



Feminization of Pedagogical Education and its Outcomes

Leyla Hasanova^{1*} and Dunya Suleymanova²

¹*Algebra and Geometry, Baku State University, Azerbaijan*

²*Economics and Management, Humboldt University, Germany*

***Corresponding Author:** Leyla Hasanova, Algebra and Geometry, Baku State University, Azerbaijan.

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Abstract

Nowadays, modernization has covered almost all countries of the world. Big changes are taking place in all areas of life, and education is not an exception. Against the backdrop of ongoing political, social and financial changes, the content of gender roles in education is also undergoing modification. In this context, it is important to study the gender distribution when high school students choose the profession of a teacher, and, in particular, a teacher of mathematics. In fact, this profession is currently one of those that are most prone to gender segregation. As a result, the purpose of this article is to explore the relationship between gender and career choice as a mathematics teacher among young people in Azerbaijan, and to illustrate the results. The article pays special attention to one Azerbaijani university - Baku State University, and statistics are built on its basis. The study revealed important results that demonstrate the existence of a certain relationship between gender and the choice of a mathematics teacher as a profession, which may negatively affect future education.

Keywords: Teacher; Mathematics; Gender Stereotypes; Gender Distribution

Introduction

The gender and composition of students entering the specialty "Teacher of Mathematics" in Azerbaijan

To begin with, the motivation for this study is caused by a clear trend observed in recent years in Azerbaijan, namely the decline in the number of young people choosing profession of mathematics teachers. The composition of students entering this specialty, by gender, also changes significantly. For instance, if in 2018, 71% of first-year students studying the specialty "Teacher of Mathematics" in one of the leading pedagogical universities in Azerbaijan - Baku State University (BSU), were girls, then in the 2021-2022 academic year, one can see the feminization of pedagogical education in this specialty, since girls already accounted for 89%. And this happens despite the fact that in mathematics, as in other exact sciences, until recently a gender bias has always been present.

This fact is disturbing. After all, today's students will determine the composition of the teaching staff of educational institutions in the coming years. The country is already experiencing a significant outflow of the male part of the teaching staff to other areas of activity. It is interesting to note that according to observed trend this issue is especially acute for secondary schools [7].

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education of the Republic in 2009-2010, the total number of teachers was 161,299, of which 37,089 were men; in 2014-2015 - 149,602, of which 31,416 men; in 2019-2020 - 141,749, of which 24,097 were men [7]. In 2021, in the schools of the capital and other large cities, the percentage of men in the total number of teachers was less than 5%. In rural schools, the number of male teachers is slightly higher [7]. This happens due to the fact that they have fewer opportunities to find another, better paid job, unlike urban residents. Things are a little better in private schools in Azerbaijan, especially

international schools that meet the standards of world examination and educational centers. In fact, there the number of male teachers is equal to the number of women, and this is due to high wages.

The problem of feminization in school pedagogy being present in all countries

Unfortunately, the problem of feminization of school pedagogy is relevant for all European countries [4]. Among the developed countries of the world, only Japan has more men in the teaching profession than women, and even then, only slightly. In 2017, 48% of the teaching staff of all Japanese educational institutions were left by women [4]. In other countries, this profession has long acquired a female appearance [2]. According to international studies, in 2017 the number of female teachers exceeded 60%, for example in Korea, Norway, Germany and the UK, more than 70% - in the USA, Finland, Poland, Russia, and in Latvia - 84% [2].

At the same time, the situation in private schools in these countries is radically different from public schools. For example, in the UK, the percentage of male teachers in private schools is three times higher than in public schools [2]. In addition to prestige and salaries, this is also due to historical reasons. If one wants to choose a school in the UK, then the number of male teachers can be an informal indicator of its high ranking [2].

The case of Azerbaijan: Sex distribution

Another gender problem in the education system has been and remains the feminization of the teaching staff of higher educational institutions in the country.

In recent years, state statistics show an increase in the proportion of women among the teaching staff of universities in Azerbaijan: for 2009-2022, this share increased by almost 8% and amounted to 54% in 2022 [6]. The entire increase in the number of teaching staff (by 302 people) that occurred over the years was achieved almost entirely due to the increase in the number of women [6].

The change in the sex distribution of the teaching staff did not equally affect different age groups. The sharp decline in the absolute and relative level of wages in education, as well as the First Karabakh War, led to a reduction in the proportion of young and middle-aged men. As a result, men predominate among teachers of pre-retirement and retirement age, and women predominate among young people and middle-aged people.

Materials and Methods

In order to study the link between two variables, data from Baku State University is used. The department "Algebra and Geometry" in Baku State University consists of the 20 faculty members, 9 are male teachers (7 are of retirement age and 2 are under 35) and 11 are female teachers (3 are of retirement age and 8 are under 35). As a result, 40% of the team are women under the age of 35. For comparison, the data from 2000 at the same department was used. In fact, in 2000, this department consisted of only 3 women out of 15 teachers, and they were middle-aged. Paradoxically, it is a fact that despite the predominance of women, the so-called "leaked pipe effect" is observed at the department in question. By examining the average number of women at different levels of a scientific mathematical career, an interesting trend can be observed: the higher the level, the fewer women "achieve" it. This effect manifests itself in a similar way in different countries, and many spears and careers have been broken in attempts to explain its causes.

Discussion

Gender discrimination, stereotypes and profession

The ratio of women and men in the structure of the teaching staff of educational institutions is undeniably a fairly important socio-cultural indicator of the status and prestige of the teaching profession in society. Researchers note that the social prestige of a profession often decreases if the number of women in it increases [4]. If we return to the problem of choosing the profession of a mathematics teacher by future graduates of secondary schools that we are studying, then the low prestige of the teaching profession is one of the most important determinants that negatively affect this process [4].

In addition to the prestige of the profession, another important factor influencing the professional self-determination of high school students is gender stereotypes. According to the theoretical foundations of the American sociologist, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Delaware Linda Gottfredson, professional aspirations are included in the individual self-image that develops in the process of socialization from early childhood to adolescence [1]. The process of developing professional aspirations consists in comparing one's own image with the image of the profession. In this process, the gender image of the activity is especially important for its choice, since the "wrong" gender

type of the profession is more fundamental to the “self/I – concept” than the prestige of the profession or individual interests. When applying the theory of Gottfredson, a number of studies confirmed the significant influence of the gender image of the profession on the process of choosing a specialty [1].

What is currently happening in our society confirms Gottfredson’s theory. For 15 years (from kindergarten to high school seniors) children and teenagers grow up and mature under the supervision and control of female teachers. There is a stereotype in the society that “teacher is a female profession” [8]. It is a sad fact, but in modern society, a boy who, after school, decides to enter a pedagogical specialty, is usually facing a pressure from relatives, friends, and society.

As a result, it is not surprising that young people aged 17-18, who make the most important decision about professional self-determination, are strongly influenced by gender stereotypes. Even with all the love for mathematics or teaching, young people disregard not only school, but also the field of education as an option for a future profession. It is obvious, but the fact that gender stereotypes sometimes negatively affect the professional self-determination of schoolchildren, especially if their personal qualities contradict the gender roles accepted in society, can be disorienting, act as a barrier to the development of individuality in the future.

Obviously, there are other factors that negatively influence the choice of the profession of a teacher by graduates of secondary schools. The other reasons include the large amount of paperwork that teachers have to do, as well as the predominance of women in this field, which men feel uncomfortable.

Conclusion

What can the further feminization of pedagogical education lead to?

As can be seen, feminization of education does not positively affect the situation of women, rather it has a negative impact. Nevertheless, it is important to note that neither it has a positive effect on the position of men and the future of students. In fact, the role behavior of male teachers significantly differs from women teachers. For instance, male upbringing is focused on achieving results, it pushes the child to know the limits of her/his abilities, to focus on her/his own future. In other words, for a student to

have a full-fledged personality, both a feminine and a masculine philosophy of life is required to be present in the field of education.

The feminization of the school inevitably leads to the so-called humanization of education: women, who have become the leading pedagogical force, bring their understanding of the world, their methods and approaches to the education system [3]. In the absence of a “living example” in the person of a teacher, most modern schoolchildren form a very abstract understanding of the so-called masculine (male) qualities and their significance in modern society [3]. Taking into account the large number of children growing up in single-parent families with one mother, the scale of the problem becomes catastrophic [3]. As a result, it is highly important both for government and society to take actions to cope with this problem.

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