgrounds. They consented to participate in research and were given extra credit for filling out the questionnaire forms.

Measures

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI): The 22-item of ASI was used to evaluate hostile sexism (11 item) and benevolent sexism (11 item). ASI was developed by Glick and Fiske (1996) and adopted to Turkish version by Sakallı-Uğurlu (2002) as part of a cross-cultural study (Glick et al., 2002). Cronbach's alpha for hostile sexism and benevolent sexism were .86 and .77, respectively. Sample item for benevolent sexism was "In a disaster, women ought not necessarily to be rescued before men"; and for hostile sexism was "Women are too easily offended". Participants indicated their level of agreement with each items on a seven point Likert type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Higher scores on the main dimensions of hostile sexism and benevolent sexism indicates having more hostile or benevolent sexist attitudes toward women.

The results of the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the subscales revealed that item 17 from the Benevolent sexism subscale wasfound to have relatively lower degree of item-total correlations and found to decrease alpha coefficients of the subscale. Therefore, the item was extracted from the scale in the present study. The final Cronbach's alpha coefficient was found as .69 for Benevolent sexism scale. Cronbach's alpha for Hostile sexism was .85; which revealed reliable internal consistency. The alpha coefficient for the whole scale, which was composed of 21 items (item 17 was deleted) was found to be .83. Mean scores on those subscales were used to measure benevolent sexism and hostile sexism, respectively.

Attitudes toward Women Manageners (ATWoM): This instrument was developed by Aycan, Bayazıt, Berkman and Bolak-Boratav (2012). Data were collected from Turkish employees and junior-senior undergraduate. The results of the ATWoM's psychometric properties were reliable and valid. A total of 27 items (14 items were reverse coded) were generated. Internal consistency of the whole scale was .91 for employees, and .90 for students. Three factors, namely Task role behavior (Cronbach's alpha = .91), Relational role behavior (Cronbach's alpha = .90), and Work ethic of women managers (Cronbach's alpha = .70), were obtained. Sample items were "………. are lost in detail" (reverse coded), or "…………. are good listeners." Participants indicated their level of agreement with each items on a seven point Likert type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). High scores on scale refers positive attitudes toward women management.

In present study, Cronbach's alpha for the entirescale was .90. Mean scores on the scale was used to measure attitudes toward women managers.

Results

Table 1 presents Pearson's correlation coefficients among all the study variables. Gender was positively correlated with hostile sexism (r = .31, p < .01), and negatively correlated with attitudes toward women management (r = -.43, p< .01). HS and BS were moderately and positively correlated with each other (r = .35, p < .01) suggesting that they are related, but still distinct subtypes of sexist ideologies. Whereas the correlation between hostile sexism and benevolent sexism was modest, hostile sexism was strongly and negatively correlated with attitudes toward women managers(r = -.56, p < .01). Benevolent sexism was insignificantly correlated with attitudes toward women.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelationsamong Research Variables

Variables	Min-Max[a]	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1.Gender	1-2				-.14	.31**	-.43**
2.BS	1.90-6.70	4.73	.90		(.69)	.35**	-.03
3.HS	1.00-7.00	4.37	1.00			(.85)	-.56**
4.AToWM	1.22-6.52	4.68	.78				(.90)
Note: Values in parentheses at the diagonal indicate Cronbach's alpha reliabilities. BS= Benevolent sexism; HS= Hostile sexism; AToWM= Attitudes toward women managers [a] Observed variable ranges (possible variable range for all variables = 1-7, except for gender, which has range 1-2). ** p< .010							

Low and high groups on hostile sexism were formed by using median split as the cutting point (low vs. high; *Mdn*= 49). Therefore hostile sexism can be utilized as an independent variable. ANCOVA (benevolent sexism as a covariate) was performed to explore, by gender, whether participants' hostile sexism influence attitudes toward women managers. Results of the analysis yielded a very strong main effects. Of the main effects of hostile sexism, $F(1, 137) = 15.94$, $p= .000$, $\eta2 =.09$; and gender, $F(1, 137) = 23.54$, $p= .000$, $\eta2 =.10$, were statistically significant. As expected, women were found to embody more favorable attitudes toward women managers.

Participants who had higher scores on hostile sexism held less positive attitudes toward women managers (*M* =4.38, *SD* = .083) than participants who scored low in hostile sexism (*M* = 4.83, *SD* = .083). Concerning the participants' gender effect, male participants had less favorable attitudes toward women managers (*M* = 4.33, *SD* = .090) than did female participants (*M* = 4.91, *SD* = .075).

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive power of gender, benevolent sexism and hostile sexism on attitudes toward women managers. There was no multicollinearity problem for the analysis because the predictor variables were not themselves highly correlated (see Table 1). In the first step, gender was added into the equation model; and in the second step benevolent and hostile sexism were added into the model. Accordingly, results of hierarchical regression analysis indicated that gender was significant predictor of attitudes toward women managers (β=-.43, t= -5.615, *p*<.001). While gender explained 18% of the variance in attitudes toward women management, in the second step, when benevolent and hostile sexism were entered into equation together, a 21% increment was achieved in the variance explained, only the contribution of hostile sexism (β= -.52, t= -6.785, *p*<.001) was significant. Thus, in line with the expectations of the present study, both gender and hostile sexism predicted attitudes toward women managers. Hostile sexism was more important than gender for explaining less favorable attitudes toward women managers.

Table 2: Results of the Hierarchical Regression Analyses for Attitudes toward Women Managers

Predictor Variables	B	SD	β	R^2	ΔR^2
1st Step				.185	.179
Gender	-.677	.121	-.430*		
2nd Step				.396	.383
Gender	-.394	.115	-.250*		
BS	.099	.064	.114		
HS	-.404	.059	-.522*		

Note: Centered scores were used. BS = Benevolent sexism; HS = Hostile sexism; * p< .001

Discussion

The present study contributed to the understanding of the sources of attitudes to women managers in several ways. First, the results demonstrated consistent relationship of gender to attitudes toward women managers.

The male participants had a higher score in negative attitudes toward women managers than had female participants, in congruence with the related literature (Schein, Müller and Jacobson, 1989; Sakallı-Uğurlu and Beydoğan, 2002).Women in generally held the belief that men and women are equal to be qualified managers (Schein, 2001; Schein et al., 1996). Managerial sex typing is more common among male and creates one of the major barrier for women in advance.Despite the increased equivalence in the managerial positions, sex typingis still a barrier to evaluate women's real performance and competence (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Powell, Butterfield and Parent, 2002; Rudman and Kilianski, 2000).

Second, the results points that specifically hostile sexism predicted negative attitudes toward women managers, thereby supporting the expectations of the present study, based on ambivalent sexism theory. The results corroborated the emphasis of hostile sexism on legitimizing unfavorable evaluations of women managers, which were in conjunction with the past research (Sakallı-Uğurlu and Beydoğan, 2002; Masser and Abrams, 2004).

Furthermore, benevolent sexism did not uniquely predict negative attitudes toward women managers. This type of sexism primarily contains protective attitudes to women who conform to traditional roles (Glick et al., 2000). It seems plausible that to the extent that individuals associate women with traditional roles, women continue to be perceived as a disadvantaged group. Thus, the result in general showed that hostile sexist attitudes might create an organizational climate from women that that might lead them to perform less work and get less success. Furthermore, the prejudiced attitudes against women may lead to apply for the jobs which are classified as "women jobs".

The findings of the present study overlapped with the recent history of the Turkish modernization process. The political regulationsof the Turkey has formed as "family type modernization" which has been utilized by governments to ruin the society. This type of formation has been supported by the initiatives of women to found a family, and of men to found a state (Sancar, 2012).

For future studies, it might help to measure attitudes toward women managers in other cultures. In addition, how ambivalent sex attitudes change in different organizational types should be explored. Family business or third sector organizations could reveal a different perspective about the effect of gender on attitudes toward women managers. Also, in organizational settings, it is more apt to conduct intervention programs to minimize sexist attitudes. Also, to possess in-depth information about the predictors of ambivalent sexist attitudes, women can realize that benevolent sexism is a powerful source of gender inequality.

Appendix

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory

1. No manner how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman.
2. Many women are actually seeking special favors, such as hiring policies that favor them over men, under the guise of asking for "equality."
3. In a disaster, women ought to be rescued before men.
4. Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.
S. Women are too easily offended.
6. People are not truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex.
7. Feminists are seeking for women to have more power than men.
8. Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.
9. Women should be cherished and protected by men.
10. Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them.
II. Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.
12. Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.
13. Men are incomplete without women.

14. Women exaggerate problems they have at work.

15. Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.

16. When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.

17. A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.

18. Many women get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.

19. Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.

20. Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.

21. Feminists are making unreasonable demands of men.

22. Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste.

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