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Gender differences in formal, non-formal and informal adult learning

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ABSTRACT: At first sight, participation rates in adult learning do not differ strongly between men and women. Further exploration, however, makes clear that main differences exist at the level of the type of learning. Men participate more in work related learning and experience more job related motives to participate. Women take the main responsibilities at the home place, resulting in fewer employment in knowledge intensive jobs and fewer opportunities for work related training. In this paper, we use the Harvard gender analysis framework to get insight in the differences in adult learning activities between men and women. In the empirical part, we use the Eurostat Adult Education Survey, which provides sex-aggregated data, which are needed to gain insight in the broader activity profile of the population divided by men and women.

KEYWORDS: gender analysis, lifelong learning, participation rates, motives, barriers

SITUATION

The 2006 UNESCO report on 'Unequal chances to participate in adult learning: international perspectives' describes unequal patterns of adult participation in post compulsory learning (Desjardins, Rubenson & Milana 2006). Main determinants of participation, analysed by International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) and Adult Literacy and Lifeskills survey (ALL), are employment status, educational attainment and age. Older low skilled blue collar workers participate less, younger high skilled white collar workers participate more than average. Within the report, gender is analysed as one of the core variables, but large participation differences between women and men were not found. In their statistical analyses, Desjardins

et al (2006) defined the participation variable as ‘participation in adult education and training’ not making a distinction between formal and non formal learning activities. By making new tables based on the recent Eurostat Adult Education Survey, we will demonstrate that men and women have indeed comparable participation rates in ‘adult education and training’, but that significant differences appear at the level of the learning type referring to formal, non formal and informal adult learning. Bearing in mind the specific aims, goals and objectives of these different types of learning, we can argue that participation is highly related with other life spheres such as work, family and leisure time (Tight 1996). As an example, participation in on-the-job training is mainly work related, following a lecturer at a folk high school about childcare is mainly family related. As a result, unequal participation leads to broader unequal socio-economic outcomes of learning in terms of income, employment, happiness and life satisfaction (Hoskins et al 2010).

We start this paper by defining the concept of gender and define the different types of learning. We refer to European lifelong learning policy and give detailed information on the Eurostat Adult Education Survey. In the empirical part of this paper we use data of Flanders, the Northern part of Belgium, an average performer at the level of adult learning participation.

GENDER AND LEARNING: CONCEPTS

The ‘gender’ concept refers to roles, relationships and expectations determined by socio-cultural, political and economical factors and goes beyond biology (UNESCO 2003). The ‘sex’ concept describes biological differences between women and men, usually determined by birth. ‘Gender inequality’ is used to draw attention to the unequal roles men and women fulfill in society, ‘gender equity’ refers to the efforts undertaken to strive towards more ‘gender equality’. Every single individual person, regardless his/her gender role, should get

equal opportunities to develop his/her personal abilities and to make choices without any limitations or being blocked by traditional stereotypes. A gender analysis framework is a tool to make diagnoses of differences between gender roles related to citizens participation in society. Various scholars have developed a gender analysis framework such as the Moser framework, the Harvard framework, the Social-Relations framework and the Longwe framework (March et al 2005). The main aims of these frameworks are to understand society better through 'gender looking-glass' and to promote gender equality (Leong, Lang & Biasutti 2004).

In this paper, we make use of the Harvard gender analysis framework as it is ideal for micro level analyses and because it starts with a good overview of the activity profile of both men and women (Leach 2003). The entire framework can be distinguished in four main steps:

- The socio-economic activity profile: who does what, when and where?
- The access and control profile: who has access to resources to participate and who has access to the benefits of this participation? Who has control over these resources and benefits?
- Factors which determine the gender differences: How can we relate the findings to political, economical, historical, cultural and social factors?
- Project cycle analysis: which interventions can be undertaken to reduce gender inequalities?

Within the empirical part of this paper, we focus on the activity profile of both men and women in adult learning activities, the first step in the Harvard gender analysis framework. In the discussion session, we reflect also on the other steps.

Adult learning can be divided by different types of learning and the entire topic of adult learning takes place in a wider lifelong learning discourse. Discussions on different forms of

lifelong learning emerged in the late 1960's (Coombs 1968). Three forms of learning were distinguished: formal, non-formal and informal. Formal learning referred *'to the highly institutionalized, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured 'education system', spanning lower primary school and the upper reaches of the university'* (Coombs and Ahmed 1974, 8). Non-formal learning was defined as organized education taking place outside the formal education system. Around 1970, it was seen as a solution to deal with the weaknesses of the mainstream school system (Illich 1973). Furthermore, in contrast with formal education, non-formal education focused on needs of special groups such as women or adults with literacy problems. Informal learning was described as the natural accumulation of knowledge and skills in daily life, often unorganized and incidental (Rogers 2004).

The Eurostat Adult Education Survey (AES), which we will use in the empirical part of our paper, contains questions measuring participation in formal, non-formal and informal learning (Eurostat 2007). In order to make proper distinctions between these different forms, Eurostat created a decision tree leading to the correct form (figure 1).

FIGURE 1 here

A learning activity has always to be an intentional and conscious decision. If not, the AES does not speak about a learning activity. If learning is intentional, but does not take place in an organised setting or learning institution, the corresponding form is informal learning. It refers to planned self-directed learning and is thus not comparable with the common definition of incidental, accidental and at random learning taking place in everyday life (Schugurensky 2000). Six forms of informal learning are used in the AES: learning by conversations with family, friends and colleagues, by using printed materials, by using

computers, through television, radio and video, by guided tours e.g. in musea, and by visiting learning centres e.g. libraries.

If learning takes place in institutionalised contexts, but does not lead to officially recognised degrees, credits or diplomas granted by the responsible ministry, AES refers to non-formal education. Although it is possible that non-formal learning institutions provide an own credit, it has no official status. Nevertheless, it can be valued by employers or taken into account by granting exemptions if the student wants to continue a course in the formal education system. The AES distinguishes four categories of non-formal education: classroom learning, distance learning, seminars and workshops, and guided on the job training.

Learning taking place in organised settings leading to official degrees and credits refers to formal education. The AES uses the metaphor of a continuous ladder which can be climbed starting from basic education to university degree courses for mature students. The starting level of the students depends on the qualifications obtained in the past. This form of education is similar to the initial school system for children and teenagers.

Overall, the AES uses lifelong learning as the umbrella term for formal, non-formal and informal learning. Lifelong learning is defined as intentional and meaningful learning activities undertaken by the adult in order to increase skills and knowledge useful in daily life, in and outside the labour market (Eurostat 2007).

Relating gender to adult learning, we found two recent books touching upon the topic. First, we consulted ‘Gender and Lifelong Learning’ edited by Leathwood & Francis (2006), second, we consulted ‘Researching Gender in Adult Learning’ edited by Ostrouch & Ollangier (2008). Chapters within these books are mainly written by female scholars in the field. Both books give insight in inequalities between men and women related to various subfields of education and learning such as emancipation, recognition of prior learning, gendered subject choices,

fair access to higher education, … . In her chapter ‘Gendered constructions of lifelong learning and the learner in the UK policy context’, Leathwood (2006) describes that participation patterns in lifelong learning are strongly classed, raced and gendered. The European Unions’ lifelong learning policy is often criticized as being too narrowly focused on economic issues although citizenship and social cohesion are official points of attention. Boshier (1998) even called contemporary lifelong learning ‘human resource development in drag’. Leathwood continues that this view leads to a lifelong learning discourse which is focused on masculinist values and assumptions and that women’s skills in the workplace are less valued than those of men, with the result that women are more employed in dead-end jobs, leading to less opportunities to take place in adult learning activities (Ngo et al 2003). On an overall level, women are still expected to take the main responsibilities in the household, such as doing the washes and taking care of the children (Daniels 2010; Gouthro 2009). The neo-liberal shift towards more responsibility of the individual learner makes it even more difficult for women to achieve equal opportunities. *´If a strategy´s point of departure is the notion that adults are completely self-directed individuals in possession of the tools necessary to seize on adult education opportunities, then that strategy is doomed to widen, not narrow, the educational and cultural gaps in society´* (Rubenson & Schuetze 2000). In this quote, Rubenson & Schuetze warn policy makers that reaching equal participation in adult learning activities can only be achieved if disadvantaged groups get support in their decision making process. In the case of women, policy makers should try to compensate the historical and social disadvantages towards women.

One of the remarkable issues in the two books related to the topic of this paper (‘Gender and Lifelong Learning’ and ‘Researching Gender in Adult Learning’) is the absence of large scale quantitative empirical assessment of gender inequalities. Even in a European based Journal such as International Journal of Lifelong Education, gender issues are always, with the

exception of one article in the last ten years (Maclead & Lambe 2007), discussed based on qualitative research methods. Although these researches are valuable, a gender analysis framework explicitly asks for sex-disaggregated data. The Eurostat Adult Education Survey is an ideal instrument to map participation patterns across an entire adult population and can be divided by sex. Based on these data, the main research question we want to answer is *whether participation patterns of men and women differ related to the type of learning: formal, non formal and informal?*

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We use results of the Flemish Eurostat Adult Education Survey conducted in 2007. Flanders is the Northern part of Belgium and has around 3,500,000 inhabitants between 25 and 64 years old. The official language is Dutch. Lifelong learning policy documents are in accordance with European policy, although participation is rather average, but around the European mean (Vlaamse Regering 2000, 2001, 2005, 2009). Flanders is one of the numerous regions that failed to obtain the Lisbon target of 12,5 percent participants between 25 and 64 years old by 2010 (Vlaamse Regering 2008). The main focus of the lifelong learning system is on economic prosperity and the decrease of long term unemployed adults, which is common in the entire European Union (Holford et al 2008).

The AES took place in nearly all European countries in the past few years and is mainly developed to measure participation in lifelong learning across the European Union (Eurostat 2007). As the Lisbon strategy, signed in 2000, included lifelong learning as one of the main challenges to strive towards Europe as the most knowledge based and competitive region in the world, measurements of participation in these learning activities are needed. Therefore, the Adult Education Survey can be seen as a policy evaluation instrument. Immediately after

singing the Lisbon strategy, a Taske Force on the issue of measuring lifelong learning participation was established in cooperation with the Directors of Social Statistics from the European Union. Nowadays, general results on participation can be consulted on the Eurostat website, a complete database can be bought for project reasons. LLL2010, 'Towards a Lifelong Learning Society, the Contribution of the Education System' is an example of a European Sixth Framework project analyzing the role of lifelong learning making use of AES data.

Besides measuring participation in different forms of learning, it contains information on socio-demographic and socio-economic background characteristics, on language and ICT skills, on participation in social and cultural activities, on barriers hindering participation and on attitudes towards learning. Eurostat provided all national teams with a common codebook which had to be converted into a national questionnaire (Eurostat 2007).

The Flemish survey used a stratified sample based on age and gender (Vermeersch and Vandenbroucke 2010). A total amount of 8,677 adults between 25 and 64 received a letter to participate in the survey. A 3,104 respondents participated in the survey, which is a response rate of 35,8 percent. In order to strive towards a representative sample for the Flemish population, the sample is weighted based on 6 variables: gender, age, occupational status, educational attainment, nationality and family size. In this paper, we use the weighted dataset.

Questions on participation in adult education were asked using a reference period of 12 months preceding the interview. We do thus not have the opportunity to control if the participation target of 12,5 percent – as defined in the Lisbon goals – is reached, as this percentage refers to a 4 weeks measurement period (CEC 2000).

RESULTS

Sample

It is the main aim of this paper to search for gender inequalities related to participation in various lifelong learning activities. In order to understand these participation differences properly, we have to define the sample population first. Table 1 shows the socio-economic profile of the Flemish sample divided by gender. As the sample is weighted based on gender, the overall ratio between men and women is 50-50. In all our tables, we show the level of significance based on the p-level of the Chi Square test.

TABLE 1 here

Based on occupational status, educational attainment, age and income, we notice a clear economic gender inequality. Women are less employed and are more in inactiveness. The group of inactive adults consists of those in early retirement systems, but also of full-time household workers. In our statistics, the group of inactive women mainly consists of house women taking responsibilities for childcare and managing the household. These findings correspond with previous findings arguing that Flemish women still take the main responsibilities in running the family (Koelet 2005). Results on net monthly income – divided into quintiles – are related with occupational status. As women work less, it is not surprising that their average income is lower than those of men. Overall, the Flemish gender pay gap is not only due to shorter working periods of women, but also because of their higher employment in ‘soft’ poor paying sectors such as nursing and childcare. Concerning educational attainment, statistics show that around 30 percent of all adults between 25 and 64 years old have a bachelor or master degree. Although differences are not significant, it is a general trend that more girls participate (successfully) in higher education (Sax 2008). Furthermore, Flemish education policy focuses strongly on reducing the amount of unqualified school leavers and on offering second chance education in order to obtain a final

qualification of secondary school in later life (Vlaamse Regering 2001). Nevertheless, nearly one out of three Flemish adults is low qualified. The age distribution between men and women is rather similar. Generally speaking, women have longer life perspectives than men, but the Adult Education Survey questions only adults between age 25 and 64. Within this life span, differences by gender are not significant.

Participation

Having described the socio-economic profile of Flemish adults, we analyse their participation patterns in lifelong learning activities by gender. On an overall level, we notice that 59,0 percent of all men and 55,4 percent of all women participate in at least one lifelong learning activity – formal, non-formal or informal. These overall statistics together with statistics by type of learning can be found in table 2.

TABLE 2 here

The table starts with the participation in formal activities. Overall, women tend to participate a bit more in these courses, but the differences are small and not significant. Further analyses show that differences in field and level of the formal adult education course are also rather small and not significant.

Participation in non-formal activities is questioned by four different forms. Gender differences in classroom and distance learning are rather marginal. Overall, participation in distance learning is very low, apart from the gender case. Until 2007, the Flemish ministry of education offered ‘Guided Individual Learning’ by means of packages which could be ordered on the internet. Adult learners could ask for help of an online tutor. In 2007, the Flemish minister decided to close down this educational offer due to minor interest.

Nowadays, regular centres for adult education are stimulated to develop modes of distance learning in their global offer, but at this moment, this development is rather poor (Boeren 2009). Overall, the poor existence of distance learning is clearly reflected in these AES results. Seminars and workshops as well as guided on the job training are more popular among men. These results are not surprising as our sample showed that more men than women are active in the labour market. Furthermore, literature has repeatedly shown that men get better opportunities to develop themselves in the workplace (Clayton and Slowey 1996; Anker 1998; Blackburn and Jarman 2006; Heikkinen 2004). These findings are in contrast with the belief of college students who expect men and women to get the same opportunities in later life (Sipe, Johnson and Fisher 2009).

Informal self-directed learning differs between men and women. Using printed materials such as books or using computers and digital learning environments are more popular among men. This is in contrast with more social forms of learning such as conversations with friends, colleagues or family. Previous findings already showed that men prefer individual learning while social relations and contact with other people are more important in the learning process of women (Hayes 2001). Females are in constant search for more intimacy and less for autonomy (Miller 1986). Learning by means of television, video or radio does not differ between gender and is generally speaking rather low. We can assume this is an underestimation, bus as the AES views informal learning as a conscious and intended learning activity while mainstream definitions refer to at random and accidental learning (Schugurensky 2000). As watching television is a popular activity, as demonstrated by recent Flemish time budget studies, we can assume that almost everyone learns by using these media (Glorieux, Minnen and Van Tienoven 2008). Guided tours in musea or visiting cities are poorly present although a bit more among women. We find similar results related to visits to learning centres such as libraries.

Main purpose

Respondents who participated in formal or non-formal education were asked to complete a few additional questions about their learning activities. One of these questions measured the main purpose: do you mainly participate because of job related reasons or because of personal related reasons? Table 3 shows this statistic for formal as well as non-formal learning activities, divided by gender.

TABLE 3 here

Although participation patterns in formal activities did not differ significantly by gender, the main reason to participate does. Men participate more because of job related reasons while more than half of women indicated to participate because of mainly personal reasons. This result is striking as the level and field of education did not differ strongly. On a general level, more respondents indicated the job related reason in non-formal activities. This result is related with the definition of non-formal learning activities including workshops, seminars and guided on the job training. Table 2 showed that women are less represented in these courses. Among those who participate, men have more job related reasons than women. As a first explanation, we refer to the dominance of men in guided on the job training which clearly has a job related affiliation, which has not to be the case for e.g. leisure oriented classroom learning. Furthermore, it is possible that women attach more personal value to learning than men. Based on an attitude scale in the AES questionnaire, men indicated more than women that employers should be responsible for the training of their employees ($t = 2.179$, $df = 2949$, $p = .029$), that participation in learning can avoid unemployment ($t = 2.464$, $df = 2945$, $p = .014$) and that the skills you need to learn to do a job cannot be learnt in a classroom ($t =$

4.421, df = 2950, p = .000). Women have a stronger opinion that learning new things is fun (t = -3.688, df = 2971, p = .000) and that learning gives you more self-confidence (t = -5,219, df = 2958, p = .000). Attitude items related to employment are thus higher valued by men. Again, this confirms the gender dimension that male participation is more focused on labour market aspects and that female participation focuses on inter- and intra-personal aspects such as fun, self-confidence and building relations.

Barriers

Table 2 showed the general participation statistics in various adult learning activities divided by gender. Until now, we have stressed the gender dimension for actual participants. While analysing adult learning activities, we have to bear in mind that participation is a socially unequal subject (Desjardins, Rubenson and Milana 2006). In general, participants have a high educational attainment, have better job prospects and are rather young. In order to motivate and stimulate these non-participants, educational institutions and the regulating government can give incentives (Smith and Spurling 2001). Lowering barriers was a central theme in the work of Patricia Cross (1981) – including her Chain of Response Model. She argued that people can face situational, institutional and dispositional barriers preventing them from actual participation. Tackling these barriers is needed before participation can be realised. Situational barriers relate to the personal life circumstances such as a lack of time due to the balance between work and private life. Institutional barriers are produced by the educational institutions themselves by e.g. offering courses on inconvenient times or on difficult to reach locations. Dispositional barriers relate to psychological uncertainties such as a lack of self-confidence. Specific strategies will be needed to avoid or overcome these barriers, such as provision of information by educational institutions or the government or by adapting the learning offer towards the needs of potential learners (Boeren, Nicaise and Baert, 2010a).

In this paper, we are interested whether experiences of barriers differ by gender. If this is the case, we can argue it is needed to adapt gender specific strategies in order to widen participation in a gender equal way. The AES questionnaire contained eight barriers which had to be filled in by respondents who did not participate in formal or non formal learning activities, but who had the intention to do so. Results can be found in table 4, divided by gender.

TABLE 4 here

The results in table 4 clearly show that some barriers do not significantly differ between men and women. Not being able to participate because of lack of prerequisites, because of no offer at a reasonable distance, because of lack of confidence in one's own abilities, because of lack of support from the employer and because of conflicts with the work schedule are nearly the same for men and women. The last two barriers only had to be filled in by those respondents having a job. Overall, time scheduling issues seem an important problem and have to be taken into account by the government, educational institutions and employers. Despite the absence of a gender gap related to this barrier, we cannot neglect the destroying effect on adult education participation (Boeren, Nicaise and Baert, 2010b).

Financial difficulties in paying the course are more common among women than among men. More than 15 percent of all women judged the course of their interest as too expensive. We relate this finding to the socio-economic profile in table 1. More women were inactive, less were employed. Furthermore, more women indicated they are situated in the lowest income quintiles. The absence of a job can have a negative effect on adult education participation. Rubenson (2004) often refers to the 'long arm of the job'. The workplace itself offers a lot of training possibilities. A lot of multinationals have their own human resource development

services with strong focus on skill and knowledge development of their employees in order to increase their overall productivity. Furthermore, it is plausible that employers are willing to pay for external courses, organised outside the workplace. Additionally, in Flanders, adults in employment can pay training vouchers for a maximum of 250 euro a year (Op den Kamp, Sels and Bollens 2005). Only half of these vouchers have to be paid by themselves, the other half is subsidised. Adults in unemployment or inactiveness have no rights in buying these vouchers. The new decree on formal adult education states that adults in unemployment can get a reduction of one quarter of the normal fee, which is still more expensive than paying with training vouchers (Boeren 2009). Those in early retirement or household workers do not get any reduction. Overall, we notice a Matthew effect, indicating that those with a monthly income get positive incentives to participate in adult learning and that those without a monthly income get less. Special attention for the poorest groups remains an important point of attention.

The main difference between men and women is related to the experience of time pressure due to difficulties in combining family responsibilities with other life tasks. Flemish time budget studies related to the gender issue have repeatedly shown that women take main responsibilities in domestic work (25:02h a week for women versus 12:57h a week for men) (Glorieux and Koelet, 2002). Childcare and educating children are not included in this ‘domestic work’ category and is also significantly different by gender (3:37h a week for women versus 1:17h a week for men). On average, women work 10 hours a week less (14:07h a week for women versus 24:37h a week for men), but as indicated above, this difference is more than compensated by domestic work and childcare. When we count this overall workload pattern based on paid work, domestic work and childcare, we have to conclude that males have an average workload of 42:33 hours a week and females of 45:46 hours a week. Furthermore, women need a bit more sleep than men (1:26h difference a week) resulting in a

total loss of nearly five hours a week. Overall, we have to conclude that Flemish time use patterns are still very traditional.

Health or age problems are also significantly different by gender. In this case, men experience this barrier more than women. Although we do not have any further information to explore this barrier, it can possibly be linked to the dominant job related motives of males. Comparable with rational choice theory, people are often only willing to invest in their education if they are sure it will grant them some benefits (Allingham 2002). As people get older, their prospects and chances on the labour market are diminishing as the retirement age is getting closer (Doets, Hake and Westerhuis 2001). Investing time and money for uncertain benefits can thus be a barrier.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Harvard gender analysis framework starts with the description of the activity profile of both men and women: *who does what*? In our analysis, we noticed that men and women have on average equal participation rates (59,0 versus 55,4 percent), but that the participation differs by type of learning activity. Men's participation is clearly stronger in non formal job related settings. Looking at the p-levels of our analysis, differences in guided on the job training are most significantly different. Furthermore, the motives to participate – in formal and non formal learning – differ: men participate more because of job related reasons, women more because of personal related reasons. Looking at the barriers, we notice that women have greater difficulties in combining family life with other life spheres. Overall, we have to conclude that traditional gender roles are still present in Flanders: men earn money in the workplace, women take the main responsibilities at home.

The following steps in the Harvard gender analysis framework consist of analyzing access and control and to look at broader factors influencing the gender differences. In this regard, we

refer to participation research in the field of lifelong learning. Around 1980, several scholars created participation models explaining the shape of participation in an adult learning activity. Most models are originated in a psychological discourse and stress the importance of the individual motivation. Even in the 21st Century, the individual responsibility of the (potential) adult learner remains important, shaped in a neo-liberal educational discourse. This rather narrow individualistic scope is enlarged by Boeren, Nicaise and Baert (2010a). In their view, a decision to participate is the result of a matching process between the individual, the educational provisions and the regulating government. An adult can be highly motivated to participate and have a strong socio-economic profile, but if the course of his/her interest is not offered or too expensive, participation will not be realized. Furthermore, it is the role of the government to stimulate participation, to lower the barriers and to give incentives (Smith and Spurling 2001; Boeren 2008).

At the level of the individual, we can relate the gender differences to the socio-economic profile. Table 1 showed that women are less employed than men and that the net monthly income of women is below that of men. Looking at the type of employment, we observe that men are more employed in managerial roles than women. Until today, women suffer from the so-called glass ceiling and do often not succeed to climb the hierarchical ladder in their company. These findings at the individual level interact with the level of the educational provisions. The workplace itself generates a lot of learning opportunities, but as women are thus less employed in demanding jobs asking for continuous upgrade of knowledge and skills, they get less opportunities to participate in work related learning. In order to improve the labour market chances of women, and thus also their chances to get equal access to workplace learning, partnership between men and women should be achieved. Recent research by Hoobler et al (2009) demonstrated that male managers have strong perceptions that women have stronger conflicts between work and family life. Although women experience these

conflicts themselves, the perceptions of managers are stronger than the perceptions of women themselves. These perceptions shape the attitudes towards gender roles and create a gender unequal behaviour. In the end, these mechanisms lead to a vicious circle: women do not succeed to achieve better jobs in the workplace, as a result they get less training and because of the lack of continuous update and upgrade of skills and knowledge, they have more difficulties in climbing the hierarchical ladder.

Not only the education system and the labour market play a role in shaping and retaining these gender inequalities. Historical and social disadvantages have left their marks. As stated in the Harvard gender analysis framework, we have to understand these broader context factors. Boeren et al (2010a) also state that analyzing the broader environmental structural policy context in a country is needed to understand the educational practice. As an example, Flemish women obtained the right to vote during political elections in 1948 and until today, we notice that ministry posts are dominated by men. As powerful policy makers and employees in managerial jobs are mainly men, we should be aware of the masculine values slipping into policy actions (Jackson 2004). Because of these inequalities shaped in the past, gender equity measures are necessarily. One the organizations which pays attention to gender equality is UNESCO (2003) and as stated as the last step of the Harvard gender analysis framework, they work hard on developing policy interventions to reduce gender inequalities. As specific points of action, they want to strive towards the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in policy planning on all domains and to implement and evaluate this gender policy. Furthermore, they promote the participation of women in all domains and ask attention for the specific needs and priorities of women themselves. In order to achieve equal participation, specific programmes and activities should be developed such as e.g. a specific management training for women. Only by developing and implementing these gender equity

strategies, gender equality can be achieved and gender stereotypes will get a chance to disappear.

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