

Female teachers ask for work/family reconciliation to be able to access management posts

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Female teachers ask for work/family reconciliation to be able to access management posts. Credit: SINC

A research team made up of various Andalusian universities and coordinated by the University of Huelva (UHU) has concluded that the main barrier that these professionals encounter when accessing management roles is the lack of policies for reconciling work and family life. Only 38.6% of management positions in Andalusian centres for pre-school and Primary education are occupied by women, compared with 61.4% by men.

According to figures from the Ministry of Education for 2009-2010, in [Spain](#) there are 230,288 female and 64,152 male pre-school and Primary

school teachers.

"Despite this vast majority and that the requirements for accessing management positions are the same, in Andalusia more than half of these educational centres (61.4%) are directed by men" José Manuel Coronel, main author of the study and researcher in UHU, declares to SINC.

The piece of work, that is published this month in the journal *Gender Work and Organization*, focuses on the barriers that female head teachers have encountered when accessing management roles in pre-school and Primary education centres in Andalusia.

To carry out the study, Coronel and his team contacted educational centres and made a representative sample of female head teachers of schools. "206 female teachers responded to the survey which makes up 58% of the whole sample", the author explains.

This questionnaire, which was concluded in 2005, includes demographic information, general opinions on management, the factors blocking access to management roles and a final section of observations from responses "in open answer format".

The main barrier that the women interviewed described is related to the incompatibility of work and family life. "The figures prove that the family work conflict is still present when women consider management positions", the researcher points out.

Around 68% of the women interviewed have children older than 12 years, "which indicates that they have the inconvenience of having to wait until their children grow up before they can be promoted", Coronel notes.

In this sense, female head teachers are missing the support of specific

policies for reconciling family and work life, at a general level and more specifically by the educational administration.

Study plans lack training in management

Another of the barriers is related to the organisational culture of schools, "in particular, with the male oriented management culture and the scarce valuation of management work compared to teaching work", Coronel points out.

The experts state that although the women interviewed know the school and have broad experience in teaching when they gain admittance to the post of directors, they keep asking for initial and permanent training to be better equipped to perform management activity.

"In this sense, female teachers find themselves with the issue that they are trained for teaching, but not for management, and if this is added to the fact that management is considered 'masculine', they can even be rejected by their own colleagues", explains the researcher.

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