

SEX DIFFERENCES IN UNDERGRADUATES' ACADEMIC AND
CAREER ASPIRATIONS, AND ATTITUDE TOWARDS MARRIAGE
AND PARENTHOOD

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It cannot be denied that many obvious sex differences between the males and females can be observed in every society. However, it is only in more recent times that people have begun to question these differences and to study them systematically. Much research has been done in the West and the literature available ranges from anecdotal observations and speculative discussions to the results of well-designed experiments.

The study seeks to investigate sex differences in academic and career aspirations and attitudes towards marriage and parenthood. Most of the literature to be reviewed is from western countries because very few, if any, systematic studies have been carried out in Malaysia.

Since the present study is centred on academic and career attitudes and aspirations, it would be useful to briefly mention some of the fairly well established sex differences in cognitive and intellectual functioning, as they may have bearings on the attitudes and aspirations of the two sexes. Females have been found to be superior in verbal or linguistic functions while males are superior in the visual-spatial and mathematical. Males' mechanical aptitude was also higher. This may be the basic reason (but not the only one) why sex differences can be seen in the courses taken by undergraduates in Universiti Malaya in the 1978/79 academic session (see Table 1.1),

that is, the students take the course they are more competent in. A considerably greater percentage of females are found in the Arts and social science, and Dental faculties whereas many more males are in the engineering and medical faculties compared to females.

Table 1.1

Distribution of Undergraduates by Sex, in the Faculties of Universiti Malaya, 1978/79

Faculties	Male (%)	Female (%)
Faculty of Economics & Administration	17.73	18.20
Faculty of Arts & Social Science	26.07	40.08
Faculty of Law	3.57	4.09
Faculty of Engineering	15.86	0.88
Faculty of Dentistry	1.14	3.25
Faculty of Medicine	10.58	6.05
Faculty of Science	25.05	27.45
TOTAL	100.00	100.00

Source: Serangkaan Mahasiswa 1978/79, Bahagian Akademik & Rekod, Universiti Malaya, p.3.

A study by the American National Opinion Research Centre (Miller, 1963) asked women college graduates why they thought women are underrepresented in medicine, engineering and science. For medicine and science, the most frequent reasons given were that, "A job in this field is too difficult for a woman to combine with family responsibilities", and that "women in general want occasional or part-time work".

Very few thought that women lack the skills. For engineering, the most frequent reasons chosen were that, "women are afraid they will be considered unfeminine", and that "parents discourage it". Twenty-four percent of the respondents thought that women lack the necessary skills. We can also see from here that societal labelling of masculinity and femininity on certain jobs (and courses too) may also influence the sexes' attitude towards them.

Back to the studies of cognitive functioning, males and females were, however, more recently found to be comparable in general intelligence (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). In contrast with the findings which indicate few differences in ability, our educational pattern seems to show otherwise. The ratio of males and females in assisted schools/institutions for the year 1976, shows increasingly greater difference the higher up the educational level with two males to one female in the university and college level (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2

Percentage of Age-groups Enrolled in Assisted Schools/
Institutions of West Malaysia, 1976, by sex

Level of Education (%)	Male	Female
Primary	97.2	94.9
Lower Secondary	72.3	61.0
Upper Secondary	37.8	30.0
Post Secondary	9.7	7.4
University & College	2.3	1.0

Source: Social Statistics Bulletin, Peninsula Malaysia,
Department of Statistics, 1976.

England's statistics show similar patterns. The 1975 MNSO 'Social Trends' shows that as many girls as boys are represented in the GCE level but the girls were under-represented in the A-levels. Blackstone and Fulton (1975) found that females represent only one third of the undergraduates, 16% of the graduate students and only 9% of the universities' teaching staff. The Statistical Abstract of the U.S. 1972, shows that for the year 1970, out of all the degrees conferred, women earned 39.8% of the Masters or second professional degree but only 13.3% of the doctorates or equivalent.

The above situation can imply two things. Firstly, it can imply the traditional, stereotypical belief that women are less intelligent or less competent than men, or secondly, that women's academic aspiration is lower than that of the men's. A number of studies show that women are perceived as inferior and less competent than men (e.g. Goldberg, 1968; O'Leary, 1974). When women do well, it is usually attributed to luck or special effort rather than skill or ability. Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) also found women to be less confident on many tasks even when objectively they do as well. That girls lack achievement motivation is an unfounded belief (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Maybe it is not so much a sex difference in the level of achievement motivation but rather, differences in their 'goals' and the importance they place on them.

An important aspect of personality development in which traditional sex differences are manifested, includes interests, preferences, ideals, attitudes and personal sense of values. Because

of their relatively subtle and persistent nature, these characteristics often exert an unsuspected influence, not only upon the development of emotional and character traits but also upon the individual's achievements and effective abilities.

Sex differences have been found on interest tests such as the Kuder Preference Record (1941) where males were found to show stronger preferences persuasive, mechanical, computational and scientific work. Female averages indicate greater interest in the literary, musical, social science and clerical areas. This seems to show that males tend to prefer that which is stereotypically considered 'masculine' and vice versa. The Allport-Vernon-Lindzey "Study of Values" (1951), shows women's response rates to be highest in aesthetic, social and religious values. This suggests that the immediate enjoyment of artistic experiences, a concern for the welfare of other people and an emphasis upon spiritual values may be relatively important in the life goals of women. The men's profile, on the other hand, shows peaks in theoretical, economic and political values.

The actual employment situation in Malaysia in 1967/68 supports, in part, these studies. Table 1.3 shows considerably more males to be in the first and second occupational groups whereas more females are in the third group. It must be also noted that the majority of the employed females in the professional groups are teachers.

It has been found that in adulthood, after graduation from school, men achieve substantially more than women in almost every aspect of intellectual activity where achievement can be compared -

Table 1.3

Percentage Distribution of Employed by Occupation and Sex

Occupation (%)	Male	Female
Professional, technical & related occupations	5.1	5.0
Administrative, Executive & managerial	2.2	0.2
Sales & related occupations	10.5	7.0
Service, sport, entertainment & recreation	6.1	9.6

Source: Report on the Socio-Economic Sample Survey of Households - Malaysia, 1967/68, Department of Statistics, Malaysia, p.98, Statement 13.

books and articles written, artistic products and scientific achievements (see Mednick, Tangri & Hoffman, 1975), Men achieve distinction not only in greater numbers but also to a much higher degree than women. In a somewhat different vein, Terman and Oden's follow-up study of gifted children (1947) showed that, for girls, there was no relationship between the level of occupational achievement and IQ as measured during the school years, while for boys, this correlation was substantial. In fact, about two-thirds of the women with IQs of 170 or above ended up as housewives or office workers. Other studies (Garai and Scheinfeld, 1968; Fogarty, Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971), also found that highly educated women do not fulfil their potential and training in working life. In most industrialised societies, fewer women than men reach university and, if they do, they are less likely to pursue their careers afterwards. Among those who do pursue careers, fewer reach top jobs.

This does not necessarily mean that women have a lower level of aspiration or achievement motivation than men. It could be due to external factors such as discrimination, prejudice and women's perception of their own personalities (O'Leary, 1974; Hartnett, 1975). Many types of occupations have been completely closed to women until recently. Even today, competition is not on an equal basis for men and women in many fields.

Very much related to the area of career is that of marriage and parenthood, especially so for women. The male and female's attitude to these will undoubtedly affect their career development as we shall see below. "Study after study has reported that the overwhelming majority of girls and women expect and wish to get married and have children. They formulate this intention earlier and in greater number than boys and men." (Fransella & Frost, 1977). Marriage to most women is considered as an ultimate goal and most people still assume that it should take priority over their career. Responses to the 1975 EEC survey indicate that both sexes believe that women's sole responsibility for family commitment is the greatest obstacle to equal opportunities in career. Yet surprisingly, women seem to be accepting this situation. In fact, a pilot study by Schwenn (1970) showed that some women would give up the idea of a serious career if it appears to conflict with their marriage prospects and with motherhood. A large scale survey, involving 171,509 American-college students of both sexes from 326 colleges, showed that about half of the men and one-third of the women thought 'the activities of married women are best confined to the home and family.' (Wasserman, 1973).

It used to be that marriage itself provided a major turning point in a woman's occupational career. More recently, it is the assumption of parenthood that provides this turning point (Le Masters, 1974; Rossi, 1968). A survey in France (Chombart de Lauwe, 1962), involving 60 middle-class couples, supports this. Almost all the females and two-thirds of the males that were interviewed, were of the opinion that married women with no children should work. However, only 30% of the females and 20% of the males felt that those with school-age children should work and, on the whole, both males and females disapproved of work for mothers with young children.

It also seems to be an accepted fact that women become house-workers by virtue of getting married and having children. Studies which look at what men and women actually do as housework, usually find that by far the greater part of the work is done by the wife, even if she has a strong career commitment (Fogarty, Rapoport & Rapoport, 1971). One would assume that such a position would make it difficult for her to develop in her career. Related to this is the fact that throughout human history, women are perceived to be the more nurturant sex, probably by virtue of the fact that they are the ones who give birth to children. However, more recently, Parke and O'Leary (1974) show that adult men can exhibit as much nurturant behavior as women towards newborn infants. Mead (1935) called attention to the Manus tribe where the assumption is that only men enjoy playing with babies.

Stereotyping and Theories of Sex Differentiation

We can see from the previous section the discrepancies between actual empirical findings and conventional beliefs. This is largely because many of the conventional beliefs are more often than not, arbitrary social sex stereotypes passed on from one generation to another, and which can be changed if society itself is to change. What may begin as simple description ends up as prescription, that is, 'is' becomes 'ought'. Stereotypes involve expectation about the disposition and typical behavior supposedly displayed by members of a category, in our case, the members of the two sexes. The term used by Walter Mischel (1970) is 'sex-typed behavior', that is, "behavior that typically elicits different rewards for one sex than for the other. They have consequences that vary according to the sex of the performer...." R. Sears et. al. (1965) put it more concisely as "role behavior appropriate to a child's ascribed gender".

Perhaps in principle, children of both sexes are brought up as people but in practice, gender is a highly significant factor in their upbringing. As Mischel and Mischel (1971) put it, "no other category is as important psychologically as the one that sorts people into males and females and dichotomises their characteristics into 'masculine' and 'feminine'." Socialisation is the process through which children become psychologically male and female. Socialisation can simply be defined as "the transmission of culture, that is, behaviour, beliefs, roles and attitudes to the next generation...." (Chetwynd & Martnett, 1977). It would seem appropriate at this

junction, to look at the different theories put forward to explain these sex differences, that is, how the 'transmission' takes place. Basically, there are three different theories.

The first is the 'Unitary Identification Theory' put forth by Freud (1949). The psycho-analytic theory states that a child identifies with the same sex parent and learns the details of a sex role through imitation of this parent. According to this view, all the seemingly diverse components of socialisation should be clustered with the product of identification of the same sex parent. However, there is reason to be dissatisfied with this theory. Children have not been shown to resemble closely the same sex parent in their behavior. In fact, boys have been found to resemble other boys' fathers as much as their own. Sutton-Smith (1969) also found that sex-role preference varies as a complex interaction of family structure, including the influence of other siblings.

The 'Social Learning Theory', on the other hand, stresses the importance of imitation, observation and reinforcement. It argues that children are more often reinforced when they imitate the same-sex model (not only the same-sex parent). Mischel (1970), who is largely responsible for this theory, states:

From the viewpoint of social learning theory, the greater attentiveness to same-sex models, especially when they are displaying appropriately sex-typed behavior, probably reflects that people generally are reinforced throughout their histories more for learning the sex-typed behaviors of same-sex models than those of cross-sex models. (p.38)

There is, however, a need to distinguish between acquisition and performance as a child may learn to do something but may not perform it because he learns too that such an action will be punished. There are two problems which this theory fails to answer. Firstly, when offered an opportunity to imitate either a male or female model, children (at least those under 6 or 7) do not characteristically select the model whose sex matches their own; their choices are fairly random in this regard (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974). Secondly, children's sex-typed behavior does not always closely resemble that of adult models, for example, boys select an all-male play group even though they do not observe their fathers avoiding the company of females. Children also play games that adults do not play.

The third theory as put forward by Kohlberg (1966) is known as 'The process of self-socialisation'. Kohlberg stresses that sex-typed behavior is not made up of a set of independent elements acquired by imitating actions the child has seen same-sex people perform. It stems from organised rules the child has induced from what he has observed and what he has been told. This process is not easy to define but in its simplest terms, a child gradually develops concepts of masculinity and femininity and when he understands what his own sex is, he then attempts to match his behavior with the concepts he has learnt. His ideas may be drawn very minimally from parents and the constructions he draws are organisations of information distilled from a wide variety of sources. The child's conception is seen to be limited by the level of the cognitive skill he has

developed; his conception is therefore not static but changes with age as he matures cognitively. One problem, however, with the Kohlberg view is that sex-typing of behavior occurs much earlier than gender constancy normally develops, that is, gender constancy is not necessary in order for self-socialisation into sex roles to begin.

We can see from here that the processes of direct reinforcement and simple imitation are clearly involved in the acquisition of sex-typed behavior, but they are not sufficient to account for the developmental changes that occur in sex typing. The third kind of psychological process, as stressed by cognitive-developmental theorists like Kohlberg, must also be involved. It must also be noted here that biological factors should not be undermined. The process of acquisition of sex-typed behavior can be seen as a process built upon biological foundations that are sex-differentiated to some degree.

In this chapter, we have not only seen how the male and female sexes differ in the areas of education, career and marriage/parenthood, but we have also attempted to see why they differ.

The Interview Schedule

In this study, a structured questionnaire was used to collect the necessary data. The use of a structured questionnaire

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

The Fieldwork

The fieldwork for this project was carried out in Cameron Highlands at a christian camp organised by the Fellowship of Evangelical students (FES). The camp was held at the Highlands Christian Centre, Tanah Rata, from 14th April to 6th May 1979. A total of 30 undergraduates from four different universities were interviewed.

Sample Selection

Since the study is designed to compare male and female undergraduates' academic and career aspirations and their attitudes toward marriage and parenthood, a total of 30 respondents (15 males and 15 females) from four different universities were included in the sample. The subjects were randomly selected from a potential pool of 28 male and 42 female undergraduates attending a christian camp. Table 2.1 summarizes the design of the study.

The Interview-Questionnaire

In this study, a structured questionnaire was used to collect the necessary data. The use of a structured questionnaire

allows for greater control over interviewer-responder differences. It also decreases the likelihood of bias against the less articulate among the respondents. Since all of the respondents were proficient in English, an English language questionnaire was used throughout the interview.

Table 2.1

Sample Selection by Sex and Ethnic Grouping

Ethnic Grouping	Male	Female
Chinese	14	14
Indian	1	1
TOTAL	15	15

The questionnaire was designed to provide information on respondents' family background and other biodata; their academic and career aspirations; their attitudes toward education, career, marriage and parenthood; their opinions on some general statements made concerning intelligence, housework, etc., and their ratings of various occupations in terms of 'femininity' or 'masculinity'. (See Appendix A for a full text of the interview-questionnaire).

Before the interview-questionnaire was finalized, a pilot study was carried out in order to gain some idea of the suitability of the questions, the time taken for each interview and any other problems which may be related to the questionnaire. The pilot study

was carried out on four students from the University of Malaya. Following this, certain questions that were difficult to understand or ambiguous were either restructured or eliminated.

The Interviews

All interviews were conducted in English and each respondent was interviewed individually by the author. Respondents were requested not to discuss the questionnaire with other campers for the duration of the interviewing. Prior to each interview, respondents were told that the study was concerned with undergraduates' academic and career aspirations. They were not told that the main purpose was to investigate sex differences. This was to prevent respondents from giving 'public' or 'acceptable' answers which may differ from their personal opinions; that is to say, their answers or responses may be influenced by knowledge of the actual purpose of the study. Each interview lasted between 20-35 minutes.

Some Concluding Remarks

Despite the pre-testing, certain unforeseen problems were encountered during the fieldwork. Question 36 was still not specific or clear enough. The question, which states, "Would you place priority on your career or your marriage if you were forced to do so?" failed to specify whether the choice was to be made before or after marriage. Some respondents took it to mean before marriage whereas others took it to mean after marriage. The answers they gave were thus in accordance

with how they interpreted the question. The question was therefore excluded from the analysis of the data.

A few of the respondents were unsure about their future plans and intentions and thus were quite unwilling to commit themselves on some of the questions asked. Some admitted that they had never even thought about certain aspects of life touched on by some of the questions and, consequently, found difficulty in answering them. However, all of the interviewees did attempt to answer all the questions although one or two respondents were unable to give reasons in support of their answers in a couple of questions. All this must be taken into consideration when analysing and interpreting the data.

It must also be noted at this juncture that this study is limited to a very select group, that is, Christian undergraduates. The findings therefore, need to be viewed in the light of these limitations.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this Chapter, the results of the interviews are presented and discussed. Since the primary aim of the study is to investigate sex differences, the data are presented and analysed by sex affiliation.

Respondents' Background Data

It can be seen from Table 3.1 that both sexes are, on the whole, comparable in terms of urban-rural residence, medium of education and university. All of the respondents have had English as their medium of education with 13.3% of the female respondents having had vernacular education as well.

However, the male respondents are 0.7 years older than the female respondents and this corresponds with their being at the university for a longer period of time (0.7 years). This may mean that the male respondents are more exposed to certain ideas and experiences which may in turn influence their attitudes and aspirations.

Table 3.2 shows comparable sizes for male and female respondents' families. However, more females are eldest children in the family as compared to males. Their position as eldest children may influence their parents' attitude towards them in a positive way, for example, by showing more interest and encouragement in their studies.

Table 3.1

Respondents' Age, Place of Residence
and Educational Background by Sex

	Male	Female
Mean Age (in years)	21.3	20.6
Place of Residence (%)		
Urban	93.3	93.3
Rural	6.7	6.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Medium of Education (%)		
English only	100.0	86.7
English & Vernacular	-	13.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
University (%)		
University Malaya	66.7	60.0
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia	6.7	6.7
Universiti Pertanian Malaysia	-	6.7
Universiti Sains Malaysia	26.7	26.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Mean No. of years in University	2.8	2.1

Generally, psychologists agree that parents do have an influence over their children even though they may differ in their opinion as to how the parents influence the children, or to what degree they influence them. It is therefore appropriate to consider the parental background of the respondents as well.

Table 3.2
 Respondents' Family Structure by Sex

	Male	Female
Family size (No. of Children)		
Less than 4 children	40.0	40.0
4-6 children	40.0	46.7
More than 6 children	20.0	13.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Position in family		
Eldest	13.3	33.3
Middle	60.0	46.7
Youngest	20.0	20.0
Only child	6.7	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Parents of female respondents are, on the whole, better educated, and a greater percentage of them are educated in the English medium as compared to the parents of the male respondents. Table 3.3 clearly indicates that more fathers (73.3%) of female respondents have had a secondary education as compared to the male respondents' fathers (33.3%). Similarly, more female respondents have mothers with at least a secondary education - 40.0% compared with only 13.3% for mothers of male respondents.

If education can be taken to reflect on the parents' occupation, it would appear to be consistent with the findings that the fathers of female respondents are better represented in the professional field. This is in keeping with their higher level of

education and their English medium of education. As for the mothers, both sexes are quite comparable in terms of their occupation, with the majority being housewives. (see Table 3.4)

Table 3.3 Parental Educational Background		
Occupations	Male	Female
%	Male	Female
Father's highest level of education		
No education	6.7	-
Primary education	33.3	20.0
Secondary education	33.3	53.3
Tertiary education	-	20.0
Don't know	20.0	6.7
Deceased	6.7	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Mother's highest level of education		
No education	13.3	-
Primary education	46.7	40.0
Secondary education	13.3	33.3
Tertiary education	-	6.7
Don't know	6.7	20.0
Deceased	20.0	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Father's medium of education		
English only	26.7	46.7
English & vernacular	6.7	26.7
Vernacular only	46.7	20.0
Don't know	20.0	6.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Mother's medium of education		
English only	6.7	33.3
English & vernacular	-	6.7
Vernacular only	53.3	40.0
Don't know	40.0	20.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Table 3.4

Parental Occupation

Occupations	Male	Female
Father's Occupation:		
Professional	13.3	26.7
Clerical	6.7	-
Business & Sales	13.3	13.3
Agricultural	6.7	13.3
Service	13.3	-
Technical chargeman	-	6.7
Government officer	6.7	13.3
Production process workers	13.3	6.7
Retired/Unemployed	20.0	13.3
Deceased	6.7	-
No information	-	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Mother's Occupation:		
Housewife	66.7	73.3
Domestic worker	6.7	6.7
Cook	-	6.7
Teacher	6.7	13.3
Deceased	20.0	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Parents' education would appear to be related to their general outlook in life, as perceived by the respondents. Table 3.5 shows considerably more females (53.3%) perceiving their parents to be quite modern as compared to only 13.3% males perceiving their parents to be so. The majority of the males (66.7%) perceived their parents to be neither modern nor traditional. The greater modernity of the parents of the female respondents may be attributable to their higher level of education and their English medium education.

Table 3.5

Parents' General outlook in Life,
as Perceived by Respondents

%	Male	Female
Very modern	-	-
Quite modern	13.3	53.3
Neither modern nor traditional	66.7	40.0
Quite traditional	20.0	6.7
Very traditional	-	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

It may be assumed that the more modern the parents are, the more unconventional would their views be. Thus it is not surprising to find that 53.3% of the females as compared to 13.3% of the males perceived their parents to be very encouraging towards their studies. (see Table 3.6) It has been a long-standing Chinese attitude that daughters are not as 'important' as sons and therefore, traditionally, do not receive as much attention as the sons. Another reason for this greater interest and encouragement may be because of the females' position as eldest children in the family as compared to the males, and as eldest children, they may tend to receive more attention from their parents.

In summary, both males and females are comparable in terms of place of residence, medium of education and the university they come from. The males are slightly older than the females and have

spent a longer time in the university. In terms of family structure, more females are eldest children in the family but both males and females come from families comparable in size.

Females perceived their parents as more interested in their studies as well as giving them greater encouragement. On the whole, the parents (both father and mother) of the female respondents are better educated and are more likely to have had English as their medium of instruction. Although the two groups do not differ much in terms of mother's occupation, the fathers of the female respondents are more likely to come from the professions, in keeping with their English-medium educational status.

Table 3.6

Parents' Interest and Encouragement in Respondents' Studies, as perceived by Respondents

%	Male	Female
Very interested	46.7	53.3
Quite interested	40.0	46.7
Not very interested	13.3	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0
Very encouraging	13.3	53.3
Quite encouraging	60.0	40.0
Neither encouraging nor discouraging	26.7	6.7
Quite discouraging	-	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Respondents' Attitude towards Career and Academic Aspiration

A considerable difference in the university courses taken by the respondents can be observed in Table 3.7. Considerably more females (60.0%) than males (26.7%) are enrolled in the Arts/Social Science and Economic courses whereas more males (73.3%) than females (40.0%) are in the Science course and related fields (including Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Engineering).

Table 3.7

University Courses Taken by Respondents

%	Male	Female
Science	40.0	26.7
Medicine/Pharmacy/Dentistry	26.7	13.3
Engineering	6.7	-
Arts/Social Science	20.7	53.3
Economics	6.7	6.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

This is consistent with course differentiation by sex at the University of Malaya. During the 1978/79 academic session in Universiti Malaya, 58.3% of the 2495 female undergraduates were in the Arts/Social Science and Economics faculties compared with 43.3% of the males. (Perangkaan Merher [versi Ringkas], Universiti Malaya, 1978/79).

In Chapter One, we have seen how Western psychologists have established certain sex differences in the area of aptitudes. It has been found that girls generally tend to excel on verbal types of problems and boys on quantitative or spatial problems. Girls are also superior in language materials and boys in science and mathematics (Carmichael, 1954). While this may help to explain the sex differentiation in the courses in Universiti Malaya, it could also reflect traditional attitudes regarding what are "feminine" and what are "masculine" subjects.

As to the reasons given by the respondents for being in the present course, it can be seen from Table 3.8 that a considerably high percentage of both female (60.0%) and male (53.3%) respondents stated interest. Males also cited competence in the subject (13.3%) as one of the reasons for being in the course whereas females listed ambition (13.3%).

Table 3.8

Respondents' Reasons for Choice of Present University Course

	%	Male	Female
Interest		53.3	60.0
Future Prospects		6.7	-
Given the course		26.7	20.0
Ambition		-	13.3
Competence in the subject		13.3	-
Don't have to use Bahasa Malaysia		-	6.7
TOTAL		100.0	100.0

Respondents were also asked to rate themselves on their academic abilities. Table 3.9 shows no sex differences with 60.0% considering themselves to be average students and 40.0% considering themselves to be above average students. However, these ratings differ from ratings of others on the respondents' abilities (see Table 3.10).

Table 3.9

Respondents' self-ratings on Personal Academic Abilities

%	Male	Female
Above average	40.0	40.0
Average	60.0	60.0
Below average	-	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Table 3.10

Other Ratings of Respondents' Academic Abilities, as perceived by Respondents

%	Male	Female
Above average	60.0	80.0
Average	40.0	20.0
Below average	-	-
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

There is greater discrepancy between self- and other-ratings for the females than for the males. More females (80.0%) than males (60.0%) perceived others as rating them above average. From here, it may seem that both males and females tend to underrate their own academic abilities but with the female respondents having a lower rating of themselves. This is in keeping with other studies which show that women are less confident about predicting what grade they will get and less confident on many tasks even when objectively they do as well as men. (See Maccoby and Jacklin, 1954; Crandall et.al., 1962).

However, another possible reason for this difference may be that females set higher standards for themselves than males or, put in another way, they are perhaps harder task-masters. This is supported by the results shown in Table 3.11. Respondents were asked to rate two sets of grades as above average, average or below average. Respondents rating the grades as average are presumed to have a higher standard than those rating it as above average. We find that 26.7% females rate the given grades B, B, B, C, D as average as compared to 40.0% of the males. In the second set of grades, that is, A, A, B, B, C, once again, a slightly lower percentage of females (33.3%) rate it as very good compared to the males (40.0%).

The questionnaire was designed to investigate not only the respondents' attitude towards education but also their level of aspiration in the academic field. They were therefore asked whether

Table 3.11

Respondents' Rating of Two Sets of Grades from
a University Examination

%	Male	Female
(i) Grades B, B, B, C, D.		
Very good	-	-
Above average	40.0	26.7
Average	60.0	73.3
Total	100.0	100.0
(ii) Grades A, A, B, B, C.		
Very good	40.0	33.3
Above average	60.0	66.7
Average	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0

would want to go for further studies if there are no family or financial constraints. Although as many males as females (66.7%) answered in the affirmative (see Table 3.12), the females' areas of studies are largely restricted to Diploma of Education and Masters. This is less ambitious than the areas stated by the male respondents viz. Doctorate, specialization of present course, or other professional courses than what they are doing now (example, law and theology). The males show a greater range of choices than the females.

The Statistical Abstract of the U.S.:1972, showed that for the year 1970, out of all the degrees conferred, women earned 39.8% of the Masters or second professional degrees but only 13.3% of doctorates or equivalent. The Malaysian situation is very much the

same. Out of the total number of Masters and Doctoral degrees conferred on June 1978, by the University of Malaya, only 30.51% and 36.36% respectively were received by the females (Perangkaan Mahasiswa, 1978/79, Universiti Malaya).

Table 3.12

Respondents' Aspiration for Further Studies

%	Male	Female
No plans for further studies	26.7	26.7
Uncertain	6.7	6.7
Plans for further studies:		
Diploma of Education	-	20.0
Masters	13.3	33.3
Doctorate	20.0	13.3
Specialization of present course	20.0	-
Other professional course	13.3	-
Total	66.7	66.7
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

Respondents were also asked to state their opinions on some general statements on male-female intelligence and diligence. Table 3.13 shows agreement in male and female attitudes towards the general statements made. Both sexes agree that either "men are more intelligent than women" or "both are equally intelligent".

The results obtained here are comparable to those studies of the West. A number of studies (e.g. Goldberg, 1968; O'Leary, 1974) show that women are perceived as inferior and less competent

than men although in actual fact, no sex differences have been found in general intellectual capacities (see Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974) When women do well, it is usually attributed to luck or special effort rather than skill or ability. This we can also see in Table 3.13 whereby both male and female respondents are of the opinion that women are either more hardworking or just as hardworking as men,

Table 3.13

Respondents' Opinion on male-female Intelligence and Diligence

% Agreement	Male	Female
(a) Men are more intelligent than women	46.7	40.0
Women are more intelligent than men	-	-
Both are equally intelligent	53.3	60.0
Total	100.0	100.0
(b) Men are more hardworking than women	-	-
Women are more hardworking than men	60.0	53.3
Both are just as hardworking	40.0	46.7
Total	100.0	100.0

This may explain the data in Table 3.14 which shows that less females experience failure in examination papers during the last three years. The data seem to lend support to the view that women seem to do better in examinations even though they are not as intelligent as men because they are more hardworking.

Table 3.14

Respondents' Experience of Failure in Examination Papers during the last three years

%	Male	Female
No failures	33.3	53.3
Experience failures	66.7	46.7
Total	100.0	100.0

In summary, we can see very clear sex differences in the respondents' attitude towards education and their academic aspirations. Women are seen to be more inclined towards the arts in contrast to men who tend towards the sciences. Females also appear to have lower self-esteem and are harder task-masters. Even though just as many females as males stated plans for further studies, males show higher aspirations for them. Women are also perceived as less intelligent but more diligent than men, in keeping with western stereotypes (O'Leary, 1974).

Respondents' Career Aspirations and Attitudes

Since the issue of one's career is related to one's educational and academic aspirations, one section of the questionnaire was devoted to the area of the respondents' career aspirations and studies.

Table 3.15 clearly shows that more males (86.7%) than females (53.3%) intend to work immediately after they graduate, while

33.3% of the females chose to further their studies.

Table 3.15

Respondents' Intention to work Immediately
after Graduation

%	Male	Female
Intend to work immediately	86.7	53.3
To further studies first	13.3	33.3
To rest first	-	13.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

This does not contradict the earlier data which show that 66.7% of the males would like to further their studies if circumstances permitted. It would mean that 53.3% of the males who intend to work immediately may either face family or financial constraints or wish to have some working experience first. The 33.3% female respondents who wish to further their studies first stated that they would like to pursue a Diploma of Education or Masters.

Respondents were also asked what career they would ideally like to pursue. Table 3.16 shows that the males are more varied in their choice of ideal careers (12 different occupational choices in all) as compared to the females (with 8 different occupational choices)

Table 3.16

Respondents' Ideal Career and their Expectation of Achieving it

Ideal Career %	M A L E		F E M A L E	
	Able to achieve	Not able to achieve	Able to achieve	Not able to achieve
Medical field	20.0	-	13.3	-
Administration	6.7	-	13.3	-
Teacher	6.7	-	20.0	6.7
Social worker	6.7	6.7	20.0	-
Lawyer	6.7	-	-	6.7
Lecturer	6.7	-	6.7	-
System analyst	6.7	-	-	6.7
Religious worker	-	-	6.7	-
Pilot	-	6.7	-	-
Accountant	-	6.7	-	-
Operation Research Analyst	-	6.7	-	-
Racing Driver	-	6.7	-	-
Military Commando	-	6.7	-	-
TOTAL	60.0	40.0	80.0	20.0

The two most popular choices for the female respondents are teacher (26.7%) and social worker (20.0%) - traditionally 'feminine occupations'. Other ideal careers mentioned by the males but absent from the female list include pilot, accountant, operation research analyst, racing driver and military commando. The ideal careers chosen would appear to be in line with studies done by Terman and Miles (1936) on masculinity and femininity. They summarized their findings

as follows:

From whatever angle we have examined them, the males included in the standardization groups evinced a distinctive interest in exploit and adventure, in outdoor and physically strenuous occupations, in machinery and tools, in science, physical phenomena and inventions; and from rather occasional evidence in business and commerce. On the other hand, the females ... have evinced a distinctive interest in domestic affairs and in aesthetic objects and occupations; they have distinctly preferred more sedentary and indoor occupations, and occupations more directly ministrative, particularly to the young, the helpless, the distressed....

(Terman & Miles, 1936, p.447)

As to their ability to achieve their ideal career, 80.0% of the females as compared to 60.0% of the males stated that they could achieve it. Judging from the different types of ideal careers cited, it can be expected that more females would be able to achieve theirs than males. Reasons given by the males for not being able to achieve their ideal career include physical qualifications (e.g. eyesight, height, etc.), different course, stiff competition and limited vacancies, and lack of opportunity.

As we have seen earlier in the choice of ideal careers of the male and female respondents, there seem to be certain occupations more to the inclination of females than males and vice versa. Many occupations even to this day are very typically sex-typed, that is, more 'suitable' for one sex than another. This stereotyped attitude towards occupations is evidenced by the respondents.

In this study, a list of 24 occupations were also presented to the respondents who were asked to rate them on a 9-point scale ranging

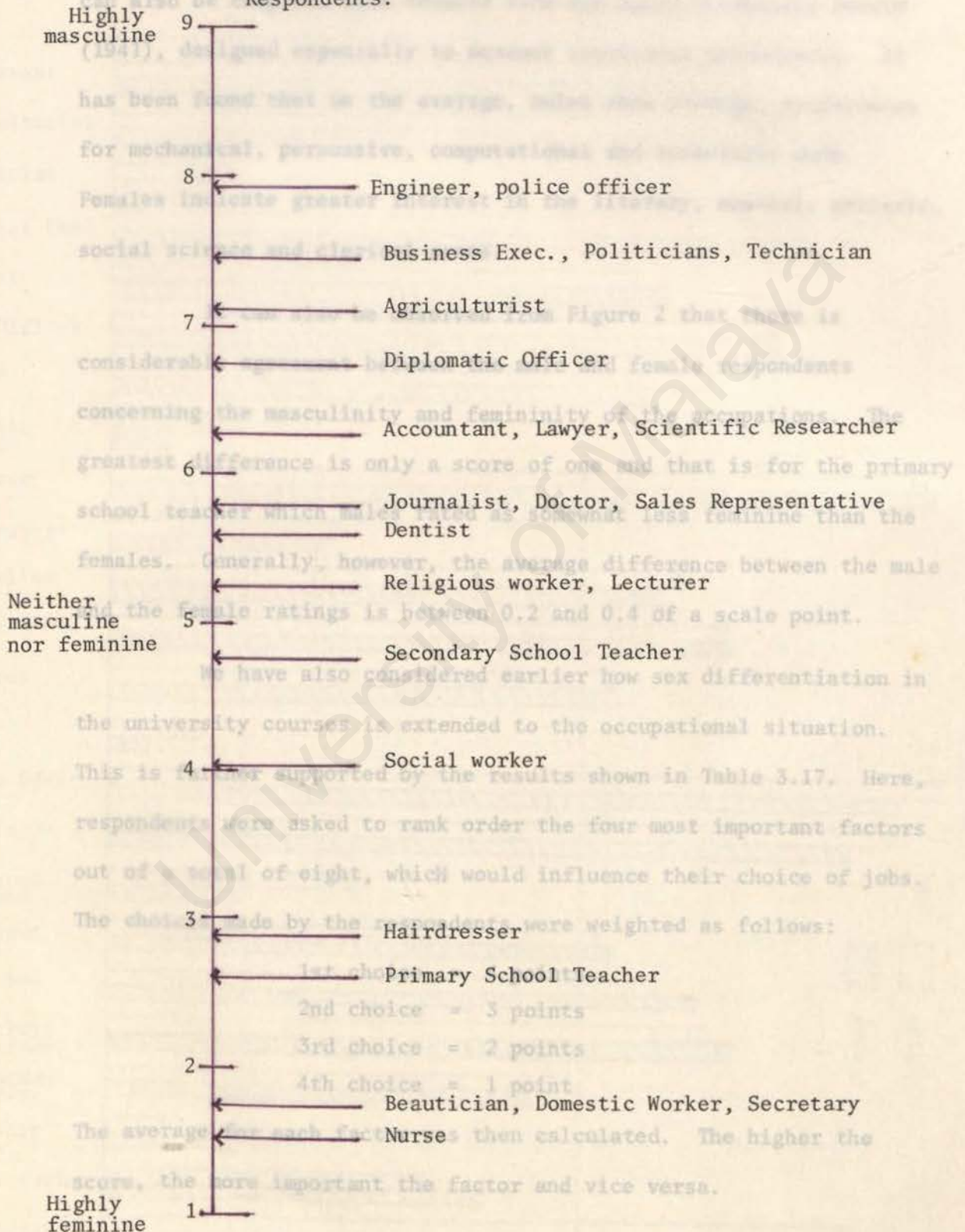
from 1 (highly feminine) to 9 (highly masculine). The results are presented in Figure I which shows the different occupations arranged in order of masculinity and femininity, based on the average scores of both male and female respondents.

We see here how a large number of occupations are very clearly sex-typed. The respondents distinctly considered certain occupations as more masculine or feminine than others. Occupations such as nurse, beauticians, domestic worker, secretary, primary school teacher and hairdresser are clearly rated as highly feminine occupations. On the other hand, the more masculine occupations include engineer, police officer, business executive, politician, technician and agriculturist.

It is interesting to note that most of the occupations which are considered feminine fall under the category of service* whereas those considered to be more masculine are in the professional, technical and administrative categories. This is clearly consistent with the actual employment situation in Malaysia (Refer to Table 1.3, p. 6). The actual occupational situation in Malaysia in 1967/68 shows clear sex-differentiation. This may be due to differentiation in educational opportunities, occupational opportunities, sex discrimination and other practical problems. Sex bias in occupations is still a very deep-rooted phenomenon in Malaysian society and it is very likely to have affected the respondents' rating of the occupations given.

* The classification of occupations here, follows that of the Department of Statistics - Socio-Economic Sample Survey of Households, Malaysia, 1967-68.

Figure I: Mean Masculinity-Femininity Index of Various Occupations - based on both male and female Respondents.



The results obtained from the ratings of the respondents can also be compared with results from the Kuder Preference Record (1941), designed especially to measure vocational preferences. It has been found that on the average, males show stronger preferences for mechanical, persuasive, computational and scientific work. Females indicate greater interest in the literary, musical, artistic, social science and clerical areas.

It can also be observed from Figure 2 that there is considerable agreement between the male and female respondents concerning the masculinity and femininity of the occupations. The greatest difference is only a score of one and that is for the primary school teacher which males rated as somewhat less feminine than the females. Generally, however, the average difference between the male and the female ratings is between 0.2 and 0.4 of a scale point.

We have also considered earlier how sex differentiation in the university courses is extended to the occupational situation. This is further supported by the results shown in Table 3.17. Here, respondents were asked to rank order the four most important factors out of a total of eight, which would influence their choice of jobs. The choices made by the respondents were weighted as follows:

1st choice = 4 points

2nd choice = 3 points

3rd choice = 2 points

4th choice = 1 point

The average for each factor was then calculated. The higher the score, the more important the factor and vice versa.

Highly masculine

Highly feminine

Neither masculine nor feminine

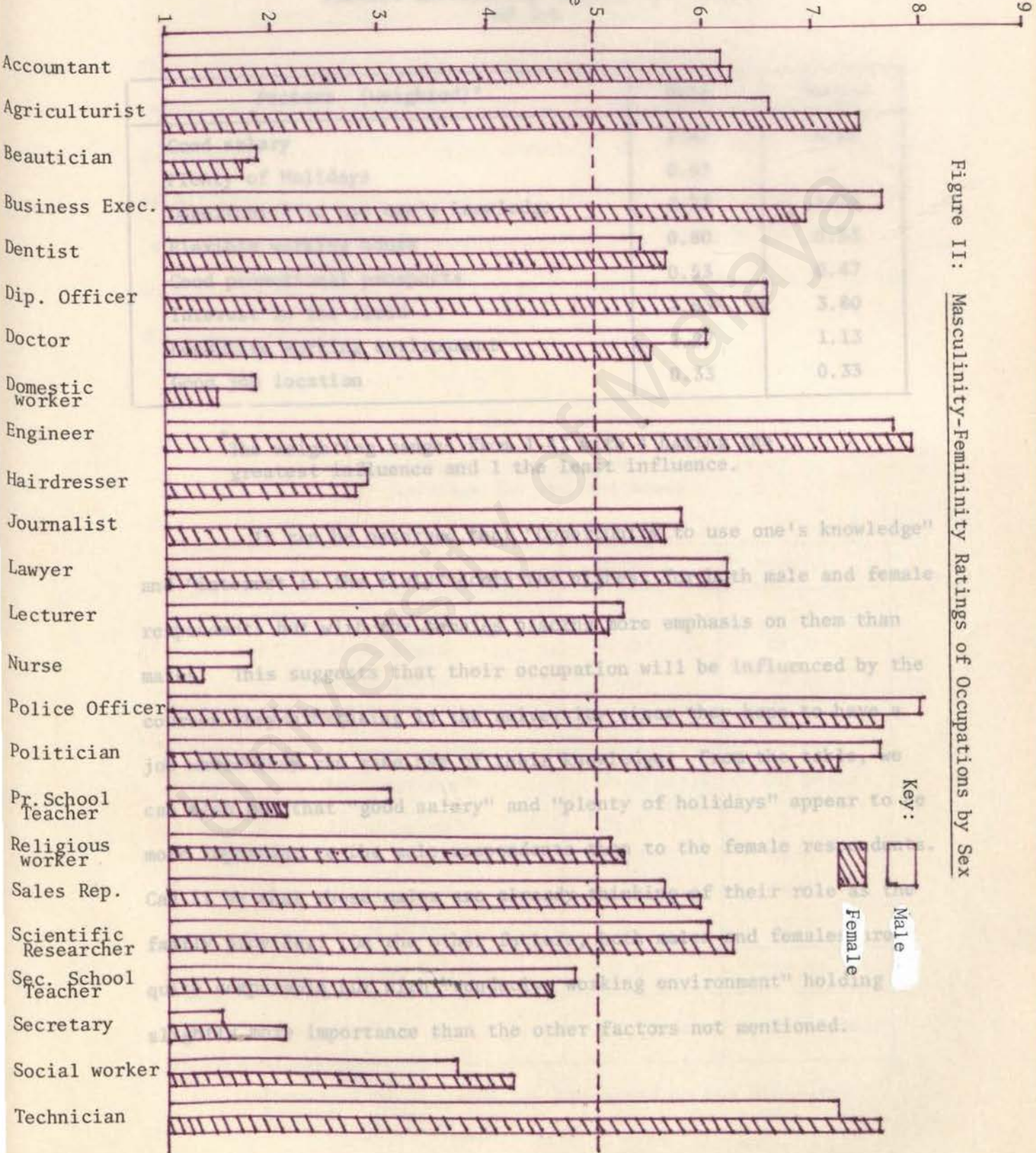


Figure II: Masculinity-Femininity Ratings of Occupations by Sex

Table 3.17

Factors Influencing Respondents' choice
of Job

Factors (weighted)*	Male	Female
Good salary	1.47	0.53
Plenty of Holidays	0.53	-
Opportunity to use one's knowledge	2.53	3.20
Flexible working hours	0.80	0.53
Good promotional prospects	0.53	0.47
Interest in the field	2.53	3.80
Conducive working environment	1.27	1.13
Good job location	0.33	0.33

* The weighting ranges from 1-4, with 4 having the greatest influence and 1 the least influence.

It can be observed that "Opportunity to use one's knowledge" and "interest in the field" score the highest for both male and female respondents but with the females placing more emphasis on them than males. This suggests that their occupation will be influenced by the courses they are taking in the university since they hope to have a job where they can make use of their knowledge. From the table, we can also see that "good salary" and "plenty of holidays" appear to be more important to the male respondents than to the female respondents. Can it be that these males are already thinking of their role as the family provider? On the other factors, both males and females are quite comparable but with "conducive working environment" holding slightly more importance than the other factors not mentioned.

Respondents' Views on Marriage and Other Related Aspects

In the previous section, it was found that all the respondents expected to work after they graduate - whether it be immediately or after further studies. It is inevitable that the question of marriage will arise somewhere along the line. The question of marriage and career is especially important to the women as there is the assumption that the women should take a job only if it fits in with her married life. This can be seen in further detail in the following findings.

Table 3.18

Respondents' View in the Ideal Age of Marriage for Men and Women

%	Male	Female
For women: 20-22 years	6.7	-
23-25 years	80.0	66.7
26-28 years	13.3	33.3
Total	100.0	100.0
Mean ideal marriage age*	24.2 years	25 years
For men: 23-25 years	20.0	-
26-28 years	66.7	60.0
29-31 years	13.3	26.7
32-34 years	-	13.3
Total	100.0	100.0
Mean ideal marriage age*	26.8 years	28.6 years

*Computations for mean age are based on the mid-point of each age group.

Table 3.18 shows that the male and female respondents are agreed on earlier age of marriage for women as compared to men. This seems to be in accordance with the popular view that men should be older than women in marriage. However, it is of interest to note that male respondents favour earlier marriages for both men and women than their female counterparts. Female respondents were of the opinion that the mean ideal marriage-age for men and women is 28.6 years and 25 years respectively. The male respondents, on the other hand, felt that the ideal marriage age is 26.8 years and 24.2 years respectively for men and women.

The above, however, is not congruent with the popularly accepted view of marriage expressed by the picture below.



Source: What Society Does to Girls, J. Nicholson, Virgo Ltd., 1975, p.45.

The impression given is that the men have to 'lose' the greatest amount of 'freedom' when the opposite is more true to life. Further findings continue to dispel the popular prejudice pictured here.

As expected, Table 3.19 shows that 80.0% of the male respondents as compared to a mere 6.7% of the female respondents are of the opinion that marriage is more conducive to their career. This is in keeping with male respondents favouring earlier marriages for both men and women. In contrast, 86.7 of the female respondents feel that singlehood is more conducive to their career.

Table 3.19

Respondents' Views on Marriage or Singlehood as being more conducive to Career

%	Male	Female
Marriage as more conducive to career	80.0	6.7
Singlehood are more conducive to career	13.3	86.7
No information	6.7	6.7
Total	100.0	100.0

Two major reasons cited by both sexes who consider marriage to be more conducive to their career include companionship and encouragement from the wife, and marriage gives one a sense of security, stability and something to work for. The first reason is actually a stereotyped view of the role of the wife where her value as a

'companion after work' is much stressed. On the other hand, the reasons given by both sexes for considering singlehood as more conducive are: marriage will compete with career for time and attention; it means added responsibilities; work demands dedication; and one can have more freedom in one's work if one is single.

It would appear, from the reasons given here that the female respondents are of the opinion that even if a married woman is committed to a career, she is still expected to keep up with her identity as a housewife. This includes the three roles of wife, house-worker and child bearer/mother (Fransella & Frost, 1977).

Many have accepted the view that marriage itself provides a major turning-point in a woman's occupational career. More recently, however, parenthood is seen as that which provides this turning point (LeMasters, 1974; Rossi, 1968). The views of the respondents seem to support the above statement.

Table 3.20 shows that ^{as} many males as females (93.3%) are of the opinion that women should pursue their career after marriage. From this, it can be safely said that the traditional view of the woman's place as being in the home no longer fully applies to the respondents. This is no doubt largely attributable to economic reasons or women's increasing sense of independence. However, the majority of the respondents (both male and female) still see the importance of the woman as a mother. Only 20.0% of the males and 40.0% of the females are of the opinion that women should continue to pursue their career even if they have infants in the family.

Similarly, only 26.7% males and 20.0% females feel that married women with pre-school children to take care of, should pursue their career. Apart from the infancy period, males and females do not differ much in terms of the proportion favouring women working, though their reasons may be different.

Table 3.20

Respondents' Attitudes Toward Women Pursuing their Career at Different Stages of Married Life

Women should continue to pursue their career	Male	Female
%		
(a) after marriage	93.3	93.3
(b) when they have infants	20.0	40.0
(c) when they have pre-school children	26.7	20.0

A survey in France (Chombart de Lauwre, 1962) came up with very similar findings. Out of the 60 middle-class couples who were interviewed two-thirds of the males and almost all of the females felt that no children should work. When it came to married women with school-age children, only 20.0% of the male respondents and 30.0% of the female respondents approved of them working. On the whole, both males and females disapproved of work for mothers with young children.

Since for the male respondents, marriage is by and large perceived to be conducive to their career, one would not expect males to experience conflicts between their career and marriage. On the

other hand, females may be expected to foresee conflicts. However, the data in Table 3.21 do not appear to support this.

Table 3.21

Conflicts Arising Between Respondents' Career
and Marriage, as foreseen by Respondents

%	Male	Female
Foresee conflicts	13.3	26.7
Do not foresee conflicts	80.0	73.3
No information	6.7	-
Total	100.0	100.0

Only 26.7% of the females foresee any conflicts arising between their career and their marriage. On the other hand, 80.0% of the males do not foresee any conflict arising at all.

Table 3.22 may be able to explain why even though the majority of the female respondents are of the opinion that singlehood is more conducive to their career, only a minority foresee conflicts arising between marriage and career. Two-thirds of the male respondents consider their career to be more important than their spouse's career. Almost as many female respondents subscribe to the same view; that is, 60.0% of them consider the men's career to be more important. One may assume that the females would probably give up their jobs when deemed necessary. There will be no conflict so long as men and women 'keep to their place in society'.

Table 3.22

Respondents' Rating of Own Career in Relation
to Spouse's Career

%	Male	Female
On par with spouse's career	33.3	40.0
More important than spouse's career	66.7	-
Less important than spouse's career	-	60.0
Total	100.0	100.0

The present data lend support to those of Schwenn (1970). Schwenn's (1970) study showed that some women would consider giving up their real interests or the idea of a serious career because it appears to conflict with their marriage prospects and with motherhood. Responses to an EEC survey (Commission of the European Communities, 1975) indicated that both sexes believe that women's sole responsibility to family commitment is the greatest obstacle to equal opportunities.

The 'traditional' view of women's work is that it is secondary - at least for married women; it is an 'option' dictated by the needs of husband and children. Why then, do women continue to work? Rosenfeld and Perella (1965) put this question forward to a national sample of married and single American women and the most common response given was 'financial need'. The data in Table 3.23 are consistent with those of Rosenfeld and Perella.

Table 3.23

Reasons Given as to Why Married Women Work

%	Male	Female
To help with family income	26.7	20.0
For own economic independence	6.7	40.0
To make use of one's education/training	20.0	6.7
Work provides interest	40.0	13.3
For a sense of ambition/achievement	6.7	20.0
Total	100.0	100.0

For women, economic independence is the single most important reason for married women working. It is cited by 40.0% of females in contrast to only 6.7% of the male respondents. Hoffman (1963) points out that women who say they work 'for money' may in fact have other reasons, for example, women with children may not want to admit that they also like to work, for fear that someone might tell them that they are neglecting their families. The female respondents of this study do not appear to show this fear. Twenty per cent of them cited 'for a sense of ambition/achievement' as one of the reasons why married women work. Forty percent of the male respondents also stated 'work provides interest' while 20.0% cited 'to make use of one's education/training'.

It is not surprising that only 6.7% of the male respondents gave 'economic independence' as the reason why married women work. The male respondents are probably holding on to the traditional view

of the male as breadwinner or provider of the family. This view is strengthened by the results in Table 3.24 whereby 66.7% of the males placed little importance on married women's economic independence. This is sharply contrasted with 80.0% females who rate economic independence as important. The data suggests that men may have underestimated the strength of women's need for economic independence.

Table 3.24

Respondents' Rating of Importance of Economic Independence to Married Women

Important (%)	Male	Female	Not Important (%)	Male	Female
Very important	6.7	26.7	Not very important	60.0	20.0
Quite important	26.7	53.3	Not important at all	6.7	-
Total	33.3	80.0		66.7	20.0
<u>Reasons</u>			<u>Reasons</u>		
Less of a burden on husband	13.3	-	Husband should provide	53.3	20.0
For own security	13.3	53.3	Wife should spend time at home	13.3	-
Fulfilment of own economic needs	-	13.3			
For self-satisfaction	6.7	13.3			

Not only did the respondents differ in their attitude towards married women's economic independence, but also in the reasons given. The females emphasised on 'security' and 'fulfilment of economic needs'

while the males stressed on 'less of a burden on the husband'. The main reason given by both males and females but considerably more so by the males, as to why they feel that married women's economic independence is not important is because "the husband should provide".

Despite the seemingly liberated views put forward by the female respondents vis-a-vis career and marriage, we see in Table 3.25 that a surprisingly large percentage of them (60.0%) still tend to feel that housekeeping is largely the wife's responsibility. None of the respondents think that it is largely the husband's responsibility. The females especially, seem to be much influenced by the assumption that women become houseworkers by virtue of getting married and having children. It is also interesting to note that more males (53.3%) are of the opinion that housekeeping is the joint responsibility of both husband and wife as compared to 46.7% females who feel that it is largely the wife's responsibility.

There is complete agreement, however, on the part of the two sexes that child-rearing is the job of both husband and wife. While the data may seem rather encouraging for the female sex, whether it actually works out in practice is quite another matter. Studies by Fogarty, Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) which looked at what men and women actually do as housework, found that the greater part is still done by the wife.

So far, we have seen that in career as in education, the male respondents tended to have a greater sense of achievement. This is seen in their choice of ideal career. The males preferred either

Table 3.25

Respondents' View on the Role of the Sexes in
Housekeeping and child-rearing

%	Male	Female
(a) Housekeeping is largely the wife's responsibility	46.7	60.0
Housekeeping is largely the husband's responsibility	-	-
Housekeeping is the responsibility of both	53.3	40.0
Total	100.0	100.0
(b) Child-rearing is largely the wife's job	6.7	6.7
Child-rearing is largely the husband's job	-	-
Child-rearing is the job of both	93.3	93.3
Total	100.0	100.0

more technical or adventurous careers whereas the females were more inclined towards ministrative occupations such as teaching and social work. In choosing jobs, both sexes were just as concerned about the opportunity to use one's knowledge, and interest in the field. However, 'good salary' is also markedly more important to the males than females.

With regard to the question of marriage, males favour younger marriage ages for both men and women compared to the females. A sharp contrast between males and females can also be seen in male-female attitudes toward certain aspects of marriage. Males were more

likely to find marriage conducive to their career whereas females were more likely to find singlehood conducive. Both sexes felt that women should continue to pursue their career unless there are infants or pre-school children around. However, certain conflicts will have to be worked out by the females because of their seemingly incompatible views concerning career and the role of the married women. Generally, the females felt that women should continue to pursue their career even after marriage; one of their reasons being for economic independence which they rated as important. At the same time, however, they were of the opinion that housekeeping is largely the wife's responsibility and they completely concur with males in rating the husband's job as more important. Despite their higher education, these respondents are still very much influenced by various stereotypic views on the roles of husband and wife.

The males' views are more consistent, for example, they feel that marriage is more conducive to their career; their career is more important than their spouse's; they do not foresee conflicts arising from their career and marriage; and they feel married women's economic independence is not important as the husband should be expected to provide in any case.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Though small in scale, this study does show that certain sex differences do cut across culture. Many of the findings here support the results of studies carried out in the western countries and certain cross-cultural trends have been found.

There is no doubt that compared to the past, our present day has seen some changes in the sex-role system. This is evident especially in western society. The notion that masculinity and femininity represent dichotomous and mutually exclusive classes and traits is beginning to be recognised as inadequate and unsatisfying. Chetwynd and Hartnett (1977) feel that this is detrimental to creative thinking and to the development of mature adults capable of combining the more desirable traits from both stereotypes. Even so, many of these stereotypical beliefs, backed by cultural tradition still have a strong influence on male and female psychological make-up.

Many aspects of society need to change if such stereotypical beliefs (which can sometimes become unhealthy and hinder progress) are to be got rid of. Areas that would need changes include the educational system, especially that of the young ones beginning from kindergarten; the mass media, including the television where stereotypical views of the two sexes are often subtly implied; the literature world, parental attitudes, etc. Both in principle and in practice,

children should indeed be brought up as people, free to cultivate the desirable traits from both sexes. But such changes will take a very long time to come about and these unfounded beliefs will die a very slow death.

As mentioned in chapter 2, this study is limited in certain ways. Firstly, the sample is small and limited to christian undergraduates, the majority of which are Chinese. Secondly, the scope covered is wide and general, resulting in more specific aspects of the different topics left untouched. Further studies could be done to give a more complete and clearer picture of local male and female sex differences in the three areas touched on by this study, that is, education, career and marriage/parenthood. Follow-up studies could take into consideration different ethnic groups, rural-urban differences and age groups.

The topic on marriage and parenthood is an interesting one and it would be good to be able to deal with it more specifically by itself. Studies could be carried out with married couples as respondents so that one can also find out how a marriage works out in practice rather than just knowing what the males and the females want their marriage to be like. For example, males and females may be of the opinion that child rearing is the responsibility of both husband and wife, but is it really practised out in their lives? Who, for example, does all the 'unpleasant' jobs of changing the nappies, cleaning the 'potties', etc. How much of the housework is the husband really involved in? One could also find out how many mothers with a

high level of education actually gave up their career to become housewives and how they feel about doing so.

This study has also come up with certain implications. Even from a group of undergraduates, many of the views put forth are stereotypical. One would expect that the more education a person has, the less unconventional and more liberal his views would be. It is therefore, likely that the uneducated or those with little education would be more tied down by traditional, stereotypical beliefs, even if they may be unfounded. Future studies taking into consideration different educational level would prove to be interesting.

Malaysia, with its pluralistic society resulting in its rich and varied culture, provides an interesting situation for such studies. And all the more so because very, very few studies have been carried out here.

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