THE LIMITS OF FATHERING: UNDER THE SWAY OF MATERNAL GATEKEEPING

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The fact that mothers started to take a more active role in business life, started to change the traditional understanding of parenting, and the father-child relationship and its effects became more important. In this context, the concept of maternal gatekeeping, which has become more important, refers to the mother's supervision of the father's attempts to be included in the domestic life and the child's life. There are eight subtypes of maternal gatekeeping and it is examined in three dimensions: encouragement, discouragement, control. The current study aims to investigate the relationship between maternal gatekeeping perceived by fathers and father involvement.

For this purpose, Turkish adaptation of the Maternal Gatekeeping Scale-Father Form and the validity and reliability analysis of the scale was completed. The sample of the study consisted of 300 fathers of 3-7 years old children. The participants completed the Demographic Information Form, Father Involvement Scale and Maternal Gatekeeping Scale-Father Form. According to the descriptive statistics, the most commonly perceived gatekeeping type by fathers is the traditional gateblocker in which the level of the encouragement is low; the least perceived gatekeeping is apathetic gatemanager in which, encouragement and discouragement are low and the control is high. Partners of mothers with low levels of education often perceive discouragement and control; the negative perceptions of gatekeeping perceived by fathers are reduced as the duration of marriage and the age of the child increase. Fathers often find encouragement in the care of children in families with more than one child. ANOVA analysis showed that, the father who perceived facilitative gatekeeping showed the highest level of father involvement.

Research results are important to show the effect of maternal behaviors on the fatherhood role and they are discussed within the framework of father vulnerability hypothesis.