



Female Physicists in Germany earn less than their male colleagues!

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Survey on equal opportunities in Germany in the year 2000

Who carried out the survey:

German Physical Society (Working Group on Women in Physics)

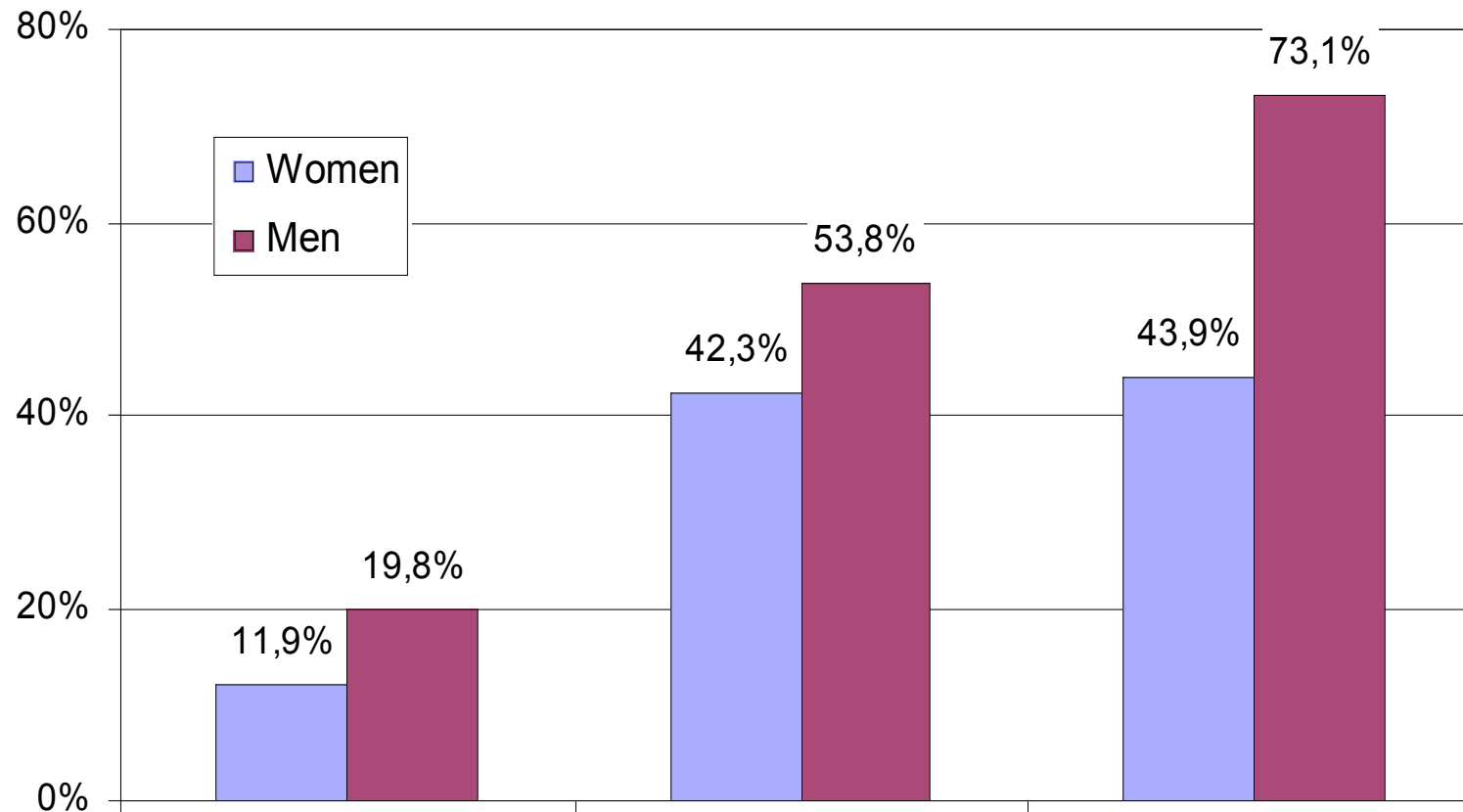
Institute of social studies of the Technical University of Darmstadt

Who has been asked:

All female members (3629) and a group of male members (800) of the German Physical society

Results of the German Survey

Fractions of women and men in leading positions, grouped by age



In all age groups men are holding leading positions more often than women.

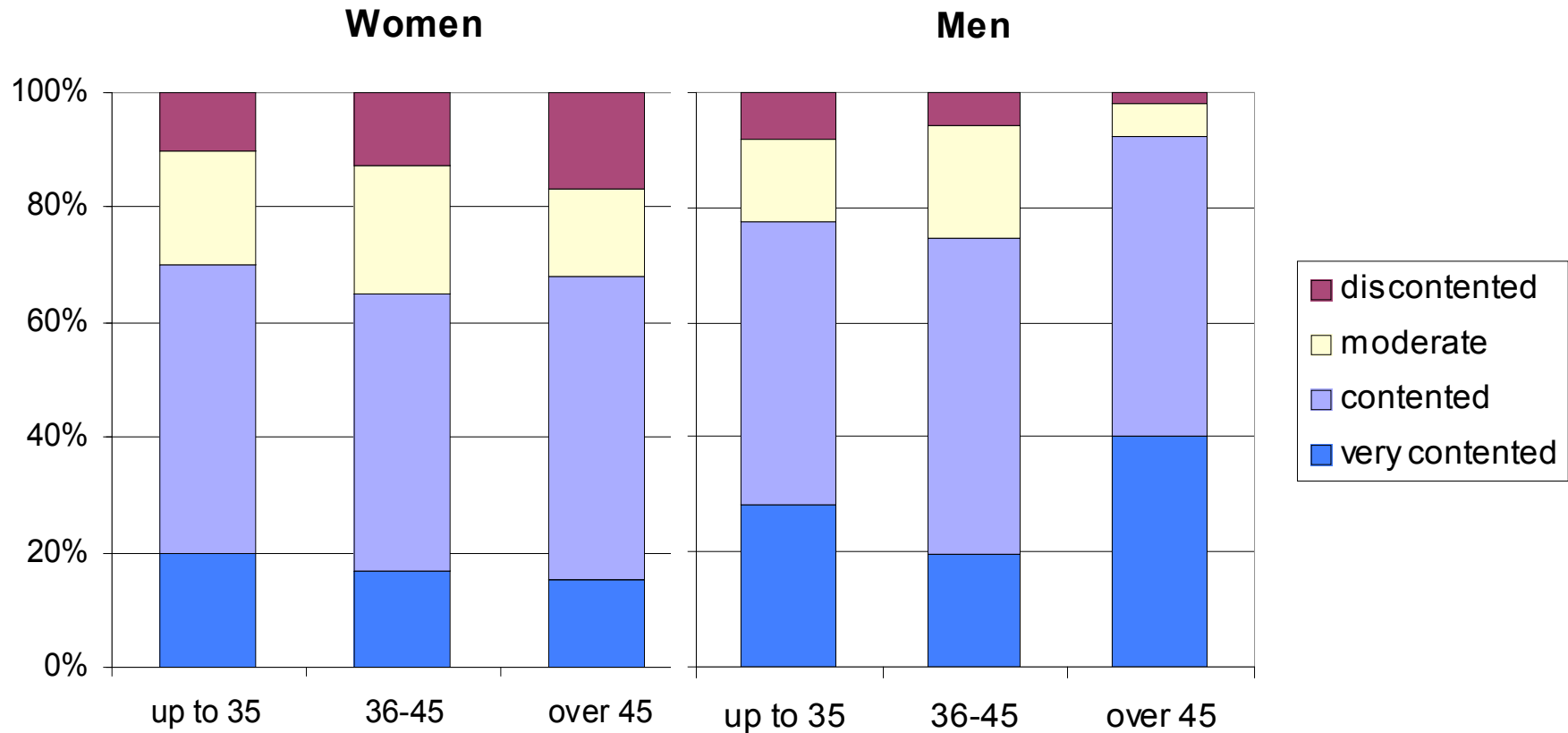
Results of the German Survey

Fractions of women and men in leading positions, grouped by age

- Men, even in younger years, do have much greater opportunities to get a leading position than their female colleagues. Even with increasing age this advantage cannot be recovered by the women.
- The significant under representation of women in leading positions cannot be explained by the facts, that women are less educated, or that they are more strongly bound to their families. In this case women without children should be found significantly more often in leading positions, as compared to women with children. This is not the case in this survey.

Results of the German Survey

Contentedness at the job for women and men grouped by age



Results of the German Survey

Contentedness at the job for women and men grouped by age

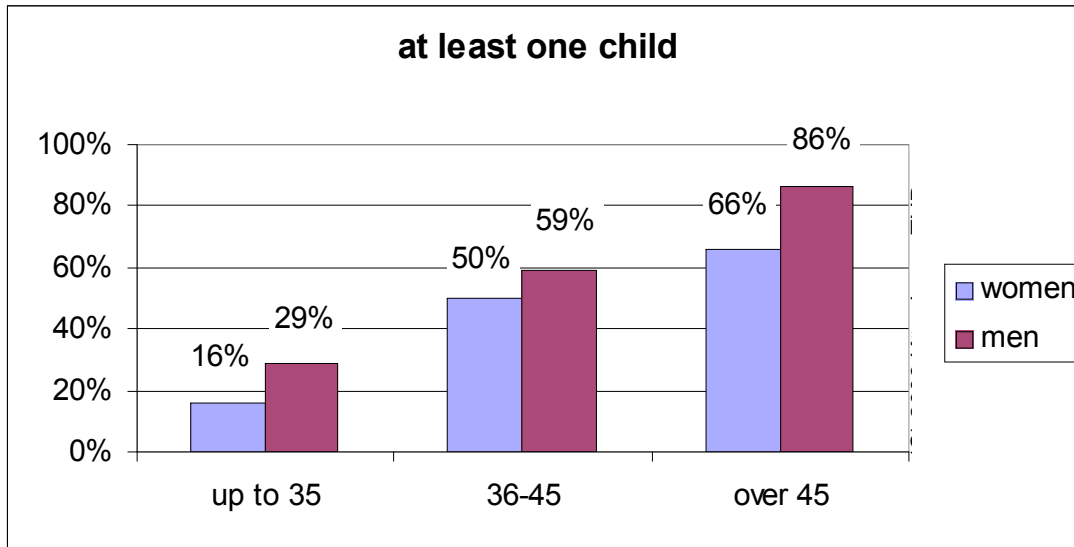
In general men and women are very content working in physics. But there are some gender discrepancies:

With increasing age the discontentedness with the job situation accumulates for the women whereas for the men the contentedness increases with the age: 17% of the women over 45 years old and only 2% of the men are discontent.

The clear comment of the senior women could be a hint for a change in perception in the course of the working life. Longer professional experience and experienced barriers may have led to this result.

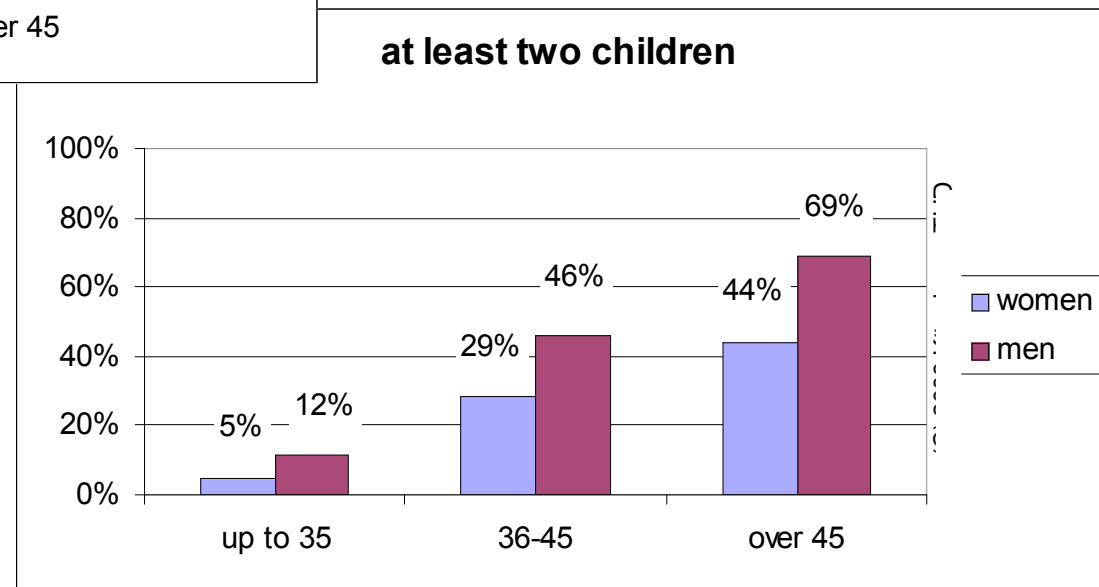
Results of the German Survey

Fractions of men and woman with children, grouped by age



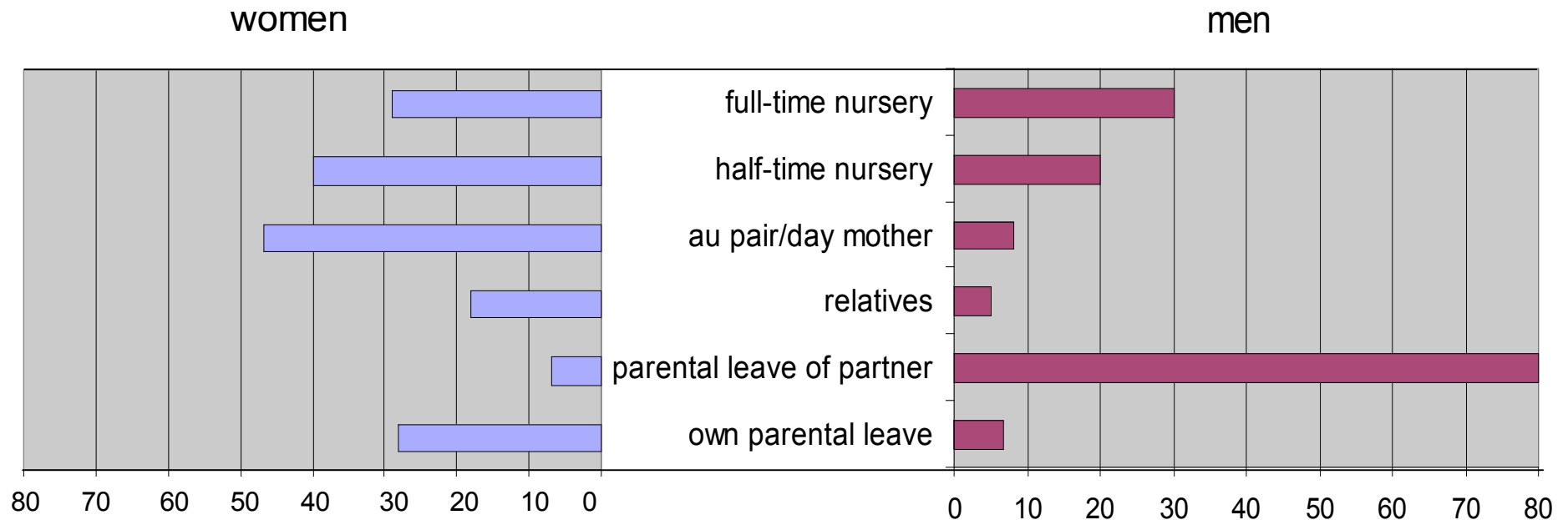
Female physicists less often take the decision for having a family and a large number of children.

59% of the men and 50% of the women (between 36 and 45 years old) have at least one child.



Results of the German Survey

Childcare



Women more often use childcare institutions. They depend more on these institutions. In Germany women working in permanent positions have the right to take up to 3 years of parental leave, but physicists rarely use this possibility.



Results of the German Survey

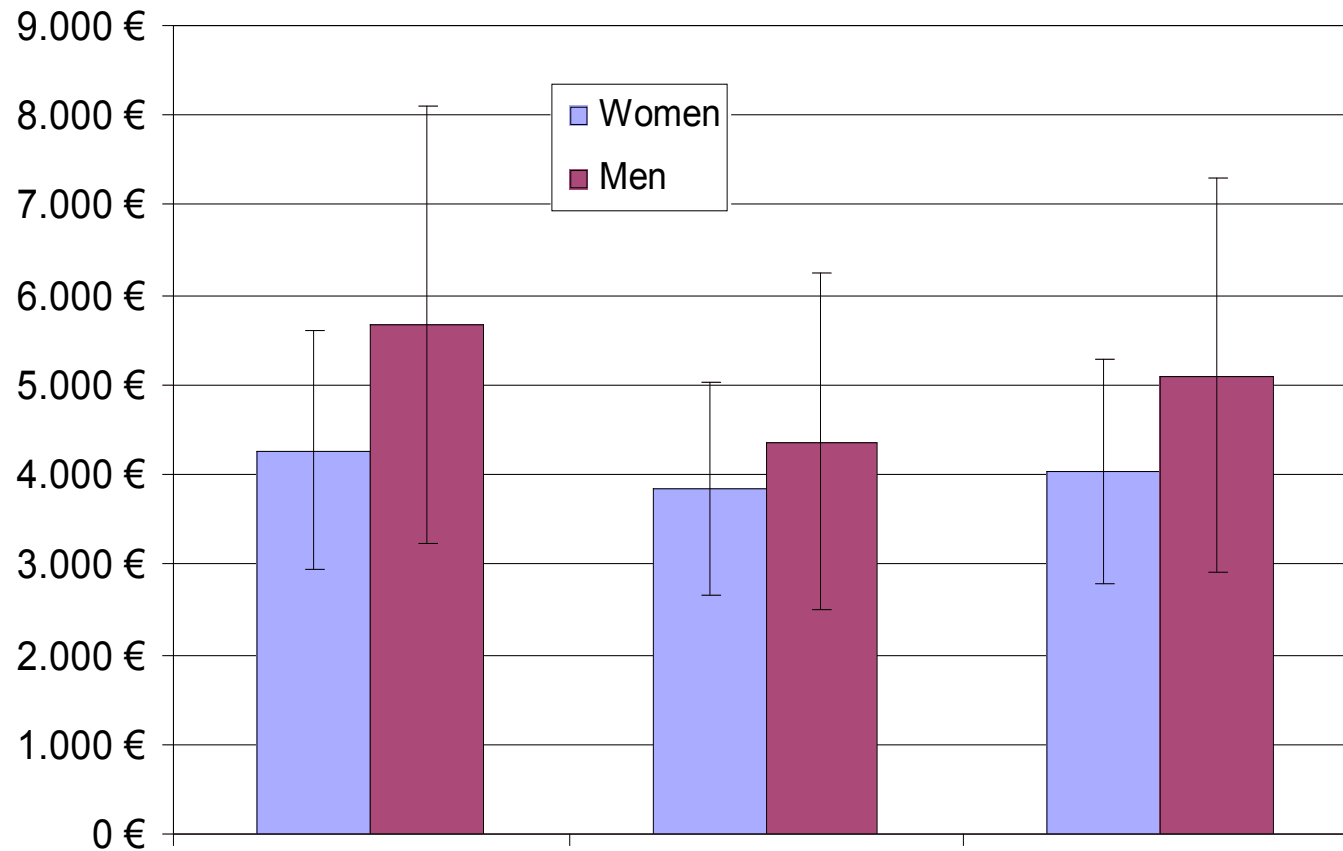
Choice of Partner

A major discrepancy which will have impact on the job lies in the choice of the partner.

Female physicists tend to choose partners who have been trained academically as well (86 %) whereas male physicists mostly choose partners without academic training (48 % academics).

Results of the German Survey

Income



The income of women is much below that of men. Even when holding leading positions women earn on average less than men in ordinary positions.

Results of the German Survey

Income

The income differences between men and women are not due to part-time positions: The income of full-time employees has been compared

They are not due to lower professional qualifications of the women : In this age group (*) there are no differences between men and women with respect to the attained scientific qualifications: in both groups, 21% hold a diploma or a “Staatsexamen”, 67% hold a doctoral level, and 13% have a postdoctoral lecture qualification (“Habilitation”).

(*) results for the middle age group (36-45 years). This age is characterized by the main career phase, as well as the central family phase. The decision for or against having a family is taken now at the latest.

Independent of their field of responsibility and their performance, women are paid less compared to men.

Summary of the German Survey

Despite the fact that female physicists have good preconditions for their professional life, their advantages vanish in the professional everyday life. **An „ordinary“ career in physics is a male career.**

Women encounter primarily minor discriminations, that seem to appear accidentally at first sight. However, **with increasing age** women realize how limited their remaining opportunities and their professional recognition is. The result is a **growing dissatisfaction with the professional situation.**

Female physicists are less successful than male physicists when considering **salary**, the seniority of the attained job position, or the job satisfaction as criteria. Especially in a professional field where seemingly only objective criteria count as decisive factors for professional success, the results shed a light on other aspects that have been underestimated so far: gender is an important criterion for professional success. This is an explanation for the extreme under-representation of women in scientific professions.