

# Gender Discrimination in Education in Croatia

Ivana Šalinović

**Abstract**—The term gender emerged in the second half of the last century and since then a growing body of research dealing with the topic demonstrates its importance. Primarily, the research and the theories that were addressing the topic were focused on stating the differences between the terms sex and gender, where sex refers to the biological aspect of a person, while gender refers to the socially ascribed roles, attitudes, behaviors, and etc., and on gender discrimination whose visible and invisible repercussions are harming society and one of the agents of change should be educators on all educational levels since they are emotionally sculpting their students, that is why considerable effort should be put into implementing education about this topic into the standard curriculum. Not only educators, but it is also necessary to change the mindset of the younger generations because they will be important agents in the further elimination of gender discrimination, thus causing societal changes. Therefore, it is very important to hear their voices and their experiences and for these reasons, this research has been done, to see what the students of the second year at a private college university Aspira in Croatia have gone through in their educational ladder. The hypothesis was that the findings would most certainly show a huge difference between female and male students' experiences and effects of gender discrimination, but the results have actually shown a very mixed picture and the original hypothesis was somewhat disapproved. Instead of finding out that girls experienced a lot of gender discrimination, it turned out that it was the boys who believed that in their previous and current education, there was no equal time distribution between genders, they noticed that the language was not gender-sensitive, teaching aids were not adopted to the genders. They were also the ones that pointed out that the discipline path was not the same for everyone, and they were the ones that the teacher's gender had more influence on and were also the ones that experienced more gender discrimination.

**Keywords**— Gender, discrimination, elementary school, high school.

## I. INTRODUCTION

**A**SSURANCE of equal opportunities is a fundamental principle for any state that wants to promote democratic culture, build a healthy society in which every person is valued for what he/she truly is, regardless of their gender, race, religion, socio-professional category, etc., and since all human functioning has a gendered cast [58], researching gender has become a vital part of pathing a better future for the upcoming generations, so it is necessary to peel the layers of the past to better understand the past and with those insights try to steer to a better future. Up to now, much has been done to fight and prevent gender discrimination in all parts of the world, but the devastating reality is that gender discrimination is still an insidious problem, and females are without a doubt routinely facing societal and cultural obstacles because of their gender.

Ivana Šalinović is with University College Aspira, Zagreb, Croatia (e-mail: salinovicivana1@gmail.com).

Instilled in them from an early age and trained through years of schooling are behaviors that restrict them, and demand from them to be passive and not to fight against unfair treatment which leads to unconsciously embracing imposed gender stereotypes. Complicit in reinforcing the hurdles are external agents, among them their parents, teachers, peers, etc., and since the majority of their early years they spend in the educational environment, it is devastating to witness how that environment still mirrors only the male perspective, which can be seen in the curriculum, textbooks, teachers' behaviors, and so many other examples. Educational research is very abundant and it is now almost the second most important group of research [9]. Still, it is a rarity to find research that deals with the students' experience of gender discrimination since any type of research that combines gender and education has been mainly focused on the way toddlers, teachers, and parents view gender. Only lately there has been a rise of studies tackling the topics like gender equality, equity, and especially gender discrimination [18] and its effects which can sometimes be very difficult to tangibly measure. For these same reasons, this research was done, using a questionnaire built on the extensive existing research with a goal of trying to measure something that in certain moments seems unmeasurable, while simultaneously acknowledging the limits of the research. The research was done with the second-year students of a small private university college Aspira in Croatia where there are three departments: Gastronomy, Sport Management, Tourism, and the age of students ranges from 18 to 50. A questionnaire was used to find out about their experience of gender discrimination in elementary, high school, or university.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Examination of gender discrimination cannot be done without glimpsing through previous studies to see how far the world has come since the concept of gender was starting to be talked about in the 1970s [87]. The theoretical studies that followed were dealing with the difference between gender and sex which was and still is difficult to distinguish for a society that still believes in the predefined roles of female/male. Simply stated, the term sex refers to the physical distinction, while gender to all the societal and cultural concepts [8], [57]. The process of gendering begins before birth and continues postnatally [33] and across their lifespan, people perform a patterned system of practices [87]. A sizable amount of research and numerous theories have investigated how gender is developed and constructed [11], [47], and soon gender equality, gender parity, and gender equity became buzzwords [21]. In an effort to create equality and parity there should be an

elimination of every form of discrimination which is the unequal treatment of individuals based on a certain condition or different behavior towards others [39], [50], [73]. Discrimination can be categorized in different levels and types [24], [28], [39], [73].

#### A. Laws

Governments have made an abundance of legally binding commitments and numerous laws have been passed demanding the abolition of all forms of discrimination and among them are 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education (Paris), 1979 United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (United Nations, New York), 1990 World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand), 1995 Declaration and Platform for Action, Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, China), 2000 Dakar Framework for Action, "Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments", World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal), 2000 United Nations Millennium Declaration (United Nations, New York), 2005 Plan of Action of the World Programme for Human Rights Education (United Nations, New York) [8]. Elimination of gender discrimination is also a core value of the EU with its Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 [91] and a global priority [79] for UNESCO with its plans: Strategy for gender equality in and through education [88] and the Gender Equality Action Plan [89]. The Education 2030 agenda [83] will be led by The Global Education 2030 Agenda UNESCO as a part of their 17 sustainable development goals, and Education is Goal 4 [88].

#### B. Education

Besides the legal part, many countries have accomplished equal access to education for all children but that does not mean there is gender equality or that there is no gender bias. Surprisingly, gender differences are most pronounced in European and American cultures in which traditional sex roles are minimized [16]. The educational system, like all institutions of society, exhibits gender discrimination and reproduces existing gender regimes.

##### 1. Toddlers

Sex prejudices emerge by the age of 3 and are in full force by age 4 [39]. Toddlers notice gender differences when they are 24 months old [22], [32], [54], [59]. As children grow older, differences become more obvious, forms of play change [3], toys and the choice of toys become gendered [2], [67]. All of these processes evolve as the children enter the classroom and although gender parity has been achieved, gender equality will be achieved through gender equity [1], [64], [82], [88].

##### 2. School

Upon entering school, gender differences change and become more noticeable as students grow older [35]. Although the curriculum is created in a non-sexist way, it still mirrors the outside world, and the combination of the everyday classroom [27] with school language [65] and also with the hidden curriculum [15] ensures that the girls are aware they are not on the same level as boys [76] which can lead to some of them to

behave in a way that bolsters boys' power at their own expense [55].

##### 3. Educators

Ideal school seems to be an unachievable goal because even that notion is gender-sensitive [37] and the educators, whose task should be only to see their students through types of interaction [43], although they do not explicitly make gender discrimination in lessons, reinforce it through their behaviors [60], interactions [30], comments they make [45], the language they use, examples they give during a lesson, seating arrangements, or which age group is taught [61]. Some teachers unintentionally or unwillingly perpetuate gender standards and are completely unaware of gender discrimination or are not even familiar with its concept [52], and the ones who understand it, associate it with the out-of-school factors and do not see their role in it [38]. However, there is a considerable amount of those who question even their own teaching and their own bias [62] and the combination of teachers' bias with the parents' distorted perception of their children in gender role stereotypic activities influence the children's self-perception [23] leads to constant reaffirming of gender stereotypes.

##### 4. Teacher's Influence

A lot has been said about the profession of teaching, more precisely about the feminization of the occupation [85] and the seriousness of allegations have been seen in certain cases where feminization of this line of work was used to blame the failure of some countries' educational reforms [66]. While discussing feminization, the topic of the creation of the Male Crisis [75] is often mentioned since boys are often forced to wear the Masculinity Mask [46]. Effects of teachers' gender on school achievement have been various, some are claiming that they are generally insignificant [10] or do not even matter [14] while others found that it has a major influence on the student's performance. It has also been shown that the influence undermines girls' performance in certain subjects like Math (usually girls prefer languages and boys physical education [44]), but so many things influence girls to steer away from STEM domains [12], which can lead to choosing a less demanding high school [13] or choosing a major based on the perceived discrimination in that field [72] which again leads to gender inequity in traditionally female fields [53]. Without a doubt, the situation is not the same everywhere and some studies show a completely different situation, for example, one study shows that male students face discrimination in each subject [42], and another one shows that the more masculine the subject, there is more positive discrimination against girls [7].

##### 5. Educational Materials

Countless educational materials show signs of gender bias including textbooks [49], picture books [40], children's literature [48], and so on, confirming not a lot has changed since 1970 when it was discovered that gender bias in textbooks was found in countries at all levels of economic development and at all levels of gender equality [5] which other recent research confirms [4].

### C. Additional Research

Other researchs dealing with gender in education mostly focused on goal orientation and measures of self-regulated learning, self-discipline, and motivation [20], [31], [41], [51], [63].

Gender discrimination in education does not end after education, it progresses into applying for a job position, whether in school administration [34] or obtaining a full professor's position [68] [17], unfortunately, these interviews cannot be blind auditions [29].

### III. CROATIA

According to 2019 estimate [90], there are 2,1 million women, 51,5%, and 1,97 million men, 48,5%, in Croatia, and the sex distribution in education in 2020 was as follows: basic schools 48,8% F, 51,2 M; upper secondary schools 48,9% F, 51,1% M and in institutions of higher education 57,2% F, 42,8% M; basic school teachers 85,9% F, 14,1% M, secondary school teachers 67,9% F, 32,1% M; and academic staff at institutions of higher education 51,1% F, 48,9% M [70].

Croatia is 45th in the Global Gender Gap Index 2021 [81] and 9th in the regional ranking Eastern Europe and Central Asia with 70th place in literacy rate, females 7%, 99.6% [81], since 2017 has been one of the countries with the greatest increase in Gender Equality Index scores [86]

Croatia is familiar with the fight for gender equality since it has signed numerous international documents for protecting and promoting human rights and fighting for gender equality, various anti-discriminatory laws, work laws and so on. Croatia has even hosted an Expert Group Meeting on "Gender and Racial Discrimination" [74], [84].

Whilst many laws have been passed, there has not been a lot of academic research on gender discrimination in Croatia, most of them that have been done were dealing with discrimination in the business or in the labor market [26] or they were investigating sexual harassment in the workplace [6]. So, it can be said that the only extensive research about gender discrimination in education was done by Kamenov and Galić as a part of the research on perception, experience, and attitudes about general gender discrimination in Croatia [36]. The parts of [36] that were dealing with education showed that gender discrimination is still present; for example opinions that girls should be quieter during lessons, or boys get better grades than girls from female teachers if they show interest in the subject, and gender is still important for enrollment in vocational school. The research has also confirmed that sexual dichotomization in high school is still a tool of gender discrimination and most of high schoolers have experienced gender discrimination in school (in the form of comments, a difference of grading, disciplining and so on). Kamenov and Galić's conclusion was that in all analyzed levels of gender discrimination, there are still indicators of traditional/patriarchal thinking.

### IV. THE RESEARCH

#### A. Method

The primary source of data collection was a questionnaire

that consisted of 30 questions (3 groups of the same 10 questions to track the differences in elementary, high school, or university levels) with the objective of identifying the students' experience of discrimination in their educational environment. Confidentiality of the respondents was maintained with the anonymity of the questionnaire with the hopes of resulting in a better chance of acquiring their objective answers. Limitations that appeared and that were tried to be avoided were very specific because the process of studying discrimination has its unique complexities that other research domains do not have as the experimenter intentionally or unintentionally can influence the outcome, can show biases in creating the questions, or can interpret the data as he/she desires [92].

The questionnaire tried to question all 3 signs of gender discrimination in the classroom: behavioral discrimination, achievement discrimination, and developmental discrimination [78] and was influenced and inspired by several researchers [36], [38], [43].

The point of the research was to find the answers to the questions:

- 1- What are the experiences of Aspira's second-year students of gender-based discrimination based on their gender through elementary and high school?
- 2- What are the experiences of Aspira's second-year students of gender-based discrimination based on their field of study during their two years of university?

And it was done using the questions:

1. Educators spent equal time interacting with people of my and the opposite sex;
2. Educators used gender-sensitive language;
3. Educators encouraged boys to behave in accordance with the expectations (louder, physically active ...);
4. Educators encouraged girls to behave in accordance with the expectations (quieter, more passive);
5. The materials (books, posters, worksheets) were adapted to my gender;
6. My and the opposite sex were equally disciplined;
7. Educators used different criteria for assessment depending on gender;
8. The gender of the educator influenced my learning because we are of the same gender, so I was able to identify;
9. Gender experiences in primary school influenced my choice of further education;
10. I felt gender discrimination in primary school
11. There was also an additional question in which they if they desired so, could write their own experience of gender discrimination.

The questionnaire was announced several times from the beginning of the winter semester, then in December; the link to Google forms was directly sent to all second-year students through the university's forum platform and also posted on the internal university webpage for several weeks. The questions were written in Croatian to avoid possible language confusion and to mainly avoid connecting the questions with the English lessons. Likert scale was used, with the number 1 referencing that they strongly disagree and number 5 referencing that they strongly agree.

**B. Participants**

The participants were second-year students of all three departments (Gastronomy, Tourism, and Sports Management) and since it is a private and a somewhat vocational university, the number of students that attend it is not very high and since most of them are part-time students who do not regularly follow the webpage, the number got even smaller. In the end, 26 students completed the survey, 12 females and 14 males. Out of 12 females, 5 of them belonged to the age group 18-25, 5 of them 26-30, one in 36-40, and one in 41-45. Out of males, 12 of them were from 18-25, one from 26-30, and one over 31. According to their departments; 8 students studied Sport (7 male, 1 female), 8 students were from Tourism (all female), and there were 10 Gastronomy students (7 male, 3 female).

**B. Analysis**

Question 1. Educators Spent Equal Time Interacting with People of My and Opposite Sex

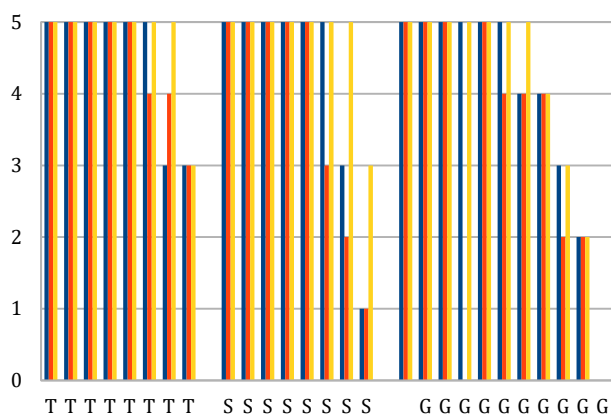


Fig. 1 Educators spent equal time interacting with people of my and opposite sex

The first question inquired if the amount of time educators spent with the students and their opposite gender was proportionate. As can be seen from Fig. 1 Tourism strongly agreed 87,5% with this statement only at the university level, and a small percentage, 25% of them declared that there was an average distribution of time in elementary and in high school. A similar pattern for university and elementary school can be seen in Sports, with a slightly less agreement, 62,5% about equal time distribution in high school. The difference in results is noticeable when compared with Gastronomy where 40% of them and mostly males declared a substantial difference in time distribution at all educational levels.

Question 2. Educators Used Gender-Sensitive Language

The second question examined educators' usage of gender-sensitive language. Fig. 2 shows that Tourism mostly agreed with the statement 60%, only a few of them gave lower grades for elementary school and even less for high school. Almost two-thirds of Sport 62% gave high marks to all levels, and one-third gave lower grades, especially for high school and university. An almost identical situation as in Sport is with

Gastronomy where one third gave lower marks mostly for high school.

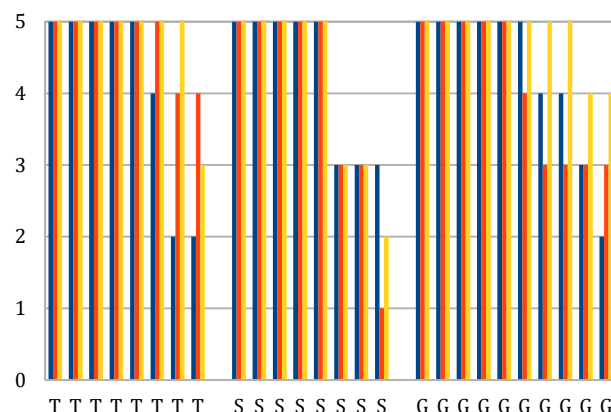


Fig. 2 Educators used gender-sensitive language

Question 3. Educators Encouraged Boys to Behave in Accordance with the Expectations (louder, physically active ...)

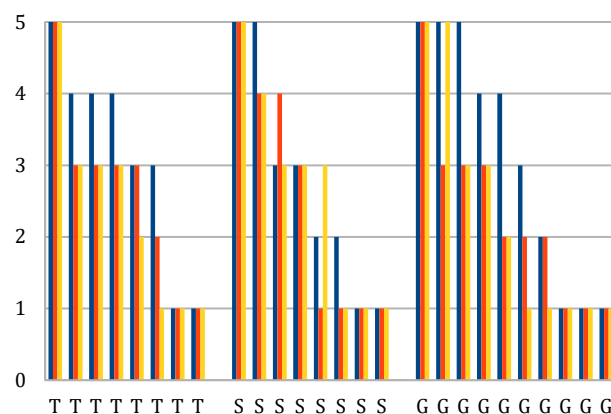


Fig. 3 Educators encouraged boys to behave in accordance with the expectations (louder, physically active ...)

The third question was dealing with whether the educators encouraged boys to behave in accordance with their expectations of them, meaning were they expected to be louder, more physically active, and so on and what is visible from Fig. 3 is that Tourism confirmed that it was mostly the case in elementary school, but less in high school and even less in university. Sport showed that it happened a lot in elementary school but less at university and even less in high school. Gastronomy indicated that such behavior was vastly encouraged in elementary, less in high school, and a little bit less in university.

Question 4. Educators Encouraged Girls to Behave in Accordance with the Expectations (Quieter, More Passive)

Question 4 was focused on whether girls were encouraged to behave as was expected of them. As can be seen from Fig. 4, Tourism gave even higher grades than in the previous question for elementary, but lower for high school and even lower for university. The same situation happened for elementary with

Sport and Gastronomy, they gave higher grades than in the previous question, and they almost had the same results for high school and university where half of them gave an average/neutral mark and the other half disagreed with the statement.

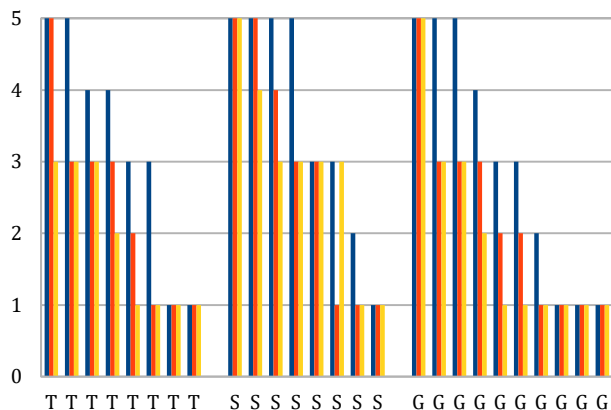


Fig. 4 Educators encouraged girls to behave in accordance with the expectations (quieter, more passive).

Question 5. The Materials (Books, Posters, Worksheets) Were Adapted to My Gender

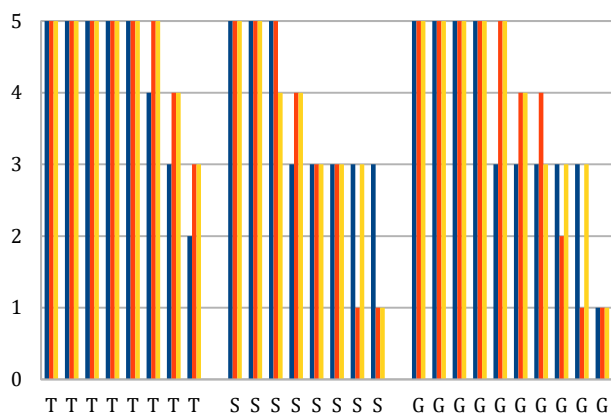


Fig. 5 The materials (books, posters, worksheets) were adapted to my gender

Question five referred to whether all the teaching aids were adapted to the student's gender. Fig. 5 shows that Tourism markedly agreed with a small minority slightly disagreeing for elementary school. A large portion of Sport gave an average mark, especially for elementary school and some gave lower marks for high school and university. Gastronomy is almost identical to Sports in answering this question.

Question 6. My and the Opposite Sex Were Equally Disciplined

Question 6 was about whether the genders were equally disciplined where two-thirds of Tourism strongly agreed for all of the levels, one-third on average agreed for all levels and as represented by Fig. 6. Sport was divided, half of them completely agreed, while the rest slightly agreed and some of them completely disagreed. Gastronomy highly agreed for

university-level but only half of them agreed for the elementary and high school level and the other half showed a huge difference with very low grades in elementary and high school.

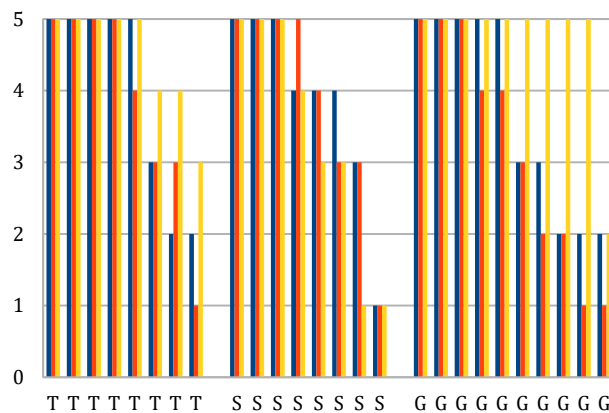


Fig. 6 My and the opposite sex were equally disciplined

Question 7. Educators Used Different Criteria for Assessment Depending on Gender

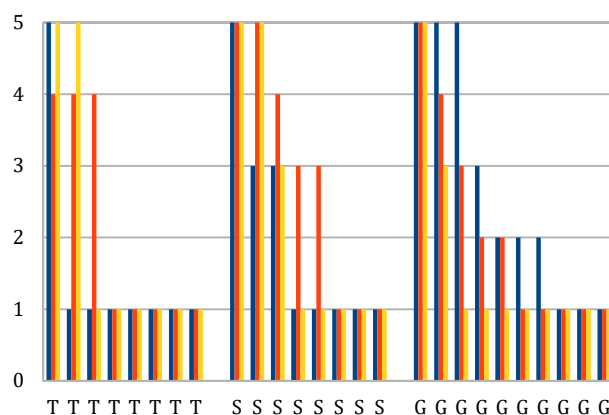


Fig. 7 Educators used different criteria for assessment depending on gender

Question seven, represented by Fig. 7, was interrogating whether educators used different criteria for assessment depending on gender. Tourism mostly disagreed and those who agreed with that statement only connected it with high school. Half of Sport strongly agreed with the statement for almost all levels but especially with the high school level, whereas the other half completely disagreed. Gastronomy varied a lot because most of them agreed with that statement for elementary school, a little bit less with high school, and even less with the university.

Question 8. The Gender of the Educator Influenced My Learning Because We Are of the Same Gender, So I Was Able to Identify

The eighth question was dealing with the influence of the same-gender teacher. Fig. 8 shows that Tourism who are mostly girls, half of them agreed with that statement for all levels, the other half strongly disagreed and very similar results were in

Sport and Gastronomy

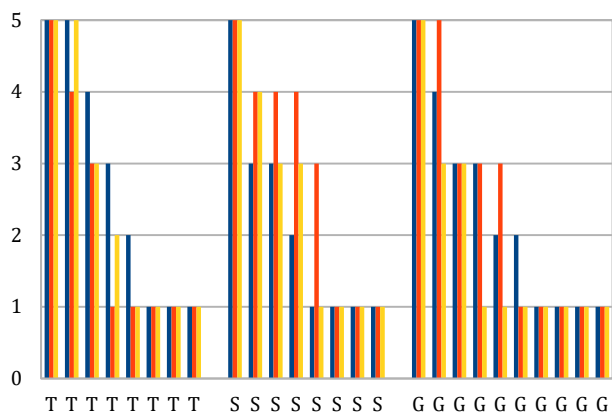


Fig. 8 The gender of the educator influenced my learning because we are of the same gender, so I was able to identify

Question 9. Gender Experiences in Primary School Influenced My Choice of Further Education

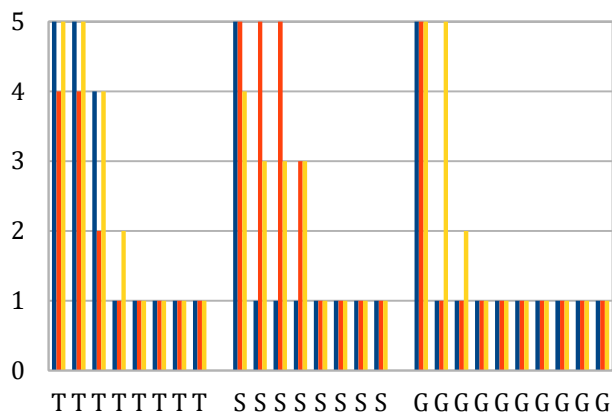


Fig. 9 Gender experiences in primary school influenced my choice of further education

The ninth question was dealing with the effects of gender discrimination which can be seen in Fig. 9 where Tourism shows that almost one-third of them said it has affected their choice of education on all levels. Sport showed a huge difference between elementary where only one student agreed with the statement, whereas half of them agreed with the statement for high school and university.

Only one female student from Gastronomy said it affected her choice on all levels, some other students said it affected them at the university levels, and all the others said no for all the levels.

Question 10. I Felt Gender Discrimination

The final question was dealing with their actual experience of gender discrimination. Fig. 10 explains that in Tourism, one student expressed that she felt it at all levels, and one more student said she felt it in high school, all the others said no to all levels. Only one student among all Sports students experienced it in elementary or university, but half of them experienced it in high school. Gastronomy has similar results in

high school, where half of them experienced it, but just slightly less in elementary or university.

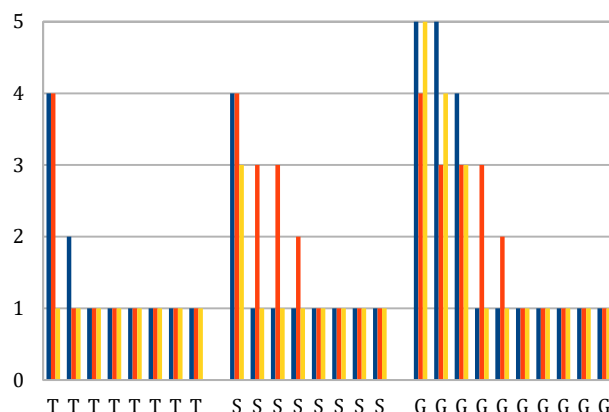


Fig. 10 I felt gender discrimination

The last question for each part was an open-end question where they were able to comment on their own experiences of gender discrimination.

Almost all students from Tourism but one left either the comment that they have not personally experienced it or they have not paid attention to it. One said that she does not believe in gender equality and the only comment connected with the discrimination was that in elementary school, some boys' behaviors were justified with the saying, "boys will be boys" and the girls had to have tidy handwriting (the student even commented that is not biologically possible to change it). Sports students said they did not experience discrimination, but there were comments about how in elementary school, educators were defending female pupils no matter what and because of a few males who behaved badly everybody else suffered and female tears were helping them while male tears were an embarrassment. One student gave an example of a feminist teacher in a high school where male students were not able to get a passing grade, so the principal had to intervene and the only female said that the gender discrimination was felt in high school but not because of the educators, but because of the other colleagues. Most of the Gastronomy students said that they have not experienced any form of gender discrimination. Some of them commented that boys had lower grades than girls. One of them commented that it was expected of her to be a mother first and she also laments that women create pressure on themselves and by accepting discriminatory situations they encourage the system. Her final thought was that until that does not change, there will be gender divide. One student commented that boys had stricter punishment in high schools, and another commented that at the university it was felt by some chefs that only the males can be professional chefs. One student retold the situations that happened to him while he attended one of the best gymnasiums in Croatia, how girls had to cover their legs, boys were not allowed to show their knees, and educators even negatively commented on boys' outfits and the paradox was that the dress code did not apply to the educators. He continued with

the story how there was also discrimination because girls were allowed to have their exams postponed.

## V. DISCUSSION

The hypothesis for this study was that the findings would most certainly show a huge difference between female and male experiences and that the experiences the students had would also demonstrate the effect this type of discrimination has had on their education in the sense of them choosing different educational paths, but the results have actually shown a very mixed picture and have shed new light on the effects of gender discrimination in elementary, high school and university which can be valuable data for future generations.

The focus of the study was different discriminatory educational segments that have shown up in numerous types of research. The first of them was the time distribution, which usually negatively favored boys. Here, the results are attesting that the girls (Tourism) believe there was an equal time distribution, especially at the university where there are mostly females in the Tourism department. It has to be taken into consideration that, since there are not enough male students, girls may not be able to notice possible inequality. This can be read from their lower grades for high and elementary school where they were in mixed classes. The boys were the ones who attested that the time distribution was not equal but it could be in correlation with that, if girls are getting an equal amount of attention as they claimed they have, this also could be interpreted from the boys' perspective that although it was equal, for them it seemed less since they have been used to getting more attention, which is evident in the Gastronomy department, where they claimed time inequality for all levels.

Girls claimed the educators (again at the university) used gender-sensitive language. This is one of the most interesting findings in this research because in Croatia it is very rare for any person to use gender-sensitive language. This finding also indicates that maybe girls are not even aware how that type of language would even look like, since they have never heard it, and they do not realize that language that is gender sensitive includes female gender (Croatian has forms of male and female gender in all words). A considerable number of boys claimed the opposite. It is visible in the Gastronomy group which can be explained by the fact that their high schools were usually vocational gastronomy high schools with predominantly female students. It may mean that there was a possibility of discrimination against boys which can be supported by the marks they gave for university where there are more boys than girls in their department. At the university, the language is probably more adjusted, which for those who have been brought up in Croatian society could be seen as a huge shift from the standard language.

The part that was connected with the encouraging behavior for girls and boys showed very similar, but also in certain cases different results. All three groups mostly agreed that the behavior of boys was encouraged in elementary, probably because they had more playtime, and most of the students come from smaller cities where there is still a predominant traditional opinion that boys should be more playful, while girls should be

quieter. There was a slight drop as they progressed to high school, which can be explained by their vocational schools where Sports students were more encouraged in their sports endeavors and were not consequently encouraged to behave like that during high school so they could finish it. Although it did drop a little bit, it is still very present at the university, where there are almost no females in the Sports department. Tourism students acknowledged that fact, especially for elementary school. It is the same for Gastronomy students, who experienced a huge drop in that type of encouragement from elementary school, which again could be connected with them being in mostly female high school. Most of the female students agreed with the statement that girls were encouraged to behave according to societal expectations. The boys hugely agreed and especially for the elementary school. It is interesting that they all responded almost the same for the university as in the previous question. The reason for girls moderately agreeing could be found that encouraging them to be more passive, and quieter was probably done in such a way they were not able to notice it, while boys were able to see the difference. One of the biggest surprises was that the teaching aids were considered mostly adapted to both genders according to girls, whereas boys saw the difference especially in elementary school. Sports students as well as Gastronomy students noticed a difference in high school and even in university. This fact is also very surprising since most of the Sports and Gastronomy students are males, and that has been happening since the foundation of the university so it was presumed that all materials were adapted to cater to their needs. On the other hand, it could be their perception of not being treated equally and the reality could be quite the opposite. Girls (Tourism) since they have not been used to gender-sensitive materials, may not be aware they are not included.

Discipline and assessment criteria were next on the list. Girls agreed with the statement about equal discipline whereas Sport and Gastronomy were divided. Gastronomy gave lower marks for high school, which could be because if they were encouraged to behave as boys are expected to behave, then they were also breaking more rules and consequently being disciplined more. Sports gave almost the same marks for high school and university which has to be seen through the case of them being mostly in the male class so they were not able to see so many different discipline processes. Assessment criteria for girls were a little bit different in high school, with the possible explanation that in some traditionally male subjects they were not treated equally, and it could have been more noticeable. For half of the boys, there was a huge difference in Sports especially in high school, which could be the result of them being treated equally in school, while not being treated equally in the real world because of their accomplishments in their respective sports. For Gastronomy it was very present in elementary, a little bit less in high school and all groups confirmed it is still present in university, which is a very regrettable fact.

The influence of the teacher's gender is where there were almost completely similar results in all groups. Half of them agreed with it in elementary school, half completely disagreed and the pattern was that there was a decline for high school and



even less in university, which is surprising since most of the educators in all three departments are male, and Gastronomy and Sports mostly had male teachers at their high school. Gender experiences have shown not to be an important factor in the choice of their educational path for Gastronomy, while a small portion of Tourism has based their choice on that, and at least half of Sport has done it in high school and university. Have they experienced gender discrimination was the last question, about a quarter of females have experienced it while boys have mostly experienced it in high school and some even in university. Analyzing all the answers, the original hypothesis was somewhat disapproved. Instead of finding out that girls experienced a lot of gender discrimination and that it had a huge effect on their career choice, it turned out that for them and respectfully for the Tourism department, they did not experience it in some drastic way. A possible explanation could be that they have always been taught to be passive, not to rebel, not to make any interruptions and since throughout their whole education they never came across gender-sensitive language, or teaching aids, it never came to their minds that it should/could be used and that the hidden curriculum, the small everyday details are actually gender discrimination. So, it was the boys who believed there was no equal time distribution, they noticed that the language was not gendered sensitive, and teaching aids were not adapted to genders. They were also the ones that pointed out that the discipline path was not the same for everyone, and they were the ones on whom the teacher's gender had influenced, and were also the ones that experienced more gender discrimination which is an extraordinary finding that could very likely indicate that there is a shift in the society towards making gender equality and since most of them have been traditionally accustomed for more attention, for them gender equality can be perceived as male inequality.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of discrimination is present in the lives of most teenagers and can greatly affect their emotional state and their future plans [19]. The outcome is of three factors: (a) the genetic/evolutionary predisposition to form and differentially evaluate in groups and out groups; (b) cultural norms, which attach higher status and dominance to males than females; and (c) the socialization of sex-typing [24]. Gender discrimination is far away from being eradicated and since none of us teach in isolation [1], centuries-old limitations have and will be for some unforeseeable future a part of the educational system. Opportunities that have been taken away because of persons' gender have done insurmountable damage to many generations, fortunately, the times are slowly, but surely changing, and fight against gendered injustice has become a prerogative of so many educators who try to incorporate gender mainstreaming in their work. Although the results showed an unexpected picture, where instead of finding that girls experienced gender discrimination it was the boys who recognized and felt it more, the surface shows a better picture of gender equality than it was envisioned. This research was also done so students can become aware of certain possible discriminations they faced and may have not been even familiar that it was discrimination or they

have forgotten or repressed it. It made them question the experiences they have gone through, to create dialogues so they can examine their own biases and stereotypes and try to understand and dismantle some of the barriers. Although the original hypothesis was disapproved, the picture of girls feeling equally represented, seen by their educators is showing a new path and new discoveries in terms of the effects of gender discrimination. The questions that arise from the boys' results are: Do they mean that boys have actually gone through more gender discrimination through their education? Have they been the victims of educators by not giving them equal attention, equal discipline, equal grades, or have they perceived all of that as discrimination and the reality could be that they were treated equally which is a huge step from generations of unequal treatment of girls. Additional research has to be done to investigate this possible theory. Whatever the case, the results also showed that gender discrimination is still present which has to be stopped only by having government-prescribed mandatory education for educators [76] so their gender bias can be tackled. Obviously, educators are not machines but they need to become aware that their modeling normative behavior. They should be gender aware, see their work through a gender lens, use gender-sensitive teaching aids and resources and try to implement gender transformative policies in their schools [88]. Numerous manuals have been written with advice on how to see students from a holistic perspective [43], [56], [71] or how a checklist for teachers [77], [80] or even how 70 strategies (those strategies are accompanied with the solutions to numerous problems faced by the educational institutions [25]) can be useful. Although great strides have been made, there is a long path ahead (governmental willingness factors are central to understanding gender equality in education [69]) until the representativeness, recognition, and appreciation of females in the educational system equals their colleagues'.

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