

SOC 499 Final draft

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Women in male-dominated industries in Nur-Sultan: policewomen and female manual workers autonomy, difficulties, and work culture.

Changes are highlighted as yellow. Many parts were re-organized and changed in place

## **Introduction**

People spend a considerable part of their life devoted to work. It is the gender, one of the dimensions, that shapes the access to a specific profession and determines how others may perceive you. For centuries society's prescription on what work to go or what women should do are constrained by discrimination. This notion of what is accessible to women must be differing in various cultural settings. Kazakhstan is considered a post-Soviet country, such dominant cultural ideology left a trace of structure on work dynamics: in the families, gender roles division suggests the man's role be a breadwinner, while women's activity, though usually working, prescribed to spend considerable time on house chores. Still, this stereotypical gender division has a heavy impact on the choice of work. Because when we look up at the gender composition of a group who does this work, we may label it as feminine or masculine work – depending on the prevalence of men or women. This labeling accompanies giving symbolic associations such as power and prestige associated with a particular activity. Following that, normalizing it to be men's or women's work sets the norm for who can enter the job industry, which after that we may think “this job is done only by men/women” (Gherardi 1994 cited in Johansson, Asztalos Morell, and Lindell 2020: 4).

Women in male-dominated organizations are tokens. Kanter (1977) used the term token to refer to a woman as a representation of a category. What she noticed is how the women in

those male-dominated workplaces such as offices were found only a few. Her observation in Indsco corporation brought valuable insights about tokens: we can call it minority in a picture of the majority. The alternative examples of tokens are a few foreigners among natives, and a few blacks among whites (Kanter 1977, p. 330). Because the number of tokens is easily identifiable, they could become the target of stereotyping and attention. Attention rate would be so dramatic that any act could be rumored, scrutinized, and gossiped about among colleagues. Because of increased perception, it is easier to associate the group with traits, and behavior features, which, in turn, lead to stereotyping than those people who are in majority. This in turn creates the image of what kind of person does the job, a “special” approach to how to treat women at work can be socially created. This treatment Kanter called treating like symbols (p. 336), that instead of considering a single woman worker, a group as a whole.

In this project, I examine the strategies women in male-dominated industries use to navigate the workplace. Specifically, I use Giddens’ structuration theory to explore the forms in which token women experience agency in the context of structural constraints. As a result of conducting five in-depth qualitative interviews with female police officers and machine operators at a local manufacturing plant, I found that women employ the rhetoric of adopting masculine traits of male counterparts such as not crying, whining, adopting some bold qualities such as staying late. On the other hand, they were tokenized and labeled to behave in a certain way. For example, they believed that they should be neat and address the work matter with care and accuracy.

### **The historical exclusion of women in manufacturing industries**

A popular argument against the inclusion of women in technical jobs is the presence of hazardous contamination that might affect not only the general health of organs but the functions of reproductive organs as well. April Merleaux (2021), an environmentalist, did a review on the US context of arguments between sides of feminists, environmentalists, and birthright advocates. It is of importance to mention here because a similar discourse on building a ban list of

professions for women in post-soviet countries has been developing. In the 1970s, the US industrial sectors observed many court cases where women workers protested against the exclusion. Manufacturing that involved exposure to toxic substances, Hepler denoted (2000 cited in Merleaux 2021), affected the way how women were hired. The public saw that such toxins included the diethylstilbestrol, Agent Orange, dioxin, nuclear radiation, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) with alarming concerns about fetus development. Activists were working and claiming to create a safe space for women and include them to work as this was against the freedom to choose work. On the other hand, some said that they overfocused much on the birthrights to push the authorities into the decision. Antitoxin activists in the 1970- 80s spurred protests on regulations and slow progress to include women regardless of having a baby. Many scholars (Hay 2009, Martucci 2015, Blum 2008, Loyd 2014 cited in Merleaux, 2021) pointed out the rhetoric on the history of these regulations: across the country, working women and women of color raised their voices in campaigns, participated in surveys, argued with employees, against contaminations.

So, the question to be addressed stands on whether women can perform the job that men do. The answer was partially addressed above in the section on the Right to work because the argument for this determines the physical abilities of a woman if she can perform hard work, for example, that may require heavy metal uplifting. One feminist sociologist Charlotte Perkins Gilman in her book “Women and Economics” elaborated Darwinist approach to explain why stereotypically men's and women's work performance are determined by certain positions. She explained that men can perform women’s work such as cooking and cleaning (Chapter 1), but for women to perform in “the making and managing of the great engines of modern industry, the threading of earth and sea in our vast systems of transportation, the handling of our elaborate machinery of trade, commerce, government, – these things could not be done so well by women in their present degree of economic development.”

What all this might mean is that institutions such as machinery and transportation limit women physically. It is not the sexist attitude of others that might cause difficulty for the woman to enter, but rather the specific physical qualities that are required. With this in mind, this project explores later physical abilities. The questions I set to address were whether women can freely enter the manual work such as metal cutting, and woodcraft.

### **Soviet Legacy and Kazakhstani Context**

The history of exclusion of women from manufacturing industries runs deep. Kozina (2002, p. 129) in her work proposed that the Soviet legacy allowed active women participation in work, but still was limiting women to participate in physically demanding work such as loader, laborer, a construction worker. She emphasized that there is not a division of work because all professions are considered as what men can do that there is no feminine work. Since the Soviet regime and citizens were affected by socialism, this not only encouraged women to perform along with men but also blurred the boundaries that some jobs belong to women, while some to men. All worked equally. Katz (p. 90) in her book studied women's participation in jobs and described the forced labor that required the able-bodied population to work or study **regardless** of their gender. This forced women to go to work too, and no constraint seemed to affect women's participation. Overall, Katz found that by 1960s the female participation at work increased substantially and was decreasing until the 1990s when the Soviet regime collapsed.

The USSR had influenced the hereditary regulations of the list of banned professions that exist in Kazakhstani legislation to this day. The original Soviet List of industries, professions, and work with severe and harmful working conditions on which the use of women's work is prohibited (1978, as amended in 1987 and 1990) consisted of 431 professions. After post-Soviet countries such as Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan passed a similar list of banned professions for women (Kamidolla, 2020). **In 2019, Uzbekistan and Moldova abolished such a list, Moldova constraining only breastfeeding and pregnant women.** The history of the banned list considers two events: the Labor Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2007) passed the list to

be the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and Social Security (2015). In 2017, Minister of Labor, Tamara Duisenova, promised to reconsider the list. The recent news claim that thanks to the work of activists the list of banned professions in Kazakhstan has vanished by the UN recommendations and the president's order ('В Казахстане с 23 октября 2021 года отменяются «запрещенные профессии» для женщин' (the author is unknown) 2021). This study brings into a new context of post-Soviet women or women of independent Kazakhstan who are dealing with a capitalistic system that is generally ruled by men mostly.

According to gender conformity, the women may face a market that is already segregated heavily. One of the possible difficulties women face is a glass ceiling. It is a popular term, that defines the boundary that women face when reaching the high level of the career ladder.

Katarina Katz who studied the state of women's employment in Russia after the fall of the USSR noticed how women could be harassed in the workplace. The bodies of Russian women were desired (and nobody openly discussed the harassment cases) not in a professional manner, but for her appearance and beauty: advertisements of "good-looking women, not older than 25, or for secretaries with language skills and long legs." (p. 203). This evidence will be shown later to conform to some degree how policewomen and manual workers are tokenized so. The reason to include such evidence is to show how women were disadvantaged, not seriously perceived as equals. It is of recent decades phenomena on how the discourse of women entering the "men" field is discussed and evoke interest of public in news. But with the rise of feminism in previous century, activists have been actively advocating for women rights to participate in "banned works". For example, the court cases of Anna Klevetz (2009–12) ('Запрещенные женщинам профессии — гендерная дискриминация' 2018) and Svetlana Medvedova were on spotlight. The decision of court of Anna was in favor of not letting them to work because it is not only reproductive rights that were in danger but also the inability to conform to high responsibility standards as men can perform in metro train driver. The scope of another juridical case of Svetlana Medvedeva reached a higher point to UN conventions in 2016 because she was denied

employment as steamboat driver, and she beforehand reached out to the activist of Memorial organization for help. The Gorbachev's perestroika period of Soviet time saw a decreased number of employment as the societal expectation of motherhood (by politicians, employers, and academic researchers), and home as a place for women – those norms of ideology penetrated the agency and freedom of women (Katz, 2001: 204).

Then after the fall of the USSR regime came market reforms. The centralized force of the socialist regime now was giving power to individual business owners. The cuts in administration forces were directed at many females. The types of professions shuffled and changed, and so did the places women hold. Katz (2001: 205) also points out that the maternity rights that were advocated heavily in the 1990s impacted the home/kitchen returning. For this research, specifically, the policewomen and machine operators in Nur-Sultan will be invited to contribute. This study will bring novelty in terms of hearing the voices of post-Soviet women in Nur-Sultan.

### **Policewomen**

Much research proves that this sector of the profession is heavily dominated by men. Morabito and Shelley (2018) expressed the concern that the found agencies of policewomen reported miserable chances of advancement for female workers in policing as almost all high positions were held by men. The workplaces are highly gendered and thought to be best accomplished by policemen. Whetstone (2001 cited in Morabito and Shelley 2018: 289) examined the role of qualified female officers in the US police department and found no women promoting themselves or pushing further. This can be explained by inner or external constraints. Morabito and Shelley (2018) in their findings presented an interesting insight that media depiction of policewomen encouraged spectator women to aspire to the job (visibility made it easier for them to choose). Shelley, Mirabito, and Gurley (2011), however, found the sexist representation on TV influenced the jokes of male counterparts, specifically in one training video crime scene had a misogynistic message: COPS TV series scene had a guy who said “there

oughta be a law against bitches”, and the class burst out of laughter. The woman trainee at police heard that phrase more than 25 times from her male colleagues. This further contributed to exclusion of women by shaming their ability to not perform “aggressive” jobs. Fletcher, 1995 cited in Shelley, Mirabito, and Gurley (2011: 356) shared the experience of one female who complained about the exclusion because it was a “boys club” where excluded in drinking-socialization, a setting in bars where sharing important work data happens. What it means is in these settings such as bars men discuss the work matter excluding women's presence there. This shows how difficulties such as exclusion may impact the work of the woman who is in a men-dominated workplace.

### **Manual female workers**

There is a limited number of research concerning women working with metal. This goes against the argument that women should be working with hard metal or machines that expose some level of harm to their bodies. Johansson, Asztalos Morell, and Lindell (2020) discuss thoroughly the gender performativity of Butler to see how femininity is being brought with conflict in the steel industry of masculinized work. There is one belief that the digitalization of working on metal, in other words, increased automation in the 21 century, makes it easier for women to enter the workforce. Baron (cited in Johansson, Asztalos Morell, and Lindell 2020: 2) says, that although alleviating some physical work, the automatic work on machines is heavily influenced by hegemonic masculinity ideology to associate the work with physical strength, toughness, and aggressiveness. Because these associations determined what type of person can enter the metal industry, it may make women mimic those traits to some extent to be accepted in a community as those masculine qualities are valued. The expected type of work was machine operation in workshops, but I aimed to reach the inclusion of other professions such as concrete workers, woodworkers, and work on the metals. The reasoning for this choice will be explained later.

## **Theoretical background**

Since the study is going to focus on organizational and structural institutions of work of policewomen and female manual workers, which later will be a comparison analysis. Anthony Giddens's structuration theory fits in this study to be applied. Walsham (2002 cited in Pham, 2019) emphasized the applicability of the theory in organizational research of work cultures, cultures influencing people, and information system organizations. Giddens theorized (1984 cited in Spivack and Desai 2016, p.173) that duality of dynamics helps to see how social agents shape the structural arrangement of work and vice versa – how the arrangement of work shapes the behavioral patterns of workers. For instance, when the workers apply new actions that were not performed before, this repetition normalizes it in the workplace, thus expanding the agency and autonomy. Giddens (1984) treats this structure as a social system that exists in accordance with space and time consisting of rules and resources (which can be a hierarchy organized). Those rules and resources can be the production of actions and reproductions by the system. Structure does not exist without the social agents' rules and modes of interacting with resources. Probably it is important to note how fluid and changing the system is, but not as a fixed product (Giddens and Pierson, 1998 cited in Pham, 2019). This theory will be helpful to see how women in male-dominated workplaces are constrained or not. In this sense, the theory is useful when analyzing the exercise of agency in terms of the ability to express voice: managing the work in communication, whether there were cases of sexism, and whether the norm of work to be associated with men shapes them individually. Those work structures may constrain the agency of workers to do something that male counter partners are freely doing. The assumption here would be that due to gender constraints the actions such as applying for a job that is heavily gender constrained are very much shaped by institutions of work. If the institutions that they, women, are constrained by the gender are heavily influenced, it is expected to see fewer female individuals. When gender representation of work is increased with images of women, they



become “normal” to enter for women. In contrast, we can see the women-dominated types of work such as office, and administrative work that may be gender constrained for men. In Nur-Sultan, where the community has not shaped during the Soviet time (the city was called Tselinograd), it was the time when women's autonomy was granted and their participation at work was encouraged because of the socialist regime. The picture of an independent Kazakhstan city, Nur-Sultan, can be different now because the capitalistic system that is present can create those work structures and institutions that reproduce their own rules and norms. It is these norms that may dictate which works to pursue and which ones not to follow.

### **Research methods**

This project aims at addressing how women manage their work in two industries: the manufacturing industry and policewomen. Besides, the possible struggles and the ways of strategies of management managed studied. The data collection method is a qualitative method because the structural framework of works is suitable to be studied in deeper detail. By applying structuration theory, the data collected is a possibility to find out how the presence of women helped to normalize such “masculine” works. The ethnographic work will focus on these women, policewomen, and manual workers, and the findings to enrich the data in the context of modern Nur-Sultan citizens, as tokens, a minority in the men-majority world.

The study used non-participant observation and a **mix** of face-to-face and online 5 interviews. Recruitment and interviews were conducted from January to April months 2022 in Nur-Sultan city, Kazakhstan. The reason why I choose them is to have richer data descriptions that would help me construct evidence that explains the difficulties and agency of women. Creswell (2003) stated that the qualitative data collection method adds up to descriptive and interpretive by the researcher, that is, concluding, pairing up the meanings that arose during analysis 5 in-depth interviews overall were conducted. **Three** women were selected by the PR

department and consented to my participation in interviewing. One woman was a loader and worked in a workshop firm. Another woman was a director of a woodcraft firm who had experience in working with wood in the beginning. Since I selected two various jobs, convenience sampling was applied. The intended first sampling of female machine operators failed in my attempt to interview them because they did not show any interest in the research. The path that was convenient to choose was to broaden the recruitment requirements. So far, the interviewed participants were policewomen from different departments such as Drug Control, Operating Service, etc., while the machine operators were hard to recruit. With these two groups, this might be the case study comparison. The reason why I am choosing these two specific jobs is the availability of jobs and the available population (For more please see the Notes section). With policewomen, it was easier to locate the names of the participants because, with the help of the PR Department inside the police Department of Nur-Sultan city, the interviews were organized and chosen at a convenient time for the participants. Also, they are very structurally different. Analyzing social structures and institutions would give insights into how differently they operate. If one profession is chosen, the subjectivity would increase, and the viewpoint is limited. The interviews were recorded and protected from outside intrusion by masking the names of the interviewees.

When locating the policewomen, they were at police institutions and the structures of offices and departments were highly formal and serious. When I was locating the office, the only difficulty is to find which offices could be having female workers. After phoning 102, the operator directed me to the address of Beibitshilik, 19. The next profession- manual workers were much harder to locate and recruit. Almost all of them did not show interest and thus, any manual work that could be performed by a woman was included. I located one loader who also used to work in building cranes in height. Then I located a female director of the workshop center that is specialized in products made from wood, the interview with whom I conducted online. At the beginning of the company, the launch was doing a lot of work that involved

procedures that men did. So, she performed such work and experienced the work of token, and thus, I decided to include her response too.

When interviewing women, it was discovered that they are working heavily in an environment where men are working at the police station or in the workshop. When I was recruiting manual workers, I opened the digital map 2GIS and collected contact information of all firms and companies that are targeted. To my surprise, out of 15 firms that I have contacted through phone calls, only one or two was having at least one woman who worked there.

The instruments were developed in 3 languages, namely Kazakh, Russian, and English. Mostly it was expected to use Kazakh and Russian language. In reality, all participants preferred to be interviewed in Russian. Coding was helpful for me to apply the themes categorizing that emerge by sorting the data in the transcript, and these themes were analyzed using Microsoft Word. The inductive coding was applied to transcripts where the answers to interview questions. The preferred analysis was thematic.

## **Results**

Overall, the strategies I found that women employed is that through man's role in work, they tried to adapt to the harsh environment. By adapting the qualities, some behavioral patterns of men that were shown in work, women could mimic and reproduce them. This I find the set of strategies they needed, the strategies that will be discussed below sections. However, because gender representation made male colleagues stress that women's representation was different from male performance, they were perceived differently to some extent (See also tokens). Respondents claimed that communication was based on mutual respect for work. To be accepted in the work environment, they got strategies to mimic the "boldness" of men and behave accordingly. **One interesting answer** I received from a very outstanding policewoman who got any accomplishments in her life who stressed out that her grandmother named her after Aliya, a known woman soldier so that she becomes "batyr kyz" or brave hero (e.g, Hercules). After that,

she took it seriously and made a purpose to conform to the role and aspire to heroic masculinity. According to structuration theory, we get women who are constrained by institutions and obey the rules of it, be it the police department or woodcraft firm. However, it should be noted that in quantity they make up a very little proportion of women.

When asking about the intention and force that drove them to choose the professions they got was dreams of childhood: 3 respondents were admiring the adult workers who became role models. **Mostly they** were men, who were absent from homes most of the time, trying to save the citizens and being policemen. Two looked up after father figures. One respondent emphasized how the clothes they wear and what prestigious work they have, and the dignity with which policemen serve a country that defined their path for them. The themes that I am going to present my findings are next: “feminized qualities”, “masculinized identity”, “physical difficulty”, and “internalized misogyny”. **I have** also found out that these environments, which made them adapt strategies, do shape the behavior of women in the workplace. On the other hand, the institutions (men mostly) expected them to be neat and “beautifying” the woodcraft, for instance, and suit them to paperwork because they are organized.

### **Men dominated environment**

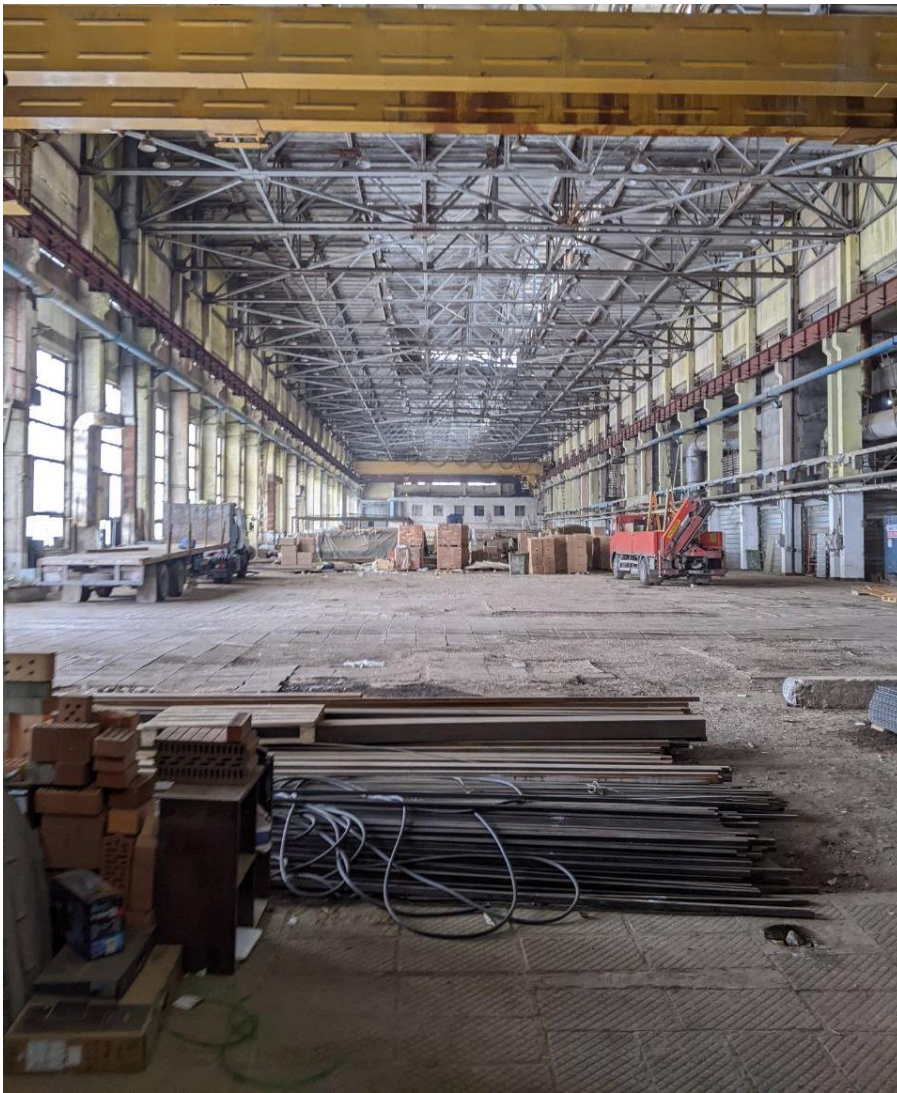


Figure 1. at the workshop station, Orlykol 14. An area where the raw materials come in is surrounded by a cold and bold environment where the few women work.

Respondents shared how preparation to work advanced them to enter. For example, from the next quote: one policewoman went through preparation in army barracks along with her male counterparts:

There is a 3rd floor for women, the rest for men. there is something there, we did all the actions that the men did: starting from 6:00 in the morning, exercises and ending with lights-out, everything that the combatant men did, physical training, everything-everything-everything that men should do.

This is the turning point how a woman may face the institutions that do not limit her but require the same preparation that men go through. Women evoke their past experiences of enduring harsh conditions on par with men to create an image of themselves as being just as

worthy and capable as men. This might show that the strategy to mimic boldness is not mimicking but acquired set of qualities to employ in future men-dominated workplaces.

Although the way how they performed work can be the same positions and roles at work, there are some differences. Men were believed to perform simple and bold, while women were expected to show detail-precision and neatness in work performance such as interacting with paperwork, and other people. The tokenism process is seen, therefore, in this phenomenon: they are stereotypically singled out from the crowd and received specific treatment. The symbol of femininity became being neat and organized in addition to the “harsh work” they perform along with men colleagues. Particularly, this advancement in qualities, 3 respondents believe, that outstand them from male colleagues. Almost all respondents claimed that these qualities of being organized make them higher/better at work in comparison to men who believed in simpler work. This organizational quality helped them to be promoted to higher positions: 2 respondents shared that previous job site colleagues did not want them to go.

### **Authority and autonomy**

When coming to authority, the institutions where interviewed women workers expressed that they are fully respected by their male colleagues. From Table 1, two cases focused on the work experience – the more professional your work do, the more respectful you become in an environment where men are dominated. Because the more serious and responsibly you come to a work agreement, the work institution may ask you to assert certain qualities such as respecting the law and doing the same job that men do in your position (See also next sections Internalized Misogyny and Physical Strength). This, in turn, proves how the social institutions for women to be accepting put a set of expectations as men.

One cultural norm of respect that was left from Soviet time is naming a person with a third family (father-relation) name along with a first name. Calling like that your colleague is considered a sign of respect. One respondent was “addressed by name and respectful to this day.

even those who are older than me.” Usually calling older people is accompanied by calling a third family name.

Another demonstration of authority comes from the institution structure: to be well respected, you have to obey the rules, interact with colleagues with humility, respect the laws, and establish good communication sets the trust between workers. It has nothing to do with the gender of the workers. One respondent U. even said that her professionalism was advanced so high that when she was transferring to the other jobs, colleagues and the director of previous work in the police station did not want her to leave because she became well-respected. This may show that if the rules of the institution are followed and not broken, then the authority is easily established.

On the other hand, this authority might be coming from institutional laws. For example, in the last quote the respondent shared that her work is serious and must be respected because she has responsibility before the law – if the procedure to investigate a police case has been mistaken, the error might cost serious consequences in work. She could be afraid of mistakes because the sanction law prohibits her from being irresponsible carry the investigation. The main question that lies behind the authority thing is how I assume; it can be tied to men's qualities.

One respondent, however, complained that in the beginning when she was working in the workshop experienced the difficulty of people not taking seriously their responsibility of doing woodcraft. When got the job, they seemed to be willing to work for her, however, the men she hired were having drinking issues: they would celebrate on weekends and then disappear because this drinking affected the future of their work. After that, she would make some jobs by herself – wood-crafting because the service does not wait for deadlines.

Another respondent faced a similar issue when her colleagues of her (men only) were not listening to her orders due to difficulty – the radio set was one item that connected her work procedures when she worked in the tower crane for building blocks. “Yes, no one understood me

there. Simply or they did not understand. There were two of us (women)” It might show that working atmosphere and people do shape the way how institutions operate. It was not properly organized. (For more on organizational concepts see the Feminized qualities section). The fact that she mentioned there was two of her proves that they are singled out tokens in this atmosphere.

In terms of autonomy, she, a woman who worked on the crane, did not feel any constraints that could stop her. One of her answers touches upon the reaction of her friends who wonder whether she is scared: “I don't know. they look so awful. “How? With a job like this, how do you work at all? Aren't you scared?” I don't know, it's not scary that this is the height. This is the height, you see, it also depends a lot on the height”. This also shows how despite the friends and close ones noting the height of the cranes, she is not afraid and performs the work responsibly. Nevertheless, the limitations such as reprimanding or controlling them were not observed – only a few people could be surprised they are going to such “dangerous” jobs.

### **Possible internalized misogyny**

The effect of the environment where men are dominated could be reflected in their position as tokens. 1-2 respondents implied and shared that their surrounding consists of men only, and their work is manly in some way. For example. U. policewoman who fights with drug abuse and criminal cases on that for me seemed strict to herself. Strict in the sense that workaholic attitude towards the work was noticeable. She also emphasized the importance to continue the service because everyone at the police makes a vow that they will serve the country, that they would sacrifice their time and commit it. **This might show that she tried to escape from women's femininity and get closer to being masculine.** Because the citizens are in danger, they are in charge of protection. The misogyny I am going to discuss is these “manly” qualities that are juxtaposed with female stereotypical qualities such as crying and whining that are not expected during police work. U. confirms it in their next speech:



I'm surprised at our men, you know why? that they don't whine, that's what I'll say, they call it, they don't cry, they don't say anything, "I'm tired" our guys, I didn't hear them say "I'm tired", "I'm sick of it", although they are at work Saturday-Sunday.

On the other hand, we can observe that stiffness is correlated with workaholism. It shows how the women's stereotypical qualities can be considered not favorable for the environment where men are stereotypically depicted – bold, serious, cold, and rational. While emotionality is considered unfavorable. Another response that I got is based on having female friends:

Yes, I can't lie, I can't tell you that I'm sitting here from morning to an evening discussing manicure pedicures. "What did I cook yesterday?" we communicate purely at work [With other departments] and that's it.

These sentences were uttered with disgust by U. who was strict with herself and others.

The discussion touched upon the topic of how her communication with other women is established. Given the fact that a few women in reality work, it was hard to answer – it is limited interaction with women colleagues – only from other departments. If we analyze the utterance, in addition to disgust, the activities mentioned "discussing manicure pedicure" and what was cooked, were addressed as women's activities. The reason why I considered including it in the misogyny case is the strategy they might have adopted. It might have become a part of a personality of women that may consider the gendered female qualities (e.g., being chit-chatty) to be unfavorable in the environment where men prevail. The disgust may explain the escaping mechanism from "lower" and "unimportant" actions such as discussing the cooked meal with families, whining, and crying. Thus, the misogyny that was shown here is affected by the men prevailing at work; what qualities determine a respected worker – was expressed.

When I asked when they rest and whether they have a fixed work schedule, two women answered that their workday is not fixed. From morning till the finishing tasks. What can be noted is how they are not marginalized from men – they stay the same late work hours and finish their duties. Therefore, their agency and autonomy to perform work is not constrained by anything, but it is this hard and stiff workaholic culture that makes women along with men perform the job.

## Physical strength and biological determinism

There has been some research concerning feminism, female behavior, and what things contribute to certain choices. One answer would be the biological determinism argument that deals with explaining human behavior according to the body's differences, and hormones. These hormones are believed to explain the reason why men's physical strength generally is higher than that of women.

**One respondent** was physically limited. There is a commission and medical check-up that examines the physical qualities of future police workers. She, for the first time, was denied because she was underweight. They suggested she gain some weight and return with the examination. Later, she eventually got the position. It may be the case that the institution might limit women in the weight category because of the belief that men are generally stronger. The director of a firm confirms that the steelwork is intended for men only, women can't hold those huge steels of metal and carry them. The only type of work a woman can do it with a little metal, especially design and coloring/beautifying the little wood elements. So, the work conformity should be followed according to the physical abilities of women and men, they agree.

One such conformity is seen in the operating work of policewomen. Here the case is not about the physical ability, but the gender-separated search. When they go out to the places of crime and search for suspects, they check the pockets and clothes of the suspects. K. shared that men ask her to search women suspects because touching the cloth and female body while searching is suited for policewomen. However, she said that most men go out and do such serious searching because of the associated danger men better face rather than policewomen. Therefore, the institution of police constrains the women not to perform searches on the suspect, but only when searching female suspects occurs. If the criminal is found, men do arrests, according to the respondent's answer. As I understood, people favored the argument of the physical ability of policewomen to be smaller and accordingly not to do searches and arrests.

Even if she was in the same position as men, her male counterparts were unwilling to allow her to face the danger at work, which is constrained not by an institution, but by coworkers.

### **Feminized qualities**

This section is devoted to gendering certain qualities. If above, I have discussed how misogyny is observed, making some qualities, that are believed to be feminine, unfavorable, then here is a set of qualities that respondents think they are better than men.

Almost all respondents answered that the favorable trait of women is being organized and highly responsible. Here the respondents claim that these qualities advance them and emphasize the work, highlighting better-performed jobs than that men do. Policewomen respondents, I noticed, forward the work duties being accomplished responsibly. Investigation work has been highlighted to conform to the laws by one police worker. She highlighted that she must be diligently responding to her work duties since she is responsible front of the law policies.

Besides performing work with strong responsibility, women could be expected to be accurate:

Men, they somehow just do it on their own and that's it. And we are somehow more responsible women. it is necessary to drive up [to place the cargo] beautifully raise [the crane], beautifully so that everything is neat. And the man will drive up once and just put it.

What should be noted is that as Tokenism phenomena fit here, it indeed makes the women respondents not only adapt to the environment but also label them as “beatifying”, and “detail-oriented” whose work is expected to be precise. A, have expressed that “generally woman is multifunctional. If a woman sets a goal for herself, she will achieve it by any means.” They also “quickly print, then write letters better.”

The director of a woodcraft center, when asked about women's work abilities, claimed that women should perform work based on the abilities they have. As was mentioned above, she expected neatness and organizing, which directed some female workers to design small wood

products that required beautifying them. In contrast, men could hold up heavy metals and perform more harsh work. In terms of this, I can say that firm established by such a director would be discriminating against people selectively: women go to administrative paperwork and design, while men do heavy jobs.

Another interesting case that was selectively discriminating the women's work is when policewomen do police searches of people. Policemen could be ashamed to search for women civil because it includes touching the body of women. Such rights were given to women policewomen to search for any potentially dangerous items.

## **Conclusion**

The project has discussed the work culture of women in male-dominated industries such as police and manual work. I discussed the policewomen and manual work industry dynamics that were reflected in the performance of women. This capstone project aimed to explore tokenism, explore how the representation of gender changes the perception of men colleagues. The results of 5 respondents showed that very few enter real-world settings in Nur-Sultan. 1 out of 15 phone companies would have a woman working there. During the discussion of results, the data were categorized into "feminized qualities", "possible misogyny", and "physical strength and biological determinism". They were entering the workplace, though in a few quantities, along with men and went through the same preparation as men did. When coming to work, the distinction came to stereotypical images: women being neat and organizing. In terms of the structuration of the social setting, they needed to adopt some "boldness" of men to be respected. However, as a token they were expected to do beautifully, which was not expected from men. What was also differing is physical abilities: men could live up to heavy things, while women's neatness. Some of the respondents claimed this organizing quality put them forward than men because these qualities are considered favorable when working. When discussing misogyny, 2 respondents think that the stereotypical emotionality of women is unfavorable for work. This project is heavily limited in terms of having a low number of respondents, which leads to a

generalizability point: the findings might be applied to these 5 respondents. The research is still needed to recruit more respondents to make the results more credible.

#### Notes.

1. Recruitment difficulties were as follows: Orlykol 14 was a workshop place that had about 5 female workers. When I found free minutes with them after lunch, I approached them and asked if they would be interested to participate in my research. I was greeted with skepticism in the sense that why should I bother them and sneak around. 4 women one after another refused. This to some extent demotivated me to continue recruiting and interviewing. Some time passed when I could come back to recruiting.
2. The second huge difficulty was that most women on manual work were unwilling to respond to me. After opening the 2GIS application on smartphones, an electronic map, that provides information about the firms, companies' addresses, and contact information, I picked about 15 firms that did the following: woodcraft, metal cutting, concrete work, and machine operators. Out of 15 firms, 2 were found to have at least one woman working. One huge company that was referred by another firm operator who answered me – she would tell other female workers. In case someone is interested, they would call me back. None did.

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