EXPLORING THE EVOLVING LANDSCAPE OF GENDER ROLES IN SOCIETY: TRANSFORMATION, CHALLENGES, AND IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract

This endeavour explores the growing trend of women pursuing traditionally male-dominated professions, looking at the significant implications it has on societal norms and gender dynamics. The increased interest of women towards these fields has a dramatic shift in the perceptions of gender roles, creating a crucial step towards achieving genuine gender inclusivity. By emphasizing the importance of improved access to education and career avenues, this study aims to explore the key factors causing this change and empower women to challenge conventional gender roles. To challenge stereotypical roles and prejudice, women are increasingly pursuing a wide array of careers. This trend emphasizes the indispensable skills and ingenuity that women contribute to many fields, cultivating greater innovation and promoting organizational effectiveness. To collect data, we conducted an online survey with fifty-five participants from Ibn Khaldoun University, Tiaret, besides a naturalistic observation in the same setting. It is worth noting that our sample's selection was probabilistic. The findings have revealed that gender biases and barriers still exist; nevertheless, women's potential for progress in male-dominated settings is still overwhelming. Overcoming these barriers requires institutional support, as well as workplace policies that foster an inclusive culture. This trend opens the door for a more egalitarian future by challenging prevailing beliefs and advocating for inclusivity, enabling individuals to thrive in their respective fields. Our collective efforts to break the gender barriers contribute to an adaptable workforce, benefiting both individuals and society as a whole.

Keywords: Gender equity; gender roles; stereotype; workforce.

Introduction

The subsequent shift in gender roles has received significant attention in recent years. To gain insight into the impact of changing gender roles on individuals, families, and communities, this study aims to explore the intricate dynamics of these roles as they develop within modern society's framework. Through a comprehensive investigation of this phenomenon, our objective is to foster a deeper understanding of the intricate challenges and potential advantages that emerge from these ongoing shifts. Scholars have extensively acknowledged the notion of the gender gap, which emphasizes the existence of disparities and inequalities between genders, particularly in social, financial, and political domains, as well as in matters related to resource allocation, rights, and privileges. The gender gap serves as a prominent indicator, highlighting the clear disparities and imbalances that exist between men

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and women in various aspects of life. The manifestations of the gender gap can be observed in various factors, including income disparities, limited access to employment opportunities, educational achievements and school dropout, inadequate healthcare accessibility, underrepresentation in political spheres, and limited decision-making autonomy. These manifestations uncover the complex nature of gender-based inequalities.

The existence of this widespread gender gap poses a significant challenge, revealing the deeply ingrained structural inequalities that persist between genders. Gender-based discrimination, traditional prejudices and biases often limit people's potential and achievements. To narrow the gender gap, we must work together to support legislation and programs that guarantee equal rights and opportunities for men and women. We must also advocate for gender equality and challenge established gender stereotypes. By implementing such transformative measures, we aim to advance society towards an equitable trajectory.

In the existing corpus of scholarly research, academics have thoroughly examined multiple aspects of gender role shifts and their dimensions. Leathwood and Read (2009); Deborah, (2014); Boutemedjet, (2019); Dandachli and Barry, (2020) have investigated the correlation between gender-based disparities and workplace discrimination, elucidating the underlying mechanisms that contribute to the persistent educational and occupational gaps. Additionally, Abdulkadri et al. (2022) investigated the gender disparities in education as well as employment, besides the critical perspectives of the non-traditional shift of gender roles.

Building upon these foundational studies, the present research aims to explore not only the dimensions of changing gender roles but also the effect of these transformations, primarily observed in Western cultures, on our societal structures. Through an empirical investigation that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, our goal is to enrich the current discourse by offering new perspectives. Hence, we foreground the importance of addressing the gender gap and also provide valuable insights for policy interventions and societal changes that promote a more inclusive and equitable environment.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Shifting Societal Paradigms

De-traditionalization is a sociological concept that pertains to the absence or shifts of traditional practices within a given society. Essentially, the evolution of gender roles is leading to significant shifts in power dynamics. It is important to note that societal changes in gender roles can be influential on various aspects of life, including education and the workforce (Bouguesri, 2020). De-traditionalization encompasses the phenomenon wherein societal norms, values, and practices are questioned. The phenomenon entails a transformation in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours that diverge from deeply rooted and culturally embedded customs. De-traditionalization can manifest in multiple dimensions of societal existence, encompassing gender roles, familial arrangements, religious observances, and educational frameworks (Leaper, 2000a; 2000b). When referring to gender roles, de-traditionalization denotes a shift away from the customary norms and stereotypes linked to masculinity and femininity. The process entails interrogating and redefining established gender norms, thereby enabling individuals to delve into alternative forms of expression and identities that transcend the limitations imposed by traditional gender binaries (Adkins, 2003; Holmes, 2009).

In the field of education, de-traditionalization presents a significant challenge to the conventional gender roles and expectations that have historically dictated specific behaviours and roles for male and female students. This statement acknowledges the diverse array of experiences, interests, and talents that students possess, and advocates for a more inclusive and equitable approach to education (Deborah, 2014; Boudersa, 2018). It encompasses the promotion of equal opportunities for academic excellence among male and female students (Bouzida & Yassine, 2023), even in subjects that have historically been associated with the opposite gender. Furthermore, the conception of de-traditionalized gender acknowledges the importance of encouraging a supportive and inclusive educational setting in which all students, regardless of their gender, feel respected and empowered. Teachers are strongly encouraged to diligently review and critically evaluate conventional teaching methods and materials that may perpetuate gender stereotypes. Thus, it is recommended that individuals and institutions adopt strategies that foster gender equity and stimulate critical analysis of gender roles. In this perspective, de-traditionalization embodies a process of transformation that re-conceptualizes conventional social norms and expectations. Subsequently, the promotion of greater gender equality, inclusivity, and freedom of self-expression is advocated in various aspects of society, including education (Coleman, 1961; Belaid and Sarnou, 2019; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Bouzida & Yassine, 2023).

In traditional perceptions of gender roles, femininity has often been regarded as an innate characteristic associated with women. Research on gender bias in the workplace has shed light on the obstacles women encounter when it comes to receiving recognition for their contributions, especially when these contributions align with traditional feminine attributes. To address these biases, efforts are made to raise awareness, provide diversity training, and develop an inclusive work culture that values all forms of contributions, irrespective of gender-associated traits (Leathwood & Read, 2009). This aforementioned brings to light a pressing concern that requires immediate attention to foster a professional environment that is equitable because, in present-day society, there is an observable inclination towards the reversal of traditional paradigms (Ramet, 1996).

Accordingly, Adkins (2003) has argued that there are studies which support the claim that gender is acquiring an inappropriate status. While others have claimed that there is limited argument indicating a restructuring or replacement of gender power dynamics (cited in Leathwood & Read, 2009). In Western contexts, for example, the values associated with femininity are frequently imposed on males, resulting in the disapproval of behaviors that are considered naturally masculine. This societal phenomenon often leads to a suppression of male expression and a limited understanding of the diverse range of characteristics that can be exhibited by genders. By adopting this viewpoint, we acknowledge that masculinity cannot be fully understood in isolation. Instead, it should be analysed within the broader framework of power dynamics. Power, in this prospect, is viewed as a relational concept, meaning that it exists through the interactions between individuals. Furthermore, power is productive, as it shapes and influences the construction of masculinity. It is only through the perception of power that masculinity gains its meaning, as explained by (Shepherd, 1996)

> *When examining the power relations of gender and the ways that discourses of masculinity are articulated in everyday life, sensitivity must be shown to how discourses of sex are spatialised and how spaces are sexualised… masculinity is dependent upon situational context, and the individuals, the location, and the 'history' of power relations which make up this situation. (p. 79)*

In the realm of medicine, the presence of a higher proportion of females in society has many implications. This phenomenon may be attributed to the elevated levels of hormones that permeate the environment, potentially influencing males in therapeutic and psychological ways (Leathwood & Read, 2009; Deborah, 2014). Conversely, it is crucial to acknowledge that conversations centred on feminization can inadvertently contribute to a gender dichotomy, where males are depicted as victims of both feminized cultures and hormones. This perspective places a strong emphasis on the feminine, while simultaneously diminishing the importance of the masculine. Consequently, it suggests that males in times of crisis are more prone to engaging in self-destructive behaviours such as suicide, struggling academically, and resorting to violence (Deborah, 2014).

1.2 Gendered Workplace

Initially, the term "gendered" refers to the attribution of characteristics to either masculinity or femininity or the manifestation of patterns of differentiation based on gender. For instance, the categorization of colours such as pink and blue as gendered is based on their cultural associations. Pink is commonly linked to femininity, while blue is often associated with masculinity. In specific societal contexts, there is a tendency for women to engage in part-time employment, whereas men are more likely to be involved in full-time work. Furthermore, there exist disparities in occupational choices based on gender, wherein women tend to gravitate towards nursing while men are more inclined towards education. These disparities also encompass discrepancies in average earnings derived from paid employment. The distinctions and associations between males and females, which are shaped by societal norms, are commonly known as gendered (Mastekaasa & Smeby, 2008). Thus, gender, as a social construct, is a learned behaviour that assigns distinct roles and responsibilities to individuals based on their biological sex within peculiar social contexts (Leaper & Friedman, 2007; Deborah, 2014).

The distribution of women's time and responsibilities, both in the workplace and within the household, is influenced by their social class. The responsibilities imposed on women with regard to their various roles are shaped by their social and economic standing. Based on Kathleen, McGinn, and Eunsil's (2017) work, the active involvement of women in gainful employment holds considerable significance. Women currently constitute 40 % of the global workforce, and their engagement in this form of employment not only contributes to the overall expansion of the global economy, but it also strengthens its long-term durability (International Labour Force, 2009; Labor Market Report, 2020). In the Algerian context, the turnout of females with high rates towards financial independence has received a polarized reaction from the part of males claiming that their choices would limit males' chances in employment.

Correspondingly, the workplace structure is shaped by a combination of formal and informal rules, as well as gender dynamics. Policies, regulations, and labour laws serve as formal mechanisms that establish guidelines and regulations about various aspects of employment, including working hours and entitlements to leave. Informal rules refer to the norms and behaviors within a workplace that are not explicitly defined, yet significantly impact the dynamics of the organization. (Cortes & Pan, 2017; Dandachli & Barry, 2020)

1.2.1 Women's Participation in the Workforce

Between 1930 and 1970, the choices offered to women underwent significant transformations. It is important to recall that women were still seen as secondary wage earners at that time, in comparison to the opposite gender. This was true even for educated women who achieved higher positions, as they were still expected to have relatively short careers. As per Yellen (2020), there has been a shift in women's attitudes towards work and their employment prospects over time. In many countries, women's employment rates are frequently high,

indicating the importance of their participation in the public workforce. To understand this phenomenon, we should take into account the circumstances that contribute to its occurrence. These factors could involve the ratio of females in the workforce, the rate of employment, and the proportion of women engaged in part-time work. As maintained by Banks and Milestone, (2011):

> The movement of women into the labour market is thus part explained through women's own desires to achieve economic independence and escape their 'natural fate', and is part accounted for by the ways in which capitalism must secure its own future through seeking new sources of cheaper, flexible labour (p .05)

1.3 Occupational Gender Perceptions

The issue of persistent disparities in employment patterns between men and women has been extensively studied in the field of social sciences. The correlation between occupation and various social attributes, including lifestyle, prestige, and education, elucidates gender-based disparities. Additionally, the existing body of research on occupational grading has primarily focused on predominantly male-dominated occupations. In the mid-1980s, approximately half of the population supported a gendered division of labour, where men were seen as the primary earners (the 'breadwinners') and women were expected to be caregivers. There was a strong conviction in the conventional gender barrier during that period. Since then, the number of people who share this viewpoint has steadily declined. Conversely, by 2012, approximately one out of every eight people believed that this should be the case. In the context of whether women should choose to stay at home or pursue a career, several factors are considered; hence, attitudes toward gender roles have shifted dramatically in the last 30 years (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019).

According to gendered race theory, both race and biological sex contribute to the assessment of an individual's femininity or masculinity. This factor determines one's perceived fit and recruitment potential for jobs that are perceived as feminine or masculine (Hofstede, 2000). As an illustration, in professions such as nursing and teaching, which have traditionally been associated with "women's jobs" workers may experience physical strain due to prolonged standing, lifting patients, and repetitive motions. Occupations that are predominantly held by men, such as high-pressure managerial roles, can subject workers to psychological stress. This is primarily due to the responsibility of making critical decisions and managing challenging situations. Similarly, roles that are predominantly chosen by women, such as social work or customer service, can also pose emotional stress due to the need to handle challenging situations and exhibit empathy towards clients. Further, certain industries, such as manufacturing, have historically had a higher proportion of male workers and may subject them to dangerous chemicals and toxins, resulting in potential long-term health problems. By contrast, sectors such as healthcare and education, where women often dominate, may have a different set of chemical exposure risks. For example, women in healthcare may be exposed to cleaning chemicals in hospitals, while women in education may be exposed to art supplies in educational settings. Eventually, all sectors, at different levels of responsibility, could be stressful and anxious for both genders (Hall, Messing & Punnett, as cited in Bond et al., 2004).

1.4 Gender Stereotype Dynamics

Stereotype, as a concept, was initially introduced to social science in 1922. It describes the 'cognitive image' that comes to mind when thinking about a particular social category (Stewart et al., 2021). In reality, stereotypes are overarching perceptions regarding the attributes of boys and girls, or males and females that are fundamentally shaped within a specific societal context. Gender stereotype, which is embedded from a young age, persists over time and it is generationally transferred. It is assumed to be an accurate perception and an integral part of cultural and social norms, with the consequence that individuals who do not conform to traditional gender roles may face ostracism. As per Pilcher and Whelehan (2004), there is a common stereotype that women are emotional, sensitive, impulsive, and bad drivers. On the other hand, men are often perceived as rational, instrumental, bad at housework, and have a preference for sports. Gender stereotypes, as posited by social role theory, arise from the imbalanced allocation of men and women to societal roles within the domestic and professional spheres (Eagly, Koenig, & Eagly, as cited in Hentschel, Heilman, & Peus, 2019). Stereotypes can be perceived negatively when they impair women and men from developing their skills and making autonomous decisions regarding their lives. Subsequently, gender stereotypes exert an influence on people's subconscious assumptions regarding the traits, priorities, and needs of individuals based on their gender. These aforesaid may also shape the criteria by which we evaluate individuals across various domains.

Men and women are both subjected to descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes, which serve to reveal how societies perceive and expect them to behave. When individuals face criticism for deviating from conventional gender norms within particular contexts or professional environments, we respond to the descriptive prejudice of such criticism. Prescriptive bias, on the other hand, becomes evident when individuals encounter adverse responses due to their exhibition of counter-stereotypical behaviours. To illustrate, the categorization of "androgynous" can be attributed to female or male individuals who display non-traditional behaviours that do not conform to the conventions of society (Veg-Sala, 2017). Hence, gender stereotypes impair the attempts to achieve gender equality within society and yield detrimental consequences for both the individuals they target and the gender groups they are associated with. These misconceptions have the potential to restrict individuals' potential and impose unnecessary limitations on their choices and behaviours. Nevertheless, statistical difference in performance between girls and boys can only serve as a suggestive measure rather than a definitive proof of superiority or inferiority (Bouzida & Yassine, 2023).

2. Methodology

2.1 Context

In this study, data were collected from a sample of fifty-five participants who were concurrently enrolled in bachelor's and master's degree programs at the University of Ibn Khaldoun, Tiaret. The objective of this research was to investigate how gender roles are changing and how society is beginning to value traits or actions that are traditionally associated with men and women; hence, the students' perspectives are important to see how they perceive gender in the digital realm. A mixed-methods approach was applied, which involved the implementation of both an online survey and an observation. The survey provided insights into the participants' attitudes and beliefs concerning the changing paradigm of gender. Additionally, the researcher assumed the role of an observer within an educational environment and carried out a naturalistic observation. Within the cohort of female participants under observation, instances of cross-dressing were observed; these instances involved female students who typically dressed in a manner traditionally associated with males, coupled with a

simultaneous commitment to achieving academic excellence and advancing in their careers, in addition to their continuously growing numbers, surpassing that of male students in the faculty.

3. Results

The participants in this study were comprised of 75% female and 25% male respondents. Gender distribution played a crucial role in facilitating a comprehensive examination of the diverse viewpoints associated with changes in gender roles among undergraduate and graduate students in universities. According to the research findings, 40% of the sample have chosen to further their education by pursuing a master's degree. This could reflect their dedication to acquiring knowledge and improving their expertise in their respective fields, while 60% of participants are currently enrolled in a bachelor's degree. It is worth noting that the pursuit of a master's degree reflects a desire to develop the skills that can promote career prospects and open doors to higher-level positions. While those engaged in a bachelor's degree program are focused on acquiring fundamental knowledge and building a strong academic foundation. It is worth mentioning that some of the participants, approximately 15%, have already obtained Master's degrees in other disciplines (mainly in scientific majors), and they have eventually transitioned into the workforce.
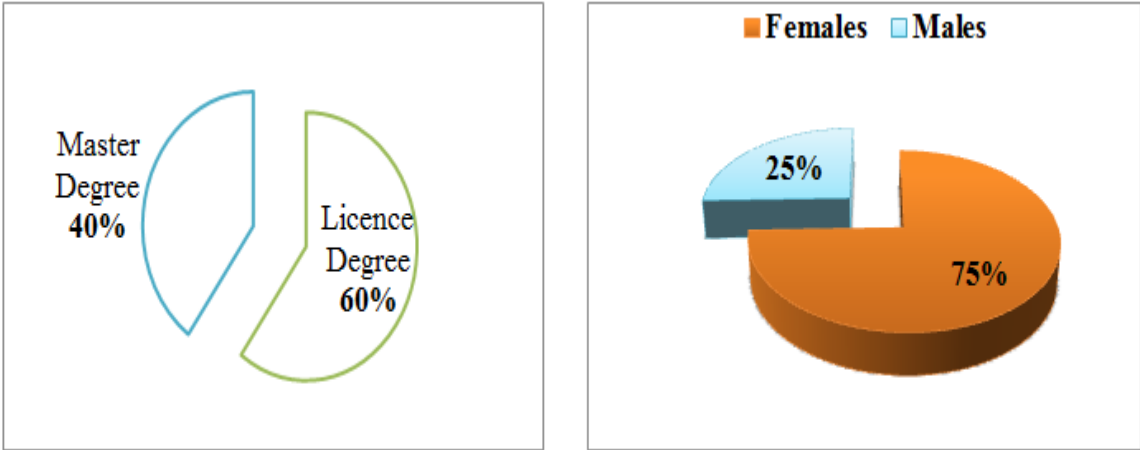

Figure 1: Participants' Gender and Educational Level

Question 01: Which gender (of teachers) is hard working in foreign language teaching?
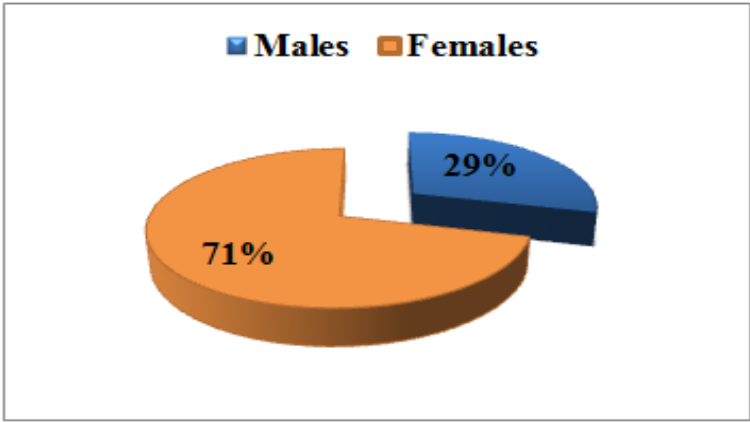

Figure 2: Exploring Efforts in Teaching Foreign Languages

Evaluating the level of hard work and perseverance among teachers of different genders in the field of foreign language education necessitates the collection and analysis of specific data and research. It is crucial to acknowledge that the assessment of work ethic and diligence should not be made in a generalized manner solely based on gender. This attributes exhibit significant variation among individuals and can be influenced by various factors, including personal motivation, prior experience, training, and the work environment. According to the survey results, the majority of respondents (71%) hold the belief that female teachers demonstrate hard work and commitment in teaching foreign languages in comparison to male teachers, whereas a smaller percentage (29%) attribute the same level of hard work to male educators. It is important to note that these percentages represent only the points of view of the sample. Yet, the perspectives regarding work ethics can be influenced by cultural stereotypes and personal experiences; this can potentially lead to a false portrayal of the true attributes that foreign language teachers possess.

Question 02: Which gender is more productive in business organizations?
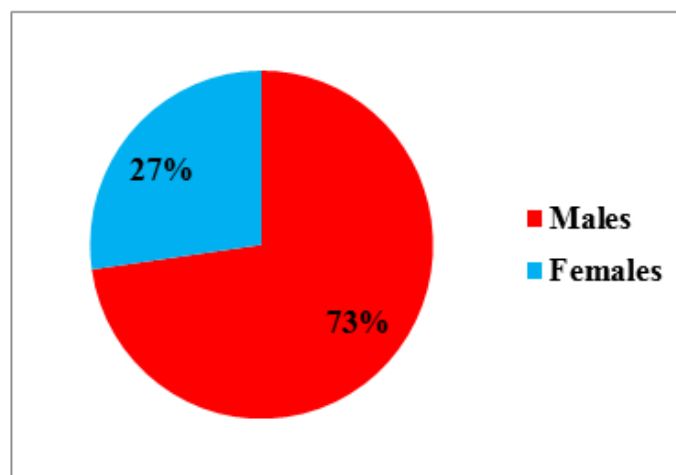

Figure 3: Productivity in Business Organizations

Analysing the productivity of a specific gender within business organizations requires a comprehensive assessment that considers many variables. It is not academically appropriate to make indecisive assumptions about genders' productivity. Many elements can impact productivity in business organizations, such as work ethics, motivation, experiences, credentials, and the special requirements of the workplace. It's crucial to remember that both sexes are capable of exhibiting extraordinary productivity in professional settings. However, the productivity of an individual is not only determined by their gender but also by his or her abilities, commitment, and work habits. Efforts to promote workplace gender equality aim to provide equal opportunities and help individuals excel and make meaningful contributions. To accurately evaluate productivity in such organizations, it is essential to consider objective measures such as performance evaluations, project outcomes, team contributions, and overall organizational success; these factors help in evaluating females' and males' performances. Accordingly, 73% of respondents perceive males as more productive in business, while 27% believe that females are more prolific. Even though business and entrepreneurship have always been monopolized by males to the extent that it is believed that their performance in business is better, females express their interest in being businesswomen because they are empowered and motivated by successful women in the same field.

Question 03: In your opinion, why certain jobs became gendered? (Females working in males' jobs)

The aim of this question is to examine students' perceptions regarding the changing dynamics of gender roles within our society. The responses of individuals vary based on their social backgrounds. Some argue that the inclination to engage in work and pursue specific occupations can vary among individuals, irrespective of their gender. Some women may opt for professions that have traditionally been dominated by men, motivated by their personal interests and passions, particularly in the fields of science, business, and entrepreneurship. Both genders possess the necessary skills that compel them to attain financial stability and be protected against poverty, thereby rendering work a mechanism for meeting fundamental needs. Additionally, it has been acknowledged that emotional intelligence may play a role in the success of women in specific professional fields. Individual abilities and skills are of utmost importance as they serve as key factors in facilitating one's exceptional performance in their respective majors. Certain occupations may exhibit gendered characteristics as a result of specific prerequisites, including physical prowess, childcare responsibilities, and a willingness to prioritize professional commitments over personal time. Consequently, these factors contribute to the dominance of a particular gender within certain professions. Achieving gender equality in the workplace is of paramount importance to guarantee equitable access to rewards and opportunities for all individuals. The significant presence of women in the labour force, along with their varied requirements, plays a crucial role in promoting job diversification. Both genders exhibit a common desire for freedom and self-expression, with aspirations to validate their abilities and openly communicate their ideas. In fact, the change of societal norms has facilitated the empowerment of both men and women, enabling them to strive for success and achieve financial independence, thereby surpassing conventional gender roles. In this regard, the perpetuation of gendered job divisions can be attributed to the limited availability of job opportunities, and this latter, according to our sample's responses, is in favour of women.

The pursuit of achievement, the promotion of gender equality, and the decay of socio-cultural barriers have resulted in women entering professions that were traditionally dominated by men. Therefore, females' discipline, perseverance, and ambition could positively influence productivity within the workplace. Some respondents have highlighted the possibility that men might face limited opportunities and many challenges within their respective majors, which prompt them to pursue alternative occupations. As a result, this phenomenon may contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based divisions.

Question 04: What do you think of women who are recruited with high numbers in different fields?

Our sample responses share a wide array of viewpoints concerning the high ratio of women being recruited across various professional domains. Some students perceive this as a favourable advancement, indicative of strides made towards achieving gender equality and foregrounding the skills and capabilities of women. They present the argument that women exert significant effort and are entitled to equal opportunities across diverse professional fields. Some individuals perceive it as a detrimental factor, voicing apprehensions regarding possible unemployment among men, imbalanced societal dynamics, and the encroachment of women into traditionally male-dominated positions. Numerous respondents posit that the growing inclusion of women in the workforce can be attributed to their elevated levels of educational achievement and unwavering commitment to their professional endeavours. It has been argued that women contribute to productivity in various fields and exhibit higher levels of maturity, courage, and seriousness in their professional careers compared to men. Nevertheless, certain participants expressed their concerns regarding societal expectations and their influence on the

perception of responsibility and self-esteem among men, leading to what is referred to as *'masculinity crisis'*. In this vein, we are witnessing an evolutionary trend of men and women with new perspectives and prospects, and this is what our sample consistently mentioned regarding the pursuit of the *'strong independent woman'* trend.

Question 05: Which fields are females oriented to? Explain why?

The responses of participants offer a spectrum of viewpoints regarding the influx of females being recruited across various fields. The following analysis aims to deconstruct and examine the primary themes provided throughout the participants' responses. One of the prominent themes identified is *gender equality and progress*. It is noteworthy to mention that a considerable number of respondents see the growing presence of women in the workforce as favourable progress. They perceive it as a positive measure in the pursuit of gender equality and diversity. Some respondents expressed admiration for the diligence exhibited by women across various domains, acknowledging their ability to offer valuable contributions to society. Some answers reflected that traditional societal norms and expectations have a negative effect on the formation of gender dynamics. Some respondents have raised concerns regarding the recruitment of women in positions that have traditionally been dominated by men, while others maintain that women should be given equal opportunities. Cultural and religious perspectives are mentioned too in which some respondents hold the perception that the concept of gender equality contradicts our cultural norms and doctrines, whereas others contend that religion advocates for gender equality, disregarding the difference between equity and equality. Moreover, several responses include statistical observations or demographic data to emphasize the disproportionate representation of women in comparison to men within society. They perceive it as an inherent phenomenon rather than a reason for concern. Our sample highlights the capabilities and diligence of women, implying that these attributes play a significant role in their achievements across diverse domains. Conversely, some respondents were concerned regarding the negative consequences associated with the issue, highlighting the possibility of increased unemployment among men and the potential for an imbalance of opportunities between genders, besides the gender gap that is in constant progress. The following graph illustrates the choices provided for each field according to their socio-cultural background.
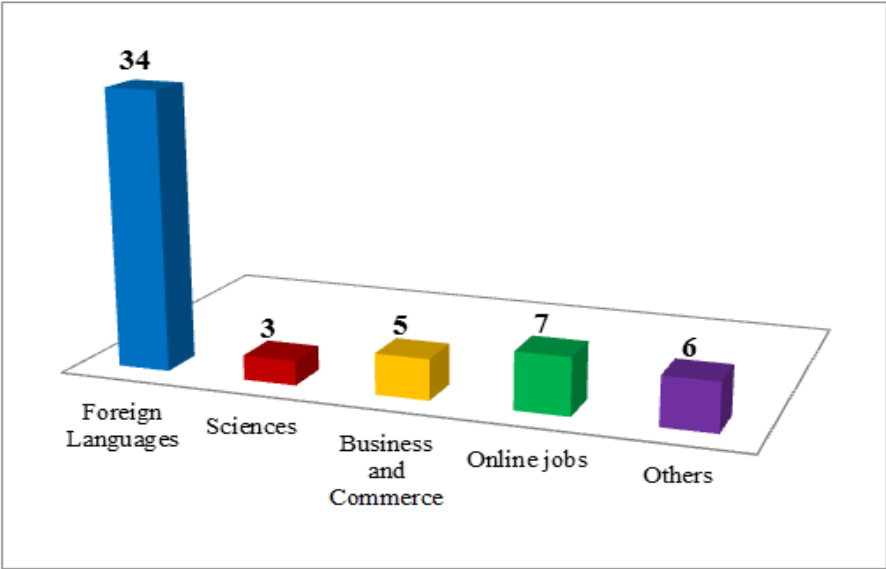

Figure 4: Females' Occupational Orientation

Question 06: Recently, a form of **'androgyny'** has been observed, it is prominently revealed through social media. In your opinion, what are the reasons behind this phenomenon?

The responses obtained from our sample population demonstrate a set of perspectives regarding the presence of androgyny within societies. One of the key themes that emerge is the impact of environmental and cultural factors on the emergence of androgyny. Many of the responses emphasize how the environment, culture, and mindsets shape individuals' understanding and expression of androgyny. The presence of various gender roles and norms, along with the influence of Western cultures and social media, are cited as influential factors. Genetic and hormonal influences have been mentioned by certain individuals as potential biological factors that can impact gender identity perception. In fact, the adoption of an androgynous appearance by individuals is often motivated by personal preferences and the desire for self-expression. While several responses indicate that the concept of androgyny may be influenced by psychological factors, mental health conditions, or an individual's quest for self-identity and validation, besides the decline in religious beliefs and convictions, several responses have identified gender inequality as a potential factor, while others maintain that societal norms and the embrace of gender diversity contribute to the issue. Apparently, there is no clear justification for such a phenomenon, but a number of possible reasons are highlighted. Their answers detect their consciousness vis-à-vis the topic, claiming that the situation is step by step naturalized and the shift of genders in their attitudes became apparent. Cross-dressing is observed in this context; however, it may reflect personal preferences and is not necessarily a form of androgyny. Nevertheless, the impact of digital technology on this phenomenon remains indisputable.

4. Discussion

Acknowledging that detraditionalization has many implications is essential. Initially, it has contributed to greater gender equality by discarding stereotypical gender roles. This has led to the creation of new opportunities for personal and professional growth, empowering individuals to pursue their aspirations unrestricted by social constraints. Further, de-traditionalization has had a significant effect on families and relationships. In households, gender roles are being re-evaluated, and both partners are sharing responsibilities. In response to this change, there are now more equal relationships where the division of labour is determined by individual preferences and skills rather than gender stereotypes. In other words, both positive and negative effects can be attributed to the de-traditionalization of gender roles. There are positive changes as well as challenges associated with them. It may be difficult for some people to adapt to this change since traditional gender boundaries are blurring.

Based on the researcher's naturalistic observation, a discernible gender disparity is revealed not only in social interactions and behaviour, but it extends to educational and professional domains. Notably, a noticeable gender gap exists within universities and workplaces. Within the context of higher education, a growing number of females are enrolling in and actively participating in universities and colleges. This trend is reflected in the higher representation of females in various academic fields, previously dominated by males. By contrast, some fields still exhibit disparities in gender distribution, but the overall trajectory suggests a closing gap. Similarly, in the professional domain, the gender gap is undergoing transformation. Females are increasingly occupying positions and roles traditionally held by males. In various sectors, a significant pattern emerges: the rise of women in influential leadership roles, notably within the education sector. Nevertheless, certain sectors persist in facing gender disparities, particularly at senior levels. It is crucial to acknowledge that females are making remarkable progress in the workplace; however, challenges still exist (Ouadah-

Bedidi, 2018; Ratoul & Boudjelal, 2020). Some disciplines may exhibit unequal representation, and gender-based stereotypes can persist in subtle ways. The evolving landscape, however, illustrates a promising movement towards greater gender equity and inclusivity, which collaborate in redefining societal expectations and norms. Yet the outcomes of the shift in gender roles cannot be predicted.

Some respondents express support for gender equality and the right of women to make career choices. Still, there are individuals who hold the belief that certain fields necessitate male leadership or may be more suitable for men based on specific job prerequisites. The responses provided in this study shed light on the intricate dynamics between societal norms, education, cultural biases, and personal attributes, all of which contribute to the patterns observed in the recruitment of women. The points of view presented put emphasis on the importance of creating an inclusive workforce wherein individuals are acknowledged for their knowledge, diligence, and expertise irrespective of their gender.

This work introduces androgyny as a prevailing trend within Western societies. The complexity of androgyny is associated with a number of factors, including individual, biological, social, cultural, and psychological dimensions. The impact of external factors, such as media and globalization, is also underscored in shaping attitudes and expressions of gender. Hence, it is imperative to acknowledge that the perceptions and experiences of individuals differ, resulting in a wide range of opinions on this phenomenon. While this phenomenon is not largely viewed in the Algerian society, we attempted to detect how our participants perceive it since they are addicted to virtual and digital platforms and this phenomenon is exposed throughout these platforms. Moreover, cross-dressing exists in the Algerian context, though it is not a reflective form of androgyny, it requires explanations regarding the expression of feminine and masculine traits. We cannot disregard that there is a strong correlation between religious commitment and personal self-development (Abood & Idri, 2020); individuals who are committed to religious practices tend to reflect this special diligence to their social life aspects, including their understanding of individuality.

While it is widely acknowledged that females possess the ability to excel in diverse fields and may even surpass males in certain instances, it is important to recognize that the impact of religion and culture still play a prerequisite role in shaping the gendering of occupations. Societal stereotypes and expectations can intensify the gendered perception and representation of specific majors, thereby impeding the achievement of genuine gender equity. As educational opportunities continue to advance and societal aspirations evolve, there is a growing trend of women being attracted to a wide range of professional fields. This shift is naturally portrayed in their attitudes and behaviours, all forms of conviction imposed by society are re-evaluated with the aim of breaking the limitations of patriarchy and embracing freedom and equity. Therefore, the de-traditionalized world is expected to bring forth many challenges for genders at all levels, especially when it comes to their masculine and feminine energies; in this vein, their non-conforming societal roles could possibly influence their individual choices in life, especially women.

5. Conclusion

When individuals diverge from the norms and expectations of a traditional society, it can lead to a reversal of gender roles. The abolition of gender stereotypes in society uncovers the transformation in social perspectives. To show their distinct qualities, women in particular may decide to take on characteristics more often associated with the other gender to express individuality. Women are now pursuing different occupations since they have greater access to employment opportunities in fields that were traditionally dominated by men. In addition,

changing social norms and an increasing call for gender equality have inspired women to fight against stereotypes and prosper in traditionally male-dominated sectors. In a nutshell, the interconnected phenomena of cross-dressing, gender reversal, and the increasing inclusion of females in many fields reflect broader societal changes in gender equality. These changes mirror a progressive society that challenges traditional gender stereotypes and embraces a step to sustain inclusive and tolerant cultures.

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