

GENDER EQUALITY IN THE ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

Inside the education system at all its levels, including higher education, a gender balance should be observed and discrimination concerning women access to positions with high power of decision in schools and universities should not exist. The present study focuses on the presence of three phenomena: vertical segregation, horizontal segregation and the 'glass ceiling' in higher education institutions from Romania. These phenomena are often manifested in the public sector so we could assume their presence in the education system, too.

The methodology of research consists of an exploratory study conducted using 2003-2017 data. The study revealed that the Romanian educational system is a feminine field as from the total number of teachers from all levels, women represent over 70%. The horizontal segregation inside the education system is present from two perspectives. First of all, the highest percentage of female teachers is met in primary and secondary-lower education institutions, where women are over-represented (over 90% and 70% in 2017). In the academic area, we could observe that the number of female professors is lower as in the pre-university level, even if it registered an increase from 42% in 2003 to 51% in 2017. In the academic area, a certain gender equality has been reached as both genders are almost equally represented. Women are over-represented in relatively lower status positions whereas men are concentrated in better-paid, higher-status positions (in academia) that hold greater influence in policy and decision-making. Gender segregation could be observed inside the academic area too, where the number of women lowers as the academic rank is higher (women are represented better as Assistants and Lecturers).

The study revealed that women in this professional category from higher education level did not manage to break the 'glass-ceiling', as in 2018, from 47 public universities from Romania only in four, women occupied the position of Rector. Concerning the position of Dean, women managed to hold around 30% of these positions. The results showed the presence of vertical discrimination among higher education system and a gender imbalance in leadership positions in academia.

If in public administration of Romania, gender equality has been reached at the central level, we could not assume the same for the education system, which is a feminine sector where women are well-represented on inferior levels and where, with higher positions, lowers the feminine presence.

KEYWORDS: *horizontal segregation, vertical discrimination, 'glass-ceiling', the education system*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important tool which can be used for social change, so the educational system should be the first place where gender equality and equal opportunities should be promoted. More than that, we could consider that the education system is the main field where discrimination with all its aspects should not exist and the first place where stereotypes should not be present.

Gender equality in the educational system is a concept which can be approached from different perspectives. The present paper approaches this concept through two points of view: women's access to management positions from educational institutions and women's equal access to this profession at all levels of the system: primary education, secondary and upper lower education and tertiary education. It is very important to have equal participation of men and women in the teaching profession because teachers are models for those they teach and if the educational system of a country does not respect and promote gender equality, people do not have a place from where they could embrace this values.

Stereotypes represent an automatic and incorrect way of thinking which individuals have, without knowing that the way they think is not the correct one (Fiske, 1998). They are traditional beliefs, well-rooted into society and the educational system has the mission to correct this way of thinking including stereotypes regarding men and women. Stereotypes can be presented from two perspectives: descriptive and perspective beliefs (Terborg, 1977). Descriptive stereotypes are beliefs about how people who belong to a group would generally behave. For example, people believe that women are good teachers, nurses, secretaries or public servants and men are good scientists, engineers, drivers, managers or leaders (Heilman, 1983, Ruble & Ruble, 1982). The consequences of this incorrect way of thinking have led to gender segregation of the labor market and to the division of the labor market into masculine and feminine professions.

Assuming the presence of the stereotypes, the education system is considered a feminine field, so we started this research from the assumption that women represent the majority of teachers, but among management positions (such as Deans or Rectors), women are underrepresented and the majority of this powerful positions are held by men.

From this perspective, equal participation of men and women in management positions from education institutions is important because recent studies have concluded that women could be better leaders than men are (Eagly, Carli, 2003). If in the past women were not considered to be suited for leadership positions, now studies have shown the female leadership advantage (Eagly & Carli, 2003). But not only from this perspective, should women be well represented in management positions from education institutions. The gender segregation of the labor market shows that women are concentrated in fields and occupations with a lower level of payment as men are. So, consequently, women should be represented into management positions from education institutions, because not only the highest power of decision is there, but also the highest payment level.

2. METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The methodology of research consists of an exploratory study conducted using secondary data analysis from 2003-2017 periods, regarding teaching staff from the Romanian education system.

The Romanian education system is structured in:

- Early education (0—6 years)
- Primary education
- Secondary lower education
- Upper lower education

- The non-university tertiary education
- The higher education or tertiary education
- Adult education
- Home education (Eurydice, 2018).

For the present research, data concerning the teaching staff from primary, secondary and higher education levels was gathered from the National Institute of Statistics (2018) and from the European Institute for Gender Equality (2018). The data was used to realize a statistical analysis of the teaching staff for 2003-2017 periods, in order to establish if in Romania, the education system is a feminine field and if gender segregation phenomenon is present inside all education system. Also, data from the 47 Romanian public universities has been gathered in order to observe if women from academic area managed to break the glass ceiling and to occupy management positions within universities (Deans and Rectors). The data collected from the universities was also used to observe the presence of vertical segregation in the academic area and the situation of women occupying leadership positions in universities.

The purpose of the study is to observe the evolution of women occupying teaching positions through a long period of time in order to establish if they face discrimination regarding access to this professional category and access to the top of academic positions.

The main objective of the study is to establish if in the Romanian educational system, the gender segregation phenomenon in both it's forms is present and if female teachers from the academic area, managed to break the glass ceiling and occupy leadership positions.

The study has four specific objectives:

O1: To establish if the Romanian educational system is a feminine field.

O2: To analyze women's situation from decision-making positions from the academic area in order to establish if they managed to break the glass ceiling and accede in positions with the power of decision from universities.

O3: To analyze the situation of female teachers from the Romanian educational system in order to observe the presence of horizontal segregation inside the education system.

O4: To observe the presence of vertical segregation phenomenon in the academic area.

The study has four hypotheses created based on the situation from the education system from the member states and considering that in Romania the situation would be similar:

H1: Romanian educational system is a feminine field because the majority of teachers are represented by women.

H2. Women who occupy teaching positions in Romanian universities have managed to break the glass ceiling and occupy senior positions in universities.

H3: Horizontal segregation phenomenon is present in the Romanian educational system because the majority of female teachers are concentrated in primary and secondary lower education institutions.

H4: Vertical segregation is present in the academic area because the number of female teachers lowers as the academic rank is higher.

2. DOES GENDER SEGREGATION AFFECT THE EDUCATION SYSTEM?

In the EU member states, women represent the majority of university students and it could be observed that in the last years, women had more opportunities in the labor market due to the fact that their participation in education has increased very much (European Commission, 2018).

The member states encourage through their legislation, the equal participation of men and women on the labour market in order to achieve gender equality in employment. In Romania's case, in areas like public administration, a certain level of gender equality has been reached (Profiroiu & Nastacă, 2018). But in other member states, the situation is not similar in public administration area (see Profiroiu & Nastacă, 2018). Similarly, this study's purpose is to establish if in Romanian educational system a certain gender equality has been reached and if women from academic area succeeded to occupy positions with high power of decision (Deans and Rectors).

Despite member states' effort to introduce regulations regarding gender equality in employment, which also encourages the participation of women in positions which require power of decision, women are still overrepresented in some occupational areas (education, health) and underrepresented in fields considered to be masculine (defense, justice, infrastructure) or in positions with high power of decision (Cribb, Disney & Sibieta, 2014, p. 2). This phenomenon is called gender segregation which can take form as horizontal or vertical segregation and represent an important feature of the labor market. The gender segregation concept has been used in studies concerning gender inequalities into the labor market (see Hakim, 1979, 1992, 1996, Charles, 1992) and the phenomenon is still present nowadays, even if countries tried to minimize the gender segregation on labor market through their regulations.

Horizontal segregation is a concept which refers to the concentration of women and men in different sectors and occupations while vertical segregation refers to the concentration of women and men in different grades, levels of responsibility or positions (EIGE's Gender Equality Glossary and Thesaurus, 2018). Gender segregation, despite its form, has negative effects over both men and women. Authors (Charles & Grusky, 2004; Kreimer, 2004; Reskin & Bielby, 2005; Steinmetz, 2012; Burchell et al. 2014), conclude that this phenomenon has an impact over men's and women's experience, level of payment, working conditions and environments and their status. However, the most negative impact of gender segregation is the fact that it creates and maintains a gender hierarchy in society (Kreimer, 2004). Due to gender segregation, the career choices of both men and women are restricted (Sparreboom, 2014), because women would find unusual and difficult to work in fields dominated by men and men would not be attracted by working areas occupied preponderant by women.

Usually, it is believed that gender segregation has only a negative influence over the labor market, but authors like Burchell et al. (2014), have concluded that gender segregation could act as a measure of protection of women's employment (e.g. when they work in public administration) and it is associated with higher employment rates among women, but not with higher payment level.

A previous study regarding women in public administration of Romania (Profiroiu & Nastacă, 2018), showed the presence of vertical segregation in public administration of Romania, where women are concentrated on management positions from inferior levels (medium and low management), with less power of decision and men tend to occupy more positions with high power of decision.

Starting from this previous study (Profiroiu & Nastacă, 2018), the present research was conducted, in order to observe if within the education area, gender segregation is present, with both its forms and if women are concentrated in the inferior levels of the education system or if both genders are almost equally represented on all levels (pre-university level and academic area) and if women managed to occupy the most important positions from the academic area (Deans and Rectors).

3. HAVE THE FEMALE TEACHERS MANAGED TO BREAK THE GLASS CEILING?

Another form of feminine discrimination within the labour market is the fact that women must break the glass ceiling in order to occupy leadership positions. The glass ceiling is a metaphor used when analyzing gender inequalities and the relationship between gender and leadership. Even if women are overrepresented in the working area considered to be feminine, in order to occupy positions with high power of decision in those areas, they must manage to break the glass ceiling. The concept refers to a set of invisible barriers which are an impediment for women to occupy positions with high power of decision (leadership positions), only because they are women (Morrison, White & Van Versol, 1987). Because of this situation, women must work more than men in order to demonstrate their aptitudes and competencies and manage to break the glass ceiling and be promoted on decision-making positions (Morrison, White & Van Versol, 1987).

Authors (Baxter & Wright, 2000) affirmed that if women are under the glass ceiling they do not have the chance to be promoted and only when they manage to break the glass ceiling and situate above it, women have the chance to be appointed on positions with high power of decision and become leaders. If in an area (like education, health, public administration), gender equality is reached and the number of men and women is almost equal, the glass ceiling is broken and women have the chance to be leaders. The situation is more difficult in the masculine fields, where the majority of employees are men. In there, women are situated under the glass ceiling and it is more difficult for them to occupy positions with high power of decision.

Among the member states, women represent the majority of the teaching staff from primary and secondary education (75% in primary education, 66% in upper secondary education in 2015) (Eurostat, 2016). In tertiary education, the majority of the teaching staff was represented by men (57.4 % for the EU-28 in 2016) (Eurostat, 2018). The situation was worse in Greece, Malta, Italy, France, Luxembourg, and Germany (2016 data), where more than 60% of tertiary teaching staff were men (Eurostat, 2018). The only countries where the number of women representing teaching staff into the academic area exceeded the number of men, were Finland (51.1 %), Latvia (55.7 %) and Lithuania (56.1 %) (Eurostat, 2018).

The situation from the Member States showed the presence of horizontal segregation in the education area, as the majority of the teaching staff represented by women, were concentrated in primary and secondary education levels and on the tertiary education, the majority of the teachers were men, with a few exceptions.

In the next section of the article, the situation will be analyzed for Romania's case, in order to observe if the same trend is maintained at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels from the Romanian education system.

More than that, the European Commission data (2018), showed that women are overrepresented as teachers, but underrepresented in decision-making positions, especially in tertiary education. In the most of the member states, men occupied the majority of management positions in academia, which meant that at European level, female teachers did not succeed to break the glass ceiling and occupy decision-making positions, especially within the academic area. This is another aspect which is analyzed in the next section of the article: the number of female occupying leadership positions in the academic area (as Deans and Rectors), within Romanian public universities.

In conclusion, at European level, women were concentrated on the inferior levels of the teaching system (primary and secondary education) and men were dominating the academic area, holding better-paid positions, where they could have more power of decision and influence the policy-making process within the education system.

4. MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In the first part of the study, data concerning the number of men and women teachers from all the education system has been gathered from the National Institute of Statistics (2018). The data was used in order to observe the evolution of female teachers from 2003 until 2017. The purpose of the analysis was to establish if the Romanian educational system is considered a feminine field and to observe the presence of gender segregation. If gender segregation is present, female teachers should be concentrated in the inferior levels of the educational system (primary and secondary education) and men should be present in a large number within the academic area. The presence of this situation is not in women's favor. The majority of the students from universities are women (European Commission, 2018), so they should be present in a large number as teachers, within academia, too. More than that, due to the fact that in an academic area, the payment level is higher, the presence of women in universities would be a proof that the position of women in society has improved, both from social and economic perspectives.

In the second part of the study, data concerning the number of teachers from the academic area (by gender) and the number of Deans and Rectors (by gender) from public universities has been gathered. The data collected was used in order to observe the evolution of female teachers from the academic area from 2003 until 2017 and observe if women had equal access to this profession at the academic level, too. The purpose of the second part of the research is to observe the presence of female teachers in all academic ranks (Assistant, Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor). This could show the presence of vertical segregation within the academic area. If women are equally represented as men are in all academic ranks, vertical segregation is not present, if they are present more as Assistants or Lecturers, it could be affirmed that the phenomenon is present. Another purpose of the study was to show if women from the academic area have managed to break the glass ceiling. This could be shown by observing their presence in positions of Deans and Rectors of the public universities. Another aspect of the study concerns the presence of female teachers inside all academic system because this situation shows if women are situated under or above the glass ceiling and their possibilities of occupying positions with high power of decision inside the academic system.

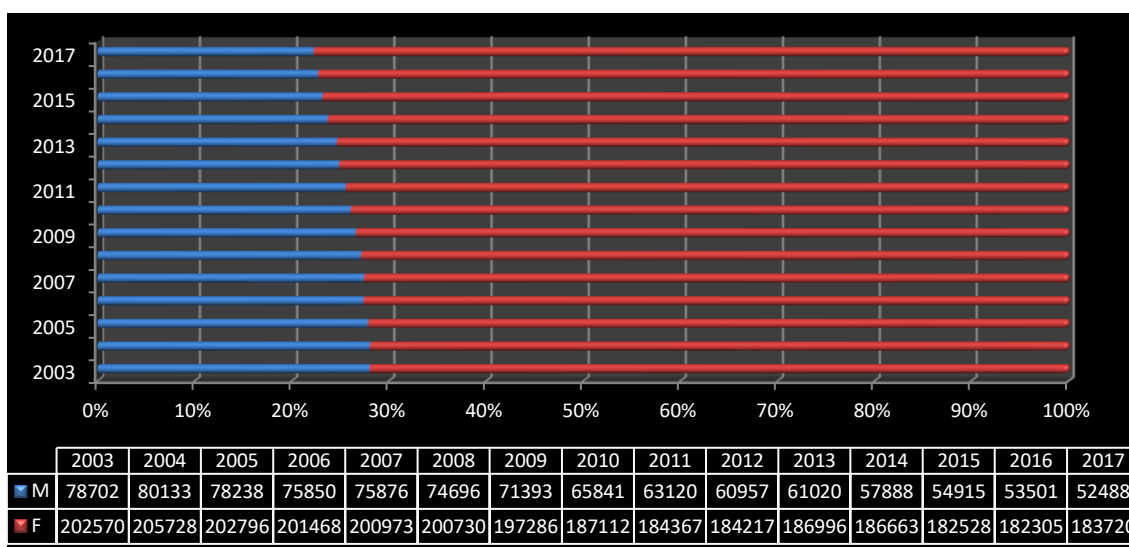


Figure 1. The distribution of teaching positions on national level by gender

Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

The data collected for 2003- 2017 period showed the evolution of teaching positions on the national level, inside all Romanian educational system (primary, secondary and tertiary education institutions). It could be observed that women represented almost two-thirds of the teachers from all education system. At the end of the studied period (in 2017), female teachers represented more than two-thirds of the total number of teachers on national level.

The figures showed that the number of men occupying teaching positions has decreased from 2003 until 2017 with almost 25.000. The decrease of male teachers was maintained in every studied year, excepting 2004, 2007 and 2013, when the number slightly increased. The most important decrease was registered in 2015 when the figures showed that there were with almost 3000 less male teachers as in 2014.

It could be observed, that the number of female teachers decreased, too. In 2017 they were with almost 20.000 less female teachers in the system as in 2003. The decrease was maintained in every studied year, excepting 2004 and 2013. It could be concluded that in the education system the number of teachers decreased and that situation was not related to gender issues. As gender is concerned, even if the number of teachers of each gender, decreased, in all the studied years, women were overrepresented in this profession. The analysis showed that the education system is a feminine field and during years, the gender gap inside the system registered an increase. At the beginning of the studied period, female teachers represented almost two-thirds of the professors at national level and the end of the period (in 2017), they represented more than two-thirds of the teachers. This could show the fact that the teaching profession is not attractive for men and the figures could show the presence of gender segregation inside the system. If men were not attracted to this profession due to financial issues (low salary level), it would be expected to find them concentrated on the superior levels of the system (in universities), where the wage level was higher.

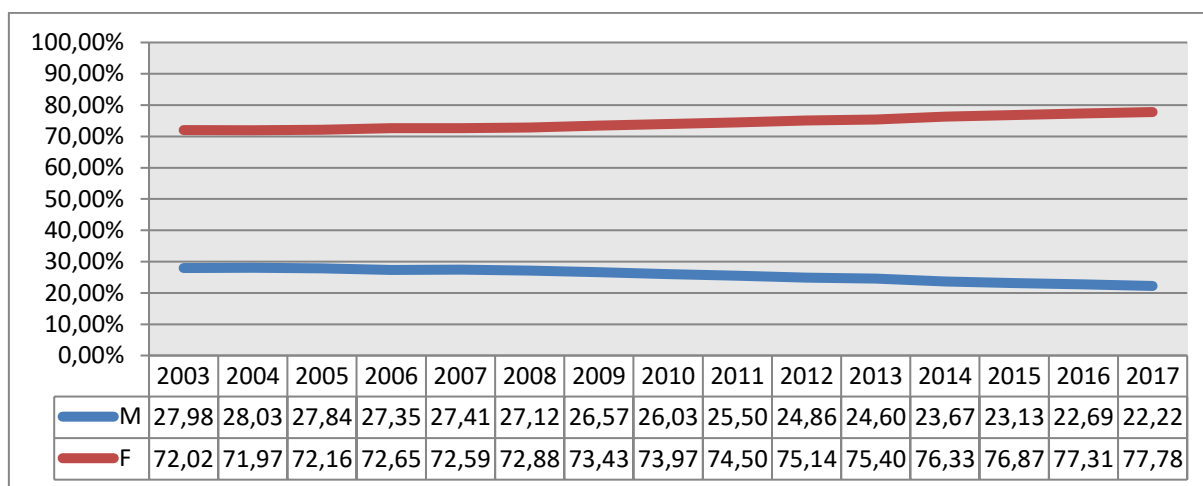


Figure 2. Teaching positions on national level by gender

Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

The figures showed that women were definitely overrepresented in the teaching profession. From the beginning of the studied period (2003), it could be observed that education was a working field preferred by women, as 72% of the teachers in 2003 were represented by women. With almost every studied year, the percentage of female teachers increased and at the end of the studied period (2017) women occupied almost 80% of the total teaching positions. Regarding the number of men occupied in the education system, it could be observed a decrease in almost every studied year. In conclusion,

the data showed the presence of gender segregation because women considered the education system a career choice more than men did and education was definitely considered a feminine field. This situation could help, as previous studies mentioned (Kreimer, 2004) at establishing the gender norms and hierarchy in society.

This situation could not be in the benefit of the social evolution because the association of the teaching profession with feminine gender could make men not to choose this field for their career and could help at preserving the horizontal segregation phenomenon on the labor market and the stereotypical way of thinking. If women continue to be overrepresented in some fields and men in others, both genders would find difficult to make a career in an area which, stereotypically thinking, is not suited from them because of their gender. Women will continue to choose feminine professions and will be skeptical to accede into masculine fields. If a gender balance will not be achieved, the horizontal segregation into the labor market will continue to exist.

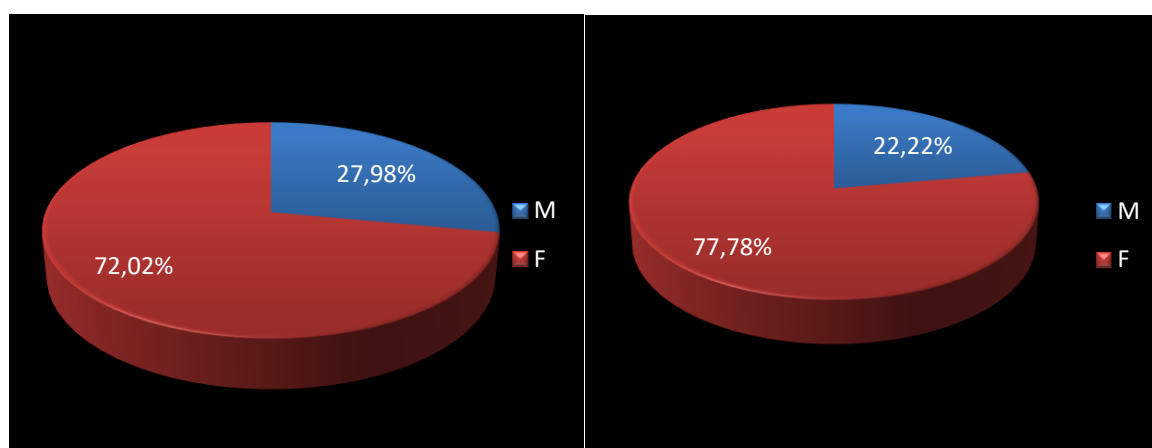


Figure 3, 4. Men and women in teaching positions at national level in 2003 and 2017

Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

Comparing 2003 with 2017 data it could be observed that female teachers occupied almost 78% of the teaching positions from all education system and the number of teaching positions occupied by men decreased dramatically. The data showed women's preference for the teaching area. This situation could exist because this profession offers stability and this could influence women's career choices. Another aspect of this profession is represented by the payment level which is not as high as in other fields. This could represent an explanation for the underrepresentation of men in the teaching positions.

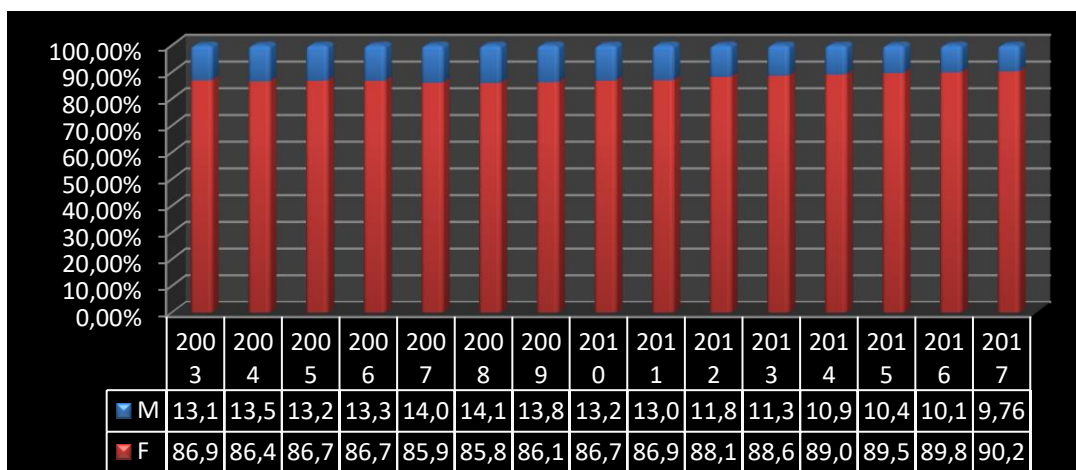


Figure 5. The distribution of teaching positions in primary education institutions by gender
 Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

The highest presence of female teachers was registered in the primary education institutions. At the beginning of the studied period, women represented almost 87% of the teaching staff from primary level. The number registered an increase and at the end of the studied period, women occupied more than 90% of the teaching positions from the primary level. The figures indicated the massive presence of women in this field and the decrease of male teachers in almost every studied year. The data showed that men were not attracted by teaching profession in primary education institutions, maybe because it is considered a feminine occupation, or because of the wage level or due to the fact that in women's world, men could find difficult to achieve the same level of performance that women could, according to the popular beliefs. The underrepresentation of men in primary education institutions could be also explained the fact that the presence of the stereotypes indicates that society considers that women are more patient with children and working with children is automatically associated with feminine gender.

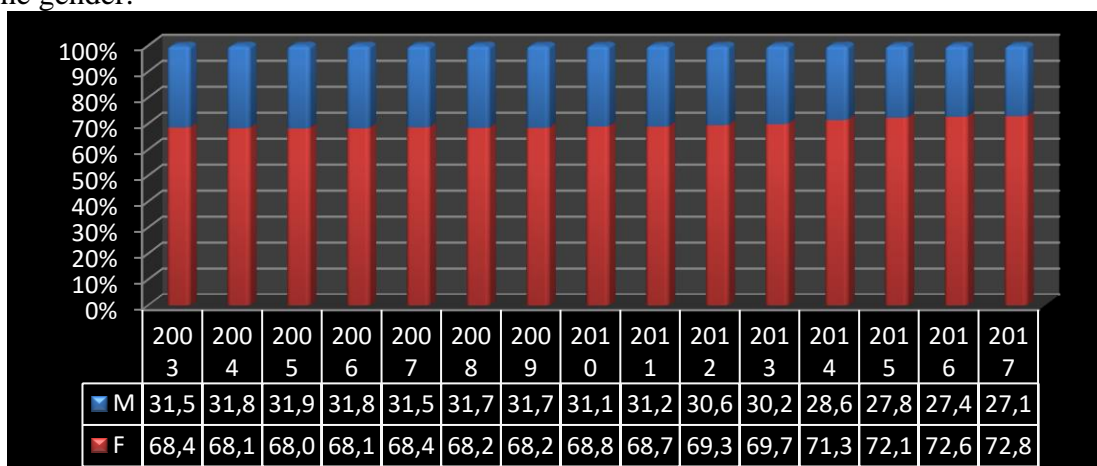


Figure 6. The distribution of teaching positions in secondary-lower education institutions by gender

Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

Regarding the evolution of female and male teachers from secondary-lower education institutions, it could be observed the overrepresentation of women in the teaching positions from this level, for all the studied period. The presence of female teachers from this level of education raised from 68.4% in 2003 to more than 70% in 2017. The presence of men occupying teaching positions at this level

was 31.5% in 2003 and decreased with 4.4 percentage points at the end of the studied period. Comparing with the data from the primary education institutions, it could be observed that the presence of male teachers was higher with 18 percentage points. If the female teachers occupied 90% of the teaching positions from primary education institutions, in secondary-lower education institutions, their presence decreased at almost 73%. This could indicate the presence of horizontal segregation inside the education system (the presence of men in a large number on the highest levels of the education system and the massive presence of women on the lowest levels of the education system).

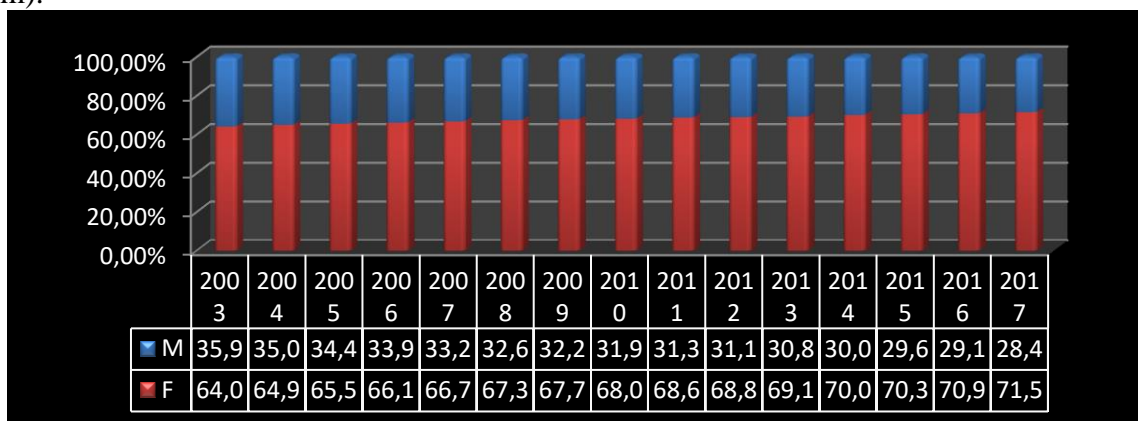


Figure 7. The distribution of teaching positions in upper-lower education institutions by gender

Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

The overrepresentation of female teachers could be observed in upper-lower education institutions, too, where the presence of women increased in every studied year. Comparing the first year of the studied period with the last year of study, the number of women occupying teaching positions in high schools increased with seven percentage points, from 64% in 2003 to 71.5% in 2017. It could be mentioned that even if the presence of men in teaching positions from high schools decreased in every year from the studied period, their presence was with almost 20 percentage points higher than in primary education institutions and with 1.3 percentage points higher than in upper-lower education institutions.

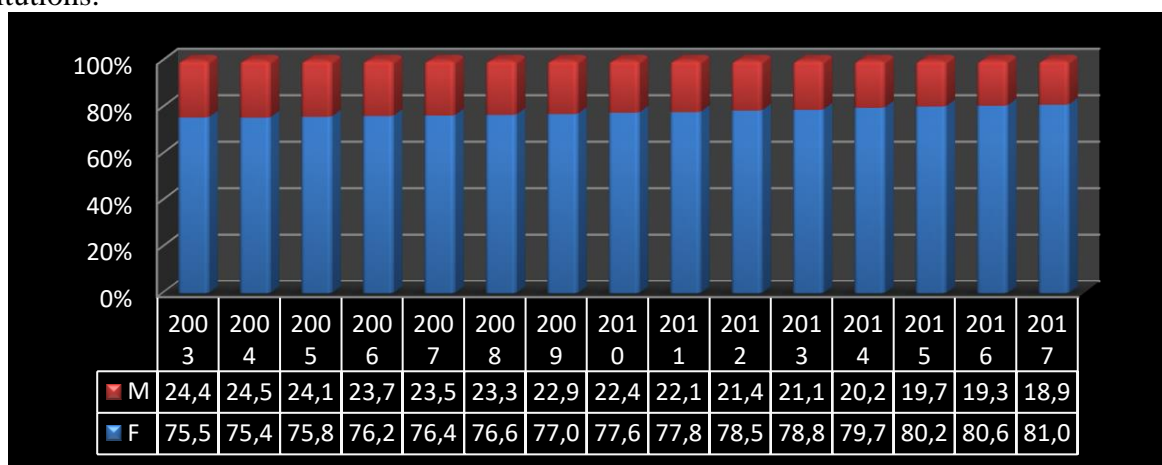


Figure 8. The distribution of teaching positions from pre-university level by gender

Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

The data analysis for all pre-university level revealed that in almost every studied year, the presence of women in the teaching profession, increased. At the end of the studied period (2017), women occupied more than 81% of the teaching positions from the pre-university level. The data showed that the number of men occupying teaching positions in pre-university institutions, decreased in every year, excepting 2004.

In conclusion, the data gathered from the pre-university level showed that women's access to this profession was not restricted and women were not discriminated regarding their access to the education system. The figures showed the overrepresentation of female teachers, a situation that could be treated from two perspectives. On one hand, the situation could be considered in women's favor because they occupied positions in a working field where they could benefit from a stable workplace. More than that, the teaching profession could help women reconcile the career with the family life, without neglecting neither their "feminine" duties (having a family, taking care of a house), nor their personal necessity for financial independence. On the other hand, the situation is in men's detriment. Because of the massive presence of women in the teaching profession, education system became a feminine working area. This could make the system unattractive for men, which would find difficult and maybe unusual to choose a career in an area where women dominate. This situation showed the presence of horizontal segregation on the labor market because we could affirm that the teaching profession is associated with feminine gender.

Comparing the data collected from every level of the pre-university (primary, lower and upper secondary education), the results showed the presence of horizontal segregation inside the system. It could be observed that from a level to another, the presence of women decreased. If in the primary education institutions, women represented over 90% of the teaching staff, in upper-lower education institutions, their presence was with almost 20 percentage points lower. This situation showed that inside the education system, the situation is similar with other working areas, like public administration (see Profireoiu, Nastacă, 2018): when the level is higher, the number of men occupying teaching positions is higher, too.

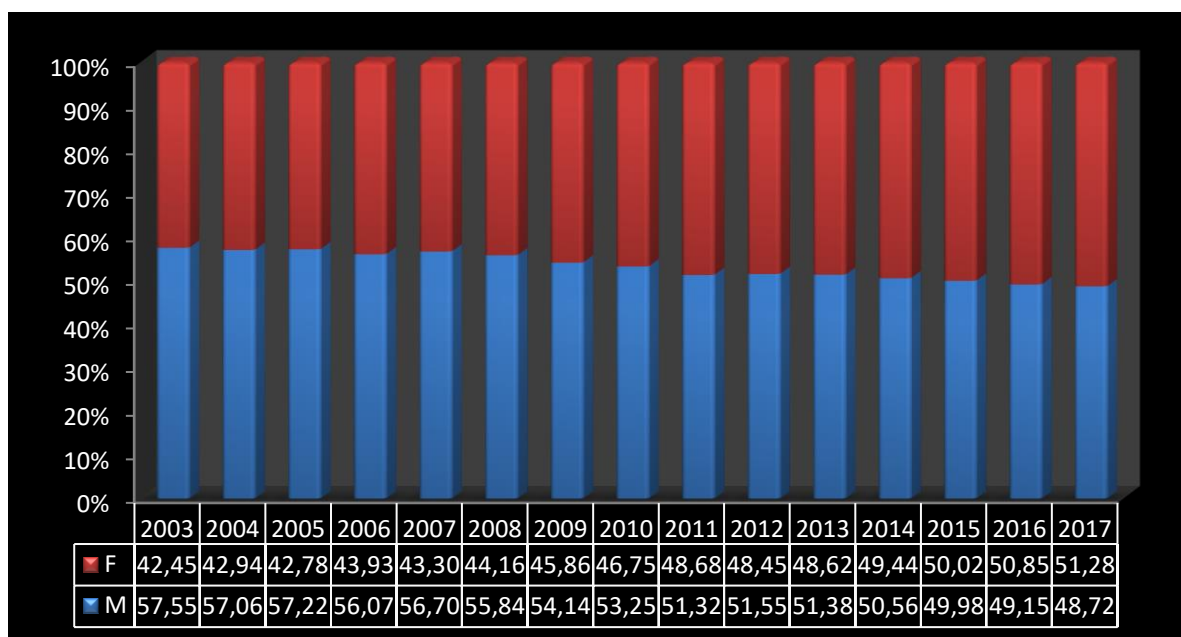


Figure 9. The distribution of teaching positions from the tertiary education level (universities) by gender

Source: Author, adapted from National Institute of Statistics (2018)

In the second part of the research, data regarding the teaching staff from universities has been gathered. The results were different from the pre-university level. It could be observed that in the academic area, the gender gap has reduced, and both genders were occupying more than 40% of the teaching positions. From 2003 until 2017, the number of female teachers in universities has raised with almost eight percentage points, from 42.45% in 2003 to 51.28% in 2017. Regarding the number of men occupying teaching positions, it maintained the same trend as in pre-university education institutions. The number decreased with nine percentage points from 57.55% in 2003 to 48.72% in 2017. It could be observed that the presence of men in the academic area was almost double as in the pre-university institutions. Even if their presence decreased, men still occupied almost 50% of the teaching positions. The figures showed that in the academic area, gender equality has been reached because both genders occupied more than 40% of the teaching positions. More than that, it could be affirmed that women did not face discrimination regarding access to this profession. The situation from Romania could be considered better than the situation from the member states. Data from 2016 (Eurostat) showed that 57.4% of the teaching positions from universities for EU-28 were occupied by men. The situation was different in Romania, where almost 52% of the positions were occupied by women.

The data also showed that within all education system the horizontal segregation phenomenon was present because women were overrepresented in pre-university level and men occupied almost 50% of the teaching positions in academia in 2017, almost three times more positions than in the pre-university education institutions.

Comparing data from all levels of the education system, it could be observed that the number of men in teaching positions decreased in almost every studied year for every studied level, which could lead to the idea that with the pass of time, the teaching profession was more unattractive for men. This could have different causes: the assumption that teaching is a feminine profession due to stereotypes, better incomes in other working areas (IT, engineering, telecommunications etc.) or the idea that the image of a teacher is associated by society with feminine gender.

The situation from the academic area is in women's favor because each gender is almost equally represented which means that women academia are technically situated above the glass ceiling, having the opportunities to occupy positions with high power of decision (as Deans and Rectors).

Table 1. The distribution of academic ranks by gender

	Gender	Assistant professor	Lecturer	Associate professor	Professor
2012/2013	F	56,3%	51,8%	45,3%	30,9%
	M	43,7%	48,2%	54,7%	69,1%
2013/2014	F	56,9%	52,8%	46,2%	30,2%
		43,1%	47,2%	53,8%	68,8%

Source: Author, adapted from Ministry of National Education, 2016

In order to observe the presence of vertical segregation in the academic area, data regarding the distribution of academic ranks by gender has been gathered. The data showed that women are better represented as Assistants and Lecturers (the first ranks from the academic career) and with a higher rank, their number was decreasing. For the two studied years, it could be concluded that within the academic area, the vertical segregation phenomenon was present because the number of women lowered as the academic rank was higher

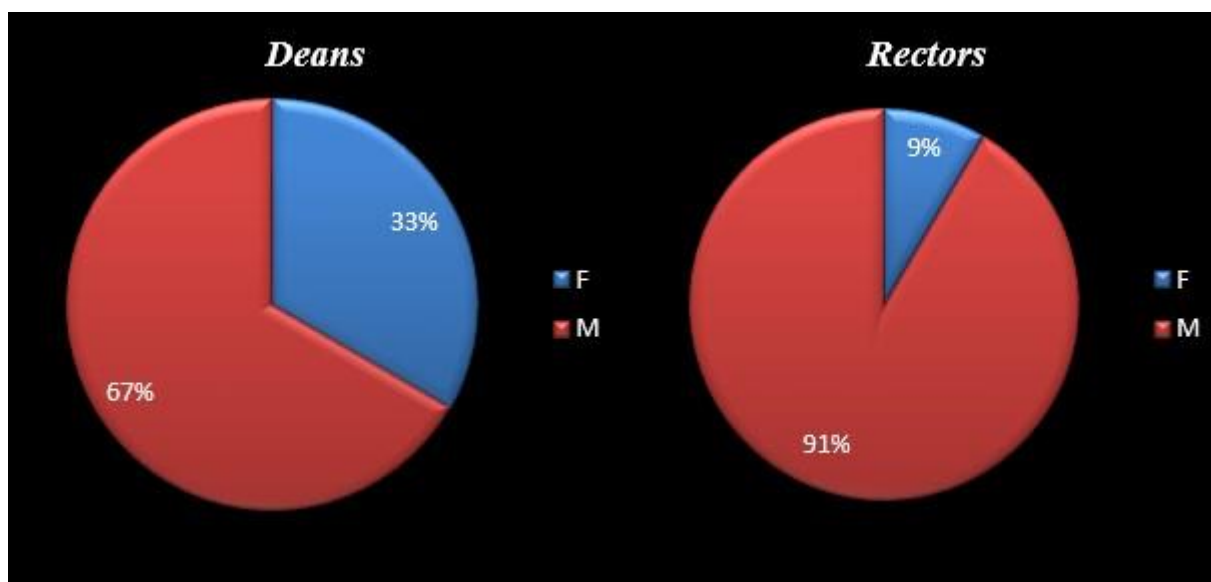


Figure 10: The distribution of leadership positions in universities by gender
 Source: Author

In the academic area, gender equality has been reached and female teachers technically are situated above the glass ceiling. This means that they have more opportunities to occupy leadership positions within universities. In reality, female teachers from academia did not manage to break the glass ceiling even if they are well represented in the tertiary education institutions. The data regarding the number of Deans and Rectors has been gathered from the 47 public universities of Romania, for 2018. From 333 Deans from universities, only 111 were women (33%). The situation was worse concerning the Rector positions because from 47 Rectors, only 4 were women. The data have shown the presence of vertical segregation in the academic area because even if women have the opportunity to hold the positions with the highest power of decision in universities, only a few of them managed to break the glass ceiling and occupy those positions.

5. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE TRENDS OF RESEARCH

The research showed that the Romanian educational system could be considered a feminine working field because almost 80% of the teaching positions at the national level are being occupied by women. The horizontal segregation phenomenon is present inside the education system from two perspectives. Female teachers are overrepresented in pre-university education institutions. Female teachers are dominating the primary and lower-secondary education institutions, where they occupy more than 70%, respectively 80% in 2017. In the academic area, we could observe that the number of female professors is lower and registered an increase from 42% in 2003 to 51% in 2017, decreasing the gender gap. In the academic area, it could be affirmed that gender balance has been reached because both genders occupy more than 40% of the teaching positions from universities.

Another phenomenon which was demonstrated is the presence of vertical segregation in the tertiary education institutions. It could be observed that in the academic area, the number of women lowers as the academic rank is higher because women were better represented as Assistants and Lecturers.

Even if women are not facing discrimination regarding access to teaching positions in universities and their massive presence should show that they are situated above the glass ceiling, the studied showed that only a few female teachers managed to break it and occupy leadership positions within academia. Only 33% of the Deans from the public universities of Romania are women and only 9% of the Rector positions are occupied by women. These results showed the presence of vertical discrimination among higher education system and a gender imbalance regarding leadership positions in academia.

From the four hypotheses of the study, three have been validated. The hypothesis assuming that women in academia managed to break the glass ceiling did not validate as the percentage of women Deans and Rectors is low.

In conclusion, women are overrepresented in the pre-university level, a situation which is in the detriment of both genders. The situation helps at maintaining the gender hierarchy in society and the gender segregation into the labor market, making difficult for both genders to accede in fields which are stereotypical not considered suited from them. Inside the education system, women are overrepresented in relatively lower status positions while men are concentrated in better-paid, higher-status positions (in academia) that hold greater influence in policy and decision-making.

Research limitations: A research limitation is represented by the lack of data concerning the distribution of academic ranks by gender for a longer period of time.

Future trends of research: A study regarding female teachers in academia should be conducted and their evolution in leadership positions during a long period of time.

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