

Men and women mentees and mentors in the IT and engineering majors of Hungarian universities, and in the employee sector

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ABSTRACT

This research is about the experiences of students studying or working in the field of IT or engineering. These experiences include, for example, the positive and negative distinctions experienced in IT and engineering majors at Hungarian universities. I ask young university mentors about their experiences, as well as the experiences of their mentees, their problems, for which they asked their mentor for help, what special cases have occurred during their past years as mentors, etc. I started an online survey to ask the mentors about their experiences at university and work.

CCS CONCEPTS

• **Social and professional topics** → **User characteristics; Gender; Women;**

KEYWORDS

women, mentoring program, mentors, mentees, university education, dropout rate

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1 EXTENDED ABSTRACT

In Hungary, the number of women studying pure IT majors has decreased significantly in the last two decades. Similarly, the tendency can be seen in the overwhelming technical fields. As in education, the majority of employees are also men in this field.

Both during their studies and at work, a woman can experience a lot of advantageous or even disadvantageous discrimination during her life. These negative distinctions can often cause discomfort in a woman's life. For this purpose, I am starting my research, in which I would like to examine this topic.

Two years ago, our university started to collect data about the number of female students in IT. The number was 6-7% in pure informatics (Computer Science, Computer Science Engineering), if we also count Business Informatics students then the number

is increased to 13%. It can be seen from this data that the number of women is significantly less than the number of men.

Some researchers [1, 2] also prove that there are fewer women in the IT sector in Hungary. In their research, 285 women were asked about their experiences as IT workers. Both positive and negative discrimination were reported during the research. It was also investigated whether gender segregation can be observed in the engineering and technology sector, of which the IT sector is also a part. The reasons for this: gender stereotypes, the gender divide in the educational background, masculine organizational culture and options aimed at maintaining work-life balance, especially for parents, etc.

The focus of my research is on students of the IT and engineering majors of Hungarian universities. This research is supported by the mentoring program organized by The National Union of Students in Hungary (HÖÖK), of which I am also a member. The research is based on the reports of mentors studying in IT and engineering fields participating in the program.

In Hungary, the mentoring programs at universities are organized by the HÖÖK.

Students applied to the program are supported by a personal senior assistant (mentor) studying in the same field during the first two semesters.

The mentor helps his/her mentee, navigates academic and administrative issues, as well as provides information on further applications, opportunities and scholarships. The aim of the program is to help integrate and prepare students for university life.

The national mentoring program is divided into 6 regions based on the universities, and each region has a mentor group that helps its mentees.

During my research, I would like to first examine how the number of female mentees has changed over the past 5 years.

What could be the reason why the number of women is constantly decreasing among both students and mentees?

I started an online survey asking the mentors about their experiences at university and work. Regarding the mentees, In the survey, I ask them about

- how many women mentees they had
- what was the dropout rate of female students from the university mentoring program
- whether the behavior of female and male mentees differed in programs organized by the mentor
- what special cases have occurred during their past years as mentors
- what problems occurred, in which the male and female mentees sought help, and
- what possible discriminatory cases they were involved in.

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I have data from our universities and the national distribution of the questionnaire is under approval, hopefully, we can spread it this month and we will have data in two months.

From the local data, we can see that the drop-out rate from the mentoring program is higher than 30% concerning female students. We got some information about negative discrimination at mentors' workplaces.

After the permission to distribute the questionnaire nationwide, presumably in the next 2-3 months, we will receive the information on the basis of which we can evaluate the survey.

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