

Differences in vocational inclinations among secondary school students based on gender and field of specialization

Les différences dans les inclinations professionnelles parmi les élèves du secondaire en fonction des variables (sexe et spécialisation)

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Abstract:

This study aims to reveal the differences in professional tendencies among secondary school students in light of gender and specialization variables. This study was applied at Ouissi Mohamed Talout High School in Tlemcen. The study was applied to a sample estimated at 104 male and female students from the second year of secondary school for the academic year (2020/2021). The researchers also relied on the descriptive inferential approach in the field of educational psychology, by applying the Holland Professional Tendencies Scale after its modification and arbitration. The results showed: There are statistically significant differences between the average scores of males and females (Literature specialization) in the first dimension (realistic environment) and the absence of differences between the sexes in the remaining professional environments. While the results showed that there are no statistically significant differences between the average scores of the sample members (Sciences) in professional tendencies attributable to the gender variable.

Keywords: Vocational Inclinations- Secondary School Pupils- Human Resources- Gender-Specialization

Résumé :

Cette étude vise à révéler les différences dans les inclinaisons professionnelles des élèves du secondaire à la lumière des variables de genre et de spécialisation. Cette étude a été appliquée au lycée Ouissi Mohamed Talot de Tlemcen. L'étude a été appliquée à un échantillon de 104 étudiants et étudiantes de la deuxième année du secondaire pour l'année scolaire (2020/2021). Les chercheurs se sont également appuyés sur l'approche descriptive-inférentielle dans le domaine de la psychologie éducative, en appliquant l'échelle néerlandaise d'inclinaisons

professionnelles après qu'elle ait été modifiée et jugée. Les résultats ont montré : Il existe des différences statistiquement significatives entre les scores moyens des hommes et des femmes (spécialisation littéraire) dans la première dimension (l'environnement réaliste) et il n'y a pas de différences entre les sexes dans le reste des environnements professionnels. Les résultats ont montré qu'il n'y avait pas de différences statistiquement significatives entre les scores moyens des membres de l'échantillon (sciences) en termes d'inclinations professionnelles en raison de la variable de genre.

Mots- clés : Inclinations professionnelles-élèves du secondaire- ressources humaines- genre- spécialisation.

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Introduction

The search for the true structure of the learner's inclination sand considering these preferences is a demand advocated by modern education, as it sees that inclinations work as a motivation to exert efforts in learning and to carry out educational and professional activities. Vocational inclinations form a major part of building the professional personality, as they are considered one of the elements of readiness in the individual are regarded as an important factor in the success or failure of the individual in his studies or the profession to which he belongs, guide him towards exerting more effort in his studies or work.

The human element will renew, create, innovate if he is contained and his true professional inclinations are discovered, he can overcome many of the difficulties that hinder the progress of his environment, through the rational exploitation - if not optimal - of his available energies and capabilities.

Paying attention to the vocational inclinations of learners is of utmost importance, as they form a major part of building the professional personality and they are considered one of the elements of readiness and an essential factor in the success or failure of the individual's studies or the profession to which he belongs, as they are an internal motive that directs him/her towards exerting more effort in his/her studies or directs them towards exerting work.

Therefore, if we aspire to progress in this area, it is imperative to pay attention to the vocational inclinations of the learner in terms of methods that identify and the factors related to them, which may form ways to predict them early. In the same context, John Holland assumed that every human being is attracted to work that suits his professional personality, which grows from childhood to adulthood.

The work that suits the individual in the future can be predicted through the activities that are likely to be practiced. If the skills required for each job are understood, the characteristics of the person who succeeds in it and excels in his performance can be predicted (Saati, 2006). It is needless to say countries of the world are striving to achieve this match between individuals and what they desire in terms of academic specializations and professional jobs to achieve academic and professional satisfaction, which in turn leads to increased achievement and production. The basis of the match is what exists of individual differences between individuals in personality characteristics,

professional inclinations, and physical, mental, and psychological abilities, on the one hand, and what exists of differences between academic specializations and professions in their nature, environments, and requirements, on the other hand (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2007).

2. Problem of the Study

Professional inclinations have been a subject of extensive debate and disagreement among psychologists, particularly educational psychologists and those involved in academic program planning and educational methods. This debate revolves around the importance of inclinations and their place in the learning process on the one hand, and the nature of these inclinations and their stability on the other hand. Despite differing perspectives, there is a consensus on the significance of studying individual inclinations in terms of their nature, intensity, and impact on human behaviour. These inclinations serve as valuable tools for understanding personality development and future trajectories. Through it, one can predict human possibilities and abilities and thus guide and advise them on these possibilities and abilities.

Effective evaluation and guidance of adolescents in educational institutions requires, in addition to measuring cognitive aspects, understanding their emotions and non-cognitive aspects. Inclinations are one of the most important of these factors that educational scientists work to exploit for their considerable impact on academic achievement. Vocational inclinations significantly influence a student's academic and professional success, particularly during the formative years of youth. These inclinations evolve, shaping career choices and ultimately determining one's livelihood. Through education and training at various levels, individuals can develop and refine their professional inclinations, leading to academic excellence and career advancement. (Abdul Wahab, 2008)

The study of professional inclinations has been a focal point of scholarly research in the past century, with numerous studies exploring the factors that influence individuals' career aspirations. The proliferation of research on this topic has led to a variety of theoretical perspectives on professional development. Parsons' pioneering theory in 1908 emphasized the significance of professional inclinations in shaping individuals' academic and professional futures. Super's subsequent work delved into the determinants of these inclinations, including age, experience, and socioeconomic factors, highlighting their adaptive nature. Holland's theory of personality and profession in 1959 further underscored the connection between personality traits and professional inclinations, suggesting that understanding an individual's preferences can provide insights into their career path. The information gleaned from inclination tests is traditionally used as a foundation for career counselling (Saleh Khatib, 2005).

Vocational interests play a pivotal role in career selection, preparation, and success. Throughout childhood and adolescence, individuals' career aspirations evolve, often shifting from unrealistic fantasies to more grounded considerations. Early identification of these interests is crucial for fostering harmony between the educational system and socio-economic realities. By understanding their passions and abilities, individuals can make informed career choices that align with their aspirations. (Al-Qasim, 2001; Roushdi Labib, 1974)

(Jabar, 1986) indicates that vocational interests play an important role in the success or failure of the student in the youth stage, which is when the development of his interests begins until they become a profession that he practices to earn a living. This is done through his education and training at the

academic , technical level, and his distinction from his peers by obtaining high academic degrees. As interests are closely linked to the willingness to participate in various activities, scholars have been interested in researching them. They have resorted to measuring their interests or looking into how they relate to success within different occupations.

In the same context, a study conducted by Bruin (2002) at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa on the relationship between personality traits and professional inclinations found that there is a significant relationship between the following:

- Extraversion in personality and inclinations related to social communication, power, influence, and control over others.
- Emotional sensitivity and inclinations related to art and languages.
- Personal independence and inclinations related to creative thinking.

The study also found that the remaining personality factors and other inclinations are open to consultation and discussion.

Another study conducted by Hirschi (2010) investigated the impact of professional inclinations on the growth and development of the adolescent personality. The research was conducted on a sample of 292 adolescents and revealed that there is a relationship between personality traits, inclinations, and career goals.

This study aims to highlight the importance of discovering differences in professional inclinations at early ages. To this end, the following research questions will be addressed:

- ✓ Are there statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the sample members (science stream) in professional inclinations due to the gender variable?
- ✓ Are there statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the sample members (literature stream) in professional inclinations due to the gender variable?

3. Hypotheses :

- ❖ The gender variable accounts for statistically significant differences in the mean scores of science students in terms of professional inclinations.
- ❖ The gender variable accounts for statistically significant differences in the mean scores of literature students in terms of professional inclinations.

4. Significance of the Study :

This study is a new addition to the studies in this field. It may help those in charge of dedicating efforts to the early detection of professional inclinations among the members of this sample and the development of training methods. The study also provides scientific knowledge related to the study of professional inclinations. It emphasizes the importance of secondary education in the general structure of educational systems, as it mediates between middle education on the one hand and higher education on the other hand besides its sensitivity to being in line with the adolescent stage.

5. Objectives of the Study:

- ✓ To identify the differences between the sexes at the level of professional inclinations, as well as to highlight them between specializations.
- ✓ To generate findings and recommendations for stakeholders that address the research questions posed in the study

✓ .6. Operational Definitions:

- **Professional inclinations:** The individual's strongest preferences and interests, and the degree to which they are committed to a specific profession or career, where they excel, feel

fulfilled, and find satisfaction, irrespective of the potential rewards or financial gains. It is also the attainment of the examinee of the highest degree of the preferred professional inclination in the Holland Professional Inclinations Scale.

7. Theoretical Framework of the Study:

A. Definition of Inclinations:

- **In Arabic:** In the Arabic language, the meaning of "ميل" (pronounced "mayl") is "to deviate from something and accept it." (Anis, 2000: 236).
- **In English:** In the Oxford Dictionary, we find "tendency," which means "inclination or tendency." (Wael, 2011).
- **In Technical Terms:** The definitions of inclinations have varied depending on the perspectives of scholars and the differences in orientations and specializations to which researchers in this field belong. The word inclinations is a common word in everyday interactions to describe people's interests in a particular job. They are considered one of the most important aspects of personality that psychological studies have focused on.
- **Strong (1981):** He believes that inclination is a response to love, while aversion is a response to hatred. The inclination is for something that exists if we are aware of it, or to put it more accurately when we are aware of what we have a predisposition and preparation for.

B. Definition of Professional Inclinations:

- **Andrew Carson:** He defines professional inclinations in the dictionary of vocational psychology as "a part of the central structure of personality that possesses that part of decision-making in career choice and adaptation to the chosen profession, and refers to the activities and processes associated with the fields of this profession." (Eid, 2006)
- **Strong (1981):** He defines professional inclinations as "a set of choices that a person makes from among the activities in which he engages, where he prefers some and rejects others."

c. Holland's theory:

As a result of his study, Holland arrived at six personality types, and each type corresponds to a professional environment that takes the same name and matches the characteristics of the same type. Each individual possesses these six personality types to varying and distinct degrees, but he is distinguished by one of them to a greater degree, which is the environment: (traditional mental, realism, social, artistic, adventure). (Shehab, 1992).

A. Research Methodology:

In line with the objectives of our current study and the nature of its dimensions, we adopted the descriptive-analytical method based on the study of phenomena as they exist in reality, This allows the researcher to describe them accurately and express them qualitatively or quantitatively.

B. Study Sample and Specifications:

A sample was selected from the departments of experimental sciences, humanities, and foreign languages in secondary education, and a sample of second-year secondary school students was selected, in a regular random manner. The research sample in our study consists of 104 male and female pupils (52 from the humanities department and 52 from the sciences department) who fall within the age range of (15 years - 20 years). The following are the specifications of the sample according to gender

Sample Specifications by Gender (Literature Department)

Figure 1: Sample Specifications by Gender(literature department)

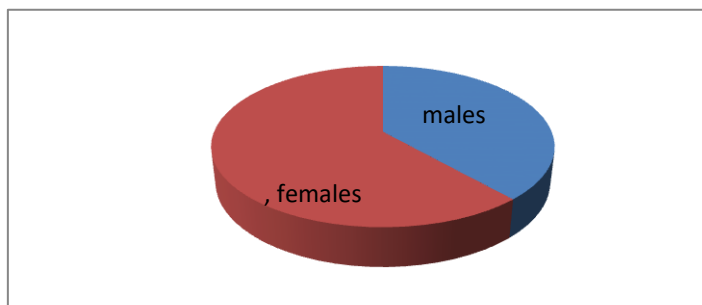


Figure 1 shows the number of sample members by gender (literature department), where the number of males was 20, representing 38%, and the females were 32, representing 62%.

Sample Specifications by Gender (Science Department)

Figure 2:Sample specifications by gender (science department)

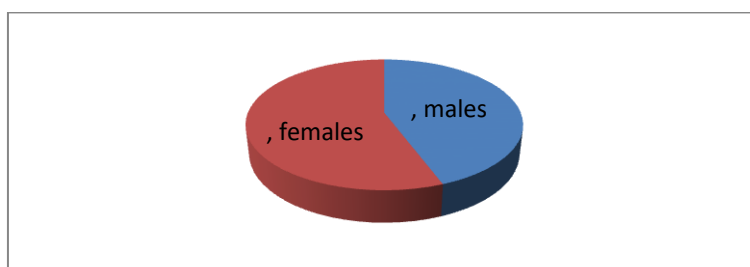


Figure 2 displays the number of sample members by gender (science department), where the number of males was 23, representing 44%, and the females were 29, representing 56%.

9. Instruments of the Study and Their Psychometric Properties:

9.1. Vocational Inclinations Scale:

This scale aims to identify the type of vocational inclinations in for individual. It was designed by the American scientist John Holland, a professor at Johns Hopkins University in the United States. It contains a set of different and specific paragraphs to measure personality traits and a wide range of information related to the individual's relationships, inclinations, abilities, professions, social conditions, and the opportunities available in society. It was developed by "Al-Huwairi (1982) and Kamal Sobhi Saeed (2005) on the Jordanian environment, then it was modified by Samira Maysoun on the Algerian environment according to her study that specialized in vocational training trainees. (Samira, 2011). The questionnaire was presented to the arbitrators to update some professions to keep pace with the requirements of the age.

9.2Psychometric Properties of the Vocational Inclinations Scale:

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Validity: We relied on two types in calculating validity: internal consistency validity and differential validity.

Internal Consistency Validity:

After distributing the tool to a sample of 30 high school pupils,

To verify the internal consistency validity of the dimensions, we calculated the correlation coefficients between the dimension score and the total scale score. This is represented in Table 1

Table 1:The correlation coefficients between the score of each dimension and the total score of the vocational inclinations scale.

Dimensions	Realistic environment	Intellectual environment	Social environment	Conventional environment	Enterprising environment	Artistic environment
Realistic environment	1					
Intellectual environment	0,297	1				
Social environment	0,117	0,629**	1			
Conventional environment	0,319	0,303	0,456*	1		
Enterprising environment	,516**	0,220	0,355	0,522**	1	
Artistic environment	0,788**	0,779**	0,746**	0,669**	0,741**	/
Overall score	0,612**	0,683**	0,737**	0,734**	0,740**	0,897**

*Significant at 0.01 level

**Significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 shows the results of the correlation between the dimensions with each other and the dimensions and the scale as a whole.

The relationship between (realistic environment) and the total score of the scale was 0.612 at the significance level of 0.01, the association between (mental environment) and the total score of the scale was 0.683** at the significance level of 0.01, the relationship between (social environment) and the total score of the scale was 0.737** at the significance level of 0.01, the correlation between (conventional environment) and the total score of the scale was 0.734** at the significance level of 0.01, the correlation between (entrepreneurial environment) and the total score of the scale was 0.740** at the significance level of 0.01, and the association between (artistic environment) and the total score of the scale was 0.897** at the significance level of 0.01. In addition to the correlations between the dimensions, which gives a strong indication of the internal consistency validity of the vocational inclinations scale?

Differential validity (extreme group validity): this is represented in Table (02)

Table 2: The results of calculating the differential validity of the vocational inclinations scale.

Sample	Upper group n=8		Lower group n= 8		Value	Degrees of freedom	Level of Significance
	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean	Standard deviation			
Total score	222,37	13,15	176,87	11,16	7,45	14	0,001

The differential validity of the scale was calculated by comparing the significance of the differences between the two extreme groups of the exploratory sample, who were administered the vocational inclinations scale, a total of 30 males and females from outside the main sample.

Table 2 shows the results of the t-test between 27% of the extreme ends of the scale. The calculated value of (t) is estimated at (7.45) statistically significant at the significance level (0.001) and the degree of freedom (14). Therefore, the tool is considered to be valid and measures what it was intended to measure.

Reliability:

The reliability was calculated using the Cronbach's alpha method.

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient:

To measure the reliability of the study tool, it was applied to an exploratory sample consisting of 30 male and female pupils, and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale as a whole was used. .this is represented in Table (3)

Table 3:

Value of the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α)

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha coefficient
Vocationalinterests	84	0.839

As shown in the table, the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the vocational inclinations scale is 0.839. This value is considered to be moderately high, which indicates that the scale has a moderately high degree of reliability.

Therefore, the results of the scale can be relied upon and trusted with moderate confidence.

10. Presentation and Discussion of the Results:

The first hypothesis of the study was that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of males and females in the vocational inclinations of the sample of science pupils.

Table 4:

The t-test for the Differences Between the Mean Scores of Males and Females in Vocational Inclinations

Vocationalinte rests	Gender	sample	Mean	Stand ardevia	t- test	Degrees of freedom	Signific ance
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				tion			
Realistic	Male	23	44.78	14.50	-0.55	50	0.58
	Female	29	47.24	16.74			
Intellectual	Male	23	20.91	3.71	-1.68	50	0.09
	Female	29	22.65	3.68			
Social	Male	23	19.30	2.53	-0.42	50	0.67
	Female	29	19.62	2.75			
Conventional	Male	23	19.91	3.14	0.16	50	0.87
	Female	29	19.75	3.51			
Enterprising	Male	23	21.60	3.21	0.85	50	0.39
	Female	29	20.82	3.34			
Artistic	Male	23	17.73	3.85	-1.47	50	0.14
	Female	29	19.44	4.37			
Total score	Male	23	144.26	20.73	-0.85	50	0.39
	Female	29	149.55	23.13			

Table 4 presents the results of the t-test for differences between the mean scores of males and females in each vocational environment. As illustrated in the table, the value of t for the realistic environment was -0.55 at the significance level of 0.58. The value of t for the mental environment was -1.68 at the significance level of 0.09. The value of t for the social environment was -0.42 at the significance level of 0.67. The value of t for the conventional environment was 0.16 at the significance level of 0.87. The value of t for the entrepreneurial environment was -1.47 at the significance level of 0.14. The value of t for the artistic environment was -0.85 at the significance level of 0.39.

All of these values are greater than 0.05, which indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of males and females in the vocational inclinations of the sample of science pupils.

10.1 Discussion of the Results:

The lack of differences between males and females in the vocational environments of science specialization can be attributed to the development and progress that have taken place at the level of society and the world as a whole. This has narrowed the gap between the demands of men and women, which is considered to be one of the most prominent social and economic transformations that the 21st century has witnessed. It has affected many of their personal characteristics, attitudes, inclinations, thinking styles, and ways of processing information. As a result, the responses of women do not differ fundamentally from the responses of men towards many professions.

This result is consistent with the findings of a study conducted by (Ezz, 2014) which found that there are no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of responses about general vocational inclinations according to the gender of second-year scientific secondary school pupils.

The researcher attributed this result to the fact that there are shared inclinations between males and females in the fields of science, mathematics, medical sciences, and social and religious services. Roushdy Labib (1974) found out in a study of the change in scientific inclinations between two generations of pupils (1958-1974) that there were no significant differences between the inclinations of pupils of the two generations. However, the change that occurred in the inclinations of females towards scientific fields was more pronounced than the change in the inclinations of males. The differences were clear in the first study, but they increased more clearly in the results of the second study so that the correlation between the results of the two sexes became statistically insignificant. This means that there is no difference between the inclinations of males and females.

We can also explain this result by referring to the previous literature on adolescent psychology, which confirms that adolescent's inclinations are affected by several factors that vary depending on their gender. One of these factors is the formation of diverse and constructive relationships with peers, which is one of the demands of social development in adolescents. Peers represent forces of influence in their lives. As the adolescent grows older, he or she becomes more similar to his or her peers in certain aspects, and friendships between the sexes become more stable and stable. This explains the convergence of inclinations between them, as indicated by the studies of Horrock (1946) and Thomson (1947).

10.2 Discussion of the Results of the Second Hypothesis:

The study's second hypothesis stated that there are statistically significant differences between the mean scores of males and females in the vocational inclinations of the sample of literature pupils.

The results of the t-test for the differences between the mean scores of males and females in the vocational inclinations of the sample of literature pupils are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The Results of the T-test for the Differences between the Mean Scores of Males and Females in Vocational Inclinations

Vocational interests	Gender	sample	Mean	Standard deviation	t-test	Degrees of freedom	Significance
Realistic	Male	23	18.90	2.57	2.14	50	0.37
	Female	29	17.34	2.52			
Intellectual	Male	23	.16	1.83	0.85	50	0.39
	Female	29	15.62	1.33			
Social	Male	23	20.35	2.79	0.56-	50	0.57
	Female	29	20.78	2.57			
Conventional	Male	23	18.75	2.88	1.51	50	0.13
	Female	29	17.71	2.01			
Enterprising	Male	23	20.05	3.10	0.42	50	0.67
	Female	29	19.68	2.92			

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Artistic	Male	23	20.05	4.45	1.57	50	0.12
	Female	29	18.34	3.35			
Total score	Male	23	114.10	12.51	1.48	50	0.14
	Female	29	109.50	9.71			

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on the SPSS statistical package

Table 5 shows the value of the t-test between males and females in each vocational environment. We notice that in the first dimension (realistic environment), the value of t was 2.14 at the significance level of 0.03, which is less than 0.05, indicating that there are differences between them.

In the second (mental environment), the value of t was 0.85 at the significance level of 0.39. We observe that in the third (social environment), the value of t was -0.56 at the significance level of 0.57. The fourth (conventional environment) had a t value of 1.5 at the significance level of 0.13. It reached (entrepreneurial environment) a value of t of -0.42 at the significance level of 0.67. As for the sixth (artistic environment), the value of t was -1.57 at the significance level of 0.12. All of these values are greater than 0.05.

10.3 Discussion of the Results:

The results of the t-test showed that there are differences in the mean scores of females and males in realistic inclinations. We can conclude that this results from the cognitive content of Holland's theory. He describes the professions in this environment as being characterized by patience, movement skills, and clear physical effort, such as farmer and car mechanic. The owners of this environment are characterized by: aggressiveness and inclination towards activities that require coordination, strength, physical skill, and masculinity, such as army officers or combat sports. They tend to avoid situations that require verbal skills and social interaction with others by preferring action and over thinking. They are characterized by being practical in their interaction with the problems of life. Their favourite things include manual labour, tools, devices, and animals; they dislike assistance and educational activities.

Khalil Mikhail Mouawadh (1994: 345) confirms that males are inclined to topics related to practical hobbies, mechanics, electricity, driving cars, and sports such as wrestling, boxing, football, and basketball, while females are more inclined to historical, emotional, and poetic stories. The two sexes share some inclinations, such as reading newspapers, and magazines, listening to radio and television programs, and artistic hobbies such as painting and music. This result also agrees with the study of Al-Hameedi (2010), as he concluded that males have interests in mechanical, sports, and technical aspects. They are interested in agriculture, nature, sports, mechanical activities, military activities, data handling, computer activities, and office services. All of these activities fall within the realistic environment. In the same context, "Strong(1994)" confirmed that people with a realistic inclination are people who love activities, work, and sharing workers who do mechanical work, construction), activities related to repair, or related to nature, the outdoors, adventures, and physical activities. (Hatem, 2011)

Regarding the absence of gender differences in the remaining professional environments, can be attributed to the fact that these professions, based on their characteristics, are equally applicable to both men and women. We find males with social inclinations are characterized by loving people and working with others, being the center of attention, enjoying working in groups, and participating in taking on responsibilities. They also enjoy solving problems through discussing feelings and interacting with others. Among their features are being idealistic and humanitarian. They are distinguished by tact, cooperation, understanding, insight, and cheerfulness, sees that adventurers (entrepreneurial environment) have verbal skills in sales and leadership. They are looking for leadership positions, power, and rank. We note that females in this era have led leadership positions and competed with males in power and ranks. These individuals also enjoy working with people and leading them toward organizational goals and economic success, while embracing personal risks and participating in competitive activities. This trend is evident across all professional inclinations, as society has become increasingly inclusive and open to diverse roles. Even traditionally female-dominated professions like cooking, beauty, and design have witnessed growing male participation in recent years.

11. Conclusion:

This study comes as a continuation of the efforts and previous studies that have fed the field of interest in vocational inclinations, perhaps it will fill the clear gap between the outputs of education and qualified human resources with the requirements of the labour market, and this process is not completed except by studying vocational inclinations and exploring them at an early age. The results of this study yielded the following:

- ✚ There were no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of individuals in the sample (science) in the professional environments due to the gender variable.
- ✚ There were statistically significant differences between the mean scores of females and males (literature stream) in realistic vocational inclinations.
- ✚ There were no statistically significant differences between the mean scores of females and males (literature stream) in mental, social, traditional, adventurous, and artistic vocational inclinations.

The researcher concluded that the discovery of vocational inclinations is an essential element in the educational process. The stronger the inclinations towards a particular specialty, the more these inclinations will be directed soundly by those involved in the guidance and counseling process. Therefore, it is necessary to educate and raise awareness of the students about their capabilities and potential, as the human resource (student) is the one who will work to activate and invest the rest of the material and technical resources in the future for any organization. Therefore, it is crucial to direct all our efforts towards developing and nurturing this resource to achieve a level of excellence and ensure that the right people are in the right positions.

12. Recommendations and suggestions:

- Develop the educational curricula by including activities that contribute to meeting the needs of pupils to develop their professional awareness and prepare workshops,

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professional projects, and field visits that develop their professional inclinations and methods of achievement.

- Inform parents and children that selecting a subject of study should be based on each individual's unique qualities, career preferences, and a solid scientific understanding of their abilities.
- Adopt these standardized scales, tailoring them to empower educators in effectively identifying their students' vocational interests.

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