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An Investigation of Gender Differences Related to Education and Employment in a Representative Adolescent Sample

The improvement of educational and employment opportunities for women in the United States has been one of the primary social developments in recent history; however research has demonstrated that gender role ideologies continue to affect these areas. Knowledge of how gender role ideologies affect important domains like education and employment will allow for the development of effective campaigns to target inequalities and promote gender egalitarianism. This research provides a secondary analysis of the 2011 data from the Monitoring the Future Study (MTF), which annually surveys a nationally representative sample of high school seniors. The primary dependent variables analyzed in this study were expected educational attainment, husband and wife divisions of labor, and occupational prestige of expected career choice. Results of this analysis demonstrate mixed support for adherence to traditional gender roles. Contrary to prediction, data suggested a significant correlation between gender and occupational prestige, such that female students anticipated holding more prestigious careers ($r=.108, p<.01$). Analysis also revealed significant correlations between gender and egalitarian beliefs about both employment and education, such that females held more egalitarian beliefs about employment and education ($r=.176, p<.01$; $r=.178, p<.01$). Furthermore, post-hoc research may provide some evidence supporting a trend in male underachievement in high school ($r=.132, p<.01$). The results of this investigation into adolescents'

projections of their future career and educational choices can be used to predict future trends in education and employment.