

Gender Inequality and Social Science Careers – a snapshot from Hungary

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Introduction

Literature has widely researched those factors which put women at a disadvantage on the labor market (Komka, 2007., Koncz, 2010)

In Hungary, the academic opportunities of women are far behind that of men, their academic career often ends much sooner, and they cannot count on their partners as much.

- What do academics think about inequality?
- What kind of obstacles do they have to face?
- What kind of structural inequalities do they have to get through during their career?

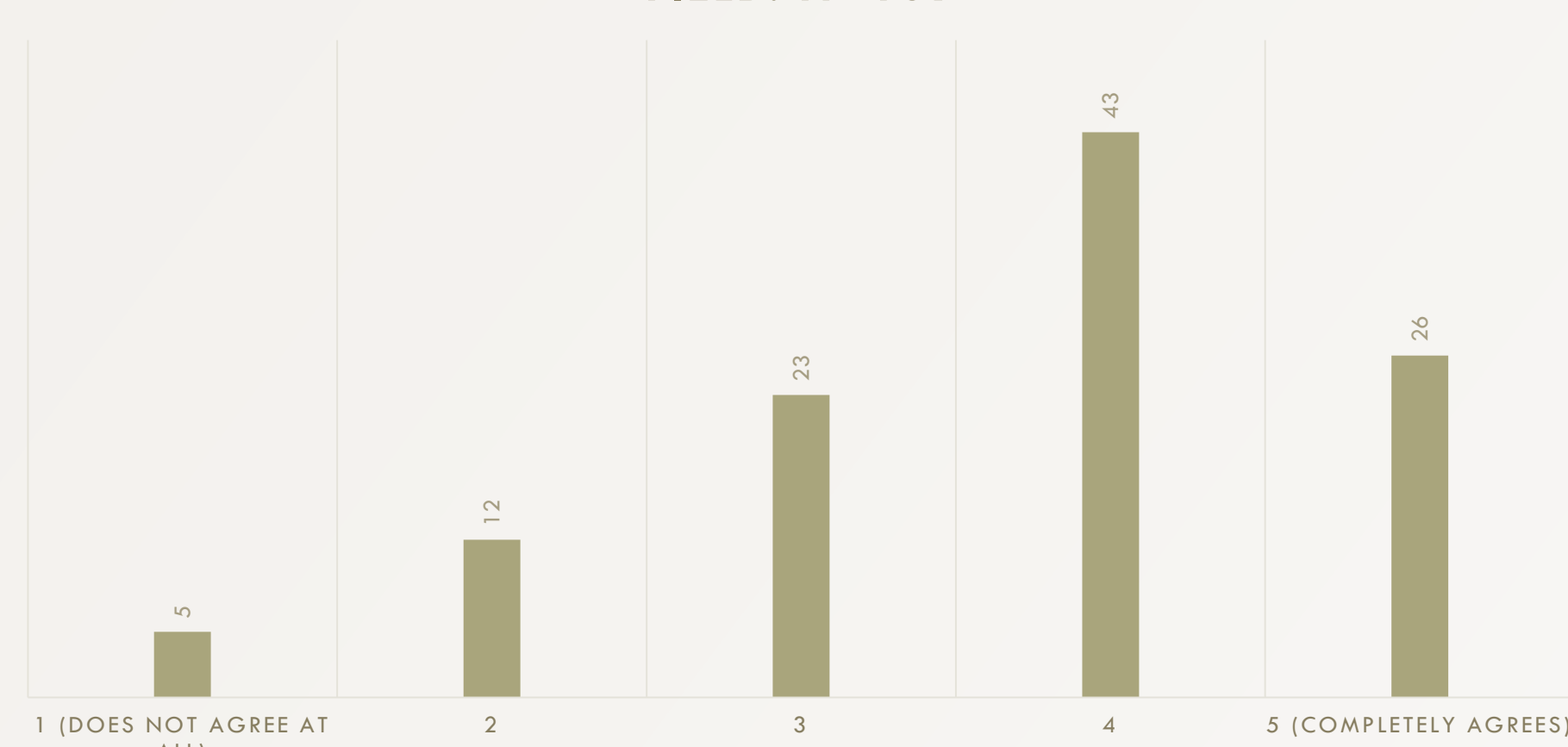
Methods

N=109, 75 women and 34 men
January-February 2014 – online survey

Results

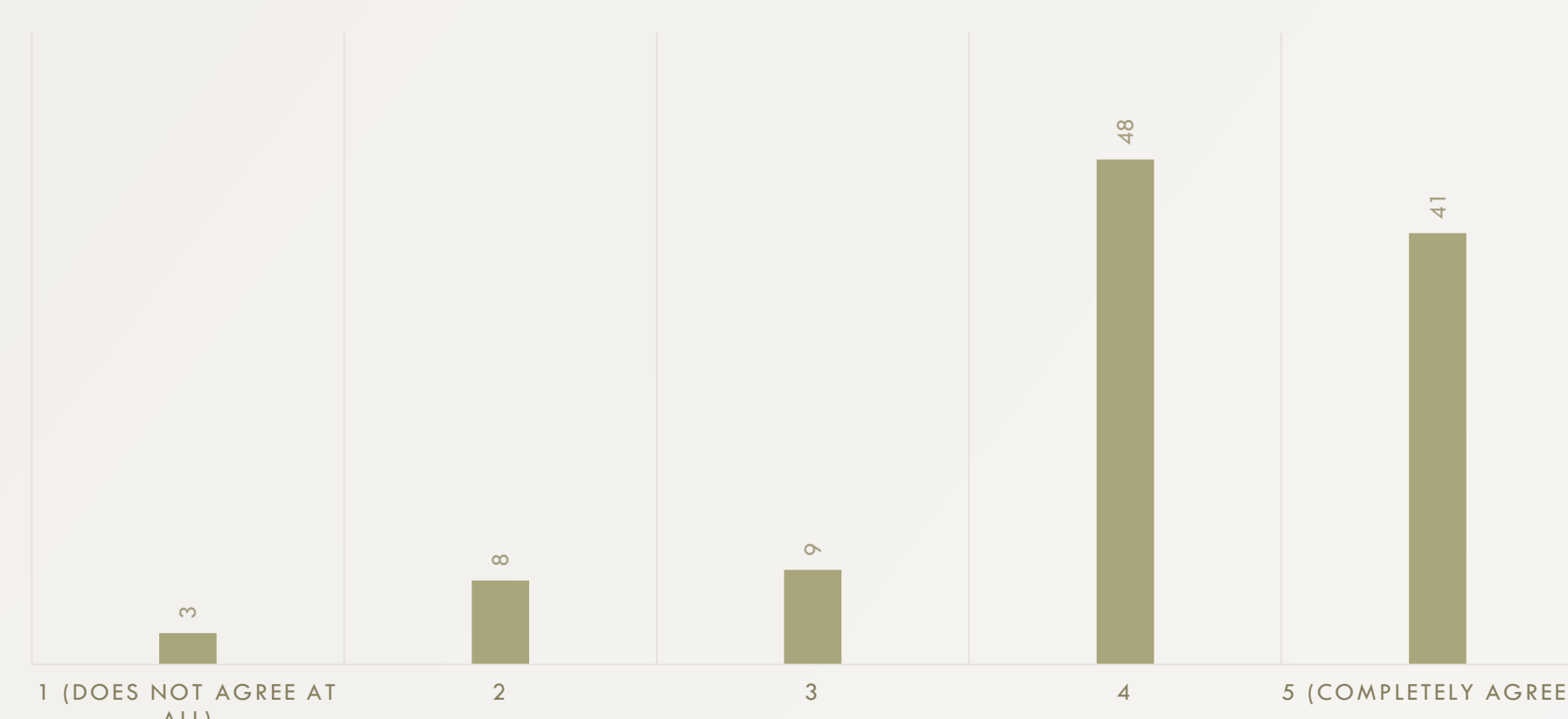
1. Hypothesis: According to researchers there is inequality in the academic career.
2. Hypothesis: The double burden of the family and work is a phenomenon mostly relevant for women in the academic field.

WOMEN ARE AT A DISADVANTAGE IN THE ACADEMIC FIELD. N=109



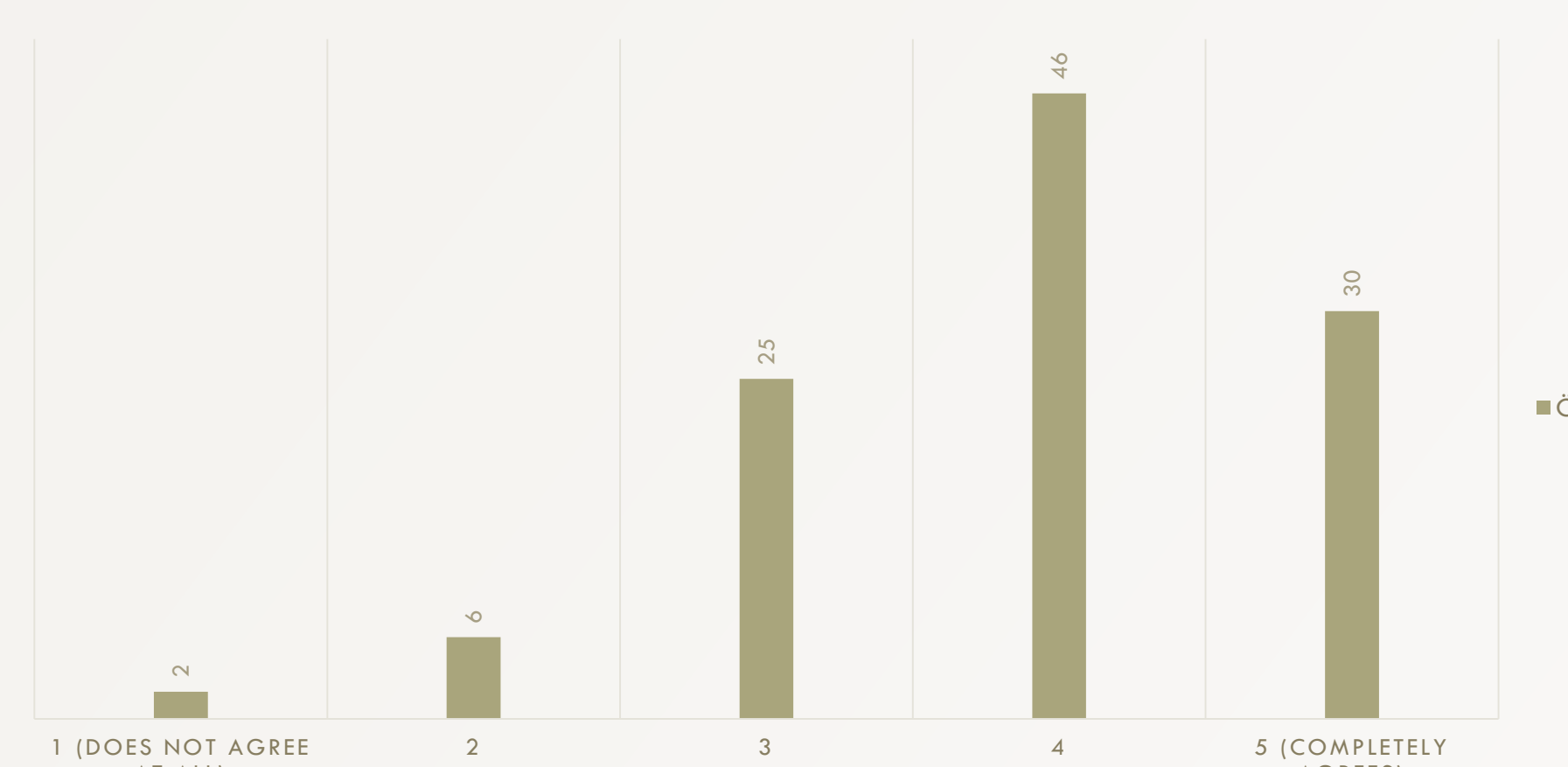
Results (Continued)

BALANCING THE FAMILY AND CAREER IS SOMETHING MOSTLY WOMEN HAVE TO FACE IN THE ACADEMIC WORLD. N=109



3. Hypothesis: Because they have to balance work and family, female researchers have less time for professionally relevant studies, and learning which would advance their careers.

FEMALE RESEARCHERS HAVE LESS TIME FOR PROFESSIONALLY RELEVANT STUDIES, RESEARCH AND LEARNING. N=109



How do you manage household duties?

Managing alone

“Just as my partner does not attempt to give lectures instead of me I do not attempt to brew the morning coffee instead of her.” (man, 57, professor)

Supervising is women’s privilege

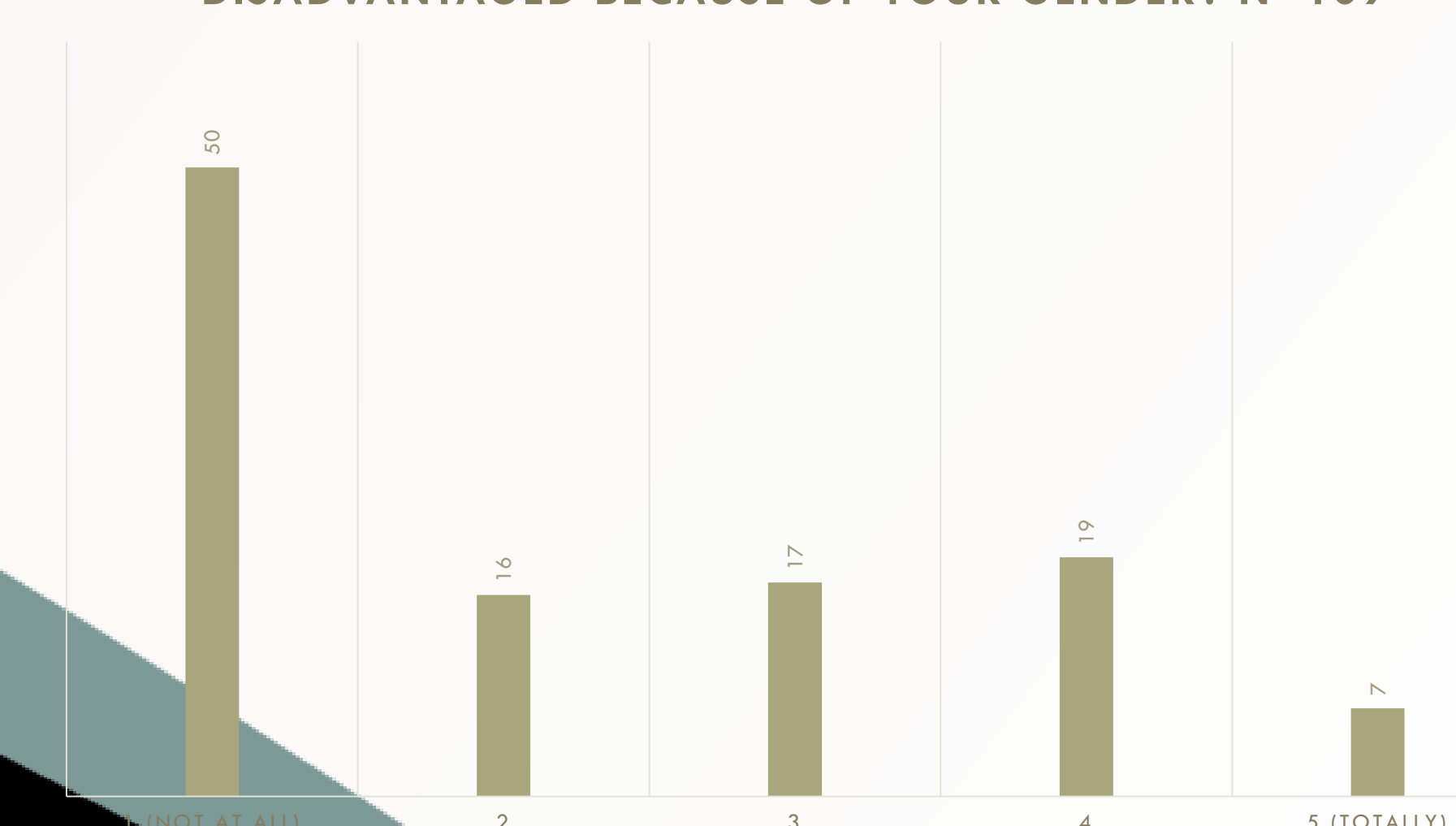
“My husband helps me in doing the dishes, cleaning, walking the dog, and doing the shopping, so that I have more time to finish my dissertation.” (woman, 30, assistant lecturer)

True sharers

“I think this only works if one chooses a partner for whom this is evident.” (woman, 46, research fellow)

4. Hypothesis: The majority of the participants did not experience inequalities at all, or only to a lesser degree in their own lives and career.

UP TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE YOU BEEN DISADVANTAGED BECAUSE OF YOUR GENDER? N=109



Results (Continued)

How would you define inequality?

Barriers

“That they should let me work and not hinder me when I have an idea” (woman, 46, associate professor)

Fairness

“When there will be women among the highest university leaders, when not ALL of the presenters of a high-ranking conference will be men, when a woman does not need to work three times as much as her male colleague, when I will not have even a single male colleague who does not work yet still gets paid and gets a high position just because they are men.” (woman, 40, associate professor)

Having children

“That they will not choose the man for a given job just because they take the fact into consideration that I will have children in the future.” (woman, 31, assistant lecturer)

Gender equality is not significant

“There is no such thing as equal opportunities. In the academic world the inequalities are the same as elsewhere. In which country and with what social and family background one is born with. Compared to this, gender inequality is small.” (man, 30s, assistant professor)

Disadvantages of men

“In current social and family division of labour men from intellectual families share a significantly larger role in raising children. In spite of this, more and more often women are favoured in an incorrect way, for example, when considering applications or scholarships. I think that we have gone to the other extreme, and often male researchers are at a disadvantage”. (man, 40, associate professor)

Conclusion and suggestions

- What do researchers and professors mean by equal opportunities, since 60% of the responders think that they have not been disadvantaged as researchers, yet the answers given to open-ended questions show experiences of a variety of strategies to keep them down?
- A great number of responders think that due to balancing work and family female researchers have less time for their own work and studies related to their field that would carry their career forward. Can this mean that the double burden becomes a multiple burden?
- How does the phenomenon of the double burden affect men as well, and how it can define their progress. How do fixed gender roles influence the academic career of men?
- What kind of solution suggestions do researchers have apart from analysing regarding promoting equal opportunities in the academic world? What do they think, what methods would be worth to use against structural inequalities?