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THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN WORK METHODS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN
GERMAN SOCIETY

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the influence of modern working methods on women in Germany. In the context of current studies on gender equality, it is clear that the implementation of this human-right will not be achieved in the foreseeable future. This thesis introduces the "Capability Approach" according to Armataya Sen and develops indicators which are operationalised in a questionnaire. This paper concludes with an analysis of the data and inclusion of relevant literature. This thesis arrives at the conclusion that in Germany modern working methods alone will not achieve equality, but that a societal transformation is called for.

Keywords

Gender Equality, Capability Approach, Remote-Work, Flexible Working Hours, German Labour Market.

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1. Introduction

Due to globalisation and the accelerating pace of technological advancement, every aspect of modern life is undergoing change. Recent events such as the global covid pandemic have drastically changed the way we live and interact with each other. This of course includes the way we all work. New working methods such as home office arrangements, teleworking as well as flexible working hours have also changed the way women combine their professional and their family lives today. This of course has an impact on our society and moreover on our home lives and relationship dynamics. To adapt to these new challenges, the pursuit of a fairer and more equal society has become more important than ever. This includes the equal access to a professional career. Although this is a global problem with worldwide efforts, progress in addressing this challenge has been slow. A recent study conducted for the G20 meeting in Indonesia concluded that equalising wages and access to paid work, as well as reaching leadership positions, is still more difficult for women than for men. The study also estimated that closing gender gaps will take nearly 132 years at the current pace of global progress. In addition, the report states, "Women's advancement into leadership positions also lags - while all S&P 500 companies have at least one woman on their board, 90% of Fortune 500 CEOs are men." (cf. Yosetya/Prihatiningsih 2022: 14-15)

The aim of this paper is to analyse the impact of the modern work environment on gender equality in the above areas for working women in Germany. In order to achieve this objective, this thesis introduces and defines the gender equality perspective. Furthermore, the gender perspective will be used to answer the proposed research question. For this reason, this thesis establishes a basic historical and theoretical framework based on the „Capability Approach“ according to Amartya Sen. For the research section six indicators were developed for a questionnaire for Germany. The standards for collecting valid and reliable data through the created questionnaire are presented. Furthermore, a brief analysis of three expert interviews in

the field of gender equality and human resources, conducted as part of the “Empower Playbook of the G20 Summit in Indonesia“, offers insights of present and future challenges for women in the international work force. Subsequently, the research results, as well as the three international expert interviews are evaluated and interpreted from the perspective of the “Capability Approach“ according to Sen. For the concluding section of this thesis possible future paths for a more equitable working environment are briefly examined as a best practice outlook for Germany.

2. Historical evolution of the legislative frame concerning the working life of women in Germany since 1949

In Germany, equality in the labour market was enshrined in the Basic Law in 1949 (Hagemann et al 2020: 287). The article 3 paragraph states that men and women have equal rights in all areas of life. However, it was still necessary for a woman to obtain her husband's consent, if she wanted to take a paid job or pursue a professional career. (cf. *ibid.*) Although the Equal Rights Act of 1958 abolished this rule, women were still exclusively responsible for household, child rearing and the care for the sick and the elderly. These everyday tasks naturally affected their professional careers. It took almost 20 years for the Civil Code to be amended. The paragraph of a new law stated: "The spouses must take the interests of their partners and the family into consideration, when choosing and pursuing gainful employment. (cf. Berghahn 2003: 9). In effect, these words were the legal foundation for a beginning gender equality path for the German work force. However, the reality of partnerships and family challenges in Germany only seldom corresponded with the proposed legal paragraphs. Women remained the primary caregivers for their families and daycare for children developed slowly, especially in West Germany.

It was not until the UN Charter of 1980, which aimed to prohibit any kind of discrimination against women in all areas of life, that the reality of women within the Germany society began to change. More progressive legislations were initiated. For example, the equalisation of working environments and conditions for women in public service. And also, the development of more affordable daycare for children.

Finally, with the EU Anti-Discrimination Directive of 2006, followed the aim of: "(...) German equality policy (...) to establish equal opportunities for women and men in all areas of life". This legislative measure took more into account: Women's access to the labour market as well as individual woman's access to counselling and the advancement within their careers. Rather than focusing only on the integration of women living within a relationship, often being the primary care givers to children and the elderly, into the German work force, the focus shifted to the advancement of "career women" into the ranks of upper management. This was a milestone for conservatively governed Germany under chancellor Angela Merkel from 2005 - 2021.

3. Theoretical Framework

The aim of this paper is to examine how modern work methods influence gender equality today. The base of this research are six selected "capability" indicators following the "Capability Approach" by Amartya Sen.

In order to approach this goal, the following section provides an account of the equality and gender research method. Furthermore, the above-mentioned theory will be briefly presented. At first the essential moral and philosophical foundations of Sen's theory, as well as the theory itself, will be explained. Secondly, based on this theory, the six specific indicators for this investigation of "capabilities" will be developed.

As a first step for approaching the basics, it is necessary to underline that gender equality research is not an exclusively empirical and closed-fact field of research. Gender equality research today is a dynamic theoretical system as well as a political goal that cannot be summarised in a one-dimensional and universal way. (cf. Pimminger 2017: 40)

To analyse this system, three different approaches are generally used in the assessing and recording of gender justice. In the first step, a structural dimension of justice and equality is followed in the recording of women's equality in politics, in the economy and for the associated wage expectations. (cf. *ibid.*: 42 f.) Here, many evaluated gender-related work environments confront each other. For example, according to the indicators of income and social security. If one follows this dimension, a society can often be seen as separated into male (economic) and female (domestic) life worlds, derived from unequal wage expectations through an analysis of the differing financial situations according to gender. (cf. *ibid.*: 43)

As a second approach, the symbolic dimension can serve to capture women's equality to men's lifeworlds. This dimension focuses on the transmission of prevailing gender roles dictated by a given society. The structural separation of the sexes in the work force is underpinned by role models for women and for men thus recognising the different role models as cause for unequal financial situations of the sexes. Furthermore, this dimension postulates prevailing social sanctions in case of deviation from role models by individuals. (cf. *ibid.*: 47 f.) Thus, this dimension focusses on a societal perspective concentrating primarily on the norms and values of any given society and less on the purely empirical financial distribution of economic resources.

The third dimension of the approach is the subject-related dimension. This assumes a natural difference between the sexes, which attributes specific abilities to the respective sex. This places the sexes in a hierarchical relationship to each other, thus explaining any inequalities. (cf. *ibid.*: 50)

If a more comprehensive perspective on gender equity is desired, it is useful to combine aspects of all three dimensions. Here, the financial situation of the genders is considered in the context of the norms and values within a given society, as well as the subjective differences between individuals and genders, which are also included.

For this thesis Sen's comprehensive approach proves most effective. The multidimensional theoretical approach to operationalise gender justice has also been used as the base to develop the research-questionnaire for this thesis. (cf. *ibid.*: 50 f.)

3.1 "Capability Approach" According to Amartya Sen

This desired multidimensional path, offered by the "Capability Approach" of Amartya Sen (cf. Sen 1979) analyses gender justice comprehensively and in relation to all three dimensions, as mentioned in the paragraph above. (cf. Pimminger 2017: 50 f.) Sen's theory distances itself from several approaches of the philosophy of justice, to enable a more comprehensive operationalisation. (cf. Sen 1979)

First, Sen distances himself from an approach to equality from the approach of simple utilitarianism. The latter sees the achievement of equality exclusively in the distribution of resources and paints a one-dimensional picture. Pure utilitarianism sees distribution, from the point of view of utility, as an essential instrument for achieving equality. Thus, it does not lend itself to the analysis of a multidimensional concept of equality presented earlier. (Sen 1979: 198-205) If one considers equality as a pure cost-benefit calculation in the economic distribution of goods of a society, one underestimates the specific formative dynamics of a society consisting of men and women, which arise from their values and individualistic needs. Furthermore, Sen distances himself from the assumptions of "Total Utility Equality", as a variant of utilitarianism, as well as from the approach of "Rawlsian Equality". Thus, Amartya

Sen creates a more differentiated moral basis for the "Capability Approach", in a demarcation from the theories mentioned above is created in this theory. (cf. Sen 1979).

In the first step, Sen describes the approach of "Total Utility Equality" as a theoretical assumption from the perspective of welfare is described. This defines the quality of the condition of a society, in the sense of equality, dependent on the quality of the services available to everyone. (cf. *ibid.*: 205) The essential goal here is to define the quality of equality of a given society. The quality of this distribution is measured here by the condition of those individuals in a society who are worst off. Thus, a distinction must be made between a distribution of goods, in terms of any given society, and a more specific distribution in the context of a normative society, focused on the individual. In both cases, there is a risk of unjust distribution or social inequality. (cf. *ibid.* 209 f.)

At this point, Sen introduces John Rawls' approach to equality and justice in society with the "Theory of Justice". This theory establishes a group of "primary goods", which consist of access to a certain basic supply and certain freedoms. (cf. *ibid.*: 213 f.) This basic approach of "Rawlsian-Equality", Sen distinguishes from his theory, because the assumption that the basic needs of all individuals would be the same, does not correspond to reality, but varies individually. (cf. *ibid.* 215 f.) Rawls approach represents a more just approach, but, according to Sen, disregards the needs and differences of individuals.

For this reason, Sen presents a different kind of justice in his "Capability Approach." (cf. *ibid.*: 217-219)

The core of this approach is the further development of the "primary goods", which are to be distributed. Here, however, the focus is not on the nature of these goods or their extent, but above all on their impact on the individual and the possibilities and opportunities that go with them. (cf. *ibid.*; cf. Robenys 2003: 62).

The advantage of this approach, as the basis of the consideration of gender equality in this thesis, is the possibility of the manifold adaptation. Furthermore, the focus of the theory on opportunities enables a perspective on a hypothetically achievable equality of women, in a historical and thus progressive context.

This focus on opportunities, also poses one of the difficulties in terms of operationalisation. For this reason, the mere meaningfulness of the approach as a theoretical framework is not sufficient on its own, (cf. Robeyns 2003: 62) However, it is suitable as a basis for designing the six indicators. With the help of these indicators, equality, or inequality, in the sense of gender relations, is to be analysed more precisely and in a temporal context by recourse to the theory. (cf. Sen 1980: 219)

Two theoretical approaches have emerged for operationalising the indicators of the capability approach. These either assume a generally valid list of indicators as a starting point for justice or equality or they demand an individual list of indicators for the respective research object to be considered. (cf. Pimminger 2017: 54)

This thesis follows the approach of Robeyns, who postulates that the compilations of indicators used to test the "Capability Approach" can only be valid individually for any researched society. (cf. Robeyns 2003) This shows the strength of the Sen's approach, which is able, through its individual structure, to undertake an examination of the respective individual situation outside of purely market-based analyses. (cf. *ibid.*: 65 f.)

Robeyns lists a total of five criteria for the creation of indicators for application to the "Capability Approach". (cf. *ibid.*: 70 f.) The first criterion she names is that of explicit formulation. Here, above all, the selection of the indicators should be justifiable. (cf. *ibid.*) The second criterion is the justification of the methodology.

Here, the emergence or selection of the indicators is to be justified, this time however methodically. (cf. *ibid.*) The third criterion is the sensitivity for the respective context. The use

of the chosen indicators to reach the respective level of the debate, or the questions raised. Depending on the perspective of the work, the indicators are to be chosen in an appropriate level of abstraction. Thus, the use of less abstract, or more specific indicators is more suitable for an empirical review. (cf. *ibid.*) As a fourth criterion, Robeyns introduces different levels of generality. This criterion is about the selection of indicators in terms of their feasibility.

This list of indicators should be checked for practicability in the implementation, and if necessary, due to e.g., lack of data and information, should be adjusted. (cf. *ibid.*: 71) The fifth and last criterion for the development for indicators is that of the exhaustion of indicators. This criterion encourages keeping the list of indicators as detailed as possible, or feasible, so as not to run the risk of shortening the list of indicators through subjective selection criteria. (cf. *ibid.*).

3.2 Development of Six indicators According to the “Capability Approach“

With the above criteria for indicators, the following six indicators for recording gender equality are created according to Robeyns (cf. *ibid.*: 71 f.). They analyse and clarify gender equality and focus on the situation of women in the context of the modern working environment in Germany. The first indicator is paid work. This falls into the area of opportunity as a "capability" examining women's access to paid work, as well as career advancement opportunities and prospects.

The second indicator is the time spent on domestic work and non-market care. This indicator examines the time invested by women in the care of offspring and family members as well as the family home, in a comparison with the time invested by men. This indicator is to be understood as a basic indicator of gender equality in terms of realisation and the use of opportunities for a self-determined life.

The third indicator to be operationalised is education, or equality of opportunity around access to education, accumulation of knowledge and continuous professional education. This indicator compares the level of education to be attained by the sexes in their daily life routine as well as in their various work environments. Also examining the recent changes through modern virtual company trainings and more home office hours due to the pandemic.

The fourth indicator examined is autonomy in the allocation of time. The aim here is to determine, whether there are gender-specific differences in the use or allocation of time available to individuals. This indicator should be emphasised, because, along with the second indicator, it represents a prerequisite for the self-realisation on an individual.

The fifth indicator reflects the possibility of corporate structural participation and thus the shaping of company culture and the work-environment, especially regarding possible gender-specific challenges for women as primary caregivers in their families.

The sixth and last indicator examines the appreciation of women in the work force as well as their possibilities for advancement within a company. Within the questionnaire for this thesis all above indicators are linked to modern working methods and modern working environments in order to illuminate the initial research question about the equality of the sexes within the modern German work force. The questionnaire will be created using Microsoft Forms and the participants will be contacted via social media.

4. Methodology – Complete Data Collection

In addition to the social science method of data collection in Germany through a crafted questionnaire, applying the theory of the "Capability Approach" with six relevant indicators, this thesis analyses three expert interviews of the 2022 "G20 Playbook" allowing a glimpse into the progress of international challenges for gender quality

4.1 Methodology - Summarising and Analysing Three International Expert-Interviews

This paper decided to analyse the aforementioned interviews due to their high relevance, as well as an expertise, which privately conducted interviews would not have achieved. In order to provide a vision for the advancement of the equality of the sexes within the work force in Germany, these three international expert voices will be analysed within the framework of the six indicators of the questionnaire answered by participants from Germany.

4.2 Methodology - Analysis of the Questionnaire

The advantage of the instrument of the questionnaire lies in the independence from the interviewer and thus an increased objectivity. (cf. Reinecke 2014: 612) Furthermore, the fifty answered questionnaires of individuals in the present German work force can claim a statistical relevance in comparison. This allows some conclusion on certain trends and some statistical outlook towards the needs of working women in the todays Germany.

The description and the visual background of the questionnaire were designed to motivate the recipient. Some information on the first page is intended to make it easier for the respondent to complete the questionnaire by informing of the anonymity of all answers. (cf. Porst 2014: 47-52).

In the first block of the questionnaire, individual data about the respondent is collected. This serves to allocate the later response categories and the possibility of separating age and gender in the sense of the research question. The second block of questions under the title "Access to paid work" aims to gather information about the participants access to paid work as responses to the first indicator. The collection of data is executed with five closed single choice questions. The third block of the questionnaire examines the second indicator, the topic of "Time spent on domestic work and non-market care". The allocation of time between duties in the professional

area as well as the domestic chores is crucial for an individual's capability to self-fulfilment in the private and professional sector of life. Again, the collection of data is executed with five closed single choice questions.

In the following block under the title: "Access to education and further professional development", the third indicator is researched with three closed questions. These questions are crucial to determine the career goals as well as the possibilities to pursue those by modern day remote and virtual possibilities, also created because of the recent pandemic.

In the following block "Autonomy in the allocation of time", four questions were formulated in the questionnaire to examine the "capabilities" of indicator four. These questions analyse the participants possibilities to allocate free time in their own choosing. The relevance for that block of questions describes an individual's possibility to enjoy and structure free time. This has been proven to be essential for personal development as well as the advancement of any individual's career. The answers were collected in four closed single choice questions. In the next block the questionnaire tries to gather data for the fifth indicator. The topic being involvement or the possibility of involvement in corporate structures. Under the title "Structural involvement in the company" five closed single choice questions aim to analyse the possibility for the participant to get involved in a company's internal structures and boards. This possibility of involvement is crucial in order to have influence on a company's culture and policy. It furthermore reflects a culture of welcome for women, also as primary caretakers of families, within a company.

Lastly, this questionnaire wants to gather intel about the possibility of an individual's job opportunities. The four questions, again closed and single choice, try to ~~elaborate~~ investigate, whether the gender and other above collected individual traits have an influence on the job opportunities for the individual.

5. Evaluation of the two Types of Collected Data

The evaluation of the fifty questionnaires, reflecting the present days' work situation of women in Germany according to the five indicators developed along the "Capability Approach" will be placed within a recent international framework of three expert-interviews. These three interviews of the G20 Playbook will be provided in the following in a descriptive form, summarising each of the interviews briefly and roughly along the six indicators of the questionnaire. The goal within the conclusion of this thesis is to come up with a rough frame of reference for best practice for Germany by examining the changed modern work environment of more virtual and home office, owed to the pandemic, as an opportunity to combine women's professional life with actual or potential family care.

5.1 Evaluation of Three Expert Interviews of the "G 20 Playbook"

The expert interviews were conducted with three international experts in their respective fields, always focusing on firstly, their personal experience and secondly, their professional opinion. All three approaches describe individual and professional combat of gender inequality in the interviewee's area of work or company. In the following, the three G20 interviews are briefly summarised.

First Interview: Romilly Madew, Chief Executive Officer, Engineers Australia, Australia

Romilly Madew shares her personal career experiences as a professional as being difficult, due to her gender. With access to a leadership role, she prioritised the change of work environment, especially empowering women. She managed to be the first federal government reorganising the parental leave structure in order to improve the situation for parents, and especially for the

women in her agency. According to her, the most important step to empower women is firstly to fully understand their needs in the workplace. This was done in her company through a careful creation of KPI's that make the progress or lack of measurable and quantifiable. (cf. Yosetya/Prihatiningsih 2022: 12-13)

Sharzad Rafati: Chairperson and CEO, BBTV Holdings, Canada

In the second interview, Mrs. Rafati shares her experience exercising women empowerment in her company. She stresses that after developing functional KPI's in her company the most important is tracking the fulfilment of those Indicators in every department. Furthermore, to internalise change it is crucial to empower women to join the senior management level. Therefore, she implemented a special leadership training for women to not only enable them to fit management positions, but also to develop, if necessary, adjustments to these roles, to be synchronised to female needs in the workplace. Nevertheless Mrs. Rafat pointed out, that in order to measure success in equalising the professional opportunities, measurement must be adopted individually matching the needs of women as well as the needs of companies or sections. (cf. Yosetya/Prihatiningsih 2022: 14-15)

Third Interview: Fahrul Irvanto: Human Resources Director PT Nestlé; Indonesia

For Mr. Irvanto in his function as HR Director empowering women at Nestle in Indonesia has been a core responsibility. According to his experience one of the crucial topics of empowering women has been to ensure a steady pipeline of female talents in the recruiting process, as well as on every company level. To ensure that this takes place, Mr. Irvanto established four key programs: Women Mentoring Program, Direct Experience Initiative, Mission for Female Talent

Program, Training for Female Leaders. Furthermore, Nestlé implemented programs for remote working and additional webinars, which provided the opportunity to continuous and relevant professional education. All the above-mentioned actions have been proven to be successful in the company. They retargeted to a more equal distribution of the sexes inside Nestlé. Nevertheless, he pointed out, that the recent Covid pandemic has set back efforts in enabling women in the workplace. Due to travel restrictions management conferences as well as international networking opportunities could not take place. These can be essential in order to have access to top-level management positions inside Nestlé. (cf. Yosetya/Prihatiningsih 2022: 20-24)

5.2 Summary Assessment of the Three Interviews of the “G20 Playbook“:

In Summary, although facing the difficulties balance of gender in the workplace in three different countries and industry sectors, trends and common challenges can be derived from those interviews. Firstly, the need to address and measure inequality between the sexes in the professional life. Secondly, to ensure that the distribution of women is not only limited to a certain section of the company, but also reaches upper and top management in order to establish a structure of women supporting other women. Lastly, the need to implement working methods that enable women to be able to access every role and hence change working methods. For example, more flexible working hours as well as teleworking in a way that befits the individual woman in combining family life and professional life, have already proven to point in the right directions.

Although these conclusions are not new and have also been mentioned in the “G20 Playbook of 2021”. (cf. Mascaro 2021), the mentioning in the recent report underlines that those challenges are still under construction. Especially the role of modern methods of remote

working remains still a technical challenge for many countries. Evaluating the field of “Flexible Working Hours” (cf. Chung/Van der Lippe 2020: 386) and “Teleworking” (cf. Rao 2020), for Germany will be done in more detail in a later part of this thesis.

5.3 Evaluation of the Questionnaire for Germany

The self-administered questionnaire had 50 responses, varying in age as well as in sex and if the individual lived in a partnership. Due to Germany's size of population (83,13 million in 2021), statistical representativeness cannot be inferred. The sample size of fifty individuals questioned, evaluated for the purposes of this thesis only, however, offers a relevant post pandemic glimpse. And it is the base in addressing the questions asked in this thesis - about the paths to more equality within the German work force.

To collect the data, an online questionnaire with 33 questions was created (see appendix). It was made available to the test persons via various channels. The findings according to the indicators of the “Capability Approach” will be examined in detail together, referencing the conclusion of the three “G20 Playbook“ interviews summarised above.

6. Findings According to the Indicators of the “Capability Approach”

The six indicators are first applied in the elaboration of the developments in women's policy, with the help of scientific literature and statistics to further support the evaluation.

First indicator: Access to Paid Work

In order to verify the first indicator in the context of Germany's modern work environment, the qualitative differences of the jobs as well as the opportunities for advancement within the professions must be examined. According to the questionnaire the majority of participants who were female and worked either in part- or in full-time positions, preferred an anonymous interview. (see question 12) This did not take into consideration, whether they were in a relationship or had children (see Figure 1). None of the participating men would be more likely to apply for a position, if the interview would be held in such manner. Hence, men in the questionnaire do not perceive that their marital status or whether they have kids or not could be perceived as a disadvantage.

This leads to the conclusion of a perceived inequality towards women, which is further enhanced by the fact that almost half of the women have experienced difficulties in their professional life due to their gender (see question 9) (see Figure 2). Furthermore, it can be stated, that regarding the job interview process modern working methods such as remote interviews count as an asset for women, because they enable them to apply anonymously. This effect is also confirmed by scientific literature, anonymous application procedures (AAP) benefit women and avoid discrimination. (cf. Åslund/Skans 2012: Abstract) Lastly, the responses of the questionnaire also point towards a trend, that women (see Figure 3) as well as men prefer a job that allows remote work and flexible working hours. (See question 10)

Second indicator: Time Spent on Domestic Work and Non-market Care

The unequal distribution of employment opportunities or access to employment shown in the previous section was attributed, among other things, to the demands placed on women in the household. In this context, the second indicator is related to the first. When analysing the questionnaire, a difference in the amount of household work between the sexes can be observed.

The majority of women answered that the amount of housework has not improved due to the possibility of remote work and flexible working hours (see Figure 4). This is also underlined by question 17 (see question 17), in which most women stated that their burden of household chores has not been reduced by modern working methods. Among male participants, a slight majority attested to a reduction in their household management burden as a result of the aforementioned work options. (See Figure 6)

This suggests a trend that works to the disadvantage of women regarding domestic tasks. This hypothesis is also supported by the information provided in question 14: "Does the time you spend on non-market care and/or household tasks get in the way of your professional career?" (See Question 14). Most participants did not feel that housework was a barrier to their career goals. Some women felt that housework hindered them in their careers, while no men shared this feeling. (cf. Figure 5) This has a particularly negative impact on women in the work environment, as the perception of spending flexible working hours on household and family tasks in particular is perceived negatively in the work environment. (cf. William et al 2013: 222). This, therefore, makes it even more difficult for women to reconcile private and professional tasks in Germany.

Third Indicator: Access to Education and Further Professional Training

The reconciliation of professional and domestic spheres is additionally challenged by the need for qualification programs and educational initiatives, which are crucial for a professional career. The analysed answers from the questionnaire (see questions 18, 19, 20) aimed to collect data on this topic. When analysing the data of the answers to the question about the different situation of men and women, it can be stated that no man perceives his gender, relationship status or whether he has children or not as influencing his educational goals. While the majority

of women also agree with this statement, there are still some women, who feel that the above-mentioned circumstances of being, for example, primary long-time care givers have hindered them in pursuing their educational goals. (See Figure 7). This tendency to discriminate becomes even clearer after evaluating question 19 (see question 19), where almost no men admitted that they had shortened their occupational training at the expense of their partners, while a much higher number of women had to do so. (see Figure 8). Nevertheless, both genders admitted (see Figure 9) that their access to education has improved as a result of virtual training opportunities in Germany. (see Question 20). These benefits of virtual trainings are also stressed for by the interviews, especially for the worldwide company Nestlé, which underscores the importance of virtual and flexible training possibilities. (cf. cf. Yosetya/Prihatiningsih 2022: 23-24)

Fourth indicator: Autonomy in the Allocation of Time

An important indicator of women's equality in the modern German work force, this paper considers women's autonomy in their time management. This indicator is particularly important, as the ability to freely allocate time is closely linked to the possibility of leading a self-determined life.

The fourth indicator therefore examines the time available to women in the work environment apart from work as well as family care and household chores. The focus is particularly on women in partnerships, since single women, who are not defined as primary caregivers for dependants, do not differ from their male counterparts, who are not defined as primary caregivers for dependants, in their allocation of time. In the questionnaire, this is captured primarily by question 22 (see question 22).

In this question, participants were asked to indicate whether they had to reduce their free time at the expense of their partner. Although free time is not directly related to work, it is an

important factor in personal development, which of course includes the active pursuit of happiness and self-actualisation.

Both factors play a crucial role in the “Capability Approach” as does job performance (see Page et al. 2009: 442).

After evaluating the questionnaires response data, namely questions 21 and 22, it becomes clear that women more often perceive that they cannot divide their time as freely as their male peers or that they even must shorten their free time at the expense of their partners. (see Figure 10, 11).

In line with the above indicators one through four, it can be concluded that in Germany a trend towards the discrimination against women is measurable. However, both sexes believe that modern working methods help them to manage their time more freely. (see Figure 12)

Fifth Indicator: Structural Involvement in the Company

The indicators examined so far suggest that gender inequality exists in various areas of professional and private life in Germany. For this reason, the fifth indicator of internal company participation is crucial to ~~furthe~~ capture present as well as future possibilities of more future equality in the German work force. Company influence includes the ability to shape specific work conditions and to influence the change in the ways companies and systems develop. In this process it is essential to include those, who struggle with established traditional work patterns. Therefore, the fourth indicator was developed to find out how all questionnaire participants view their opportunities to participate at management level in their respective positions. Questions 25, 26, and 27 of the questionnaire aimed to collect data on this topic.

The answers of the majority of women and men reflect clearly that in Germany they did not have the opportunity to participate in the shaping of the internal company structure. (See Figure

13). Several women also indicated that they were prevented from doing so due to their household responsibilities. Again, consistent with the other results, no man answered that household responsibilities prevented participation in the development in the corporate structure (see Figure 14). Although not many participants felt that they could participate, it must be concluded that some women felt excluded because of their domestic responsibilities.

In contrast to the aforementioned indicators, some participating individuals in the questionnaire also did not feel that increased virtual work (home office because of the pandemic) helped them in bettering the overall working conditions within the organisation they were working for. (see Figure 15).

Sixth indicator: Advancement Opportunities and an Overall Appreciation of Combining Family & Career in Germanys

The purpose of this last indicator is to analyse whether women perceive their chances of promotion or participation in their professional environment to be worse than men, which was examined in the questionnaire in the last section. In particular, questions 30, 31 and 32 were aimed at this item (See questions 30, 31, and 32). When it comes to promotion or any kind of possible career advancement, neither men nor women indicated that they believed their employer would be considerate of their employees' private circumstances. (See Figure 16). In addition, both genders responded that they did not believe that remote work would increase their chances of being promoted. (see Figure 17).

Nevertheless, male participants did not indicate in the questionnaire that they ever felt that their domestic duties or responsibilities prevented them from being promoted. This was not the case for women. More than one-third of the women responded that their personal lives and domestic

responsibilities stood in the way of a promotion and therefore of an overall career advancement.
(see Figure 18)

6.2 Answering the Question on the Impact of Modern Working Methods in Regard to Gender

In the context of the “Capability Approach”, it can be stated for Germany that women are more likely to be discriminated against in the workplace. All indicators showed a clear trend towards this problem. The main difficulty in this area is the link between domestic tasks and women's careers. While their male counterparts often face similar challenges professionally, such as not being able to participate in measures to change company policies, women additionally have to balance work with primary caretaking and household responsibilities. This study concludes that it is primarily the division of domestic responsibilities that causes this problem. Across all indicators, it was possible to analyse that women are at a clear disadvantage due to their domestic situation, for example, when sharing possible free time for a promotion or for further training, because women with caregiving & household responsibilities do not have as much free time as men without the same amount of domestic responsibilities. In answering the question about remote work and flexible working hours, it can be seen that while benefitting some women and men, they are not the solution to gender inequality for the German work force. Moreover, due to home office because of the pandemic, the situation for some women has actually worsened. The measurable increase in the daily tasks of primary caregivers, due to the closing of childcare facilities and schools, led to a clear disadvantage within the German work force. Therefore, this paper suggests that while modern work methods can benefit society, in order to redress workplace inequity, women need more access to positions that allow for change. Secondly, the overall work force needs the opportunity for greater participation in shaping

German corporate structures by examining and including data of individual living situations regularly (as recommended in the G-20 Playbook by Romille Madew, Australia). Third, and most important when analysing the data of the questionnaire for Germany is a more equal sharing of all domestic work amongst partners.

7. Conclusion

The aim of this work was to analyse the gender imbalance in the German labour market, taking into account the changes and possibilities of new working methods. In order to achieve this goal, this thesis briefly introduces the underlying theory, the "Capability Approach" according to Amartya Sen. Subsequently, this thesis developed six indicators according to Robeynes, which operationalise the above theoretical framework. In order to create an empirical basis that can be evaluated using the developed indicators, a questionnaire was designed using the scientific criteria mentioned in this thesis. In addition, three recently published interviews of the "G-20 Playbook" were evaluated to provide contemporary international data for comparison and analysis. In the following, the results of the questionnaire and the conclusions from the interviews were evaluated for all six indicators. Next, these results were analysed with a focus on the role of modern work methods aiming towards a best practise recommendation for Germany.

Finally, this paper proposes three specific approaches to improve the situation of women in the German workforce as a best practise recommendation. Two of these recommendations address the German economic landscape. However, the most important best practise recommendation to further advance the opportunities for women within the German work force belongs within the domestic realm. This is different of each individual. Here, while also further future incentives from the German government may be helpful, a change within the perceived gender roles within German society is still needed.

Appendix

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Appendix Graphs:

Indicator: Access to Paid Work

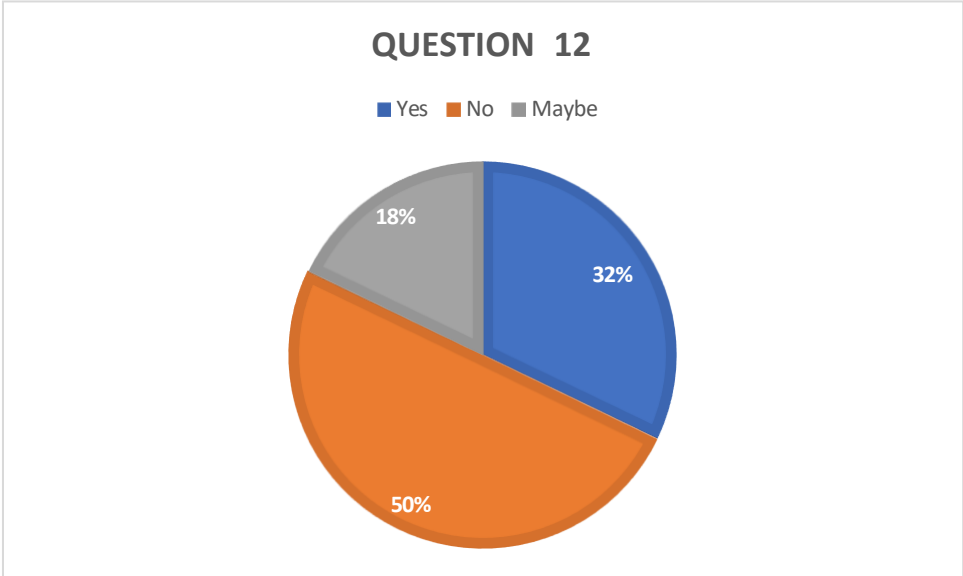


Figure 1

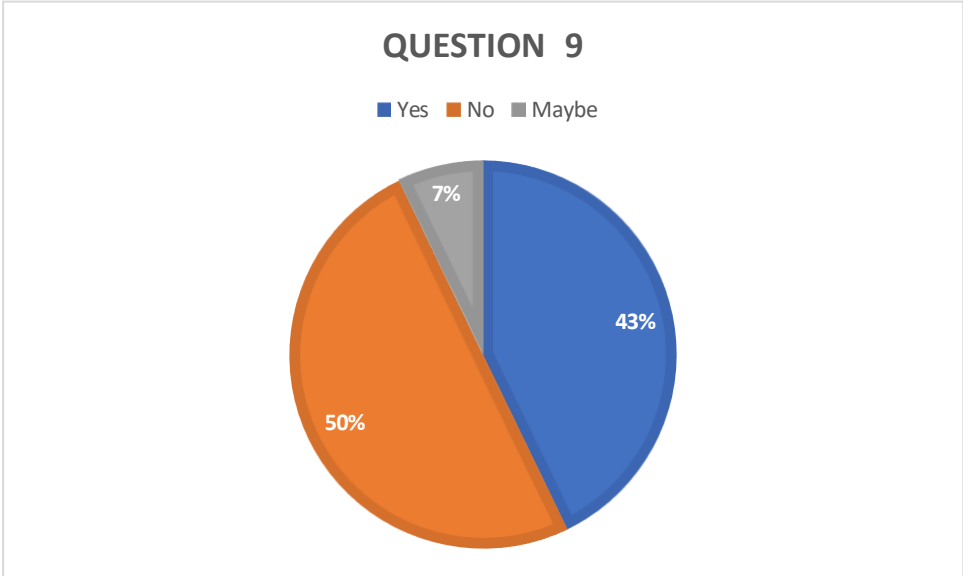


Figure 2

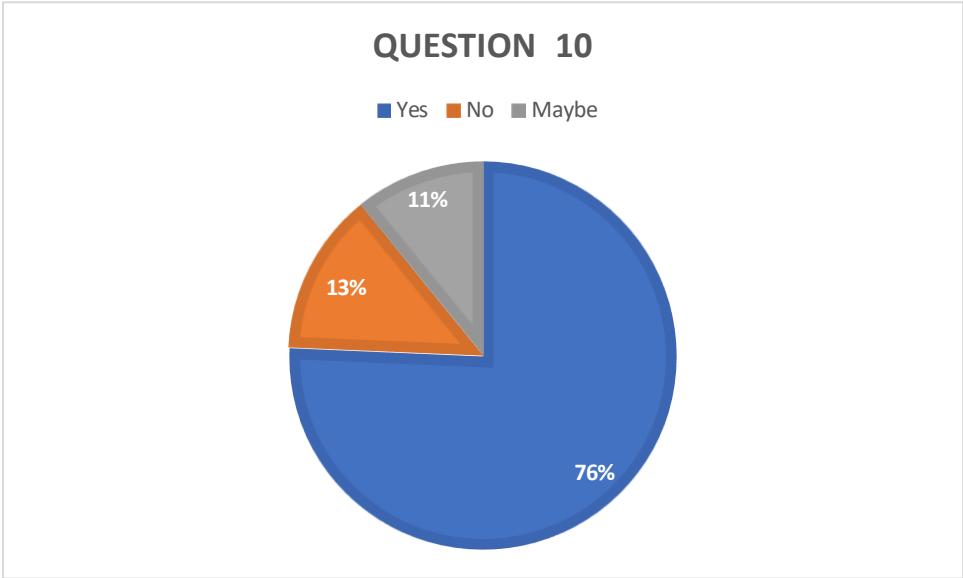


Figure 3

Indicator: Time spent on domestic work and non-market care

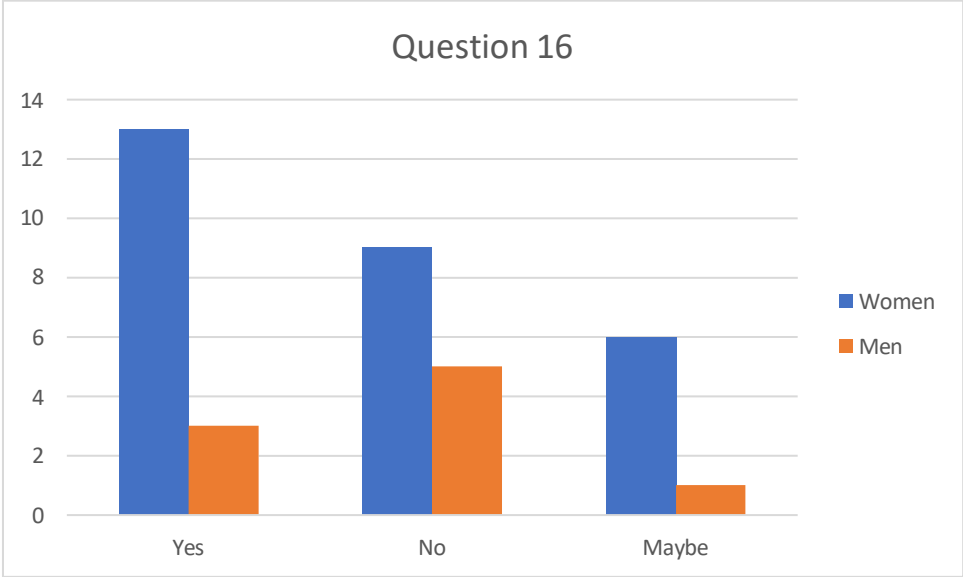


Figure 4

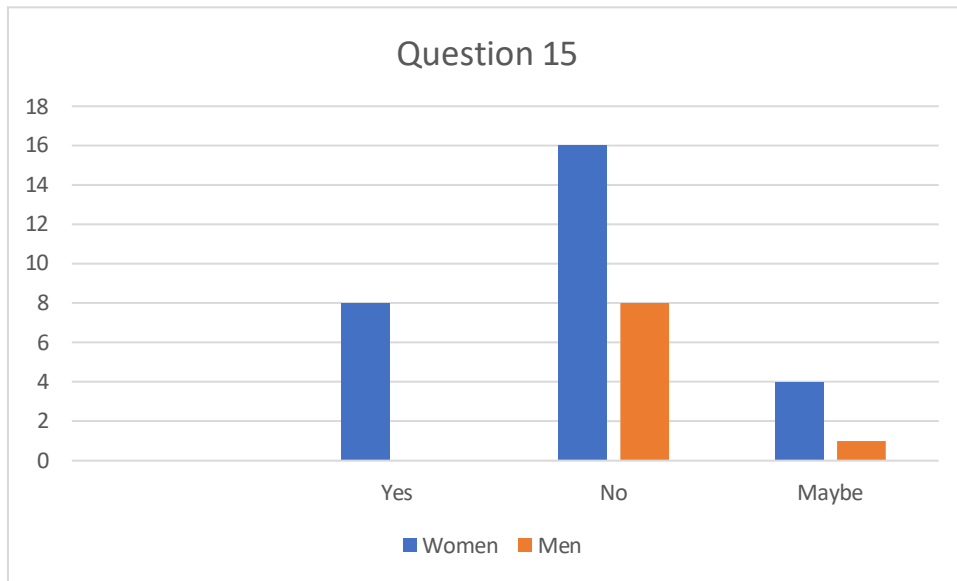


Figure 5

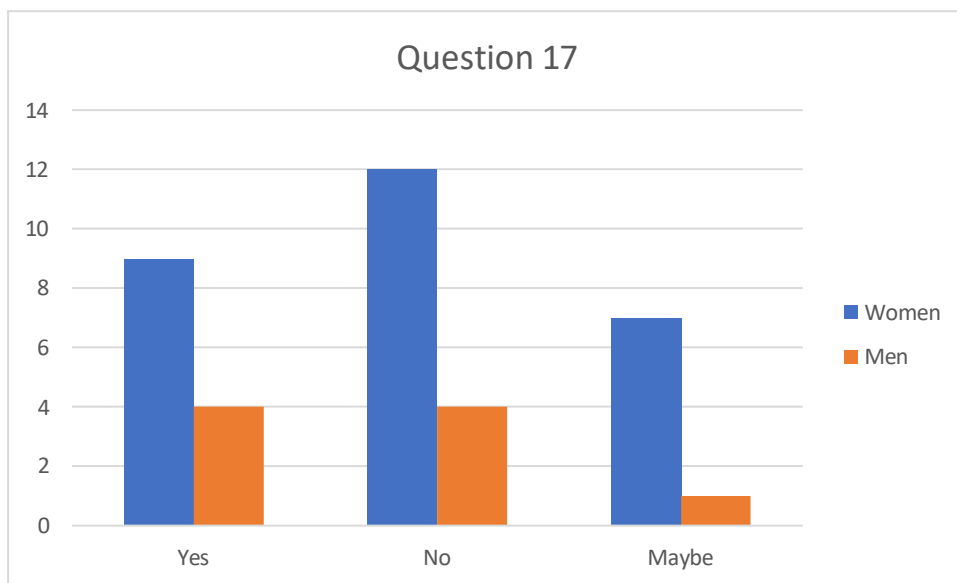


Figure 6

Indicator: Access to education and further professional training

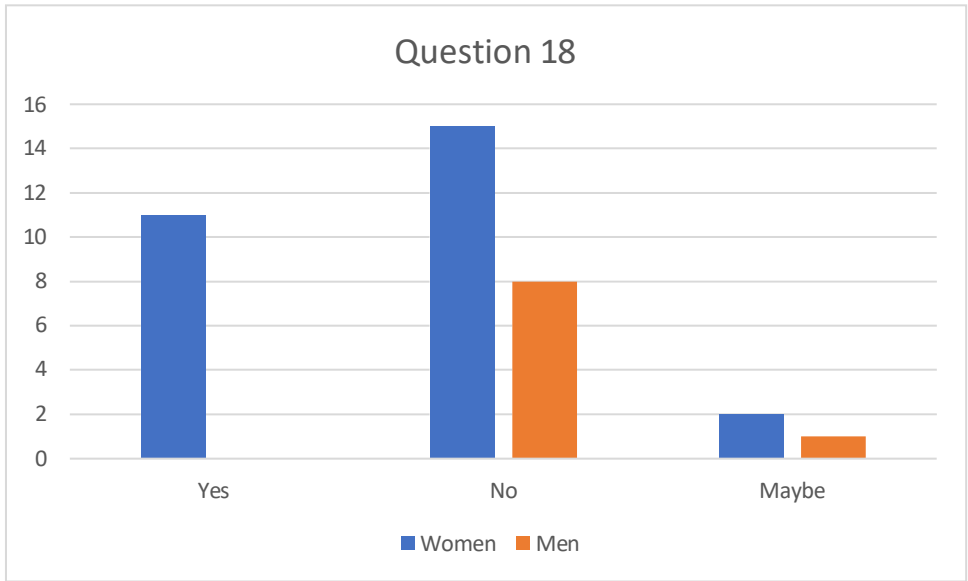


Figure 7

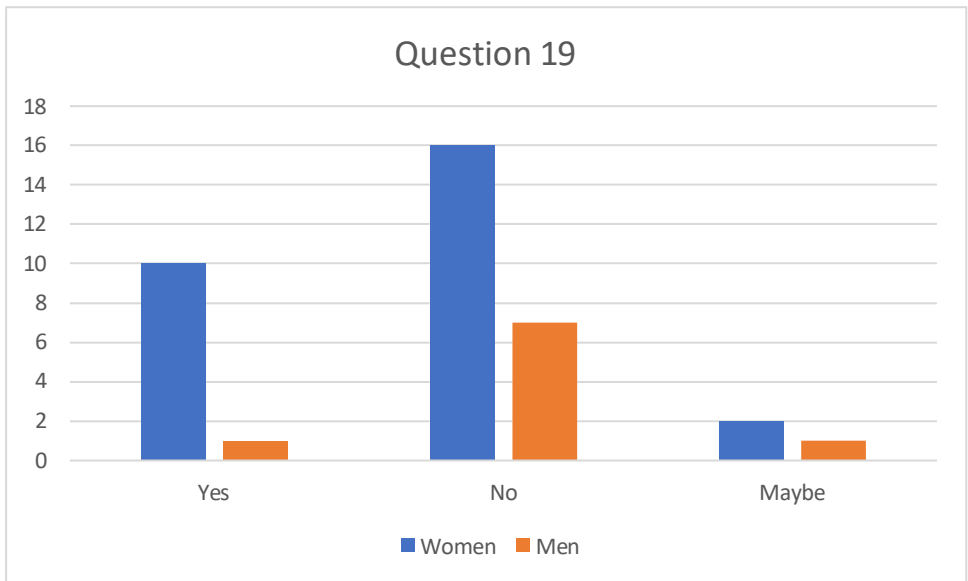


Figure 8

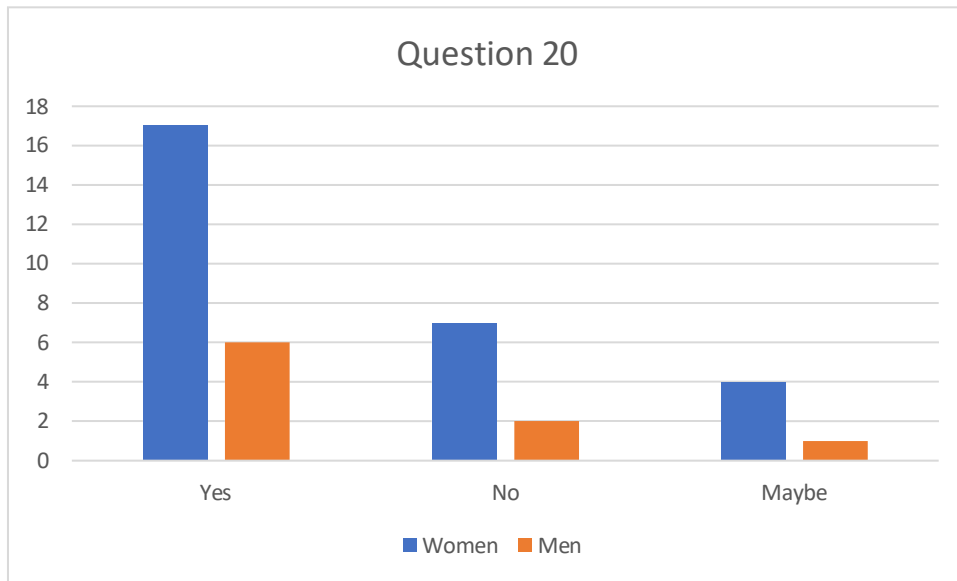


Figure 9

Indicator: Autonomy in the allocation of time

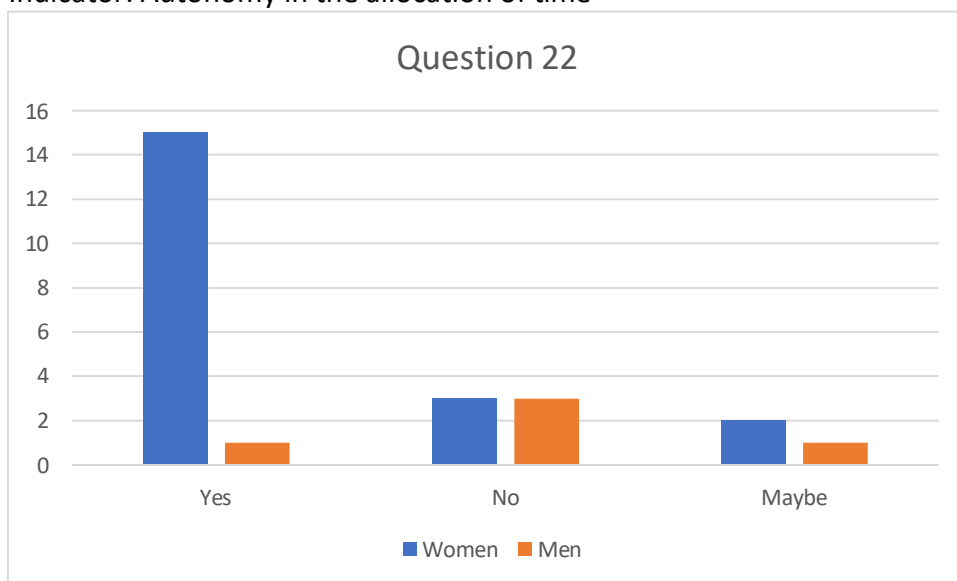


Figure 10

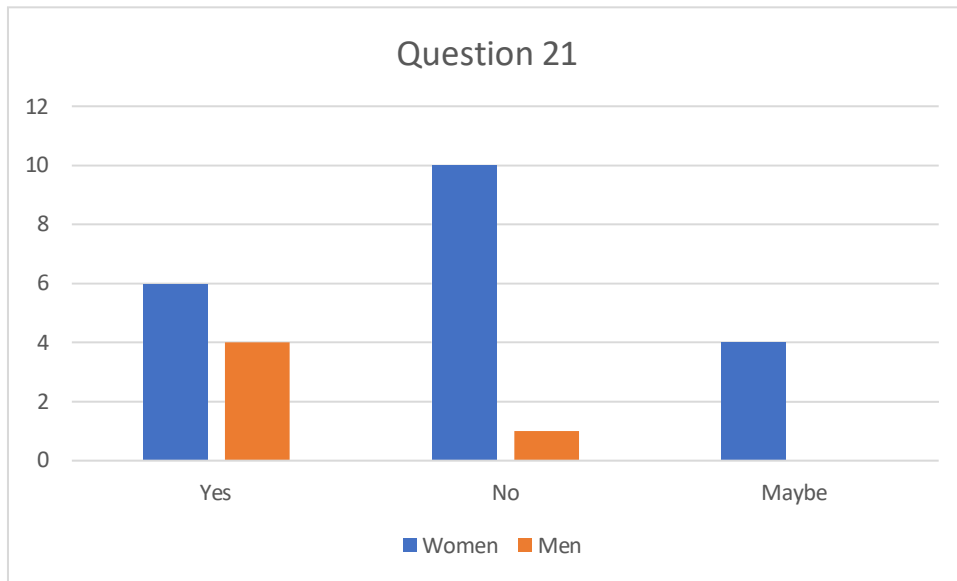


Figure 11

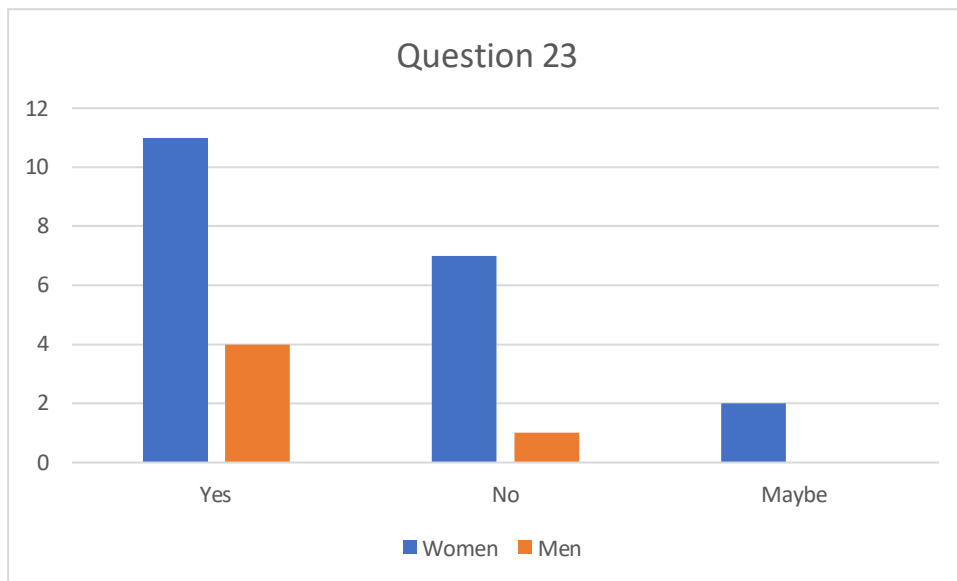


Figure 12

Indicator: Structural involvement in the company

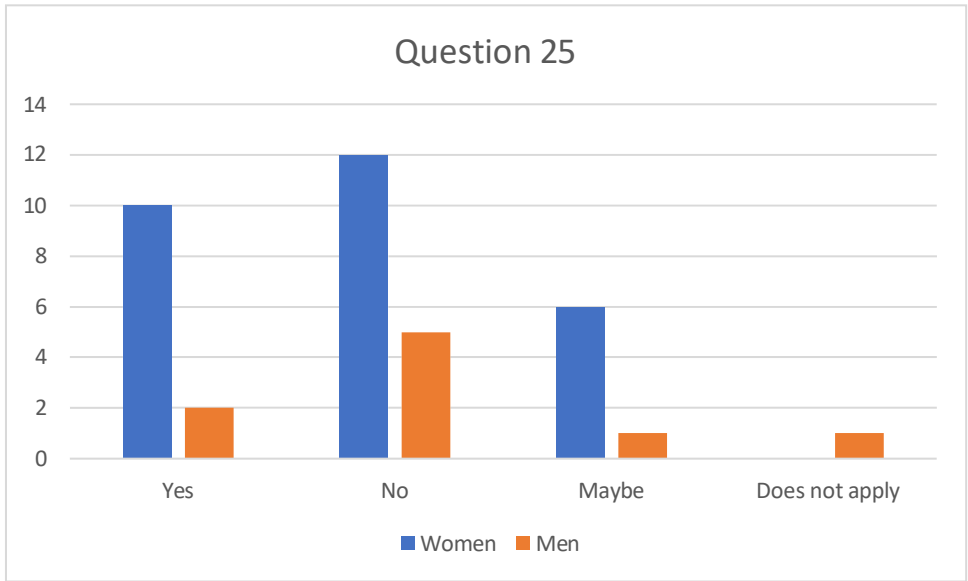


Figure 13

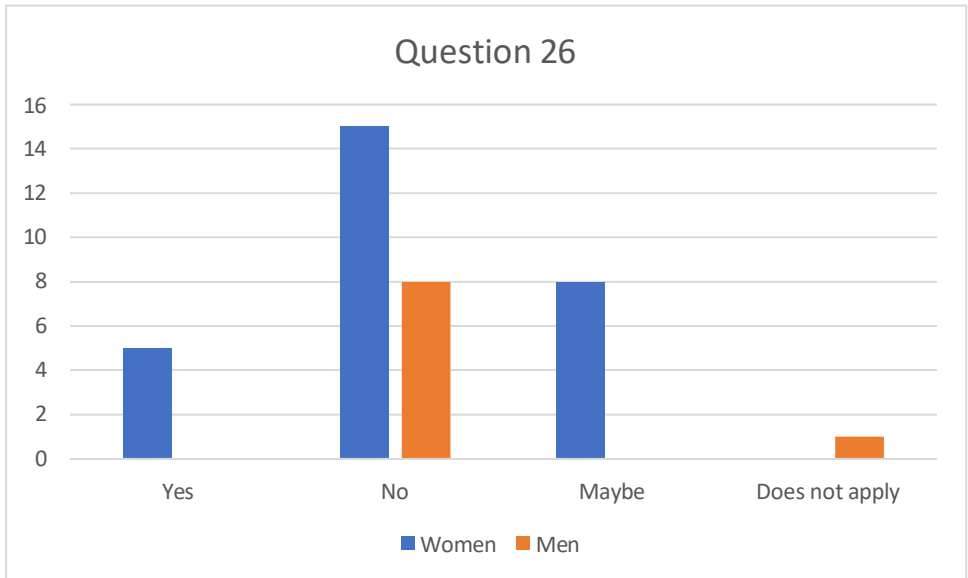


Figure 14

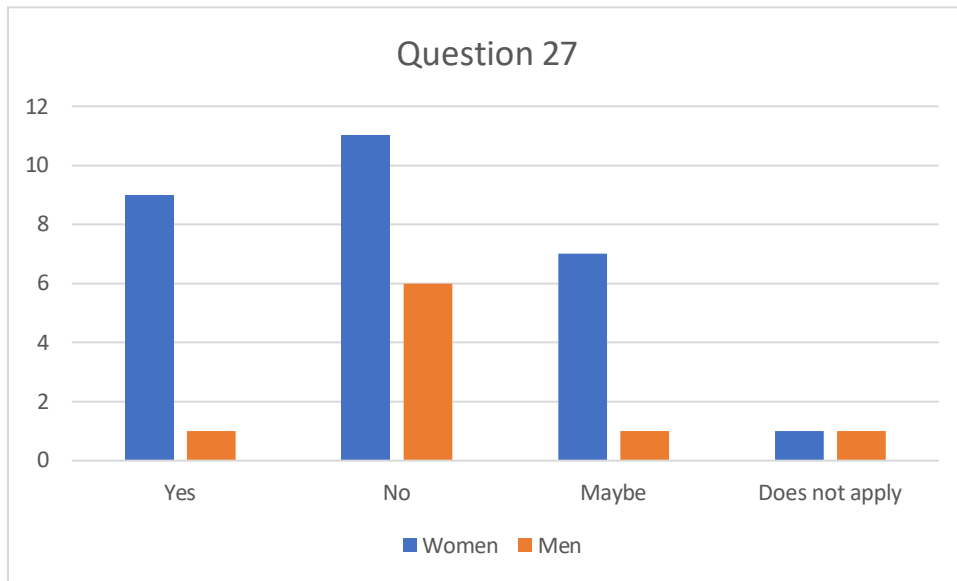


Figure 15

Indicator: Opportunities in the Job

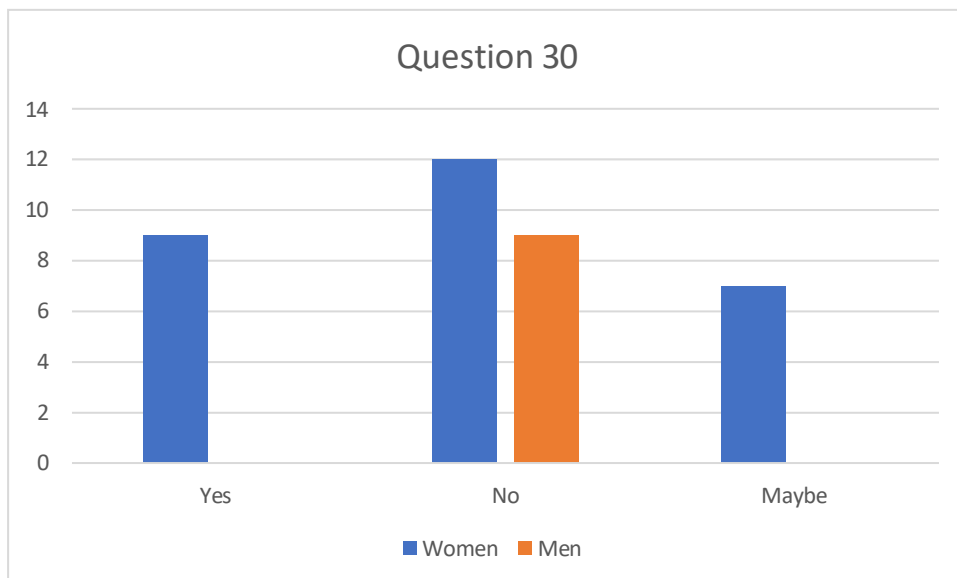


Figure 16

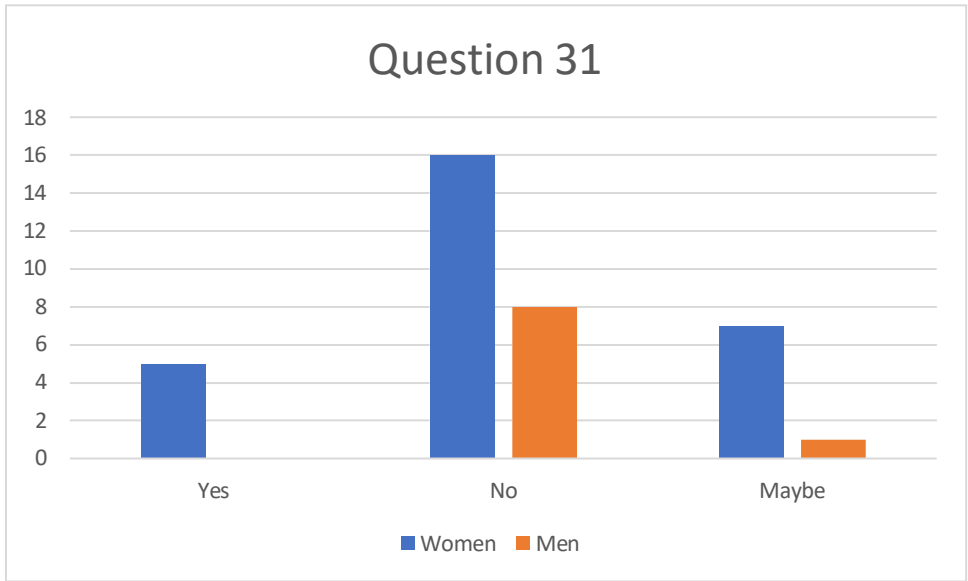


Figure 17

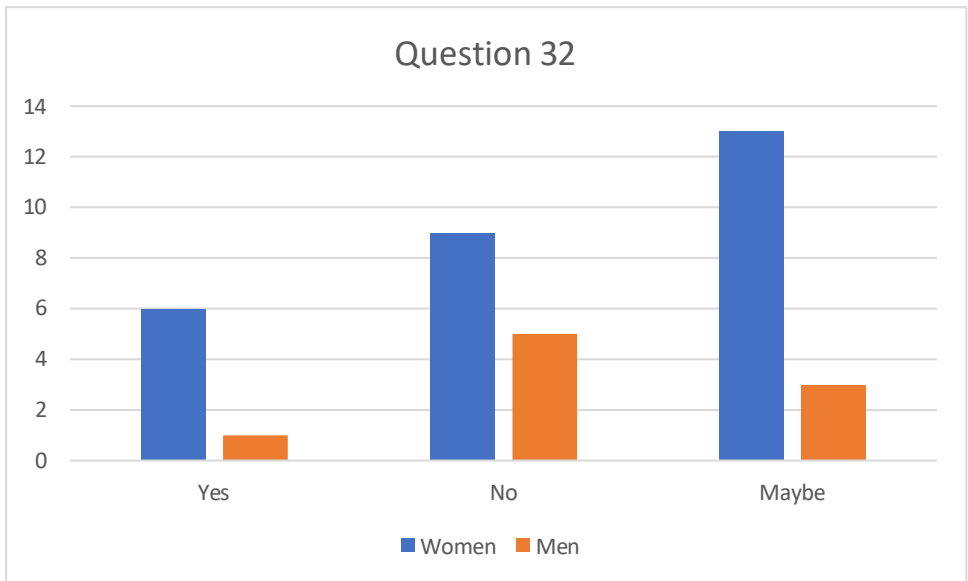


Figure 18

Appendix Questionnaire:

Questionnaire on labour and the working environment

The aim of this questionnaire is to analyse the impact of modern working methods on the individual working and private environment. The questionnaire is divided into 7 sections that aim to operationalise these effects and quantify the results to make them comparable. In this way, it should be possible to identify trends or distinguish between genders and age groups. The first section aims to collect personal data of the individual. All responses are anonymous.

* Required

Personal Information

1. How old are you ? *

- 18 - 25
- 25 - 40
- 40 - 70
- Prefer not to say

2. Which gender was assigned to you at birth?

- Woman
- Man
- Other
- Prefer not to say

3. What is your current occupation?

- Working (Full-time)
- Working (Part-time)
- Unemployed
- Student
- Prefer not to say

4. What is your current relationship status?

- Single
- In a relationship
- Prefer not to say

5. What is your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Fluid
- Prefer not to say

6. Do you have kids or any other form of guardiative responsibility?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

7. Do you live with your partner?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Access to paid work

8. Is the main part of your daily work paid?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

9. Have you experienced difficulties in your job due to your perceived gender?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

10. Are you more comfortable to apply for a job if you know that you can work remotely or allocate your working hours more flexible?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

11. Are you more likely to apply for a job if the interview is held remotely?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

12. Is it more likely for you to apply for a job if the interview is conducted anonymously (without reference to your gender or your relationship status or without questioning whether you have children)?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Time spent on domestic work and non-market care.

13. How much time do you spend on non-market care and/or domestic tasks per week?

- 10 hours
- 20 hours
- More

14. Do you spend more time on non-market care and/or domestic tasks than your partner?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

15. Does the time you spent on non-market care and/or domestic tasks is getting in the way of your professional career?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

16. Have modern working methods, such as the possibility of remote working, increased the time you spend on household and care tasks?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

17. Have modern working methods, such as the possibility of remote working, improved your burden of household management?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

Acces to education and further professional training

18. Do you feel that your gender or relationship status or whether or not you have children has ever hindered you in pursuing your educational goals?

- Yes

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

19. Have your relationship or personal responsibilities ever prevented you from furthering your education?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

20. Has the availability of online courses or virtual company training improved your access to continuing education?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Autonomy in the allocation of time

21. Do you feel you can allocate your private time freely?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

22. Have you often had to shorten your free time at the expense of your partners? Yes

Yes

No

Maybe

Does not apply

23. Have modern working methods, such as the possibility of working remotely, increased your freedom in managing your time?

Yes

No

Maybe

Does not apply

24. Have you ever felt that your gender was the reason why you could not freely manage your time?

Yes

No

Maybe

Structural involvement in the company

25. Do you have the opportunity to participate in company processes to change the working culture or environment?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

26. Do you feel that your housework or caring tasks prevent you from participating in operational change processes in your work environment?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

27. Do you feel that the possibility of virtual participation has improved your opportunities to participate in structural processes in your company?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

28. Have you ever had the feeling that you are left out of company processes because of your gender or that you have less time to participate because of your caring responsibilities?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

29. Does your company support those who have increased private commitments such as caring responsibilities?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

Opportunities in the Job

30. Do you feel that you have fewer chances of promotion because of your marital status or gender?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

31. Do you think that working remotely has improved your chances of promotion?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

32. Does your employer take personal circumstances into consideration when it comes to promotions?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

33. Do you feel that your partner has a better chance of being promoted because you are more involved in private care and housework?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Does not apply

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