

Teachers' Career and Educational Aspirations, based on the "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010"

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This study aims to identify those factors which may have an influence on entrant teachers' career choices, aspirations for further education and training and access to leadership/management positions. These are strong gender stereotypes and polarization of sexes or the standardized requirements of the teaching profession.

This study analyzes data from the "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010", a Hungarian national survey supported by the Social Renewal Operational Programme (SROP) "Higher Education System-level Development" project.

The survey examines those higher education students who completed their undergraduate or graduate studies in 2007. The current study focuses on those who undertook teacher training. The total sample consisted of 49,382 people, the surveyed sample is 4,511 participants, and of this number 738 people have a teaching qualification.

The results suggest that phenomena based on gender stereotypes are very typical among teachers. For example, the individual's sex fundamentally defines his or her career opportunities: leaders are much more likely to be men, while women have less chance to move forward even if their performance is better. At the same time teachers who chose masculine disciplines are more likely to undertake further education and training than those who chose feminine disciplines – regardless of their sex.

In addition, the highly feminized teaching profession itself shows feminine characteristics. The further training aspirations and work positions of teacher training graduates – compared to the overall sample – are below average, even if their performance is better. Moreover, social skills ("interacting with others") were significantly more important to them, which can be related to the caring attitude expected from them.

Keywords: gender stereotypes, teacher training, higher education

Teaching is a gendered profession: the statistics demonstrate the predominance of women in teaching both in Hungary and in Europe. The proportion of women in Hungary is slightly higher than the OECD average: 87.5 per cent among primary school teachers, while the OECD average is 81.5 per cent, and 68.2 per cent among high school teachers¹, while the OECD average is 67.7 per cent². We would see a similar ratio in the former socialist countries, and in Sweden, Finland and Italy, while the percentage of both sexes is the same in Japan, China and Korea. Parallel to feminization claimed by a specific trait especially for those who will work with pre-school children, which is associated with women's role: have a caring attitude towards students (Weiner, 2001). In addition research shows that the teacher's identity is strongly affected by gender stereotypes. One of the reasons is that in the course of expansion of education two different professions grew up. The maternal role of women was converted to a job: they were governesses educating children in the home, and later kindergarten and elementary teachers. Their main tasks were to take care of children and to nurture good personal relationships with pupils. Women are more likely to define their own teaching identity by their relational and nurturing functions (Gaskell & Mullen, 2006; Weiner & Kallós, 2000). At the same time male teachers remained predominant in elite and secondary

¹ Data source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office yearbook "Women and men in Hungary 2008" (KSH: "Nők és férfiak Magyarországon 2008")

² Data source: OECD "Highlights from Education at a Glance, 2011" statistics

education, their role in the learning process determines the standards set against them and they establish their teaching identity through their subject (Weiner & Kallós, 2000).

The question is how these conflicting expectations affect career choices and future career paths. This may not only be relevant for the individual, but also affect the teacher-student relationship and the effectiveness of education. As Gordon Györi has concluded, those countries – e.g. Mediterranean and former communist countries – which show uncertainty or transience in the field of gender equality have low educational efficiency, while those countries which have coherent principles and practices in this field have more effective education too.

The lack of tension may be the result of the strong presence of equality, as can be seen in some of the English-speaking countries and in the Northern European states, but also of the opposite of it: the notion and practice of sexual equality are equally weak in the successful and prosperous Confucianist countries. Gordon Györi adds to this that in the absence of detailed analyses, consideration of the reasons for as well as the consequences of these phenomena would be no more than speculation; however, it is apparent that the educational systems are sensitive to attitudes and practices concerning the sexes (Gordon Györi, 2007). Based on the above, we may assume that where a number of participants in the educational system expect the same kind of behaviour from teachers of different sexes and at times completely different behaviour is demanded, this situation would most probably result in achievements considerably lower than what is possible.

Considering the correlation between teacher-student relationships and gender, most researches focuses on the gender of the students and the needs and consequences in connection with this. One of the few exceptions that focus on the teachers is the meta-analysis of Cornelius-White: the author analysed 119 studies during his research on student-centred teacher behaviour, and considered the sex, ethnicity and experience of the teachers as variables. He found differences in only one dimension, namely that person-centred teacher behaviour affected students more where the teacher was female. Interestingly enough, the results also show that the effect is considerably stronger if there are more male teachers in the sample. It should be noted, however, that the correlation is less obvious if primary school pupils are included. Although the uncovering of the cause and effect relationships would require more elaborate studies here, it can clearly be seen that the sex of the teacher and the commitment of the students towards school are considerably interconnected (Cornelius-White, 2007). According to students, female teachers are more likely to provide attention and care, while for students in the senior years of their studies – taking special courses connected to their chosen fields of study – the presence and support of male teachers are more important, also closely connected to the shaping of attitudes towards school.

"Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" is aimed at the follow-up of those higher education students who completed their undergraduate or graduate studies in 2007. By using the database of this research we tried to provide answers to questions concerning the decisive factors influencing career choices, educational successes, acquiring leadership and/or management positions, and aspirations of students for further learning: are these more likely to be connected to the strong presence of sexual stereotypes and polarization, or rather the opposite, the uniform demands required of those in the teaching profession? If all of these are firmly vindicated, then – taking the study of Gordon Györi as a starting point – we may assume that mixed signals cause hardships to teachers, although the exact nature of these hardships cannot be deduced from the "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data, therefore, further research needs to be conducted. In the following, we will give an overview of the characteristics bound to gender observed within the world of education and work, the absence or presence of which it is interesting to examine within the field of the teaching profession.

Social status and competence

Sex, age and skin colour are three basic categories that heavily influence our social roles. Based on these biological characteristics, society creates cultural constructions that also interconnect with each other; that is exactly why "it is impossible to tell what kinds of peculiar consequences of the joint racial, class and sexual determination do exist" (Moore, 1997, p. 87). Moreover, we should be aware that if we choose one dimension to be examined, the common features discovered may essentially be graded by other constructions left out of the scope of study. In a sense, gender-based categories differ from the above mentioned basic categories: we are unable to think of anybody without automatically including the person's sex, and we are more likely to confuse people of the same sex than people of the same age or skin colour. The fact that belonging to one gender or the other is usually seen at first sight is one of the main reasons why we learn gender-based stereotypes as early as our childhood. A further reason is that the gender categories are dichotomous and mutually exclusive, thus it is easier to navigate in this category than among categories that are multi-class and overlapping (Zemore, Fiske & Kim, 2000).

Stereotypes are conceptions firmly attached to a given category: during their creation a person applies his or her expectations and associations regarding a group to a single member of that group. Regardless of our awareness that judgments are decisions of possibility, people usually do not attach probability ratios to their statements regarding members of an external group" (Fiske, 2006, p. 513). The content of gender stereotypes seems to be essentially uniform even in fundamentally different cultures. According to the research, one of the most common gender stereotypes is that women are much more relationship-oriented, while men concentrate more on achievement and performance. In almost all cultures the basis of differentiation between femininity and masculinity is the duality of being sensitive to the community or to activity (Nguyen, 2006). Besides the duality of relationship-orientation and self-assertion, another general assumption is that women are more likely to be lovely and nice, and men are more likely to have competences. Glick and Fiske explain this with differences in status: in each and every society, there is a group (or a number of groups) with higher status and several groups with lower status. The members of the lower-status groups are held to be less competent in the given society (Glick and Fiske, 2001).

A similar explanation is offered by the social dominance theory of Pratto and Sidanius. According to this, the social and political dominance of the individual has a group-based background, and this group-based dominance and discrimination may be measured on the social dominance orientation (SDO) scale. The theory provides three fundamental principles. The first states that the gender- and age-based hierarchy is an existing phenomenon in every society, and the other optional categories – for example those based on religion, ethnicity, class or sexual orientation – are products of the given economic-social system. The second principle states that most of the conflicts among different groups – for example racism, nationalism, sexism – are just different forms of the fundamental human inclination to set up group-based hierarchies. According to the third principle, there are forces in human societies both strengthening and attenuating hierarchy, therefore the scale of group-based social inequality may constantly be changing. SDO measures the personal attitude of social dominance; this way, the values derived depend on the status of the group and on gender – for example an international research study conducted in 10 patriarchal countries revealed that the SDO value is definitely higher in the case of men than in the case of women, but it also depends on socialization and one's nature and temperament (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). One strives to adjust one's profession and social roles to one's SDO; this explains the higher demands on men concerning status and prestige, and the higher need of women "to be useful members of the community" (Nguyen, 2005. p. 115.).

Differentiation: horizontal and vertical

As can clearly be seen from the facts mentioned above, the traditional roles occupied within the division of labour are essentially different for the genders. The "outside" versus "inside", the "housework" versus "work in the field (far away)" all belong to the basic masculine-feminine opposite pairs (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 12). In this way it is also characteristic of modern societies that men working hard, therefore spending little time with their families, are held to be excellent fathers and husbands according to the traditional, gendered approach, because they earn money for the family. As opposed to this, a woman working hard may feel remorse because of not spending enough time with her family. One consequence of this is the self-selection observed in career choices, as a result of trying to avoid the anticipated role conflicts (Nguyen, 2006). This, besides motivations and expectations in connection with achievement and performance, strengthens segregation not only horizontally but also vertically.

In the case of formation and development of horizontal segregation the outsider's expectations and the internalized stereotypes both play an important role. This is clearly shown, for example, by an American longitudinal research study which followed up the careers of especially gifted and clever students. Researchers distinguished three sub-groups: in the first, language test results were significantly better, in the second the members excelled in mathematical studies, and those who belonged to the third group were good at both. Within the sub-groups, studying female and male students separately, the researchers found a clear divergence in plans developed for the future, as well as in the achievement thereof. The boys excellent in mathematics sought to be good in mathematics and inorganic sciences, as opposed to the girls with the same capability profile. Approximately 50% of the verbally skilled boys chose humanities and social sciences and 50% natural sciences, as opposed to the girls in the same group, the vast majority of whom chose humanities and social sciences. Most of the boys with balanced capability structures – that is, good at both mathematics and language skills – wanted to study mathematics and natural sciences, while the girls were evenly distributed between humanities and social sciences and natural sciences (Gordon Györi, 2007).

Horizontal segregation may only be reduced with considerable and concentrated efforts: Charles and Bradley conducted research in twelve developed countries and found that the notion of equality of chances for both genders contributed to the dismantling of horizontal and vertical segregation. It is true, however, that the choice of certain fields of study is not so uniform in different cultures: for example, where choosing engineering studies was substantially supported by the given country, the number of women entrants was growing significantly (Charles & Bradley, 2002).

Although the broadening of possibilities in higher education resulted in many of the formerly segregated courses of study starting to become gender-neutral, men are over-represented in fields like engineering studies, agriculture and natural sciences, mathematics and informatics, while women represent the majority of students in the fields of humanities and social sciences (Fényes, 2010; Weiner, 2001). This in turn affects the performance of women and men in different fields, to which the creators of complex models pay special attention. For example, the model of Eccles from 1999 calls attention to two aspects apparent in choices in connection with performance. One of these is judgment of the probability of success, and the other is the subjective judgment of possibilities, in addition to their relationships to one's personal aims and self-definition. Factors and aspects of socialization, parents and teachers, gender stereotypes, media, the self-perception of the person, and

perception of the task itself all play an important role in the making of decisions (Nguyen, 2006).

Gender-based categorization may be decisive where the distribution pattern of the genders is especially disproportional. Presence in a group with a rate of 15% or more creates a so-called symbolic (*token*) status both for women and men. However, while the consequences are rather negative for women because of their contrasting roles, they are positive in the case of men: the culturally and socially higher rated male identity is highlighted, and they have to make efforts not to go ahead but just to remain where they are. The scientific literature uses the concept of "glass escalator" to describe this phenomenon: such men often describe unseen pressure exerted on them to move upwards, just because they are men, and according to the stereotypical expectations, sooner or later they are to acquire leadership and/or management positions (Kanter, 1977; Nguyen, 2006).

Vertical segregation is rather connected to the prescribing aspect of the stereotypes: the successful woman breaks these rules and therefore she is not "preferred". This is the "double bind" or "rope-dancing" situation: if a woman acts along with the principles of stereotypes, she is held incompetent at best and she is not going to move forward, and if she does not act according to the stereotypes, she is considered unable to fit in and will be disapproved of. In workplaces there is a hidden, unconscious level of gender distinction in addition to apparent and open segregation. Such indirect discrimination occurs, for example, when "a popular female college teacher is described as charming and caring instead of mentioning her professional achievements when the head of the department considers her promotion" (Nguyen, 2006, p. 247). Men also face limitations to their role, though: they have to be successful and gain high status, which can only be achieved by running too many risks, or – in some cases – it may be associated with the difficulties of asking for information.

There is an ongoing debate as to whether there are any gender distinctions in leadership styles and methods. A number of authors emphasize that the "female leader" myth is holding up to this day; it is characterized by distinctive "female values" (Gaskell & Mullen, 2006; Shakeshaft, 2006). Women in leadership roles, for example teachers, are expected to emphasize the role of human relationships and be more caring. Stepping somewhat outside this framework, Eagly and her colleagues studied the gender differences between leadership roles and styles in a social context. According to their theory, people usually categorize leaders according to their sex and express such expectations towards them, which defines the reactions of male and female leaders who internalize these expectations (Nguyen, 2006.) Based on the above mentioned phenomena, the glass escalator and glass ceiling are created – women may not reach above a certain level in the structural hierarchy (Powell, 1988), in consequence of which in all branches of the economy male leaders are predominant.

The phenomena described earlier are also apparent in education, although their effect is shaded by a number of factors. With mass education the rate of female students became considerably higher on upper educational levels, and their secondary school performance is characteristically better than that of male students. Upon entrance to higher education this advantage is still apparent; however, as shown by the research of Fényes, it disappears by the fourth year: more male students plan publications, or have publications already, and fewer women plan to achieve PhD status than men. At the same time, however, female students are more likely to plan further learning after leaving university, in order to gain larger cultural capital, but this only means acquiring another degree on the same level, and not entry to PhD programs (Fényes, 2009).

An important question in connection with feminized professions is how far decisions regarding learning, work and career are influenced by the feminine or masculine self-image of the person. Society looks upon femininity and masculinity as the two ends of the spectrum – that is, a person may be one or the other, but not both. According to Bem, this gender-based

polarization is nothing more than one of the working methods of the "lenses of gender". That is why he assumes that the identity of a person may be formed by decisions between assertive and impressionable, instrumental and relationship-oriented attitudes and behaviour. Persons showing flexible attitudes towards these gender-specific expectations were defined as being androgynous (Bem, 1993).

Abele also defines gender-orientation as a dynamic and context-based phenomenon; the researcher studied personal career choices during her research, and found that sometimes there is only a loose connection between sex and gender. The perception of gender roles and career choices of the people she studied mutually influenced each other: the feminine-oriented people – both women and men – acquired less advantageous jobs, and felt themselves less efficient than their masculine-oriented counterparts (Abele, 2000).

Mónika Kovács has studied the preference of higher education students based on Bem's above cited statement, namely that masculinity and femininity are not two end points of a scale. Students attending engineering, economics and law courses – both women and men – had more respect for masculine values, for example high social status, high salary, and acquisition of personal authority. As opposed to this, students choosing professions in public health, education and other fields within the humanities and social sciences preferred to have feminine values, for example working in a socially useful job that makes other people's lives better, or in one that makes it possible to help others (Kovács, 2007).

A similar result in terms of value preferences is shown by the research of Kovácsné, who examined 738 students attending nurse and teacher training courses. Altruistic motivations were apparent in choosing both professions, and within this, the importance of helping people was even more emphasized in the female sample. (Kovácsné, 2008).

Horizontal segregation in the teaching profession

The "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" studied undergraduate and graduate (including PhD) students of state universities who completed their studies in 2007 and their situation in 2010. The sample – taken by simple random sampling – consisted of a total of 4,511 persons, with 16.4 per cent of these (738 persons) acquiring a teaching qualification. Although we examined the characteristics of women and men based on the teacher sample, we also compared this group to the whole of the sample in connection with some of the questions, and thus the sex of those interviewed and their qualification (namely, whether they have graduated as teachers or not) were among our examined variables. We differentiated the teacher graduates depending on their choice of masculine (engineering, informatics) or feminine (social sciences) fields within the teaching profession. In addition, we examined whether the given person attended the major he or she wanted at the beginning, and whether he or she succeeded in graduating in time. Other aspects we examined were aspirations for further learning, whether the given person found work within his or her profession and, if so, whether he or she is employed in a leadership position. In addition, formation and development of important values and characteristics regarding work were also examined, although the "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" inquired about these only in connection with the current work of the given person, therefore the answers provided are necessarily less exact than in other examinations generally aimed at value choices.

As the whole teaching profession is generally thought to be feminine, those choosing this are required to show performance higher than the average, and within this women even higher than men. According to our hypothesis, there are significantly more men occupying leadership positions than women, and they are more likely to be more successful in other aspects of their careers too. Aspirations for further learning will, however, be slightly different: because of the higher expectations it is anticipated that more women than men

would like to learn more, although the latter prefer higher educational levels. Considering values, we may assume that building relationships and teamwork are more important to women than to men, who generally prefer working individually and concentrate on reaching the set aims.

The results are influenced by the fact that not only those completing their first (bachelor's) degree were included in the sample, because it would not have been reasonable to expect teachers to occupy leadership positions only three years after their graduation. At the same time, looking at the whole sample, the percentage of female teachers is much higher (73.2%) in the group of supplementary training and master's degree graduates.

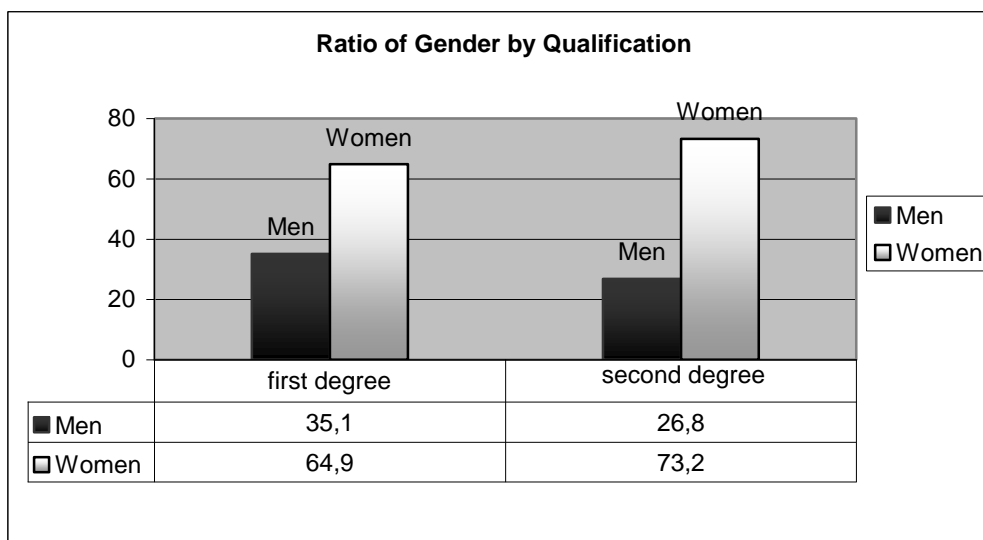


Figure 1.

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

We see an even more emphatic majority of women if we take a close look at the time organization of the training: 80% of those on correspondence courses are women. Furthermore, the statute prescribing that women receiving child care fees (GYED) or maternity grant (GYES) were able to attend university free of charge was still in effect at the time the interviewees attended university; this may be the reason that there is a slightly higher rate of women having children than was expected (while the rate is slightly lower in the case of men). Based on the questions asked, we cannot recognize the demographic characteristics and job market positions of those acquiring their second or third degrees. However, from earlier research we know that a large number of young mothers wished to compensate for the disadvantage resulting from inactive status with learning, which was even more reinforced by the possibility of learning free of charge (Engler, 2007). This also influenced the characteristics of their career path, because women still remaining in young mother status do not seek work at all; those who are looking for a job find themselves in a slightly less favourable situation than women and men who wish to improve their workplace positions with a further degree (Háber, 2011).

It should be noted that compared to the whole sample the rate of women acquiring their second degree is considerably higher within the group of teachers (86.6 per cent); at the same time, being a parent is not dependent on aspirations for learning. In this case, therefore, the gender of the student is the influencing factor, which seems to be in accordance with the statement of the literature cited earlier, namely that women are expected to show higher performance than men considering the same position.

Gender of teachers, according to different forms of education (%)

	Undergraduate course	Supplementary training	Master's degree
Male	19.9	33.3	13.4
Female	80.1	66.7	86.6

Chi-squared = 0.025

Table 1.

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

It is characteristic of the teacher sample that – as was anticipated based on the statistical data – the rate of women is considerably higher among them compared to the whole sample. Considering, however, what has been stated earlier, we may assume that the distribution of genders does not follow the classification according to horizontal segregation closely, that is, we also find men within professions considered to be feminine as well as women in masculine professions.

The fact that the rate of social educators is rather high among students who graduated from teacher training colleges refines the results of the research: their rate is 27.5 per cent, the same as the rate of traditional primary school teacher graduates. Apart from them, special needs teachers, developmental teachers, teachers of persons with behavioural difficulties and graduates of education are all positioned on the same education level. Social pedagogy – as well as the fields of health care and social care – is a strongly feminized special field of science: women compose 81–85 per cent of the students. At the same time, however, it is closer to social care work than to teaching: graduates are more likely to get a job in the child care and welfare system. However, there are a number of jobs created in the social administration and public education fields for which these graduates may apply (Benkő, 2006). In the present sample the rate of women among those who graduated in social pedagogy is considerably higher than that of men: it is 84.6 per cent. At the same time, compared to the other teacher graduates, they show more aspiration for further learning: 14.2 per cent of them think about enrolling on master's degree courses, whilst the rate is only 7.8 per cent among the others. Thus, when considering the characteristics of feminine professions, this aspect may also be included.

As we mentioned earlier, the teaching profession is characterized by a majority of women: two thirds of the whole sample consist of women and one third of men, while 81.3 per cent of the teachers are women and 18.7 per cent are of men. This, however, does not mean that the "feminine" courses are completely filled by women and they avoid "masculine" professions. At the same time, within traditionally feminized professions – like kindergarten teachers, primary school teachers, household managers and teachers of health promotion – we find the rate of women to be over 90 per cent. Furthermore, one fifth of the teacher graduates in humanities and social sciences are men. The teachers who graduated in natural sciences (mathematics, physics, chemistry) show a much larger variety: two thirds of them are women and one third are men. However, the men have a majority within fields traditionally held to be masculine – computer sciences, engineering and engineering teacher – but only with 55 per cent. That means women chose masculine fields in large numbers. Parallel to this, though in smaller numbers, men can also be found within fields traditionally thought to be feminine, although they are more likely to strive for masculine professions.

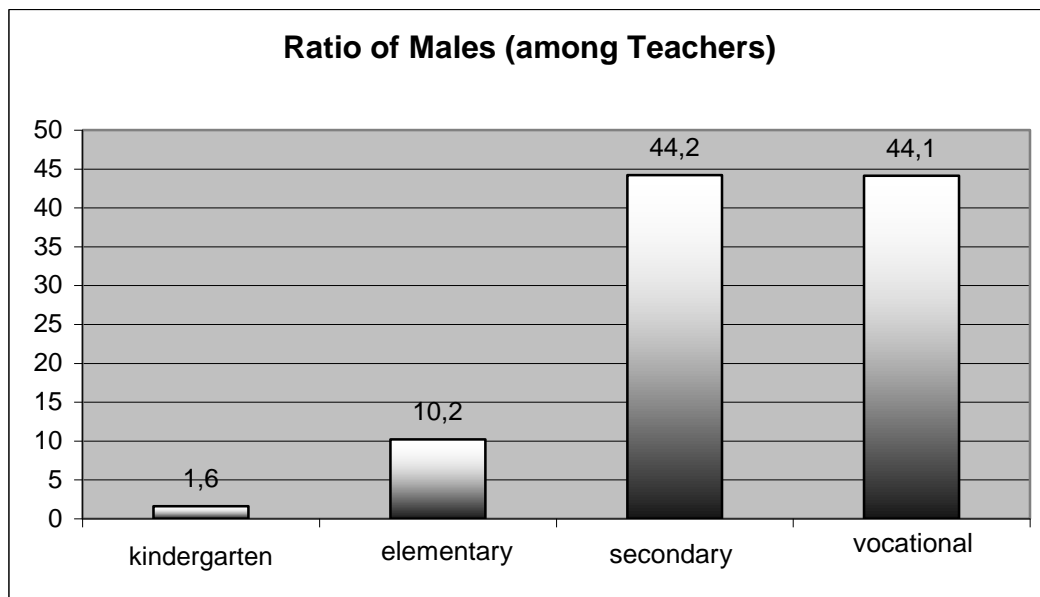


Table 2.

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

We also examined success in learning based on how motivated the given person was in choosing his or her particular field of knowledge, and whether he or she succeeded in completing the course within a reasonable time. There was no significant difference between women and men in this respect, although the number of men who were more motivated at enrolment was slightly higher, but did not manage to complete their studies in time. At the same time, taking the teacher training students, the rate of male graduates completing their studies in time was slightly higher, though the difference was not significant. If we examine the masculine-feminine dimension, we find that those choosing masculine sciences are more likely to be motivated in their choices but less likely to graduate in time, and on the other hand, those choosing feminine sciences are generally less motivated but more likely to complete their studies in time.

The rate of those acquiring second degrees (master's degrees) was higher within the group of teacher graduates (both women and men) than within the whole sample. The rate of teacher training students is 13.5 per cent of those attending undergraduate courses, and 34.9 per cent of those acquiring master's degrees. It seems to be true for the whole of the feminine career that – regardless of the gender involved – larger cultural assets have to be invested in order to be successful.

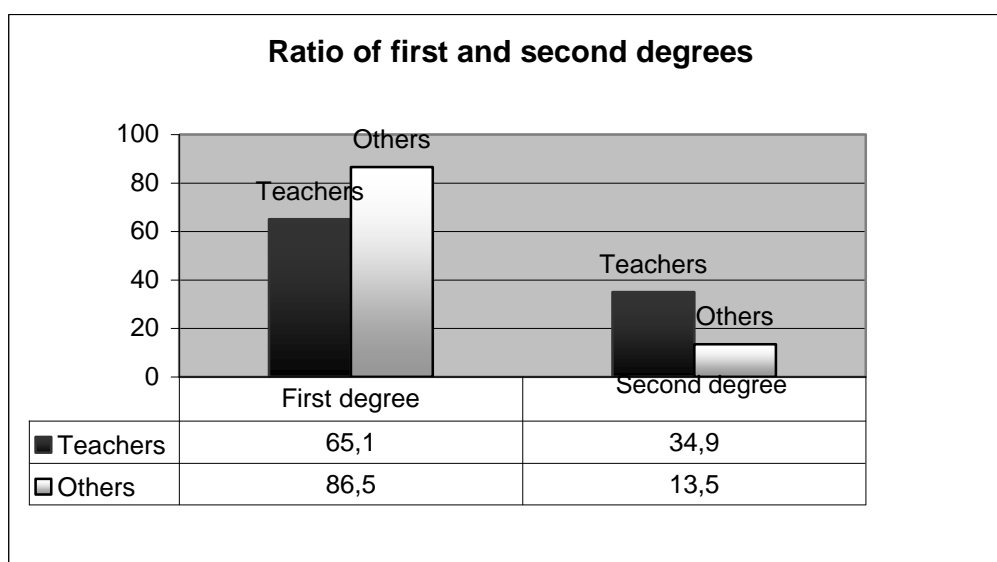


Table 3.

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

It should be noted, however, that success in studies completed earlier in higher education does not influence later aspirations for further learning; the gender of the interviewee has a greater effect on this question. Teachers are more successful than the average: more than three quarters of them (73.8 per cent) enrol with motivation and finish each course in time; considering the whole of the sample this is true only for two-thirds (63.7 per cent) of the sample.

Educational aspirations and career paths

Taking aspirations for further learning into consideration, both genders wish to take part in company training and professional development courses with roughly the same ratio. Planned enrolment on master's degree courses (one tenth of those interviewed) is also regardless of gender. However, the influencing factor of gender is already visible within PhD courses: 5.3 per cent of men and only 3.3 per cent of women think that they wish to take these courses. This does not seem to be in accordance with the actual data concerning education: in both 2007 and 2008 the rate of women and men among PhD students was roughly 50 per cent³; the only differences were due to horizontal segregation. That is, the rate of women in informatics studies was only one tenth, and it is the complete opposite in the case of educational sciences, where 77.6 per cent of the students were women.

If we only look at the aspirations of teachers, we may find that slightly less than the average number plan to take part in company training courses, and slightly more seek to be involved in teacher development courses. There are no differences concerning master's degree courses: one tenth of those asked think that they would like to undertake further study. At the same time, PhD studies would only be chosen by 2.2 per cent as opposed to the 4.3 per cent of the whole sample.

The rates of the genders and the distinction according to the masculine-feminine dimension provide a unique picture of aspirations for further learning. Although women and men wish to take part in professional development and master's degree courses at the same rates, it is men who have a tendency to acquire a master's degree and enrol on special

³ Data source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office yearbook "Women and men in Hungary 2008" (KSH: "Nők és férfiak Magyarországon 2008")

development courses. Although relatively few think of attending PhD courses, even larger male dominance can be seen here: 5.8 per cent plan to acquire a PhD degree as opposed to 1.3 per cent of the women. This is not influenced by the number of degrees one has at that time: two-thirds of those who have just gained their first degree plan to complete postgraduate studies. What is important, however, is whether the course the given person has completed is considered to be feminine or masculine: 80 per cent of those planning PhD studies come from the engineering and natural science fields, and those who graduated in feminine studies – especially social educators and kindergarten teachers – prefer postgraduate specialization programs.

Teachers' aspirations for further learning according to gender (%)

	Yes		No	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Master's degree courses	11.6	8.3	88.4	91.7
PhD courses	5.8	1.3	94.2	98.7

Significance in the case of PhD courses = 0.001

Table 2.

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

There is only one aspect that has significant influence on finding a job that suits one's qualifications, namely, whether one has just completed one's first (bachelor's) degree or has already acquired one's second degree. Two-thirds of those completing undergraduate courses and 80 per cent of those gaining their second degree found the ideal workplace; the rates and numbers are regardless of gender and courses.

Opinions on the importance of the ability to interact with others (%)

	Important	Not important
From teachers training	90.8	9.2
Not from teachers training	86.7	13.3

Chi-squared = 0.002

Table 3

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

Most of the interviewed persons hold both masculine values (ability to work alone, achieving set aims) and feminine values (communication skills, social skills, interacting with others, group work) to be important in their current workplace, and in this respect there is no significant difference between the genders considering either the teachers or the whole of the sample. This "harmony" may also be due to the fact that the persons interviewed might deem important all of the characteristics listed (and described by the employers as essential). At the same time, teachers – regardless of their gender or field of science – significantly find the presence of "ability to interact with others and maintain communication" more important than the others asked.

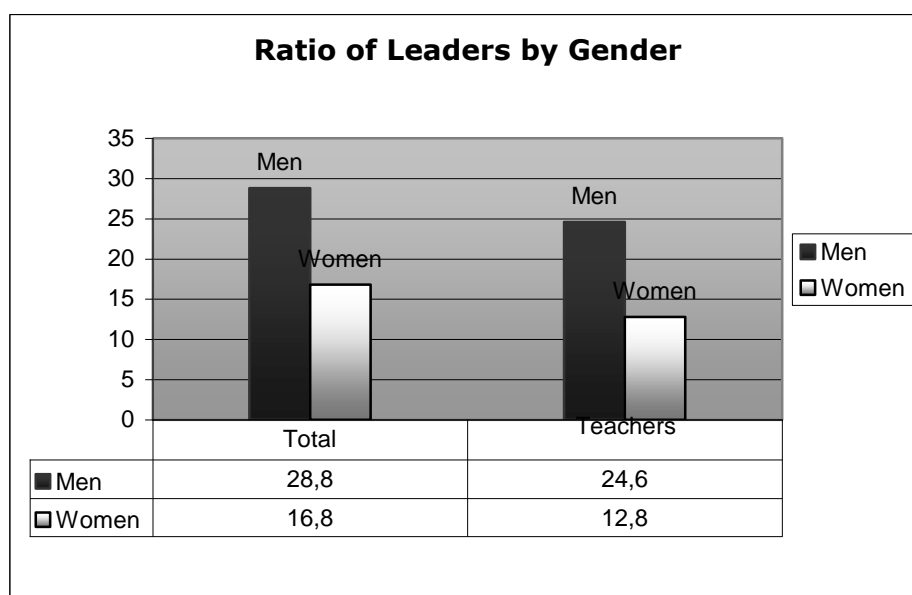


Table 4.

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

The phenomenon of the glass ceiling clearly influences the acquisition of leadership positions. Taking the whole of the sample, a slightly higher rate (22.8 per cent) work in leadership positions than among teachers (18.7 per cent). Due to the characteristics of the teaching profession, it is not usual to have this kind of promotion three years after graduation; therefore, almost half of the leaders are people who have acquired their second degree (master's degree), as opposed to the whole sample, where there was no clear connection between the number of degrees and promotion. At the same time, men are over-represented among those in leadership positions both within the teacher group and within the whole sample, and regarding teachers, the number of male leaders is twice of the number of female ones, which confirms the presence of the glass elevator in this field.

Rate of teachers in leadership positions, distributed by gender (%)

	Men	Women
Leader	24.6	12.8
Employee	70.3	81.7
Other	5.1	5.4

Chi-squared = 0.006

Table 4.

Source: "Graduate Follow-up Research 2010" data

Conclusion

According to the above it can be stated that the teaching profession, already highly feminized in itself, shows clearly "feminine" characteristics: students choosing this profession need to have better achievements and performance, which is shown also by the higher rates of second degrees (master's degrees) and the greater successes in learning. Despite better performance, teachers remain below the average regarding their aspirations and workplace positions: fewer plan to enrol for PhD studies, and there are fewer among them in leadership

positions; furthermore, they need master's degrees more than anticipated in order to receive promotions.

The choice of profession only partially reflects the horizontal segregation apparent in education and on the job market: women often choose studies traditionally assumed to be masculine, and men can also be found in professions thought to be feminine, but the rate is considerably lower, only 8.4 per cent. The masculine-feminine dimension seems to be more influential on plans for further learning than gender: those graduating in feminine studies prefer postgraduate specialization programs, while those graduating in masculine courses are more likely to attend postgraduate courses.

Success or failure in acquiring jobs – contrary to the anticipated results – does not depend on gender; what is decisive in this respect is the number of qualifications or degrees. Similarly, the characteristics people assume to be important regarding the job in question do not depend on gender either; at the same time – compared to the whole of the sample – the ability to interact with others is significantly more important for teachers, which may be connected with the caring attitude expected from them. However, men within the teaching profession have much better chances to acquire leadership positions than women, regardless of possessing one degree or several; this confirms the results anticipated based on research conducted earlier.

The conclusion seems to be that equal demands are only experienced by those female teachers who have chosen a feminine profession within a field of sciences. Because of the "token" position of men, their gender alone seems to be enough for them to become leaders; at the same time they face higher expectations and the importance of a person-centred way of thinking which is characteristic of the teaching profession as a whole. The aspirations of women choosing masculine fields of study are similar to men's, although – because of their gender – their prospects for promotion are considerably less. The question regarding the consequences of these situations for the whole of the education system is yet to be answered.

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