

Working group n° 3: women, knowledge and technologies

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Women status in the Mediterranean: their rights and sustainable development

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WORKING GROUP n°3

women, knowledge and technologies

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I – General outline

The working group focused on Higher Education across Europe and Arab Countries with specific reference to Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) Programmes.

The Arab countries have been subdivided in three categories in relation to women's participation in Higher Education:

- Group 1: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia;
- Group 2: Bahrein, Libya, Sudan, United Arab Emirates;
- Group 3: Oman, Saudi Arabia, Yemen.

Group 1 Countries have a high percentage of women participation even in SET Programmes.

Two examples were presented from public and private Higher Education systems: Morocco and Lebanon, respectively.

Morocco: (Public University level) The percentage of female students is 40% in Science, 55-60% in Medicine, 45% in Humanities, and 15-20% in Engineering. However, female academic staff in SET Programmes is only 25-30%.

1. Lebanon: (Private University level)

In private universities 45 to 55% of students, 85% of administrative staff, 50% of full time faculty members are female. Part time faculty members are mostly male.

In Groups 2 and 3 the percentage of female representation grows very slowly.

2. Exemple of a European / North Mediterranean Country: Spain

In Spain there is one full professor out of 2.5 male lecturers, and out of 8.5 female lecturers.

Spain introduced a new law to create incentives for female academics at every segment of Higher Education.

Over 50% of students are female in almost all programmes in Higher Education.

There are incentives to encourage women to get into medical career as well.

The group also reviewed SET Programmes across Europe: it was stated that, to attract female students to SET programmes, there is the crucial need to change the mindset for both men and women.

There is also a remarkable contribution made by the European Technology Assessment Network "ETAN" report and "SET in EU" - Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) projects.

The reports concluded that it is widely accepted that:

- Interdisciplinary studies will attract more females;
- Proper information plays an important role in the decisions of school students;
- SET (Science, Engineering and Technology) Programmes attract more female students.

II – Conclusions and recommendations

There is a discrimination at:

- Vertical;
 - Horizontal;
 - Contractual level.
-
- Women rather prefer to sacrifice themselves for family and household tasks;
 - This limits their growth in their academic career;
 - Social and Cultural environment also forces women to behave in that direction;
 - Therefore, media and other tools should be used to change the mindset of both men and women;
 - Political will of decision makers is required to create a suitable environment to help women to develop themselves like their male peers.

Percentage of female students in Morocco

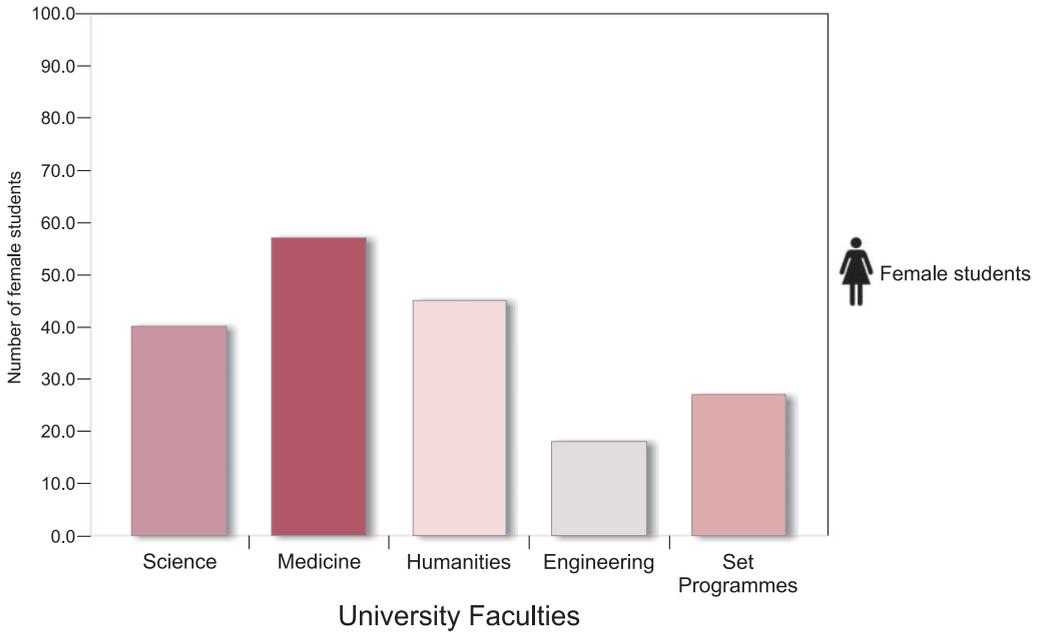


Figure 1. Percentage of female students in Morocco

Female presence in private universities - Lebanon

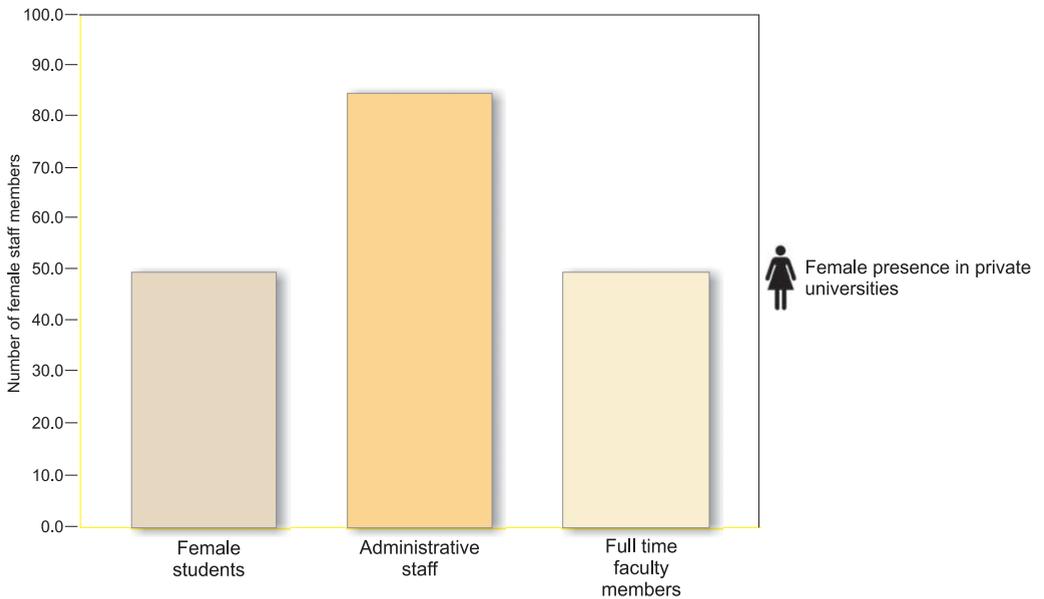


Figure 2. Female presence in private universities in Lebanon

