



# GENDER DISTRIBUTION IN FIELDS OF GERMAN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

## research question

The dynamic process of professionalization in early childhood education tends to improve the performance of pedagogical work, but also contributes to increasing the prestige of the professional field as a whole. Nowadays, the possible qualification levels are ranging from vocational school level to university master. In this context questions arise, which impact this has on the gender-related profiles of professional fields in early childhood education and whether the different qualification levels lead to a gender-biased hierarchy. The study at hand provides an overview on the presence of women and men in the various segments of early childhood education.

## method

The data on workers in German early childhood education is very inconsistent and for large parts not easy to use at more detailed levels. Since it was intended to provide an overview here, various sources of data were processed and merged. As it being the best resource, the official statistics of the German Federal Statistical Office and Regional Statistical Offices were explored and compared with existing social science-related surveys or evaluations. Remaining gaps were closed by own internet research and pencil-and-paper as well as telephone surveys.

## central results

I

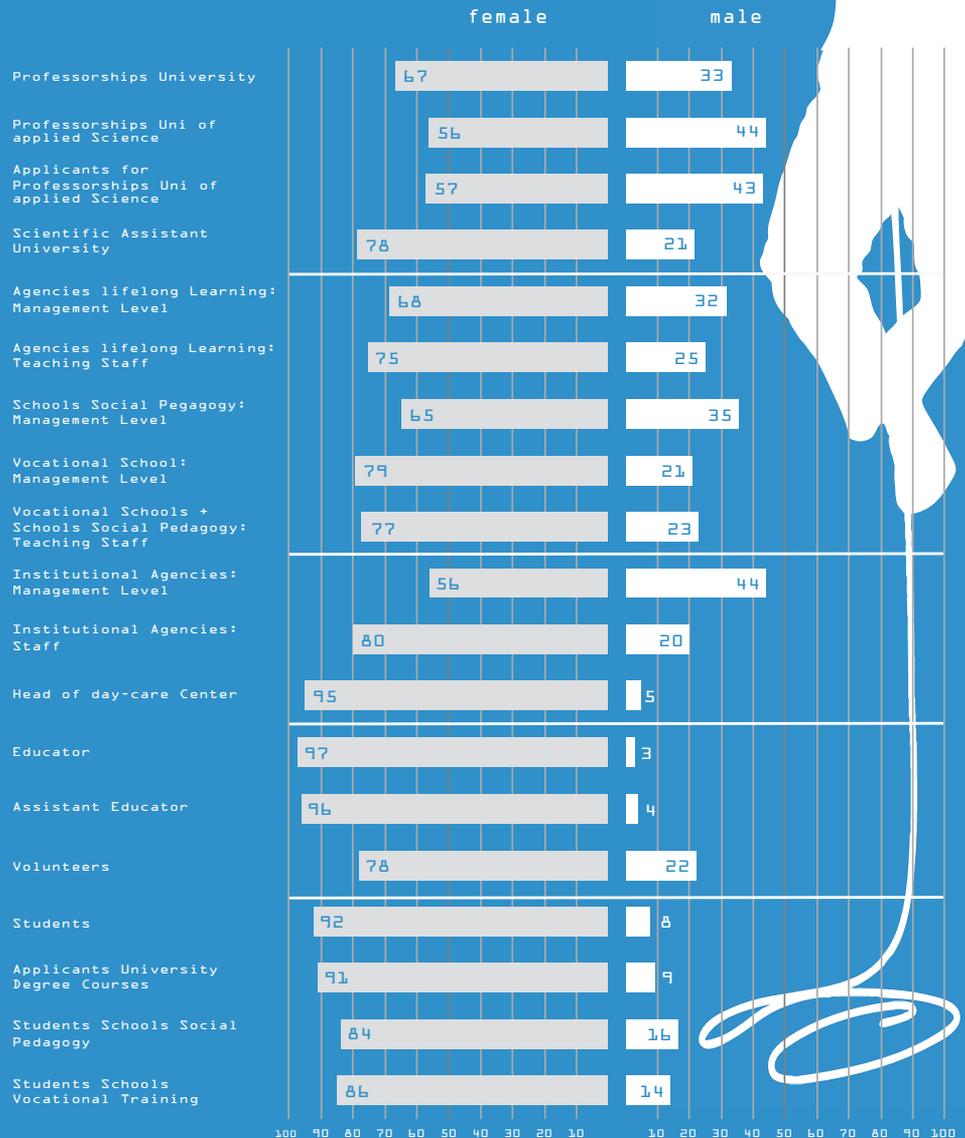
As it turns out, women dominate quantitatively in all segments of the sector of early childhood education. However, when different hierarchical levels are examined by comparison, structural gender imbalances to the detriment of women were observed whenever the position is related with increased attractiveness and responsibility.

II

The partial 'academisation' of the early childhood sector has not yet led to an increased interest of young men in the sector. Given the background of the quantitative relationship between higher education graduates and graduates of vocational training of schools of social pedagogy, short-term adaptation of the 'academisation' towards an increase of men cannot be expected. This holds even true if the higher education option should have spread more among young men.

III

Since men are more successful in the use of career options that the early education field provides, the following can be expected with regard to the differentiation of qualification caused by the partial 'academisation' of the field: Once young men show more interest in early childhood education, this will also increase the dynamics of their professional advancement in the field. Therefore the desirable increase of men in the field should be explicitly combined with an encouragement of women to advance as well.



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