

# The role of androgynous gender stereotypes in entrepreneurship

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**Abstract:** Numerous studies have addressed the phenomenon of entrepreneurship from a gender perspective. In many of them, the gender perspective consists of analyzing the differences shown in the behavior of entrepreneurs based on their biological sex. This approach has several limitations in interpreting the phenomenon and, moreover, developing supportive policies. This paper addresses entrepreneurship from the perspective of the role orientation associated with gender. Based on a questionnaire to 780 students of business administration, the article follows the BSRI methodology to perform analysis. The results of the study confirm the persistence of gender stereotypes and their effect on the entrepreneurial phenomenon. Male stereotypes persist associated with entrepreneurs. But androgynous stereotypes also emerge. The emergence of this kind of stereotype may imply a change in attitude towards entrepreneurship. Finally, this research examines the influence of gender-role orientation of individuals in their entrepreneurial intention, deriving theoretical and practical implications for promoting female entrepreneurship.

JEL Codes: L26, J24.

**Keywords:** Gender stereotypes, gender-role orientation, female entrepreneurship, androgyny, entrepreneurial intention.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the dramatic increase in female entrepreneurs in recent years in most countries (Acs et al., 2005; Allen et al., 2008) men are still more likely to create businesses and have greater entrepreneurial orientation compared with women (Langowitz & Minniti, 2007; Mueller & Dato-on, 2011). This phenomenon is also observed in the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor research, either by Global Report (Amorós & Bosma, 2014) or by Women's Report (Kelley et al., 2013), which presents evidence for a sample of 65 countries. In addition, women have less entrepreneurial intention than men, so this gap may continue (Zhao et al., 2005, Gupta et al., 2009). Among business populations, there are twice as many men compared to women (Reynolds et al., 2004; Acs et al., 2005), so these entrepreneurial talents and involvement in the business world is seen as a reserve in which there exist change expectations. These expectations affect not only the management style, but also the distribution of welfare and regional growth rates. Therefore, one way to increase the economic power of women is by enhancing their participation in entrepreneurial activity (Runyan et al., 2006; Tan, 2008).

Traditionally, the literature on female entrepreneurship has analyzed the gender gap from the point of view of biological sex, merely measuring and describing differences between men and women entrepreneurs, (Robb & Watson, 2008; Watson & Robinson, 2003; Kwong et al., 2012) differences between the types of businesses created and indicators based on economic rationality principles (Verheul et al., 2005; Manolova et al., 2012; Marlow & McAdam, 2013). In the last decade, other literature thread in entrepreneurship suggests overcoming biological and essentialist approaches researching on the social construction of gender (Mueller, 2004; Elam, 2008; Nwankwo et al., 2012; Javadian, 2014). Given that the archetype manager is located in the male sphere, they propose interpretations that revolve around the influence of gender stereotypes on entrepreneurial intentions of men and women (Williams & Best 1982; Wood & Eagly, 2002; Gupta & Bhawe, 2007, Gupta et al., 2008, 2009, 2013).

Due to the fact that gender stereotypes have influences on the preferences and choices of individuals in their career (Scherer et al., 1990; Fagenson & Marcus, 1991; Cejka & Eagly 1999, Gupta et al., 2009) this research proposes the following objectives: (1) the first one is to determine the existence of such gender stereotypes in Catalonia (Spain). Following the categorization proposed by Bem (1974, 1981, 1993), we analyze the items that make up each one of these categories; (2) secondly; this paper calculates the gender-role orientation of each individual and, finally, (3) it analyzes the relationship between the entrepreneurial intention and the gender-role orientation of individuals.

The paper is structured as follows: in the next section we review the theoretical framework of gender stereotypes, the gender schema theory (Bem, 1981) and its relationship to entrepreneurial intention. Then, we present the research context and the methodology used for the implementation and processing of the questionnaires. The fourth section sets out the main results and the fifth presents the conclusions of the study.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes refer to socially hegemonic beliefs about the characteristics and attributes associated with each sex (Rosenkrantz et al., 1968, Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Powell & Graves, 2003). Classifying people using gender stereotypes is a universal procedure, as it allows to quickly sorting them into two groups –men and women– using prominent visual and physical characteristics (Gupta & Bhawe, 2007). During socialization the adoption of gender stereotypes is encouraged (Bem, 1981; Miller & Budd, 1999; Wood & Eagly, 2002) and since the time of birth, a phenomenon of different social acknowledgement by gender is developed.

The study of the specific attributes that characterize gender stereotypes includes the work of Bem (1974, 1981, 1993), Norman (1963), Rosenkrantz et al. (1968) and Heilman (1983), among others, which demonstrates some consensus in the results. While male stereotyping gives higher priority to rationality, competition, success orientation and instrumentality, female stereotyping appreciates tenderness, affection, relationships and

expressiveness (Bem, 1981; Feather, 1984; Beutel & Marini, 1995; Gibson-Prince & Schwartz, 1998; Wood & Eagly, 2002; Abele 2003; Mueller & Dato-on, 2011; Hernández-Bark et al., 2014). Generally, men are expected to be providers, and women to be caregivers (Watson & Newby, 2005). Male identity is constructed to be the 'I' protagonist of his life, while female identity 'is for others' (García-Leiva, 2005).

These stereotyped characteristics of both sexes not only describe how men and women are (descriptive stereotypes), but also how they should be (prescriptive stereotypes) (Heilman et al., 2004; Schein, 2001). Descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes are not mutually exclusive but, on the contrary, largely complementary; prescribed behaviours are clearly identified with the positive attributes for each sex (Gupta et al., 2009). Consequently, the prescriptive gender stereotypes make masculine traits desirable for men and undesirable for woman, and vice versa (Gupta & Bhawe, 2007).

## 2.2. The Gender-Role Orientation

Stemming from gender stereotypes are gender roles, which constitute the legitimate social functions for both sexes (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). The Gender-Role Orientation (GRO) is defined as the degree of identification of the individual with certain personal attitudes, values, self-concepts, social behaviours and career choices that are consistent with the socially constructed gender stereotypes (Beutel & Marini, 1995; Abele, 2003). Men are expected to think and act in a masculine way, while women are expected to behave femininely (Constantinople, 1973; Williams & Best, 1982; Spence & Buckner, 2000). Gender-role orientation is a dynamic and multi causal phenomenon in which the subject is an active part of the constant interaction between biology and environment, which in turn are inseparable (García-Leiva, 2005). Moreover, pertaining to a gender category is weightier for women –as the dominated group– than for men –as the dominant group. Women tend to think about themselves in terms of their group characteristics and men tend to do so in terms of their personal characteristics (Moya, 1993).

The Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) was the tool proposed by Sandra Bem to classify individuals on different gender categories and to measure their gender-role orientation

(1974). Her proposal offers an alternative critique of a single bipolar dimension that has been accepted so far by femininity and masculinity. According to Bem, these attributes may not be mutually exclusive in an individual. Therefore, she refuted the belief in a tight correlation between sex –men/women- and gender -masculine/feminine- (Watson & Newby, 2005). She defined four gender categories, resulting from diverse combinations of the individual's levels of masculine and feminine traits (masculine, feminine, androgynous and non differentiated).

Androgynous individuals define a new category of gender stereotyping and Bem's procedure measuring their psychological traits, conclude that "the concept of psychological androgyny implies that it is possible for an individual to be both compassionate and assertive, both expressive and instrumental and both feminine and masculine, depending upon the situational appropriateness of these various modalities. It further implies that an individual may even blend these complementary modalities in a single act, such as the ability to fire an employee, if the circumstances warrant it, but with sensitivity for the human emotion that such an act inevitably produces". (Bem, 1981: 4).

Since the time of its proposal, the BSRI tool has been used by many researchers from different fields (Spence & Helmreich, 1980; Spence & Buckner, 2000; Vafaei et al., 2014) and applied to a multitude of cultures (Persson, 1999; Colley et al., 2009; Fernández & García, 2010; Zang, 2012; Adebayo & Olonisakin, 2014). Although it has also been criticized (Hoffman, 2001) and there are alternative tools to measure gender-role orientation of individuals (Spence, 1993; Spence & Buckner, 1995; Watson & Newby, 2005, Gupta et al., 2009), it has been widely applied to social sciences (Scandura & Ragins, 1993; García-Leiva, 2005; Gartzia & van Engen, 2012), including entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006; Mueller & Dato-on, 2011; Nwankwo et al., 2012).

### 2.3. Gender-role orientation and entrepreneurial intention

Bem (1985) proposed the Gender Schema Theory. According to the gender schema theory (Bem, 1985), people's gender typing is the result of gender-schematic processing. Gender-schematic persons tend to process information, including information about

themselves, according to the culture's definitions of masculinity and femininity (Bem, 1985). The gender schema theory suggests the interrelatedness of gender related phenomena: gender-personality type, gender attitudes, and gender-related behaviors (Katsurada, 2002). In this regard, gender stereotypes determine the attitudes of individuals in both elections: studies and profession (Cejka & Eagly, 1999; Gupta et al., 2009).

Although there has been a trend for change in recent years, there are still female and male labeled professions (Ahl, 2006). That is, the stereotyping of occupations by gender is still present in society (Miller & Budd, 1999); expectations and beliefs about the characteristics that men and women bring to their work determine what are considered the most suitable type of jobs for each gender. Some jobs define their necessary traits in terms of gender and become "men's jobs" or "women's jobs" (Heilman, 1997; Gupta et al., 2009). Even today, in the vast majority of cultures and countries, the stereotypes associated with engineering, surgery and the law are mostly male, whereas those associated with education and community services are mostly female (Heilman, 1983; Mirchandani, 1999).

Meanwhile, entrepreneurship has been traditionally considered a male activity (Fagenson & Marcus 1991; Bird & Brush, 2002). This analysis of previous literature highlights that the classical view on entrepreneurship is charged with male stereotypes (Bird & Brush, 2002; De Bruin et al., 2006; Elam, 2008; Watson & Newby, 2005; Gupta et al., 2009; Wilson, 2010; Javadian, 2014). It is not only the almost unique use of the masculine pronoun (Schumpeter, 1934, Collins & Moore, 1964) but also in the manner by which the entrepreneur is described (Mirchandani, 1999; Ahl, 2006). Traditionally, the entrepreneur has been associated with the figure of the explorer that discovers new lands; a person close to heroism, a patriarch with above-average qualities that stands up within a Darwinian system (Bruni et al., 2004). Moreover, in the archetypal entrepreneur outstanding qualities have also been linked to leadership and management: the entrepreneur (who discovers new worlds), the leader (who has control) and the manager (who requires sound management skills) (Czarniawska-Joerg & Wolff, 1991). The

successful businessman stereotype has been influenced by the culturally dominant masculine attributes, in which size, growth and other performance measures are leading indicators (Watson & Newby, 2005).

This subordination is demonstrated in the analysis of the discursive practices of research on female entrepreneurship. Ahl (2006), starting with the BSRI proposal, carries out an exhaustive review of the literature on entrepreneurship and collects the adjectives used to define the entrepreneur. She demonstrates that these traits match with those that define masculinity, and also that they are opposed to female stereotypical traits. While proactivity and risk taking are associated with a masculine symbolic universe, flexibility, adaptability and passivity connected to a female universe (Ahl, 2006; Wilson, 2010).

Based on the Theory of Stereotype Threat, (Steele, 1992, 1997) when individuals detect a mismatch between their own characteristics and those associated with a stereotyped task, the intentions of carrying out such a task are reduced. In other words, the perceived threat causes a negative evaluation on one's own abilities and the lack of support from the environment is also detected (Gupta & Bhawe, 2007). This could be the case of entrepreneurial intention. If, as discussed above, the entrepreneur's positive traits are related with male and negative traits with female, (Fagenson, 1993) women entrepreneurial intention will be influenced by stereotype threat. The threat only operates when the individual is vulnerable and self-perceived as belonging to the group which bears the negative traits (Steele, 1997).

The relationship between the intention to create a company and the sex of individuals has been widely studied in the literature on entrepreneurship (Wilson et al., 2007; Díaz-García & Jiménez-Moreno, 2009; Santos et al., 2010; Shinnar et al., 2012). Indeed, intention toward a particular behaviour has often been demonstrated to be the best predictor of that behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). This literature shows that even when entrepreneurial intention levels presented by women are high (although lower than those of their male counterparts); the number of women who create their own business is lower than their male counterparts, resulting in the known gap in statistics. Literature has shown



that this difference is partly due to the perception of a lesser ability to carry out the role of business owner and to the experience of receiving less support from social environment (Crant, 1996; Shaver et al., 2001; Minniti & Arenius, 2005; Veciana et al., 2005; Santos et al., 2010; Nwankwo et al., 2012). For women, there is a direct relationship between the level of confidence in the ability to detect an opportunity and the creation of a new business (Minniti et al., 2005; Langowitz & Minniti, 2007; Javadian, 2014). In fact, the clear identification that still exists between the entrepreneur and the male stereotype reduces the female entrepreneurial intention (Gupta & Bhawe, 2007).

However, there are few studies on the relationship between gender-role orientation and entrepreneurial intention. Mueller & Dato-on (2008, 2011) analyze the influence of gender orientation and culture in entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Gupta et al. (2009), in a study conducted for three different countries, show that the entrepreneurial intentions of individuals do not depend on sex, but on the degree of identification with male gender. Therefore, the influence exerted by gender stereotypes may explain low entrepreneurial intention shown by women (Baron et al., 2001). Empirical evidence supports this view: studies that measure the gender traits of entrepreneurship show that two thirds of them are considered male and only one third, androgynous (Wilson, 2010). Other recent empirical evidence, points towards gender orientation as being a better explanatory variable than biological sex for those with entrepreneurial intentions (Gupta et al., 2009; Mueller & Dato-on, 2011; Nwankwo et al., 2012).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The purposes of this paper are (1) to determine the existence of such gender stereotypes in Catalonia (Spain). Following the categorization proposed by Bem (1974, 1981, 1993), we analyze the items that make up each one of these categories; (2) to measure the gender-role orientation depending on biological sex of each individual and, finally, (3) to analyze the relationship between the entrepreneurial intention and the gender-role orientation of individuals.

### 3.1. The research context

Catalonia (with capital city is Barcelona) is a Spanish region located in the northeast of the country, between the French border and the Mediterranean Sea. It's one of the most developed regions in Spain and has traditionally been considered the engine of the Spanish economy. In an area that is only 6.5% of the total, there live 16% of Spanish population, generating around 19.5% of total Spanish Gross Domestic Product (GDP). As a result, it is more densely populated (232 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>) and has a per capita GDP, which is more than 15% higher and an activity rate (62.6%) three points above the national rate (INE, 2014).

The empirical literature has recognized differences between regions and countries in entrepreneur activity with economic development (Wennekers et al., 2005; Carrée et al., 2002), making this is an interesting case to analyze. Among 42 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) countries, Spain is ranked 26th for the male/female ratio in early-stage entrepreneurship, and 20th for the same ratio in established business owners (Cetindamar et al., 2011). Catalonia is a rich region in a middle-wealth European country where the gender gap in entrepreneur activities can be analyzed in the light of cultural and social environment.

Entrepreneurship has played an outstanding role in the wealth creation in Catalonia and the on-going economic crisis has made governments more aware of this issue and the society, more sensible. Catalonia is already one of the most entrepreneurial oriented regions in Spain and southern Europe. In 2013, in Catalonia, the rate was well above 16%, which means that 16% of the total population between 18-65 years old were involved in some entrepreneurial activity (Guallarte et al., 2014). Moreover, in regards to the distribution of self-employed women in Spain, more than 16% are located in Catalonia (INE, 2014).

### 3.2. The participants

This study uses two samples of students from the University of Barcelona. Following previous studies on the issue (Gupta & Bhawe, 2007, Gupta et al., 2008, 2009, Mueller &

Dato-on, 2008, 2011; Nwankwo et al., 2012), they attend Business Administration and Management degree programs. There are several advantages and reasons for this sample. On the one hand, the students are familiar to the entrepreneurship issue due to their studies (Begley et al., 2005, Gupta & Bhawe, 2007; Gupta et al., 2009). Second, they are potential entrepreneurs and maybe some of the future entrepreneurs included in the sample (Thomas & Mueller, 2000). Thirdly, although most of them they have not begun their career, within an organization or in the creation of their own company, they receive strong stimulus to think about doing so.

We collected two data sets separated by 2-4 weeks, surveying 760 respondents in both cases (380 respondents in Sample 1, and 380 respondents in Sample 2). This procedure reduces variability and provides robustness to the results as we consider the consistency of the responses. Sample 1 was used for identifying gender stereotypes and Sample 2 for determining gender-role orientation of each individual and their relationship with entrepreneurial intention.

### 3.3. Measures

#### *Gender stereotypes*

For this study, 31 items were selected from the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (Bem, 1974, 1981). This selection (see Table 1) coincides with adjectives that are synonyms or antonyms for the entrepreneur in management literature (Ahl, 2006; Javadian, 2014). In Sample 1 questionnaire respondents were asked about their opinions on the social desirability for women and men of these 31 items, in order to determine gender stereotypes (E.g., "In your opinion, how socially desirable is it for a woman to be individualistic?" "In your opinion, how socially desirable is it for a man to be flexible?"). Since gender is constructed and is likely to vary according to time and place, the goal of this part of the research is to determine which items are classified as masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated, *i.e.* how gender stereotypes are conceived nowadays. For this purpose, a Likert 7 points scale, ranging from 1 (Not at all desirable) to 7 (Extremely desirable), was used for assessing the social desirability of the items for women and men.

Table 1: Selection of 31 items synonymous or antonymous of entrepreneur

Synonymous	Antonymous
1. Self-confident	1. Kind, attentive
2. Prone to take risk	2. Gullible
3. Prone to position	3. Flexible
4. Individualistic	4. Loyal
5. Determined, steady, temperamental	5. Sensible to the needs of the others
6. Innovative	6. No systematic
7. Creative	7. Unpredictable
8. Analytical	8. Obedient
9. Assertive	9. Yielding
10. Self-sufficient	10. Submissive
11. Active, energetic, capable of sustained effort	11. Humble
12. Optimistic	12. Shy, discreet
13. Vehement in opinions	
14. Leadership capacity	
15. Independent	
16. Make decisions easily	
17. Ambitious	
18. Dominant, aggressive	
19. Competitive	

#### *Gender-Role Orientation*

In order to calculate the gender-role orientation, the Sample 2 questionnaire asked respondents to define themselves as compared to the same previous 31 items (Karniol, 1998; Washburn-Ormachea et al., 2004). For this purpose, a Likert 7 points scale, ranging from 1 (Totally disagree) to 7 (Totally agree), was used for assessing the self-identify of respondents with these items (How do you define yourself?).

#### *Entrepreneurial Intention*

Based on a construct consisting of six items (Zhao et al., 2005; Liñán & Chen, 2009) a Likert 7 points scale, ranging from 1 (Totally disagree) to 7 (Totally agree), was used for assessing the entrepreneurial intention concept (see Table 2). In order to analyze the reliability of the scale to measure the entrepreneurial intention, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. This coefficient measures the internal consistency of the scale, by analyzing the correlation of each variable with all other variables. The scale shows a high level of consistency with the concept of entrepreneurial intention, well above the recommended standard minimum of 0.7 ( $\alpha$  (IE) = 0.948).

Table 2: Items of Entrepreneurial Intention

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Construct: I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur
1. My professional goal is to become an entrepreneur
2. I will make every effort to start and run my own firm
3. I am determined to create a firm in the future
4. I have very seriously thought of starting a firm
5. I have the firm intention to start a firm some day
6. I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur

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### 3.4. Procedure and analysis

#### *Estimation of gender stereotypes*

From social desirability values obtained in Sample 1, the t-test statistics for all respondents, only for male and only for female respondents were calculated. For an item to be considered masculine, feminine, or androgynous we impose the condition that the results for the whole group and the subgroups point in the same direction. Therefore, an item is considered masculine if found to have significant differences between social desirability for a man and a woman, the average social desirability for men is higher than the average social desirability for women. An item is considered feminine if found to have significant differences between social desirability for a man and a woman, the average social desirability for women is higher than average social desirability for men. Following the same criteria, an item is considered androgynous if there are no significant differences between social desirability for a woman and for a man. Finally, the item is considered undifferentiated if there is not unanimity of gender attributes for the three groups (significance level  $p < 0.05$ ). In addition, when the items were sorted we have determined the average social desirability for each category –masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated– separately for women and men, and depending on whether the opinion is issued by male or female respondents. Based on the differences between the averages we calculated the t-test statistical to quantify their degree of significance and to provide greater depth to the analysis of the socialization process.

#### *Estimation of Gender-role orientation*

Taking into consideration the items that define the gender stereotypes obtained in Sample 1, the statistical treatment of Sample 2 has been carried out. To this end,

according to the methodology used by Bem (1974, 1981), the median split is used. The average value attributed to male items is 4.99 and the average value attributed to female items is 4.8. If a judge rates herself or himself with an average value greater than 4.99 for male items and an average value greater than 4.8 for female items, it means he or she has an *androgynous gender-role orientation* (AGRO). Likewise, if a student rates herself or himself with a value greater than 4.99 in male items and less than 4.8 in female items, he or she has a *masculine gender-role orientation* (MGRO). If the opposite happens, he or she has a *feminine gender-role orientation* (FGRO). Finally, if she or he is self-rated in male items and female items with lower values than the averages, she or he has an *undifferentiated gender-role orientation* (UGRO). Afterwards, woman and men are classified according to their gender-role orientation.

Finally, the relationship between the respondents' entrepreneurial intention and gender-role orientation is tested using a correlation matrix and a multiple regression model for three different groups (men, women and all).

#### 4. RESULTS

The following Table 3 presents the samples' characteristics. As can be seen sex distribution is quite balanced. The average age is around 20 years old and about one third of the respondents belong to families owning a business. The high percentages of students working experience are explained because of curricular practices carried out in companies during their studies in business administration.

Table 3: Samples' Characteristics

Sample 1	Women	Men
N	189 (49.7%)	191 (50.3%)
Average age	20.2 years	21.3 years
Range	18-26 years	18-59 years
Families owning business	38.1%	36.6%
Foreigners	12.2%	7.3%
Working experience	54.4%	70.7%

Sample 2	Women	Men
N	180 (47.4%)	200 (52.6%)
Average age	20.3 years	20.9 years
Range	18-41 years	18-55 years
Families owning business	36.4%	37.5%
Foreigners	17.6%	16%
Working experience	61.4%	67.5%

#### 4.1. Gender Stereotypes

The purpose of this section is to discover if gender stereotypes still exist in the context being researched. Do the instrumental-agent categories for masculine stereotype and expressive-communal categories for feminine stereotype still persist? Does gender socialization achieve its' objectives for men and women? What is the weight of androgynous gender orientation?

From the Sample 1 questionnaire data, and using statistical t-test results we note that gender stereotypes persist in Catalan society. There are certain items that are more desirable for men (male items), others which are more desirable for women (female items), others that are equally desirable for women and men (androgynous items) and some items for which there is not an unanimous response, which are qualified as undifferentiated. Table 4 shows an example of the results for each category: 'self-confident' (masculine item), 'humble' (feminine item), 'creative' (androgynous item) and 'yielding' (undifferentiated item).

Table 4: Mean values and SD of Social Desirability for women and men of various items

Item		Average for women (SD)	Average for men (SD)	Sig.	Gender Category
	All	5.58 (1.267)	6.18 (.966)	.000***	
Self-confident	Women	5.78 (1.215)	6.30 (.889)	.000***	Masculine
	Men	5.38 (1.287)	6.07 (1.026)	.000***	

	All	5.39 (1.287)	4.55 (1.538)	.000***	
Humble	Women	5.49 (1.200)	4.41 (1.589)	.000***	Feminine
	Men	5.29 (1.363)	4.68 (1.479)	.000***	
	All	5.48 (1.330)	5.35 (1.420)	.147	
Creative	Women	5.52 (1.316)	5.20 (1.553)	.590	Androgynous
	Men	5.44 (1.347)	5.50 (1.263)	.012	
	All	3.93 (1.585)	3.51 (1.639)	.000***	
Yielding	Women	4.05 (1.604)	3.33 (1.576)	.000***	Undifferentiated
	Men	3.81 (1.563)	3.68 (1.684)	.402	

Significance level: \*\*\* p < 0.05

Following the methodology previously explained, Table 5 shows the thirty-one items included in the Sample 1 questionnaire. Eleven items result as masculine, eight feminine, six androgynous and six undifferentiated. These results point to the persistence of gender stereotypes showing that masculinity is still associated with instrumental-agent traits (competitive, ease to make decisions, leadership ability, etc.) and femininity with expressive-communal traits (sensible to the needs of the others, humble, loyal, etc.). It is also worth observing that some traits closely linked to entrepreneurship (creativity, innovation) are categorized as androgynous.

Table 5: Items selected and classified by gender stereotypes

Masculine Items	Feminine Items	Androgynous Items	Undifferentiated Items
Self-confident	Kind, attentive	Innovative	Assertive
Prone to take risk	Gullible	Creative	No systematic
Prone to position	Flexible	Analytical	Self-sufficient
Individualistic	Loyal	Unpredictable	Obedient
Determined, steady, temperamental	Sensible to the needs of the others	Active, energetic, capable of sustained effort	Vehement in opinions



Leadership capacity	Submissive	Optimistic	Yielding
Independent	Humble		
Make decisions easily	Shy, discreet		
Ambitious			
Dominant, aggressive			
Competitive			

After all 31 items had been classified, mean social desirability scores were computed for the masculine, feminine, and androgynous items considered as a group for each of the 380 respondents of Sample 1—see Table 6-. As shown in Table 6, for both males and females, the mean desirability of the masculine and feminine items was significantly higher for the "appropriate" sex than for the "inappropriate" sex, whereas the mean desirability of the androgynous items was of equal measure. These results are a direct consequence of the criteria used for item selection. However, we are able to demonstrate that both male and female respondents agree with the socialization process with respect to gender, and are also in the same direction as Bem's results (1974, 1981).

Table 6: Mean social desirability ratings of the masculine, feminine and androgynous items

<i>Male respondents</i>			
	Masculine items	Feminine items	Androgynous items
For men	5.40	4.02	5.31
For women	4.70	4.61	5.15
Difference	0.7	0.59	0.16
<i>t</i>	10.065*	7.502*	2.735
<i>Female respondents</i>			
	Masculine items	Feminine items	Androgynous items
For men	5.52	3.79	5.33
For women	4.87	4.74	5.29
Difference	0.65	0.95	0.04
<i>t</i>	8.649***	10.439***	0.845

Significance level: \*  $p \leq 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$

From a selection of the results in Table 6 a further analysis has been conducted of the social desirability of androgyny in both men and women. Table 7 shows the average convenience of masculine and feminine items expressed by male and female respondents when thinking only about their own sex.

Accordingly, the first data column reports the opinion of the male respondents on how socially desirable the masculine and feminine items are considered by men. Likewise, the second data column reports the opinion of the female respondents on how socially desirable the masculine and feminine items are considered by women. According to the results in Table 7, androcentric values persist in the research context because the social desirability of masculine items is higher than feminine items, whether the view is from the male respondents and applies to men or if coming from female respondents and apply to women.

Table 7: Social Desirability of the masculine and feminine items for the appropriate sex

	Male respondents opinion for the men	Female respondents opinion for the women
Mean Masculine Items	5.40	4.87
Mean Feminine Items	4.02	4.74
Difference	1.38	0.13
<i>t</i>	16.357***	0.830

*Significance level: \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$*

Moreover, the difference between these averages is significant only in the case of male respondents and what they say about men. This leads us to interpret that the female respondents think of themselves more socially desirable as androgynous than male respondents, since the difference between the means of masculinity and femininity is not significant. In other words, in the opinion of female respondents, society expects women to act in line with both masculine and feminine gender stereotypes, while male respondents believe that society expects men to only adopt behaviors consistent with the masculine gender stereotype.

#### 4.2. Gender-role orientation

The finding of persistent gender stereotypes makes us question gender-role orientation of respondents following categories used by Bem (1974, 1981). For example, do women have higher propensity to androgyny than men? The results from the Sample 2 questionnaire are shown in Table 8. It can be appreciated that women and men are equally self qualified as androgynous (25%), and that it is also more common for women to self qualify as masculine (22.9%) than for men to self qualify as feminine (16.9%).

Table 8: Sex and Gender-role orientation

	Women		Men		All	
Masculine GRO	35	22.9%	65	35.5%	100	29.8%
Feminine GRO	54	35.3%	31	16.9%	85	25.3%
Androgynous GRO	39	25.5%	46	25.1%	85	25.3%
Undifferentiated GRO	25	16.3%	41	22.4%	66	19.6%
TOTAL	153	100.0%	183	100.0%	336	100.0%

Finally we analyze whether the socialization process achieves its purpose in terms of gender-role orientation. This is to say, does there exist a correlation between biological sex and gender-role orientation, being it masculine, feminine or androgynous? To answer this question we use the correlation coefficient between average self-perceived masculinity, femininity and androgyny of respondents with their biological sex (0 = Female, 1 = Male). The results are shown in Table 9 and show a positive correlation between men and male gender stereotyping, and also between women and female gender stereotyping. They also show no correlation between the androgynous stereotype and sex. This piece of evidence reinforces that the socialization process achieves the objective: individuals are identified with their prescriptive gender stereotype.

#### 4.3. Gender-role orientation and entrepreneurial intention

Based on the results obtained from the average self-perception of individuals for masculine (MGRO), feminine (FGRO) and androgynous (AGRO) items, we extend the analysis to check which of those gender-role orientations are correlated with the entrepreneurial intention. Table 9 shows the correlation coefficients between gender-role orientations, sex and entrepreneurial intention. A positive correlation between entrepreneurial intention, male and androgynous gender orientations and sex (men have more entrepreneurial intention than women) is found. Also, a negative correlation between entrepreneurial intention and female gender orientation is found.

Table 9: Descriptive statistics and correlations between gender-role orientations, biological sex and Entrepreneurial Intention (N = 380)

	Mean	SD	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. MGRO	4.99	0.716	1				
2. FGRO	4.8	0.678	-0.132**	1			
3. AGRO	4.99	0.743	0.560***	0.040	1		
4. Sex	0.53	0.500	0.192***	-0.171***	0.044	1	
5. EI	4.8	1.503	0.435***	-0.004	0.467***	0.168***	1

Significance level: \*  $p \leq 0.1$ ; \*\*  $p \leq 0.05$ ; \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.01$

In order to find out to what extent the gender-role orientation and the sex of individuals explains their entrepreneurial intention a linear regression model has been estimated for three different groups (all, women and men). The results are presented in Table 10. The model in the first column –Model 1- confirms that androgynous and male gender-role orientations are significant variables in explaining entrepreneurial intention of individuals. Model 1 can explain up to 26.6% of the behaviour of such variable.

Applying a stepwise procedure (Stevens, 2012) it is found that androgynous gender-role orientation is the most significant variable in explaining entrepreneurial intention: it explains 20.5%. When male gender-role orientation is introduced, adjusted  $R^2$  reaches 25.6%. When we introduce the dichotomous variable sex in the model,  $R^2$  increases up to

26.8%. This result reinforces our assertion that gender-role orientation is a better approach than sex for the analysis of entrepreneurship issues. Regarding the feminine gender-role orientation, the results suggest that there is no relationship with the entrepreneurial intention. This result is consistent with the results previously obtained in terms of descriptive attributes of entrepreneurs and correlation coefficients.

This is checked when the model is estimated separately for women (Model 2) and men (Model 3). As can be seen in Table 10, MGRO coefficient is greater for men than for women. In the case of the AGRO coefficient, the opposite result is obtained. There are not important differences of the explanatory power of gender-role orientations for women and men separately as the adjusted  $R^2$  is around 24% in both cases.

Table 10: Combined effects of gender-role orientation and sex  
on the entrepreneurial intention

<i>Variables</i>	Model 1 (All)	Model 2 (Women)	Model 3 (Men)
Masculine GRO	0.253 (4.231)***	0.184 (2.059)**	0.319 (3.974)***
Feminine GRO	0.020 (0.407)	0.078 (1.054)	-0.032 (-0.476)
Androgynous GRO	0.309 (5.280)***	0.387 (4.367)***	0.253 (3.157)**
Sex	0.122 (2.455)*	-	-
F	29.694	16.508	19.740
Sig.	.000	.000	.000
$R^2$	27.5%	26.3%	25.7%
Adjusted $R^2$	26.6%	24.7%	24.4%

+ Standardized Coefficients, (t-values); Significance level: \* p <0.10; \*\* p <0.05; \*\*\* p <0.01

## 5. DISCUSSION

Often, in a wide range of cultures, a distinction is made between psychological traits that describe each sex and those prescribed for each sex (Williams & Best, 1982; Wood & Eagly, 2002; Mueller & Dato-on, 2011). As a result, the present study has demonstrated the persistence of gender stereotypes among the young and educated in the Catalonia (Spain) population. The female gender stereotype continues to be linked to the person who is kind, attentive, gullible, flexible, loyal, humble, shy, discreet, submissive and sensitive to the needs of others. In other words, femininity remains characterized by expressive-communal traits (Bem, 1974, 1981; Prince-Gibson & Schwartz, 1998; Abele, 2003; Ryckman & Houston, 2003; López-Sáez et al. 2008; Gupta et al., 2009; Gartzia & Van Engen, 2012; Vafaei et al., 2014). Meanwhile, the male stereotype characterizes the person who is self-confident, individualistic, independent, ambitious, predisposed to risk taking, and someone with leadership capacity, who easily makes decisions. That is, masculinity is still associated with the instrumental-agent traits (Bem, 1974, 1981; Rosenkrantz et al., 1968; Heilman, 1983; Gartzia & Van Engen, 2012; Vafaei et al., 2014).

Along these lines, another important result of this work is the identification of six androgynous items linked directly or inversely to the entrepreneur (Bem, 1974, 1981; Ahl., 2006; Hernandez-Bark et al., 2014; Hancock et al., 2014), that is, items that are considered as socially desirable in men and women (Innovative, creative, analytical, unpredictable, active-energetic-capable of sustained effort, optimistic). This confirms not only the existence of such a stereotype (Bem, 1974; Gartzia & Van Engen, 2012) but also reinforces the theories that suggest individuals with this type of psychology as especially prepared for leadership, entrepreneurship and business management (Gartzia & Van Engen, 2012; Hernandez-Bark et al., 2014).

It is also found that androcentrism is still valid since the values awarded social desirability are greater for male items than those granted for female items (Klingenspor, 2002). Therefore, possession of masculine values is something positively valued socially, in both men and women. Firstly, men perceive that society considers it desirable that they

distance themselves clearly from feminine values. Moreover, women receive social pressure for androgyny, since they consider it socially desirable to aim for male and female values. In fact, male items are perceived as more socially desirable than female items (Klingenspor, 2002)

With regard to gender-role orientation, in 1974 Sandra Bem pointed to the fact that individuals identify with gender stereotypes to varying degrees, which leads to the existence of four types of gender-role orientation. According to the results of this study, 25% of respondents are considered androgynous, this being the same proportion in both men and women. According to the Hofstede report (2001), Spain is a low masculine and quite androgynous country ranked 37th in a masculinity classification for 53 countries. Nevertheless, gender orientation according to our results for Catalonia differs slightly from those obtained for the rest of Spain (Mueller & Dato-on, 2011; Hernandez-Bark et al., 2014; Vafaei et al., 2014). Mueller & Dato-on (2011) carried out a comparative study between U.S. and Spain, (specifically, for central and southern regions) using BSRI and focusing on gender-role orientation and self-perceived entrepreneurial efficacy. Comparing their results with the one obtained by this research, in Catalonia women are more likely to be androgynous than in the rest of Spain, while men present a lower propensity to androgyny and greater propensity to masculinity. On the other hand, the results of this study show that there are more women with Male GRO than men with Female GRO. According to different authors, this is due to social change towards less polarization of gender roles in western countries, traits and masculine roles have become more available and desirable for women (Klingenspor, 2002; Hernández-Bark et al., 2014; Gartzia & van Engen, 2012).

In line with previous studies, the results of this research show that entrepreneurial intention is higher for men compared with women (Veciana et al., 2005; Gupta et al., 2009; Diaz-Garcia & Jiménez-Moreno, 2009; Manolova et al., 2012; Shinnar et al., 2012; Perez-Quintana & Hormiga, 2012a, 2012b; Karimi et al., 2014). All work has shown differences in the approach using biological sex as an explanatory variable. This research

goes further in the field, using a real gender perspective instead of a solely sex based one, something which is uncommon in entrepreneurship research.

However, more and more, recent contributions to entrepreneurship literature claim that biological sex is not such an important factor in explaining differences between women and men because the differences within each group are too large (Ahl, 2006). In the line of this research, different authors assume that the degree of identification of individuals with gender appears as a best predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour (Gupta et al., 2008, 2009; Mueller & Dato-on, 2011; Nwankwo et al., 2012; Javadian, 2014). The results of this research confirm this statement and show that androgynous and masculine gender-role orientation is the best predictor of entrepreneurial intentions rather than biological sex.

Regarding the positive influence of masculine gender orientation in entrepreneurial intention, we cannot forget that the entrepreneur has traditionally been male (Williams & Best, 1982; Wood & Eagly, 2002; Mueller, 2004; Elam, 2008; Ahl, 2006; Nwankwo et al., 2012) and consequently there is a lack of reference models for women (Justo & Diaz-Garcia, 2012; Javadian, 2014). The stereotype threat of the entrepreneur is one of the likely reasons for wanting to understand the gender gap in entrepreneurship (Gupta et al., 2009). This idea may be subverted if one thinks that workplaces, jobs or professions are mixed, regardless of whether they have been traditionally held by men or women (Cacouault, 2000; Gartzia & van Engen, 2012).

With respect to the positive relationship between androgyny gender-role orientation and entrepreneurship, it is very interesting to analyze the gender stereotypes in the figure of the entrepreneur in Catalonia, the Spanish region with more male and female entrepreneurs. As in the U.S., the masculinity of the entrepreneur is blurring toward androgyny (Hancock et al., 2014; Mueller & Dato-on, 2011). Maybe this evolution has not yet taken place in the rest of Spain or its evolution is slower (Mueller & Dato-on, 2011; Hernández-Bark et al., 2014). This finding could confirm the emergence of a new entrepreneurial archetype in which androgynous attributes, like innovativeness,



optimistic, creative or active are more and more usual. In fact, recent work is beginning to emphasize feminine traits of good businessmen, as humility or kindness (Gupta et al., 2009; Diaz-Garcia & Jiménez-Moreno, 2009; Javadian, 2014).

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

The implicit dynamism in gender-role orientation leads to the possibility of changes in workplace views and especially in entrepreneurship as a career option. In this way, it is possible that the general belief that the company owners are men may change. Improving women entrepreneur social visibility which acts as 'role models' may increase female entrepreneur intention. Moreover, emphasis on the androgynous entrepreneur traits in forums at different levels of education, in entrepreneur training activities, will certainly increase the women entrepreneur intention if they perceive they have positively valued traits for entrepreneurship.

In line with previous studies that link gender-role orientation and entrepreneurship, in this paper we analyse the Business Administration students view to draw our conclusions. In our opinion they constitute an interesting group as they learn management skills regardless of their sex and are equally empowered to undertake entrepreneurial positions. The next step is to apply the gender perspective to advance in the analysis of the features that characterize business managers. Likewise, it is interesting to continue the study of gender social construction in entrepreneurship focusing on the discourse used in the media.

Finally, our conclusions are relevant for educators and trainers of future entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurial archetype evolves from masculinity to androgyny. This may help women entrepreneur intention. Emphasizing androgynous traits is a way to disable male stereotype domination and threat. This possibility is open, not only for educators who have the ability to improve this perception, but also for media, advertising companies and women to push and value female entrepreneurship.

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