

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN HEAD TEACHERS' WORK MOTIVATION FOR ASSUMING DIVERSE JOB ROLES

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Abstract/Izvleček

This paper explores the characteristics of gender differences in work motivation for assuming the diverse job roles of head teachers in their everyday work in Croatia. Grounded in the well-established self-determination theory (SDT), this paper examines not only the intensity of motivation among head teachers, but also its quality, while applying the WRMS – SP questionnaire. The findings have important implications in recognizing the gender-based similarities in motivation types as confirmation that both men and women perceive themselves as effective leaders in a complex job role and present-day challenges in schools.

Keywords:

gender differences, head
teachers, work
motivation, job roles,
school.

Razlike v motivaciji za prevzemanje različnih delovnih vlog glede na spol – ravnatelj/ravnateljica

Ključne besede:

razlike med spoloma,
ravnatelji, delovna
motivacija, delovne
vloge, šola.

V prispevku preučujemo značilnosti razlik med spoloma v delovni motivaciji za prevzemanje različnih delovnih vlog, ki jih ravnatelj/ravnateljica prevzamejo pri vsakdanjem delu na Hrvaškem. Z uporabo uveljavljene teorije samoodločanja (angl. SDT – self-determination theory) preučujemo ne le intenzivnost motivacije ravnateljev/ ravnateljic, ampak tudi njeno kakovost, in sicer z uporabo lestvice delovne motivacije za ravnatelje/ravnateljice šol, tj. raziskovalnega instrumenta WRMS – SP (angl. Work Role Motivation Scale for School Principals). Naše raziskave na podlagi spola vodijo kažejo pomembne implikacije pri prepoznavanju podobnosti v tipih motivacije kot potrditev, da se tako moški kot ženske dojemajo kot učinkoviti/učinkovite vodje v kompleksni delovni vlogi in današnjih izzivih v šolah.

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Introduction

Headteachers in today's schools encounter diverse challenges in their work. Various cultural, economic, social, and geopolitical changes affect schools, having a multifaceted impact. In schools, administrators are the first line of defence against those external influences. At times, internal demands for change, such as conceptually distinct educational reforms, pose significant challenges to headteachers' operational and strategic endeavours. Headteachers are expected to act as catalysts for change within their schools, yet their readiness for this role and their effectiveness are often questioned. Pupils' parents often, through their official bodies, question head teachers' leadership and management, as well as their personal abilities, competences and motivation. Recent research indicates growing discontent and increased professional challenges among school head teachers (Chapman, 2005, Medford and Brown 2022). Confronted with increasingly intricate and demanding responsibilities, head teachers frequently reassess their career decisions (Su et al. 2003, Woodley, 2018). Given the crucial role they play in school success and enhancement, it is pertinent to investigate motivation among head teachers for involvement in or disengagement from their work. Therefore, this paper examines head teachers' motivation for assuming the diverse roles they assume in their everyday work.

Theoretical framework of workplace roles among head teachers

There are a plethora of responsibilities and roles that a headteacher takes on in their everyday school practice. Worldwide, head teachers have different occupational responsibilities depending on the school system, but there are a common set of roles. A meta-analysis of previous studies on head teacher job descriptions has resulted in a tripartite conceptualization of job roles (Table 1). It shows that, regardless of the specific features of each national education system or potential cultural differences between countries, the complexity of a head teacher's job comes down to three main roles: the administrative role, the instructional leadership role, and the informational role (Fernet, 2011). Fernet's theoretical framework is based on the findings of several authors, particularly synthesizing the work of Hallinger and Leithwood (1994) and others who examined leadership roles across various educational systems.

Table 1.*Theoretical framework of head teacher roles in school (Fernet, 2011)*

HEAD TEACHER ROLES		
Administrative role	Instructional leadership role	Informational role
- school administrator	- pedagogical leader	- promoter of the school to the community
- human resources manager	- agent for change in practices	- point of contact with parents
- financial and materials manager	- educational project planner	- liaison with authorities
	- supervisor of teachers' work	
	- staff supervisor	

In that sense, Argyriou and Iordanidis (2014) see the administrative role as the duty that a headteacher assumes as an administrator of various aspects in everyday "office" work, and includes the following (sub)roles: 1) dealing with school administration (e.g., providing reports for external and internal bodies, resolving legal issues concerning staff members and pupils, etc.); 2) managing human resources (e.g., managing staff turnover, dealing with yearly fluctuations in student number, forming school teams, participating in the activity of the school boards, etc.); 3) acting as a financial manager (e.g., monitoring cash flow, providing accurate financial information, managing expenses, handling reductions in financial resources, providing new materials and resources, finding opportunities for financial gains/donations, managing facility maintenance, etc.).

When head teachers occupy the instructional leadership role, they take responsibility for the teaching and learning processes that occur in classrooms (Kovač, 2021). This means they act in these five roles: 1) pedagogical leaders (e.g., enabling the application of new educational approaches, setting up favourable conditions for curriculum development, implementing current information and communication technologies etc.); 2) agents for change in practice (e.g., changing the policies and practices of the school, creating strategic documents, etc.); 3) educational project planners in the school (e.g., empowering teachers to implement projects in everyday instruction, motivating them and guiding the focus of projects to common goals, etc.); 4) supervisors and evaluators of teachers' work (e.g., gaining insight into teaching, observing regular classes and extracurricular activities, providing evaluation and guidance in teaching methods, etc.); 5) staff supervisors (e.g., guiding and directing professional development of staff, supervising the work of technical staff, accountants, legal department, etc.).

At the same time, head teachers also assume an informational role towards external stakeholders (Towers, 2022), which encompasses the following roles: 1) promoter of the school to the community (e.g., ensuring school visibility, organizing public

events, making media appearances, public promotion of school projects, designing a visual identity of digital school media, etc.); 2) point of contact with parents (e.g., establishing an open-door policy towards parents, mediating between parents and teachers, collaborating with parent to ensure pupils' well-being, etc.); 3) liaison with authorities (e.g., implementing and enforcing agendas, strategies and action plans, etc.).

This framework indicates the complexity of roles and sub-roles that each head teacher is obliged to carry out through activities, administration and cooperation with other stakeholders and staff members. Assuming these roles in an effective and meaningful manner calls for a spectrum of professional knowledge, leadership skills and positive attitudes toward the job itself, which is evident in the motivation of head teachers for their work.

Work motivation among head teachers

The work motivation of head teachers can be explained by the well-established self-determination theory (SDT), which was introduced by Deci and Ryan (1985) to provide a tool for exploration of both the intensity of human motivation and its quality. It represents an empirically derived theory of human motivation and personality in social contexts, one which differentiates motivation in terms of being autonomous (intrinsic) or controlled (extrinsic) (Deci and Ryan, 2012). It has yielded the following five motivation types: intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, external regulation, amotivation (Table 2).

Drawing on self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation refers to conducting an activity for inherent pleasure and satisfaction. Extrinsic motivation refers to carrying out an activity for reasons other than the activity itself (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). This assumes that the activity is only a means to the end, or the instrument used to achieve a goal. Amotivation is a relative absence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. It is noticeable when a person does not see a relationship between their action and the outcomes and therefore feels incapable of achieving their goal(s).

Table 2.*Types of motivation (Fernet, 2011), adapted*

BEHAVIOR						
Non-self-Determined						Self-Determined
MOTIVATION						
	Amotivation		Extrinsic Motivation			Intrinsic Motivation
Regulatory styles	Non-regulation	External regulation	Introjected regulation	Identified regulation	Integrated regulation	Intrinsic regulation
Perceived locus causality	impersonal	external	somewhat external	somewhat internal	internal	internal
Relevant regulatory processes	non-intentional, non-valuing, incompetence, compliance, external rewards and punishment	self-control, ego-involvement, internal rewards and	personal importance, conscious valuing	congruence, awareness, synthesis with self	interest, enjoyment, inherent satisfaction	

Self-determination theory also suggests different types of extrinsic motivation that can also be spread along a self-determination continuum from lower to higher levels of self-determination (Table 2). These are referred to as introjected, external, identified, and integrated regulations. According to Chaman et al. (2021), introjected regulation equals a process in which the external demand becomes an internal depiction. People put pressure on themselves, through shame or guilt (internal coercion), to ensure that distinct behaviour is performed. External regulation occurs when a person's behaviour is regulated to gain a reward or to avoid pressure. Identified regulation is defined as when individuals choose to act because the behaviour is compatible with their own goals and values. People choose to do the activity even if the activity is not interesting to them, and they do not succumb to external or internal pressure. Integrated regulation occurs when a person values their significance (meaning importance) and the behaviour that is performed is consistent with their identity (Matsumoto et al., 2021).

Additional studies indicate that the motivation types have a substantial impact on the welfare of individuals, their productivity, and the overall performance of (any) organizations (e.g., Faragher et al. 2005; Meyer, Stanley et al. 2002). However, studies on school administration and/or leaders have predominantly overlooked the job-

related conduct of school principals, except for their leadership approaches. While these strategies form the foundation for comprehending school improvement, there has been insufficient exploration of the broader factors influencing educational leadership, along with other crucial job-related concerns such as recruitment, retention, job stress, and work-related challenges.

In addition, gender can play a role in educational leadership. In Croatia, approximately 60% of elementary head teachers are female. However, this is not the case in many developing countries nor in developed countries. For instance, Mpezeni (2022) reports that there is a prevailing negative attitude and lack of respect from members of the community towards women head teachers, as well as negative perception from some teachers, which is related to gender discrimination in Zambia. Similarly, in Turkey, Arar et al. (2018) noted that there are gender-related challenges in a conservative society, and staff doubt female head teacher abilities. In China, many gender stereotypes are based on traditional culture, the contemporary political context and the organizational setting in school, which is reflected in the lower number of women head teachers (Law, 2013). The situation has improved over time, although women are still highly under-represented among senior managers in education in the UK (Coleman, 1996; Coleman, 2007; Lee, 2023). In the United States, leadership is still perceived to be the most male-dominated position within the field of education (Lemasters and Roach, 2012). Less than five percent of public school superintendents are women, and less than twenty-seven percent of public secondary school principals are women (Noel-Batiste, 2009), which testifies to the existence of a glass ceiling (Lemasters and Roach, 2012). Contrary to that, women are more frequently found occupying head teacher positions than men in Croatia, which shows that women head teachers are positively viewed by students and teachers (Nzeli, 2013). Given the rising trend for women to be appointed to head teacher positions, the question arises whether there are gender-based differences in motivation for occupying diverse job roles.

When it comes to gender differences in head teacher work motivation, the previous findings are inconclusive and system dependent. With that in mind, this study turns to determining what motivates men and women head teachers in Croatia to do their job and assume various work roles.

Research methodology

Aim

The study aimed to examine the motivation of head teachers to assume the diverse roles that their job requires, with an emphasis on gender differences. The focus was on the three types of job roles (administrative role, instructional leadership role and informational role) in addition to five types of work motivation (amotivation, external, introjected, identified and intrinsic). More precisely, we aimed to find the answers to the following research questions:

RQ1: What types of motivation do male and female head teachers exhibit while assuming a) the administrative role; b) the instructional leader role; and c) the informative role?

RQ2: Are the differences in motivation between men and women head teachers while assuming a) the administrative role; b) the instructional leader role; and c) the informative role statistically significant?

The answers to our research questions should provide better insight into work motivation types among Croatian head teachers, while identifying potential gender differences.

Participants

To find answers to the research questions, we turned to head teachers for self-assessment. According to the Croatian Ministry of Education and Youth [MZOM] database, eRudnik (2023), there are 924 primary school head teachers in the Republic of Croatia. In total, 564 are female and 355 male. According to Cohen et al. (2007), this dictates that the size of the random sample should be approximately 270 to make it representative of the entire population, and in this study, it is 262. Both genders were represented, but there were more female than male participants (Table 3), which is in line with the national ratio (MZOM, 2023).

Table 3.

Gender distribution in the population (MZOM, 2023) and in the sample of primary school head teachers in Croatia

	Gender distribution in population		Gender distribution in the sample	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
N	355	564	93	169
%	39%	61%	35%	65%
Total	924 (100%)		262 (100%)	

When it comes to other demographic data, according to MZOM, 2023, the average age of Croatian head teachers is 52, with 9.2 years of leadership experience. Most of them have a master's degree (81.2%), 18% hold a bachelor's degree and 0.4% has completed doctoral studies (all women head teachers). The participants included in this study are also highly educated professionals, with 85.8% having a master's degree, 13.4% a bachelor's degree and 0.38%, a doctoral degree. Again, these figures were in line with the national ratio (MZOM, 2023).

Method, instrument and procedure

To collect the type of data suitable for statistical analysis, a quantitative method was used. The research instrument was a questionnaire called the Work Role Motivation Scale for School Principals (Abb. WRMS – SP), constructed by Fernet (2011). It has a 15-factor structure (5 types of motivation \times 3 roles) confirmed through factor analysis and construct validity through a multitrait-multimethod matrix method analysis. The questionnaire was modified for online distribution as a Google form. The scale consisted of three parts describing three roles: a) the administrative role (10 items describing five types of work motivation), b) the instructional leadership role (10 items describing five types of work motivation), and c) the informational role (10 items describing five types of work motivation). Next to each item, there was a seven-point Likert-type scale asking the participants to recognize how much the described motivation statement corresponded to each job role in their own everyday practice (1 - Does not correspond at all; 2 -Corresponds very little; 3 - Corresponds a little; 4 - Corresponds moderately; 5 - Corresponds strongly; 6 - Corresponds very strongly; 7 - Corresponds completely). The collected data on head teachers' motivation and job roles were processed with the statistical package SPSS 20.0, and measures of descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages and mean values) were applied. For the examination of gender differences in measured variables, the two – tailed t-test for independent samples was used.

Results

The first set of results provides the answer to the first research question (RQ1) regarding types of head teacher motivation types. When it comes to the administrative role, male and female head teachers are extrinsically motivated (Table 4).

Table 4.

Types of work motivation expressed by Croatian head teachers (responses to the question: Why do you perform your work roles?)

	Items	Gender	N	Mean	SD
Administrative role	1) ...gives pleasure	F	169	4.97	1.466
		M	93	5.02	1.518
	2) ...seems pointless	F	169	3.07	1.763
		M	93	2.95	1.563
	3) ...is interesting	F	169	4.60	1.556
		M	93	4.51	1.639
	4) ...out of guilt	F	169	5.85	1.317
		M	93	5.26	1.580
	5) ...for the salary	F	169	5.22	1.515
		M	93	5.18	1.539
	6) ...enables professional achievements	F	169	4.85	1.535
		M	93	4.73	1.643
	7) ...is mostly disliked by me	F	169	2.66	1.700
		M	93	2.73	1.745
	8) ...is essential for the job	F	169	4.98	1.510
		M	93	5.05	1.354
	9) ...for self-validation	F	169	4.84	1.663
		M	93	4.77	1.490
	10) ...is required	F	169	5.67	1.280
		M	93	5.52	1.256
Instructional leadership role	11) ...gives pleasure	F	169	5.68	1.071
		M	93	5.32	1.287
	12) ...seems pointless	F	169	2.60	1.586
		M	93	2.80	1.698
	13) ...is interesting	F	169	5.47	1.314
		M	93	5.08	1.385
	14) ...out of guilt	F	169	5.84	1.269
		M	93	5.15	1.628
	15) ...for the salary	F	169	5.44	1.388
		M	93	5.39	1.497
	16) ...enables professional achievements	F	169	5.53	1.254
		M	93	5.27	1.320
	17) ...is mostly disliked by me	F	169	2.37	1.591
		M	93	2.77	1.801
	18) ...is essential for the job	F	169	5.51	1.354
		M	93	5.42	1.183
	19) ...for self-validation	F	169	5.02	1.558
		M	93	4.97	1.521
	20) ...is required	F	169	5.82	1.255

		M	93	5.58	1.297
	21) ...gives pleasure	F	169	5.57	1.184
		M	93	5.44	1.211
	22) ...seems pointless	F	169	2.72	1.725
		M	93	2.60	1.596
	23) ...is interesting	F	169	5.42	1.391
		M	93	5.12	1.405
	24) ...out of guilt	F	169	5.64	1.429
		M	93	5.13	1.637
	25) ...for the salary	F	169	5.37	1.413
Informational role		M	93	5.31	1.406
	26) ...enables professional achievements	F	169	5.34	1.331
		M	93	5.03	1.363
	27) ...is mostly disliked by me	F	169	2.56	1.762
		M	93	2.74	1.738
	28) ...is essential for the job	F	169	5.46	1.309
		M	93	5.33	1.228
	29) ...for self-validation	F	169	5.11	1.616
		M	93	5.03	1.514
	30) ...is required	F	169	5.83	1.234
		M	93	5.73	1.172

They express dominantly external regulation, for they strongly agree with the statement that they do administrative tasks because their position requires it (item 10: (M (f) = 5.67; M (m) = 5.52); that they are paid to do those tasks (item 5: (M(f)= 5.22; M(m)=5.18), and introjected regulation for they strongly agree with the statement that they feel guilty if they do not perform this role properly (item 4: M (f) = 5.85; M (m) = 5,26).

For their instructional leadership role, head teachers' self-perceived motivation is both extrinsic and intrinsic. The highest mean scores are found in items referring to external regulation (item 20: (M (f) = 5.82; M (m) = 5.58); item 15: (M (f) = 5.44; M (m) = 5.39), and those referring to introjected regulation (item 14: (M (f) = 5.84; M (m) = 5.15), corresponding to the statements that they perceive instructional leadership to be an integral part of the job they are paid to do, and that they would feel guilty if they did not perform well. On the other hand, they also strongly agree with the statements that they feel pleasure in performing this role (item 11: (M (f) =

5.68; $M(f) = 5.32$); and that they find activities related to this role to be interesting and stimulating (item 13: ($M(f) = 5.47$; $M(m) = 5.08$), thus testifying to intrinsic regulation. In addition to this type of intrinsic motivation, they also exhibit integrated regulation, by strongly agreeing with the statement that this role enables them to achieve their own work objectives (item 16: ($M(f) = 5.53$; $M(m) = 5.27$), and that they feel this role to be essential to performing their job (item 18: ($M(f) = 5.51$; $M(m) = 5.42$).

While assuming the informational role, head teachers again exhibit both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation by scoring an average mean above 5.00 (strongly agree) on all items, except for the items denoting amotivation (item 22: ($M(f) = 2.72$; $M(m) = 2.60$ and item 27: ($M(f) = 2.56$; $M(m) = 2.74$).

To further explore gender difference and to find answers to the second research question (RQ2), an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the score on the scale of the administrative role for male and female head teachers (Table 5).

Table 5.

Gender differences in motivation types for the administrative role

Motivation type	Items	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test	
		F	Sig.	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Intrinsic motivation	Item 1	.012	.914	-.267	.790
	Item 3	.757	.385	.451	.653
Identified regulation	Item 6	1.131	.289	.566	.572
	Item 8	1.042	.308	-.380	.704
Introjected regulation	Item 4	2.787	.096	3.25	.001
	Item 9	2.598	.108	.319	.750
External regulation	Item 5	.025	.875	.214	.831
	Item 10	.011	.916	.965	.335
Amotivation	Item 2	1.715	.192	.543	.588
	Item 7	.108	.743	-.309	.758

$p \leq .05$

There was a statistically significant difference found on item 4, describing introjected regulation among male head teachers ($M = 5.26$, $SD = 1.580$) and female head teachers ($M = 5.85$, $SD = 1.317$), but the magnitude of the difference in the means

was very small ($t(260) = 3.250$, $p = 0.001$, eta squared = 0.039), meaning that only 3.9% of the variance in introjected regulation is explained by gender.

Similarly, gender differences were tested in the instructional leadership role (Table 6). Again, the only difference that proved to be statistically significant was found on item 4, describing introjected regulation among male head teachers ($M = 5.15$, $SD = 1.628$) and female head teachers ($M = 5.84$, $SD = 1.269$).

Table 6.

Gender differences in motivation types for the instructional leadership role

Motivation type	Items	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test	
		F	Sig.	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Intrinsic motivation	Item 11	2.894	.090	2.406	.017
	Item 13	.088	.767	2.302	.022
Identified regulation	Item 16	.134	.715	1.563	.119
	Item 18	2.433	.120	.570	.569
Introjected regulation	Item 14	7.446	.007*	3.536	.001
	Item 19	.344	.558	.280	.779
External regulation	Item 15	.238	.626	.308	.759
	Item 20	.218	.641	1.475	.141
Amotivation	Item 12	1.521	.219	-.915	.361
	Item 17	2.013	.157	1.863	.064

$p \leq .05$ * Equal variances not assumed

However, the magnitude of the difference in the means was very small ($t(260) = 3.536$, $p = 0.001$, eta squared = 0.0458), meaning that only 4.58% of the variance in introjected regulation was explained by gender.

Finally, we investigated gender differences in the informational role and the motivation types that head teachers have (Table 7). Again, the differences found in self-assessed motivation types between male and female head teachers in the informational role were not found to be statistically significant, except in the case of item 4, which corresponds to introjected regulation. The independent t-test for equality of means shows that female head teachers ($M = 5.64$, $SD = 1.429$) feel significantly more guilty than male head teachers ($M = 5.13$, $SD = 1.637$) when not

performing well in this role. The magnitude of the difference in the means was very small ($t(260) = 2.624$, $p = 0.009$, $\eta^2 = 0.0257$), meaning that only 2.57% of the variance in introjected regulation is explained by gender.

Table 7.

Gender differences in motivation types for the informational role

Motivation type	Items	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			
		F	Sig.	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Intrinsic motivation	Item 21	.054	.817	.825	.410
	Item 23	.003	.959	1.674	.095
Identified regulation	Item 26	.225	.636	1.760	.080
	Item 28	1.141	.286	.775	.439
Introjected regulation	Item 24	2.854	.092	2.624	.009
	Item 29	1.296	.256	.393	.695
External regulation	Item 25	.169	.681	.335	.738
	Item 30	.029	.866	.621	.535
Amotivation	Item 22	1.007	.317	.552	.581
	Item 27	.012	.915	-.820	.413

$p \leq .05$

Discussion

The first set of findings refers to the gender differences in the way they approach their roles, and it provides an answer to the first research question (RQ1: What types of motivation do men and women head teachers exhibit while assuming various job roles?). The results suggest that there are no statistically significant differences between male and female head teachers, even though previous research on gender-based differences suggested that men and women head teachers could differ in many leadership features. More precisely, Peters (2010) reports that female head teachers tend to establish a non-hierarchical and interaction-based leadership, because they perceive the system differently than men (Alyami and Floyd, 2019), because they work and operate in a world dominated by men and in a paradigm designed around men (Leamsters and Roach, 2012). Mpezeni (2022) claims that, in order to foster a positive attitude towards female leadership, women head teachers more frequently

turn to teamwork through employing a transformational, participatory and people-oriented leadership style, thus confronting education challenges of social justice, democracy, and equity in their schools (Normore and Jean-Marie, 2008). When asked about their prevailing style, both male and female head teachers see themselves as adopting stereotypically “feminine” style of leadership (Coleman, 2007).

However, when self-perception is put aside, primary schools are increasingly ‘masculinized’ in terms of management regimes because the women climbing up the managerial ladder tend to assume personal characteristics of head teachers that are connected with hegemonic masculinity (Skelton, 2002). Coleman (1996) notes the emergence of an ‘androgynous’ leader, who draws upon a range of qualities, whereby the effective leadership of women head teachers is ascribed to the possession of qualities similar to those of the traditional male leader combined with the female aspiration to prove themselves worthy of leadership.

Unlike style and typical behaviours, when it comes to motivation types, there were no statistically significant differences found between men and women school leaders: both are extrinsically motivated for doing the administrative part of the job; head teachers’ self-perceived motivation is both extrinsically and intrinsically motivated for instructional leadership and for their informational role.

The only exception is the finding that women head teachers are more guilt-driven when it comes to all job roles as compared to men head teachers. This is in line with the recent study conducted by Lee (2023), who claims that both male and female school leaders have gendered approaches to their roles and conceive school leadership in markedly different ways, with male leaders rating themselves more positively than their female peers. Women being more guilt-driven relates to the second research question (RQ2: Are the differences in motivation of men and women head teachers in Croatia while assuming a) the administrative role; b) the instructional leader role; and c) the informative role statistically significant?) corroborates the existence of a statistically significant but rather small difference. An explanation as to why women head teachers are more guilt-driven can be found in their conflicting professional and domestic roles (Guihen, 2020), indicating that women tend to contemplate whether or not to pursue promotion to headship, because they often make career choices knowing that they carry most of the

domestic responsibilities in their family, whereas male colleagues are more likely to have partners who take the majority of domestic responsibility. In other words, the effects of gender on work motivation are closely related to the effects of family roles (Ernst Kossek and Misra, 2012).

Conclusion

This study extends and deepens the understanding of head teacher work motivation and shows how men and women head teachers self-assess their motivation for different job roles in elementary education in Croatia. Based on the data obtained with the use of the Work Role Motivation Scale for School Principals (Abb. WRMS – SP) Questionnaire, it can be concluded that both men and women head teachers are extrinsically motivated for their administrative role, while expressing dominantly external and introjected regulation. For their instructional leadership role, both genders report extrinsic (introjected regulation) and intrinsic motivation (integrated regulation), which is also the case with the informational role.

Gender-based differences are generally not detected, apart from a single statistically significant difference when the administrative role is explored in more detail, indicating that women head teachers would feel more guilt than men head teachers if they failed to perform their role properly. This shows that those two groups of leaders differ in this aspect of extrinsic motivation, confirming that women head teachers are more guilt-driven for the administrative role, which may be linked to increased levels of accountability in schools.

In that sense, important implications of the research lie in recognizing gender-based similarities in motivation types as confirmation that both men and women perceive themselves as effective leaders in a complex cultural and political environment, while gaining acceptance from all stakeholders. By recognizing that head teachers, regardless of their gender, are externally motivated for the administrative aspects of the profession, policy makers can find appropriate responses to better motivate head teachers for the job role. There are also implications regarding the training of school leaders, where innovations are called for in order to increase their intrinsic motivation for instructional leadership and informative roles. However, the main limitations of this study involve the fact that the results of the study were drawn exclusively from self-assessment of in-service head teachers; thus, further research should include triangulation of sources, as well as observation of day-to-day leadership practices in order to expand our understanding of the issue.

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