Gender inequality in child-rearing

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the gender inequality in child-rearing and find out the solutions, how can increase the number of the fathers who use paternity leave, in addition, what are the causes that in Hungary this situation is so rare. Through the research, I used mixed methods, firstly a focus group discussion, and secondly an online survey. Basically, I get similar results both of the methods, there was not any significant difference between the opinions. There were same relevant factors which the people highlighted both in the focus group discussion both in the survey. Firstly, one of the most influential factors is the amount of the money that parents get after children. It follows that financial reasons are the most important in that sense. Secondly, in Hungary, people said that nursery schools are not developed enough; moreover, there is not enough free space for every child, so it is a tough decision for the parents, and it leads to the third issue, that women cannot go back to the labor market after giving birth. So Hungarian women have limited possibilities in the case they want a career and a family too. Because of these issues, in this research I tried to focus on the facts, how can these problems be solved, and make suggestions.

1. Introduction

In the XXI century gender inequality as a whole is a relevant and thought-provoking topic and in this writing, I would like to focus on gender inequality in child-rearing. This study will analyze the Hungarian situation, according to what do the people think about if the fathers use the paternal leave, and all of these facts can fit with the social norms, furthermore, it is unequivocal that mothers use the maternal leave, moreover, it is a privilege for mothers or not.

From certain perspectives, Hungary can be regarded one of the best places to live with a family because there are a lot of supports, which parents can use in case of having a child. In Hungary, one of the supports called Pregnancy and Confinement Benefit
(Terhességi-gyermekágyi segély – TGYÁS) which includes that women have 24 weeks maternity leave, but are allowed to take up to three years off and receive maternity benefits. For the first six months, a woman receives 70% of their previous salary. There is another support for the next eighteen months, until the child’s second birthday, called Child Care Fee (Gyermekgondozási díj – GYED), which is also available for the Hungarian mothers. The amount paid is 70% of the previous earnings of the parent taking care of the child; however, it is capped, and cannot be higher than 70% of twice the minimum daily wage. The third kind of support which mothers can use is the Child Home Care Allowance, which is available for parents or grandparents taking care of a child up to the age of three, although this is a much smaller amount. In contrast with the fathers, they can also have a 5 day-long paternal leave. Available latest by the end of the second month counted from the birth. In case of siblings, fathers can have a 7 day-long leave. But they are not entitled to any kind of monetary allowances or supplements.

In the XXI century, the traditional family roles are changing, women also want a strong place in the labour market, they want to work in higher positions and they do not want a career break in their life, because they want a child. According to this fact, we should think it over, what is happening in the workplaces?

2. Literature review

2.1. Introduction of the literature for the analyzed social problem

Although, the article from Carli-Eagly (2007) picks up some interesting facts and figures that we need to bare in mind when this was published. We read in the article that “mainly because they are erratic. And emotional. Men are erratic and emotional, too, but the point is a woman is more likely to be” (p.67) Today there are no all-men boards in the FTSE 100. Leeds University Business School reports that having at least one female director on the board appears to cut a company’s chances of going bust by about 20%. Having two or three female directors lowers the risk even more. This shows more organizations are now aware how important and beneficial it is to them to include women in their workforce and shows the improvements that have been made over the years. Moreover, a current study conducted by the Global Strategy Group and the
Rockefeller Foundation in 2017 concludes that the percentage (6%) of women CEOs at Fortune 500 companies has never increased since the Fortune 500 list was first published in 1955. Even though the responders to the survey believe that women are as qualified as men for leadership positions, they also believe that it is more difficult for women to reach these positions. The past ten years, women have achieved more and more regarding equality in the fields of wages and so on; however, how come the women in leadership positions remains as a problem? Another thing that the environment in which most CEOs and other powerful people develop might be a big part of the reason why women have had a very slow increase in participation. The environment has been dominated by men for so long that most settings are built to satisfy men’s needs and wants, not women’s, but now that women are seen as profitable, the environments designed to attract the best workers are changing as well, but quite slowly. This is why I consider it important for women in powerful positions to demand, in contract and agreement, that their womanly needs be met, as opposed to adjusting their lives and personalities to fit the masculine status quo. This type of diversity has been shown to promote values and a better atmosphere in work places.

Going back to the Carli-Eagly (2007) text, one of the most interesting thing what the article reveals is that today, however, men tend to take over more hours of housework, despite women still face more time spent on childcare, and housework too and also they have to have a workplace because families cannot afford to have only one person who is the “breadwinner”. That is why the woman of today has more tasks to be fulfilled than previous generations had. As the article argues some programs should be done in order to support women’s two bound tasks. E.g. give an opportunity to work less and importantly to fit this model as changing reasons to reach the top of careers, because many women have a problem, that they simply cannot get leadership positions because it is not linked to efficiency but other factors like years and hours spent at the workplace. If we see these facts in connection with the fact that women should have the opportunity to work as men, and men also should have the opportunity the use parental leave, we should take into consideration that it could have positive effects to families and in a long-term in divorce rates.
Since child-care leave became parental leave, that is, parents could share this form of absence among themselves, a new form of paternity leave has appeared which entitles fathers to a special leave right after the birth of their child. (Korintusiné 2008) However, Moss Korinus (2008) shows that according to researchers, fathers typically use this form of leave when it is specifically offered for them and masculine behavior can cause this fact. Paternity leaves originally created for females, and it can be in contrast with masculine domination.

Figure 1

[Insert Figure]

Moreover, it is not basic Hungarian, or Central European practice, that the government motivates fathers to stay at home, and take part in child-rearing.

There are gender beliefs and gender stereotypes, which has a huge importance according to this. Ridgeway C. (2011) article talking about hegemonic and non-hegemonic gender beliefs; how the experiences of dominant groups in society dictate the norm in society. The author states that: "People in dominant groups have more cultural resources and power available to them to shape the cultural images" (p.67), so
they are culturally hegemonic. Non-dominant groups, like women themselves, also contribute to enhance and reinforce these stereotypical ideas because they behave as society expects them to, and act according to the "self-other performance expectations". Some women truly believe these stereotypical ideas are true, which helps to make the cultural images even stronger. Finally, the author stated that changes in stereotypes tend to lag behind changes in material life, to which I completely agree. As we know, material life has and continues to change, favoring women a lot, so isn't it only natural that the stereotypes of both genders will eventually catch up? In the U.S. there are no real constraints and limitations to people's behaviors; women are free to be homemakers as they are to pursue ambitious careers, they are free to ask a love-interest out or wait for a traditional approach, they are free to speak their mind in institutional settings and they're free to be as passive as they want. So given the rocky road that women have traveled through history, and seeing the number of freedoms and opportunities that women have today, isn't it obvious that stereotypes are already underway to reforming? They already have, in fact, as what we think of typical men and women will certainly differ from the views of our parents.

Figure 2

Back to the workplace after giving birth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Gyed</th>
<th>Gyes</th>
<th>Gyet</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Compared to working-age women (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>157.8</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>244.7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>147.9</td>
<td>114.2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>262.1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>128.8</td>
<td>118.2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>99.2</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>295.3</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>291.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>186.2</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>296.5</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>73.4</td>
<td>166.7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>290.1</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>162.6</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>293.3</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/pdf/visszamunkaero05.pdf

KSH Back to the workplace after giving birth (Visszatérés a munkaerőpiacra gyermekvállalás után ) (2006) Budapest, p.6
At the same time, Hungary, in 2011, the National Health Insurance Administration’s (Nemzeti Egészségbiztosítási Alapkezelő) data showed, that only 5-6% of the families with young children choose the possibility of having the father stay at home and take care of the children, which means only 1% of those taking Child-Care Fee were male. (Figure 2)

Continuously, on the reading of Hochschild, A. The Time Bind File (1997), the author mentions the case of Amerco (Amerco was founded in 1941 and has been continually run by the Shoen family for over 80 years. In terms of products, Amerco rents trucks, trailers and moving supplies through its U-Haul subsidiary) and how no fathers were taking advantage of parental leave and no father took up the part-time work schedule when they had a baby. Also, those fathers with young children only miss half a day more a year than fathers without young children. But then there was a lack of information on the possible reasons why. The reasons mentioned for why fathers don’t take this opportunity where those parents can’t afford to work shorter hours, but the majority of them don’t even use all their paid vacation days so that's not a good enough reason for it. Then, also that they are afraid of being laid off, but the rates of people that get laid off at least in Amerco were very low so that can’t be the main reason either. Moreover, another reason mentioned is how work becomes a new home because it means less stressful situation and can be more enjoyable for some people, but the burden of going back home is not for men but mostly for women. A possible reason for why men don't take the opportunity of parental leave and holidays could be due to stereotypes and the way men are brought up and made to feel by colleagues, friends family etc. In most cases, they are made to feel work is their main duty. When mentioned work is an escape from the stressful situation in the home, this can also be said to work the opposite way. After reading about the UK Business Culture (2017) it can be said many people nowadays who are working in higher positions are taking work home with them, and therefore work is no longer seen as an escape as no matter where they go due to the help of technology they are working at all hours without even noticing. The text also clearly showed that there still exists the expectation that mothers are the caregivers and fathers should be the provider of the family (p.189). It was also mentioned that mothers are “always on call” compared to the fathers who see their home as a place to relax from work. Hence, as with most of gender inequality factors we have studied so far, such roles and stereotypes will only disappear with the full
inclusion of men and boys. One sentence about the importance of parental patterns and socialization. In this regard, a father is more likely to take paternity leave or work halftime to take care of his children and household chores if his own father did so too. Moreover, it is important to understand for fathers who do not take parental leave that trying to compensate for lost time does not give them a full position as caregivers in their home (p.193). Thus, there is a need for legislation offering parental leave on an equal basis to women and men. As we have seen in previous readings, discussions and in the article by Haas and Rostgaard (2011), such options for paternal leave has been implemented in most of the Scandinavian countries and have proven very successful. The final goal of every social policy is to create change in people for the better, and, in order to achieve that, we must address why the society exists and behaves in a certain way, to begin with. The real cornerstone in this matter is, in fact, observing the reasons why fathers don't take the opportunity of a paid parental leave, and why so many oppose "father quotas" and, ultimately, equality in the upbringing of children. Expecting both parents to take an active role in childcare should be a democratic starting point to build a society closer to gender equality. An equal, non-transferable parental leave is essential because children and their care are surely not transferable.

Figure 3
Enrolment rates of children in public pre-school facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>2002</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>birth to age</td>
<td>age three to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>two (0-1-2)</td>
<td>five (3-4-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>20.3 (13.2% in nurseries)</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>11.7% (11.2% in nurseries)</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>9.1% (8.7% in nurseries)</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>17.7% (15% in nurseries)</td>
<td>88.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany (in 2000)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden (in 2000)</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-15 (in 2000)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Therefore, more often than not, mothers end up carrying this burden almost all by themselves: quotas, as it is the case, with many gender equality-related issues, the only
way they really work is with the application of quotas, or in other words, the legal obligation.

Furthermore, also childcare support is an important issue in this case. From reading the Saxonberg, S. and Sirovátka, T. Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice (2007) article, it needs to be questioned why do the state reduced the aid to nursery schools for children aged 0-3.

2.2. Details of gender inequality in child-rearing and different approaches

On the one hand, there should be more help in childcare schemes to encourage mothers to go back to work and also give less stress on fathers having to work extra hours, as he will no longer be the only one bringing money into the household. By increasing fees and closing those down it will make it harder for parents to get back into a stable job and therefore parents will find it easier to stay at home rather than returning or continuing to work. The main issue of why women still stay at home to care can be blamed on the lack of support from the government. For example, in Poland, most cannot receive parental leave benefits and the state gives little support to kindergartens, therefore this means that the family has no choice but for one of them to stay at home. As the father will struggle to get parental leave and only 1 in 20 can afford it, the mother has no choice but to leave her career as finding childcare is also difficult. The state is increasing gender inequality by giving women the right to work but only supporting men in their career. Everyone should have equal opportunities in gaining a career after having children and women should not be forced into part-time, low positions and low pay, in order to have a balanced life. But on the other hand, many people agree the fact that the state discouraging parents from sending their 0-3 years old children to nursery school.(Figure 3) I think at this age, children need to get as much caring from their parents as possible, not only to forge a strong bond between them (which will be important later in their life), but also to be able to teach the children basic skills (speech, walking, "potty training" etc.) that are better be taught by their parents and not by a stranger. But on the contrary, both parents should (and should have the opportunity to) participate in raising their children equally, and neither of them should give up on their career because of it. A possible solution could be that one parent
stays at home with the children and gets the childcare support from the government, and
the other parent works normally but they switch roles every week. (e.g: at week one, the
mother stays at home/ gets the fee and the father works, at week two the father stays at
home and the mother works etc.)

Figure 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Part-time work</th>
<th>Employment impact of parenthood</th>
<th>Women's employment share</th>
<th>Women's unemployment share</th>
<th>Employment rate – women aged 15–64 in two points of time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(% of total employment)</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>48.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-15</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Back to the article, this text highlighted a specific region that shows relatively similar values. A given society can be heavily determined by the actions of all-time government. For instance, in Hungary, I do not think conservative attitude is so automatic in general, - but in the case of family, this is the most important thing in the world- considering the childcare support is really rigid and really hard for the man to get it properly. A man is able to get the full support if the partner is unable or dead and men stay at parental leave when the partner earns markedly more income, which has also a problem, Hungarian women earn 15-20% less on average.(Figure 4)

With these circumstances, it is not surprising when parental leave is not even in consideration for men. It seems childcare support is not for the child itself, but much more for the mother specifically, so the protection is one-sided, however, we call it child-care support. Of course, it does not mean that the government should take away the support from mothers, just make it even for both men and women to be possible to share weight about parental leave and childcare.
In the previous paragraph, I raised two issues interrelated. First, females earning is in average less in the labor market because of the glass ceiling. Second, males are not supported enough to stay at home with the child. (Fathers get just 5 days leave, or 7 if siblings were born, and in addition, some of the financial support is also entitled only to mothers.) If just one of the two issues would be equalized, it would start a positive circle. Since money is always and everywhere an issue, even among richer people, it would not be an economically logical (rational) choice for the family, if the father would stay at home. The average middle-class family in Hungary has strict-budget and cannot afford it.

As we could see, it is not a widespread practice in Hungary for fathers with young children to stop work for longer or shorter periods of time, thus becoming inactive in the labor market. Because of this fact, I make a survey about how widespread and acceptable that fathers may stay at home with the children and draw conclusions concerning causes and effects.

2.3. Hungarian situation and background

Nowadays, in Hungary, the situation is rare where the fathers use paternity leave but there are some counter-examples too. A Hungarian daily paper HVG Extra Business, regard to an article, which title is: "How is that situation looks like, when the mother did not do anything?", in which Szendrei-Berta Zsófi and Berta Gergő tell their story about how they used paternity leave. They lived in Ireland when Zsófi giving birth to their first kid. The reason why they went to Ireland is they would like to provide much better existence than in Hungary. Zsófi had better salary-she is a physiotherapist- than Gergő-he is a bookkeeper- 10 months after giving birth, Zsófi went back to work. Gergő stayed at home for a year with the 10 months little baby, but in retrospect, they are happy with this decision, because they could experience the situation, in which the dad is the active person at home, and it can be beneficial all the members of the family. Gergő said in the early time it was hard to organize all the things and figure out exciting activities when the weather was rainy, but he can deal with the difficulties, and he said he feels himself more a dad than a "mother allowance". In these kinds of situations, the mothers have their own difficulties too. For instance, in Zsófi's case, she said she worried about the
fact, how can Gergő lull the little baby. Luckily, Gergő can easily solve this problem too, he sang a song, and the baby can get sleep. In conclusion, the young couple said, that in Ireland the system is more flexible than in Hungary, and the society is more accepting than in Hungary, so they could not have to feel anxiety and stress because they chose this way.

As shown in the enclosed paragraph, it is very unusual that the fathers use paternity leave, and they stay in Hungary and do not go abroad. Luckily there are some situations when this example comes true. Also to HVG Extra Business regard another article on this topic and the title is very meaningful: "Why do have mothers take so much unbearable pressure through the years?". A psychologist called Szél Dávid, who is the writer of a blog, which name is "Apapara", and her wife, György Eszter told their situation with their second child. Eszter is a historian, and it was not a question, that in the case of the second child, she will stay at home for 9 months and then, she will go back to the university to teach, and Dávid will stay at home with the kid. They both agree that changing the classical meaning of the roles helped them to create the family, but they both think that it is the harder way, and they had to work on this issue a lot. Dávid said that he did not worry about the difficulties, because in the case of the first child, he was present in the family's everyday life, and he tried to help. There was one fear, that Dávid cannot hold the baby's daily routine (sleeping, eating), but finally, they could solve it too. Dávid believes that one of the most important things is when the mother coming home, there would be a calm and quiet atmosphere. In the case of Eszter, she said she felt guilt despite the fact that she and Dávid talked about this millions of time. In contrast with that, she said it was reinforcing to see, how Dávid can handle all the things with the child. In addition, the immediate family was not surprised according to their decision, because Dávid writing his blog on this topic. In conclusion, they both agree that the young couples have to be brave and go against with the social norms because it is beneficial both of the parents and children.

By good fortune, I have an opportunity to participate in a conference, organized by a small Hungarian organization- called Ampók Organisation- which focused on the Hungarian and Scandinavian family support system. This topic is very complex, and the listeners get an open-minded perspective, because there were many experts, such as Szikra Dorottya, Keveházi Katalin, and Susanne Flolo (from Norway). One of the presenters was Szél Dávid, who could give us a wider view of the above-mentioned
topic as a man who stayed at home with his second child as I mentioned in the above paragraph. The title of his presentation was “The father’s role in the family”, and he started his speech with an interesting issue. He searched through Google pictures about dads, and he finds a lot of funny pictures about how a daddy playing with his child, but the basic message of these pictures are that fathers are not responsible for their kid, and they are incompetent for the tasks. By the same token, it also refers to the gender stereotypes and beliefs which mentioned by also Ridgeway C. (2011.). Figure 5, is a table created by Szél Dávid tells a lot about, how social norms are influencing these fetishes, and what the building blocks of this complex system are.

**Figure 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being a father</th>
<th>Being a mother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>law</td>
<td>commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexy, lovely</td>
<td>natural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decision</td>
<td>obvious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>release</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can do mistakes</td>
<td>cannot do mistakes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast with these facts, it is interesting to go back to the history and see how the Hungarian family system started. Szikra Dorottya attracted our attention through the conference, that it is important, that in Hungary after the Second World War, the family support system was a priority for the government. Firstly, if the people talk about the family, it contains only the mother and the children, the father did not get a mention “only through a magnifying glass”. In 1912 the family allowance has been introduced and people call it “family wage”. The essence of this support is that those fathers got it, which’s had dependent family members. (Important factor is that it had not cover wives.) Later, in 1938, those people who work for factories, the factory had to pay this.
family wage, here, basically the focus on the fathers, but the law highlights that the mother also can demand this family wage, if she does not live together with her husband. I believe it is also relevant fact that this support is not paid by the government, it is paid by the factory. In addition in that time, this family wage was also not a huge amount. In the 1970s there was a big change in this case because the family allowance started to be that kind of support, which demanded by the mothers only. The government supported this process, however, supported them, and the character of the family wage is gone. Of course there were other childcare supports at that time too, for instance, Hungary was the second country in the world who lead in the Pregnancy and Confinement Benefit (Terhességi Gyermekágyi Segély-TGYÁS) in 1891, and only mothers can use this support, except the situation, when the woman dies during giving birth, in that case, the father also can use it. Another support, which I mentioned in the Introduction part, the Child Home Care Allowance, also play an important role in that case, because it provides a long-term home staying after giving birth to the mother, and in the same way throw into the shade the question, that what is the father’s role in child rearing? Because also back that facts, in which the husbands expect from their wives to do all the housework because they are home all day, so in this way, women will be careworn, and the men also stressful because of the work, and because he did not spend any time with his family. Exactly this is why the Hungarian government lead in that dads also can require the Child Home Care Allowance after the kid is more than one year. Another support, that the fathers also can require is Child Care Fee, which depends on the previous salary. Interesting to mention, that exist another Child Care Fee Extra, which can be required from 2014, which is more and more popular in the daddies case in the recent years because it can be demanded also during the time when the mother chooses that she would like to back to work. All in all, the Hungarian government takes measures to inspire fathers to stay at home through the years, but unfortunately, it is not enough. The supports are small amount of money, and the political leaders are not focusing on the importance of these issues. The society also not that accepting and those fathers who are brave and jump into this situation, unluckily most of the cases he had to face critical comments.
3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction of the chosen research methods

For my research, I used mixed research methods which help me to draw conclusions about my topic. I chose the focus group interviewing which is a research method in case of which data are generated by the participants in the research, who collectively communicate on the given theme, in this case, the gender inequality in child-rearing. I thought it will be a useful method because there are interactions during the interview, and can observe conductive issues. Group discussions are used for various reasons. Pollock prefers them to single interviews because "studying the attitudes, opinions and practices of human beings in artificial isolation from the contexts in which they occur should be avoided" (1955, p.34). Another important feature of group discussion is that corrections by the group concerning views that are not correct, not socially shared, or extreme are available as means for validating statements and views. So the importance is laid on the interactive aspect of the data collection. The key advantage of focus groups is the "explicit use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group" (Morgan, 1988, p.12). Also, a mentionable advantage is that it can add a human dimension to an impersonal data, and they can provide a broader range of information, what is more, they offer an opportunity to seek clarification.

3.2. Introduction of the data and sources used in the research

In my interview, I was the moderator, and I was the observer too. For this focus group, I chose 9 people, both men and women (2 women, 7 men) who are working for a multinational company called Dreher. This company is a Brewery in Budapest, and my interviewees working in Győr and its agglomeration. Dreher Brewery is one of the three leading players in the Hungarian beer market. I intended to interview people in working and childbearing age because they are actual and potential stakeholders of the issue discussed. What is more, as being a multinational company, wages are relatively high there, so that it is relevant to study the attitudes towards career versus childrearing and childbearing as well as costs and benefits of both of them. I chose this particular
company because I have a contact here, and I believe it is a thought-provoking issue to examine this topic in this field. Back to the participants, I believe the focus age in this topic is between 25 years old and 45 years old. I chose according to this because in my opinion is this is the relevant age to my topic. They can talk about their own experiences, and they can remember the difficulties. Most of them have children, and both who have not, they want in the near future, so they have plans, and they have practice, so they are suitable for my focus group. As I mentioned, all of them are working for this multinational company, their salary is approximately the same, so I can compare the answers, ex-observe the money.

The material I used is a focus group outline which is prepared in advance, and my mobile phone to record the whole focus group furthermore another mobile phone to record a video too. Since all of the interviewees accepted that I will record the whole discussion, I believed it would be useful, because when I watch the video back, I could see the facial reactions and the non-verbal communication too, which is also relevant in this kind of research. There were 14 questions which are strongly connected to my topic, and the main goal of the focus group discussion is to gain the respondents’ opinion. All questions in the focus group are found in the Appendix. After the focus group was finished, the participants were thanked for their time and participation and given information about when and how they could find out about the results of the study. They were also allowed to keep a copy of my notes, the voice record, and the video record too.

As I mentioned I chose mixed methods for my thesis, so focus group was not an individual method of research, I use it in combination with conducting online surveys. Online surveys are questionnaires that the participants can complete on the internet. I chose this one because I can easily create the web form, where the questions are stored in databases and statistical software provides necessary basic analytics. Online surveys are good way to do a research, because you can collect opinions around the world in short time for example, and easily draw the conclusions. Moreover, the online survey provides the highest level of convenience for respondents because they can answer the questionnaire according to their own pace, chosen time and preferences. So I chose this online survey to my second method for my thesis.
The participants were in the same field, I thought it is an important factor. I sent the online survey to 100 people, who are also working for the Dreher multinational company. Here, there was no age control, so the participants can be older than 45 or younger than 25. I sent this questionnaire for people who are working in different rank, because in the case of the focus group, there were different ranks too, and I thought this in this way I can get more relevant and precise outcome. The questions mostly were the same as the focus group interview too, but I rephrase them to more closed questions and I reduce it for 12, and in the final part there was an option to write their individual opinions and suggestions according to the current system. The questions are also focused on the childrearing and the parental leave in connection with gender inequality. I sent the same online survey all of the participants, and out of the 100 people, 82 resent me. All of my questions in the online survey are found in the Appendix too.

4. Analysis

4.1. Basic characteristics of the sample

As I mentioned in the Methodology part, I used mixed research method to my thesis. The first research method was the focus group, where I chose 9 people, 2 women, and 7 men, who are working for a multinational company, called Dreher. Both of the participants are between 25 and 45 years old, and they working in different fields. I asked them 14 questions, and the focus group was very useful to my research because all of the interviewees answered openly, and luckily, the atmosphere was calm, and everybody could tell their own opinion and they could narrate their own experiences in connection with the topics. Except two of the interviewees do not have a child, but they want in the near future, so they could also have a view. Firstly, I asked the people to give a short introduction of themselves, but there were no surprises because they knew each other, so it was a homogenous focus group. Thanks for this fact; I think they can freely shape their sights.

My other research method to my thesis was a survey, and 82 people conducted it from the same company, Dreher. Here, the age limitation was bigger than the focus group, so the workers who conducted it are between 20 years old and 60 years old. I open out the limitation because a lot of people works for this multinational company, and in this
way, I get a wider range picture of the topic. Obviously, the people work in different fields, so I will put them into four sections, which are illustrated through Figure 6.

All in all 82 people conduct my survey, and from these, 39% of women and 61% of men. I believe I can draw relevant conclusions because the spread of the people can be observed. As I mentioned these people are working for the same multinational company and because of this fact, they get the same allotment.

**Figure 6**

![Circle diagram showing fields of employment (N=82)]

4.2. *Voices and opinions of the respondents*

The first conclusion that I can draw from both the focus group discussion, both the survey, that people, who have kid or kids, are not satisfied with the Hungarian system. Only 4.9% of the people who conducted my survey said that they would not change anything if they have a chance. In the focus group discussion, there were same opinions about the topic. One of the interviewees called Lilla, who uses the maternity leave now, she added that “*I used the maternity leave, because I think in Hungary this is a “cube law”.. But it is very circumstantial. Moreover, the amount of the money is not too big..*”
In Hungary, mothers can use several supports, but as Lilla said, it is complicated and time-consuming. In addition, a lot of people not informed enough, they are not familiar with all the supports they can request. Some of the people who conducted the survey give some examples that they would like to prelude into the system like, they would like to increase the amount of the money, which the parents get after giving birth, furthermore, they would not like to limit the amount of the money, so everybody should get proportional support of their salary, but they get it during less time like instead of 3 years, they get it during 1 year, over and above not only support those families who have more than 1 child. An individual suggested, that he or she would like to increase the amount of the money of the support, if the parent has an evidence, that he rear the kid alone, because now, the single parent gets as much money as those families which have two members. Another suggestion was that the government should develop the nursery schools, and they should motivate the society for an effective social communication in the case of the equal share of housework, and equal participation in the child-rearing. People think that these are the most relevant financial reasons, why fathers do not use the paternity leave. In the focus group discussion, József, who has two daughters phrasing that “The paternity leave is maximized, I think if the paternity leave was not maximized, more fathers would use it” Of course, there is another side of the coin, where there are sociological reasons. Many of the findings of this study go along with stereotypical beliefs about the role of men and women in child-rearing. Ridgeway C. (2011) writes a lot about hegemonic and non-hegemonic gender beliefs which play an important role in our society, and unfortunately, these beliefs are influential factors in a large way. Surprisingly, in the survey, 51.2% (42 people) of the respondents think that it is a social norm that the mothers use the maternity leave, and the others think (40 people) that it is a questionable issue in the family. Then again, it is a very complex topic, because the opinions are sharing in the sense, that the mothers must use the maternity leave. Figure 7 represents the results, and it shows that people have very different views.

In the survey, I use a five large scale (where 1 represents “not at all”; and 5 represents “fully agree”), designed to assess the individual’s perception of the question. In the case of focus group discussion, the opinions were more unified than the survey. Most of the interviewees think that obviously, the mothers have to stay at home with the child. Andrea, who has two children thinks, that “Usually, mothers are more positive
“with the children, than fathers” and Zoltán, who has one kid, continued with “For the child, it is better that the mother uses the maternity leave.” moreover, József (two children) thinks, that it is an emotional side and he told, “with the born of the child, the mothers feel this kind of involuntary sense of duty, then she feels she has to deal with the things.”

Figure 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your opinion about the fact, that mothers must use maternity leave? (N=82)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not agree at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear, that there is a biological bonding between the child and the mother, and because of this issue, everybody agreed, that in the first half year, the mothers have to stay at home, and give the emotional support for her child. But it is only a half year. What about the other two and a half years?

Some of the interviewees told that besides the financial issues, these gender beliefs are hugely influential factors in the fathers’ life mainly. Miklós who has two children, give an example in the discussion, and he believes “I think the more educated people are, the more fathers use the paternity leave.. and now I do not want to offend anyone, but if we look at the people, who work for the Audi, around the clock, I am not sure, that he thinks it over, and he goes to the dump, how embarrassing for him that he uses the paternity leave..”
The Hungarian social conditions do not allow for the men to use paternity leave, because the society classifies because of his decision. Besides this, it is hard to change these fetishes because, as József (2 children) phrased, “The messages of our leading politicians do not go to that direction that.. this issue is not dealt with, and basically, the example for them is the issue that men are strong etc..”

If I observe this topic, I have to take it consideration, what Erik (no child) mentioned during the focus group, “In these days, there are a huge amount of careerist women, who push this paternity leave for the men, and the males are losing their social role, so maybe they beg for that they would like to use the paternity leave” The second shift, as defined by Hochchild A. in the The Time Bind File (1997) that mostly, the society live with the fact that mothers are the caregivers, and fathers are the family providers. But these days, the roles are changing, and more women would like to participate in the labour market and they would like a career besides children. Carly-Eagly (2007) also argues with these facts, and the article draws our attention, how important this issue is.

In workplaces nowadays more and more acceptable, that women have higher positions too, and this is beneficial for companies. Lilia Burunciuc, who works for the Forbes, said that “There has been an obvious progress in achieving gender equality around the world over the past two decades: more girls are attending to school, more women are working and are being elected to public office, more women hold management positions, and the situation involving women’s legal rights has also improved” . Of course, Hungary is in a good position in the sense, that there is equal access to education, health care, women can participate in economic spheres and they have the opportunity to represent themselves in politics, but still, there are limitations like the minority in the parliament and ministries, moreover executive government positions. So the situation is better, but in this way, organizing the family and focusing on the career is still a complex mission. Furthermore, not to talk those things, which make the parents’ life’s difficult. There are lots of trends and fashions which can be determinative factors in the child’s development, such as neutral parenting. In these days there are shared opinions about this type of rearing. It basically means that the parents encourage their children to play with both “girlish” and both “boyish” toys, and exposing them to a variety of gender types and allowing the kids to explore. As I mentioned there is a lot of opinion about this, and exactly this is the reason why I asked this question in both of the focus group discussion and the survey too.
In the focus group, neither of the people know the exact meaning of the expression, so I gave a short definition to them, and in the survey too, because I would like to avoid the misunderstandings.

My experience was that people are trying to be careful when this topic comes up, because they do not know how they can handle it. In the focus group, József (2 children) said, “I am convinced that, this neutral parenting is a watchful game...” But he said he did not experience that with either of his children. Luckily one of the interviewees, Attila (1 child) mentioned a story about his kid called Eszter, and her cousin called Milán in connection with the topic of neutral parenting. Both of the kids were 1 year old, they were basically toddlers, and once, when the children played with each other, Milán started to fell in love with Eszter’s pink ponies. The ponies could sing, and they could move their wing and things like that, so they piqued Milán’s attention. Milán started to cry because they parents did not allow him to bring one of the ponies to home. It was a huge quandary for the parents, especially for the dad, that his boy wants to play with a “girlish” toy. Now, Milán is three years old, and surprisingly he started to play with cars...

So here, in this situation, the problem solved without including interference, but Attila also agreed, that it is a thought-provoking task both of the parents. As I mentioned I ask the people’s opinion about this topic in the survey too, and I get also various answers too. Figure 8 shows that 38% of the conductors totally agree with the neutral parenting, and it is a surprising result in the Hungarian society I believe.

Figure 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is your opinion about neutral parenting? (N=82)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totally agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under protest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not agree at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were also some people, who wrote their individual opinion, like “basically I agree, but I do not allow my boy to wear a skirt” and “I am not forcing anything, but nowadays I see a lot of men in the television who are wearing pink shirts -which were Barbie’s colour not so far- I believe it is not significant anymore” over and above, someone wrote that “today’s girlish boys are very strange”. In conclusion as the Figure 7 and the focus group discussion shows, in Hungary this type of rearing is not totally accepted, not to say that many people judge it, so it is important, that in a family, the parents should discuss it equally, and make a decision together in these kinds of questions.

One opportunity to handle this task and provide space each mothers and fathers, on the one hand, that the dads start to use paternity leave and share responsibility with the moms, on the other hand, take into consideration that there are nursery schools. In connection with nursery schools, in the focus group discussion, some of the people said that they would use this possibility if the nursery schools are more developed. It can be a good solution if the government focuses on more to this problem, because in this way, mothers can go back to work after giving birth, and it is beneficial for the economy too. Not to mention the fact, that women and men can also participate in raising their children, and neither of them has to give up the career, because of the kids. According to Saxonberg, S. and Sirovátka (2007) article, it is obvious that one of the most important issue that the government, and also men have to encourage women to go back to work because everybody should have a chance to build a career and have children too. Not to mention the fact, that it is also beneficial for fathers too, because for instance, they do not have to struggle with working more hours, so in this way, they have less stress in their private life, and they can live in balance.

Unfortunately, in Hungary, there are a lot of families, in which mothers use maternity leave for three years, and the fathers have to handle many problems. Zoltán (1 child), one of the participants of my focus group told his experiences, and complain about the difficulties, and explains “In my family, now my second kid is three years old, and we are living through this very difficult times with GYES and GYED, and it is hard so much, because basically, we lived from one salary, because the support is ridiculously
As he said, they have to live from one salary, and in this way, it is difficult to organize the family, and he could not participate in family life as he would like. In the survey, I asked the people in the survey to evaluate in a five large scale that “it is an influential factor that the father or the mother stays at home with the child, or not?” The five means that totally influences the child development and the one means that it absolutely not.

Figure 9

What do you think, it is an influential factor in the child's development which parent uses the paternity leave? (N=82)

Figure 9 represents, as Szél Dávid said too, that some people still believe that it can be an influential in some way, but it is an encouraging sign, that out of the 82 conductors 0 people said that they think that it is significant absolutely.

One of the conductors put a comment under this question, and it was “I think it mainly depends on the intellectual level of the individuals” So we can see, that people start to see this issue differently, and there is a propensity, just families need to be supported.

And it is in connection with the train of thought according to which the legislative background and the psychological attitudes are the two main responsible facts that this phenomena exist, where the fathers are the breadwinners, and the mothers are at home with their child. It is one of the hardest tasks to change these stereotypes in Hungary because as Keveházi Katalin said in the conference, the Hungarian family support
system does not encourage the employees to organize their private and work life, neither of the women who want to back to work after giving birth.

All in all, the Hungarian family support system basically based on social traditions. According to Szikra Dorottya, this system represents a so-called “familialist” approach according to the care-giving, so the responsibility of the care is the families’ task, instead of the institutional solutions. Sociologists also use the “maternalism” expression because the mothers are the prior family maintenance characters. The current domestic family policy, which has a stated priority, the demographic growth, continues the tradition in which the mother has the care-giving role, and she is primarily responsible for the kid, and allow that she can stay at home with the child in long-term. At the same time, as I mentioned, the rules also accept that the fathers and mothers share the child care and household tasks, just marginally support the fathers to stay at home, and take part in these duties.

The conference was a good example to see, how big the difference between the Hungarian and the Scandinavian system is, and how beneficial could the gender equality be through the child-rearing.

However, it can be said that we can see a change in the younger generation in Hungary, because there are existing examples who are trying to share the responsibility in child-rearing, and there is a need to involve fathers in family life. It is clear fact, that it would be necessary that the government should support these efforts, and encourage the young adults.

5. Conclusion

In this part of my study, I would like to summarize my findings, and draw the conclusions. The goal of my thesis was to find possible reasons, why so frequent in Hungary, that fathers do not really would like to use paternity leave, if they have a chance. This is a short overview about the Hungarian child supporting system, and I tried to draw attention both the individual level, and both the social level, the advantages and disadvantages that could come up during analyze the whole topic. In conclusion, it is an obvious fact, that the Hungarian system is very family-oriented, and focuses on that the prior care-giving role is concerned by the mothers, and the social policy also concentrates on it. It can be stated also, that in the recent years, there were
some elements, which called for to support the mothers to go back to the workplaces after giving birth, for instance, the Child Care Fee Extra (GYED extra), and also the government tried to increase the free places in nursery schools. In contrast with this, in Hungary, it is still very unusual that mothers work in part-time, which can be a beneficial solution for the economy and both the family life. Through the focus group discussion and through the survey many people argued, that developed nursery schools and more possibility to part-time work can force females to return to the labour market. It is also turned out, that for Hungarian families it would be important, that the equal housework sharing, and equal child-rearing to come true. As long as the mothers can get enough help in the housework and child-rearing, the father would not be the regulatory breadwinners, which is a big responsibility for them. Experiences show that in Hungary, the biggest retraction force is the amount of money which does not depend on the salary, so financially it would not be advantageous if the man uses the paternity leave because in most cases the father’s salary is bigger than mother’s. The withstander is very rare, in that case, it is also questionable, that in the family, what are the people’s opinions, and the dad is brave enough to face with the difficulties. I am convinced that there is a need for stronger incentives from the state, but it is substantial that the support does not make differences between the genders. At the same time, that fathers need to be supported to take part in the family life and housework, and the mothers need to be supported to be active in the labour force after giving birth. The law allows that the members of the family share the supports in that sense, that they can share the supports.

Another retraction force is that nursery schools are not developed enough; moreover, there are not enough free places for the kids, and for these reasons, there is no inclination in the parents. But it is a worth considering issue, because it can be a positive effect on the child development, he or she can meet kids with the same old, and she or he can develop the social skills. Not to mention the fact, that in this way, mothers can go back to the labour market earlier. It does not necessarily mean, that the moms have to take full-time jobs, as I mentioned earlier; it should be a good solution to lead in more part-time jobs.

The third retraction force is that social norms and gender beliefs are still very strong, and the Hungarian society is not so open-minded. In this country, if the dad uses paternity leave he has to face with a lot of problems and critics, but luckily there are counter examples. Furthermore, those fathers, who used the supports, they said that it
was an interesting experience for them, they loved to do something else than their work, and also agreed that it is important that the child gets more stimuli, if she or he meets more kinds of parenting styles. In conclusion, it is ascertainable that Hungarian fathers need a support from the state, but also from the family and society. A lot of issues changed through the years, but still, the people are not enough opened.

I believe in the near future, hopefully parenting become more equally divided among males and females, and it will results more balanced families. Ganong and Coleman (2001) believe that we are already on a good way to reach the ideal family arrangement, in which fathers can be as co-parents as moms. In these time, it can be observed, that between fathers and children there are stronger bonds, because fathers get more caring than in the past.(Sandberg and Hofferth, 2001)

5.1. Limitations

This study has limitations, because firstly, I tried to use a large sample size (82 people who are working for the same multinational company and in the focus group 9 people from the same multinational company), there were twice as many men than women, so the study should be replicated, because in that way if the number of the male and female interviewees are the same. Also in the focus group discussion, perhaps the social desirability bias affected the data; it is possible that some participants do not would like to say the most honest reviews.

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Appendix
Focus group:

Introduction:

Let us start our focus group discussion with a short introduction. My name is Blanka Szabó, I live in Győr, and this is my third year in Corvinus University, and I am studying sociology. As the most of you know, I do my thesis this year, and in my work, I try to focus on the topic of gender inequality in child-rearing. I would like to ask you to say some words about yourself, what are you doing, and a short introduction as I did.

Interview questions:

1. What do you know about the Hungarian family supporting system, and what is your opinion?
2. If you have a chance to change anything in the system, what would you like to change?
3. What is your opinion about gender equality in child-rearing? What form?
4. What do you think; it is a privilege for mothers to use maternity leave?
5. How did you choose that who will use the paternity leave?
6. What do you think about social norms in connection with this topic? It is a social norm that mothers use maternity leave? Why/Why not?
7. Do you agree with the fact that fathers use the paternity leave instead of mothers?
8. Do you think it is an influential factor in the child’s development if the father uses the paternity leave?
9. Imagine the situation, that the father uses the paternity leave. What do you think, what are the difficulties which you have to face with?
10. What do you think; it will be more accepted and more wide-spread in the next ten years in Hungary that the fathers use paternity leave? Do you want that?
11. If you have more child, will you think it over that the father uses paternity leave?
12. What is your opinion about the statement that women are primarily responsible for the care of the child?
13. Nowadays, people sometimes talk about gender neutral parenting, which means that parents are break away from the gender binary and expose their children to
a variety of gender types and allow them to explore. There are different forms of it, but parents who practice a relaxed type of it; they encourage their children to play with both “boy” and “girl” toys, keep clothing and room colour neutral or allowing children to pick their own clothes. What do you think about this?

14. What do you think; how raise kids, who believe in gender equality? Has it an effect on the child’s development and his/her gender identity?

**Transcript-shortened version**

My name is Blanka Szabó, I am a student of Corvinus University Budapest, I am studying sociology, and the goal of this focus group is to find out what is your opinion about gender inequality in child-rearing. I have 14 questions, and I think we should start with a short introduction.

Ádám: “Hello! My name is Ádám Kavalecz, I am working for a multinational company (Dreher), I live in relationship, and I am an area sales manager.” (1 child)

Erik: “Hello! My name is Erik Honfi, I am working for the same multinational company, I am an area sales manager too, and I live in relationship too.” (no child)

Lilla: “Hi! My name is Lilla Maeda-Imrefalvi, I am in an administrative position in a multinational company, and I am married.” (1 child)

Tamás: “Hello! My name is Tamás Vincze, I am working for a multi too, and I am a regional representative.” (1 child)

Andrea: “Hi! My name is Andrea Dömény, I am working for a multinational company too, and I live in relationship.” (2 children)

Miklós: “Hello! My name is Miklós Németh, I am married, and I am working for a multinational company too, and I am a county consultant.” (2 children)

Attila: “Hello! My name is Attila Nagy, I am working for a multinational company too, I am a regional representative, I am married and I have one kid.”

Zoltán: “Hello! My name is Zoltán Molnár, I am working for a multinational company, I am a trade-marketing representative, and I am married.” (1 child)
Balázs: “Hello! My name is Balázs Szajki, I am working for a multinational company too, I am a trade-marketing representative too as Zoli, and I live in relationship.” (no child)

József: “Hello! My name is József Szabó, I am working for a multinational company Dreher too as an area sales manager, and I live in relationship too.” (2 children)

Moderator: Thank you, so as I mentioned I have 14 questions, and I would like to ask you that please, someone start to answer my question, and after that everybody can reflect, and react for that. If you have different opinion about the topic, feel free to say that.

Lilla: “I used the maternity leave, because I think in Hungary this is a “cube law”.. but it is very circumstantial..Moreover the amount of the money not too big..”

József: “The paternity leave is maximized, I think if the paternity leave isn’t be maximized, more father will use it”

Zoltán: “For the child, it is better that the mother use the maternity leave.”

Andrea: “Usually, mothers are more positive with the children, than fathers”

József: “with the born of the child, the mothers feel this kind of involuntary sense of duty, than she feels she has to deal with the things.”

Attila: “I think we cannot be equally involved, but we can relieve the mother.”

Zoltán: “It used to be much more strict, than it was, nowadays, men are more ready to help”

József: “I believe in this society, approximately 10% talk about the fact who will use the paternity leave”

Erik: “In these days, there are a huge amount of careerist women, who pushes this paternity leave for the men, and the males are lose their social role, so maybe they beg for that they would like to use the paternity leave”

Miklós: “I think the more educated the people, the more father uses the paternity leave.. and now I do not want to offend anyone, but if we look at the people, who work for the
Audi, around the clock, I am not sure, that he think it over, and he go to the dump, how embarrassing for him that he uses the paternity leave.”

József: “The messages of our leader politicians do not go to that direction that.. this issue is not dealt with, and basically, the example for them is the issue that men are strong etc..”

Zoltán: “In my family, now my second kid is three years old, and we are live through this very difficult times with GYES and GYED, and it is hard so much, because basically we lived from one salary, because the support is ridiculously low.”

Erik: “so now, if the man uses the paternity leave, do you think that from that time, this person is not a man anymore?”

József: “I am convinced that, this neutral parenting is a watchful game..”

Lilla: “I think the parent reflects the child’s”

In the first case, everybody agreed with the fact, that neutral parenting is a hard topic, and every parent should think it over carefully. One of the interviewees, Attila mentioned a story about his kid called Eszter, and her cousin called Milán in connection with the topic of neutral parenting. Both of the kids were 1 years old, they were basically toddlers, and once, when the children played with each other, Milán started to fell in love with Eszter’s pink ponies. The ponies could sing, and they they could move their wing and things like that, so they piqued Milán’s attention. Milán started to cry because they parents do not allowed to him to bring one of the ponies to home. It was a huge quandary for the parents, especially for the dad, that his boy wants to play with a “girlish” toy. Now, Milán is three years old, and surprisingly he started to play with cars...

Survey questions

1. Gender
2. Age
3. What is your workplace position?
4. Do you have children?
5. Who used the paternity leave in your family?
6. What was the reason?
7. What is your opinion how many percentage of men and how many percentage of women use the paternity leave in Hungary?

8. What is your opinion about the Hungarian child supporting system? Are you satisfied with it?

9. What is your opinion; it is a social norm, that the mothers use maternity leave?

10. Do you agree with the fact that the mothers must to use maternity leave?

11. What is your opinion about neutral parenting?

12. What do you think; it is an influential factor in the case of the child development if the father uses the paternity leave?

13. What are your suggestions in the case of the Hungarian child supporting system? If you have a chance to change anything, what would be the thing?