Research Report

COMMITTEE: Equality and Discrimination (ILO2)
ISSUE: How to abolish gender stereotypes in the tertiary sector?
CHAIR: Adrienne Husny, Selma Surieux, Grace Baylis.

INTRODUCTION: PRESENTATION OF THE CHAIRS

Hello delegates! My name is Grace Baylis and I'm in my final year at the Institut Fénelon in Grasse, France. I'm one of your three chairs for the Equality and Discrimination Committee. Outside the classroom and all things MUN, I like listening to music, swimming and surfing. At school, I like to study literature, but I also like to debate current topics and problems. That's why I've been taking part in the MUNs for four years now. I'm looking forward to meeting you, and listening to all your proposals and solutions for *abolishing gender stereotypes in the service sector*. The beauty of MUN is that we'll be able to find solutions to problems that affect us all, now and in the years to come.

Hello delegates. My name is Selma Surieux and I'm in my final year at the Lycée Français Bonaparte in Doha, Qatar. I'm one of your three chairs for the Equality and Discrimination Committee. I was born in Brazil and have travelled all my life. It's one of my favourite pastimes, along with reading, dancing and my friends. At my lycée, I took SES and HGGSP as special subjects and I really enjoy debating on a variety of subjects. This is not my first MUN, which is why I hope to be able to help you from my past experience. The subject of abolishing gender stereotypes in the third sector is a very serious one and I hope you'll be able to find some solutions, while having fun throughout the conference. See you soon!

KEY WORDS:

Stereotype: A stereotype is a ready-made expression or opinion without any originality; it is a cliché, a received idea. In social psychology, a stereotype is a fixed caricature of a human group or social class. However, this definition is intended to guide a sociological study, and stereotypes can affect many other groups. Stereotypes also apply to differences in age, sex, gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, nationality and language, to name but a few.

Sex: Sex is a set of biological attributes, such as chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and the anatomy of the reproductive system, which is often characterised by the binary terms 'female' or 'male'. Sex determination is generally based on the anatomy and physiology visible at birth, such as the external genitalia. However, there are natural variations in sex development, as some people may have intersex characteristics that do not strictly fit into the binary categories.

Gender: Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, expressions and identities that society constructs for men, women, girls, boys and people of different sexes and genders. Gender influences how people perceive themselves and others, how they act and interact, and how power and resources are distributed in society. Gender identity is neither binary (girl/woman, boy/man) nor static. Rather, it lies along a continuum and can evolve over time. Individuals and groups understand, experience and express gender in very different ways, through the roles they adopt, the expectations placed on them, their relationships with others and the complex ways in which gender is institutionalised in society.

Discrimination:Discrimination refers to the act of separating, distinguishing and treating a person or group differently from another person or group, usually to the detriment of the person's dignity. It is an attitude of objectively unjustified differentiation that consists of denying certain people the rights and advantages granted to others, which is profoundly contrary to the principle of equality.

Tertiary sector: According to INSEE, the tertiary sector covers a vast field of activity, ranging from commerce to administration, including transport, financial and real estate activities, business and personal services, education, health and social work. This activity may be commercial (e.g. accommodation and catering) or noncommercial (e.g. public administration and social work). The tertiary sector is defined by its complementarity with the agricultural activities of the primary sector and the industrial activities of the secondary sector.

Pay gap (unadjusted) : According to the European Parliament, the gender pay gap is the difference in average gross hourly pay between women and men. It is based on wages paid directly to employees before income tax and social security contributions. The average pay gap between men and women in the EU was 12.7% in 2021.

Pay gap (adjusted) : The adjusted pay gap is measured by an analysis that calculates the difference in pay between women and men after taking into account factors that determine pay, such as job function, training and experience. The pay gap is used to determine whether a company offers women and men the same pay for similar or equal jobs.

OVERVIEW:

Since stereotypes are fixed mental images, perpetuated by men and women alike, their abolition requires a different approach to that of a problem where the origin and the sign are physical. Here, the origin is intangible, whereas the sign has very real consequences, generated by ideas followed by corresponding actions. Stereotypes are based on differences that can be perceived visually, so female physical features are often the pretext for constructing a caricatured and false idea. Gender stereotypes are instilled in us from a very early age: for example, in the vast majority of cases, mothers look after children, who in turn are imbued with the impression that women must look after others. This stereotype erects a barrier that accentuates self-censorship for a student, yet a female student is more likely to choose an academic path that leads to a career centred on helping and caring for others.The choice of subjects and academic path is

therefore very important, as these choices form the rudder that steers us towards a job, towards a life.

When gender stereotypes start to form part of our lives from a very young age, and can direct important academic choices, they continue to follow us throughout our lives, for example by influencing the way we are perceived by our colleagues at work. There are certain expected behaviours at work based on gender. A woman who knows how to actively promote her ideas or manage a team by pushing her limits could be seen as authoritarian and aggressive, whereas this behaviour would be expected and respected if she were a man. This discrimination extends to making it harder for women to achieve promotions, since even today, some people consider that women are led by their emotions rather than reason, and would therefore not be compatible with a job of high importance.

As a result, women seeking equal consideration with their colleagues will behave in a way that is considered masculine, abandoning characteristics considered feminine, in order to blend in and conform to the expectations of their job, and perhaps even to facilitate their access to promotion. In developed countries, people affected by gender stereotypes have the opportunity to express themselves more freely about what they are experiencing in their jobs. In less developed countries, on the other hand, they have to resort to more moderate, even silent, protest. Often, if they have no hope of an exemplary woman or person, who has managed to get by, to go against all the stereotypes of which she is the victim, it is even more difficult to imagine personal success.

We have therefore established that gender stereotypes can stem from socialisation in family life, with work colleagues, education, the socio-economic status of those around them, or the culture that structures their lives. In the service sector, this can influence many things, such as job choice. Those who go against stereotypes are marginalised or celebrated. In addition, gender stereotypes give rise to negative or positive ideas within the same job. For example, when a woman works as a waitress, it is often assumed that she does so because she has no other career options and no qualifications. On the other hand, when it's a man, a waiter, it seems more like a passion for the job, a voluntary and committed choice.

Many barriers have been broken down in recent years and decades. However, as long as there are still signs of inequality, such as the pay gap, or offensive stereotypical remarks made under the pretext of humour, we still have a long way to go.

RELEVANT UN TREATIES AND EVENTS:

- [The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women](#) adopted by the General Assembly in New York on 7 November 1967:
Defining the United Nations' position on women's rights, it declares that discrimination against women "is fundamentally unjust and an affront to human dignity"; however, the term "discrimination" is not developed. It consists of 11 articles. It prefigures the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

- [The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) was signed in New York on 18 December 1979:

After being ratified by 20 countries, it entered into force on 3 September 1981. It has now been recognised and ratified by 189 countries, excluding the United States, Iran, Somalia and Sudan. Qatar signed it in 2009.

It recognises that "despite these various instruments [the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, United Nations conferences, etc] women continue to be subject to significant discrimination," and that action is therefore essential.

- [The 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing](#), 4-15 September 1995:
  The most important of the four United Nations conferences on women between 1975 and 1995, it built on the political agreements reached at the three previous conferences, consolidating five decades of legal progress designed to ensure equality between women and men, in law as well as in practice. Adopted unanimously by 189 countries, the Beijing Platform for Action is considered to be the world's foremost policy document on gender equality. With the goal of empowering women, it covers areas such as women's fundamental rights, as well as the role of women in the environment, the economy and health.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS:

We can therefore imagine new solutions to this problem. Let's take the example of possible solutions for a company: in 2004, CARI, a general building contractor, decided to introduce a CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) approach, which takes account of social and environmental issues in business relations and internal and external company activities. Their aim is to focus recruitment on three target groups: young people, senior citizens and women. But how can we make construction jobs more attractive and adapt integration programmes for people who are not interested in these jobs? How can we disseminate these CSR principles within companies that recruit mainly men? In the tertiary sector? How can we increase the transparency of these incentives and their results? What are the effects of the rise of teleworking on gender in the sector?To continue with the company situation, we will also need to find solutions to the shortfall in paid maternity and paternity leave, as well as paid leave specifically for fathers. We also need to look at the cost of childcare. If they are too high, what can be done to bring them down?

Sexual harassment and sexist comments are currently inseparable from gender in the tertiary sector. Based on the solutions that already exist in your country, we need to analyse their effectiveness and remedy any shortcomings. How are you going to ensure that your company policies are implemented with sincerity and commitment?

Another way of finding solutions would be to target the government and local authorities directly: for example, by setting up a monitoring system for the implementation of national, regional and local gender equality policies. It would also be necessary to promote the equal integration of the sexes into existing social structures: for example, in a school setting, by demonstrating gender perspectives that are harmful or favourable to an egalitarian education for subsequent generations. How will you implement these strategies? How can they be generalised internationally, given that a developing country will have different needs and specific characteristics to those of a developed country?

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Insee Première: Gender pay gap: mainly the effect of working hours and job type in french

"We should all be feminists" by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie