

Gender Equality Online Training Information Booklet

Module 1
Code of Ethics and Preventing
Discrimination



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Since its foundation, Özyeğin University has been striving to create an inclusive learning, teaching, and living environment for everyone, especially our employees and students. In this context, one of the concrete steps we have taken to maintain the current environment we share safely and to advance our institutional culture is the establishment of the Code of Ethics¹. In 2015, we published our Code of Ethics, which outlines our institution's ethical values and principles. These values and principles not only guide us in academic matters but also outline a vision regarding the responsibilities of being a member of Özyeğin University in social life.

One of the Fundamental Values and Principles that form the foundation of this training we have prepared is Respecting Others. The concept of Respecting Others is defined as: "Members of Özyeğin University must respect and value differences among individuals, never allow discrimination or harassment, treat all colleagues, employees, students, stakeholders and external parties and individuals with kindness and respect; and protect the dignity and honor of all stakeholders." Our Code of Ethics also emphasizes that all members of Özyeğin University are obligated to "contribute to the prevention of violence and harassment within the campus premises and shared areas." In this training prepared by the ÖZÜ Gender Office, our primary aim is to examine the discrimination indicated in this clause, how it emerges, and what effects it has. Additionally, we aim to look at discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity, which is highlighted in this clause.

Fundamental Concepts of Discrimination, Stereotype, and Prejudice

Stereotypes: These are the images we form in our minds as a set of pre-constructed impressions and attributions that fill the gaps in our knowledge about a particular group, thus making it easier to make decisions about them. Especially when we encounter new phenomena, objects, or groups, our understanding of them is shaped in the light of such images. Thus, we perceive the new phenomenon/group according to our thought tendencies, not as it is or with its natural characteristics.

Prejudice: Refers to an attitude that evaluates others not based on their existence but on their group affiliations, together with negative, dogmatic beliefs. This concept leads us to create at least physical or social distance between ourselves and the individuals or groups we approach, and it is closely associated with discriminatory attitudes.

Discrimination: This concept involves a process related to all negative attitudes and behaviors towards a group or its members. The process described by this concept leads to negative thoughts towards a group or its members and attitudes that feature feelings such as dislike, disdain, avoidance, and hatred. While behaviors described by this concept may be directed towards individual persons, what distinguishes them from adverse and 'unkind' behaviors in interpersonal relationships, such as dislike and avoidance, is this: the individuals towards whom behaviors described by this concept are directed are the target of this behavior not because of their characteristics, but because of the discriminatory characteristics attributed to the group they belong.

Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination are mutually reinforcing processes in this context. People often generate quick judgments to make sense of new encounters in everyday life. It is an expected behavior to follow heuristics in the evaluation of the current situation, person, or object by drawing similarities with one's existing judgments rather than engaging with those directly. This is a type of behavior that makes sense of the unknown and makes one feel more secure. However, these quick shortcuts can grow like a snowball, first into prejudice and then into discrimination. Discrimination affects people's lives in direct and negative ways. People are discriminated against because of the characteristics attributed to their group. They may be excluded from society and even face difficulties accessing their fundamental rights and freedoms. Therefore, preventing discrimination is critical for everyone to have equal and free access to their rights. It is a humanitarian responsibility and a subject enshrined in national and international legal regulations.

You can visit genderoffice.ozyegin.edu.tr to access more resources on this topic, particularly regarding gender.







genderoffice.ozyegin.edu.tr
gender.office@ozyegin.edu.tr

— ÖZYEGİN —
— ÜNİVERSİTESİ —

Nişantepe Mah. Orman Sok. No: 34-36,
34794 Alemdağ - Çekmeköy/İstanbul
T. 0216 564 95 64
E-posta: tanitim@ozyegin.edu.tr
www.ozyegin.edu.tr