

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN CAREER PLANNING AMONG YOUNG ADULTS



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ABSTRACT

Gender equality is the state where both men and women get equal opportunities, rights and status. Our exploratory research focuses on the situation in Armenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Unlike usual researches where traditionally countries from the West and East of Europe are investigated our exploratory research focuses on countries from the Eastern Block. These countries support gender equality in the labor market; however, they contribute in strengthening the traditional family model with the length of parental leave. Based on our exploratory research we can identify patterns showing that the opinion of society about the distribution of gender roles has undergone changes in these post-socialist countries. In general, there is a common understanding about equal rights of men and women. But still, in all investigated countries, there are “traditionally” thinking people, who tend to keep the strict role-distribution of gender in child upbringing, participation of women in political and managerial matters. The results of our exploratory research can guide the human resource departments and organizations who deal with labor market in their professional orientation activities among younger generation and be a base for a future large sample research to prove the identified patterns highlighted after analyzing the sample used by the authors.

KEY WORDS

career, education, gender equality, labor market, parental leave

JEL CODES

J16, J28, J71

1 INTRODUCTION AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Gender in the Labor Market

Women's education increased significantly at the end of the 20th century. It has reached such a level that it has become possible to erase the difference between the level of education of men and women, both in Western and Eastern countries, not excluding China (Jiang, 2020). Nevertheless, many countries struggle with the so-called gender pay gap (Geisberger and Glaser, 2017; Fuchs, 2017) and the lack of women in leadership positions.

One of the reasons for these facts is that women choose different fields of study and career paths. Among the numerous reasons for gender-differentiated choice of study and professional direction, the link to considerations of future career and family life is often mentioned (Gabay-Egozi et al., 2015). The connection of career choice to future family life is significantly more often represented by women (Bass, 2015; Redman et al., 1994; Hägglund and Lörz, 2020). Bass (2015) notes that women in their research sample were more likely to be willing to change careers in order to take care of their family. Men were much less likely to consider parenthood in their career plans.

In post-socialist states, before the transition to a market economy, women were led to full employment. In addition to the high rate of full-time employment of women in these countries, high demands were placed on women in the area of family and household care (Čermáková, 1995). In contrast, in Western countries, since the 1960s, there has been a push for a more balanced involvement of men and women in domestic and family duties and a strengthening of gender equality in the labor market in the form of the introduction of flexible working hours and the motivation of men to share parental leave (Newell and Reilly, 2001). In the course of the transformation of post-socialist countries since the 1990s, there has often been a shift away from egalitarianism, an extension of parental leave taken mostly by women, and a limitation

of childcare services up to the age of three (Hašková and Saxonberg, 2016). The process of promoting gender equality in the countries of Western Europe, the USA and Australia on the one hand, and in post-socialist countries on the other hand, was therefore historically initiated at different times and under different socio-economic conditions. However, in both of these worlds, the traditional family model is considered to be a division of roles between men and women in the sense that the woman takes care of the household and the family, while the man is the breadwinner providing the family's financial resources (Larsen and Long, 1988; Dicke et al., 2019; Pospíšilová et al., 2020). Our research focuses on the situation in four post-socialist countries – Armenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Three of the selected countries are located in Central Europe and have a similar sociological, historical and political development, while one of the investigated countries (Armenia) is located on the border between Europe and Asia and has in common with the other countries, from a historical point of view, that it was significantly influenced by the Soviet Union and that it is a Christian country. Currently, there is significant support for cooperation between the so-called Visegrad countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia) and the countries of the so-called Eastern Partnership – these are Visegrad + grant programs. It is interesting and desirable to find out to what extent the given countries agree on gender issues through the prism of the career direction of young people. These are countries where government supports gender equality in the labor market, but at the same time contributes to strengthening the traditional family model with the length of parental leave, which is among the longest in the world. Parental leave in these countries is mostly taken by women, although it is also legally possible for men. According to the Raub et al. (2018) study, most women in OECD countries return to the labor market

only at the end of parental leave. In the same study, it is further stated that if parental leave lasts more than 6 months, there is a negative effect on the wage level and career seniority of women, especially among highly qualified employed women. However, the finding that longer parental leave has a positive effect on children's morbidity and the creation of a child's bond with the family is also important.

1.2 Parental Leave in the Surveyed Countries

In Armenia, parents have the opportunity to take parental leave until the child is three years old (Labour Code of the Republic of Armenia, 2004). Parents receive parental allowance up to two years and it is 28,600 AMD per month (about 60–70 EUR).

In the Czech Republic, parents can use parental leave until the child is three years old, while they can draw parental allowance until the child is four years old. In the first 28 weeks of parenthood, the caring parent receives a social insurance benefit, which depends on the amount of his/her income to date – it is about 70 percent of the income up to a maximum of 47,700 CZK per month (about 1,900 EUR). Regardless of participation in social insurance, parents receive parental allowance 300,000 CZK (about 12,205 EUR). From this amount of money, they draw a monthly parental allowance. The speed at which the specified amount of money is used up is chosen by the parents themselves – they can quickly use it up within at least 6 months or they can gradually use it up to a maximum of 4 years of the child's age (Act on State Social Support, 1995). Most often, parents use up the parental allowance within three years of the child's age (ČSÚ, 2019). It means parents get usually 9,700 CZK per month (about 395 EUR).

In Hungary, parental leave lasts up to three years of the child's age. Parents receive the parental allowance up to three years of the child's age. Up to two years it is called GYED which is 70 percent of previous earnings, up to a maximum of 225,288 HUF per month (about 567 EUR). GYED is only for insured parents. Up to three years of child's age it is called

GYES. GYES is 28,500 HUF (about 72 EUR) per month (Act on the Labor Code, 2012).

In Slovakia, parental leave lasts up to three years of the child's age. Parents receive the parental allowance up to three years of the child's age, when the child is healthy. In the first 34 weeks of parenthood, the caring parent receives a social insurance benefit, which depends on the amount of his/her income to date – it is about 75 percent of the income up to a maximum of about 1,800 EUR. Regardless of participation in social insurance, parents receive parental allowance. The amount of this contribution is 270–370 EUR per month according to the definition of conditions in Act on Parental Benefits (2009).

1.3 Gender and Fields of Career

The long duration of parental leave, which is taken mainly by women, significantly contributes to gender inequality both in households and in the labor market. As mentioned above, another reason for gender inequality in the labor market is that women choose different fields of study and career paths. The lower representation of women is manifested in the fields of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). On the contrary, a higher representation of women can be observed in fields focused on language, art and culture. The fields of law, economics and sociology show a balanced representation of men and women (Hägglund and Lörz, 2020). Many scientific studies have investigated the reasons why the unequal involvement of women and men in different fields occur and several theories describing the way of field choice. These include the Rational Choice Model, Rational Choice Theory, Breen and Goldthorpe's Model, Structural Factor of Becker, Habitus Theory, The Concept of Creative Society and many others (Baltrėnas et al., 2015; Barone et al., 2019; Breen and Goldthorpe, 1997; Charles and Bradley, 2002, 2009; Correll, 2001; Gabay-Egozi et al., 2010, 2015; Haller, 2001; Glaesser and Cooper, 2014; Johnson, 1999; Legewie and DiPrete, 2014; Lörz et al., 2011; Mann and DiPrete, 2013; Morgan et al., 2013; Ochsenfeld,

2016). As it becomes clear, there are several reasons for the different genders to choose the field of study and career direction. Among the numerous reasons for gender-differentiated choice of study and professional direction, the link to considerations of future career and family life is often mentioned (Gabay-Egozi et al., 2015).

As it was mentioned above, the connection of career choice to future family life is significantly more often represented by women (Bass, 2015; Redman et al., 1994; Hägglund and Lörz, 2020). Bass (2015) bases her claim on research conducted in the USA. Redman et al. (1994) investigated the choice of medical practice, medical field among men and women medical students. They found that women significantly more often choose general fields of medicine, which allow them to be more flexible in their working life (shorter working hours, flexible working hours). Redman et al. (1994) conducted their research in Australia. In their research, Hägglund and Lörz (2020) confirmed that among students who chose to study social sciences and humanities, the justification for the choice of the importance of family is more evident in women, while this justification was not demonstrated in men. For students of other fields, the choice was not influenced by the relationship to the importance of the family. Likewise, Waaijer et al. (2016) when examining PhD students in the Netherlands they concluded that women and men choose different fields of study. Women are rarely found in engineering and science majors. On the contrary, a significantly larger number of PhD students among women, they want to work part-time. Hägglund and Lörz (2020) conducted their research in Germany. Professional studies from the USA confirm that women are disadvantaged in postgraduate studies and academic careers with regard to combining work and motherhood (Thébaud and Taylor, 2021). It is also often mentioned in the US literature that motherhood disadvantages women in employment, while fatherhood brings bonuses to men (Luhr, 2020). According to research conducted in Great Britain, women prefer jobs that allow them flexible working hours and good training during apprenticeships,

while men prefer jobs with high pay and career advancement opportunities (Sutherland, 2012). Flexible working hours are important to balance parenthood and career. In the Spanish literature, it is stated that women and men have different goals that they want to achieve in their lives and careers (Fernández et al., 2006), by which it is understood that women more often than men consider the usefulness of work in the sense of improving the quality of life as their mission. The result of research conducted across 34 different countries is that the behavior of women and men in the division of employment and unpaid work is determined both by family policy and by the prevailing cultural practices of families and society (Çineli, 2022). Jung and Takeuchi (2016) even state that men and women create different mechanisms for the perception of career success, which implies a different approach in career planning. On the other hand, the latest studies (Ernst & Young, 2018; Arar and Öneren, 2018; Fodor and Jäckel, 2018; Hampton and Welsh, 2019; Bohdziewicz, 2016) focused on investigating behavior and planning among the young generation Z, ie. people born in the period 1995–2012, it is found that gender differences in the field of career choice are almost disappearing. Both women and men from generation Z expect excellent financial remuneration from their careers and demand flexible working hours and the possibility of working from home, which will allow them to pursue personal interests. Our research is focused on young adults (a large proportion of the interviewees belonged to generation Z), and therefore it will be interesting to observe whether the choice of career direction will also be similar for men and women. Although studies focused on generation Z show similar career expectations of young men and women, Grow and Yang (2018) state that there is a difference in career expectations between young men and women in many countries – women, unlike men, expect gender discrimination in the workplace.

As stated by the above-mentioned literary sources, the gender-differential choice of study field and career direction with regard to planned or existing parenthood is confirmed by research

from many countries. This gender difference is related to how the roles of men and women in families are perceived in individual countries. A comparison of how the choice of career is influenced by parenthood in the studied post-socialist countries Armenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia is not yet available in the professional literature. The first research question is: What is the opinion of the roles of men and women in families caring for young children in the countries studied? The second research question is: In the studied countries, is the choice of professional direction of young adults influenced by considerations about future parenthood more for women or for men?

By answering the research questions, feminine research in post-socialist countries will be

expanded which is important for the global level of knowledge. Gender equality in the surveyed countries is one of the important topics that the government of all the surveyed countries is committed to achieve. The answers to the research questions will be essential both for understanding the ideas of young adults and the subsequent setting of the communication of gender issues. They will also help to understand the similarities/differences of the opinions of young adults in regions which have gone through very different historical developments. As for their economic systems in the past three decades: they have jointly governed the principles of the market economy and aim at establishing gender equality in the labor market.

2 METHODS AND DATA

In terms of legitimating methodological procedures, the following part of our study is dedicated to description of the research methodology carried out by the authors.

2.1 Research Design

In the framework of data collection, we used the design of quantitative research using one of the most common quantitative methods – questionnaire. Průcha (2014) explains that quantitative research has a well-defined subject matter of research, and it is important to identify hypotheses at the beginning of research. Quantitative research has well-formulated conclusions based on quantitative data.

Considering that the basic unit of our research is an individual, measurement of variables in a group of people and looking at the relationship between them become the main purpose (Punch, 2008). The standard procedure for such research is to determine the research problem; formulate hypotheses; test (verify) hypotheses; draw conclusions and present them (Chráska, 2007). We have used this procedure in carrying out our research.

In addition to the standard breakdown of research into quantitative and qualitative, we also recognize the categorization into basic, applied, experimental and evaluation (OECD, 1994). Based on the description of each category, we characterize our research as basic type, since such research represents experimental or theoretical work, which is primarily aimed at acquiring new knowledge about the nature of the phenomenon and new observable facts. Such detection will be provisionally free of specific application and immediate use. Basic research analyses characteristics, structures and relationships to formulate and test hypotheses, laws or theories (OECD, 1994).

In view of the above characteristics of quantitative and basic research, we proceeded in terms of formulating the research problem, objective and hypotheses.

2.2 Research Problem

The research problem was formulated, based on our theoretical analysis (face-to-face meetings, literature, internet articles) in Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Armenia. We also respected the principles of the formulation

of research problem: the problem should be formulated specifically, unambiguously and in the form of a question; the problem must imply the possibility of empirical authentication; the problem should reflect the relationship between two or more variables (Chráska, 2007, p. 17).

Based on the theoretical backgrounds described in the previous chapter and respect for the methodological principles of the research problem formulation, we have come to the establishment of a specific research problem: On the basis of which criteria do young adults prepare for a combination of future marriage, parenthood and career?

2.3 Research Objective and Hypotheses

In order to be able to obtain an answer to the research problem we identified and described the real situation, the next step was to set the goal of the research and, consequently,

the hypotheses that we wanted to verify with research.

The main objective of our research is: to identify the current state and criteria for preparing young adults for the combination of future marriage and parenthood with careers in our selected countries – Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Armenia. As for the nations in the sample, unlike previous comparative research, we did not compare West to East, but rather four of the former socialist countries in the East. Therefore, the results are certainly novel, as no similar comparison has been done before in this topic.

Based on our research objective the following research hypothesis are generated:

- H₁: There is a significant difference in the family maintenance beliefs of families with young children related to gender and nationality of the surveyed countries.
- H₂: The choice of employment is influenced by the planning of future parenthood and marriage more for women than for men.

3 METHODOLOGY AND DATA

We used a questionnaire method for data collection as it is time-saving and adapted to collect data from several respondents in a short time.

After considering all methodological procedures, as well as topics of study and research, we confirmed the selection of the questionnaire to be suitable and effective for obtaining the required data. The designed questionnaire contains closed questions that are thematically focused precisely on obtaining information about preparing young adults for future marriage and parenthood and the combination of marriage and parenthood with their careers.

In total, the questionnaire contains 24 questions, divided into two groups: a) questions for finding basic demographic data (age, gender, educational attainment, residence, nationality and marital status); b) issues related to the preparation for future marriage and parenthood and the link to an individual's career. The questionnaire includes different types of questions:

showing agreement or disagreement; multiple choice; indication of given responses.

The formulated questionnaire of our research contains carefully formulated questions that are logically ranked in terms of the objective of the research. Before launching the research, we validated the questionnaire among focus groups in all participating countries. Based on the pre-tested results we improved the questionnaire and developed the final version.

As part of the analysis of the obtained data from the questionnaires, we used statistical processing through the program SPSS version 26. We used various methods for data analysis. Descriptive analysis as crosstab was used for the presentation of composition of research sample and for the response analysis by gender and nationality. We used the variance analysis to determine significant differences in response analysis by gender, and Tukey's post hoc test was used for testing the significant differences for nationalities and education levels.

As can be seen from the above chapters, the questionnaire inquiry was carried out in several countries. Specifically, these were the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Armenia. In each country, the questionnaire was distributed to a selected sample of respondents. The selection of the sample was intentional and the respondents were selected on the basis of predetermined criteria.

The respondents were primarily university students of the concerned countries. At the same time, the questionnaire was also distributed via social networks asking for the questionnaire to be shared between family members and friends of respondents who meet the above criteria.

We present the total composition of the research sample in Tab. 1.

Tab. 1: Composition of the research sample by country and gender after data cleansing

Country	Men	Women	Total
Armenia	45	114	159
Czech Republic	44	155	199
Hungary	55	128	183
Slovakia	38	153	191
Total	182	550	732

4 RESULTS

Based on the results from the data collected in the exploratory research, the following patterns were observed.

H₁: There is a significant difference in the family maintenance beliefs of families with young children by gender and by the nationality of the surveyed countries.

To test the first hypothesis, we analyzed the six questions of the questionnaire, which are shown in Fig. 1. Taking into account the total number of respondents (732), it can be immediately seen that the agreement with the six questions ranges from 134 (18.3 percent) to 274 (37.4 percent): the lowest level of agreement was with the question “It is more important for a woman to help build her husband’s career than her own”, while the highest level of agreement was with the question “A child aged

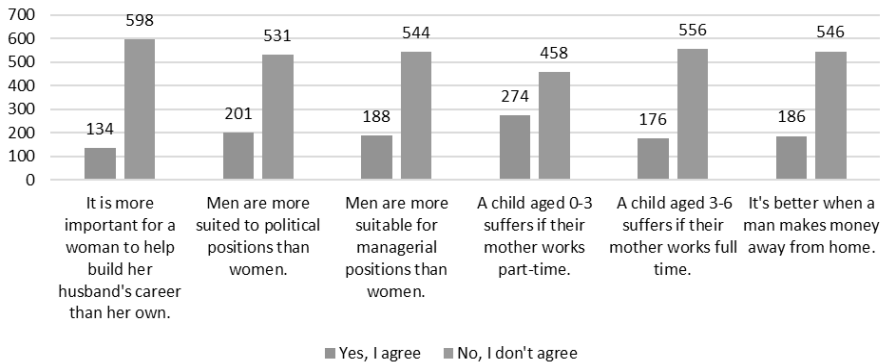
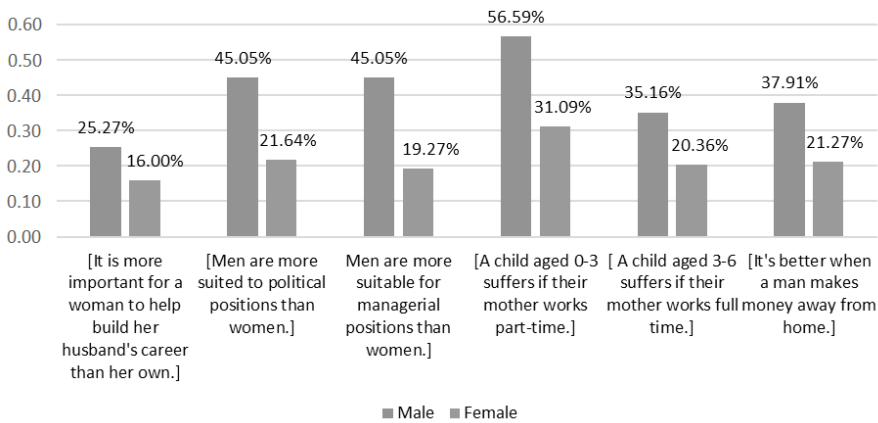
Our aim was to create a relatively homogeneous and equally distributed research sample, about 200 respondents from each country, so that we could also compare the data obtained among countries. The aim of this exploratory study, conducted on a relatively small sample size, was to use the results to establish the basis for a subsequent, larger-scale study on a similar topic.

The research was done taking into account the ethical norms, which are connected to the implementation of questionnaire surveys. The main aim of the research and the types of data to be collected were introduced to the respondents the during the research. All participants were informed, that the data were anonymous and the results will be summarized and published in the article.

0–3 suffers if their mother works part-time”. Agreement with the six questions surveyed averaged 26.4 percent. The group of those who agreed was labelled Traditional, while the group of those who disagreed was labelled Modern.

The gender distribution of all respondents’ answers in terms of agreement is shown in Fig. 2. The statement “It is more important for a woman to help build her husband’s career than her own” was agreed by 25.27 percent of all men respondents and 16.00 percent of all women respondents, showing a 61:39 ratio of men to women in the Traditional Values group.

In response to the statement “Men are more suited to political positions than women”, it is striking that 45.05 percent of all men and only 21.64 percent of women hold this view, so that the men side dominates over the women

Fig. 1: Distribution of responses ($n = 732$)Fig. 2: Percentage agreeing with the statement by gender based on the total sample ($n = 732$)

side in the traditional persuasion by a ratio of 68:32. For the next question – “Men are more suitable for managerial positions than women” – the proportions (70:30): more men than women agree with this statement: 45.05 percent of all men respondents agree with this statement, compared to 19.27 percent of women. The statement “A child aged 0–3 suffers if their mother works part-time” was agreed by 56.59 percent of men and 31.09 percent of women. Both men and women agreement with this question was the highest of the six questions. Among those who agreed, men had a higher proportion of agreement, 65:35. (Note that only part-time, not full-time, was included in the question.) For the question on children as young as preschool age – “A child aged 3–6 suffers if their mother works full time” – 35.16 percent of men and 20.36 percent of women

think the statement is true, a ratio of 63:37, again confirming the more traditional view of the men. The statement “It’s better when a man makes money away from home” is held by 37.91 percent of men respondents, compared to only 21.27 percent of women respondents, giving a 64:36 ratio of traditionalists in favor of men.

Overall, taking into account the exploratory research sample ($n = 732$), the proportion of men who agree with the above mentioned six statements, i.e., those who hold Traditional values, is almost double that of the women.

In the following, we analyze the responses of the Traditional group for the four countries (Armenia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary) surveyed and their gender distribution, focusing on significance (Tab. 2).

“It is more important for a woman to help build her husband’s career than her own”

Tab. 2: Respondents agreeing with the statement by gender and nationality

		Means, means differences and <i>p</i> -values of the two-samples <i>t</i> -tests					
Nationality		"It is more important for a woman to help build husband's career than her own."	"Men are more suited to political positions than women."	"Men are more suitable for managerial positions than women."	"A child aged 0-3 suffers if their mother works part-time."	"A child aged 3-6 suffers if their mother works full-time."	"It's better when a man makes money away from home."
Armenian	Men	0.49	0.58	0.56	0.71	0.69	0.53
	Women	0.37	0.38	0.32	0.43	0.48	0.24
	Difference	0.12	0.20	0.23	0.28	0.21	0.30
	Sig.	0.165	0.021	0.007	0.001	0.019	0.000
Czech	Men	0.11	0.30	0.32	0.50	0.09	0.32
	Women	0.11	0.14	0.15	0.23	0.05	0.27
	Difference	0.00	0.16	0.17	0.27	0.05	0.05
	Sig.	0.941	0.013	0.010	0.001	0.243	0.541
Hungarian	Men	0.24	0.53	0.56	0.62	0.45	0.49
	Women	0.13	0.26	0.18	0.36	0.29	0.25
	Difference	0.11	0.27	0.38	0.26	0.17	0.24
	Sig.	0.059	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.030	0.001
Slovakian	Men	0.16	0.37	0.32	0.39	0.11	0.11
	Women	0.08	0.14	0.15	0.26	0.08	0.10
	Difference	0.07	0.22	0.17	0.13	0.02	0.00
	Sig.	0.181	0.001	0.018	0.105	0.696	0.990

does not show a significant difference between men and women respondents in any of the countries studied, but when examining the actual difference found between the men and women values we can see that there is actually no difference in the Czech values and there is a tiny but not significant difference in the other nations' values. The statement "Men are more suited to political positions than women" shows significant differences by gender for all four countries: Hungarian ($d = 0.27, p < 0.000$), Slovak ($d = 0.22, p = 0.001$), Czech ($d = 0.16, p = 0.013$) and Armenian ($d = 0.20, p = 0.021$) in order. Also significant differences are detected in all four countries for the statement "Men are more suitable for managerial positions than women", but the order is different: Hungarian ($d = 0.38, p < 0.000$), Armenian ($d = 0.23, p = 0.007$), Czech ($d = 0.17, p = 0.010$) and Slovak ($d = 0.17, p = 0.018$). There are significant differences in the values for the statement "A child aged 0-3 suffers if their mother works part-time" by genders in three

countries (Armenia, Czech Republic, Hungary) and interestingly all three have nearly the same difference ($d_{Ar} = 0.28, d_{Cz} = 0.27, d_{Hu} = 0.26, p = 0.001$), with no significant difference in Slovakia. The responses to the question "A child aged 3-6 suffers if their mother works full time" show that there is a significant difference between the opinions of Armenian ($d = 0.21, p = 0.019$) and Hungarian ($d = 0.17, p = 0.030$) men and women, while no significant difference is found for Czechs and Slovaks. Similar to the previous one, after aggregating the opinions on "It's better when a man makes money away from home", we see a significant difference for the Armenian ($d = 0.30, p < 0.000$) and Hungarian ($d = 0.24, p = 0.001$) responses.

When comparing countries, based on the exploratory research sample, it can be seen that for the six statements examined, Armenia and Hungary produced significant differences in the same five cases, while Czech respondents produced significant differences in three cases and Slovak respondents in two cases.

Tab. 3: Distribution of opinions by gender and nationality

		Percentage response											
Nationality		“It is more important for a woman to help build husband’s career than her own.”		“Men are more suited to political positions than women.”		“Men are more suitable for managerial positions than women.”		“A child aged 0–3 suffers if their mother works part-time.”		“A child aged 3–6 suffers if their mother works full-time.”		“It’s better when a man makes money away from home.”	
		No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Armenian	Men	51.1	48.9	42.2	57.8	44.4	55.6	28.9	71.1	31.1	68.9	46.7	53.3
	Women	63.2	36.8	62.3	37.7	67.5	32.5	57.0	43.0	51.8	48.2	76.3	23.7
Czech	Men	88.6	11.4	70.5	29.5	68.2	31.8	50.0	50.0	90.9	9.1	68.2	31.8
	Women	89.0	11.0	86.5	13.5	85.2	14.8	76.8	23.2	95.5	4.5	72.9	27.1
Hungarian	Men	76.4	23.6	47.3	52.7	43.6	56.4	38.2	61.8	54.5	45.5	50.9	49.1
	Women	87.5	12.5	74.2	25.8	82.0	18.0	64.1	35.9	71.1	28.9	75.0	25.0
Slovakian	Men	84.2	15.8	63.2	36.8	68.4	31.6	60.5	39.5	89.5	10.5	89.5	10.5
	Women	91.5	8.5	85.6	14.4	85.0	15.0	73.9	26.1	91.5	8.5	89.5	10.5

To further examine the responses to confirm the hypothesis, we also wanted to see how agreement and disagreement with each statement varied by country and gender (Tab. 3).

Those agreeing with the statement “It is more important for a woman to help build her husband’s career than her own”, i.e., those with traditional values, are Armenian men (48.9 percent), Armenian women (36.8 percent), Hungarian men (23.6 percent) and Slovak men (15.8 percent). The least likely to be considered as having traditional values are Slovak women respondents (8.5 percent). The statement “Men are more suited to political positions than women” is represented by Armenian (57.8 percent) and Hungarian (52.7 percent) men, Armenian women (37.7 percent), Slovak (36.8 percent) and Czech (29.5 percent). Czech (13.5 percent) and Slovak (14.4 percent) women agree the least. The statement “Men are more suitable for managerial positions than women” is most strongly agreed by Hungarian (56.4 percent) and Armenian (55.6 percent) men, while Armenian women respondents (32.5 percent) and Czech and Slovak men agree at 31.8 percent and 31.6 percent respectively. Czech and Slovak women are the least sympathetic to this statement, with 14.8 percent and 15.00 percent respectively. The statement “A child aged 0–3 suffers if their mother works part-time”, as mentioned above, was agreed

with most by Armenian (71.0 percent), Hungarian (61.8 percent) and Czech (50.00 percent) men and Armenian women (43.00 percent), while the figures for Czech (23.2 percent) and Slovak (26.1 percent) women were much lower. Responses to the statement “A child aged 3–6 suffers if their mother works full time” show the most extreme results: while the scores of Czechs (women: 4.5 percent, men: 9.1 percent) and Slovaks (women: 8.5 percent, men: 10.5 percent) show a tendency to disagree, the scores of Armenians (men: 68.9 percent women: 48.2 percent, and Hungarians (men: 45.5 percent, women: 28.9 percent) are more in agreement. In the “It’s better when a man makes money away from home” agreement, Armenian and Hungarian men have high scores (53.3 percent and 49.1 percent respectively), followed by Czech men at 31.8 percent. Both Slovak men and women show a 10.5 percent agreement.

The set of Traditional values was further tested and the Tukey’s post hoc test for analysis of variance revealed the following (Fig. 3):

Significant differences were found between the groups marked with different letters. “It is more important for a woman to help build her husband’s career than her own” statement resulted in two main groups: there is a significant difference between the Slovak-Czech-Hungarian (letter a) and the Armenian (b) values. Two groups also emerged for “Men are more suited

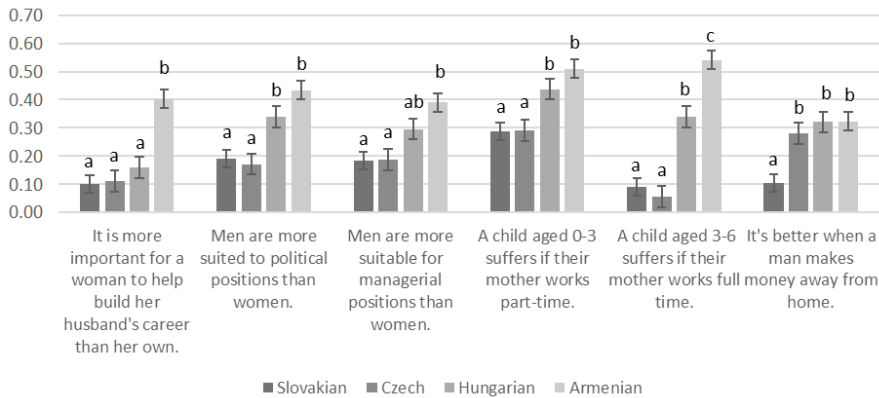


Fig. 3: Tukey's post hoc test for analysis of variance

to political positions than women”: one with similarities between the Slovak and Czech scores and the other with similarities between the Hungarian and Armenian scores, with a significant difference between the two groups. The group structure of the statement “Men are more suitable for managerial positions than women” shows an interesting picture: there is a significant difference between the Slovak-Czech and Armenian scores, while the Hungarian scores are similar to both groups. The analysis of the question “A child aged 0–3 suffers if their mother works part-time” separates two main groups for significant differences: one with Slovak and Czech respondents and the other with Hungarian and Armenian respondents. The statement “A child aged 3–6 suffers if their mother works full time” was divisive, with three groups emerging: the Slovak-Czech group (a) showed significant differences with both the Hungarian (b) and Armenian (c) groups. Furthermore, the Hungarian (b) and Armenian (c) opinions also differ significantly. In the case of the statement “It’s better when a man makes money away from home”, significance is found between the Czech-Hungarian-Armenian values and the Slovakian values.

Based on the exploratory research data results, it can be stated that the first hypothesis was confirmed following the variance analysis tests for the four countries studied and the gender differences in opinion.

H₂: The choice of employment is influenced by the planning of future parenthood and marriage more for women than for men.

Our hypothesis focuses on conscious career choice, i.e., that young people choose a profession and a job with the concept of family with children as a priority. 45 percent of respondents did not consider family at all when deciding on a career and were only influenced by the need to achieve their dreams. However, it can also be seen that the rest of the respondents (except for 1 percent who could not answer the question) were more or less concerned with the idea of starting or maintaining their own family.

Now let’s see to what extent the 54 percent of the total sample had the idea of their own family in mind: 8 percent said they would completely subordinate their career to starting their own family and parenthood. Twice as many people, 16 percent, think that being a parent or about to be a parent has only a small effect on their choice of job or career. A relatively high number of people, 30 percent of the sample, think they can balance work and parenthood without damaging either side.

In fact, the results of the exploratory research sample confirm that having a career and a good job is incredibly important for this generation. And having a family of their own, including parenthood, seems to come after a career.

Looking further at the sample by gender, there is no significant relationship between men and women responses (Tab. 4). Tested using variance analysis, Independent Sample *T*-test.

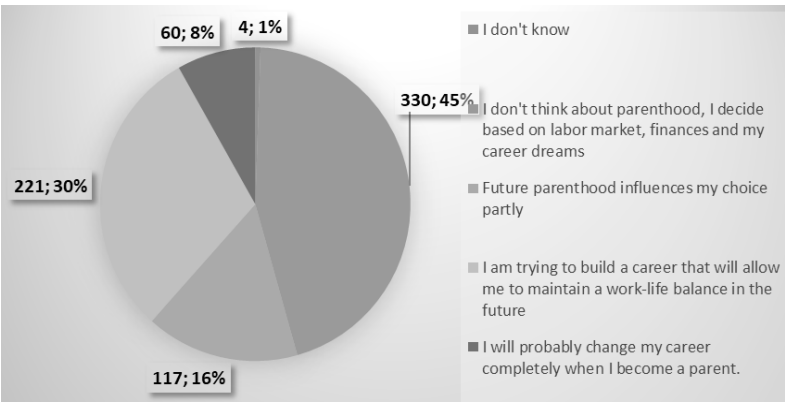


Fig. 4: To what extent was your choice of field of study influenced by considerations about future parenthood? ($n = 732$)

Tab. 4: To what extent is your current career choice influenced by future parenthood?

Gender	Means, means differences and p -values of the two-samples t -tests
Men	1.91
Women	2.04
Difference	-0.13
p -value	0.149

When tested the men/women responses by each country separately, there was a significant difference between the values in the Czech responses, the women indicated that their career choice was more influenced by their future adulthood than the men ($d = 0.41$, $p = 0.018$). However, in the other three countries, the difference between men and women responses is subtle.

Tab. 5: To what extent is your current career choice influenced by future parenthood?

Means, means differences and p -values of the two-samples t -tests				
Gender	Armenia	Czech Republic	Hungary	Slovakia
Men	2.44	1.55	1.84	1.79
Women	2.28	1.95	2.09	1.89
Difference	0.16	-0.41	-0.26	-0.10
Sig.	0.397	0.018	0.110	0.603

It can be seen that of the four countries surveyed, Czech women respondents are the most conscious of preparing for parenthood compared to Czech men.

Four categories were created by educational attainment: high school, college/bachelor's degree, university/master's degree, and doctoral degree/PhD (Tab. 6). When the sample was examined by these categories, the following results were obtained: looking at the sample, there is no significant difference in education between prospective parenting roles as we would assume (e.g. the higher the education the bigger the difference).

Tab. 6: To what extent is your current career choice influenced by future parenthood?

Means for groups and p -values of the Tukey HSD test in homogeneous subsets			
Education	n	1	2
Secondary school	337	1.87	×
BA/BSc	187	2.08	2.08
MA/MSc	162	2.10	2.10
PhD	46	×	2.43
Sig.		0.317	0.053

Notes: Subset for $\alpha = 0.05$; uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 110.415; the group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

However, a Tukey's post hoc test was performed, which shows that there is a significant difference between high school education and PhD education on the perception of parenthood: namely, PhD holders take more into account prospective parenthood when choosing their career.

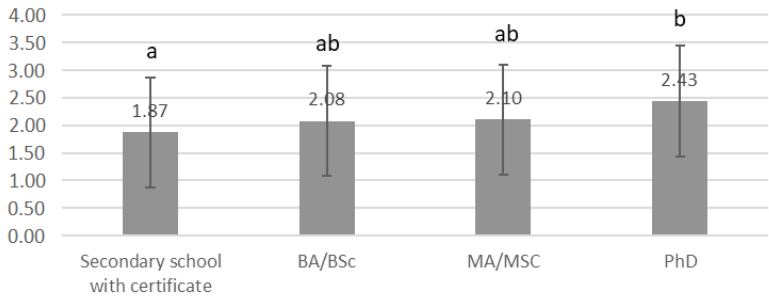


Fig. 5: Tukey's post hoc test, Perception of parenthood by education level, ($n = 732$)

We looked further with cross tabulation analysis: we also looked at educational attainment by gender. Tab. 7 and Fig. 6 show us the results. When looking at men and women with a secondary school education, it can be seen that women are more attentive and more conscious about choosing a career that puts their future family first than men, with a small difference ($d = 0.11$).

There is no difference among the scores of respondents with bachelor's degree, they are the same for both women and men. In case of master degree students, it can be seen that the values of women are higher than those of men, and as a result, it can be concluded that women with master's degree keep in mind future parenthood and the performance of related tasks when they choose a career or workplace. The difference between the values of the master's men and women answers is 0.21.

The biggest difference is clearly noticeable among those with the higher degree of education: the difference between the opinion values of men and women with PhD degree is 0.38. It follows that the parental involvement of women

with PhD degree is much stronger than that of men with a similar degree.

Overall, the higher the educational attainment of women, the more consciously they prepare for the role of their own family and parenthood, and consequently the more these options influence their career and job choices.

Tab. 7: To what extent is your current career choice influenced by future parenthood?

Education		Means and means differences
Secondary school	Men	1.79
	Women	1.90
	Difference	0.11
BA/BSc	Men	2.08
	Women	2.08
	Difference	0.00
MA/MSc	Men	1.95
	Women	2.15
	Difference	0.21
PhD	Men	2.19
	Women	2.57
	Difference	0.38

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Hypothesis 1

Ensuring equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women is one of the most important challenges of modern developed and developing countries. In political, social, economic, cultural, and social life and other areas, guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for

women and men are regulated in different ways, up to the existence of relevant laws.

Ensuring gender equality in all areas of public life, the legal protection of women and men from gender discrimination, support for the formation of civil society, and the establishment of democratic relations in society are among the

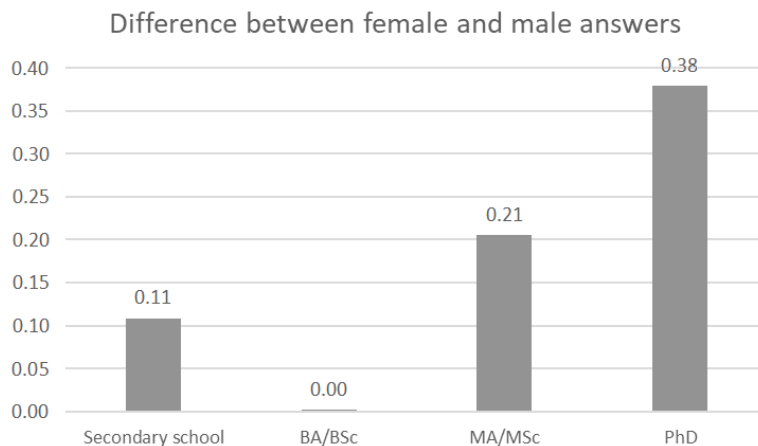


Fig. 6: To what extent is your current career choice influenced by future parenthood?

priorities of any country. The equal right to education became one of the dramatic changes in men-women rights' equality.

In the post socialist countries, men-women equality and real-life distribution of duties underwent significant changes after the collapse of the socialist order. Although they had equal rights to education in the USSR, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, the real employment opportunities varied greatly, and national customs and strict parental role-playing were among the main factors.

Our research shows that the biggest difference between "traditional" and "modern" groups is about the role of women to help their husband's career. 81.7 percent of the survey's participants agree, that women career is as important as men's.

The most part of participants (72–73 percent) disagree that men are more suited for managerial and political positions. This approved the idea, there is a big positive change in the society's opinion about the women's role in the abovementioned positions. Despite this, it is worrying that one-quarter of men in "traditional" group still thinks that women have an obligation to help their husband in building a career rather than thinking about their careers.

In the same group compared to women number, the number of men who believe that men are more suitable for managerial and political positions, is doubled. Our research

indicates, that more men agree with "traditional" statements ("It is more important for a woman to help build her husband's career than her own"; "Men are more suited to political positions than women"; "Men are more suitable for managerial positions than women"; "A child aged 0–3 suffers if their mother works part-time"; "A child aged 3–6 suffers if their mother works full-time"; "It's better when a man makes money away from home"), than women. In some cases, the number of men is doubled then women's numbers. So, in spite of prevalence of modern thinking in general, there is still big difference in the traditional value group based on gender.

In the traditional group there is a significant difference by gender for all four countries regarding the questions about role of women in managerial and political positions: more men agree with the opinion, that men are more suitable for the abovementioned positions. Also, in Armenia and Hungary, the number of men, who think, that the child aged 0–6 suffers, if mother is involved in part-time or full-time work, is significantly higher compared to women number. We notice the same significant difference between men and women for the situation of making money away from home among Armenian and Hungarian participants.

It is visible, that Armenia and Hungary produced significant differences in the same five cases, while Czech respondents produced

significant differences in three cases and Slovak respondents in two cases. "It is more important for a woman to help build her husband's career than her own" does not show a significant difference between men and women respondents in any of the countries studied.

It is very visible that in traditional groups, that is who gave positive responses to the questions, the number of men in all positive responses is greater than women in all participating countries. The only exception applies to the question "It's better when a man makes money away from home", where the number of men and women who answered positively is equal in Slovakia.

Based on our research results we can notice, that in many cases the Armenian opinion is much closer to the traditional way of thinking and attitude, rather than Slovak and Czech ones. Hungarian responses mostly are situated between Armenian and Slovak-Czech responses, in some cases being closer to Armenian ("Men are more suited to political positions than women"; "A child aged 0–3 suffers if their mother works part-time").

5.2 Hypothesis 2

It was very interesting for us to study the impact of different factors on determination of future choice of employment. The exploratory research identified patterns, that in the most cases the need to achieve their dreams is the most important factor to choose the future job. And only 16 percent of responses prove, that the future parenthood influence on their choice partly. Only a small group (8 percent) think, that they will completely change their job after becoming a parent. This indicates the privilege role of career and job in family and parenthood. What is interesting in this case – there is no significant difference between men and women responses in general. But when we analyze it by countries, only in Czech responses we indicate difference: the women indicated that their career choice was more influenced by their future adulthood than the men.

We cannot show a significant difference in education (in our case – high school;

college/bachelor's degree; university/master's degree; and doctoral degree/PhD) between prospective parenting roles as well. But PhD holders take more into account prospective parenthood when choosing their career.

In Master's and PhD levels, the higher the education, the more we notice the increasing difference between men and women responses regarding career choice influenced by future parenthood. It is visible, that women are more likely influenced by future parenthood than the men.

Based on our exploratory research we can testify, that the opinion of society about the distribution of roles of men and women in family has undergone big positive changes in post-socialist countries. In general, there is a common understanding about men and women equal rights and their implementation. But still, in all investigated countries, there are "traditional" thinking people, who tend to keep the strict role-distribution of men and women in the upbringing of the child, in terms of financial security, participation of women in political and managerial matters.

The results of our exploratory research can guide governmental and non-governmental organizations dealing with studying and management of labor market, as well as educational organizations (high schools, vocational and higher educational institutions etc.) in their professional orientation activities among younger generation.

In the same way, the results of the research can help the management of companies in setting up flexible forms of work and managing parental leave. It should be stressed that our research is exploratory in nature and the results will be used as a basis for repeating the survey on a larger, appropriate sample.

Taking into account the aforementioned data, we can state that the correct approaches of the given country and the leadership and the improvement of the existing legislative regulations are invaluable in the matter of equality of men and women rights. A striking example of such improvement can be the fact that men are also allowed to take childcare leave. It has a two-way effect. On the one hand,

it can be more favourable in those families where the woman is overloaded with work and earns more money than the man. On the other hand, this circumstance significantly increases the awareness and self-awareness of the equality of rights in male-female relationships.

From the point of view of legislative regulations, the role of the government and authorities of the given country is irreplaceable, but it would be desirable to increase the participation and involvement of women in the management bodies of various spheres of public life in real life.

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