



Social Gender in the Algerian Labor Market

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Abstract

Each stage of international criminal jurisprudence has been shaped by specific circumstances that have influenced international criminal punishment. This jurisprudence was initially characterized by the political context that accompanied the establishment of temporary international criminal tribunals, which sparked extensive debates regarding the validity of their sentences. In the end, the international community established a permanent judicial mechanism that was tasked with dealing with the most serious crimes committed on a global scale, bringing those responsible to justice regardless of their status, and preventing impunity. This framework for international criminal penalties is based on a commitment to penal legitimacy and advancing an impartial and equitable international criminal justice system.

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1. Introduction

The integration of women into the labor market is a critical social issue that has engaged most countries globally. It provides valuable insights into a nation's developmental progress and the effectiveness of its developmental policies. Women's participation is an integral part of each country's human activity, contributing significantly to the overall developmental process. However, the dynamics of this participation vary significantly from one country to another and over time.

The behavior of women in the labor market is intrinsically linked to their economic and social realities. The decision to enter, remain in, or exit the labor market is influenced by a complex interplay of demographic, social, economic, cultural, and political factors, along with the specific strategies adopted by the state.

In Algeria, like other nations, there has been a consistent pursuit of comprehensive development in all aspects, with a particular emphasis on economic and social sectors. Initially influenced by socialist orientations, these development plans were critical in engaging all societal sectors, signifying a fundamental shift in women's participation in development. This involvement has evolved over time with the Algerian economy's developmental stages, influenced by factors such as cultural changes within Algerian families,

increasing openness resulting from cultural globalization, a steady rise in women's education, growing awareness of the importance of women's roles, and the necessity of empowering them alongside men in achieving progressive and comprehensive development.

These changes, supported by the new strategic directions of the Algerian state, have led to the formulation of policies, procedures, and regulations, fostering a labor market that provides equal opportunities for both genders from a social gender perspective.

Recent developments in Algerian society have made women's participation in the workforce a notable feature, assigning them a significant role and weight in the labor force composition. This emerging trend has necessitated a thorough examination of the phenomenon, its distinct characteristics, and its impact on women, families, and the broader society.

The concept of gender, relatively new linguistically in Arabic but not in meaning, corresponds to 'social gender' in Arabic, referring to the societal roles assigned to males and females.

This concept has sparked significant debate among researchers, each bringing their perspective. Despite widespread advocacy for equality between men and women, gender discrimination, particularly a bias toward men for specific jobs and leadership positions, has led to unequal opportunities

in the workforce. This is evidenced by the concentration of women's employment in specific sectors such as education or healthcare, highlighting the need to identify the fundamental obstacles affecting women's roles and functions, from family to society and the workplace.

Therefore, our study aims to investigate the factors that have contributed to reinforcing the differences in work between men and women and the causes of the gender gap, focusing particularly on the Algerian labor market. Our research is guided by the following question:

-What are the factors that led to gender differentiation in the Algerian labor market?

2. Reasons for Choosing the Topic:

- ✍ Our full realization of the increasing importance of women in comprehensive development sectors, including human development, and their contribution to driving the development process through their roles in various economic activities.
- ✍ The scarcity of field studies related to the phenomenon of social gender and its significant impact on human development.
- ✍ Our genuine desire to gain field insights into some of the dynamics that directly or indirectly influence women's entry into the labor market, as well as to

verify the severity of obstacles and challenges they face in the workplace.

3. Importance of the Study:

This study gains its significance from the Algerian social reality, which underscores the deep-rooted traditional culture defining the images, roles, and consequently, the social positions of men and women within the framework of patriarchal authority in Algerian society. This entrenched cultural paradigm has led to an imbalance in the status of men and women, amplifying the gender gap. It perpetuates gender inequality through the exaltation of masculinity and the simultaneous devaluation of femininity. Such cultural norms position men as dominant figures and women as subordinate, underscoring the need for specialized academic research. This research aims to explore the transition from focusing solely on women's development to a broader approach encompassing gender or social gender development.

The objective is to restructure the relationship between men and women, incorporating Social Gender as a strategy to achieve equality and justice across genders. This approach advocates for the active involvement of both men and women in the developmental process across all spheres of social, economic, and political life, without any form of exclusion or marginalization.

Moreover, the study seeks to heighten awareness about the roles and social status of both women and men in terms of their

rights and responsibilities. This involves critically reassessing the prevailing social culture and traditional notions within Algerian society. These notions, often reinforced through social upbringing from family units to various societal institutions, contribute to the perceived differences between women and men. Over time, these socially constructed differences have been misconstrued as innate aspects of human nature.

4. Objectives of the Study:

Any correct practical study must have clear objectives, both for the researcher and the reader. Therefore, we have identified a set of preliminary objectives for our study, which are as follows:

- ✍ Understanding social gender and how it is formed.
- ✍ Highlighting the role of societal culture in shaping social gender.
- ✍ Analyzing the Algerian labor market from a social gender perspective.
- ✍ Understanding how changes in roles resulting from the formation of social gender in the labor market.
- ✍ How the culture of social gender produced in the labor market affects the culture of society.

5. Study Concepts:

5-1 Social Gender:

- *Linguistically:*

The term "gender" is of American origin, derived from the Latin word (genus) and the old French term (genre). It refers to the pattern, category, class, sex, type, and distinction between masculinity and femininity. However, the true equivalent of "gender" is "social gender," or "social role," meaning that gender, in its various linguistic derivations, refers to the grammatical and linguistic meaning during conjugation (masculine and feminine) or it indicates the three genders (he/she/neutral) (Hamdawi, 2018, p.13).

- *Terminologically:*

Gender or social gender refers to the social attribute of sex, meaning: "the roles, relationships, personal characteristics, attitudes, behaviors, and values that society attributes to men and women" (Hattit, 2014, p.9). Gender concerns not only females but also males and their relationship. It is defined as: "the embodied social characteristics of differences in behavior between men and women within a particular culture" (Al-Saba'i, 2011, p.267).

The association of gender specifically with women is because women are often the less advantaged group in this context, and many of the values attributed to them in the family and society generally lead to their being constrained and unable to employ their energies and capabilities most suitably.

Feminist researcher Maggie Humm defines gender as: "a set of culturally formed characteristics and behaviors imposed on

females and males. Modern feminist theory is keen to distinguish between sex and gender" (Kamal, 2013, p.2).

Simone de Beauvoir is one of the most famous to define gender in her book "The Second Sex" in 1949, stating: "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman," suggesting that gender is based on changing the complete biological identity of women (Farhi, 2018, p.620).

Gender is also defined as: "the process of studying the interrelated relationship between men and women in society, known as the social gender relationship, which is defined and governed by various economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental factors through their impact on the value of work in reproductive, productive, and organizational roles performed by women and men." The term social gender refers to:

- The distinct roles of women and men in society, which are reinforced by civilizational, cultural, and social components within the society.
- The relationship between men and women in that society at a particular place and time, in terms of:
- Distribution of social roles between them,
- Ability to access resources,
- Possibility to control them,
- Fulfilling their needs to perform these roles (Meftah et al., 2006, p.9).

5-2 Gender Differentiation:

It is society's bias towards men over women in rights, responsibilities, and job opportunities, not based on sex but on social upbringing, customs, patriarchal authority, etc.

5-3 Labor Market:

The labor market can be defined economically as the mechanism through which wage levels and employment are determined, i.e., the interaction of demand and supply forces with labor services.

The labor market is also defined as: "the place where demand and supply for labor or work meet" (Ben Shahra, 2009, p.197), "any physical and mental effort exerted by humans deliberately and consciously with the purpose of creating economic benefits" (Saad, Tabri, 2013, p.26).

6. Social Gender and Sex:

The term social gender is one of the sociological (social) terms, corresponding to the English term gender. This term has been and continues to be subject to confusion, ambiguity, and complexity between what is sex or biological type, and what is social gender. It is mistakenly understood to be concerned only with women and their issues, while in reality, it refers to both women and men together and their shared and interchangeable roles. Social gender issues, as socio-cultural issues, have their historical roots and are as ancient as humanity and its issues. The main differences between social gender

and sex can be summarized in the following points:

Table 1: Social Gender and Sex

Sex (Biological)	Social Gender
Nature	Culture/Traditions/Economy/Politics
Male/Female	Woman/Man
Organs/Functions	Social/Cultural characteristics/Status/Image/Position/Roles and Relationships
Unchangeable	Changes over time and place
Individual	Society/Environment/Institutions
Born with (Biologically)	Socially Constructed
Unchangeable	Changeable

There are additional distinctions outlined in the following table:

Table 2: Another Classification of the Differences Between Social Gender and Sex

It is evident that sex determines the

Sex (Biological)	Gender (Social)
Defined biologically	Socially constructed
Fixed and unchangeable	Dynamic and fluid
Determined at birth	Developed over time
Typically two distinct categories (male and female)	Carries multiple phenomena and signs
Universal variations determined by genetics	Can have cultural specificity

biological differences between men and women, referring to the biological features that a person is born with. These features are unchangeable, thus being innate and not acquired. On the other hand, social gender determines the set of relationships between the sexes and the differences in roles assigned to each. It also refers to the ways in which these relationships are formed in society. Therefore, social gender is not born with the individual but is shaped by society (Bahlouli, 2013, p.12).

7. Literature Review:

In this section, we review some previous studies that might help us gain a deeper understanding of our research problem, by examining the nature of these studies in terms of their subject, methodology, and most important findings. These studies can assist us, directly or indirectly, in discussing and comprehending the results that we will reach through our research. They are as follows:

Maayas (2016) conducted a study aimed at discussing and analyzing the status of women in the labor market and investigating the reasons for the low participation of Algerian women by examining the most prominent gender gaps in the workforce. The study used a descriptive-analytical method to uncover the essential relationship linking various study variables for the period 1991-2016. The study concluded that there are disparities between the sexes within the labor market, meaning that gender discrimination has led to increased annual unemployment rates in Algeria during the mentioned period, due to the following reasons:

- ✍ Low rate of working women compared to the total workforce.
- ✍ Lack of a supportive environment enabling women to perform their roles.
- ✍ Difficulty in reconciling professional commitments and family life.

- ✍ Girls' preference for specializations that are less in demand in the labor market.

While Al-Assaf (2016) conducted a study to analyze the reality of women's contribution in the Jordanian labor market and to highlight the obstacles preventing women from contributing to the labor market proportionally to their representation in society. The study aimed to identify the barriers for Jordanian women workers across sectors and job types and to assess women's educational levels in the labor market. The study provided practical recommendations for policymakers to formulate strategic plans for effectively employing women in the labor market and correcting existing policies to align with the needs of the Jordanian labor market.

The study was conducted on a random sample of 400 working and non-working women in various jobs in both public and private sectors, along with non-working women. Data were collected through official statistics related to the Jordanian labor market (labor and unemployment statistics, new job opportunities, gender indicators), labor ministry statistics, and data from the National Center for Human Resources Development, using a descriptive quantitative analysis method. The study found:

- ✍ Lack of sufficient job opportunities and a narrow labor market, especially in remote areas far from major cities, and weak provision of necessary data on job opportunities in the labor market, particularly for females.
- ✍ Long working hours and lack of a work environment suitable for women, especially in the private sector, and disregard for women's specific needs and their domestic responsibilities.
- ✍ Neglect of the issue of providing nurseries with specifications that ensure proper care for the children of working women, especially in the public sector.
- ✍ Wage disparities between males and females, particularly in the private sector, leading to the exploitation of women
- ✍ The prevailing culture of shame in society, where there are still some professions not socially acceptable for females.
- ✍ Cultural and social issues related to the division of family responsibilities, especially those assigned to women, and the lack of equitable sharing of these roles between husband and wife.
- ✍ Weak legislation that ensures women's rights and job stability in the private sector, limiting the arbitrariness of employers in appointments and terminations. Additionally, there is a

lack of government oversight regarding the rights of female workers in the labor market.

Moreover, *Jassem Mohammed (2015)* conducted a study on the formation of gender roles in the workplace, a field study in the Directorate of Education in Anbar, Iraq. This study aimed to provide quantitative and qualitative data for those interested in gender studies and to identify other factors contributing to the male dominance that shapes gender roles at work. The study was conducted on a random sample of 100 female employees from the Directorate of Education in Anbar, Iraq. The study concluded:

- ✍ The phenomenon of shaping gender roles in the workplace is a social issue that affects both developed and developing countries, but it is more prominent in our developing countries.
- ✍ The contribution of social upbringing in shaping gender roles as a cultural legacy has been passed down to future generations.
- ✍ Women, especially the poor, face the problem of educational and cultural illiteracy, due to poverty, lack of security, and many other factors.
- ✍ The concept of development is no longer limited to economic growth or individual incomes but has become more comprehensive through reliance

on human capital, with women being an essential part of this equation.

- ✍ Development cannot be achieved when more than half of society (women) is unable to participate effectively in society and is confined within the walls of the kitchen.

Furthermore, **Ghrouba (2015)** conducted a study on the gender ideologies of the academic mind components in Algerian society. The study aimed to understand the role of gender ideology in determining the social roles and positions of university management personnel, to reflect on the gender distinctions entrenched by societal culture on the intellectual production of university researchers, and to reveal the prevalent gender distinctions in the university in terms of role performance and positions, and the continuation of gender preference between genders.

The study was applied to 79 academics selected purposefully from the University of Algiers 2, using interviews as a data collection method and employing comprehensive surveying. The study found:

- ✍ There is a relationship between the gender ideology held by faculty members and their role performance at the university. Male faculty members perform roles that reflect traditional gender ideology, while women perform

roles indicative of liberal gender ideology.

- ✍ Male academic managers possess a traditional ideology that reinforces male dominance, while female academic managers hold a less traditional ideology, striving for liberation from stereotypical and subordinate views. This is evident in men's fear of women's success in administrative management and competition for leadership positions in the university, while female managers aim to perform institutional roles without embodying femininity in their roles.

- ✍ There are differences in administrative management skills between men and women, involving gender-based role stereotyping, where male managers have skills indicative of leadership traits, and female managers possess skills linked to feminine traits.

- ✍ A set of factors contributed to the scarcity of women in leadership positions at the university, including organizational barriers related to the administrative leader's perception of women's work, lack of confidence in women's decisions and capabilities, and limitations in qualifications and job experience.

- ✍ The continuation of male academic dominance ideology, which

consolidates interests and maintains the status quo, contrasts with the ideology of submission and rejection of marginalization and exclusion mixed with the desire for equality, as expressed by female academics. This is manifested in conflict and competition for personal interests among faculty members and academic managers.

- ✍ The persistence of gender preference in the university, due to the prevalence of stereotypical images of masculinity and femininity.
- ✍ The ongoing gender differentiation in dividing university fields into male and female domains.
- ✍ The continuation of the traditional division of roles in the university, as shown in the topics discussed among faculty members and academic managers between men and women. Topics by female researchers reflect expressive roles oriented towards the inner world, while topics by male researchers indicate performative roles linked to the external world. This traditional division of roles reflects on the effectiveness and quality of performance of female faculty members and researchers, where women exert less effort than men in terms of time spent on teaching duties and are less productive in research than men.

9. CONCLUSIONS:

The phenomenon of gender differentiation in work areas is a significant social issue impacting both developed and developing countries, with a more pronounced effect in developing nations. The analysis of prior studies reveals several key factors contributing to this differentiation:

- ✍ The contribution of social upbringing in shaping gender roles as a cultural legacy has been passed down to future generations.
- ✍ Male roles are valued and positioned higher than female roles, especially in leadership positions, a concept known as male dominance. For example, gender preference continues even at higher academic levels, reflecting societal dynamics where men occupy higher positions due to holding sources of power, while women are placed in lower positions as beings subordinate to male authority.

The association of certain work types with either men or women is not inherently determined by physical or emotional attributes but rather is a societal construct. This association can vary significantly over time and across different cultures.

Study results indicate a persistent trend of gender differentiation in the workplace, segregating job roles into male and female

domains. This is particularly evident in the prevalent preference for working with men, appointing male leaders and managers, and a general gender bias favoring interactions with the same gender.

The perpetuation of male dominance ideology, which aims to consolidate power and maintain the status quo, stands in stark contrast to the ideology that calls for submission, challenges marginalization and exclusion, and advocates for gender equality.

Several factors have impeded women's advancement into positions of responsibility. These include the challenge of balancing professional commitments with family responsibilities, a lack of self-confidence and perceived abilities stemming from societal upbringing, fear of failure, and a societal tendency to undervalue women's roles in leadership. Additionally, the absence of a supportive environment that facilitates women's full participation in their roles and a tendency for girls to gravitate towards fields with lower demand in the labor market further exacerbate this issue.

10. Recommendations:

The phenomenon of gender differentiation reflects a culture of male dominance, patriarchal authority, and social upbringing that gives men privileges and opportunities in work over women, regardless of

competence. Therefore, we recommend the following:

- ✍ Start by changing the notion that raising children is solely a woman's responsibility in addition to her reproductive role.
- ✍ Change the idea that household chores are exclusively a woman's task.
- ✍ Change the stereotypical image of women and their role confined by our society to childbearing, child-rearing, household chores, and caring for the husband.
- ✍ Reconsider the prevailing social culture and inherited concepts in Algerian society, through upbringing that advocates for equality between males and females in all opportunities, starting from the family and school. Increase awareness of the roles of both women and men and reconsider their social status in terms of their rights and duties.
- ✍ Provide a suitable and safe work environment.
- ✍ Formalize the system of male dominance within laws and policies that diminish women's status and equality with men before the law.

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