ABSTRACT

GENDER, LABOUR MARKET AND THE EDUCATION. A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE BETWEEN SWEDEN AND ROMANIA

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The paper is focused on gender issues and especially on women’s status on the labor market, following a comparative perspective between Sweden and Romania. I have on purpose chosen a Western European country and an Eastern European country, both with Social Democratic welfare state regimes, but still promoting different social policies, generally speaking, and, in particular, different policies regarding women. This approach allows me to emphasize the similarities, the differences and the effects of these policies, as well as to describe in a suggestive manner women’s roles and statuses, also taking into consideration the societal characteristics, the present context and former events and policies that have significantly influenced women’s image and place in the society. The paper also discusses the connection between individual educational levels and the particular characteristics of women’s participation on the labor market, and especially between women’s involvement in learning programs and their status on the labor market and within other social systems. All these comparisons, discussions and analysis are related to the globalization and transformation process of the last years, in an attempt to understand the social process of change and its implications for women in the two countries.

While in Sweden the dominance of economic globalisation allowed Social Democracy to play an important part, having as consequence women’s release from the “male breadwinner” model, in Romania the situation is different. As political globalisation is dominant, a new “male breadwinner” model appeared and women have been forced towards decisions that weaken their position in the society.

Secondary analysis was used as method for research; the greatest difficulty encountered was that of harmonizing the data when comparing the same dimensions/variables for the two countries taken into consideration.

Key words: social policy, economic/political globalisation, gender differentials, “male breadwinner” model, double burden, labour market, people’s mentality.