ABSTRACT

GENDERED CONSTRUCTION OF ‘ACADEMIC CAREER’ IN CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISON.

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Gender hierarchy in academia with women’s subordination, marginalization and/or exclusion is to be found cross-nationally yet patterns of women’s participation in academia vary from country to country. In my paper I examine the cross-national differences in social construction of ‘academic career’ taking the example of Polish and German academia. I seek firstly to uncover the social profile of successful academics (e.g. in terms of social origin and family situation), their social capital and current professional position (productivity, income, work load and level of work satisfaction). Next, I reconstruct their career paths (e.g. time spans between different career steps, mobility, timing of childbearing) and finally I examine how different national contexts shape gendered construction of ‘academic career’ in both countries. Perceptions of gender discrimination in society and academia and opinions about proper gender roles are investigated as well and examined in terms of their correspondence with the actual experience of women and their social and academic profile.

My research is based mainly on the representative survey of full professors (male and female) in Poland and (West)Germany and the paper itself is a part of my dissertation project (in progress). These two countries have been chosen for comparison as they share the core principles of academic careers, institutional organization of university and higher education, and university culture, yet influence of different external factors, that in course of my research will be sorted out, resulted in different outcomes in women’s patterns of participation in academia, their academic careers paths and experiences.