

Gender Role Perception among the Awra Amba Community

Seid Ebrie*

Department of Psychology, College of Social Sciences and Languages, Mekelle University, Mekelle, Ethiopia

*Corresponding author: seayoo60@yahoo.com

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Abstract The objective of this study was to discover the influence of age and sex on gender role perception of the Awra Amba community. For this purpose, a total of 180 participants (from 403 total Awra Amba population), 60 from three age groups (children, adolescents and adults), 30 from two sex groups (male and female) were selected by using stratified random sampling method. Two different instruments (Personal Attribute Questionnaire and Social Role Questionnaire) were adapted and pilot tested. For data analysis, descriptive statistics, One-Way ANOVA and independent t-test were employed. In relation to the major findings, there is a statistically significant difference in gender role perception among the Awra Amba children, adolescents and adults. While children hold stereotypic and traditional gender role perception, adolescents and adults demonstrate androgynous and egalitarian gender role perception. Besides, egalitarian and non-traditional gender role perception increases with age in the Awra Amba community when one grows older from childhood to adolescence and adulthood. Finally, there was no statistically significant difference between the Awra Amba males and females in gender role perception. Both males' and females' gender role perception is androgynous and egalitarian or non-traditional.

Keywords: Awra Amba, gender, gender role, perception

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1. Introduction

Apart from the biological variations that differentiate females from males, there are psychosocial facets of society that make boundaries for behavior manifestations that are considered "appropriate" for each sex. These psychosocial pressures would directly or indirectly dictate every member of the society to act according to the norms that govern the behaviors specified for males and females. The community spells out some of the rules and regulations clearly in black and white and their effect would be direct on the behavior of its members. However, others remain latent whose influences are not explicitly comprehended by members of a society. Thus, whatever the way of acquiring gender specific knowledge, the set of societal expectations for behaving, thinking and feeling that is based on a person's biological sex is labeled as gender roles.

As recent theorists (Bockting, 1999; Bohan, 2002; Kimmel, 2000; Maurer, 1999) have claimed that, gender system is socially constructed. Religious, political, educational, communication and occupational institutions create and enforce expectations for how women and men should behave in societies. However, the expectations might differ across different cultures. How we express our maleness or femaleness varies widely from one social context to another. The roles and role expectations confronting the individual deeply influence her/his

development, self identification and general adjustment. As Mead (cited in Santrock, 2006) explained sex, like age is a determinant of position that creates certain role expectations in all societies even if they differ much from society to society. Children develop positive or negative perception about gender roles through their socialization processes in their respective cultures. In every culture, children are expected to learn the differences between sexes and acquire behaviors believed to be "appropriate" for their own sex. In relation to this, Feldman et al. (1990) points out that, not only are boys and girls expected to acquire gender typed skills, they are also expected to have or gain gender typed self-concept and attitudes to be masculine or feminine as defined by their culture.

Bem (1981) states, although culture differ in the specific tasks they assign to the two sexes, all societies allocate adult roles on the basis of gender and anticipate this allocation in the socialization of their children. Socialization processes begins in the family. Studies show that when the attitude of traditional fathers and modern fathers seen separately, children of conservative fathers show higher knowledge of gender and gender typed beliefs than children of modern fathers. In connection with this, Kagan and Mischel, (cited in Tesfaye, 1997) state that, traditional parents may teach their children by telling what roles are appropriate for boys and girls and by praising or pushing when she or he conforms to or violates acceptable "standard" of behavior.

As Farrell (1995) points out that, high expectations of men can be enormous burdens for them. Real men are

expected to be tough “big boys don’t cry” and fearless. They are supposed to be logical and practical, not emotional and idealistic. Similarly, the expectation is high on women, too. As BepeKo and Krestan (1990) there is a “goodness code” for women to be attractive and sexy, lady like, unselfish and thoughtful, ensure that everyone is getting along and be competent. These rules are pervasive that they seem to “come natural” to women.

So far, many researchers have revealed structural inequalities in the form of values, goals including income, wealth, status, political power, health, education, employment opportunities, housing and freedom within societies across nation and over time. There are some indicators that show how the stereotypic views determine opportunities in life. Due to such a stereotypical gender roles, females’ activities and duties are limited to home and their access to school and educational opportunities is very minimal, especially in developing countries. A recent analysis by (UNICEF, 2004) found that a higher percentage of girls than boys around the world have never had any education. The countries with the fewest females being educated are in Africa, where in some areas girls and women are receiving no education at all. According to the statistics of the (United Nations, 2002), at the beginning of the twenty-first century, 80 million more boys than girls were in primary and secondary educational settings around the world. As a result females’ share of unemployed and illiterate is shockingly large and still they contribute majority of the poor.

Examining about the perception of gender roles in the Awra Amba community has its own rationale. It is obvious that, equality in terms of personal freedom, work, payment, employment and the like are very critical for social, political, economical and cultural issues. Among other things, gender role stereotypes are one of the major obstacles to achieve such developments, particularly in the developing world.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Stereotypic perceptions of men and women towards different roles have been the points of attention for many researchers outside of Ethiopia. While some researchers reported a changing conception of gender role stereotypes among men and women, others pointed out that even college education does not bring a significant change in students’ gender role stereotypic perspectives, Smith, Morrison & Wolf (cited in yalew, 1997).

At present the Ethiopian government, different women groups and NGOs are making efforts in assessing the role of women in the society. The intended objective is to maintain gender equality in every aspect of the human life. Along with such efforts, a number of studies have been done by different researchers at different time and places. For instance, Ababayehu, 1995; Misrak & Taye, 2007; Seyoum, 1986; Tesfaye, yalew & yohaness 1997; Wondmagegn, 2008; and Zubedia, 1992; have conducted their studies on issues related to gender. Although the domains of those studies are the same (gender issues), they are quite different in terms of the specific objectives they have addressed. Likewise, the present research raised the same domain (gender issue), but different research questions. All in all, this study attempted to investigate the perception of gender roles at different age levels and sexes of the Awra Amba community.

Hence, with the belief that this research can provide some information on the issue raised, the following research questions are formulated:

1. Is there a significant gender role perceptual difference among the Awra Amba children, adolescents and adults?
2. Is there a gender role perceptual flexibility with age in the Awra Amba community?
3. Is there a significant gender role perceptual difference between the Awra Amba males and females?

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Participants and Sampling Method

The target population of this study includes children whose age range is between 8 and 12, adolescents whose age range is between 13 and 20 and adults whose age range is between 21 and 65. Older children were selected for the purpose of this study than younger ones; this is primarily because older children start to understand that there could be different reasons for gender differences. Moreover, the reason why the three major age groups have been selected was there is a tremendous physical, emotional and psychosocial changes when one transit from childhood to adolescence and from adolescence to adulthood than changes within one stage (for instance, early, middle and late adulthood). Permission has also been asked from the community leader and from parents to conduct the structured interview with children participants.

In relation to the sampling method, stratified random sampling was employed. The strata totally depend on age and sex of the participants. Therefore, a total of 180 participants 60 children (30 from each sex), 60 adolescents (30 from each sex) and 60 adults (30 from each sex) were drawn. As mentioned above, the total population of the Awra Amba community is 403. While 119 of them are households, 165 of them are children, adolescents and other young and aging people. Due to lack of recorded information, the total number of child, adolescent and adult population in the three strata was not defined in terms of numbers. However, since sample sizes 30 and above are often referred to as large in statistical language and the total sample size (180) is almost half of the total population (403), the present researcher strongly believe that, the inferences would be representative.

2.2. Instruments

Two instruments were adapted in this study. The purpose of these instruments is to find out information about the influence of age and sex on the perceptions of gender roles in the Awra Amba community. The first instrument is the Personal Attribute Questionnaire (PAQ) which is developed by Spence and Helmreich (1978). While a total of 16 items are incorporated in this instrument, no modifications are made. This instrument has two parts. In the first part, background information of the respondents has been asked. This background section includes information like age and sex of the participants. In the second part, respondents to the PAQ rate themselves on a 5-point, Likert-type scale (0=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree). Each item is scored 0-4

with a possible range of 0-28 for each sub scale that would assess masculinity and femininity in terms of respondents' self-perceived possession of various traits that are stereotypically believed to differentiate the sexes. Moreover, PAQ has four alternative interpretations (Androgynous¹, Undifferentiated², Feminine and Masculine). If the participants' score is high both on feminine (21-28) and masculine (19-28) then, it would be interpreted as androgynous. Conversely, if the participants' score is low both on feminine (below 21) and masculine (below 19) then, it would be interpreted as undifferentiated. When participants' score is high on feminine (21-28) and low on masculine (below 19) then, the participants' self-perceived sex role is understood as feminine. Finally, if participants' score is high on masculine (19-28) and low on feminine (below 21), the individual's score could be interpreted as stereotypic masculine sex role.

The second instrument is the Social Role Questionnaire (SRQ) developed by Baber and Tucker (2006). This instrument measures gender roles not in a dichotomous approach in which traits or behaviors assumed to be "appropriate" to females and males. Unlike the PAQ, SRQ has been modified in some way. For instance, originally, SRQ contains 13 items, but for the purpose of this study, one culturally unfit item has been deleted. Moreover, according to Baber and Tucker, respondents are required to indicate how much they agreed with each of the 13 items by circling a percentage (ranges: 0-100% with increments of 10%). Thus, since some of the participants of the present study were not literate and some of them were children, it would have been necessary to narrow the degree of responses to avoid confusions and make it having straight forward responses as agree, undecided, and disagree (2=agree to 0=disagree).

2.3. Method of Data Analysis

Different statistical methods were utilized (ranging from simple descriptive to more complex statistical procedures) in order to carry out the analysis depending on the nature of data available and the type of research questions set in the study. In the present study there are two major variables-sex and age. For the sake of the objective of the study, age has been categorized into three basic groups; children (8-12), adolescents (13-20) and adults (21-65). Under each age category there is sex category too. Therefore, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) has been employed to compare mean difference in terms of gender role perceptions among children, adolescents and adults. After significant differences were found in the masculine self-perceived gender role perception and general gender role perception, post hoc comparison, especially FISHER LSD (List Significant Difference) were made to show which age group possesses conservative, traditional or liberal gender role views. The Spence and Helmreich's (1978) chart and score interpretation manual were used to interpret the Personal Attribute Questionnaire in terms of Androgynous, Undifferentiated, Feminine and Masculine sex roles. Mean

plots on the feminine, masculine and general sex role perception also done to observe whether sex role perceptual flexibility could occur when one grow older in the Awra Amba community. Apart from the one-way ANOVA an independent t-test has also been employed to compare the mean differences in terms of gender role perception between the Awra Amba male and female participants.

3. Results

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of feminine and masculine stereotypic gender role perception

Age Groups	N	Gender Roles	Mean	Std. Deviations
Children	60	Feminine	24.40	3.45
		Masculine	18.75	2.62
Adolescents	60	Feminine	24.45	2.79
		Masculine	23.37	3.63
Adults	60	Feminine	24.50	1.99
		Masculine	23.77	3.62

As Table 1 point out that, the mean score of participants in the three age groups seem somehow similar, particularly on the feminine gender role. Although, the mean score of feminine gender role is closer to each other across the three age groups, the mean score of masculine gender role seems a little bit different. Especially, children's masculine mean score is much lower than that of their adolescent and adult counterparts. But this difference alone, however, does not confirm whether statistically significant difference exists or not in order to give answers to the research questions. Therefore, it is worthwhile to test the mean differences with one-way ANOVA.

Table 2. Summary of ANOVA on feminine and masculine stereotypic gender role perception among children, adolescents and adults

Gender Roles	Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Feminine	Between groups	0.3	2	0.15	0.02	.981
	Within groups	1394.25	177	7.88		
	Total	1394.55	179			
Masculine	Between groups	920.00	2	460.01	41.6**	.000
	Within groups	1956.85	177	11.06		
	Total	2876.86	179			

From the results of ANOVA displayed in Table 2 it appears that there is no statistically significant difference among children, adolescents and adults on feminine gender role perception. It is to mean that the mean score of the three age groups on the self-perceived stereotypic feminine gender role is somehow similar rather than different. On the other hand, ANOVA summary Table 2 gives the overall F ratio yielding evidences of significant difference among the three age groups on masculine gender role perception, $F(2,177)=41.61, p<.01$. This means that the three age groups are not the same in terms of the mean score results on masculine gender role perception, and the differences are statistically significant. Generally, as the result of ANOVA summary in Table 2 there is no statistically significant difference among

¹ An androgynous person is one who scores above average on measures of both masculinity and femininity.

² Undifferentiated refers a person who scores low on both masculinity and femininity.

children, adolescents and adults on feminine gender role perception. On the contrary, statistically significant difference has been exhibited among children, adolescents and adults on masculine gender role perception.

Table 3. LSD multiple comparisons on stereotypic masculine gender role perception among children, adolescents and adults

Dependent variable	Independent variable		Mean differences(I-J)	Sig.
	(I)age	(J)age		
Masculine gender role perception	Children	Adolescents	-4.58**	.000
		Adults	-4.98**	.000
	Adolescents	Children	4.58**	.000
		Adults	-0.4	.511
	Adults	Children	4.98**	.000
		Adolescents	0.4	.511

As the outcome of the LSD pair wise multiple comparison in Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant mean difference (4.58) $p < .01$ between children and adolescents and (4.98) $p < .01$ between children and adults. It is clearly observed in Table 3 that, the difference lies between children and adolescents and between children and adults. As the children's group have smaller mean, it could be deduced from the finding that they have lower stereotypic self-perceived masculine gender role perception compared to adolescents and adults. But adolescents' self-perceived masculine gender role perception is not significantly lower than that of adults' perception.

As it has been mentioned in the methodological section, PAQ is an instrument used to assess masculinity and femininity in terms of respondents' self perceived possession of various traits that are stereotypically believed to differentiate the sexes. Thus, participants who scored high on the feminine items (21-28) and high on the masculine items (19-28) are considered to be androgynous. If the participants' score is low both on feminine and masculine, below 21 and 19 respectively, then, the individuals' gender role perception is undifferentiated. When the participants' score is high on feminine items (21-28) and low on masculine items (below 19) it would be interpreted as feminine. Finally, high scores on masculine items (19-28) may associate with low feminine scores (below 21) then, this could be interpreted as stereotypic masculine gender role perception. Therefore, the feminine and masculine gender role interpretation would be meaningful, when the feminine and masculine scores of the participants are presented in pair as mentioned above. Accordingly, as it shows while children's feminine gender role perception mean score is 24.40 their masculine gender role perception mean score is 18.78. These scores could be interpreted as high feminine and low masculine. Based on this analysis, children's self-perceived gender role perception seems feminine. However, since children's masculine gender role perception mean score (18.78) is very close to the cutoff point to the high score (19-28), it would be preferable to be cautious in interpreting the result.

On the other hand, adolescents' and adults' scores both on feminine and masculine gender roles are high. As Table 2 shows, while adolescents' feminine gender roles mean score is 24.45, their masculine gender role mean score is 23.37. Similarly, adults' feminine gender role mean score is 24.50 and their masculine gender role mean score is 23.77. These mean scores both on feminine and masculine gender role are considered high.

Table 4. Summary of ANOVA on the general gender role perception among children, adolescents and adults

Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	2410.88	2	1205.4	36.83*	.000
Within groups	5793.36	177	32.7		
Total	8204.24	179			

As the ANOVA summary in Table 4 displayed, there is a statistically significant difference among the three age groups $F(2,177) = 36.83$, $p < .01$. Therefore, this implies that there is a statistically significant difference among children, adolescents and adults in their general gender role perception.

Table 5. LSD multiple comparisons on the general gender role perception among children, adolescents and adults

Dependent variable	Independent variable		Mean differences(I-J)	Sig.
	(I)age	(J)age		
General gender role perception	Children	Adolescents	8.30**	.000
		Adults	7.08**	.000
	Adolescents	Children	-8.30**	.000
		Adults	-1.22	.246
	Adults	Children	-7.08**	.000
		Adolescents	1.22	.246

As observed in the summary of pair wise mean comparisons in Table 5, statistically significant mean difference were exhibited (8.3) $p < .01$ between children and adolescents and (7.08) $p < .01$ between children and adults. As these data clearly shows, the significant difference lies between children and the rest two groups (adolescents and adults). In turn, this implies that children hold traditional gender role view than their adolescent and adult counterparts. But adolescents' general gender role perception is not significantly lower than adults' view.

Table 6. t-test on the general gender role perception between male and female participants

Sex	N	Mean scores	Standard deviations	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Females	90	11.21	6.22	0.088	178	.930
Males	90	11.3	7.3			

As can be seen from Table 6, there is no statistically significant difference between male and female participants in their gender role perception. This implies that males' and females' gender role perception seems similar than different. From this, it is possible to derive the inference that perception of gender role in Awra Amba community could not be determined by one's own sex.

4. Discussion

4.1. Gender Role Perception as a Function of Age

As the present study shows that, age has been found a significant factor for the stereotypic self-perceived and general gender role perception in the Awra Amba community. Even though, the perceptual difference between adolescents and adults is not significant, the difference is significant between children and adolescents and children and adults. For instance, while children's self-perceived gender role perception is feminine, their general gender role perception is traditional and stereotypic. In this regard, the present study makes

harmony with the study conducted by Mead (cited in Schaefer, 2005) among the Arapesh community in Papua New Guinea. According to Mead's findings, the Arapesh children hold stereotypic feminine gender role which is characterized by warm, nurturant and cooperative traits. Similarly, Kering et al.'s (1983) study also shows that, since the Russian culture strongly disapproves aggression and other stereotypic masculine gender roles, children are socialized to grow up with stereotypic feminine gender roles. As a result, Russian children's perception on the self-perceived gender role is feminine. In relation to Children's general gender role perception, Mensch et al. (2003) point out that Egyptian children hold traditional perception on the division of roles between males and females.

On the contrary, the finding of the present study is not consistent with many other previous findings. For instance, the research finding reported by Viorest (1986) shows that, children in both sexes hold stereotypic masculine gender role perception. Similarity, Conner and Serbin (1978) also revealed findings that indicate, stereotypic masculine gender role is children's favorite traits. According to them, when children are exposed to certain stories with male and female protagonists, both boys and girls approve more of the main character's actions and express a greater desire to be the main character when the character is male. Moreover, Williams et al.'s (1990) findings indicates that, children are more familiar with the masculine stereotype than with the feminine and suggested that masculine stereotypes are dominant in their lives and are learned earlier.

The present research revealed that adolescents' and adults' self-perceived and general gender role perception is androgynous and egalitarian or nontraditional. Androgynous and non traditionality shows that, the Awra Amba adolescents and adults perceive different kinds of duties, responsibilities, traits and behaviors not linked with one's biological destiny-the sex. In relation to this finding, there are some previous studies which are consistent to it. As these early findings by Cheling et al. (cited in Zhang, 2006) show that, when people grow older their gender role perception change from stereotypic to egalitarian and nontraditional. However, the findings conducted by Sugihara and katurada (1999) show deviation from the finding of the present study. According to these researchers, Japanese students' scores were higher on the feminine scale than the masculine gender role. Similarly, Shimonaka et al. (1990) also found consistent findings with the Japanese elderly population.

4.2. Gender Role Perceptual Flexibility with Age

Gender role perceptual flexibility across different age groups was one of the leading research questions in this study. Thus, as the present study shows that, gender role perceptual flexibility increases with age. As the mean plots in the analysis section, when one's age increases from childhood to adolescence and adulthood, their perception changes from feminine to androgynous and from stereotypic and traditional to egalitarian and nontraditional. Therefore, this implies that, in Awra Amba community when one grows older, his or her sex role perceptual flexibility increases too. In this regard, there

are considerable bodies of literature which are consistent with the present findings. Conversely, there are also several previous studies which diametrically different from the present study.

Studies conducted by Walters et al. (cited in Zhang, 2006) show that, gender role perceptual flexibility increases with age. Kohlberg's (1966) cognitive developmental theory also states that, adolescents become increasingly flexible as they mature. According to this theory, as children are able to reason and consider multiple perspectives in formal operations, cognition usually becomes more flexible. Moreover, as Katz & Ksanskak (1994) demonstrate, perceptual flexibility is highest in the late adolescent age group. Similarly, as Katz (1997) since rebelling against social conventions is an important means of achieving independence during adolescence, it predicts that adolescents would be less likely to adhere to gender role stereotypes and would become more flexible.

On the contrary, the present study is also deviated from some of the early findings. Zhang's (2006) finding in China shows that, younger Chinese students were more egalitarian and nontraditional than their older counterparts. Similarly, Tu & Liao (2005) points out that younger Taiwanese and Chinese are more egalitarian than are older Taiwanese and Chinese in terms of gender role perceptual flexibility. The other finding which is quite opposite with the present study is, the study conducted by Fan & Marini (2000). According to them, instead of moving in an egalitarian direction, Chinese students experience gender role perceptual change in a traditional direction with increasing age.

In general, as age is seen as an independent variable, it has its own contribution for gender role perception in an egalitarian or nontraditional direction. In the present study, the Awra Amba children hold stereotypic and traditional gender role perception than the adolescent and adult participants. It is evident in many developmental literatures and theories that socialization is a fundamental process for the enormous behaviors and traits that children would possess. For example, Santrock (1994) points out that, information that surrounds the child and which is internalized comes in to the child within the family arena through parent-child interactions, role modeling, and reinforcement for desired behaviors and parental approval or disapproval. Laver et al. (cited in Witt, 1997) also argue that, a child's earliest exposure to what it means to be male or female comes from parents. Researchers Miller and Lane (cited in Berryman et al., 1993) share the ideas of Santrock and Laver et al. That is, parental influence on socialization is strong.

Apart from those of the developmental literatures, some developmental theories also argue about the importance of child socialization for later adult behavior. Among other theories, the social learning theory states that, children have a multitude of experiences through which they learn behaviors, beliefs, and values considered by their family to be "desirable" or "appropriate" for their sex. Similarly, Freud's psychoanalysis theory proposes that, sex differences in perception and behavior originates in children's identification with their same sex parent. Along with this, according to the Gender Schema theory, young children begin with a simple in-group and out-group

gender schema that they use to classify other people as being either, “the same as me” or not, and act accordingly.

Even though, parents are considered the main agents for child socialization in several literatures, the Awra Amba children fail to adhere with such findings. Of course, there are literatures which argue that, socialization is the product of parents, schools, peers and media influences. As Bronfenbrenner, Alvarez and Henderson (1984) development is influenced by many social factors, and children may best be understood in terms of their environment. These environments include schools, peers and media.

As the close observation of the present researcher during data collection, there was no formal school (primary-tertiary) which would serve exclusively for the Awra Amba children. Rather, the Awra Amba children are supposed to go 6 kilometers per day (round trip) from their home to the “Woji”³ primary school which serves for the other surrounding communities. As a result, the Awra Amba children could be influenced by their peers and age mates, teachers and pictures of the stereotypic gender roles in their text books.

4.3. Gender Role Perception as a Function of Sex

Despite, age has been found a significant variable for gender role perception among the Awra Amba community, sex has not been found significant. As the present finding indicates, being a male or a female does not have differences for gender role perception. For instance, both the Awra Amba females and males have androgynous and nontraditional gender role perception. In connection to this, the reviewed literatures show that noticeable deviation from the present finding. For example, the study in New Zealand by Pryor et al. (cited in Tuck et al., 1994) indicates, females have more egalitarian perception than do males. The study of Williams and Best (cited in Gardner, et al., 2002) also revealed that, there is a significant difference between females and males in their gender role perception. Moreover, Gibbons et al. (cited in Konard et al., 2002) found study results that, women are more liberal than men in their perception of gender roles. Kagitcibasi and Sunar (1992) attribute such liberal view of women to the dramatic changes of women’s activities than men’s. Similarly, research findings conducted by Lueptow et al. (cited in Konard et al., 2002) indicates, despite current gender role perceptions are more liberal, recent studies have found that complete equality in perception has not been attained and that young people still view women and men in stereotypical ways. A local study conducted by Yalew (1997) also show that, the Amhara society regardless of their sexes, have traditional and stereotypic attitudes women’s leading and decision making abilities.

5. Conclusion

It would be impossible to say that this study is virtually free from limitations. Since the study used is a kind of cross sectional method, it incorporates all the drawbacks of the cross sectional approach. Of these limitations, one

is the cohort effect. Thus, by taking such limitations in to account the following conclusions have been made.

Age has been found as factor for the Awra Amba community to determine their gender role perception. That is while children hold stereotypic feminine and traditional gender role perception, adolescents and adults have androgynous and nontraditional gender role perception. Concerning the flexibility of gender role perception, egalitarian and non-traditional gender role perception increases with age in the Awra Amba community. When one grows older from childhood to adolescence and adulthood, gender role perception changes from stereotypic or traditional to non-traditional and egalitarian. And finally, there is no a substantial difference between the Awra Amba females and males in their gender role perception. That is, sex does not determine the perception of gender roles in Awra Amba community. As the finding shows, both the Awra Amba females’ and males’ gender role perception is androgynous and egalitarian or non-traditional.

Despite the social relations are in a continual progress, changing gender roles and traditional beliefs on gender are difficult tasks, especially in the traditional society like Ethiopia, where most of the society are illiterate, less communicative and resistant for new things. But the Awra Amba adolescents and adults displayed a great deal of progress in this perspective. Thus it would be worthwhile if the Ethiopian government and different concerned Non Governmental Organizations lend their ears and hands for this community to encourage and widen their philosophical horizon and to make them as role models for the rest of Ethiopian communities who hold stereotypic gender role perceptions. Even though, parents are the basic important figures to socialize their children to have a non-traditional gender role perception, schools and teachers are also significant socializing bodies. As a result, the Awra Amba children need to have teachers, textbooks, and related educational materials that demonstrate their parental values, norms and attitudes. For its accomplishments, the Ministry of Education, curriculum and textbook designers are responsible agents. The present finding is not ultimate by itself. As it has been introduced at the very beginning of the conclusion section, it is not totally free from limitation. Thus, in order to come up with consistent conclusions, further investigations are necessary and recommended. To this end, interested researchers are warmly invited to fill the gap using a different developmental approach.

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³ Name of the nearby school

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