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JOB PREFERENCES AMONG
YOUNG CAREER ENTRANTS:
APPLICATION INTENTIONS AND EVALUATIONS
OF GENDER-RELATED SIGNALS
IN JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

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Signals in Job Advertisements

Doctoral dissertation

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1. Introduction

Everybody is eager to find a ‘best fit’ job. Usually, the primary intention of an ambitious and goal-oriented individual is to find a well-suited occupation that guarantees financial stability, professional growth, and prosperous career opportunities. Through browsing possible career opportunities, job seekers encounter a vast number of job advertisements, which do not merely showcase a job description, but stand as a very first meeting point between the individual and an organisation. As a matter of fact, men and women are both integral parts of the labour market; hence, they are entitled to be given the same economic share and opportunities. Therefore, it became of focal interest what organisations communicate to possible candidates, and more importantly, what their explicit and implicit signals are through job advertising. The dissertation aims to present male and female differentiations within a broad spectrum, presenting the attitudinal and intention-based consequences of gender bias in organisational contexts.

By conducting lab experiments, Chapman et al. (2005) found that more than 25 attributes are considered by job seekers when deciding about the level of attraction and likeability toward an organisation. Besides attributes, universally applied visual elements (e.g., logo, design, colour) and verbal elements (e.g., title, word embeddings, linguistic style) vary across job advertisements; hence, it can be hypothesised that the more diverse a job advertisement is, the more likely to gain a diverse pool of applicants. Although research areas, such as perceived applicant attraction (Arceo-Gomez et al., 2022; Castilla and Rho, 2023; Vervecken et al., 2013), the effects of gender-inclusive word embeddings (Hodel et al., 2017; Wille and Derous, 2018), male-female inequality in STEM fields (Hentschel et al., 2018) and perceived Person-Organization Fit (Hentschel et al., 2020; Horvath and Sczesny, 2015) have gained considerable attention in the field of career communication, it remains unexplored whether implicitly and explicitly perceived gender-related linguistic cues embedded in job advertisements influence job seeking university students’ attitude and application intention.

1.1 The aim of the thesis

Although Hungarian is considered a grammatically gender-neutral language, making no explicit reference to men or women (for example, in contrast to the German or Spanish language) (Vasvári, 2014), non-disclosed gender-related signal configurations in job

advertising may encapsulate linguistic bias favouring either masculinity (e.g., confident, goal-oriented, leadership skills) or femininity (e.g., kind, patient, communication skills) (Formanowicz and Hansen, 2022). This categorisation is referred to as gendered wording, which encompasses communal (female stereotype-congruent characteristics) and agentic (male stereotype-congruent characteristics) language (Batz-Barbarich et al., 2025). When young career entrants are exposed to a wide array of job descriptions, their organisational attraction may increase or decrease as a result of gender-related linguistic bias, which can therefore fail to sustain an application desire (Banaji and Greenwald, 2013; FitzGerald et al., 2019). Because social stereotypes and linguistic bias are largely hidden, it becomes highly important to better understand the underlying aspects that exercise a significant impact on the behavioural intention of young talents in the very early stage of job seeking. To gain a more comprehensive knowledge of the topic, this thesis aims to investigate the factors that influence the job choice process of job-seeking university students, paying special attention to pre-socialisation and work values, gender stereotypes in linguistic cues, as well as attitude and intention formation.

Although the research of the thesis has neither the intention nor the authority to conclude a general statement about the topic in focus, its primary attempt is to contribute to the Hungarian literature by studying the market orientation and work-related attitudes of students actively enrolled in Hungarian higher education.

1.1.1. The theoretical aim of the thesis: First, to review, collect, and synthesise the existing literature on the effect of stereotype-congruent signal configurations on male and female organisational communication in early career development. As the basis of the dissertation, it is inevitable to outline both primary and contemporary literature on the evolution of cognitive linguistic and social psychological considerations that led to a novel type of career communication. Second, to find a scientifically grounded connection between the different subfields of the research (Figure 1). Important to mention that although the topic strongly rests on a psychological pillar, I sought to foreground perspectives from communication studies and to connect them with the field of psychology.

1.1.2 The methodological aim of the thesis: The questionnaire is built on Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (2006), which was originally developed to measure the intention formation towards everyday activities. A dominant objective of the thesis was to test

whether the method is suitable for measuring the application intention expressed towards job advertisements in an organisational context. To the best of my knowledge, this research would be the first to experiment with the scientific connectedness of Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour with job orientation. The final aim is to build an explanatory model presenting the societal and gender-related differences between the implicit and explicit attitudes of the participants.

1.1.3 The practical aim of the thesis: Finally, a third aim is the development of a practical guideline for the successful attraction and retention of best-fit applicants in the phase of talent recruitment and acquisition. For organisations, companies, and institutions, it represents a tangible loss when they fail to attract professionally qualified candidates due to "hidden," unintentional factors that hinder suitable applicants from applying. Therefore, the thesis intends to offer practical solutions that maximise the Person-Organisation Fit and increase the likelihood of the application intention of both male and female career entrants.

Figure 1. Integrative approach to career communication (*own construct*)

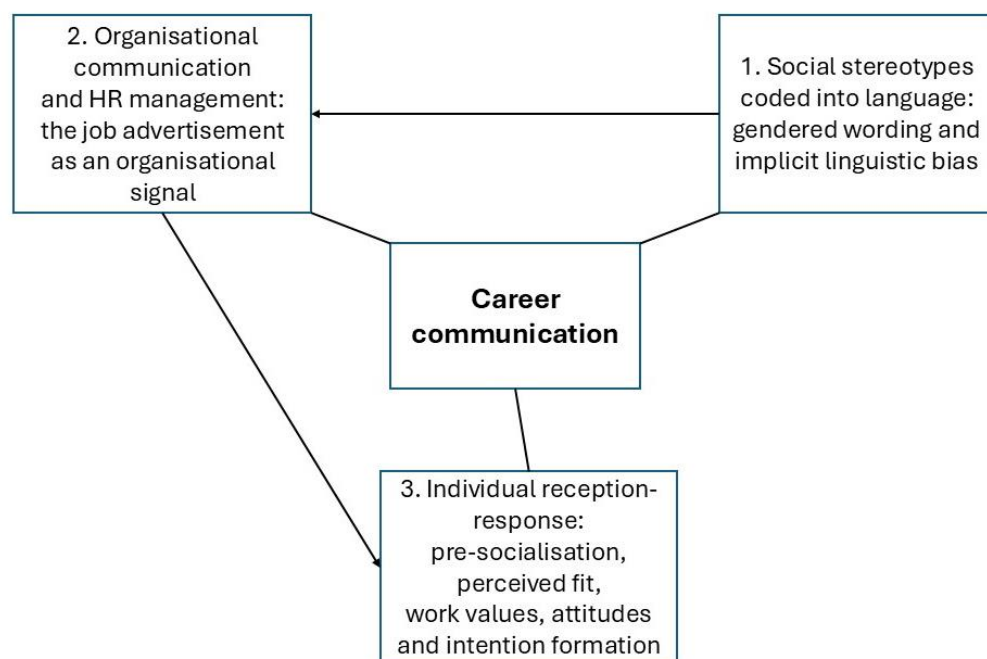


Figure 1 depicts career as a communication process in which social meanings are transformed into organisational messages and subsequently, through individual reception, are shaped into attitudes and intentions. This process links three distinct but interdependent levels: 1. Societal-discursive context: social stereotypes encoded in

language, 2. Organisational communication: human resource management and job advertising as an organisational signal, and 3. Individual reception-response: pre-socialisation, work values, perceived fit, attitudes and application intention. Together, these multidisciplinary domains form a multilevel system through which individuals' work-related attitudes, expectations, and intentions are shaped.

First, social stereotypes condensed into language (1. Societal-discursive context) highlight the discursive dimension of career communication. Gendered wording and implicit linguistic cues embedded in job advertisements, organisational messages, and career guidance transmit social norms and stereotypes. These linguistic features influence how careers are perceived as appropriate or attainable for different social groups, thus affecting self-selection, aspiration, and perceived belonging.

Second, human resource management and job advertising (2. Organisational communication) contribute by explaining how jobseekers encode messages of organisations that signal their job-related expectations and offerings through job advertising. Such advertisements serve as primary meeting points between employers and potential employees, where message signalling becomes a pivotal communication practice in human resources and talent acquisition.

Third, pre-socialisation, attitude and intention formation (3. Individual reception-response) emphasises the role of prior experiences, social learning, as well as the response system of career entrants in attitude development. University students' work values perceived fit with a certain position and job-related expectations are formed before labour market entry and serve as interpretive frameworks through which career communication is received and evaluated.

Figure 1 showcases an interrelated logic between the three levels: the first level serves as the social-discursive context of the research topic, placing linguistic gender stereotypes in the centre as a contemporary societal issue in the lives of career entrants. The second level marks the organisational context, namely, how job advertisements, developed by human resource management, can sustain gender inequality through words, which are decoded by job-seeking university students. The third level signifies the individual reception and response of career entrants, influenced by their pre-socialisation in career, perceived organisational fit, preference for work values, attitudes and job application

intention. A full understanding of all three levels completes the triadic conceptual framework of the research topic.

Although the dissertation is grounded in a multidisciplinary framework, including sociopsychological, gender linguistic, organisational, and human resource approaches, the core of the topic is defined by its communication science foundation, which constitutes a substantial point of departure for the research. A job advertisement can serve as the first point of contact between the recruiter and the job seeker, through which the advertiser can implicitly communicate messages to the recipient about organisational culture, work values, or employer expectations. “(...) organisations must answer questions about what message to communicate and how to communicate it” (Walker and Hinojosa, 2013, p. 269). Consequently, message transmission does not occur solely through personal communication but also through the job advertisement itself as an essential recruitment tool.

For a more elaborated understanding of the dissertation’s topic, chapters 2 to 5 serve as the theoretical basis for a detailed presentation of the interrelated domains presented in Figure 1.

1.2 The structure of the thesis

The dissertation aims to examine whether stereotype–congruent gender linguistic differences affect the application intention and implicit attitude of male and female university students. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the thesis topic, the primary goal was to showcase all the subtopics that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the main research topic. Therefore, the theoretical part of the dissertation rests on four main chapters: (1) The gender gap as a contemporary societal issue, (2) Linguistic stereotyping in recruitment practices, (3) Human resource management and work socialisation, (4) Behavioural intention in career orientation: attitude and intention formation.

Besides providing an overview of the most prominent theoretical and methodological findings, each section aims to connect the respective topic with the central question of the dissertation, namely, attitude and intention formation in the context of recruitment communication.

The first chapter, "The gender gap as a contemporary societal issue," provides a comprehensive analysis of gender-based labour market inequalities within both global

and Hungarian contexts. It introduces the persistent gender gap – defined as systemic disadvantages women face in areas such as education, income, and workforce participation – through data from the Global Gender Gap Index and the International Labour Organisation. The analysis highlights stark gender segregation in job roles, with women overrepresented in caregiving professions and underrepresented in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) fields. In Hungary, the gender wage gap remains significant, and women tend to apply only for jobs they fully match, unlike men. Drawing on Nagy's (2024) work, the chapter distinguishes between horizontal segregation (occupational division) and vertical segregation (hierarchical advancement barriers), attributing these patterns to early gender socialisation and essentialist beliefs about innate gender differences. These essentialist assumptions, rooted in historical and biological narratives, shape expectations and career confidence, particularly among women in HEED (Health care, Early education, and Domestic) fields. Additionally, the chapter discusses the institutional responses to inequality, including the establishment of the Equal Treatment Authority in Hungary and the legal efforts to promote gender equity in employment. The chapter further analyses vertical and horizontal segregation: the former limits women's advancement due to the "glass ceiling", while the latter places men and women in different occupations, often devaluing female-dominated roles regardless of qualifications. Although the aim of the thesis does not primarily focus on female advancement, it is a crucial step to investigate any potential limiting factors comprehensively. The chapter concludes that gendered disparities in work experience stem not only from biological differences but are perpetuated through early-stage organisational processes, particularly recruitment, where gender bias serves as a precursor to broader inequalities in pay, promotion, and workplace treatment. Overall, the section underscores the complexity and persistence of gender-based disparities in the labour market and sets the stage for further examination of their organisational-level consequences.

The second chapter, "Linguistic stereotyping in recruitment practices," explores the theoretical underpinnings of how gender-based perceptions, stereotypes, and organisational structures influence occupational choices and workplace inequalities. Drawing on person-centred and organisational structure theories, it argues that men and women internalise gendered attributes – such as competence in men and nurturance in women – shaping their self-perception and roles within workplace hierarchies. These

perceptions, reinforced by recruitment communication, institutional norms, and gendered expectations, contribute to structural inequalities such as the ideal worker model, which favours male employees. The chapter delves into stereotype construction, contrasting cognitive-linguistic and social-psychological approaches, and focuses on gender stereotypes as both descriptive (what men and women are like) and prescriptive (what they should be like), emphasising their influence on recruitment, performance evaluations, and career advancement. Central to the discussion is the Stereotype Content Model, which categorises groups – including women – as warm but incompetent, reinforcing their exclusion from high-status roles. The chapter introduces how job advertisements serve as powerful tools for employer branding and applicant attraction. Visual and verbal components of ads, including layout, wording, and images, contribute to the ad's appeal and effectiveness. Furthermore, implicit cues – such as gendered language – embedded in ads can unconsciously steer applicants' interpretations. These cues are often hard to fake or resist, affecting recruitment outcomes. Theories like social role theory (Eagly, 1987) and self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci, 2017) explain how institutional practices and traditional gender roles shape the language used in job ads, often reinforcing occupational gender segregation. Thus, job advertisements are not just practical tools for hiring but complex communicative acts that shape organisational image, influence applicant decisions, and reflect broader social dynamics.

The third chapter, “Human resource management and work socialisation,” outlines the conceptual evolution of human resource management (HRM), emphasising its shift from a purely strategic function to a human-centred discipline. Employer branding enhances recruitment by influencing how job seekers perceive a company and its offerings – economically, functionally, and psychologically. Ultimately, employer branding is closely linked to HR recruitment and selection strategies, influencing how organisations present themselves and who they can attract. The chapter further explores how young career entrants navigate job choice and career planning, highlighting its long-term impact on income, social status, and personal identity. Central to these career choices are *work values*, which refer to the personal standards people hold regarding their current and future work environment, such as pay, promotion, autonomy, and purpose. Research shows gender-based differences in these values: men often value extrinsic rewards, while women tend to prioritise intrinsic motivators (Karriker et al., 2021; Twenge et al., 2010). The chapter also presents the concept of *person–environment (P–E) fit*, which emphasises

the alignment between an individual's characteristics and their workplace environment. This fit can be *supplementary* (shared values) or *complementary* (mutually fulfilling traits). Theories such as the *theory of work adjustment* and the *attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) model* explain how fit influences job satisfaction, stress, and employee retention.

The fourth chapter, “Behavioural intention in career orientation: attitude and intention formation,” presents the sociopsychological background of the formation of certain attitudes and behavioural intentions of a young career entrant. The first section of the chapter outlines the formation and structure of attitudes, emphasising that they are not innate but shaped by beliefs developed through personal experiences and social influences. The chapter also highlights the Theory of Reasoned Action and its extension, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1999, 2006), as influential models in understanding how attitudes influence decisions. The second half of the section delves into *implicit social cognition* – the unconscious processes that shape attitudes and social behaviour. Because individuals may be unaware of or unwilling to disclose certain attitudes (e.g., stereotypes or prejudices), researchers have developed implicit measurement tools to capture these subconscious evaluations. Two main research directions emerged: one focused on the limitations of self-reports and the other on the unconscious influence of prior experiences. Together, these insights help explain how implicit and explicit attitudes function differently and why both are important for studying social cognition. The chapter further explores the types of implicit attitude measurement (for example, the Implicit Association Test, or IAT), as well as some of the most influential persuasion theories that play a crucial role in attitude change.

1.3 Paradigmatic stance and researcher positionality

In the field of social sciences, a researcher may represent different paradigmatic stances, each generating a different worldview and scientific interpretation for the analysis. A theorist can only perceive the realm of the research if he or she fully understands the assumptions of the chosen research perspective. “Such an appreciation involves an intellectual journey which takes him outside the realm of his own familiar domain” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p. 9). A paradigm is a dynamic, complex construct in which the constituent elements derive their meaning by becoming parts of a scientific model. Owing to this malleable character, a paradigm can serve as an effective analytical tool for interpreting philosophy of science (Hideg, 2005). In contrast to STEM and natural

sciences, social sciences have been viewed as “soft”, with less pejorative intent and dependability. “Scientific maturity is commonly believed to emerge as the degree of quantification found within a given field increases” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 106).

From an ontological and epistemological point of view, the research proceeds from the assumption that gender stereotypes, linguistic biases, and the effects of organisational communication are not merely individual constructions, but social and organisational mechanisms that exist partly independently of individuals. At the same time, their impact can only be examined through individuals’ perceptions, attitudes, and processes of meaning attribution. I assume that real social structures and mechanisms exist – such as gender stereotypes, horizontal and vertical labour-market segregation, the gendering of job roles and attributes, implicit and explicit linguistic cues in organisational communication, and processes of socialisation and work-related value formation. These mechanisms may operate even when individuals are not consciously aware of their influence. Based on these assumptions, one of the dissertation’s core lines of reasoning is situated within the framework of critical realism, because the research does not assume that the above-mentioned mechanisms are directly observable or identifiable with full certainty.

The dissertation’s research also represents a postpositivist epistemology, as it examines hypotheses derived from the theoretical framework using survey-based and experimental methods, employing standardised variables to measure attitudes, intentions, and implicit associations. The study seeks causal relationships and aims to develop an explanatory model (see Ajzen’s theory of planned behaviour and the joint investigation of implicit and explicit attitudes). Therefore, the dissertation primarily represents a critical realist ontology combined with a post-positivist, theory-driven quantitative epistemology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Given the numerical, empirically grounded nature of the dissertation, certain potential issues may arise that the work cannot address from a constructivist standpoint, such as the deeper understanding of meanings, recurring patterns, or even the components of human behaviour (Hideg, 2005).

The research sample included over 400 participants, and responses were collected through an (anonymised) online questionnaire, which was analysed using a quantitative research design. Thus, the empirical nature of the research greatly helped the author to rigorously follow the research protocols and become an independent investigator during the inquiry.

Standardised procedures and quantitative analyses were used to reduce, rather than eliminate, the potential influence of researcher subjectivity.

The researcher's positionality was partly impacted by a subjective bias toward the research topic. As I was increasingly invested in the thesis, it became evident what made me choose this specific research topic. Growing up in a Transylvanian national minority, segregation and differentiation (from the Romanian majority) have always been a natural part of my life. However, being discriminated for who I am has always felt wrong. Supposedly, this feeling (not consciously) led me to approach and examine segregation scientifically, but from the perspective of the male-female relationship in the labour market. Because the dissertation's theoretical approach has been largely determined by my subjective experiences and perceptions, the implementation of quantitative research methods served as a counterbalance in considering intersubjectivity and ontology.

Additionally, the fact that I am a career entrant myself and both my bachelor's and master's degrees are in social sciences (BA in International Relations and MA in Communication and Media Studies) could likewise have affected objectivity toward the topic. Considering data collection and the offline 'research visits', my personal introduction and physical presence during the completion of the questionnaire also denote a subjective influence on the respondents or on their willingness to answer the questions. However, being actively present during data collection, perceiving respondents' reactions and having the opportunity to personally introduce the participating students to the research topic were very useful and valuable experiences. Finally, ethical conduct remained a central consideration throughout the entire research process. I ensured that I approached each university group with the same attitude, delivered the same introduction, avoided any differentiation between groups or institutions, and treated all incoming responses in a neutral and unbiased manner.

2. The gender gap as a contemporary societal issue

To understand the reasons behind certain male- and female-dominated job positions and the choice of gender-specific recruitment, we shall gain closer insight into the root causes of labour market inequalities, gender segmentation in the workplace, and the phenomenon of tokenism. Chapter two introduces the gender gap ratios both at a national and international level, discusses the institutional changes in inclusion and presents the dominant theories on gender discrimination and segregation. Understanding these

theoretical approaches is indispensable for the subsequent empirical exploration of the topic.

Male and female participation in the labour market has never been static; in fact, according to global statistics, it is a volatile phenomenon, which we refer to as the gender gap. The term refers to the “systemic disadvantages that women and girls face when compared to men and boys, in terms of access to education, resources, income, power, and so on” (Fitzgerald, 2021, p. 2). Essentially, four main domains are benchmarked by the Global Gender Gap Index (2025) across 148 countries: (1) Economic Participation and Opportunity, (2) Educational Attainment, (3) Health and Survival, and (4) Political Empowerment. This index is considered the longest-standing, tracking the progress of gender gaps and parity since 2006. From the perspective of the present research, Economic Participation and Opportunity are of key importance, as they mainly focus on the gender gaps in the workforce. Important to note that several factors influence these gaps, such as socioeconomic and technological transformation, long-standing structural barriers, and economic shocks. Based on the global average scores, at the current rates of progress, it will take 151 years to close the Economic Participation and Opportunity gender gap, which increases day by day. In Health, Education, and Welfare degree subjects, women continue to be overrepresented, yet in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) fields, they remain underrepresented compared to men. The Global Gender Gap Index in 2025 measured 100 economies and concluded that in Information and Communication Technology (ICT), there are 1.7% female graduates and 8.2% male graduates; in Engineering and Manufacturing, 6.6% of graduates are women compared to 24.6% of men. According to the latest statistics by the International Labour Organisation (ILOSTAT) from 2025, certain job positions are considered male-dominated, and others are viewed as female-dominated. For instance, based on these statistics, personal care workers, health associate professionals, and cleaners are strongly female-dominated, with over 70% of women and about 30% of men involved in these roles. On the other hand, building trades workers, drivers, mobile plant operators, and armed forces occupations are all male-dominated areas with above 90% male involvement, comprising only about 3% of women. Positions viewed as neutral, with approximately 50% involvement for both women and men, are business and administrative professionals as well as sales workers. Such sharp divisions create a “gender order” in which the paid and unpaid duties of women and men are called gender

segregation (Brückner and Mayer, 2005). Once schooling comes to an end, the life stages and tasks of men and women are determined by homemaking and wage-earning, respectively, and as a result, segregation arises from several dimensions (Guinea-Martin et al., 2018). The term will be discussed in detail in this chapter.

2.1 Institutional changes on inclusion

Although international statistics are necessary to see the big picture, domestic data on Hungary shall be provided as well for the present research. Grounded in the sociocultural conceptualisation of gender differences, this subsection explores tokenism, gender essentialism, the theory of segmented labour market and the jurisdiction of the Hungarian Directorate-General for Equal Treatment.

The Global Gender Gap Report publishes each year the gender gap ratios measured in that year across four dimensions for the 146 countries assessed. On the subindex of Economic Participation and Opportunity (subindex 1), Hungary ranks in 79th place, while on the average gender gap list, it occupies the 105th place. The ranking of subindex 1 signifies a call for further investigations into elucidating the causes of such low scores for Hungary.

According to a survey from 2021 conducted by the Zyntern job portal, the wage gap between men and women is around 17-18%; moreover, women tend to apply to jobs that have a description that women can fully identify with, whereas in the case of men, the application likeability does not necessarily depend on high identification with the job ad description. These results have been previously investigated by the Gender Equality in Decision-Making (GEM) project and Hewlett-Packard in 2016, stating that when women feel that they are lacking even a bit of the given criteria of a job description, they are less likely to apply for the job, whilst men will intend to apply if they feel they meet 60% of the requirements.

Are the contemporary male and female workforces striving for the same career path to fulfil? If yes, can they? In her research, Nagy (1997) explored gender segregation in various Hungarian economic sectors between 1900 and 1996 and concluded that the identified sharp gender segregation is much deeper than the mere competence of the applicant – in fact, the answers lie in the early education of boys and girls. By explaining the existence of such gender division, the author emphasises two core concepts: horizontal and vertical segregation, both playing key roles in the categorisation and

segmentation of men and women in the workplace. On one hand, horizontal (also called occupational) segregation means that men and women tend to start a career path based on their different gender socialisation and gender expectations. Therefore, men are more likely to be in a surgeon or gynaecologist position (where both the prestige and salary are higher), while women are more likely to be in positions like childcare or elementary teaching (where both the prestige and salary are lower; Global Gender Gap Report, 2025). On the other hand, vertical segmentation refers to the opportunities that arise from the hierarchy of expertise. This refers to the fact that even if women possess the proper professional qualifications for a certain position, their overall representation is lower as they “climb the ladder” in the hierarchy (Nagy, 1997). Important to note that gender segregation does not mean that men and women do not encounter one another in the workplace; in fact, nurses work with surgeons, secretaries work with bosses; therefore, staying in touch is unavoidable, yet instead of being peers, they are simply actors with unequal positions (Ridgeway, 2011).

One core mechanism that escalates gender segregations is called *gender essentialism* (Levanon and Grusky, 2016; McDaniel, 2016). “The gender essentialism hypothesis presumes that men and women are innately and fundamentally different in aptitudes, skills, and interests and that differences between men and women are biologically rooted [...]” (Pološki Vokić et al., 2019, p. 8). Gender-essentialists believe that women are better at interpersonal relationships, nurturing, and care; moreover, they are also more likely to be emotional. These aspects suggest that women are traditionally more responsible for caring for people in need, children, or the household (Nagy, 2006, 2024; Wang and Degol, 2017). Whereas men are considered emotionally more stable, robust, and strong, as well as analytical and mathematical, they are viewed as better suited to exercise authority and therefore fulfil leadership positions (McDaniel, 2016; Wang and Degol, 2017). Such attributes assume that men are better suited to be responsible outside the house, namely in politics, war, or hunting (Pološki Vokić et al., 2019). Not surprisingly, all these assumptions originate in men’s and women’s *early human history* as well as *psychological predispositions*. Gender role socialisation is inherently a lifelong process through which social institutions – such as families, friends, organisations, media, and education – create and form expectations of acceptable behaviour that men and women should accept and follow (Bell, 2012; Szabó, 2018). Today, the gender essentialist logic is challenged as it stands in opposition to the European Union’s European Employment

Strategy, which supports equal opportunities for both men and women in the labour market (Koncz, 2008; Szabó, 2018). Tardos et al. (2025) highlight that when Hungary joined the European Union in 2004, it was required to demonstrate compliance with the EU norms on gender equality. However, contemporary research on gender-based needs continued to apply the traditional binary approach with little attention to sexual orientation, gender fluidity or gender identity. This dissertation concentrates on the male and female division in job application intention and attitude formation in an organisational communication context; therefore, because of this research scope, it intentionally builds on the traditional binary division of gender (Tardos et al., 2025).

Another core mechanism in gender segregation lies in the theory of the segmented labour market, which posits that the socioeconomic status of an employee highly depends on labour market structures that are built on two types of sectors. The primary sector is characterised by protected, high-status, well-remunerated employees, who are given several professional opportunities along their career advancement. Whereas individuals who fall in the secondary sector have less favourable career opportunities, lower wages, and limited job conditions. Given the fact that men are usually considered to have a more stable career trajectory than women (due to, for example, pregnancy-related exit from the workforce), employers are more likely to primarily invest in male employees who have a higher level of experience and less restricted job prospects (Meulders et al., 2010).

All the aforementioned historically evolved aspects have been examined in a study by Tellhed et al. (2017), where female participants showed gender-stereotypical self-efficacy beliefs, meaning that they were much more confident in dealing with HEED (Health care, Elementary education, and Domestic spheres) careers, compared to men's STEM fields. Higher education, as the antecedent of career entrance, acts as a catalyst for personal and professional development of individuals. "Higher education plays a central role in modern societies as it offers the tools and means by which individuals usually attain higher levels of self-actualisation or ensure the fulfilment of their more basic needs (from physiological ones to self-esteem)" (Macarie and Moldovan, 2015, p. 162). Although financial stability and higher income are often associated with higher levels of education, Furno (2014) argues that both men and women earn considerably more than those who did not attain higher education, yet men are more likely to benefit more and have a more advantageous financial perspective than women.

According to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office,¹ the gender distribution of the actively enrolled students in social sciences university majors is as follows: there are 10.887 men and 20.806 women who decided to study a subfield within social sciences. This rate in the higher education orientation of Hungarian students clearly indicates that there is a higher female preference towards social science majors, as they are present at twice the rate of male students in these programmes.

Because male and female positions have long been socio-historically divided, causing both gender organisational exclusion and self-limiting behaviours, regulatory laws came into force, intending to control exclusion and discrimination in organisational contexts.

Excluding any individual based on race, gender, skin colour, nationality, religion, or any other factor should not happen under any circumstances, especially not in the labour market, where selecting the best fit plays a key role in career development (Dajnoki and Balázs-Földi, 2016; Malik, 2003). While in 1998 the Equal Treatment Authority specifically targeted disabled individuals, the year 1999 emphasised equal treatment towards men and women. As a result, the “open labour market for everyone” principle came into being, and the so-called “family-friendly” social policy involved all gender-related issues (Takács, 2007). This was the first initiative in Hungary that aimed to tackle social discrimination (with a special focus on gender) in the workplace as well as to create the criteria for equal treatment, which was established in 2000-2001 (Takács, 2007). From the 1st of January 2021, the Equal Treatment Authority operates as the Directorate-General for Equal Treatment² merged into the Office of the Commissioner for Fundamental Rights (NMHH, 2025).

Overall, section 2.1 offered a basis for understanding the worldwide effects of male and female differentiation by building on the statistical data of international and domestic labour market inequalities and gender disparities. The next section goes beyond the current data and seeks to situate the explanatory factors of gender inequality within a socio-cultural spectrum.

¹ In Hungarian known as KSH (Központi Statisztikai Hivatal). The presented data applies to the 2024/2025 academic year. Source: https://www.ksh.hu/stadat_files/okt/hu/okt0022.html

² Alapvető Jogok Biztosának Hivatala (official website: <https://www.ajbh.hu/>)

2.2 Gender and discriminatory practices

Masculinity and femininity can be traced back to twentieth-century ideologies that continue to shape the relationship between the genders and their position within the labour market. This chapter seeks to scrutinise these sociocultural effects, elucidating how men's and women's work-related experiences have contributed to the formation and reinforcement of gender-based stereotypes.

2.2.1 The roots of gender discrimination

At the beginning of the 20th century, Western culture's accepted idea of gender roles was built on the doctrine of separate spheres. According to this interpretation, men and women should occupy radically different roles in society, since they hold considerable differences in nature: while men found themselves in the spheres of commerce and business, women's capacity was limited to childbearing (Korabik, 1999). These historical ideologies are viewed as one of the main reasons why work is considered a male domain (Dipboye and Colella, 2005). Later during the 20th century, the technological and industrial development of the Western world opened the doors to societal changes, and consequently, women were freed from the dominant role of reproduction.

2.2.2 Organisational gender discrimination

When men and women enter the job market, they already hold preexisting gender differences in characteristics and traits. The inaccurate perception of such differences may cause differential treatment of male and female co-workers in an institution (Cleveland et al., 2000; Heilman and Caleo, 2018). Therefore, outlining the core psychological processes of gender discrimination leads to a more complex understanding of male and female work experiences.

In its most general form, discrimination is the unfair behavioural biases against outgroup members (Dipboye and Colella, 2005). Sometimes women are treated less favourably than men; at other times women are treated more favourably than men, which underpins the idea that stereotype-based discrimination is not a static phenomenon. Naturally, men and women arrive at the workplace with some preexisting, well-documented, socio-biological differences, yet issues arise when differences in treatment are linked to the inaccurate perception of those differences (Cleveland et al., 2000; Heilman and Caleo, 2018). Although average differences between men and women have been reported for

some characteristics, the primary concern is when discrimination occurs solely based on those possessed attributes and social categorisations.

2.2.3 Gender differences in work experiences

Cleveland et al. (2005) list five main differences concerning gender differences within an organisational setting:

- *Gender differences in organisation access*

A main critical predecessor in differentiating between men and women is the recruitment process when they are still in a potential applicant phase. Several studies (cf. Baxter et al., 2022; Kuhn et al., 2020; Lambrecht and Tucker, 2019; Wille and Derous, 2017) have shown that gender discrimination often happens even before employment, namely, when encountering a job advertisement or participating in a job interview. In cases when an interview is held by a man, women are more likely to face discriminatory acts and be negatively treated (Davison and Burke, 2000).

- *Differences in evaluations of performance*

In the evaluation of performance context, research has demonstrated that gender does not have a strong effect on male and female performance evaluation (Bartol, 1999; Murphy & Cleveland, 1999). This means that both male and female supervisors are likely to assign similar evaluations to the supervised employees. However, as Cleveland et al. (2005) highlight, women often report prejudice-based, discriminatory evaluations that can coexist with unbiased ratings.

- *Differences in advancement and pay*

As opposed to performance appraisal, the gender pay gap is a critical difference in an organisational environment. “Women hold less prestigious and influential jobs, advance more slowly in organisations, receive lower starting pay, and are less likely to benefit from transfers and job changes than men” (Brett and Stroh, 1997; Reskin and Ross, 1995; Valian, 1998 in Cleveland, 2005; Horvath and Sczesny, 2015). The gendered differences existing in occupations, career prospects, and jobs directly or indirectly contribute to an unequal distribution of rewards and salaries. There is a constant gender pay gap both worldwide and in Hungary (which has been elaborated previously in section 2.1).

- *Differences in perceived treatment*

Once an individual enters the workforce, gendered differences may still be present, and in fact, approximately 10% of employed women report some sort of sex discrimination at their workplace (e.g., pay, treatment, supervision, hiring, etc.). (Yong Kim et al., 2017) For this reason, the equal employment enforcement and the equal employment legislation appear to impact the extent to which gender affects decision-making at work.

- *Differences in the experience of work*

Although this subtype is not the focus of this dissertation, it is still a very important part of the possible discriminatory acts against men or women that exist at an organisational level. This type centralises sexual harassment and the sexualisation of the work environment. It can be categorised into three major forms: verbal comments (e.g., objectification), verbal requests (e.g., sexual pressure), and nonverbal displays (e.g., sexual assault). Such experiences are the catalyst for numerous employment effects; in fact, sexual harassment can cost hundreds of millions of dollars/ a year that are lost in terms of health care costs, productivity, and decreased efficiency.

Overall, important to observe that bias against women is neither static nor universal. In some cases, it is highly predominant and causes severe disadvantages (e.g., advancement and pay), and in other cases, there is no outstanding negative consequence (e.g., performance evaluation). What remains prominently important, nevertheless, is to understand the broader societal process as well as the implications of gendered differences.

2.3 Gender segregation

The gender segregation of sectors, occupations, and jobs is one of the most striking features of the presence of women and men in the labour market. The gender-based segregation at the workplace is a common phenomenon all around the world; its presence feeds the gender stereotypical occupations that men and women hold (Koncz, 2010; Nagy, 2024). Gender segregation refers to the tendency for men and women to be unequally represented in different occupations at the workplace (Blackburn and Jarman, 2002; Koncz, 2010).

The nurse–doctor relation serves as a good example, as the immediate association that usually comes to mind is the female nurse – male doctor mental image. Besides the cognitive mental representation of such healthcare stereotypes, we can observe that this is a very typical situation where the female employee occupies a subordinate position as

a nurse – this is called vertical segregation. The phenomenon of vertical segregation refers to a labour market division where men and women are unequally employed within the same organisational setting – for example, healthcare or higher education (Gonas and Karlsson, 2006). One main explanatory concept is the glass ceiling metaphor, which denotes the unacknowledged barrier that marginalises women and other minorities from advancing in a certain profession (Nagy, 2001). Due to this invisible barrier, female employees experience a limit to being promoted on the hierarchical ladder. According to Nagy (1997; 2001), the ratio of women who are qualified for leadership is higher than their actual employment as leaders. Therefore, it is obvious that the inequality is not because of the poor qualifications of females, but mainly because institutions act in accordance with general stereotypes and hence, they choose not to integrate a woman at the top of their pyramid.

In contrast with vertical segregation, which refers to the unequal distribution within the same occupation area, horizontal (also called occupational) segregation views the “big picture” of all labour market sectors, and by doing so, it explains that women and men can be found in different areas of employment at different rates (Blackburn & Jarman, 2002). For instance, men are more likely to occupy business or commerce-related positions, while a higher rate of women is found to be present in pedagogy and higher education.

Research (Aman and England, 1997; Barone, 2011) pointed out that masculinity and femininity have become more important determinants of salary than any other employment factors like qualifications, skills, or other competencies. Therefore, typical female occupations are described as financially less favourable, regardless of the fact that they might hold the same societal and cultural values as male-typed occupations. To address this challenge, the Hungarian law introduced the European Union’s “equal pay for equal work” pact, which aims to bridge the gender pay gap and to monitor its implementation in the labour force (European Commission, 2024). Pratto et al. (1997) explain horizontal segregation as a cause of gender inequality. People tend to perceive a man occupying a high status to be more valuable than a woman, because they tend to believe that the occupied social status equals higher prestige.

3. Linguistic stereotyping in recruitment practices

The work men and women choose, and the way they decide to settle in a particular work setting, is explained by numerous theoretical contributions. These theories serve as defining elements in the topic of the dissertation, since each of them intends to encapsulate possible outcomes and consequences of recruitment communication that may reinforce discrimination, marginalisation, or the unequal gender distribution of employees. Therefore, this chapter aims to outline the organisational scenarios that organise male and female presence and shed light on the importance of early consideration in the recruitment process.

According to Ridgeway (2011), individuals are determined by their sex role characteristics in an organisation, which refer to the barometers of how well men and women will fit in these settings. The *person-centred perspective* states that “the attributes individuals perceive they possess vary according to their sex” (Fagenson, 1990, p. 204). It is hypothesised that men perceive themselves as aggressive, rational, competitive, self-confident, and independent, while women are seen rather as gentle, kind, emotional, understanding, and helpful to others (Putnam and Heinen, 1976; Schein, 1972). Based on these assumptions, the *organisational structure view* has been created, which suggests that a person’s perspective about his or her attributes will vary according to the occupied position in the organisational power hierarchy (Fagenson, 1990). Ridgeway (2011) develops this idea and claims that everyday work relations allocate men and women to certain positions in a working environment, and therefore their access to power and rewards varies – this is called the *job-matching process*. Once individuals are employed in social relations, these will have a direct effect on the activities they engage in, like “the social networks they join, how they perform on the job, how they are evaluated, and the promotions they receive” (Ridgeway, 2011, p. 93). Hiring and job performance evaluations may also be the by-product of the culturally shaped stereotype content, which presupposes that the Hungarian national and cultural values may reflect gender-based differences in society. The intercultural study of Cuddy and her colleagues (2015) examined gender stereotypes evaluated by Koreans and Americans. The results, in general, supported that collectivist traits are viewed as more stereotypically masculine, yet individualistic traits were evaluated as less stereotypically masculine.

As seen above in the outlined theoretical definitions, the quality of gender relations plays an important role in defining and organising the social relations of male and female

employees; however, these are not the only factors that escalate and sustain workplace inequality. Considering the traditional structure of the 40-hour, Monday-to-Friday workweek setup, it already reveals that there is an embedded assumption about the gendered nature of an ideal worker: it implicitly suggests that such an ideal worker has no direct responsibility for the daily care of children; thus, an ideal worker would be a man and not a woman (Acker, 1990, 2006; Ridgeway, 2011). Research suggests that the structures of power and control, division of labour, and even behaviour own an “implicit cultural assumption about the gender [...] of the actors that will enact them” (Ridgeway, 2011, p. 95). Such cultural assumptions might easily lead to the unfair categorisation of men and women, which ultimately strengthens *gender stereotypes* within an organisation.

3.1 Stereotype-construction

In 1922, Walter Lippmann coined the term *stereotype*, and even today, the most widely used definition is the following: stereotypes are “knowledge structures that serve as mental 'pictures' of the groups in question” (Stangor, 2009, p. 2). In other words, stereotypes are generalised perceptions (often misperceptions) about other groups of people. If we constantly see a particular group of people engaging in a given activity, we are likely to believe that certain personality attributes and abilities are typically required to carry out those activities. For example, if perceivers regularly observe women caring for their children will define those attributes – warmth, nurturing, kindness – to be typical of women. Whereas if the recurring mental image of a father is someone who prioritises work over family, is constantly at the workplace, and identifies himself as the primary money earner, such stereotypes will become typical of a man; furthermore, they will even strengthen a breadwinner ideology (Zuo, 2004).

Stereotypes can make information processing easier, because individuals can rely on their previously stored information instead of evaluating all the incoming stimuli in the context of a new situation (Fiske, 1998). Since stereotypes are socially transmitted via family, media, literature, or institutions, they represent an individual’s cultural beliefs derived from shared beliefs.

Due to their multifaceted existence in society, the phenomenon of stereotypes has two main approaches of interpretation: a cognitive-linguistic and a social-psychological. Although the two interpretations intertwine because of their cognitive nature, they can still be explained from both sides. On one hand, the cognitive definition suggests that

“stereotypes are linguistic-cultural pictures of objects and phenomena of our world” (Pacovská, 2007, p. 106). The transmission and maintenance of stereotypes and their interpersonal linguistic factors gained attention and became widely researched (cf. Brigham, 1971; Maas and Arcuri, 1996) after Gordon Allport wrote his outstanding work titled „The Nature of Prejudice” (1954). Semin argued that “language has the potency of ripping us out of our immediate reality and throwing us into different worlds, which can become powerfully possessive realities in their own right” (2012, p. 309). The intersection of linguistics and social cognition resulted in the *linguistic category model* (LCM), which served as the starting point for studying the underlying linguistic mechanism of stereotyping in communication practices (Ruscher, 1998; Semin, 2012; Semin and Fiedler, 1988). Research-wise, Maas and her colleagues (1996) were among the first ones who made important advances in the so-called linguistic intergroup bias (LIB), which provided solid evidence for „biased language use in individuals’ descriptions of stereotype-relevant events (Beukeboom and Burgers, 2017; Semin, 2012; Wigboldus and Douglas, 2007, p. 81).

On the other hand, social psychologists argue that stereotypes “represent the traits that we view as characteristic of social groups, or of individual members of those groups, and particularly those that differentiate groups from each other” (Stangor, 2009, p. 2). In a more simplified manner, those characteristics come to mind when we think about a certain group.

The two approaches show overlap: both cognitive linguists and social psychologists may agree on the fact that stereotype construction rests on culturally predisposed attributes, i.e., traditions, behaviour, clothing, etc. However, the two definitions outlined above highlight considerable differences too. While the cognitive linguistic approach explains stereotype construction as a mental representation of knowledge that we turn into language, the social psychological perspective places stereotypes in a cultural context and stresses the societal consequences within a community (Cleveland et al., 2005; Pacovská, 2007). Although stereotypes as linguistic category models can be the topic of a deeper discussion, because of the focus of this dissertation and its strong sociopsychological pillars, from now on I will be focusing on the depth and breadth of stereotype construction from a sociopsychological angle.

3.2 Gender stereotypes

Placing stereotyping into a more specific context, gender stereotypes are pre-conceptualised beliefs about male and female attributes, characteristics, and attitude patterns (Stangor, 2009). For example, if we say, “She’s great – for a woman”, the statement holds a “wow” effect, presuming that excellence is a masculine property, and it does not come as the default that a woman can be characterised as being excellent; this is also called an implicit qualifier (Cleveland et al., 2000). Social psychology explains that when we create socially meaningful categories, the perception of others happens immediately, completely outside of our awareness. The process is called stereotype-based judgment of behaviour, which may be influenced in two ways (Biernat and Vescio, 2002). First, stereotype-based expectations can be understood as interpretative frames that help process information, and by doing so, stereotype-consistent judgments are created that belong to the stereotyped group, i.e., women are viewed as less competent than men. The second way proposes that stereotype-based expectations serve as standards against which members of a group are compared.

There are two main types of gender stereotypes: descriptive and prescriptive. A prescriptive gender stereotype indicates how men and women *should be*, while a descriptive gender stereotype denotes what men and women *are* like (Heilman, 2012). Descriptive stereotypes received a greater amount of attention, since they are considered promoters of negative expectations of female performance, resulting in a lack of fit between the traits women are thought to possess and the traits considered necessary for a successful career in traditionally male-dominated positions (Eagly and Karau, 2002). These descriptive stereotypes are also called “energy-saving devices, allowing perceivers to form impressions quickly, enabling them to easily respond to and make more predictable the highly complex world confronting them” (Heilman, 2012, p. 115).

One of the most important theoretical contributions to stereotyping is that of Fiske and her colleagues (Fiske et al., 2002), who introduced the Stereotype Content Model. The model considers stereotypes to be very different and, in fact, places them in a “good and bad” categorisation. For instance, some stereotypes are viewed as completely harmless (e.g., housewives), others are viewed as rather dangerous (e.g., Arabs), some are perceived as cold (e.g., rich people), and some stereotypes are seen as incompetent and disrespected (e.g., elderly people). Fiske et al. (2002) observed that social psychological investigations shifted from stereotype content to stereotype processing, arguing that

although the types of stereotypes differ across cultures, presumably some of their causing patterns remain stable over time, place, and even culture (Fiske and Dupree, 2015). Consequently, the model came into being as a response to the more thorough understanding of the presumption that stereotypes generalise across groups.

The Stereotype Content Model (SCM) suggests that there are two main dimensions of stereotype processing: warmth (sincere, good-natured, friendly) and competence (capable, skilful, confident). In this view, the core question is: “Do they *intend* to harm me, and are they *capable* of harming me?” (Cuddy et al., 2009, p. 3). The SCM looks at the prejudicial attitudes towards gender and focuses on the ambivalent (and often antagonistic) reactions of individuals towards others. The model proposes that people are autonomous agents who can form intentions and judgments (Fiske and Taylor, 2008). First, an individual needs to know whether the other person (or group of people) means good or ill – this dimension is called warmth (honest, trustworthy, friendly, kind, etc.), which comprises the socioemotional dimension of the model. The other question regards whether that person is able or unable to enact that intention – this refers to the competence (skilled, determined, intelligent, practical, etc.) dimension (Fiske, 2012; Eckes, 2002). The Stereotype Content Model outlines four main categories: (1) high warmth with low competence (e.g., elderly people), (2) high warmth with high competence (e.g., middle-class people), (3) low warmth with low competence (e.g., homeless people), (4) low warmth with high competence (e.g., envied groups of people) (Fiske, 2012). In the frame of the Stereotype Content Model, women fall into an ambivalent group and are seen as warm but incompetent. Women who are traditionally responsible for the household are perceived as nurturing, kind, and loving, yet are disrespected in other societal settings, such as in the workplace (Cleveland et al., 2005; Fiske and Dupree, 2015; Heilman, 2012).

It is important to belong to groups to fulfil the basic needs for safety, survival, and reproduction (Baumeister and Leary, 1995, in Van Veelen et al., 2016). Following this thought, Tajfel and Turner (1979) defined the act of attaching affective significance to certain groups as social identification, which shapes behaviours and social perceptions. Van Veelen and colleagues (2016) propose a framework in which there are two distinct cognitive pathways explaining how people identify themselves with groups. These pathways are self-stereotyping and self-anchoring, both included in the Integrative Model of Social Identification (IMSI). When we introduce ourselves, we are likely to express a connection between the self and the ingroups, describing ourselves in terms of a group

prototype, like being part of a soccer team, academic department, or the HR management of a company – this is called self-stereotyping. Whereas self-anchoring (Van Veelen et al., 2011) argues that one may project one's personal characteristics on the ingroup and create a mental linkage between the self and the ingroup. The framework's hypothesis suggests that the person may evaluate ingroup characteristics more positively, while outgroup characteristics more negatively (Cadinu and Rothbart, 1996).

Although stereotyping and its gendered consequences stand at the focus of organisational communication research, their study can pose a real challenge to researchers. "Stereotyping and prejudice are difficult to measure because people are often unwilling to admit negative attitudes and beliefs about social groups" (Fazio et al., 1995 in Sekaquaptewa, 2003, p. 75). In fact, it is not only challenging to report on discriminatory acts, but people are often unable to accurately recall the way they feel about certain groups or cases, as these may not be consciously accessible to them (Sekaquaptewa, 2003). As outlined under chapter 4.2, descriptive stereotypes received a greater amount of attention research-wise too, since they are considered remarkably consistent over time (Heilman, 2012). In a study by Hentschel et al. (2013), a sample of 528 women and men (with different backgrounds and ages) were asked to rate communal and agentic attributes. The study found that the respondents placed men higher on an agentic scale and women on a communal scale.³ Even though women show an increasing tendency in diverse workplace settings, descriptive stereotypes are still prevalent in other employment-related social contexts.

One of the crucial reasons for researching this topic is the systematically recurring consequences of stereotyping, since they serve as impression-forming shortcuts, which are usually an imperfect, distorted, and unreal perception of the highly complex world of the other person. "Because stereotypes are widely shared, automatically activated, and very impactful, descriptive gender stereotypes are highly likely to dominate in impressions formed of men and women" (Heilman, 2012, p. 115). Therefore, it may be problematic for women to perform in an organisational context, and not because capability issues arise, but because they might not even be cognizant of the unconscious influence others exercise on their judgment (Banaji & Hardin, 1996).

³ Communal and agentic wording and its detailed meaning will be further discussed later in section 3.5.

3.3 The cognitive linguistic conceptualisations of gendered wording

Reading headlines like “The doctor seduced a patient”, one would naturally assume that the doctor is a man and the patient is a woman. If we read about some of the inventions of a scientist, our mental images still suggest that a scientist is a male, although there are plenty of female scientists now. If people hear the colour “lavender”, “baby blue” or “pink”, we are more likely to associate these colours with femininity. “Gender is thus an inherently communicative process” (Romaine, 1999, p. 2), which supports the myths that men and women are different creatures. Romaine (1999) further suggests that in the English language, the use of the word “man” instead of human, humanity, or people obscures women’s inclusion as well as contribution to language, which consequently fails to structure language in a gender-neutral form. In a rather technical interpretation, “gender is a grammatically significant classification of nouns that has implications for various agreement phenomena” (McConnel-Ginet, 2010, p. 76). The question is how language can contribute to social relations and cultural values, and to what extent it influences inequality and exclusion. Romaine (1999) argues that if female oppression has justified linguistic roots, it can be concluded that any representation of men, women, and any other group is embedded first in language, then transmitted to other areas, like politics, economy, culture, religion, history, and so on. Nevertheless, „the more gender is encoded in the grammatical structure of a language, the more gender prejudice occurs in the context of that language” (DeFranza et al., 2020 in Formanowicz and Hansen, 2022, p. 133). Based on this premise, the Hungarian language is considered a special case to examine, inherently owning a gender-neutral grammar; nevertheless, its attributes carry male and female implicit connotations.

People are cognitive beings. We are drawn to conceptualise our surroundings to create a clearer picture of our everyday experiences. Cognitive linguistics studies how language and thought are interconnected. It sees language as a window into human cognition, shaped by experience, culture, and our interaction with the world. Rather than focusing only on abstract rules, it examines how people mentally construct meaning through language (Kövecses, 2010; Tolcsvai, Nagy, 2013). By definition, a conceptual frame is a structured mental representation of a conceptual category. One of a conceptual frame’s key features is that it is often idealised – meaning it may represent something that doesn’t exist in the real world. For instance, the concept of a “week” as a seven-day cycle is not a natural phenomenon but a culturally constructed one. Lakoff (1987) refers to such

frames as Idealised Cognitive Models (ICMs). Because of their idealised nature, conceptual frames can vary significantly across cultures, and some may only exist within specific cultural contexts – like the seven-day week in Western societies (Benczes and Kövecses, 2016).

Human cognition develops within the context of social communities. The way individuals perceive and understand the world is shaped by the culture of the community they are socialised into (Deutschmann and Steinvall, 2020). This community-based culture plays a crucial role in influencing their cognitive processes. Through language interaction, individuals are able to express an opinion about stereotypes that are encoded into words (Benczes and Kövecses, 2016; Tolcsvai Nagy, 2013). At the heart of the explanatory principle of cognitive linguistics is the relationship between language and the mind (Deutschmann and Steinvall, 2020). Language is cognition, and cognition is the complex system of mental structures and procedures that determine human behaviour and how they work (Tolcsvai Nagy, 2013). Therefore, the way we describe men and women and use male and female attributes respectively will be automatically manifested in language use and behaviour. This realisation has been strengthened by the cognitive psychologist and science communicator Lera Boroditsky (2011), who studied different cultures and found evidence on how language shapes our cognitive skills and the way we perceive the world. “Languages force us to attend to certain aspects of our experience by making them grammatically obligatory” (Boroditsky, 2011, p. 2). Speakers of different languages may be predisposed to notice and encode distinct dimensions of their experience as they speak.

Kramsch (2014) views language as a cultural semiotic that is connected to thought, cognition, emotion, and embodied knowledge. These areas are known to be part of language relativity, which examines how the language an individual speaks influences their thinking (Boroditsky, 2001). Following the logic of Vygotsky (1978), a semiotic system is constituted of both cognitive tools and linguistic signs. When people learn how to speak, they first internalise the thoughts and words from others (social plane), then they start developing their own (psychological plane). According to the sociocultural theory (SCT), socialisation takes place as a cultural development; SCT is defined as “a community’s culture and an individual’s mind are in an inherently dialectical relationship as semiotically organised functional systems” (Kramsch, 2014, p. 33). Thus, language and culture are inseparable in the sense that individuals’ native language transmits their cultural signs.

The study of Deutschmann and Steinvall (2020) explores how implicit linguistic stereotypes – especially those based on accent and gender – affect people’s perception, particularly in an educational environment. The main premise of the authors is that stereotypes usually operate implicitly, which means that people are not aware of using them in their language. Leaper and Ayres (2007) studied the gender style of communication for decades and yielded two types of labels: the *affiliative*, which is typical for women, and *assertive*, which is typically male (these labels have been further studied and modified by Baxter et al., 2022). The formation of these labels is explained by the fact that “[...] women are more likely than men to use language to form and maintain connections with others (i.e., affiliation), whereas men are more likely to use language to assert dominance and to achieve utilitarian goals (i.e., self-assertion)” (Leaper and Ayres, 2007, pp. 328–329). These associations are proof that language does conceptualise gender stereotypes and become salient carriers of linguistic bias. “A linguistic bias can be defined as a systematic asymmetry in word choice that reflects the social category cognitions that are applied to the described group or individual(s)” (Beukeboom and Burgers, 2017, p. 2). The more we perceive a collection of individuals to be a meaningful, distinguishable group, the more likely people tend to find stereotypic associations and characteristics that are considered essential to its members (Crawford et al., 2002). Therefore, when we systematically perceive women as caring, soft, and communicative, and men as strong, confident, and authoritative, the human mind unconsciously creates mental categories about the salient features of men and women, and thus our language will echo the stereotypical representations of these activated social categories.

Jakiela and Ozier (2020) screened more than 4,000 languages to document the absence/presence of grammatical gender, and they concluded a negative relationship between female labour force participation and the prevalence of gendered language. Carpio and Fujiwara (2023) suggest that human cognition and decision-making are shaped by language characteristics, and one of its salient factors is the treatment of gender. For instance, one extreme category contains languages that do not make any gender distinctions (e.g., Finnish, English), while the other category is where languages assign gender to nouns (e.g., Spanish, German) – this category is often referred to as *gendered languages* (Carpio and Fujiwara, 2023; McConnel-Ginet, 2010). Important to emphasize that the use of gendered language primarily refers to nouns: in case of

occupations, in English the word “engineer” has no gender embedded, yet in Spanish a “male engineer” is *ingeniero*, a female engineer” is *ingeniera* (Carpio and Fujiwara, 2023); in English the word “professor” carries no gender meaning, however, in Hungarian there is a distinction between “male professor” as *professzor úr* and “female professor” as *professzor asszony*.

3.4 Grammatical neutrality and the Hungarian-specific context of language

“Language can be considered one of the subtle means of maintaining traditional gender arrangements, as language is an important vehicle for the transmission and maintenance of stereotypes” (Maas and Arcuri, 1996, p. 2). Words that are either masculine- or feminine-themed and are associated with gender stereotypes are called *gendered wording* (Baxter et al., 2022). Stereotypically male-oriented terms – such as *ambitious*, *assertive*, and *competent* – are classified as agentic wording, whereas female-oriented descriptors like *emotional*, *sensitive*, *kind*, and *compassionate* are categorised as communal wording. Important to highlight that gendered wording does not carry an automatic or universally shared meaning; its interpretation depends on the receiver’s prior experiences, socialisation, work values, and perceived fit (Choudhury, 2024; Connelly et al., 2025).

Although contemporary social norms increasingly challenge traditional expectations regarding gendered behaviour, empirical evidence continues to underpin that communal traits are more commonly associated with women, while agentic traits are perceived as more characteristic of men (Gaucher et al., 2011; Sandhu, 2018; Szabó, 2024b). In their study, Hentschel et al. (2021) investigated how female students respond to stereotypically gendered wording in job advertisements and found that women evaluated job ads containing agentic language less favourably. Further studies also found that when wording was manipulated into masculine (agentic) wording, women were more likely to dislike the respective job ad and were less attracted to it (Gaucher et al., 2011; Wille and Derous, 2018).

While gender-neutral language refers to the avoidance of marking gender in language, gender-inclusive (also called gender-fair) language denotes a broader strategy of explicitly including all genders in language construction (Trelohan and Zahid, 2025). Yet the two types of linguistic conceptualisations are closely related; it is important to see the distinction between the two concepts of gender-inclusivity and gender-neutrality (Halfmann, 2025). Generally, three types of language systems can be distinguished in

terms of gender characteristics. First, gendered languages that assign a grammatical gender to nouns and pronouns (e.g., French, Spanish, Romanian). Grammatical gender refers to the categorisation of nouns into distinct classes and “morphologically marking what gender the noun belongs to on some of the words that that noun is morphosyntactically related to” (Semenuks et al., 2017). Second, natural gendered languages use gender-specific pronouns (like he or she) and avoid assigning grammatical gender to nouns (e.g., English). Third, non-gendered languages (e.g., Finnish, Chinese, Hungarian) make no explicit reference to gender in either nouns or pronouns (DeFranza et al., 2020; Trelohan and Zahid, 2025). The European Parliament (2018) defines gender neutrality as follows:

Gender-neutral language is a generic term covering the use of non-sexist language, inclusive language or gender-fair language. The purpose of gender-neutral language is to avoid word choices which may be interpreted as biased, discriminatory or demeaning by implying that one sex or social gender is the norm. Using gender-fair and inclusive language also helps reduce gender stereotyping, promotes social change and contributes to achieving gender equality (p. 3).

It becomes evident that the use of gender-neutral linguistic forms is not solely a work-related issue that may result in organisational inequality, but it exists on a higher level determined by international regulation, which further underlines the need to investigate the effects of such biased linguistic conceptualisations.

According to a large-scale research conducted for the systematic literature review of this thesis (presented in Chapter 6.1), three scientifically developed word inventories in literature mark the collection of frequently embedded male stereotype-congruent and female stereotype-congruent words in job advertising: 1. the Bem and Bem’s sex-role (1974) inventory (BSRI), 2. the Gaucher, Friesen and Kay (2011) inventory, and the most current inventory is 3. the Denier et al. (2022) BIAS word inventory (for work and employment diversity, (in)equality and inclusivity).

First, Bem and Bem (1973) examined how male applicants discouraged female applicants through job advertisements that straightforwardly specified a preference. They concluded that sex-segregated newspaper columns deterred women and men from applying to opposite-sex positions, and the reason for that was that explicit signals (or references) to men as candidates were found in the job ads. The authors further noted that unbiased (referring to both men and women) job ads were presented to women, and they were

highly interested in the male-dominated occupations. In their second study, female participants were asked to rate their preference for each job presented in ads, yet two kinds of advertisements were presented: either sex segregated and labelled as male or female, or without any sex labelling. Women were more likely to prefer male-dominated jobs when there was no sex labelling (Bem and Bem, 1973). The study by the authors was a clear disclaimer, and by the end of 1973, the US Civil Rights Legislation ended gender segregation in employment using explicit requests to men or women (Gaucher et al., 2011). Important to note that though explicit signals have largely disappeared from the social landscape of job ads, word embeddings can still contain cultural stereotypes of women and men and can convey the ideal candidate for a position.

Second, Gaucher et al. (2011) sought to identify scientific evidence of gendered wording in job ads that perpetuates an institutional-level mechanism of gender inequality. By using both an experimental and an archival analysis, the research demonstrated that gendered wording is solidly sustained in job advertising, especially in traditionally male-dominated occupations. Research suggested that job ads with male-dominated areas contained a greater amount of male wording (e.g., competitive, leader, dominant, etc.) than ads with female-dominated areas; the sense of belongingness is mediated by gendered wording. One main consequence of employing linguistically masculine forms – particularly in contexts like job advertisements – women may often experience a sense of exclusion and exhibit reduced motivation to pursue the position (Stout and Dasgupta, 2011; Szabó, 2024a).

The third and also the most recent words inventory is the BIAS word inventory (Denier et al., 2022), which in contrast with the other two inventories, assesses that the language used in job ads employs both explicit and implicit cues, “which signal employers’ preferences for candidates of certain ascribed characteristics, such as gender and ethnicity/race” (Denier et al., 2022, p. 1). This is the first word inventory for work and employment diversity, as well as for exclusivity and (in)equality. The specificity of the study lies in the examination of both explicit and implicit market signalling, which has been found in the analysed job ads. Denier et al. (2002) proposed the inventory based on three dimensions: 1. explicit gender, ethnicity, and race cues, 2. implicit psychological, behavioural, and cognitive cues, and 3. explicit and implicit cues describing workplace characteristics. The inventory distinguished four lists of cues: 1. psychological cues, 2. role description, 3. work-family characteristics, and 4. social characteristics.

The three above-outlined word inventories are viewed as unique initiatives in synthesising explicit and implicit linguistic biases in the English language. English belongs to the category of natural gender languages, whereas Hungarian is classified as a non-gendered language, since its grammatical system and occupational titles typically do not obligatorily encode grammatical gender. Because the dissertation focuses on subtle linguistic bias in Hungarian-language job advertising, it is necessary to understand the grammatical structure of Hungarian and the culture-specific factors that influence speech discourses.

The dominant researchers of Hungarian gender linguistics are considered Ágnes Huszár and Louise O. Vasvári. First, Ágnes Huszár conceptualises numerous socio-biological differences between men and women, approaching the communicational characteristics from a psycholinguistic point of view. One of the main strengths of Huszár's (2009) book titled "Introduction to gender linguistics: In what ways do men's and women's language use and communication differ, and in what ways are they similar?" is that it is not only an outstanding literature review on Hungarian gendered differences, but it also reflects on the innate differences of men and women in effective communication. Huszár (2011) defines gender linguistics as the branch of applied linguistics that examines the differences in language use between men and women, primarily shaped by social gender. In line with emphasising the outstanding social importance of gender linguistics, Huszár (2011) calls attention to further investigations in Hungarian linguistic inquiries related to femininity and masculinity, as a substantial research gap can be identified in this regard.

Hungarian is a unique language with a similarly distinctive lexicality. One common feature in Finno-Ugric languages – like in Finnish, Estonian, and Hungarian – is that they lack grammatical gender (Shagal et al., 2022; Vasvári, 2011). More specifically, "(...) they do not show verbal and nominal agreement in gender; they lack gender distinctions in pronouns" (Shagal et al., 2022, p. 402). Vasvári (2011) strengthens this logic by stating that the Hungarian language has no pronominal (linguistic) gender, but can make lexical gender differences, a phenomenon also called genderlessness. "(...) languages with overt grammatical gender and those with gender related asymmetries of a more covert nature show language to represent traditional cultural expectations" (Vasvári, 2011, pp. 1–2). Even if a language possesses no pronominal (instead of the English *he/she/it*, Hungarian employs *ő/ők*) or grammatical gender (like the masculine *der Professor* in German or the feminine *la enfermera* in Spanish), it does not mean that the concept of gender cannot be

communicated by lexical means (Vasvári, 2011). Therefore, when a language does not possess grammatical gender, yet still succeeds in exerting sexist judgements of femininity and masculinity with the use of adjectives, it is referred to as lexical items with connotative (implicit, associative) gender (L’Homme, 2007; Vasvári, 2011).

Vasvári (2014) posits that although Hungarian as a language does not carry gender reference, it can encapsulate linguistic gender bias and distortion in other forms. For example, the nouns *herceg–hercegnő* are a good example to illustrate the differentiation in lexical grammar: through adding a suffix to a noun, gender becomes encoded into language. This phenomenon is known as the use of the masculine form as a generic (Formanowicz and Hansen, 2022), whereby ostensibly gender-inclusive terms in certain languages activate a generic interpretation that predominantly elicits masculine exemplars and masculine-coded mental representations (Sandhu, 2018). Shagal et al. (2022) examined gendered job titles in six Finno-Ugric genderless languages (including Hungarian) to map the embedded linguistic strategies. Their study found that job titles may differ in how frequently they encode gender and in the distribution of their gendered variants. The authors also highlight that the frequency of particular gendered variants mainly depends on whether the job is stereotypically male or female, and how often the job is done by men and women.

The linguistic cues employed in Hungarian-language job advertisements can substantially shape job seekers’ perceptions of the nature of work, thereby influencing whether their intention to apply increases or decreases. Consequently, the linguistic formulations chosen by the creator of a job advertisement – more precisely, by an organisation’s human resources management – play a decisive role in job seekers’ work socialisation processes and in the formation of their application-related intentions. The next chapter outlines these considerations.

4. Human resource management and work socialisation

How are men and women positioned within an organisation at the early stage of their careers? What values does an organisation’s human resources embody, and which psychological factors shape employees’ work socialisation? Guided by these questions, the chapter discusses the gender-differentiated mechanisms of occupational choice, the foundations of recruitment communication, and job advertisements as the primary communication signalling between employee and employer.

Effective human resource management (HRM) aspires to embody three important features (Carter et al., 2013). First, HRM dictates *strategic thinking*, which ensures the work design, employee management, and the effective pursuit of strategic goals (e.g., increasing profit). Second, the *human value* emphasises that people are not passive inputs, but the inherent generators of organisational value. The fact that people possess the potential to bring added value desired by the employer cannot be substituted by any other technological resource – the idea is also called indeterminacy in HRM, emphasising the primacy of people in the workplace. Third, linking a human resource system to the goals of an organisation requires a thoughtful *integration*. Guest (2017) suggests that effective people management results in higher employee well-being, which refers to both mental and physical health and dignity. The idea that employees are crucial contributors to an organisation is called humanistic human resource management. Besides implementing the basic rational, strategic goals of an organisation, the humanistic (or soft) HRM stresses work-related values, such as employee satisfaction and commitment, motivation and adaptability, collaboration and trust (Stone et al., 2024).

Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991, 2006; further elaborated in section 5.3), Hemsworth et al. (2024) developed the Theory of Employee Planned Behaviour (TEPB), which posits job satisfaction as a driving determinant in organisational performance; nevertheless, it serves as a novel extension of Ajzen's original theory. The study represents a fundamental advancement in organisational psychology and corporate communication, as it links intention formation with possible organisational outcomes. The central question is how different employee attitudes can aggregate and, as a result, influence organisational performance. By using the Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) research technique, the study found that job satisfaction (TEPB attitude) has a positive impact on organisational performance. The findings of Hemsworth et al. (2024) strongly support the idea that human resource outcomes (such as commitment and job satisfaction) are primary determinants of an effective organisational system (Chayomchai, 2023).

Hiring competent people is important for organisations, and such activities are highly dependent on effectively selecting the 'right' candidates from the 'wrong' ones (Bach, 2005). The main subfunctions of an HR professional cover job design (structuring the roles and responsibilities), workforce planning (a strategic process that covers the analysis of future staffing needs), performance management (the process of evaluating employee

performance, providing feedback, and setting goals), and recruitment (Bratton et al., 2022). Based on the research scope of the dissertation, the above sections will specifically focus on recruitment.

Recruitment can be defined as “the process of searching for applicants for a job, from among whom the right candidates will be selected” (Łacka-Badura, 2015, p. 2). In Newell’s interpretation, recruitment is “the process of attracting people who might make an organisational contribution to fill a particular role or job” (2005, p. 117). In contrast, Aswathappa (2007) suggests that “it is the process of finding and attracting capable applicants for employment (p.132). Although definitions vary, the above-mentioned authors apply three key terms to define the process of recruitment: *searching*, *attracting*, and *finding*. All three terms point to the connection between the employer and employee.

The employer-employee relationship stands at the centre of a recruitment process. Since the employer’s knowledge marks the job seeker’s beliefs about the recruiting company yet also reflects the strength of the company’s brand (Baum and Kabst, 2014), an employer brand may be a key determinant in the job seeker’s decision. “A strong employer brand can help to attract qualified applicants and, therefore, succeed in the war of talent” (Wayne and Casper, 2012). By definition, an employer brand comprises all the economic, functional, and psychological benefits that we identify with the employing company (Baum & Kabst, 2014). The purpose of EB is to improve commitment and recruitment in organisational culture (Mosley, 2007). Zárádné Vámosi and Kovács (2022) concluded that an attractive employer brand – based on trust and value proposition - is of priority importance for job seekers. Moreover, Chhabra and Sharma (2012) emphasise that employer branding can be viewed as a doctrine that shapes employees’ brand attitude and thus ensures human resource and marketing strategies. As important as it is to have a trustworthy brand value, the same applies to the recruitment process of a company, which is the catalyst for intertwining young talents with the organisation (Baum and Kabst, 2014; Nagy, 1997).

Jones and Vogl (2020) list seven steps that compose the most common ways communities serve organisational goals, which result in guaranteeing a solid investment. These steps are the following: 1. innovation, 2. customer and stakeholder retention, 3. marketing, 4. customer service, 5. talent recruitment and retention, 6. advancing movements, and 7. community forum. In today’s information society, it is a great challenge for organisations

to satisfy all the needs of the talented graduates who have just stepped into the market and are ready to contribute to the latest trends and innovations. Job seekers are exposed to information asymmetry (Nagy, 2024), which makes the messages of an advertisement even more important in the immense flow of online information.

4.1 Employer branding and job advertising

A good brand can make a difference as an “identifier”. By representing a collection of values and benefits, consumers may associate brands with certain products, services or any other objects (Kotler, 1997). As per the definition: “Employer brands are developed with a view to creating an image that will render the organisation an employer of choice for current and potential employees” (Backhaus, 2016 in Spoljaric and Ozretic Dosen, 2023).

The employer-employee relationship stands at the centre of a recruitment process and is a crucial part of human resource management (Spoljaric and Vercic, 2022). Since the employer's knowledge marks the job seeker's beliefs about the recruiting company yet also reflects the strength of the company's brand (Baum and Kabst, 2014), an employer brand (EB) may be a key determinant in the job seeker's decision. “A strong employer brand can help to attract qualified applicants and, therefore, succeed in the war of talent” (Wayne and Casper, 2012 in Baum and Kabst, 2014). An employer brand comprises all the economic, functional and psychological benefits that we identify with the employing company (Baum & Kabst, 2014), intending to improve commitment and recruitment in organisational culture (Mosley, 2007).

One of the modes in which a potential employee may be attracted to an organisation is by the formation of employer attractiveness. The notion of employer attractiveness refers to the “envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation” (Berthon 2005, p. 156). In other words, the more the employee finds the employer organisation beneficial and satisfying to their needs, the stronger the organisation's employer brand equity is (Alshathry et al. 2017; Heilman, 2012). Employee attractiveness has been widely discussed in the areas of marketing (Ambler, 2002), applied psychology (Collins and Stevens, 2002), management (Gatewood et al., 1993), and communication (Bergstrom et al., 2002). The assessment of employer attractiveness gained attention with the increased importance of marketing and human resource management activities (Puncheva-Michelotti et al., 2018; Spoljaric and Vercic,

2022), so much so that Berthon et al. (2005) successfully developed and validated a scale that can assess employer attractiveness. In their research, Collins and Stevens (2000) highlight the complexity of organisational and HR practices carried out in the initial phase of recruitment. The authors claim that the beginning of a recruitment process may decide whether job seekers find the offered organisational image desirable enough to proceed with the application. Their study found that the application intention of job seekers is indirectly influenced by early recruitment activities, such as the general attitudes towards the company and perceived job attributes. Nevertheless, the study also pointed out that word-of-mouth endorsements, marketing activities, and job advertisements had a positive effect on perceived job attributes and job seeker attitudes.

The employer branding of a firm has the power to shape the perceived organisational attractiveness of current and future employees; moreover, it influences an organisation's reputation (Dabirian et al., 2019). In the research conducted by Sarabdeen and colleagues (2023), high salary, work-life balance, and the contribution of development value as parts of employer branding were found to be more important to male employees than to female employees. Similarly, Samoliuk and colleagues (2022) aimed to explore the most important determinants of joining a company and to detect the possible differences between employed and potential employees. Their study analysed the data of 510 respondents and concluded that women are more likely to value workplace safety, while men are more likely to value personal development opportunities. These results serve as evidence that a company's employer branding may elicit different aspects in male and female organisational attraction.

Job seekers are exposed to only limited information about the characteristics and requirements of a certain job, the compensation offered by a company, or the organisational culture. The lack of details results in the applicants being exposed to a so-called information asymmetry (Wiktor and Sanak-Kosmowska, 2021), which makes the content of a job advertisement even more important in the immense flow of online information. Based on Perkins et al. (2000) and Barber and Roehling (1993), applicants' level of trust will be higher if they regularly encounter the company's job advertisements on online platforms before the application. Therefore, an efficiently crafted job advertisement is key in increasing brand trust, reaching out to job seekers, and hence attracting the best-fitting applicants to the organisation.

Even though a vast number of job ads exist on several platforms from which we may choose, one might wonder why it is so important to create an effective job ad. Literature suggests that through job advertisements, a company may transmit a value proposition, which targets its business brand value, and which is the first impression the job seeker gets from the company (Aaker, 1991; Zárádné Vámosi and Kovács, 2022). Job ads, by being present on different online platforms, create stronger love, intensity, and trust for the brand value of a company (Sisodia and Chowdhary, 2012). As stated before, employer branding is the primary tool for attracting job applicants, which has a strong connection to Human Resources Recruitment and Selection activities, also called HRRS. This department is involved in the attraction, recruitment, and selection of job seekers (Dessler, 2010); therefore, their organisational execution determines who will be hired at the end of the day (Stariņeca, 2015). HRRS is also regarded as “the basis of all management activities”, since it coordinates and attracts the people who will comprise the staff of an organisation (Torrington et al., 2005, p. 4). In an arena of a rapidly changing business environment, growing customer expectations, and high global competition, success will be “dependent on attracting and retaining high-quality individuals who can respond effectively to this changing environment” (Newell, 2005, p. 5).

Based on Acarlar and Bilgiç (2013), the following elements comprise an online job ad’s effect on organisational attraction:

- **The elements of employer branding attraction:** interesting position, social value, economic value, advancing opportunity, and opportunity for cooperation.
- **The elements of an attractive job ad:** the appearance of the ad, the content of the ad, and the congruence between the expected competences and the applicant’s competences.
- **The elements of application intention:** the attraction of the ad, the interest toward the organisation, and the prestige of the organisation.

Although the effect of employer branding and its ability to execute as well as retain HR processes (e.g., attracting, recruiting, advertising, selecting) has been scientifically underpinned by a stream of research (cf. Baum and Kabst, 2014; Mandhanya and Shah, 2010; Mosley, 2007; Stariņeca, 2015; Zárádné Vámosi and Kovács, 2022), the application intention and the decision of a job seeker are not solely dependent on the

recruitment practices of human resource management. An individual's career choice is largely influenced by their pre-socialisation and their fit with a given environment.

4.2 Recruitment communication: work characteristics in job advertising

The implemented work characteristics in a job advertisement are the main resources as instrumental attributes that a job seeker typically obtains from an ad (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). These characteristics refer to the tasks, duties, required competencies, responsibilities, organisational offerings, and, in some cases, even the working environment that the job seeker may expect from the given organisation (Ganesan et al., 2018). Because of their utility, these attributes might trigger a considerably strong signal, which can increase applicant attraction in the long-term. Therefore, "presenting the complete job and work details in job ads will aid the potential job seeker in matching his/her job profile with organisational work profile" (Ganesan et al., 2018, p. 429). Spence's (1973) signalling theory explains that through informational content, potential applicants receive unknown organisational attributes (Turban & Cable, 2003). By assessing a great number of studies, Ganesan et al. (2018) determined that if job ads possess the following dimensions, they will exhibit a signalling effect and will predict application intention: 1. job and work characteristics, 2. employee testimonial/picture, 3. corporate image statement, 4. organisational culture, 5. aesthetic appeal of the ad, and 6. HR offerings.

A stream of academic literature has aimed at exploring the relationship between organisational attributes and applicant attraction (Highhouse, 2003). For instance, Phillips and colleagues (2014) concluded that the driving force for applicants' attractiveness and attitude can be found in the content of print job advertisements. Using an experimental design on 171 job seekers, Roberson et al. (2005) examined the effects of recruitment message specificity. They concluded that job seekers' intention to apply will increase if organisational attributes are outlined in detail in the recruitment message. Blackman (2006) conducted research on commerce students and analysed variables that influenced job seekers' attention to ads. Results indicated that the title of a job ad is essential as a tool for effectiveness.

Besides the message content, the visual aspects of a job ad have been another focus of academic literature. During the process of job seeking, the experience given by the visual elements is an essential factor as well. In Walker's view (2008), the style, the visual

experience, and the wording are all central determinants of organisational image and job seeker perception. Moreover, Sisodia and Chowdary (2012) researched the effect of illustrations and job ad visuals in print media and pointed out that emphasising the content of recruitment ads will lead to attracting the right kind of applicants. Another stream of research has focused on the (above-detailed) aesthetic properties of recruitment messages and concluded that visual characteristics, such as pictures, colour, font, and design, positively influence applicant attitude (Cober et al., 2004; Dineen et al., 2007). For example, Dineen et al. (2007) conducted a study on both aesthetics and content and noted that the cognitive processing of recruitment messages will likely be influenced by both text and visuality. All the outlined studies illuminate that the message content and ad design play a crucial role in advancing organisational attractiveness, attitude, and application intention (Ganesan et al., 2018; Lievens and Slaughter, 2016).

All in all, organisational attraction can be supported and improved by the information and unique elements that their job advertisements represent (Ganesan et al., 2018). The next section will provide a closer insight into the specific elements embedded in job advertising, namely the gender cues.

There are no two identical ways in which individuals can perceive and interpret a job advertisement; in fact, not even one single person consumes an ad the same way twice. The reason for this is that the underlying mechanism of a job ad lies in the implementation of both visual and verbal elements, which is called market signalling (Connelly et al., 2011; Spence, 1972). Before hiring someone, a company is blind to the competencies and attributes owned by a potential applicant; thus, stipulating certain salient applicant features and including them in a job ad will determine the applicant pool (Turban and Cable, 2003). When it comes to determining what information is considered trustworthy for making job market choices, recruitment researchers mainly rely on the job market signalling theory (Derous and Decoster, 2017; Spence, 1973). More precisely, this process is called Spence's (1973) signalling theory, which has been extensively used in strategic and human resources management, and also in entrepreneurship (Connelly et al., 2011). According to Spence (1972), the theory helps to create a theoretical research frame for better understanding the connection between job advertisements and their market value, attitude formation, and influence in relation to potential applicants. The theory marks the intertwined relationship between organisational signals and applicant signals; hence, both sides have certain signalling authority towards each other (Connelly et al.,

2011, 2025; Ganesan et al., 2018; Zárádné Vámosi and Kovács, 2022). In other words, an organisation determines the communication channels and the type of ads, while the signals determine the tendency and competence of potential applicants. Once organisational signals are sent out, the applicant may signal back by browsing, interpreting, and filtering the most attractive job advertisements (Gregory et al., 2013). Therefore, the signalling theory presupposes a never-ending circle, which affects both sides vice versa. Celani and Singh (2011) studied the importance of the signalling theory in the field of HR. As a result, the authors extended the theory and established an applicant attraction model, which includes the individual-organisation signals and their effects (Zárádné Vámosi and Kovács, 2022).

Although signalling theory provides a useful framework for explaining how job seekers make inferences about organisations under conditions of incomplete information, its application to recruitment communication has several limitations. “Hiring by organisations is like making an investment in uncertainty” (Choudhury, 2024, p. 99). An employer may not know all the useful pieces of information about the candidates that they would like to know in the recruiting phase. However, they can try to integrate information that jobseekers will consider desirable and attractive. Studies that investigate job application signalling (Campbell & Hahl, 2022; Connelly et al., 2025) consider the relationship between gender and qualification signals and claim that over-qualification (e.g., industry experience, job title) may send a different signal for men than it does for women. Another constraint of signalling theory was formulated by Windscheid et al. (2016). Their work pointed out that mixed diversity statements are signalled (e.g., referring to gender diversity in job advertising, yet having no gender diversity in the organisation) can enact adverse signalling consequences and, as a result, reduce attractiveness to potential candidates.

Although Spence’s market signalling theory provides a complex explanation for how employer-employee communication takes place, if we exclusively zoom in on the signals sent through a job ad, we will find several elements that have a hidden or even unintended meaning, and that is called an *implicit cue*. Deros and Decoster (2017) researched resumes and tested the perceived implicit age cues recruiters could detect from the names of the applicants. The authors explain that “implicit cues differ from explicit cues in that they may be much more ‘hard-to-fake’ by applicants and ‘hard-to-resist’ by recruiters” (p. 4). If we project this argumentation to the gender dimension (instead of ageism), an

implicit age cue becomes an implicit gender cue, which refers to all the subconscious, ‘hard-to-fake’ signals that carry reference to a specific gender. On one hand, a cue is ‘hard-to-fake’ (or honest) from the sender’s point of view, because signalling happens beyond one’s conscious control based on the individual’s acquired qualities. On the other hand, cues are ‘hard-to-resist’, since recruiters constantly look for cues, and candidates embed them in their resumes as valuable information. These explanatory definitions can be applied to job advertisements too (Formanowicz and Hansen, 2022; Gaucher et al., 2011). Therefore, it can be argued that such implicit cues will be hard to fake from the recruiter’s point of view (by signalling through the job ad), and hard to resist from the job seeker’s point of view (by decoding the job ad).

The origin of gendered wording effects ultimately leads us to some essential theories that illuminate the reason why job ads tend to use specific word embeddings for potential male and female job seekers. First, the self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan and Deci, 2017) clearly states that institutional discrimination is likely to maintain group-based inequalities in society. The theory further highlights that “[...] gendered language used in job advertisements likely serves as a covert institutional practice – one that is very subtle – that ultimately serves to reinforce existing gender inequality [...]” (Gaucher et al., 2011). One of the most influential theories that confirms the existence of gender stereotypes is the social role theory (SRT; Eagly, 1987). The SRT proposes that one core reason why men and women reinforce gender stereotypes is that their social roles are often segregated in accordance with their gender. Men and women perform different social roles that go hand in hand with different skills and social expectations. For instance, women frequently perform caregiver roles for children and elderly people; hence, they are more likely to exhibit traditional female roles (such as nurturers and advocates for personal relationships. In contrast to this, men usually exhibit traditional masculine roles (like leadership skills and assertiveness) as they are more likely to occupy the breadwinner role outside the home (Vogel et al., 2003). As women and men possess such traditional gender roles (e.g., women as housewives, men as breadwinners), later they will be more likely to enter those occupational fields which are associated with those traditional gender roles, respectively (e.g., women as nurses, men as firefighters) (Gaucher et al., 2011).

4.3 Pre-socialisation in career

One's thoughts and beliefs about organisations are not completely newly formed when being hired. In fact, empirical research has demonstrated that an individual's prior experiences with an organisation influence their work attitudes and behaviour as a newcomer (cf. Fisher, 1986; Jones, 1986). "(...) pre-entry experiences during the recruitment and selection process are considered to be part of the anticipatory socialisation phase" (Riordan et al., 2001, p. 159). Moreover, an anticipatory socialisation phase begins to be activated when the candidate enters the recruitment process and starts to adopt new roles and attitudes that will be occupied as an employee (Riordan et al., 2001). Pre-entry socialisation is viewed as the antecedent of entry socialisation, which has been the centre of numerous studies: the dilemma posits whether the previous attitudes may be displaced by new attitudes formed at the workplace (van Maanen and Schein, 1977). For over six months, Riordan et al. (2001) examined 162 newcomers to a banking institution. The researchers hypothesised that pre-entry socialisation is positively correlated with organisational self-esteem and post-entry person-job fit. The research provides three important results: (1) the findings significantly supported that when individuals had a strong P-J fit in the pre-entry phase, they were more like to produce a similarly strong P-J fit in the post-entry phase; (2) organizational investiture tactics – like providing role models, helping with career path – was highly present in the pre-phase, newcomers showed greater work attitudes and self-worth; (3) in case employees received a group training instead of individual mentorship, there was a higher chance to turnover. The first finding of Riordan et al.'s (2001) research strengthens the fact that previously developed attitudes during the pre-socialisation phase may influence a newly entering candidate's attitude later during the hiring phase.

The impact of school is also a strongly influential factor in the chosen career path of male and female students. According to Weidman's (1989) undergraduate socialisation model, the collegiate experience is a complex socialisation-based system, which presupposes the presence of several conscious and unconscious variables during the pre-entry phase. The scope of the model was to depict "undergraduate socialisation outcomes as a process that begins when the student, who possesses certain aptitudes and aspirations, enters a postsecondary institution" (Camp et al., 2009, p. 64). The specificity of the model is that it builds on a bi-directional causal mechanism, focusing primarily on four socialisation outcomes, namely career choices, values, aspirations, and lifestyle preferences. These

outcomes are influenced by three main socialisation blocks, each including different variables: (1) parental socialisation (socioeconomic status, parent-child relationship, lifestyle), (2) non-collegiate reference groups (peers, employers, community organisations), and (3) student background characteristics (aptitude, career preference, values, aspirations). According to Weidman's model (1989), college directly affects the cognitive and affective lives of the students during their active enrollment (Komarovsky, 1985). Usually, college students need to actively make choices about the activities they aim to carry out after the completion of college, and also the desired goals they intend to pursue after graduation. This externally pressured decision-making process is called anticipatory socialisation. Merton (1968) describes this process as "the acquisition of values and orientations found in statuses and groups in which one is not yet engaged but which one is likely to enter" (pp. 438–439). The role of this type of socialisation is to prepare individuals for possible future positions, although much of this preparatory process is implicit and unwitting (Merton, 1968).

Based on Weidman's undergraduate socialisation model (1989), Camp et al. (2009) studied young women's career choice of entering the field of science or engineering (SE). The authors concluded that non-collegiate influences and math grades have been strongly supported by the model. According to a generally accepted stereotypical view, women tend to work with "people" (e.g., healthcare, education), and men with "things" (e.g., engineering, informatics), which has long sustained horizontal gender segregation and unequal workforce distribution in the labour market (Tellhed et al., 2018). Such inequalities create various societal problems, like "contributing to the preservation of the gender salary gap and the coexistence of unemployment with labour shortages in gender skewed sectors" (Bureau of Labour Statistics, 2015 in Tellhed et al., 2018). In order to gain deeper knowledge of male and female career choices, the motives of such choices shall be uncovered and better understood. The social cognitive career theory explains that in some cases, career-related interests are overruled by actual career-related choices (Lent and Brown, 2006). Although some careers have undergone slight changes from being male-dominated to being rather gender balanced (for instance, in the fields of Business and Medicine), sharp differences can still be observed between communal and agentic career paths (Skolverket, 2016).

Another influential aspect of early career choice has been offered by the vocational anticipatory socialisation framework. "Vocational anticipatory socialisation (VAS) is the

communicative process by which individuals intentionally and unintentionally receive socialising occupational messages from their environment that affect their career expectations” (Jablin, 2001 in Powers and Mayers, 2017, p. 409). When children start learning more about the world of work and start making career choices step by step, VAS starts to play a key role in shaping their perception and attitude towards work choices. Powers and Mayers (2017) surveyed 873 university students, which highlighted that, following teachers/professors, fathers and friends, mothers were the most influential and encouraging VAS sources. Friends were the most discouraging sources, while teachers and professors were the most influential VAS source for career advice and good practices.

4.4 Job choice of young career entrants

In the lives of young career entrants, the influence of career choice may serve as a predictor of the nature of work, social status, their prospective level of income, and even their personality. “Individuals who are misfits in their workplace tend to be less productive and efficient and therefore are unable to achieve their goals” (Kazi and Akhlaq, 2017, p. 187). Therefore, being able to find and pursue the most fitting job at the start of an early career is viewed as an outstanding matter for young job seekers.

Within human resource management, career management is also a key determinant in a young job seeker’s life (typically between the ages of 18 and 25), referring to the strategic planning as well as building of a professional life on an individual level (Mohácsi and Fényes, 2020). Job choice is not a straightforward and simple task; in fact, numerous factors are intricately intertwined: academic achievement, skills, talents, the individual’s environment, and the primary social institutions all impact career choice (Bandura et al., 2001; Kazi and Akhlaq, 2017).

Perspectives on career preferences and choices may be culture-specific. In their large-scale study on the prospects and self-reflection of Hungarian youth, Pillók and Székely (2023) identified ten fundamental issues: (1) unpredictable future, uncertainty, (2) financial instability, poverty, (3) lack of purpose, (4) lack of friendships and communities, (5) the use of drugs and alcohol, (6) the labour market situation of young Hungarians, (7) crime, (8) housing, (9) challenges of starting a family, (10) emigrating abroad. Based on this report, it can be argued that the examined youth between the ages of 19 and 29 are more likely to experience challenges related to financial stability, career opportunities, sense of belonging, and the feeling of safety within a community. As opposed to

Generation X (people born between 1965–1980), a general tendency can be observed in the case of Generation Z, which is more prone to the realisation of a stable professional career first, and later to family planning (Fedor and Balogh, 2016). Therefore, it can be hypothesised that younger people between the ages of 19 and 29 are likely to invest a considerable amount of effort into establishing and prioritising their work values, rather than family values.

Work values can be defined as “evaluative standards relating to work or the work environment, which can include individual preferences as well as moral standards and social norms” (Dose, 1997 in Stiglbauer, 2022, p. 2). When seeking purpose in work as well as the desire towards certain jobs, particular values are considered more important than others (Sagiv, 2002). Work values are usually assessed based on the categorisation introduced by Dawis (1991) and Cable and Edward (2004): pay, promotions, supervision, coworkers, work itself, altruism, status, and environment. The key question is which of these values are most important for individuals, and whether there are gender-specific differences in favouring different work values. In their studies, Waterwall et al. (2023) consider the effects of gender on assessed work values. The authors highlight that male and female applicants tend to value certain job characteristics differently. Specifically, male applicants are more likely to place greater value on extrinsic job characteristics (e.g., motivated by rewards), whereas female applicants are more likely to favour intrinsic job characteristics (e.g., motivated by personal desires) (cf. Guillot-Soulez and Soulez, 2014; Karriker et al., 2021; Parry and Urwin, 2011).

4.5 Person-environment fit at work

People are willing to invest a substantial amount of time in searching for suitable jobs that fulfil both their personal and professional needs, match their qualifications, meet their set of values, and eventually offer a stable career opportunity. Similarly, organisations exert a significant amount of effort in searching for and selecting applicants who adequately fit a particular job, taking into consideration the organisational environment in which they will settle. This compatibility between the individual and the environment is called person-environment (P-E) fit (van Vianen, 2018).

In general, fit theories suggest that it is the innate need of an individual to fit into an organisational environment (Englert et al., 2024; van Vianen, 2018). In the democratic world we live in, people have the freedom to choose their working environment, in which

they spend most of their days each week. By doing so, people tend to ask themselves whether the chosen environment perfectly fits their social, personal, and professional values. For instance, when economic or hierarchical changes come into being, that may generate a decrease in P-E fit at work (Vogel et al., 2016).

Literature on organisational psychology defines fit as “the degree to which individual and organisational attributes are compatible” (van Vianen, 2018, p. 77). Based on this, fit may take two forms. When environmental and individual attributes are similar, it is called supplementary fit. Whereas when the organisational environment (e.g., co-workers, team members) complements individual attributes, it is called complementary fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). However, when the person-environment fit is weak, the relationship is best described as a ‘misfit’, which points to dissatisfaction, burnout, or increased turnover of the employee within the given environment (Neumann and Giauque, 2025). In other words, when considering a work environment, we speak of misfit if there is a low similarity between the individual and the organisation, which may result in deciding not to select the candidate (Follmer et al., 2018). PE misfit also plays a key role in job choice, as it can be an even more powerful predictor of a job seeker’s job choice than fit. The study by Neumann (2016) concluded that in a job application situation, people are much more likely to focus on what they do not like (misfit) in a job advertisement than what they like (fit). Neumann and Giauque (2025) emphasise that available experience is also an influencing factor in job choice and career paths. The reference point of a freshly graduated university student can only be an imaginary ideal job, given the fact that he or she has no solid work experience. Therefore, such inexperienced job seekers gain their first knowledge from peers and family, browse through job advertisements, and participate in their very first job interview. Whereas a senior employee with over 20 years of experience has a clear vision of the labour market opportunities and economic systems.

4.5.1 Complementary and supplementary fit theories

The most dominant complementary fit theories are considered the theory of work adjustment (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984), the model of vocational personality types (Holland, 1985), and fit models of stress (Edwards and Cooper, 1990). In terms of the direction of the dissertation, the theory of work adjustment will be discussed in more detail.

The theory of work adjustment (TWA), introduced by Dawis and Lofquist (1984), focuses on the fit between a person and their job. The TWA asserts that it is organisational and individual adjustments that result in job satisfaction, and, if so, they intend to form correspondence between environmental and individual attributes (van Vianen, 2018). Only when these two attributes are commensurate, meaning that they belong to a similar conceptual domain and are related to one another, can a person-job fit be established (Longua et al. 2009). For example, when a discrepancy occurs between job characteristics and an individual, stress and burnout are viewed as typical and prominent outcomes of work (Cooper et al. 2001). Discrimination and frustration are another example that illustrates a possible negative consequence the individual may experience in an organisational environment.

Supplementary fit theories are primarily rooted in social psychology as they represent approaches to cognitive theories and human behaviour (Tooby and Cosmides, 1989; Hogg and Terry, 2000). The two theories hypothesise that individuals have a strong tendency to evaluate their similarities with others. The study of Krupp et al. (2008) concluded that “people are hardwired to establish a fit with social environments” (van Vianen, 2018, p. 79) and that these similarity assessments are automatic processes. When an individual shares very similar values and views with a partner, based on this established reciprocated relationship, are they likely to collaborate in the long-term (Lusk et al., 1998)? Because we organise our relationships into social categories, the similarity attraction hypothesis supports the notion that people tend to value more similarity than dissimilarity in their partners (Yu, 2013).

Contemporary behavioural psychologists (cf. Endler and Magnusson, 1976; Pervin and Lewis, 1978) agree on the statement that the person and the situation are inseparable. More specifically, Bowers (1973) argued that “persons are inseparable from environments because environments only exist through the people behaving in them knowing them” (Schneider, 1987, p. 439). Based on this thought, one of the main theories rooted in the field of organisational psychology is the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) model (Schneider et al., 1998). Schneider proposes that settings are not randomly assigned to people, but rather it is people who are attracted to and selected by a setting that will eventually determine the setting – this is what we call Schneider’s Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) model. “Different kinds of organisations attract, select, and retain different kinds of people, and it is the outcome of the ASA cycle that determines

why organisations look and feel different from each other” (Schneider, 1987, p. 440). The model consists of three phases:

1. **Attraction:** Holland (1985) proposed that each person is differently attracted to and selected for a certain job position within an organisation. Their selection is based on their personality and their own interests. Nevertheless, similar people will attract similar people; therefore, it logically follows that the attracted people will determine the organisation itself.
2. **Selection:** The most important part of the cycle. Naturally, organisations existing with particular kinds of technologies and environments will need people with matching kinds of competencies. Through the hiring and recruitment process, organisations might limit, to some extent, the competencies of the applicants needed for organisational effectiveness.
3. **Attrition:** It is the opposite of attraction. People who are not similar to others, make errors, or are simply not attracted to the place leave the place. Such action will result in making the remaining people a homogeneous group and making them even more similar.

Once the individual is selected, they earn the role of an employee, which brings further attitude-related functions in their work life. Similar to the attitude- behaviour–subjective norm–perceived behavioural control, a three-dimensional complementary construct of intention formation (based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen 1991, 2006; further explained in section 5.5), individuals form job attitudes as well. Job attitudes refer to the “evaluations of one’s job that express one’s feelings toward, beliefs about, and attachment to one’s job” (Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012, p. 344). Based on previous research in organisational psychology (Harrison et al., 2006; Tett and Meyer, 1993), three distinct, yet complementary job attitudes can be identified:

1. **Job satisfaction:** the affective and cognitive evaluation of the employee’s job experiences (Locke, 1976);
2. **Organisational commitment:** the extent to which an employee creates a strong emotional bond with their organisation, built on the feeling of loyalty (Allan and Meyer, 1990);
3. **Turnover intentions:** the employee’s thoughts on quitting their job and seeking another one (Adams and Beehr, 1998)

These job attitudes play a crucial role in the overall organisational behaviour and job satisfaction of an employee. This has also been demonstrated by Kühner et al. (2024), who studied the relationship between perceived environmental P-E fit and job attitudes. The findings suggest that employees with environmental values that align with the organisation's requirements are more likely to perform their jobs more effectively, which may also lead to a greater organisational commitment. Therefore, a strong P-E fit in the workplace has the potential to shape a more stable and favourable job attitude.

4.7 Organisational asymmetry and tokenism

As far as organisational history is concerned, organisations were never gender-blind (Nagy, 1997). For example, in England at the end of the 1950's, the 'marriage bar' was still practised by forcing women to withdraw from the workforce after marriage. Starting with this period, women have been selected for traditionally feminine occupations (e.g., administration), while men have been chosen for careers (e.g., top management) (Crompton, 1989).

In the field of organisational communication, Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977) was the first to explore the influence of organisational aspects on gender-based opportunities. By examining economic institutions, he noticed that the top management of a company was exclusively led by men, yet women were fulfilling only a symbolic leadership role, which consequently meant little authority. Kanter named these symbolic roles *tokenism*. A token belongs to a group or entity in which they represent the minority – in this case, women are the tokens (Kanter, 1977). One of the main characteristics of tokenism is that its group members (e.g., women) are under the dominance of the majority (e.g., men). Important to mention that, besides gender, tokenism can also refer to ethnicity, race, or any other cultural aspect (Nagy, 1997).

Nagy (2024) further emphasises that the attitude and structure of an organisation have a considerably high impact on the segmentation of gender. Meaning that if positions are already segmented by gender even before entering an organisation, then those limitations will determine further opportunities for advancement for men and women and, nevertheless, will implicitly configure certain "male" and "female" job areas. When men and women apply for an office job that lacks specific clarification of the position of interest, women are more likely to receive an assistant or a typing job, while men may be interviewed for a management or leadership position (Alksnis et al., 2008; Bell, 2012).

Although organisations might believe that some of the job positions are “crafted” for men and women, social predispositions are worth noticing. For example, the “asymmetry hypothesis states that women are more likely to cross gender boundaries than men – women enter more ‘male-dominated’ areas of life, while men hardly move into ‘female-dominated’ statuses” (van de Werhost, 2017 in Pološki Vokić et al., 2019, p. 13). With other words, women tend to adopt stereotypically masculine roles and hence, enter ‘male-dominated’ areas (e.g., STEM), yet it is unlikely for men to take up positions in a ‘female-dominated’ domain (e.g., housework, childcare), therefore, an inclination can be observed in the reciprocated adoption of male-female roles at workplace, which substantially effects the structure, the functioning, and the recruitment process of an organization.

What are some of the underlying psychological mechanisms an individual develops when he or she prefers a particular position? What meanings, values, and professional factors shape the interpretation of the perceived signals before men and women form the intention to submit a job application? The following chapter examines these questions in detail.

5. Behavioural intention in career orientation: attitude and intention formation

Attitude formation and intention-building are indirectly accessible, non-conscious processes shaped by a wide range of influencing factors. Given that the central focus of the research concerns men’s and women’s intention formation and work-related preferences, it is essential to examine these psychological mechanisms in greater depth. Accordingly, this chapter addresses the definitions of behavioural intention and attitude, outlines the theoretical and methodological approaches to non-explicit cognition, and provides a detailed discussion of one of the dissertation’s core theoretical pillars: Ajzen’s (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour.

Every individual has a certain evaluation of his or her surroundings; therefore, evaluation becomes a fundamental reaction to any psychologically important object (Osgood et al., 1957). We enjoy certain events, or we are bored with them; we like particular groups of people, or we dislike them; we favour specific brands or unfavour them. Attitude refers to these evaluative dispositions that can be favourable or unfavourable for the individual (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). By definition, “an attitude is a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event” (Ajzen, 2005, p. 3). Although numerous definitions exist that aim to explain attitude, social psychologists

agree on the fact that the characteristic attribute of attitude is its so-called evaluative nature, for instance, good-bad, pleasant-unpleasant, advantageous-disadvantageous.

Explanations of attitude change have deep roots in social psychology and have been a central focus of human behaviour (Ajzen, 2005; Petty et al., 1997). It is generally accepted that most social attitudes are not innate but acquired. Similar to a personality trait, attitude is not directly accessible, but inferred from measurable, verbal, or nonverbal responses to psychological objects (Maio and Haddock, 2007; Payne and Gawronski, 2010; Petty et al., 1997).

5.1 Response systems of attitude

The most popular classification of response systems goes as far back in time as Plato, but according to Ajzen's (2005) classical categorisation, three responses can be distinguished toward an attitude object: cognition, affect, and conation (Allport, 1954; McGuire, 1969).

In this category, there are those responses that contain thoughts and perceptions about an attitude object. Consider some of the reactions we may use to infer attitudes toward the profession of police officers. Cognitive responses (in a verbal nature) are beliefs that link police officers with certain attributes. A negative attitude may involve believing that police officers are rude and highly strict, walk around the city all day long, earn a higher salary than the average, or that they seek those situations in which they may give people a fine. Whereas if we think about this profession as individuals who acquired an academic profession to serve their country, to help civilians feel safe and keep public order within a city, a favourable attitude will be implied by the positive belief system we cognitively attach to police officers.

The second category involves feelings and evaluations with respect to the attitude object. Similarly, if a person experiences fear or anger towards police officers, it indicates a negative affective response; on the other hand, the feeling of safety and trustworthiness or even the admiration of police officers' marks, indicates that the individual holds a positive attitude towards the respective profession.

The conative category refers to the intentions, commitments, and actions toward the attitude object. Thus, this type of response considers what people might do, say, or plan to do under particular circumstances. The conative nature of response in the case of the profession of police would involve how upset people would be if a police officer stopped them on the road, or whether they would encourage their children to choose this career

path. Such a response would be an unfavourable attitude toward the situation. However, when holding a positive attitude, one would pay special attention to the law enforcement codes of road traffic, would encourage their children to choose policing as a profession, or would keep their reading updated about policing.

In sum, the cognitive, affective, and conative response systems indicate an individual's favourable or unfavourable attitude towards an object, event, or institution. Such responses can be cognitive, referring to the beliefs about an object's characteristics; they can be of an affective nature, containing the individual's feelings toward the object; and they can be conative, referring to the individual's likely actions and commitments with respect to the object.

The first step to understanding the mechanism of attitude is to comprehend the belief system that forms positive or negative attitudes towards an object. Since social attitudes are not innate but acquired through a lifetime (Ajzen 2005; Ajzen and Cote, 2010), an individual is not naturally born with negative attitudes toward certain political figures or positive attitudes toward art. The myriad economic, social, cultural, religious, and political attitudes between culturally divided people are based on the evaluative dispositions that are shaped by differing experiences and social backgrounds (McGuire, 1969; Verplanken and Orbell, 2022). Thus, because of the differently perceived recurring social perceptions, we may tend to believe that the life of celebrities is full of glamour and success, that television is only broadcasting excessive violence and crime, that men are more capable than women of holding leadership positions, and numerous other things. Such beliefs can be formed in two ways: through direct observation that is self-generated by inference processes, or can be indirectly formed through books, media, peers, and so on (Ajzen and Cote, 2010).

Although beliefs often fail to convey true and accurate information about the outside world, "[...] beliefs represent the information we have about the world in which we live in, and they form the cognitive foundation for many of our responses to aspects of that world" (Ajzen and Cote, 2010, p. 290). The most well-known model that strengthens the proposition that beliefs form the foundation of our attitude is the expectancy-value (EV) model, which was first introduced in Fishbein's (1963, 1967) summation theory of attitude. Based on the EV model, beliefs are formed about an object by associating it with certain attributes, namely with other objects, events, or characteristics. For instance,

seeing the numerous portraits of male leaders on the walls of academic institutions, one may conclude that the management of that institution is less likely to favour female leaders, and in fact, may even hierarchically segregate them and exclude women from important organisational decisions. The associated characteristics are what we refer to as readily accessible beliefs, which produce a positive attitude if we already have a positive evaluation of the object; however, the attitude becomes negative if the valued object was not desired from the outset (Ajzen and Cote, 2010; Ajzen and Dasgupta, 2015).

Another significant perspective on attitude content is the three-component model (Zanna and Rempel, 1988). According to the model, “[...] attitudes express people’s feelings, beliefs, and past behaviours regarding the attitude object” (Zanna and Rempel, 1988 in Maio and Haddock, 2007, p. 566). Let’s imagine that you sat through an academic course on cybersecurity and data protection, yet you utterly disliked it. You think that the teaching style was boring and served no novelty in knowledge (affective component), and the lecturer was quite unfriendly and rigid (cognitive component). However, despite the negative cognitive and affective reactions, you sat through the lectures every week (behavioural component). The model predicts that behaviour is also a very important component in attitude formation towards these classes, as it is hard to imagine someone completely disliking a course and still participating in it week by week (Verplanken and Orbell, 2022).

The above-outlined example draws attention to a special feature of attitudes: not all attitude components need to express the very same sentiment toward the object of the attitude. In these situations, conflicting reactions occur, which is called “intercomponent ambivalence” (Maio et al., 2000). Because of these information-processing biases, it could be argued that attitude should be examined less as an all-encompassing entity and instead, being able to focus on the components separately has the advantage of simplicity and precision. According to this view, people tend to show both positive and negative sentiments and may combine the beliefs to eventually form an attitude (McGuire, 1960; Wyer, 1970). This perspective is central to the theory of reasoned action (later extended and renamed the theory of planned behaviour) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980), which is one of the main foundations of the dissertation’s methodological background.

5.2 The theoretical and methodological foundations of implicit social cognition

Attitude research began in the early 20th century (cf. Allport, 1935; Thurstone, 1928) and continues to be a central research domain in today's social psychology (Banaji and Heiphetz, 2010). More specifically, research on the implicitness of attitudes and evaluations has gained more attention in the last two decades and has been closely studied in psychological fields such as personality, behaviour, and intergroup relations (Petty et al., 2008). "Implicit attitude measures are classically viewed as measurement devices that reveal unconscious attitudes and assess evaluations elicited through automatic processes" (Corneille and Hütter, 2020, p. 214). Implicit attitude is viewed as an associative process, as it requires little cognitive capacity and awareness, but is nevertheless based on spontaneous, simple reactions. Whereas during explicit attitude judgment – where people are asked directly - they tend to engage in a more conscious, effortful inferential process, which enables them to consider all propositions that they feel relevant for the judgment (Blair et al., 2015).

In social psychology, the automatic activation of attitudes is referred to as *implicit social cognition* or *unconscious bias* (interchangeably used as synonyms) (Wong and Vinsky, 2021), which is conventionally used to "infer thoughts and affective reactions without directly asking participants to report on them" (Hahn and Gawronski, 2017, p. 395). As mentioned before in the previous subchapters, attitude is usually preferred to be measured by indirect observation because, by doing so, this type of technique enables individuals to retrieve information that is not consciously coded in memory (Ajzen, 2005).

According to Greenwald (2002), implicit social cognition is commonly conceptualised as mental associations that are expressed in semantic and evaluative associations (Hahn and Gawronski, 2017). The seminal work of Payne and Gawronski (2010) collected and synthesised studies that focused on both the theoretical and methodological definitions of implicit social cognition. The authors concluded that in every reviewed topic, "implicit social cognition is concerned with automatic/implicit/unconscious processes underlying judgments and social behaviour" (Payne and Gawronski, 2010, p. 1). For example, when we construct an attitude, a mental representation is formed between an attitude object (e.g., fruits) and a positive/negative evaluation (e.g., healthy). "Stereotyping and prejudice are difficult to measure because people are often unwilling to admit negative attitudes and beliefs about social groups" (Fazio et al., 1995 in Sekaquaptewa et al., 2003,

p. 75). In the case of stereotype formation, a mental representation comes into being between a social group and a semantic evaluation (e.g., *men* and *competent*). When we evaluate an object, automatic processing helps us to activate social attitudes towards the given object. Automatic processing is characterised as being unlimited in capacity and requiring little attention (Fazio et al., 1986).

The debate about the use of implicit measuring instruments sparked two prominent lines of research (Greenwald and Lai, 2020). The first line of research was concerned with overcoming self-report techniques that lacked the automatic activation of attitudes. Importantly, the researchers aimed to emphasise that when individuals do not aim to evaluate an attitude object, attitudes can, in fact, be activated and can influence evaluative responses. Thus, this line of work outlined the important distinction between implicit–explicit measuring instruments: while explicit measurements allow access to strategic thinking, implicit measures are viewed as instruments that limit strategic thinking (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995; Hahn and Gawronski, 2017).

Inspired by the untrustworthiness of self-reports, the main assumption of the second line of research is that even if individuals are unable to verbally report their thoughts, prior experiences will influence their responses. Hence, in this line of work, the explicit–implicit differentiation represents the conscious–unconscious mental contents. More specifically, in the case of self-reports, explicit attitude is regarded as a conscious response system, while novel computerised instruments conceptualise implicit, unconscious attitudes and are even named as inner attitudes (Chaiken and Bargh, 1993; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995; Hahn and Gawronski, 2017).

One of the most popular implicit measurement techniques is the Implicit Association Test (IAT) developed by Greenwald et al. (1998). The procedure aims to identify the existing strength of association between an attribute dimension and a target concept (Fazio and Olson, 2003; Mitchell and Tetlock, 2015). In this test, “[...] participants are asked to complete two binary categorisation tasks that are combined in a manner that is either congruent or incongruent with the content of the to-be-measured attribute” (Hahn and Gawronski, 2017, p. 398). One of the most common IATs is to categorise pictures of male and female faces with positive or negative words. In a prejudice-congruent block, participants need to press a response key for male faces and a negative word, and another key for female faces and a positive word. In the prejudice-incongruent block, participants

are asked to do the reversed key assignment with the two genders. The underlying idea of the Implicit Association Test is to facilitate responses when participants are exposed to two mentally associated concepts displayed to the same response key. Thus, if someone holds a more positive attitude towards a female face and a positive word compared to a male face and a negative word, the participant will show a faster and more accurate response in the IAT (Mitchell and Tetlock, 2015).

In their research, Sargent and Newman (2021) asked civilians ($N=829$) to complete an IAT based on implicit attitudes towards police officers and civilians and positive/negative words. The results yielded a stronger association between police and fear-related words (e.g., panic, fear) compared to safety-related words (e.g., good, comfort). The IAT measurement of Greenwald et al. (1998) looked at the implicit association between gender and career/family stereotypes. The study concluded that participants showed a stronger association between men and a career and women and a family.

5.3 The theory of planned behaviour (TPB)

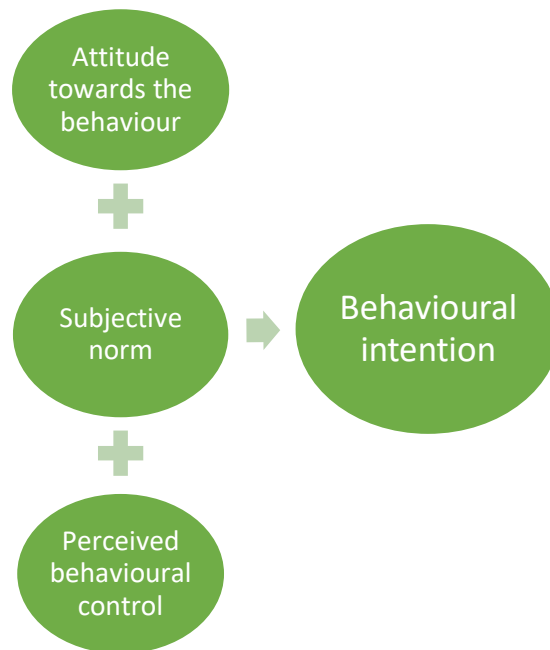
For decades, one of the central concerns of social psychological studies was to identify what are the mechanisms that link intention and motivated action (Green, 1995; Hagger and Hamilton, 2024). In other words, what drives a person to produce favourable attitudes that will eventually lead to the intention to perform a desired action? Generally, social cognition theories commonly assume that individuals are rational and reasoned decision-makers who base their intention to perform future behaviours on available information and prior knowledge represented in their beliefs (Conner and Norman, 2015). One of the most prominent social cognition theories is the theory of planned behaviour introduced by Ajzen Icek (1991). According to the theory, “the immediate determinant of human behaviour is behavioural intention” (Manstead and Parker, 1995: 70) and, nevertheless, identifies intention “as the most proximal correlate of motivated action” (Hagger and Hamilton, 2024: 199).

According to Ajzen’s theory of planned behaviour (TPB; 2006), three main considerations guide human behaviour:

1. **Behavioural beliefs:** beliefs that are the likely experiences and consequences associated with the behaviour.
2. **Normative beliefs:** beliefs about the normative expectations and likely behaviours significant others pose towards us.

3. **Control beliefs:** beliefs about the factors that may detain or facilitate the behaviour.

Figure 2. The theory of planned behaviour, based on Ajzen (1991) (*own construct*)



Ajzen (2006) proposes that, based on the three considerations, behavioural beliefs produce unfavourable or favourable *attitudes towards the behaviour*; normative beliefs constitute the *subjective norm* (perceived social pressure); and control beliefs give rise to *perceived behavioural control* (also called self-efficacy) (see Figure 2). Altogether, the three components, namely the attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, and perception of behavioural control, result in the formation of a behavioural intention. “As a general rule, the more favourable the attitude and subjective norm, and the greater the perceived control, the stronger should be the person’s intention to perform the behaviour in question” (Ajzen, 2006, p. 1).

Aczél (2005) asserts that Ajzen’s theory of planned behaviour determines the way we think about a voluntary, reasoned action in which persuasion signifies a crucial function. The method was originally advocated by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) as the theory of reasoned action, which initially existed without the *perceived behavioural control* element, which was added later to the theory (Ajzen, 1985, 1988). Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) used bipolar semantic differential scales (e.g., pleasant-unpleasant, good-bad, etc.) to sum up the products of each pair; however, the latter added *perceived behavioural control*, which has been directly operationalised by asking respondents about the control

they have over the behaviour of interest or how difficult they feel about performing it (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2000). Studies using the three-component model in this manner have proven to be useful in behavioural domains such as infant feeding (Netemeyer and Burton, 1990), leisure activities (Ajzen and Madden, 1986), and attending an academic class (Beale and Manstead, 1991).

According to Ajzen (2020), to understand and predict behaviour, a researcher's investigation shall rely on empirically validated, comprehensive, well-established theoretical frameworks. "The TPB, in particular, stood out as an effective framework for guiding the design of a behaviour-change intervention" (Ajzen, 2020, p. 323). Its three core factors – attitude toward the behaviour, social norm, perceived behavioural control – stand as the predictors of intention formation and suggest that the stronger the intention we form, the more likely it is for us to perform a behaviour (Ajzen, 1991; Dawkins and Frass, 2005). The TPB framework has been widely used in health-related behaviours (e.g., McEachan et al., 2011), technology adoption intentions (e.g., Riebl et al., 2015), and proenvironmental behaviours (e.g., Armittage and Conner, 1999). The theory is commonly adopted in the examination of career choice intentions and organisational attitudes as well. For instance, Ahmad and colleagues (2023) demonstrated that organisational culture shapes employees' intentions to support change primarily through the psychological mechanisms specified by the TPB. Within this framework, attitudes toward change, social norms, and perceived behavioural control function as mediators that translate cultural characteristics into behavioural intentions.

By focusing on bachelor's degree students ($N=823$) from four European countries, Gorgievski and colleagues (2018) used an online questionnaire to measure the three components of intention formation. Their study concluded that high evaluations of openness and self-enhancement are more likely to predict entrepreneurship career choices of young job creators. The study also highlighted that an entrepreneur's career intention showed the strongest relationship with attitude toward the behaviour. Similarly, Moore and Burrus (2019) aimed to predict STEM major and career intention of college students ($N=1,958$) within the framework of the theory of planned behaviour; special attention was paid to the possible differences between male and female intentions. The authors hypothesise that high school students' choice to pursue a major in STEM fields predicts a career in STEM fields too. One major difference between male and female students was observable in attitude and interests: attitudes and technical interests (at a more specific

level, mathematical interests) predicted a stronger intention for STEM career choice for females than males. In general, interest in STEM is a stronger predictor for female students' STEM-related career choices in contrast to male participants.

5.4 Persuasion as the predictor of attitude change

Persuasion is a fundamental process that can influence various social interactions of individuals. In politics, in economy, and in mass communication, people intend to change the thoughts and behaviours of others; therefore, persuasion attempts to change others' attitudes, which may result in behavioural change (Gardikiotis and Crano, 2015). In order to achieve attitude change and thus intention expressed towards an activity, persuasion researchers claim that first a persuasive process needs to take place that engages the individual to start desire change (Maio and Haddock, 2007). „(...) persuasive messages influence evaluative beliefs and that these beliefs influence attitudes when people are motivated and able to process persuasive messages systematically” (Chaiken et al., 1989; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986 in Maio and Haddock, 2007). Therefore, all the persuasive stimuli the individual decodes will be of prominent importance in the pre-phase of attitude change.

Persuasion does not rest only on sociopsychological virtues anymore, but on logical argumentation and pragmatic thinking as well. Originally, rhetoric, the art of persuasion, rests on the triangle of the Aristotelian ethos – logos – pathos (Adamik et al., 2005). In a rhetorical situation, ethos refers to the rhetor himself, the credibility and charisma of the speaker. Whether the audience is able to trust and respect the speaker. Second, logos is the power of words, the speech itself. The structure, the course of thought, and the logic that connect ethos and pathos. Lastly, pathos is the notion of impact exercised on the audience by the speaker. The way the speaker can trigger emotions with his truthful words (Arisztotelész, 1982).

Similarly, persuasion in a rhetorical situation may be fulfilled through the Aristotelian triadic approach: 1. the knowledge of the perceiver (logos), 2. the influence of their emotions (pathos), and 3. the personality features of the individual (ethos) (Adamik et al., 2004). The approach may help us comprehend persuasion not only from the perceiver's part, but also as a pervasive method that has access to the mind and soul.

An important explanatory part of persuasion is the attitude function, which refers to all the functions and motives that help form a person's attitude towards a psychological

object. This includes how attitudes serve different psychological motivations, such as to be asked for help or the need to express an opinion (Maio and Haddock, 2007). The object-appraisal function proposed by Smith and colleagues (1956) introduced the idea that „all attitudes serve to simplify reasoning and behaviour by providing guides for how to interact with (e.g., approach or avoid) an attitude object” (Majo and Haddock, 2007, p. 568). For example, consider a person whose attitude toward drinking coffee is strong. Since that person exhibits a higher psychological arousal when deciding whether to purchase a cup of coffee or not, they will devote greater attention to objects of more accessible attitudes (Fazio, 2000). On the other hand, when a person has a less positive attitude toward drinking an energy drink, they will have much lower psychological arousal, which will make it hard to decide regarding the attitude object (Fazio et al., 1992).

Another function of attitudes is that they are able to help people experience emotions (Maio and Esses, 2001). Because emotions contribute to basic psychological needs (Damasio, 1994), as a consequence, even when emotions are unpleasant or disturbing (e.g., sad movies or tragedy in a theatre play), people naturally seek emotional experiences. One of the ways in which we may experience these emotions is by expressing strong positive or negative emotions toward, for example, a political phenomenon or ethnic group.

One of the most influential persuasion models in advertising is the so-called AIDA model, which is the composition of the Attention–Interest–Desire–Action initials. The model was developed by Hovland and colleagues (1950) and rests on four main components of persuasion:

- **Attention:** the way the message captures attention through various communication channels, colours, non-verbal cues, visuality, and other symbolic signals.
- **Interest:** the way the perceiver comprehends the argumentative message. Persuasion shall be achieved through, for example, repetition and highlighting of key elements, structured thoughts, and logical argumentation.
- **Desire:** it is expected that the individual will learn the persuasive technique and will consider it truthful.
- **Action:** as the final step of the persuasion, the individual will take action if the previously learnt and comprehended sequence of events was beneficial to them.

The AIDA model has received a great amount of criticism due to the fact that it views people as passive perceivers, instead of actively engaged social participants in the process of persuasion; nevertheless, a persuasive process is less likely to follow such a rigid, automatic mechanism as presented by the model. However, despite the criticism, the model was successful in positioning persuasion as a continual learning process and an indispensable actor in attitude change (Fodor and Kriskó, 2014).

In summary, belief systems, evaluations, and intentions comprise the basis of an individual's attitude towards an object in question. It becomes an incremental aspect of whether a career entrant holds a favourable or unfavourable attitude when discovering the world of work and seeking a fitting job. Therefore, the next chapter outlines the determining steps that influence a job seeker's favourable attitudes in an organisational scenario, emphasising linguistic conceptualisations in job advertising, recruitment strategies, and gender neutrality.

6. The identified research gap

The process of job seeking encompasses much more than submitting a résumé or showing up for an interview. Entering the labour market marks a milestone for job-seeking individuals who have freshly graduated from high school, lack professional experience in the workforce, and have limited literacy in career orientation. They are the primary target of human resources, which aim to attract and retain the best fits for organisations. One way to achieve this is through communication in job advertisements, which allows the advertiser to convey organisational messages to potential applicants, for example, through work values, the positioning of the organisation, or work-related requirements (Walker and Hinojosa, 2013). By doing so, recruiters can signal information, which will be indirectly evaluated by candidates (Kim and Angnakoon, 2016).

The theoretical parts of the dissertation highlight that career communication is a multidisciplinary field, and therefore, the above-presented chapters aimed to encompass all the related fields that contribute to the comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The theoretical chapters connect three ideas: how university students begin forming career expectations before entering the job market, how subtle attitudes and intentions develop during recruitment, and how gender stereotypes can appear in language. Although the Hungarian language is a grammatically gender-neutral language (Vasvári, 2014) – making no explicit reference to either femininity or masculinity – a growing body

of research (e.g., Aluko et al., 2022; Baxter et al., 2022; Carpio and Fujiwara, 2023; Castilla and Rho, 2023; Denier et al., 2022; Hentschel et al., 2020; Lindqvist et al., 2019, Wille and Derous, 2018) has concluded that the descriptive words embedded in job advertisements are capable of eliciting bias indirectly at the lexical level. “To attract the most promising graduates, it is important to know what motivates them to choose a particular position and why” (Chang and Tanford, 2018, p. 215). Applicants’ job application intentions are strongly influenced by job pursuit intentions (JPI), which encompass various organisational recruitment efforts (Ajzen, 1991; Chang and Tanford, 2018). Therefore, assessing the strongest source of a career entrant’s application intention (based on the three components determined by the theory of planned behaviour; Ajzen, 1991) helps uncover how job-seeking university students reflect on gender-related normative messages and how they relate to work in their education-to-work transition phase.

The central question of the dissertation is whether non-disclosed gender-related signal configurations indirectly coded into Hungarian-language job advertisements can influence job choice preference and application intention of young career entrants. Furthermore, whether stereotype-congruent and stereotype-incongruent wording results in increased intention formation toward a job application. The empirical research of the thesis focuses on solving this “puzzle”. Therefore, the aim is to map the work-related perceptions, career orientations, identity-shaping factors, and the principal components of both the explicit and implicit attitudes of young Hungarian university students at the outset of their professional careers. To identify the methodological (e.g., measurement tools) and theoretical (e.g., research framings and definitions of gendered wording) foundations of the research topic, section 6.1 presents a systematic literature review that was conducted as a preliminary study of the dissertation’s main assessment.

6.1 The theoretical and methodological foundations of the research: A systematic literature review

A systematic literature review was chosen to describe, measure, and synthesise this empirical research, focusing on the gender biases transmitted through the descriptive words in job advertising and their effects on male and female perception. The review sought to answer two main research questions:

RQ1. *What qualitative and quantitative methods are implemented in gendered wording measurement?*

RQ2. *What is the theoretical-linguistic evolution of introducing diversity in gendered wording?*

First, this section concentrates on answering RQ1 by presenting the methodology-related findings. To ensure the proper systematic structure of the literature review, I leaned on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) checklist developed by Page et al. (2020). The following steps have been carried out: (1) defining relevant studies in the context of the chosen topic, (2) defining exclusion and inclusion criteria, (3) developing a research strategy, (4) conducting a wide-scale search in two databases, (5) identifying potentially applicable articles after screening, (6) describing and appraising the chosen studies, (7) analysing and synthesizing the findings. These numbered steps are chronologically listed in detail below.

6.1.1 Inclusion criteria

To be included in the review, studies had to meet several criteria. First, articles had to focus on the gender dimension of a job advertisement. For example, the word order of gender-based occupations, gendered wording (the male and/or female linguistic characteristics of the embedded words), gender bias, or verbal cues that we concluded contained gender-related implicit (subtle or unconscious) or explicit (conscious) meanings (these criteria answer the question *What?* as seen in Table 1). Articles examining the visual characteristics of job advertisements, word order without any gender aspects, or other verbal signals lacking a male or female perspective (e.g., subtle linguistic cues in resumes, or age-related cues in CVs) were excluded. Second, the articles included had to be handled in the context of a job advertisement (synonyms like job posting, recruitment posting, or recruitment description were also accepted). The question *How?* focuses on the words and synonyms that were used to find relevant papers. It was crucial to determine how the systematic review intends to approach an article search, because focusing merely on the *Where?* and *What?* questions would not result in exploring the embedded linguistic distortions and implicit biases related to gender dimensions. Finally, to answer the question *Where?* studies that looked at resumes (CVs), recruiter or company descriptions were excluded from the review. The language of the publication had to be English, and articles had to have been published between the years of 2013 and 2023, which enabled the author to access the latest publications on an extensive timeline.

Moreover, only studies that showed valid and reliable findings with specific conclusions were included.

Keywords identified for database research		
What?	How?	Where?
cues	stereotype	job advertisements
verbal cues	prejudice	job ads
signals	discrimination	job postings
gender bias	gender	job descriptions
gendered wording	male	recruitment advertising
word order	female	recruitment posts

Table 1. Keywords identified for database research (*own construct*)

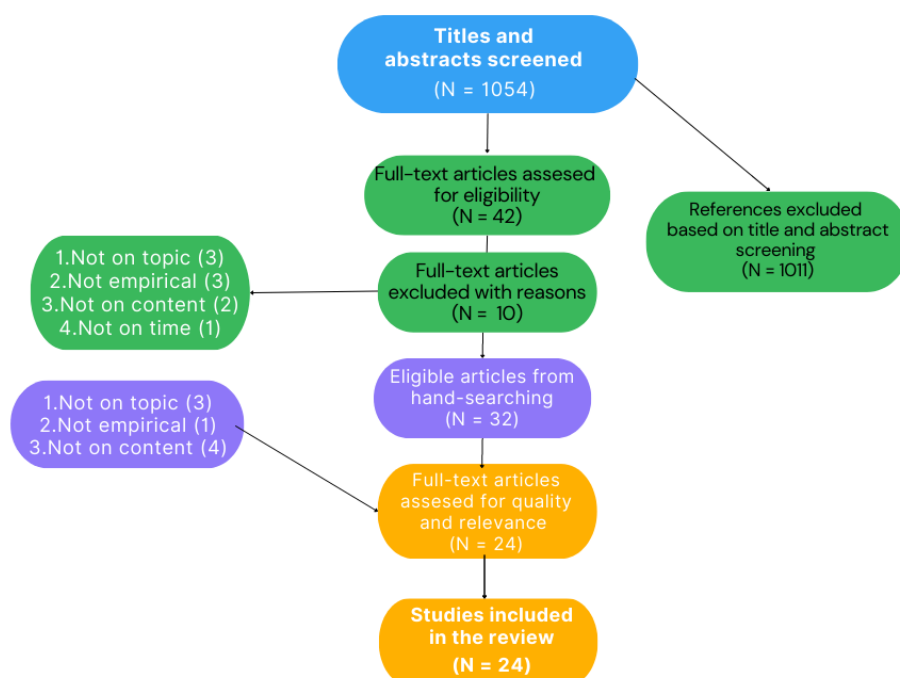
6.1.2 Search strategy and data selection

The screening was conducted manually, and two main scientific databases were used for the article search: Google Scholar and Web of Science (WoS). The author specified the interval between 2013 and 2023 (the end of April), which means that the latest studies of the last decade have been assessed and reviewed. First, a total of 1054 scientific papers were screened (based on title and abstract), followed by the downloading of 42 articles from key scientific journals, including the *Journal of Linguistics and Social Psychology*, *Management Science*, *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, *Management Communication Quarterly*, and *Human Resource Management and Journal of Organizational Behaviour*. The researcher carried out several rounds of searching with keyword combinations. In consequence, the total number of references delivered differed in each round. With each combination, about 100–150 references were found, and, for preselection, the researcher relied on the inclusion-exclusion criteria. The extensive screening of 1054 scientific papers prompted the download of 42 suitable studies, but the full text required a full check applying the exclusion/inclusion criteria, and 18 were excluded after the full-length text had been read if they proved to be ineligible under the defined criteria. Thus, 24 studies were eligible for the review.

Data extraction from the 42 selected studies was conducted using the PRISMA Flow Diagram, which helped in outlining the main steps during the study selection process (Figure 3). The key information that was considered useful from the research purpose point of view was the following: (1) author(s), (2) title of the article, (3) year of

publication, (4) research objectives, (5) methods, and (6) main research findings. The review and analysis of the entire systematic literature review were carried out manually.

Figure 3. PRISMA Flow diagram of study selection for the systematic review (*own construct*)



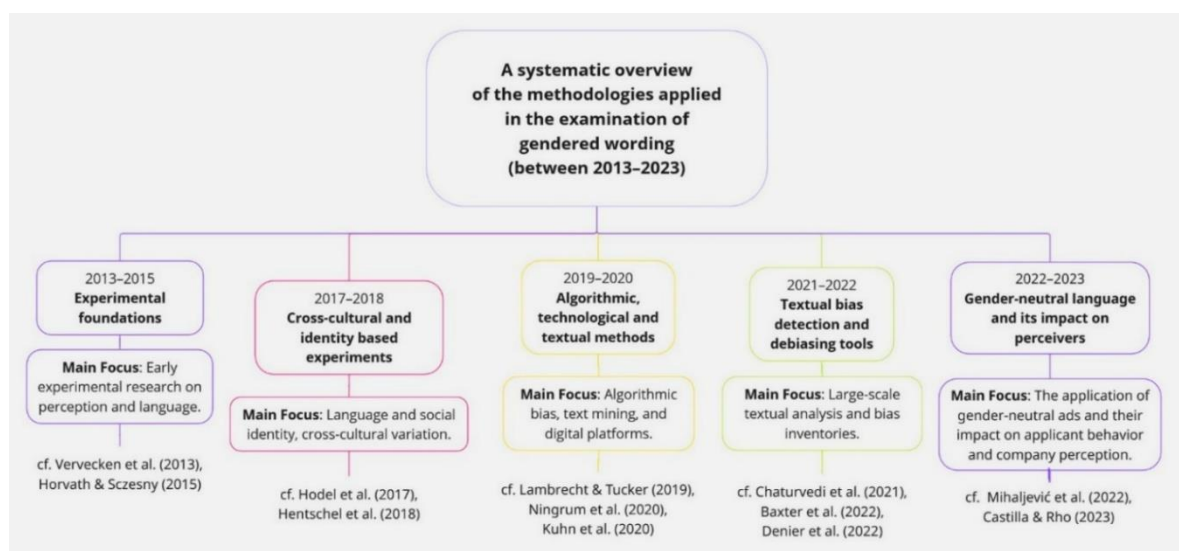
Overall, 1054 articles were scanned (based on title and abstract), which was followed by the download of 24 relevant (and available) papers that met the specified inclusion/exclusion criteria: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods were found in the examined papers.

Figure 4 visually outlines the research methodologies that study male and female linguistic bias in the descriptions of job advertising.⁴ As a matter of fact, job advertisement-related research can be conducted with both qualitative and quantitative methods, however, the measuring of effect and connection between different variables typically falls into a quantitative category, like text mining (Aluko et al., 2022), field test (Carpio and Fujiwara, 2023; Lambrecht and Tucker, 2019), questionnaire-based hiring-simulation (Horvath and Sczesny, 2015), content analysis (Arceo-Gomez et al., 2022; Hodel et al., 2017; Kuhn et al., 2020), or most frequently the implementation of between-

⁴ The table containing all details on the methods, author names and research scopes can be found in Appendix A.

subject experimental designs (Fatfouta, 2021; Lindquist et al., 2019; Mao et al., 2020; Vervecken et al., 2013; Wille and Deros, 2018). For instance, instead of focusing on what attracts women, Mao et al. (2020) examined what discourages female job seekers from applying for a particular position. By using a between-subjects method, the researchers found that men who hold a male breadwinner ideology (i.e., males who hold a dominant identity in the family) have a decreased intention to apply for a job as the number of women in job advertisements increases. Through an experimental study, Fatfouta (2021) looked at the role of narcissism (those who self-enhance communal attributes) and their way of responding to systematic wording differences in job ads. The wording of job advertisements varied across communal (e.g., kind, nurturing) versus agentic (e.g., competitive, goal-oriented) worded descriptions.

Figure 4. Visual summary of the implemented methodologies used in gendered wording research
(own construct)



In the study by Vervecken et al. (2013), three experiments were carried out to see if children's perceptions of stereotypically male jobs can be influenced by the linguistic form used to present an occupational title. Findings indicate that children's associations with female jobholders increased when stereotypically male occupations were presented in a pair form rather than in a generic masculine form. Through two experimental studies, Wille and Deros (2018) investigated whether person requirements about which women have negative meta-stereotypes (like the trait of emotionality) and the way such requirements are formulated in job ads. A conducted ANOVA test showed that if women

held negative meta-stereotypes about the required personality traits in a job ad, they had a lower attraction to it. The experimental study highlights that the implementation of word pairs promotes inclusive association.

Figure 5 stands as evidence that the linguistic conceptualisation of diversity in gendered wording wasn't always unified. The framing of diversity is an evolving phenomenon. It is clear that the authors of the analysed articles aimed at reforming the research methodology of gender bias in language. For example, Denier and her colleagues (2022) are considered pioneering scientists who introduced the most recent BIAS word inventory, which identified gender bias through expert coding in more than three million job ads. They developed female-male-neutral word lists by identifying psychological cues (e.g., "patient" is considered feminine, "confident" masculine, "curious" neutral), role description (e.g., "social skills" categorized as feminine, "negotiating" masculine, "secure work" neutral), work-family characteristics (a job ad intended to attract women is more likely to use words like "part time", if it's for men "international travel", and it is considered neutral if "global opportunities" is used), and social characteristics (e.g., women, lady, she / gentlemen, boy, he/they, their). Conflicting results can be observed, as Denier et al (2022) suggest the use of neutral words, while other researchers follow a different path. As such, Hu and his colleagues (2022) managed to develop an algorithm that evaluates gender bias in job advertisements. For the sake of inclusivity and equality, instead of implementing neutral terms, the authors recommend including both communal (e.g., considerate, kind, patient) and agentic (e.g., active, adventurous, confident). Furthermore, they built on all three existing word inventories that have been found to contain a list of words that signal implicit gender bias.

Choosing the most fitting measurement that will most likely yield the expected results is key. Therefore, it was essential, from the point of view of this systematic review, to explore the methodological background of the articles that met all the selection criteria. Of the reviewed articles, 17 based their research on experimental design, and the remaining 7 applied a job advertisement content analysis (either through text mining or algorithmic analysis). Figure 4 provides a summary of the research purpose as well as the methodology of each reviewed paper. One possible explanation for overshadowing qualitative research would be that a semi-structured interview or a visual semantic analysis could provide neither representativeness nor the generalisation of the results.

Furthermore, qualitative research usually processes soft data (e.g., colours, pictures, emotions, traits), whereas quantitative research is exclusively based on hard data (e.g., numerical correlation between well-defined variables); therefore, refraining from qualitative research and turning to quantitative measurement has proven to be an advantageous and successful way of exploring gendered wording effectiveness exercised on job seekers.

6.2 The research framing of gendered wording (between 2013 and 2023)

This section further presents the methodological considerations and detailed description of the systematic literature review, aiming to answer RQ2: *What is the theoretical-linguistic evolution of introducing diversity in gendered wording?* This part specifically concentrates on the theoretical contributions of the assessed literature and, nevertheless, outlines the chronological evolution of the changing linguistic conceptualisation of referencing gendered language.

Figure 5. Visual summary of the linguistic transformation of gendered wording in job advertising (*own construct*)

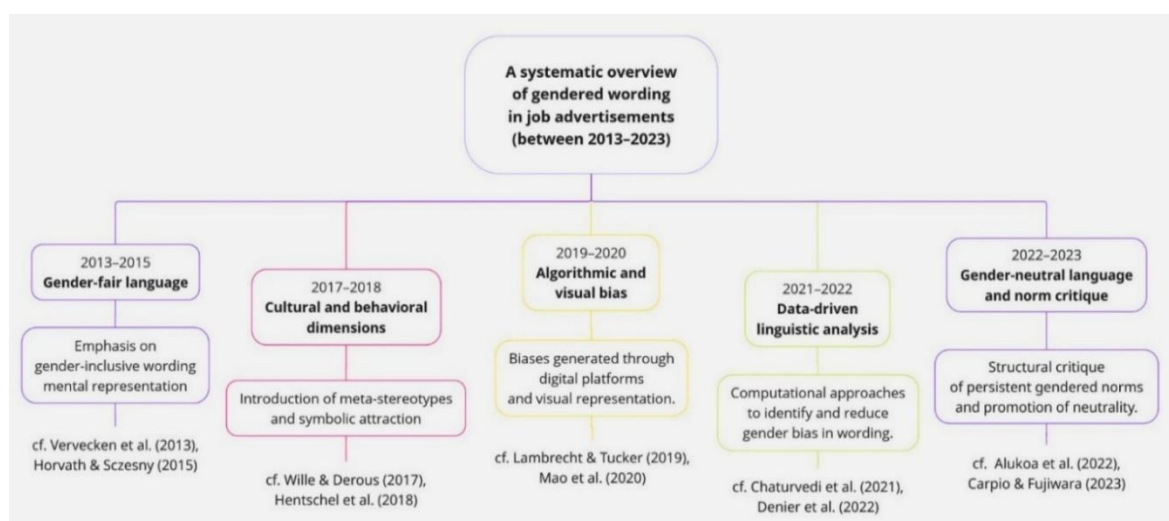


Figure 5⁵ provides a chronological categorisation of the assessed papers; it is worth noticing the timely evolution of the words referring to the way authors frame and define gendered wording in job advertisements. In the observed interval, a significant shift can be noticed: in the beginning, when research started to pay more attention to the effects of gendered wording in job advertising (mainly between 2013 and 2019), an equal

⁵ The extended table containing all details on the definitions, examples, author names and research fields can be found in Appendix A.

designation was used to mark the linguistic form describing gender diversity. The respective authors (Horvath and Czerny, 2015; Hodel et al., 2017; Hentschel et al., 2018; Lindquist et al., 2019; Vervecken et al., 2013) referred to the symmetric and equal reference to both femininity and masculinity in language as *gender-fair language* in job advertising. One possible explanation is that while extensive research was lacking, the scientific aim was to neutralise language and create a uniquely fitting word inventory for both male and female job seekers. For example, in the article by Lindqvist et al. (2019), three different gender-fair language strategies have been tested in both Swedish and English. The authors concluded that to neutralise language implemented in job advertisements, gender-fair words should be actively and continuously created specifically for every advertisement. By doing so, human resource management and job ad creators would be significantly challenged, and, as the authors posit, such a strategy would not yet guarantee permanent neutralisation. Additionally, research conducted on gendered wording differences in various languages explored the way in which neutralisation would be strongly different in, for example, English, which is a gender-neutral language, and in German, which has a conventionally gendered system. This could, therefore, explain why the creation of neutralisation failed to succeed in the authors' works mentioned above.

Linguistic gender stereotypical associations used in the context of work were studied extensively by Gaucher et al. (2011), who introduced the communal (female-typed words) and agentic (male-typed words) traits that advertise male- and female-dominated areas, respectively. The shifting tendency towards building on the communal-agentic division appeared after the realisation that neutralisation is a rather ambitious strategy. Authors such as Hentschel et al. (2020), Fatfouta (2021), Chaturvedi et al. (2021), Hu et al. (2022), and Arceo-Gomez et al. (2022) grounded their research in the various communal-agentic traits, focusing on differing male and female perceptions instead of following the same pattern of neutralising. The central question became: What linguistic framing of gendered wording makes men and women feel invited to apply for a job? A general outcome was observed in the articles: women were more attracted when communal wording was present, whereas men reacted positively when agentic wording could be detected in job advertisements.

The systematic literature review suggests that building on the male–female attitudinal differences identified over the past decade and on the gender inequalities observable in

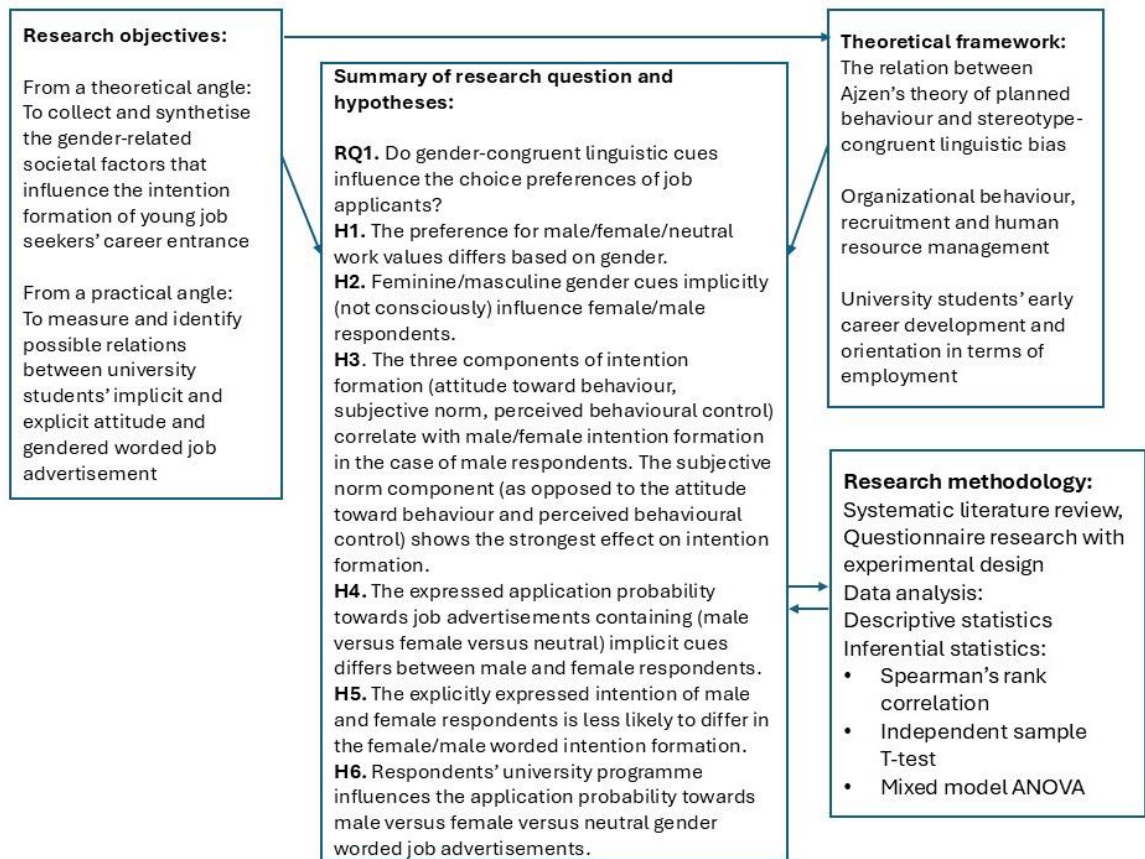
organisational contexts, empirical research has increasingly prioritised the strategic development of approaches aimed at reducing linguistic gender stereotypes. As also indicated by the rightmost category in Figure 3 (between 2022 and 2023), the concept of gender-neutral language is the most current chronologically. This trend further implies that textual differentiation between genders reinforces implicit gender bias, whereas neutral formulations may foster more equitable perceptions of organisational attractiveness.

7. Research model, research question, and hypotheses

Gender stereotypes may appear in job advertisements as hidden linguistic configurations that can distort – or even constrain – how men and women process information and how equivalently they decode the content presented. As a result, the symmetrical communication flow between employer and prospective employee is disrupted, potentially diminishing the perceived attractiveness of the position. Drawing on the market signalling theory (Spence, 1973), men and women interpret non-explicit signal configurations differently, since the lexical items used in job advertisements may carry masculine, feminine, or neutral connotations. These gender-marked expressions influence job seekers' attitudes and their perceived fit (Vogel et al., 2016): women tend to apply for more stereotypically feminine (communal) positions, whereas men are more attracted to stereotypically masculine (agentic) roles (Formanowicz & Hansen, 2022).

The application intentions of the students participating in the study are conceptualised through Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991, 2006), which posits that intention formation consists of three core components (attitude toward the behaviour, social norm, perceived behavioural control). As outlined in the theoretical overview, numerous factors may shape an individual's decision to apply for a job advertisement, including work socialisation, work values, career orientation, sociocultural characteristics, the grammatical structure of the Hungarian language, and stereotype congruence. The summary of my dissertation's research model is outlined in Figure 6.

Figure 6. The research model of the dissertation (*own construct*)



When it comes to determining what information is considered trustworthy in making job choices, recruitment researchers rely on Spence's signalling theory (1973). According to Spence (1973), job seekers often use job advertisements as a signalling source to gather data (e.g., corporate values, employment opportunities, and organisational environment) about the organisation they are motivated to apply to. The theory marks the intertwined relationship between organisational signals and applicant signals; hence, both sides have certain signalling authority towards each other (Connelly et al., 2011; Ganesan et al., 2018; Zárádné Vámosi and Kovács, 2022). Based on the outlined premises, the following research question was formulated:

RQ: *Do gender-congruent linguistic cues influence the choice preferences of job applicants?*

Work values may also differ based on culture and gender. Pillók and Székely (2023) identified the challenges that Hungarian young university students (typically Generation Z) face in Hungary. They found that the uncertainty of the future and financial instability are considered significantly bigger issues for them than family planning or housing.

Besides culture-specific values, gender may also determine the appreciation of certain values. In their study, Waterwall et al. (2023) concluded that men and women tend to differ in that male applicants are more likely to prefer extrinsic job characteristics, while female applicants are more in favour of intrinsic job characteristics. The analysis of work values in an organisational setting is viewed to be an indispensable component of attitude research (Gorgievski et al., 2018); moreover, the evaluation and dedicated importance of work values may differ across men and women (Parry and Urwin, 2011). In line with these empirical results, I expect the following associations to emerge:

H1a. *The preference for male work values differs based on gender.*

H1b. *The preference for female work values differs based on gender.*

H1c. *The preference for neutral work values differs based on gender.*

Based on Greenwald (2020), implicit social cognition is an automatic, unconscious process that underlies social behaviour. Due to the untrustworthiness of self-report, social cognition researchers (fc., Fazio et al., 1986; Payne and Gawronski, 2010) proposed that prior experiences can influence individuals' responses – even when they are unable to articulate their thoughts consciously. Within this framework, the distinction between explicit and implicit processes reflects conscious versus unconscious mental content. Specifically, self-reports are understood to capture explicit, consciously accessible attitudes, whereas methods (e.g., IAT) that focus on automatic, not conscious perceptions are designed to tap into implicit, unconscious processes (also referred to as inner attitudes) (Chaiken and Bargh, 1993; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). Although the dissertation does not measure standard implicit attitudes (that would be studied by, for example, the Implicit Association Test), it focuses on evaluations under non-disclosed experimental framing. Consistent with this theoretical evidence, I propose the following associations:

H2a: *Feminine gender cues implicitly (not consciously) influence female respondents.*

H2b: *Masculine gender cues implicitly (not consciously) influence male respondents.*

The theory of planned behaviour, introduced by Ajzen Icek (1991), posits that behavioural intention is what determines human behaviour. According to the theory, intention comprises three basic components: attitude towards the behaviour (the thoughts

and feelings towards the given object/phenomenon), subjective norm (expectations of others), and perceived behavioural control (the perceived capability of the individual). Each component has a direct effect on intention formation (Ajzen and Dasgupta, 2015), yet due to gender stereotypes, societal expectations also play an important role in shaping an individual's intentions, which is in line with TPB's social norm component (Camussi and Leccardi, 2015; Hugenberg and Sacco, 2008; Young et al., 2025). Therefore, based on these arguments, the following associations are expected:

H3a. *The three components of intention formation (attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) correlate with male intention formation in the case of male respondents.*

The subjective norm component (as opposed to the attitude toward behaviour and perceived behavioural control) shows the strongest effect on intention formation.

H3b. *The three components of intention formation (attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) correlate with female intention formation in the case of female respondents.*

The subjective norm component (as opposed to the attitude toward behaviour and perceived behavioural control) shows the strongest effect on intention formation.

Eagly's (1987) *social role theory* (SRT) was the first to propose that the gender roles and physical differences men and women hold impact the way they behave (Wille and Derous, 2018). In fact, Van Lange et al. (2012) suggest that the gender roles and beliefs individuals have been socialised into determine the way we speak our language. Masculine- or feminine-themed words, or those associated with gender stereotypes, are called *gendered wording* (Baxter et al., 2022). Stereotypically men-directed words include attributes such as ambitious, assertive, and competent, and are called *agentive wording*. On the other hand, female-directed words that include emotional, sensitive, kind, or compassionate are called *communal wording*. A wide array of contemporary research agrees on the fact that non-disclosed gender-related cues can influence male and female recipients' perception and evaluation of job advertising (e.g., Aluko et al., 2022; Baxter et al., 2022; Carpio and Fujiwara, 2023; Castilla and Rho, 2023; Denier et al., 2022; Hentschel et al., 2020; Hodel et al., 2017; Kuhn et al., 2020; Lindqvist et al., 2019, Wille and Derous, 2018), which may result in a non-explicit linguistic bias towards the

job seeking individuals (Beukeboom and Burgers, 2017). In line with these arguments and empirical findings, I expect the following associations:

H4: *The expressed application probability towards job advertisements containing (male versus female versus neutral) implicit cues differs between male and female respondents.*

Although gender wording in job advertisements may differ by implementing communal (=female) versus agentic (=male) characteristics, in contrast to that, gender-neutral language (which makes no explicit reference to either masculinity or femininity) aims to avoid discriminatory acts that would otherwise lead to behavioural bias (Dickerson and Taylor, 2000) and workplace segregation (Heilman, 2012). With the use of gender-neutral language, the following hypotheses are drawn:

H5a. *The explicitly expressed intention of male and female respondents is less likely to differ in the female worded intention formation.*

H5b. *The explicitly expressed intention of male and female respondents is less likely to differ in the male worded intention formation.*

The socialisation process of an individual is influenced by several factors: family, friends, school peers, and coworkers all play a crucial role in the pre-entry socialisation of a young job seeker. According to Weidman (1989), the higher education environment serves as a context of anticipatory socialisation involving making choices of activities after completing school and attaining desirable goals in their career. Research suggests (Delaney and Devereux, 2025; Olmos-Gómez, 2021) that there is a significant difference between men and women in the study fields they choose, even if all fields belong to the social sciences. Generally, women are more likely to enter fields like communication and media science and sociology, whereas men are more likely to enter public governance or management areas (Macarie and Moldovan, 2015; Powers and Myers, 2017). Based on these findings, I propose the following hypothesis:

H6. *Respondents' study programme influences the application probability towards male versus female versus neutral gender worded job advertisements.*

8. Research methodology

The research scope of the thesis is to study whether gender-based signal configurations indirectly influence the choice preferences of job applicants and, consequently, influence their behavioural intention formation towards job application.

Lievens and Slaughter (2016) compiled a comprehensive literature review based on employer branding and employer image since the year 2001 and concluded that organisational image belief is mainly influenced by information about the organisation disseminated by the organisation, such as recruiters, web pages, and advertisements. By reviewing literature from more than a decade, the authors stress that scientific research in this field is modest and calls for further investigation.

In 1998, Rafaeli and Oliver called for the extension of organisational theory research from a communicational, psychological, and marketing perspective, claiming that “ads contain richness and complexity that we argue is insightful” (p. 342). Although gendered wording, job advertisements, and their direct effects on the perceiver have been extensively researched in the next two decades (cf. Acarlar and Bilgiç, 2013; Blackman, 2006; Feldman et al., 2006; Ganesan et al., 2018; Gaucher et al., 2011; Gregory et al., 2013; Zárádné Vámosi and Kovács, 2022; Walker et al., 2008), it remains unexplored whether organisational bias is not only directly, but also indirectly signalled through linguistic cues in job advertisements.

The specificity of this dissertation is that, instead of collecting and synthesising already existing English-language job advertisements (whose production process and aim are unknown to the untrained eye), the research is grounded in the implementation of self-crafted Hungarian job advertisements. Based on reviewing a considerably wide array of research, to the best of my knowledge, there is no other research that has previously studied the effects of gender-based signal configurations on job seekers’ intention formation in relation to Hungarian job advertisements. Therefore, my research aims to consider the direct (explicit) as well as indirect (implicit) gender-related signal configurations in job advertisements in an experimental framing; furthermore, it aims to observe the perception and intention formation of young university students.

8.1 Online questionnaire with experimental design

To reach the expected research objectives, the main methodological base of the dissertation is an online, anonymous, self-completion questionnaire. Also referred to as

self-administered, a self-completion questionnaire means that respondents answer the questions themselves, without any direct guidance or the presence of an interviewer (Bryman, 2012). For data collection purposes, the use of a questionnaire was considered a highly advantageous choice mainly because of the large pool of respondents, the different university groups (and their easy-to-follow data organisation), and, nevertheless, because the collected data have been quantified and quantitatively analysed in software.

As discussed in section 5.4, the most common measurement technique of implicit gender stereotyping has been the Implicit Association Test (IAT) by Greenwald et al. (1998). The primary aim of the IAT implicit technique is to identify the positive and negative attitudes respondents hold regarding femininity and masculinity. By completing both a prejudice-congruent and a prejudice-incongruent block, the reaction time of the participants is measured. Pattern (2017) describes attitude as a sophisticated research component, which requires the researcher to ask questions about feelings, actions, and even potential actions. For example, considering *the attitude toward job application*, we shall ask questions about previous work experiences, how they *feel* about work values they consider dominantly important, how they *act* in work-related situations in an organisational setting, or we may ask how they would *potentially act* in a job interview scenario. By asking these questions, the researcher gathers small but crucial pieces of information about the respondents, who do not feel the burden to express any kind of explicit attitude towards the object in question. This process means that “we measure an attitude with several items” (Pattern, 2017, p. 33). By using a collection of items, we call it an attitude scale, which helps to conclude an overall attitude from the collected answers (Bryman, 2012). In my questionnaire, I used several items to measure university students’ overall attitude⁶: the work values they feel important, their general knowledge about both the Hungarian and international gender gap, their perception about the Hungarian pay gap, their thoughts on male-female tokenism and leadership, their act in different (male-congruent and female-congruent) occupations, their potential act in communal occupations vs. agentic occupations, their potential act in an imaginary job application situation (this last item involves several other items of intention formation).

The dissertation’s research design differs from classical reaction-time-based implicit measures (e.g., the IAT), as the gender coding of the stimuli is not disclosed to

⁶ All items of the questionnaire can be seen in detail in the Annex B.

participants. Instead, in my research, indirectly assessed attitudes and responses to non-disclosed gender-related signal configurations have been examined.

Table 2 summarises all the phases that comprise the procedure of the research. Following the summary, each phase is thoroughly presented in sub-sections.

	Research task	Research objectives	Date (interval)
I. Phase	Methodological pre-phase	Building on the multidisciplinary nature of the thesis, the aim was to carry out discussions with the experts/researchers of the interconnected fields and gain more knowledge on the relevance of the topic.	January – May 2023
II. Phase	The creation of job advertisements	The three Hungarian job advertisements served as one of the main backbones of the research, as attitude and intention formation have been tested in relation to job advertising.	September 2023
III. Phase	Job advertisement testing	To minimise potential errors, misinterpretations, and any kind of linguistic distortions, I conducted experiment-like sessions, such as one-on-one conversations with university students, asking them to evaluate and comment on the advertisements I had created.	October – November 2023
IV. Phase	The creation of the research questionnaire	The research questionnaire aimed to apply the TPB framework and examine career-entering Hungarian university students' job application intention and perceived attitudes.	February – August 2024
V. Phase	Pilot test	To receive first-hand opinions and reflections from university students, I conducted a pilot test with 15 students from my class. Following the response, the students formulated constructive criticism on the linguistic style, interpretability, coherence, and outlook of the questionnaire.	October 2024
VI. Phase	Sampling	In the sampling phase, I gathered all higher education institutions from Budapest that have an active	October – November 2024

		social science bachelor's study programme. I sought to work with the largest possible sample and to ensure that the proportion of respondents remained proportionate to the student populations of the respective universities.	
VII. Phase	Data collection	Among the objectives of the data-collection phase was to reach each university group in person, present the research topic, communicate the relevance of the field, and provide participants with the opportunity to ask questions following completion of the survey.	January – May 2025

Table 2. The summary of the research phases (*own construct*)

8.2 Methodological pre-phase

As argued before, the creation and interpretation of job advertising revolve around several disciplines and sub-disciplines, namely communication science, human resource management, organisational communication, social psychology, and gender linguistics. In their word inventory-based research, Denier et al. (2022) support the idea that a job advertisement is affected by the following five areas: 1. sociology (e.g., how does gender discrimination reveal in a job ad and how does it affect the gender pay gap), 2. psychology (e.g., how does organizational behaviour reveal itself between genders and towards each other), 3. human resource management (HR) (e.g., recruitment procedure and the creation process of a job ad), 4. marketing and organization communication (e.g., organizational attraction and job advertising effectiveness), 5. gender linguistics (e.g., verbal embeddings that hold a gender-specific connotation).

Based on the above-mentioned five research fields, I decided to conduct an instrument-development consultation by contacting experts (e.g., researcher/university lecturer/any kind of professional) from the dissertation's interdisciplinary fields. Besides asking their professional opinion on the chosen topic, the aim was to discuss it from the perspective of their own research field. Therefore, I outlined a semi-structured interview consisting of 8 open questions, such as “Can a job ad exclusively target a man or a woman?”, “Is

there gender bias in Hungarian job advertising?”, “From the point of view of your expertise, how can a job advertisement implicitly refer to one of the genders?”, “How would you build up a job advertisement?”, “What limitations can you foresee in the outlined research?”, “What kind of measurements do you use in your research?”

Since these interviews are only part of the methodological pre-phase and exclusively serve as my deeper understanding of the topic, they are not scripted, published, or included in the dissertation in any other form. I contacted eight individuals; four answered my e-mail and agreed to discuss with me: (1) a sociologist, (2) a fellow researcher of organisational biases and labour market inequalities, (3) a human resource manager from a multinational company, and (4) a marketing expert.

The experts called my attention to a few crucial aspects that should be considered at the very beginning of large-scale research. For example, the type of study programmes I plan to examine (e.g., social science vs. natural science vs. STEM), the data analysis software and type of statistics to be used (qualitative vs. quantitative), the age range of the respondents, and the different types of jobs that the crafted advertisements represent (as the job itself can hold gender bias as well). Based on the given advice, I managed to improve the research scope of the thesis and more carefully approach the methodological units.

The discussions helped me to get a deeper insight into the different disciplines that constitute my research, and to receive valuable feedback on the relevance and practical implications of the thesis.

8.3 The creation of the job advertisements

In line with other contemporary research (Carpio and Fujiwara, 2023; Castilla and Rho, 2023; Fatfouta, 2020; Hodel et al., 2017; Mihaljević et al., 2022), there is a disassociation between men and women when perceiving job advertisements with different verbal configurations. In their pioneering study, Gaucher et al. (2011) state that “job ads include subtle gendered wording that – intentionally or not – may affect gender sorting into jobs” (p. 3). Such stereotype-based linguistic cues may not only affect the perception of a job seeker, but also his or her application intention too. Following this line of thought, three Hungarian job advertisements have been created containing distinct gender-related signal configurations. The job advertisements are based on the word inventories of Gaucher et al. (2011), Denier et al. (2021), and Baxter et al. (2022) gendered wording theory;

moreover, the translation of the word inventories into the Hungarian language was ensured by two cognitive linguists, two psychologists, and a communication researcher. Although all job advertisements start with the same job description (given the fact that the project assistant position is the same in all three), the following three main parts (*role description*, *psychological cues*, *work-family characteristics* based on Denier et al. 2021) differ in terms of male, female, and neutral signal configurations, respectively. The three job advertisements (translated into English) are presented in Figure 7.⁷

Figure 7. The three job advertisements (with distinct gender-related signal configurations) presented to the participants (*own construct*)

Job advertisement with female linguistic cues	Job advertisement with male linguistic cues
Job Description: Responsible for ongoing coordination and effective communication with business and support functions, including gathering and consolidating information, managing approval processes, and ensuring timely delivery of tasks. Contributes to the planning and execution of professional events by preparing invitations and presentations, overseeing registration activities, and supporting seamless on-site event management. We're looking for you if you recognize yourself in the following: (<i>role description</i>) • You can navigate complex situations while maintaining strong attention to detail, always striving for the highest quality outcomes • You are people-oriented and well-organized • You communicate confidently in English • Being a valued member of a team matters to you • You consider your soft skills one of your key strengths We're looking for you if you feel that you... (<i>psychological cues</i>) • Have strong communication skills • Are committed to your work • Approach people with kindness and empathy • Genuinely care about others and your environment • Remain creative and thoughtful when facing challenging or crisis situations What we offer: (<i>work-family characteristics</i>) • A regular weekday work schedule • Cafeteria and additional employee benefits • Childcare and family-related vouchers • A strong commitment to supporting a healthy work-life balance	Job Description: Responsible for ongoing coordination and effective communication with business and support functions, including gathering and consolidating information, managing approval processes, and ensuring timely delivery of tasks. Contributes to the planning and execution of professional events by preparing invitations and presentations, overseeing registration activities, and supporting seamless on-site event management. We're looking for you if you recognize yourself in the following: (<i>role description</i>) • You can navigate complex situations while maintaining strong attention to detail • You strive to achieve the best possible outcome in everything you do • You communicate confidently in English • You can bring a team together and lead with assurance • You remain calm and decisive in crisis situations • You perform well under pressure and manage stress effectively We're looking for you if you feel that you... (<i>psychological cues</i>) • Are proactive and take initiative • Have strong analytical thinking skills • Enjoy challenges and thrive in a dynamic work environment • Are reliable and adapt easily to others • Work hard to achieve your goals What we offer: (<i>work-family characteristics</i>) • Opportunities for travel • Work performed at a variety of locations • A schedule that replaces weekday working hours with weekend shifts • Health insurance coverage

⁷ The original Hungarian job advertisements that were used in the questionnaire can be found in the Annexes A of the dissertation.

Job advertisement with neutral linguistic cues

Job Description:
Responsible for ongoing coordination and effective communication with business and support functions, including gathering and consolidating information, managing approval processes, and ensuring timely delivery of tasks. Contributes to the planning and execution of professional events by preparing invitations and presentations, overseeing registration activities, and supporting seamless on-site event management.

We're looking for you if you recognize yourself in the following: (role description)

- You can navigate complex situations while maintaining strong attention to detail
- You strive to achieve the best possible outcome in everything you do
- You communicate effectively in English
- You are comfortable with both multitasking and repetitive tasks
- You don't shy away from light physical work

We're looking for you if you feel that you... (psychological cues)

- Approach your work with precision and accuracy
- Are dedicated and conscientious
- Are open to taking on new tasks and responsibilities
- Consistently uphold high standards of professionalism

What we offer: (work-family characteristics)

- A safe and calm working environment
- International opportunities
- Accommodation provided for work-related travel
- Flexible work scheduling

Six students have been invited to participate in a one-on-one discussion with me about the three job advertisements. The Hungarian-speaking students were all actively enrolled in a bachelor's degree in social sciences. The discussion aimed to test whether the respondents had any suspicion about the gendered differences between the job advertisements that would decrease the effectiveness of the data collection. A job advertisement included four main parts (based on Denier et al.'s (2022) BIAS word inventory, which has been strengthened by an HR manager of a Hungarian multinational company), namely a general job description (which was the same in all three), role description, psychological cues, and work-family characteristics. Students were shown each part separately because this way they could formulate clearer feedback. Three questions were recurring in each part: "What do you think about the description?", "Which one can you most resonate with? Why?", and "What is most important to you out of these descriptions?" Since all six students remained clueless about the intended measurement of the implicit attitude with regard to gendered differences, only small changes were made accordingly before the next stage of testing (e.g., formulation of the job description and style). At the end of the discussion, each participant was asked to imagine the ideal candidate for the given job and describe him or her.

8.4 The creation of the research questionnaire

One of the main foundations of the research is based on the study of Derous and Decoster (2017), who indirectly assessed age cues in resumes. They conducted a field-based randomised experimental study through which they looked at whether older applicants

may benefit from concealing explicitly mentioned age signals on their resumes (date of birth) or whether more implicit/subtle age cues on resumes (older-sounding names) may lower older applicants' hiring ratings. The purpose of the research was to deepen the scientific knowledge on the effects of resume screening and test whether implicit age cues contribute to hiring discrimination. The authors recruited 610 participants who completed an online resume-screening experiment: participants read a job description of a 'project manager' (in a pilot test, this occupation was found to be age-neutral). After that, participants read four resumes. The researchers applied a 2 [Date of birth: present/absent] by 2 [Name: young vs old-sounding] mixed factorial design. The date of birth was the between-subjects factor (explicit cues about the applicants' chronological age), and name was the within-subjects factor. After the resume screening, participants were asked to fill in an 'opinion survey'.

The objective of my research is to study university students' behavioural intention and attitude towards distinct gender-related signal configurations. According to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH),⁸ men and women are equally likely to be present in an administrative occupation. Therefore, the descriptions of each created job advertisement (namely, the female-worded, male-worded, and neutral-worded) were adjusted to a project assistant position. However, to avoid biased perception of the participants, the occupation itself was not shown in the job advertisement, only the job description.

8.5 The development and the content of the research questionnaire

The questionnaire has been developed over six months with the help of (1) a statistical expert, (2) a sociologist, (3) a communication researcher, (4) two psychologists, and (5) two cognitive linguists. All these specialists assisted me with their own expertise to translate the three word inventories (namely Baxter et al., 2022; Denier et al., 2022; Gaucher et al., 2011) that were adopted from English sources into Hungarian. Primarily, the gender-specific word lists required careful consideration from the point of view of translation, while considering the nuanced differences in the Hungarian language. Once consent has been reached on the translated terminology, I created three job advertisements, each with a different gender-related signal configuration based on Denier et al.'s (2022) BIAS word inventory, Gaucher et al.'s (2011) word inventory, and Baxter et al.'s (2022) gendered wording theory.

⁸ The data is available on the following link: <https://www.ksh.hu/ferfiak-es-nok>

Gaucher et al.'s (2011) word inventory stands as an early study empirically confirming that males and females are likely to perceive implicit gender cues in a stereotype-congruent manner. Baxter et al.'s (2022) gendered wording theory served as a scientific validation for the contemporary existence as well as organisational influence of implicit gender cues on job seekers. Denier et al.'s (2022) comprehensive research applied a qualitative coding method, which maps meaning in texts. The authors worked with more than 27 million job advertisements and concluded that there are recurring gender-related signal configurations in the content of job advertisements. The identified word cues have been listed in their study; thus, these non-disclosed gender-related signal configurations have been adopted in my research:

- **Job advertisement with masculine-gendered wording:** *hard-working, goal-oriented, leadership skills, confident, proactive, composed, good crisis communication, analytical thinking, prefers challenges at work, good handling of stress, business travelling on weekends, sickness cover, and additional hours of work.*
- **Job advertisement with female-gendered wording:** *people-oriented, strong soft skills, being appreciated in a team, good communication skills, committed, kind, patient, empathic, creative, considerate, organised, childcare vouchers, 5 days/week work, cafeteria, work-life balance.*
- **Job advertisement with neutral wording:** *multitasking, good handling of monotonous work, punctual, open, conscientious, professional, calm working environment, international opportunities, flexible working hours.*

The opening page of the questionnaire briefly describes the topic, the approximate duration of completion, the fact that there are no right or wrong answers, and that filling in the questionnaire is anonymous and voluntary. This section closes by accepting (or not) the informed consent. All respondents accepted the informed consent.

The full-length questionnaire is accessible in Appendix B of the dissertation. The core of the questionnaire consisted of three main blocks: (1) work socialisation, (2) intention and attitude towards job advertising, and (3) demography. These three core pillars are outlined above.

8.5.1 Work socialisation

For the respondent to tune in to the cognitively challenging and effortful questions, the first block builds on personal values and opinions, which helps to prepare for the depth of the second block. The questions involve influential background information on preferences for work values, the participants' knowledge about Hungary's gender gap ratio, and their general perception of gender segregation in the workplace. This section raises further questions about the perception of male and female leaders, stereotypes, and gendered differences in job opportunities. These concepts are crucial to measure since they serve as moderating variables in the research.

- **The scale of work values:** Applicants' intention to pursue certain jobs is largely determined by the work values they consider important; however, these values can differ across male and female job seekers (Waterwall et al., 2023). Work values have been assessed based on the categorisation introduced by Dawis (1991) and Cable and Edward (2004): pay, promotions, supervision, coworkers, work itself, altruism, status, and environment. Each work value was evaluated on a 7-point Likert-scale (1=Extremely unimportant, 7=Extremely important).
- **General knowledge about the gender gap and its subindexes:** based on the annual statistics of the Global Gender Gap Report (2025), this part focused on the participants' general knowledge of the "Economic Participation and Opportunity" and "Educational Attainment", with a special focus on Hungary's ranking in terms of gender equality in these categories.
- **Tokenism and gender segregation:** based on the theoretical contributions of Nagy (1997), Dipboye and Colella (2005), and Bernhard and Holman (2025) on tokenism and gender segregations, I sought to examine how respondents perceive the hierarchical relationship between men and women, as well as their views on financial and professional recognition related to work.

The tokenism-related questions were the following:

In your opinion, how frequently does it occur within an organisation that the leader is a woman and the subordinate is a man?

In your opinion, how frequently does it occur within an organisation that the leader is a man, and the subordinate is a woman?

Respondents placed a slider between 1 and 100 percent to assess the frequency of tokenism.

The gender segregation-related statements were the following:

In general, I prefer to work in positions that are associated with a high level of professional recognition.

In general, I prefer to take positions that offer high earning potential.

Each statement was evaluated on a 7-point Likert-scale (1=Definitely false, 7=Definitely true).

- **Work preferences:** gender enactment may manifest itself in work-related behaviours, arguing that women are usually described as naturally possessing communal behaviours associated with nurturing, while men tend to represent agentic behaviours that are described as assertive (Russen et al., 2025; Young and Hurlic, 2007). Based on the organisational role theory (Wickham and Parker, 2007) and the naturally possessed communal and agentic traits of women and men, respectively, this section asked respondents to evaluate statements focusing on their work preferences. The statements were the following:

Women are more likely to choose jobs that are based on... social responsibility/communal work/togetherness.

Men are more likely to choose a job that is based on... proactivity/individual work/self-fulfilment.

Women are more likely to prefer a job that focuses on... social relations/collective responsibility.

Men are more likely to prefer a job that focuses on...autonomy/analytical thinking.

Each statement was evaluated on a 7-point Likert-scale (1=Definitely false, 7=Definitely true). To avoid bias in the question–response process, I posed the question for both genders using the same set of response options.

- **The gender pay gap:** the last part of the first block aimed to find answers about the general perception of the respondents about the perceived gender pay gap. For this measure, I leaned on the European Social Survey and raised the question “In

your view, how frequently does it occur in Hungary that men receive lower pay than women for performing the same work?” The answers involved “Never/Rarely/Sometimes/Frequently/Always/I do not wish to answer. To avoid bias in the question–response process, I posed the question for both genders using the same set of response options.

8.5.2 Intention and attitude towards job advertising

Based on Ajzen’s (2006) extended theory of planned behaviour questionnaire, the second block applied the original question schemas outlined in Ajzen’s (2006) work, based on the three main components of behavioural intention formation, namely attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. Although these three components are the basis for behavioural intention formation, Ajzen argues that self-reported intention formation can also serve as a valuable information source about the participants’ perceptions. Therefore, the self-reported intention is included as a fourth variable in this section of the questionnaire.

The statements of the theory of planned behaviour questionnaire (Ajzen, 2006) were supplemented by non-disclosed gender-related cues based on the word inventories of Baxter et al. (2022) and Denier et al. (2022) and based on the gender word theory of Gaucher et al. (2011). These theoretical references are discussed in detail in section 8.5.

In this second block of “Intention and attitude towards job advertising”, participants have been asked to imagine a situation where they are browsing a variety of job advertisements that fit their professional qualifications. The text embedded in the questionnaire was the following:

Please envision yourself in a job-search situation in which you encounter a variety of job advertisements. The following statements are drawn from postings that match your qualifications in every respect. Using the rating scales, please assess each item.

The statements in the second block’s content are as follows:

- **Attitude toward the behaviour**

Female-worded statements:

- For me *to be people-oriented* in my job is⁹...
- For me to work exclusively during standard weekday hours in my job is¹⁰...

Male-worded statements:

- For me, *dealing with pressure and stress* in my job is¹¹...
- For me, *the opportunity to travel abroad* for the sake of my work is¹²...

Developed by Ajzen's (2002) TpB Questionnaire, respondents evaluated the premises by adjective pairs: *enjoyable/unenjoyable*, *pleasant/unpleasant*, *good/bad*, *valuable/worthless*, *harmless/damaging*¹³

- **Subjective norm**

Female-worded statement:

- It is expected of me to be *kind* and *empathetic* to people.¹⁴

Male-worded statement:

- It is expected of me to be *proactive* and *initiative*.¹⁵

Developed by Ajzen's (2002) TpB Questionnaire, respondents evaluated the premises on a 7-point Likert-scale from Extremely likely (1) to Extremely unlikely (7).

- **Perceived behaviour control**

Female-worded statement:

- Being able to *adapt easily to others* in my work.¹⁶
- I am *committed* to my work.¹⁷

⁹ A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan emberközpontúnak lenni számomra... (Translated by Kincső Szabó)

¹⁰ A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan a kizárólag hétköznapi munkaidő számomra... (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹¹ A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan a nyomás és stressz kezelése számomra... (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹² A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan az utazási lehetőség számomra... (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹³ Élvezetes/élvezhetetlen, kellemes/kellemetlen, jó/rossz, értékes/értéktelen, ártalmatlan/hátrányos (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹⁴ Elvárás, hogy legyek kedves és empatikus az emberekkel. (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹⁵ Elvárás, hogy legyek proaktív és kezdeményező. (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹⁶ Legyek képes könnyen alkalmazkodni másokhoz. (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹⁷ Elkötelezett vagyok a munkám iránt. (Translated by K. Sz.)

Male-worded statement:

- Being able to remain *composed in crisis situations*.¹⁸
- I *work hard* to achieve my goals.¹⁹

Developed by Ajzen's (2002) TpB Questionnaire, respondents evaluated the premises on a 7-point Likert-scale. The first statement ranges from Definitely true (1) to Definitely false (7); the second statement ranges from No control (1) to Complete control (7).

- **Intention**²⁰

Female-worded statement:

- I intend to be a *valuable member of the team* at my future workplace.²¹

Male-worded statement:

- I intend to *lead a team confidently* at my future workplace.²²

Developed by Ajzen's (2006) TpB Questionnaire, respondents evaluated the premises on a 7-point Likert-scale from Strongly agree (1) to Strongly disagree (7).

The students assessed the above-listed premises one by one, each containing non-disclosed gender-related (male/female/neutral) signal configurations, which were part of the created job advertisements (Figure 7). This was the intended logic in attitude measurement, because within the framework of non-explicit evaluation, respondents must answer the questions without conscious awareness. Furthermore, the decision to break the job advertisements' content into separate statements was motivated by the need to assess each element independently and to identify how different stimuli influence evaluative judgments.

After assessing the premises, the students received the three Hungarian-language job advertisements (shown one by one), each composed according to three distinct gender-

¹⁸ Legyek képes megfontolt lenni krízishelyzetekben. (Translated by K. Sz.)

¹⁹ Keményen dolgozom a célom eléréseért. (Translated by K. Sz.)

²⁰ According to Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (1991, 2006), explicit, self-conscious intention is also part of the final result of the formed behaviour intention of an individual. Therefore, the research questionnaire also included this step.

²¹ Szándékom, hogy a jövődöbeli munkahelyemen egy csapat értékes tagja legyek. (Translated by K. Sz.)

²² Szándékom, hogy a jövődöbeli munkahelyemen egy magabiztosan összetartsak egy csapatot. (Translated by K. Sz.)

related signal configurations (based on the word inventories presented in section 3.4): masculine, feminine, and neutral. Respondents could assess from 1 to 100 each job advertisement on a slider to what extent they would apply to it. The three job advertisements in English can be seen in Figure 7, and the original Hungarian-language job advertisements can be found in Appendix A.

8.5.3 Demography

This last block focuses on demographic data like gender, age, place of living, the study programme they are enrolled in, and whether they currently have a job (if yes, how many hours/week). The questionnaire closes with the question “What characterises best the high school you attended?” Two multiple-choice answers are provided: social sciences/STEM.²³ This last question has two functions: on the one hand, it is an important variable to test whether undergraduate socialisation has an indirect effect on intention formation when exposed to male or female wording in a job advertisement; on the other hand, this type of question doesn’t require deeper cognitive effort; hence, it leaves the respondent with a rather easy task to complete.

In the second half of 2023, a pilot test was carried out to ensure and maximise the logic and coherence of the questionnaire, paying special attention to the targeted respondents of the research. Hence, the main purpose of the pilot test was to receive first-hand qualitative feedback on the interpretability and clear comprehension of the content of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire testing aimed to assess the suitability of the research method, to correct possible inaccuracies in the text, and to validate the measuring instrument. Therefore, a group of Hungarian students (N=15) from the communication and media science study programme filled in the questionnaire and commented on it. The students formed critical opinions about the following aspects:

- Technical and visibility issues regarding the online platform of the questionnaire
- Easier understanding of some of the scientific terminology in the first section of the questionnaire (e.g., gender gap, gender pay gap, tokenism).
- Naming the rating categories of a 7-point Likert scale.

²³ In Hungarian the connotations slightly differ: *humán-fókuszú/reál-fókuszú*. (Translated by Kincsó Szabó)

Based on their critique and suggestions, I corrected the instrumental issues in the Qualtrics software, added a better specification of the terminology, and updated the names of the rating categories. The testing lasted 2 hours in total and greatly helped me to receive valuable and direct feedback on the questionnaire.

In the autumn of 2024, I requested the Research Ethics Committee of Corvinus University of Budapest to provide me with a research ethics approval for my doctoral research. The required research proposal and the Research Ethics Review Questionnaire for (non-medical and non-psychological) research projects involving humans have been prepared and sent to the Committee on the 11th of September 2024. On the 16th of October 2024, the Research Ethics Committee of Corvinus University of Budapest approved my request and granted me the right to execute the research (see the approval of the Research Ethics Committee in Appendix C).

8.6 Sampling and data collection

The study employed a criterion-based, institutionally clustered convenience sampling strategy. Programmes were selected according to predefined disciplinary and linguistic criteria. For the sake of gathering valuable, trustworthy responses, I organised and personally visited 17 university groups at 7 different Hungarian universities. Instead of following the classical procedure of sharing a survey link on different social media platforms (without any social responsibility or impactful engagement), I decided to help students form a deeper impression of my research topic by physically being present during data collection. By doing so, they gained a deeper insight into the topic itself and the responsibility as well as implementation of large-scale doctoral research.

The online questionnaire has been created in Qualtrics (Corvinus University of Budapest provided me with the license to have access to it), which is a highly user-friendly web-based software platform providing a wide range of options for data collection and feedback analysis.

The entire organisation of the visits and data collection took place between January and May 2025. As a first step, a letter of request has been sent out to 9 universities (either to department leaders or colleagues). Overall, 8 institutions responded, and 7 decided to accept my visiting request. All universities are based in Budapest and are the following: Corvinus University of Budapest, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in

Hungary, Ludovika University of Public Service, Budapest Business University, Milton Friedman University.

Since the research questionnaire was in Hungarian and the research scope included exclusively social science study programmes, only those programmes that were conducted in Hungarian and fell into the domain of social sciences. The study programmes were selected based on the official ranking of the National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH). I managed to reach out to four different programmes: (1) communication and media science, (2) international public management, (3) international public service relations, and (4) political science.

	All institutions participating in the research	Study programmes	Total number of visited classes	Total number of students from the visited classes	Total number of responding students
1.	Corvinus University of Budapest	Communication and Media Science	2	53	53
2.	Pázmány Péter Catholic University	Communication and Media Science	3	54	54
3.	Budapest University of Technology and Economics	Communication and Media Science	2	93	83
4.	Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary	Communication and Media Science	1	14	13
5.	Budapest Business University	Communication and Media Science	1	13	13
6.	Milton Friedman University	Communication and Media Science	1	40	30
7.	Ludovika University of Public Service	International Public Management; International Public Service Relations;	7	227	196

Table 3. Detailed description of the visited universities and data collection
(own construct)

Following the editing and finalisation of the questionnaire, data collection took place in the form of physical visits to different higher education institutions. A “research visit”²⁴ took about 30 minutes and consisted of the following five steps:

1. **Introduction:** Once the responsible lecturer gave me the floor, I greeted the students, introduced myself, outlined my professional background, the aim of my visit, and, for the sake of not influencing their prior perception, I presented the research topic in just a few keywords. I emphasised concepts like labour market skills, career paths, and work values, but never mentioned gender inequality or male–female linguistic cues that would limit the implicitness of the research.
2. **Engagement:** Given the fact that I have been a stranger to them, who were in an exposed position of asking a favour, I intended to be engaging and playful. I raised one question: “Do you consider the job you will have after graduation important?” The answer to this question was everyone raising their hands. Because I strongly suspected the positive answer to it, I managed to increase likeability and curiosity; hence, they got in a better mood to explore the content of the questionnaire and contribute to the cause.
3. **The completion of the questionnaire:** For effective and more transparent data storage, separate QR codes have been generated for each university. Once the introductory part was over, the QR code was shown, which was accessible from any smart device. The completion of the questionnaire took about 15–17 minutes. Meanwhile, I stayed silent but was ready to answer any questions and address any uncertainty regarding the content.
4. **Explanation:** Once all students had completed the questionnaire, I thanked their valuable contribution to my doctoral research and informed them about the hidden

²⁴ By „research visit” I mean that instead of distributing the research questionnaire through online platforms, I visited the university groups in person, hence the participants completed it on their own smart devices while I was physically present in the classroom.

meaning behind the content. I touched on concepts like implicit attitude, application intention, gender discrimination, subtle linguistic cues of male and female wording, recruitment communication, and social cognition.

5. **Questions and comments:** Towards the end of the allocated 30 minutes, I offered the possibility for questions or any other observations regarding the topic. I closed the visit by ensuring the students, as well as their lecturer, that I will be sharing the results with them once they are publishable.

Overall, 442 responses have been collected from the 17 university groups. After exporting the data into an Excel file, I merged the gathered data from the 7 universities and reviewed each question from each respondent. In total, 7 answers have been eliminated from the dataset: 3 due to unseriousness (e.g., funny answers unworthy of further consideration), 2 because of illogical answering (e.g., marked that they are not actively working, but in the following question also marked that they work part-time), and 2 due to unfinished completions (e.g., missing answers).

Following the execution of data cleansing, a total of 435 answers could be examined. The gender distribution of the sample is as follows: 321 females (73.79%) and 114 males (26.21%). The average age is 21,36 (ages ranged between 19 and 25). First-, second- and third-year students were all involved in the research.

For data analysis, the online software JASP (<https://jasp-stats.org/>) was used. JASP is a web-based, user-friendly online data analysis software that can run various analyses in quantitative methodology. In my dissertation, three types of analysis have been run on the collected data: independent sample t-test, mixed-design ANOVA (also called MANOVA), and Spearman's rank correlation test.

Being one of the fundamental tools in inferential statistics, the t-test helps to determine the possible differences between the means of the two groups. The central question is whether the differences between the two means reflect a real effect or are merely due to random sampling variations. In my research, I used the **independent sample t-test** because I compared the mean values of two separate groups of people (male and female respondents). The t-test can compute a p-value, which further shows the likeability to observe possible difference in the population. If the p-value is under 0.5, the result is considered statistically significant (Aron et al., 2013).

- *Hypothesis 1* tested whether the preference for male versus female versus neutral work values differed between male and female respondents.
- *Hypothesis 5* looked at whether there is a difference between male and female respondents when they consciously evaluate their behavioural intention in an imaginative job application situation.

Mixed-design ANOVA, also called MANOVA, comprises a “mixture of between-group and repeated-measures variables” (Field, 2009, p. 507). In my dissertation, the between-group variable includes men and women, yet the repeated-measures variables include all those variables that are intended to be studied in relation to the between-group variables. For example, my research aims to observe the perceptions of male and female respondents towards three different kinds of job advertisements (namely male-worded, female-worded, and neutral-worded). The mixed-design ANOVA is a particularly valuable measurement in this case because it allows the researcher to compare groups, study change over time, or control individual differences (via repeated measures) (Aron et al., 2013).

- The intention of *Hypothesis 2* was to measure whether there is a difference between male and female perception when exposed to advertisements containing either male, female, or neutral implicit verbal cues.
- *Hypothesis 6* tested whether there is a difference between men and women in the likelihood of applying to a different job advertisement (including male versus female versus neutral gender cues) based on the university programme they are enrolled in (namely Communication and Media Science and International Public Management).

The **Spearman’s correlation coefficient** (also called Spearman’s rho) is usually implemented when parametric assumptions have been violated by the data (e.g., by non-normally distributed data). Being a rank-order statistic, Spearman’s correlation coefficient uses ranks to measure the direction and strength of associations between two variables. The main question of the statistical test is whether two variables increase or decrease together in a consistent manner (Field, 2009). Spearman’s correlation is a popular and efficient method in analysing survey data and psychological associations (Aron et al., 2013).

- *Hypothesis 3* tested whether the presented statements, including explicit (conscious) male/female statements, are in correlation with implicitly (not consciously) perceived male/female gender cues in job advertisements, respectively (see Figures 6, 7, 8).
- With *Hypothesis 4*, I measured whether the three components of attitude formation (namely the attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) stand in a relationship with the male/female worded statements measuring intention formation.

9. Analysis and research results

The holistic examination of the dissertation aimed at revealing the possible correlations between young university students' career orientation and organisational behaviour toward non-disclosed gender-related signal configurations in job advertisements. Overall, 435 responses were processed in the online questionnaire-based investigation, with every respondent being actively enrolled in social sciences university programmes. The participating students were from 7 different universities and 17 university groups.

Section 9 presents the inferential statistics used in data analysis. Due to the quantitative complexity of the analysis, the section is divided into subsections outlining the research results that are immediately supplemented with explanatory factors and theoretical justification. The section closes with a comprehensive summary of the results. Following the presentation of the results and possible implications, section 10 further discusses and contextualises the results within an appropriate theoretical paradigm.

9.1 The preference for work values

H1a. *The preference for male work values differs based on gender.*

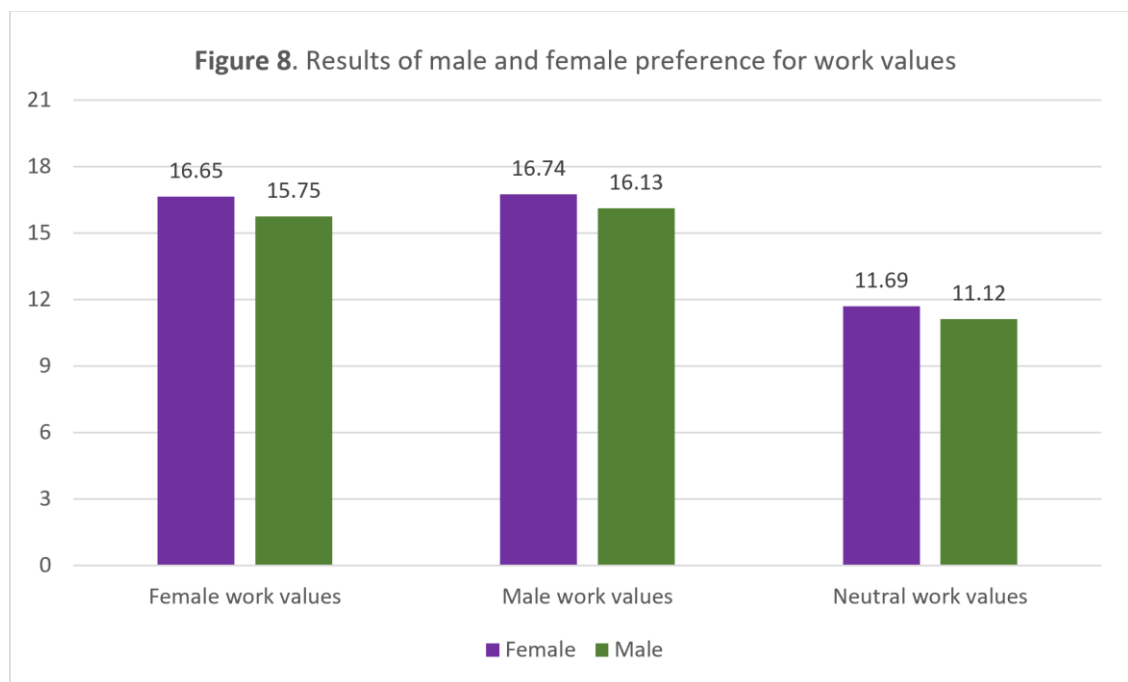
H1b. *The preference for female work values differs based on gender.*

H1c. *The preference for neutral work values differs based on gender.*

The intention to pursue a job is inherently determined by the work values men and women possess. By gaining insight into the needs and values of potential employees, managers, as well as executives, can more effectively apply human resource management tools to design programs that attract and retain talent while fostering a work environment that supports high performance (Twenge et al., 2010). Because individuals are motivated by the activities they value, those values become crucial indicators of one's activities,

desires, and decisions in a work setting (Rokeach, 1973). Work values can be categorised as intrinsic and extrinsic: while intrinsic work values refer to those desired instrumental aspects that include the individual's self-fulfilment and personal development, extrinsic work values describe those aspects that refer to work aspects like salary, compensation, and job security (Waterwall et al., 2023).

Introduced by Dawis (1991) and Cable and Edward (2004), work values are usually studied by the following aspects: pay, promotions, supervision, coworkers, work itself, altruism, status, and environment. Following the aforementioned authors, in my research, respondents have been asked to value the listed work values on a 7-point Likert-scale (7 = Very Important to 1 = Very Unimportant). Based on Gaucher et al. (2011), Denier et al. (2021), and the theory of communal-agentic wording (Baxter et al., 2022), I identified *pay* and *promotion* to be a masculine characteristic, *work itself* and *altruism* to be a female characteristic, and *environment* and *coworkers* to be a neutral characteristic. Therefore, I paired the gender-based work values and calculated the mean score for “female work values”, “male work values,” and “neutral work values”, as it is shown in Figure 8. I ran an independent sample t-test (Mann-Whitney) to measure whether the preferences for male (*salary* and *promotion*), female (*work itself* and *altruism*), and neutral (*environment* and *coworkers*) work values differ between male and female respondents. The results are presented in Figure 8.



Earlier research (Herzberg et al., 1959) reported that females found more important extrinsic values than their male counterparts; however, this trend has changed over time. According to more recent studies (cf. Lechner et al., 2017; Waterwall et al., 2023), women were found to value more intrinsic work values and men to place higher importance on extrinsic work values. My results are both consistent and, at the same time, contradictory to these findings.

In the case of the male-specific work values, the Normality test was violated for both men [$W(118)=0.967$, $p=0.005$] and women [$W(324)=0.971$, $p<0.001$] since the defined p-value was below 0.05, therefore, I used the Mann-Whitney test. The test is significant ($U=16.638$, $P=0.035$, $r_B=0.13$), meaning that there is a slight difference between men ($M=16.13$) and women ($M=16.74$) in the perception of male-specific work values (namely *pay* and *promotion*). Based on these results, Hypothesis 2b is supported: there is a difference between men and women in the preference for male work values.

In the case of the female-specific work values, the Normality test was violated for both men [$W(118)=0.957$, $p<0.001$] and women [$W(324)=0.970$, $p<0.001$]. Since the defined p-value was below 0.05, I used the Mann-Whitney test. The test is significant ($U=15.294$, $P=0.001$, $r_B=0.2$), meaning that there is a slight difference between men ($M=15.75$) and women ($M=16.65$) in the perception of female-specific work values (namely the *work itself* and *altruism*). Although the mean difference is not strongly salient, this type of work value demonstrated the largest mean difference between men ($M=15.75$) and women ($M=16.65$), in contrast to the male-specific and neutral-specific work values. Based on these results, Hypothesis 2c is supported: there is a difference between men and women in the preference for female work values.

In the case of the neutral work values, the Normality test was violated for both men [$W(118)=0.914$, $p<0.001$] and women [$W(324)=0.925$, $p<0.001$]; since the defined p-value was below 0.05, I used the Mann-Whitney test. The test is significant ($U=16.257$, $P=0.014$, $r_B=0.15$), meaning that there is a slight difference between men ($M=11.12$) and women ($M=11.69$) in the perception of neutral work values (namely *environment* and *coworkers*). Based on these results, Hypothesis 2d is supported: there is a difference between men and women in the preference for neutral work values.

According to the social role theory (Eagly, 1987), certain behaviours are developed based on the societal expectations associated with different gender roles. Through such gender-

role socialisation, men and women internalise the values they believe are expected of them. In line with gender role expectations (or gender stereotypes), contemporary research supports the idea that men are viewed as “breadwinners” and women are viewed as “homemakers” (Chullen et al., 2015; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2019). These social role systems may be responsible for women placing a stronger emphasis on intrinsic work values (e.g., helping others and society) and men favouring more extrinsic work values (e.g., job security, earning potential). My findings show that male respondents, on average, are more likely to place importance on extrinsic work values, since their highest mean value can be observed in the preference for male work values ($M=16.13$), which supports the breadwinner ideology (Kalleberg and Marsden, 2019). Whereas female respondents, on average, prefer both male and female work values with almost the same mean value ($M_{\text{male work values}}= 16.74$, $M_{\text{female work values}}= 16.65$). As such, the participants in my research provide a novel direction in female preference towards work values. These results correspond to the research findings of Waterwall et al. (2023). The authors found, as predicted, that women rated intrinsic job characteristics higher than men. However, women also rated extrinsic job characteristics higher than men, which contradicted previous studies that claimed males value extrinsic job characteristics more.

By understanding the results through the life course perspective (LCP), the importance of work values in an individual’s life trajectory changes over time. Naturally, different work values are more relevant for a young adult (aged 18 to 22) and for an adult aged 26 and greater. Once the sociodemographic characteristics stabilise, the perspective of a working individual widens, expectations change, and values transition in and out of different social roles across their life span (Elder and Glen, 1998). Such transforming gender role expectations and stereotypes may produce one’s evaluation system related to work and the labour market. Silva and Carvalho (2021) call this the higher education-to-work transition phase, which suggests that, as we live in a world full of uncertainty and financial instability, it is highly justified that Generation Z (born between 1997 and 2012) is dominantly concerned with extrinsic work values such as salary, compensation, job security, rewarded possibilities. Therefore, although my findings indicate that women place high importance on intrinsic job characteristics, it is also justified that both men and women highly value extrinsic job characteristics too.

Important to mention that these results are also culture-specific. According to the Youth Research (Pillók and Székely, 2022) on Hungarian young adults living in Hungary, the

young generations (like Generation Z) – who are still enrolled in study programmes yet already working on their career paths – are less concerned with family planning and instead prioritise economy-related issues. According to the report of the Youth Research, the first and most important concern of Hungarian youth is instability and an unpredictable future, the second is poverty and financial issues, and the third is the lack of purpose. These outstanding macroeconomic indicators denote that, due to external pressure, Hungarian young adults pay special attention to basic existential issues that fall in the category of extrinsic work characteristics.

9.2 Implicit attitude towards gendered wording

H2a: *Feminine gender cues implicitly (not consciously) influence female respondents.*

H2b: *Masculine gender cues implicitly (not consciously) influence male respondents.*

The content of a job advertisement is often worded in ways that might cause discrimination towards a certain group of people, especially towards their gender. Certain occupations are viewed as maintaining traditional gender stereotypes, like firefighters for men or elementary school teachers for women; therefore, job advertisers and human resource specialists are likely to explicitly communicate their organisational desires through a job ad (Mihaljević, 2022). For instance, these explicit, conscious signals can be communicated in forms like “We welcome applications from female job seekers” or “This job is a good fit for male applicants”. According to the Directorate-General for Equal Treatment, such discriminatory acts are considered unlawful, and the institute actively monitors actions that go against gender segregations, discrimination, and inequality in job advertising. However, such explicitly communicated signals are not the only ways to attract male and female job seekers. A wide array of research (cf. Baxter et al., 2022; Formanowicz and Hansen, 2022; Ganesan et al., 2018; Hodel et al., 2017; Wille and Derous, 2018) has demonstrated that job advertising may carry verbal cues that make reference to a particular gender. These cues are present in the form of gender-related signal configurations that can have two kinds: communal (female-stereotyped words, like kind, empathic, or caring) and agentic (male-stereotyped words, like confident, goal-oriented, or assertive) (Sandhu, 2018). Without explicit awareness, perceivers of gender-framed advertisements configurations tap into a linguistically biased social

categorisation. For the untrained eye, these subtle, verbally transmitted gender biases may create the feeling of instant resonance since language is considered a primary carrier of a gendered belief system (Formanowicz and Hansen, 2022).

“Stereotyping and prejudice are difficult to measure because people are often unwilling to admit negative attitudes and beliefs about social groups” (Fazio et al., 1995 in Sekaquaptewa et al., 2002, p.75). Because an explicit question-answer system would not clearly mirror the thoughts and perceptions of the responder, researchers often measure implicit attitudes toward stereotypes.

I ran a Spearman’s test to see whether the presented statements, including direct (explicit) male/female statements, are correlated with indirectly (implicitly) perceived male/female gender cues in job advertisements, respectively (see Figures 6, 7, 8). To successfully carry out the analysis, I contrasted two parts of the questionnaire and aimed to see whether the explicit and implicit correlate with each other: on one hand, explicitly perceived statements about male and female expectations, on the other hand. In this case, neutral wording as a variable was not involved in the analysis; the focus was exclusively on male and female intention formation. Respondents could evaluate explicitly formulated statements on a 7-point Likert-scale. The statements were the following:

Men are more likely to choose a job that focuses on proactivity / independent work style/self-fulfilment.

Women are more likely to choose a job that focuses on social responsibility/community work/togetherness.

The mean value has been calculated from the scores of the respondents. These mean values of the statements and the values of the evaluated job advertisements were correlated by a Spearman’s test.

The normality test was violated in both the explicit masculine statements [$W(118)=0.925$, $p<0.001$] and in the probability of choosing the masculine job advertisement (with implicit preference) [$W(118)=0.972$, $p=0.015$]. There was no indication in the distribution of my data that a linear relationship was not possible; I used Spearman’s test. The Spearman’s test result shows no significant correlation between explicit and implicit preference $r_s=0.154$ $p=0.096$ (2-tailed).

The normality test was violated in both the explicit feminine statements [$W(324)=0.946$, $p<0.001$] and in the probability of choosing the feminine job advertisement (with implicit preference) [$W(324)=0.932$, $p<0.001$]. There was no indication in the distribution of my data that a linear relationship was not possible; I used Spearman's test. The Spearman's test result shows a significant correlation between explicit and implicit preference $r_s=0.179$ $p=0.001$ (2-tailed).

The results indicate that female respondents who evaluated on a 7-point Likert-scale (1 = Very Important and 7 = Very Unimportant) the explicit (direct) statements about preference (e.g., *Women are more likely to choose a job, which rests on social responsibility*) were also more likely to apply to the job advertisement that contained the implicit (indirect) female cues (e.g., empathic, kind, good communication skills). Whereas male respondents who also evaluated on a Likert-scale the explicit (direct) statements about preference (e.g., *Men are more likely to choose a job, which rests on self-fulfilment*) were less likely to apply to the job advertisement that contained the implicit (indirect) male cues (e.g., confident, goal-oriented, analytical thinking).

The testing of Hypothesis 1 resulted in the finding that male respondents were the least likely to apply to an advertisement (with only 55.3%) that contained implicit (indirect) masculine signal configurations, which is considered their "most fitting" gendered wording classification. However, when it comes to evaluating statements that explicitly (directly) address social presumptions about the male category, the evaluation differs and shows no correlation ($r_s=0.154$ $p=0.096$) with the implicit mean score. The result is different in the case of female respondents. While female respondents were most likely to apply to an advertisement (with 68.1%) that contained implicit (indirect) feminine signal configurations, they also evaluated the statements that explicitly (directly) addressed social presumptions about the female category. Therefore, in contrast to men, female explicit and implicit perceptions show a significant correlation ($r_s=0.179$ $p=0.001$).

The outlined results justify highly important information about male and female implicit attitude formation and social categorisation. The fact that women are both implicitly and explicitly influenced by social stereotypical categorisations primarily derives from women's identity and the socio-culturally evolved traditional worldview. In a study by Camussi and Leccardi (2005), 61% of both sexed young adults (aged 15 to 34) believe

that men are responsible for the breadwinner role and women should fulfil their obligations as mothers.

A possible explanation of these contradictory results lies in the fact that women are expected to independently earn income in an increasing capacity, and by doing so, this leads to two conflicting perspectives. In the female life course, on one hand, there is the work-related time, while on the other, there is the private, family-related time (Woodward, 1997). These two time-based logics in a woman's life entail specific types of tension, where public-private life undergoes a continuous change and discrepancy between what is ideal and what is real (Leccardi, 1996). As these gender roles and social norms are interchangeably present in society, we must take into account the process of gender-role fluidisation, which is "linked to the dissolution of the traditional sexual roles based on associating men with paid work and women with care work" (Nedelmann 1997 in Camussi and Leccardi, 2005). We must consider the fact that adult women increasingly perform multiple roles daily: on one hand, roles connected to work and the labour market in a competing arena, and on the other hand, roles connected to motherhood and family, which constitute the "invisible work" defined by caregiving and altruism (Mauss, 1950). Focusing on the social perceptions of gender roles, a study carried out by a Hungarian researcher (Pongrácz T., 2006) yielded important results in the understanding of male and female traditional social expectations in a cross-cultural analysis. The research was carried out through a questionnaire with people under the age of 30. The statement "The husband's job is to earn a living for the family, and the wife's job is to take care of the household chores" had the highest score on a 100-point scale (71) by the Hungarian respondents, in contrast to other Eastern and Western countries in Europe. Thus, Hungarians themselves find it important that society should find fulfilment and resolution in the embedded social role expectations. This finding is another justification that Hungarian societal expectations, especially towards women, primarily represent a conscious traditional view within the country. It is important to note that the above-mentioned research was carried out between 2000 and 2003, which indicates the evolution of these perspectives in today's context. Overall, Hypothesis 2a is supported, as the results suggest that feminine gender cues do not consciously influence female respondents; nevertheless, the implicitly perceived gender-related configurations in job ads and the explicitly perceived statements show a significant correlation.

Besides the female dual gender role and social expectations, we must not forget the male view. As my results suggest, male respondents were more likely to give a higher evaluation to the explicit statements, including social expectations about men, than to the job advertisement that implicitly contained gender cues about masculinity. In this sense, male respondents are more likely to agree with the idea that men, in general, should meet the generically accepted social expectations of society (e.g., being the breadwinner), while their not conscious perception (when evaluating a job ad with gender cues) shows a considerably low agreement with the stereotypical logic of the masculine role. This can be partially explained by social categorisation and ingroup-outgroup stereotypes (Hugenberg and Sacco, 2008). According to Taylor et al. (1978) and Allport (1954), people tend to look at people, objects, and phenomena in an oversimplified manner to tackle all the incoming pieces of information. By doing so, they select salient features of the information and create socially meaningful categories – this process also applies to people having all kinds of different social backgrounds. In their early research, Taylor et al (1978) noted that “the simple fact of categorisation on an arbitrary dimension leads to favouritism toward the in-group and discrimination against the out-group” (p. 779). In other words, people tend to evaluate their ingroups positively and their outgroups negatively. This happens primarily because we try to structure the complex world around us in a manageable manner. Moreover, these structuring processes are perceived based on similarity-dissimilarity (Bruner, 1956). Instead of understanding a group of people as unique individuals, people tend to select certain physical or social characteristics of the outgroup to use as discriminating variables. A frequent result of social categorisation is that the behaviour of the within-groups will be interpreted in a stereotyped manner. Thus, once we tag men as confident, we might stereotype them as “macho”, and once we characterise women as caring, they may become “motherly”. The recurring attributes we associate with a group of people may become strongly salient within that particular group (Tajfel, 1971), such as an occupation, physical appearance, or personality traits.

Explaining the results through the ingroup-outgroup principle, we can claim that when male respondents were exposed to evaluating their ingroup social category, they were more likely to think positively about themselves; hence, they developed resonance with the statements, including male-typed stereotypical attributes (namely *proactivity*, *independent work style*, and *self-fulfilment*). Stereotypes also have a prescriptive value, which indicates how things “should be” and what is mostly desirable or right – these

expectations become normative social representations for the respective gender. The prescriptive component of stereotypes further emphasises that men and women should behave “by nature” and keep a “natural order of things” (Camussi and Leccardi, 2015). If these generic behaviours are violated and the generally accepted social expectations are overlooked, the respective gender is “punished”, which may be manifested in limited career opportunities or other advantageous work advancements.

My results indicate that when male respondents evaluated the implicit male cues in job advertisements, they were less likely to resonate with them; the implicit attitude and explicit attitude did not show a significant correlation. Although men positively evaluated their ingroup category (in the explicitly formulated statements), that does not mean their implicit perception is in line with stereotypical masculinity. The overloaded social expectations for men, like career achievements (mostly in leadership positions), breadwinning, social reproduction, and effective self-fulfilment, are all heavy weights for masculine conformity. Enmeshed in economic as well as historical structures, the gender construction theory delineates gender as a socially constructed entity with fixed boundaries (Zuo, 2004). By performing certain public and private roles, men and women derive meaning from their own individual behaviour and from the behaviour of each other (Ferree, 1990). “(...) breadwinning serves as a powerful ideological device in forming individuals’ self-identity, and in producing and reproducing gendered behaviour and activities in everyday life” (Connell, 1995 in Zuo, 2004). As a determining agency in social construction, the breadwinning role of men means the financial support of their family, which may often be against their behaviour or own decision (Gerson, 1993). Besides being a gender construction, the male breadwinning ideology is a cultural phenomenon, too. Assigning men the responsibility of supporting and financially providing goods for his family members makes them morally accountable for their behaviour and conform to social expectations (Zuo, 2004). Through these processes, the male provider role became a cultural norm, which reproduces gender behaviour and perpetuates the breadwinner ideology.

Overall, Hypothesis 2b is not supported, since male respondents rated the explicitly formulated statements higher than the job advertisements with implicit gender cues; therefore, the correlation between explicit and implicit attitudes shows no correlation.

9.3 The strongest elements of male and female intention formation in job applications

To measure the gender differences in relation to intention formation in job applications, the above-presented parts of the questionnaire contain gendered wording inventories and theories, which previously identified gender-related terms to study implicit (not conscious, automatic) linguistic gender bias in the context of employment and work. The evaluated statements rest on Gaucher et al.'s (2011) and Denier et al.'s (2021) word inventories, and on Baxter et al.'s (2022) gendered wording theory.

Ajzen (2006) proposes the theory of planned behaviour questionnaire (TpB Questionnaire), which is claimed to be flexible enough to be applied to various subfields in social sciences. Therefore, in my research, I implemented the TpB Questionnaire in the context of an imaginary job search. All statements could be evaluated on a 7-point Likert-scale. The parts of the Questionnaire contain the following items:

Attitude toward the behaviour

This component of intention formation refers to the individual's overall evaluation of performing the behaviour in question. However, according to Ajzen (2006), such evaluations often contain two separate components: an instrumental component (e.g., valuable – worthless, harmful – beneficial), and an experiential component (e.g., enjoyable – unenjoyable, pleasant – unpleasant). The author recommends including all scale types for a more comprehensive, clear measurement.

The statement containing masculine-typed signal configurations (*stress and pressure*): *In relation to my occupational role, the management of stress and pressure is...*

The statement containing feminine-typed signal configurations (*people-oriented*): *In relation to my occupational role, being people-oriented is...*

Adjective pairs based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour Questionnaire (Ajzen, 2006):

harmful : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : beneficial

pleasant : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : unpleasant

good : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : bad

worthless : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : valuable

enjoyable : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : *unenjoyable*

Subjective norm

The statement containing masculine-typed signal configurations (*proactive* and *initiating*): *It is expected from me to be proactive and initiating.*

The statement containing feminine-typed signal configurations (*kind* and *empathic*): *It is expected from me to be kind and empathic.*

Extremely likely : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : Extremely unlikely

Perceived behavioural control

The statement containing masculine-typed signal configurations (*crisis management*): *I can be thoughtful in crisis situations.*

The statement containing feminine-typed signal configurations (*adaptable to others*): *I can easily adapt to others.*

Definitely true : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : Definitely false

Intention

The statement containing masculine-typed signal configurations (*confident* and *team-management*): *In my future workplace, it is my intention to confidently manage a team.*

The statement containing feminine-typed signal configurations (*belonging* and *valuable member*): *In my future workplace, it is my intention to be a valuable member of a team.*

Strongly agree : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : Strongly disagree

H3a. *The three components of intention formation (attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) correlate with male intention formation in the case of male respondents.*

The subjective norm component (as opposed to the attitude toward behaviour and perceived behavioural control) shows the strongest effect on intention formation.

I ran a Spearman's test to see whether the three components of attitude formation (namely the attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) stand in a relationship with the male-worded statements measuring intention formation.

The Normality test was violated in the three factors of intention formation containing male characteristics: social norm [$W(118)=0.931$, $p<0.001$], perceived behavioural control [$W(118)=0.847$, $p<0.001$], behavioural intention [$W(118)=0.912$, $p<0.001$], although it has not been violated in the attitude toward the behaviour component [$W(118)=0.988$, $p=0.413$]. There is no indication in the distribution of my data that a linear relationship is not possible; I used Spearman's test.

The Spearman's test shows a significant correlation between intention and attitude toward the behaviour $r_s = 0.271$ $p=0.003$ (2-tailed), expectancy $r_s = 0.378$ $p<0.001$ (2-tailed), and ability $r_s = 0.299$ $p=0.001$ (2-tailed). Of the three components of intention formation, two components (attitude toward the behaviour and perceived behavioural control) show weak to strong relationships with intention, while the second component, social norm ($r_s=0.378$ $p<0.001$ (2-tailed)), predicts the strongest relationships with male behavioural intention.

The above results on the significant relationship between conscious male intention formation and the perceived pressure from the social environment raise several crucial determinants of the masculine role and its explanatory factors. In Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour (1991), the social norm component of behavioural intention formation refers to the societal pressure that the individual experiences in relation to the behaviour in question. In other words, if men, in general, are expected to perform a stereotypical behaviour – like team-leading, crisis management or being easily adaptive to stressful situations – it may lead to a pressured need for status keeping and continuous achievement. This phenomenon is also called the status syndrome. Proposed by Michael Marmot (2004), the status syndrome is explained “as a psychophysiological mechanism explaining the gradient pattern of health outcomes within a social structure” (Rodríguez-González and Repetto, 2024, p. 286). The status syndrome, being part of the Social Determinants of Health (SDH), comprises both social adversity and social gradient. Social adversity refers to all the hardships and disadvantages an individual faces in

society, which may include poverty, economic uncertainty, social marginalisation, or communal instability. In this sense, the greater the social adversity, the more individuals deal with everyday stressors (McDowel, 2023). The social gradient refers to the gradual, linear relationship between health and socioeconomic status. Meaning that the higher an individual's position is on the social ladder, the greater will be his or her health and well-being, and the lower will be the death rate and absolute deprivation. This intertwined relationship is characterised by numerous chronic physiological responses (as biological manifestations) that are triggered "by societal features and how individuals perceive their place within the social hierarchy" (Marmot, 2015 in Rodríguez-González and Repetto, 2024, p. 286). Moreover, the status syndrome further highlights that disparities in the capability of individuals depend on how much control they feel they have over certain parts of their lives. Whether they feel powerful and respected, or conversely, disregarded and marginalised (Shinn, 2015).

Research offers a strong linkage between the status syndrome and the self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan et al., 2022; Ryan and Deci, 2017) in the sense that both ideologies agree on the environment's pivotal role in shaping human nature, social engagement and meaningful social roles. The SDT serves as a psychological framework and proposes three basic psychological needs for human well-being: (1) the need for autonomy and voluntary behaviour, (2) the need to connect with other people, and (3) the feeling of being effective and competent. Both the SDT and status syndrome framework underline the inevitable importance of being an integrated part of society characterised by personal fulfilment and well-being (Rodríguez-González and Repetto, 2024; Ryan and Deci, 2017). In this sense, a dilemma may arise for men: on one hand, they have a natural need to feel autonomous and competent; on the other hand, being exposed to social expectations and the need to perform the provider role. This may cause an intensified impugment and threat to male self-efficacy that further leads to internal stress and the lack of control over professional achievements in life. The term coined by Bandura (1994), self-efficacy, means people's strong belief in their own abilities, specifically the belief that they can achieve their goals because they have the attitudes and skills for it (Lesznyák, 2020). A crucial factor is that self-efficacy does not refer to one's actual performance or capabilities, but to the *perceived* ability to complete a given task (Waddington, 2023). Similar to the social norm, the perceived behavioural control (the respondent's capability) also showed a significant correlation with the behavioural

intention ($r_s=0.299$ $p=0.001$), yet the external pressure of social expectancy had the strongest value score. One explanation could be that although men have a positive perception of their perceived ability to perform the behaviour in question, it is still not the most powerful determinant in forming intention in a job application situation.

The status syndrome is not the only ideology that serves as an explanatory factor for the experienced social pressure on masculine performance. The health-related quality of life has long been a central topic for evolutionary psychology. For thousands of years, human genes have been adapting to a fishing, hunting, and farming way of life. The radical psychological challenges humans have undergone in the last few decades – like the urbanisation of residence and workplace, the weakening of the value-transmitting role of an extended family, or the outstanding function of digital and mass communication – ultimately demand a novel form of life (Eaterbrook, 2003). In the post-millennium period (between 2002 and 2006), one-third of the Hungarian population claimed to suffer from a syndrome that significantly impairs quality of life and constitutes a major risk factor for premature mortality (Kopp, 2001, 2003). Although the presence of stress is an inevitable part of continuous development and increased conformity – also viewed as the antecedent of coping in various situations – it may take two very different forms. Our coping skills primarily depend on what kind of reactions have been evoked by the novel, yet difficult situation. If the coping was successful, our self-value, self-efficacy, and competence will increase – this is also called allostasis (Kopp, 2008). However, if the situation is conceived as uncontrollable, unwanted, or there is a lack of capability, we react to it with anxiety (Seligman, 2002). When men are involuntarily expected to perform numerous demanding and socially expected roles, like supporting a family, having a financially stable and successful occupation, fulfilling personal achievements, and, nevertheless, staying physically and mentally healthy, such social expectations may naturally evoke consequences on their coping mechanism that risks their health and well-being.

The Hungarostudy (2021) aimed to explore the average rate of happiness and satisfaction with life of Hungarian young adults (aged from 18 to 40). Their findings suggest that compared to the previous Hungarostudy research in 2006 and 2013, the mean score of happiness and satisfaction is higher for both men and women. The authors highlight that marital and labour market status are the main influential factors in happiness. The variables that influenced life satisfaction were the number of children, the quality of relationships, educational level, and labour market status. Thus, in both cases, the status

occupied in the labour market has a strong impact on how happy and satisfied we are in life.

In conclusion, it can be stated that Hypothesis 3a is fully supported, because all three components of attitude formation correlate with the consciously evaluated intention formation, and in the case of male respondents, social norm (outside expectations from the surroundings) shows the strongest relation to intention formation. This means that the perceived social pressure from the external environment plays the most important role when male respondents form behavioural intention.

H3b. *The three components of intention formation (attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) correlate with female intention formation in the case of female respondents.*

The subjective norm component (as opposed to the attitude toward behaviour and perceived behavioural control) shows the strongest effect on intention formation.

To see whether the three components of attitude formation (namely, the attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control) show significant correlation with the female-worded statement that measures intention formation, I ran a Spearman's test. The test helps to shed light on the possible correlations between conscious and unconscious intention formation of both male and female respondents.

The Normality test was violated in the four factors of intention formation containing feminine characteristics: attitude toward the behaviour [$W(324)=0.964$, $p<0.001$], social norm [$W(324)=0.790$, $p<0.001$], perceived behavioural control [$W(324)=0.827$, $p<0.001$], and behavioural intention [$W(324)=0.789$, $p<0.001$]. There is no indication in the distribution of my data that a linear relationship is not possible; I used Spearman's test.

The Spearman's test result showed a significant correlation between intention and attitude toward the behaviour $r_s = 0.392$ $p<0.001$ (2-tailed), social norm $r_s = 0.466$ $p<0.001$ (2-tailed), and perceived behavioural control $r_s = 0.499$ $p<0.001$ (2-tailed). The three components of intention formation show a medium-strong relationship with intention, and within the three components, perceived behavioural control ($r_s=0.499$ $p<0.001$ (2-tailed)) predicts the strongest relationship with female behavioural intention.

As the theory of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) indicates, the perceived behavioural control component of behavioural intention formation refers to the capability of the individual in relation to the behaviour in question. For example, in a job application context, the perceived behavioural control does not denote whether the individual applies to a given job or not, but whether he or she feels capable of executing the listed tasks of the job advertisement. Therefore, the perceived behavioural intention can predict the actual behaviour of the individual.

The Spearman's test of Hypotheses 3a and 3b concluded two dissonant findings: the prediction of Hypothesis 4a has been supported, given the fact that male respondents showed the strongest significant correlation between explicit intention formation and social norm (external pressure from the surrounding environment). However, the same prediction of Hypothesis 3b shows a different tendency for female respondents. In this case, it is not the outside pressure (social norm component) that generates the most powerful source of intention formation, but the perceived capability (perceived behavioural control component). This result lays the ground for several important explanatory factors intertwining women's self-efficacy and cognitive ability in organisational scenarios.

If we perceive in a particular task that our capability is strong, it is hypothesised that our self-efficacy is activated to a similar strength (Lent and Brown, 2006). In social cognition, Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1997) is viewed as one of the most influential and fundamental theories, which has long served as a sociocultural framework for interpreting the belief system, goal-orientation, and career behaviour of individuals. Self-efficacy refers to "people's beliefs about their capabilities to organise and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1986 in Brown 2002, p. 262). As female respondents showed a strong correlation between capability and intention formation, this also presupposes that, in general, they perceive their self-efficacy positively. Self-efficacy beliefs are assumed to be acquired through four main information sources: (1) vicarious learning, (2) personal performance accomplishments, (3) social persuasion, and (4) physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1997; Lent and Brown, 2006). Bandura (1997) adds to this that when someone experiences a series of successes at a given task, it may raise self-efficacy, and when they face failure, it may lower it.

People often mistake using the terms *self-esteem* and *self-efficacy* interchangeably; however, the two concepts cover entirely different phenomena. “Perceived self-efficacy is concerned with judgments of personal capability; self-esteem is concerned with judgments of self-worth” (Bandura, 1997, p. 11). The fact that someone finds him or herself inefficacious in a certain task or activity does not mean suffering from any loss of self-worth. In addition to that, Bandura (1997) also highlights that people often form an opinion based on the likes or dislikes of the attributes possessed by others, rather than evaluating their accomplishments. By doing so, personal competencies are overlooked and devalued, and instead, social status and personal attributes are linked to social evaluations. For instance, given the context of tokenism, women who fulfil subordinate positions (compared to leadership positions typical to men) in an organisational hierarchy may be misjudged and disliked simply based on their “lower” status.

As we can see at the beginning of the 10.4 subchapter, this part of the questionnaire (testing H4b) asked respondents to evaluate two statements based on the perceived behavioural control component: a statement with a masculine stereotype-congruent attribute (*I can be thoughtful in crisis situations.*) and a statement with a feminine stereotype-congruent attribute (*I can easily adapt to others.*) In a similar fashion, the social norm component included two statements, first with a masculine-typed attribute (*It is expected from me to be proactive and initiating.*), and a feminine-typed attribute (*It is expected from me to be kind and empathic.*). Based on the Spearman’s test, male respondents’ intention formation had the strongest correlation with the male-typed social norm component (*It is expected from me to be proactive and initiating.*) ($r_s=0.378$ $p<0.001(2\text{-tailed})$), whereas female respondents’ intention formation had the strongest correlation with the female-typed perceived behavioural control component (*I can easily adapt to others.*) ($r_s=0.499$ $p<0.001(2\text{-tailed})$). The distinction between the male and female implicit (not conscious) evaluation of the outlined statements clearly presents a gender difference in intention formation when exposed to an imaginary job application situation. While men perceive the outside pressure of being proactive as well as initiating in a work-related task, women are more likely to evaluate their easy adaptability as a strength in capability. In simplified terms, social expectations are viewed to be the catalyst of male behavioural intention, while perceived capability and self-efficacy tend to be the catalyst of female behavioural intention.

Important to note that although women show a strong correlation between perceived behavioural control and explicit intention formation, this does not mean that they would actually perform the given task. The result indicates that female respondents' primary component of intention formation is the capability to form the intention itself, which is the antecedent of behaviour. This means that although they perceive themselves as capable of the behavioural intention, this does not mean that they would perceive themselves as capable of the actual behaviour. For example, women may feel capable of applying to a job (*behavioural intention*), but they might not feel capable of sending their resumes to the organisation (*behaviour*). A possible explanation to this finding could be that female respondents possess a greater capability than their male counterparts, simply because of being actively participating in a social science study programme, which is known to be a communal, people-oriented field, associated with female preference (compared to STEM fields, which is highly valued by men) (Card and Payne, 2021; Delaney and Devereux, 2025). Bandura (1997) and Betz and Hackett (1983) complement this explanation by stating that "women generally express a lower sense of efficacy for occupations requiring quantitative skills, but they do not differ from men or surpass them in their efficacy to perform the same quantitative activities in stereotypically feminine tasks" (p. 423). Therefore, the stereotype-congruent statement (*I can easily adapt to others.*) presented to female respondents elicited the communal feeling of adaptability, which in turn increased self-efficacy and the capability to perform behavioural intention.

Although female respondents reported a strong capability that primarily forms their application intention, it is notable that the competence of adaptability is determined by the social situations in which the individual participates. Given the fact that women often find themselves in a subordinate position (e.g., doctor-nurse) (Heilman, 2012; Kocanci, 2025), such hierarchical inequalities may result in a self-limiting behaviour, leaving women no choice but to adapt to others. Because the statement "*I can easily adapt to others.*" does not specify to whom and in what context (because the sentence is part of the created job advertisement, thus it is intentionally not further specified), it may have led respondents to imagine a gender stereotypical setting where women are more likely to adapt to a person holding a higher, more dominant status. One main consequence of women limiting themselves to subordinate positions is that, in the long term, they may avoid or turn down leadership-related tasks (Betz and Hackett, 1983). When having negative beliefs about our own abilities, it may result in "reduced willingness to take risks,

reduced desire to be visible, and negative self-presentation, which hinders career progress” (Heilman, 1983 in Dickerson and Taylor, 2000, p. 194).

In conclusion, Hypothesis 3b is considered partially supported. Although the three components of intention formation show significant correlation with the consciously evaluated statement of female intention formation, the strongest relation of intention formation is not with the subjective norm, but with the perceived behavioural control. This means that women’s own capability plays the most important role when forming behavioural intention.

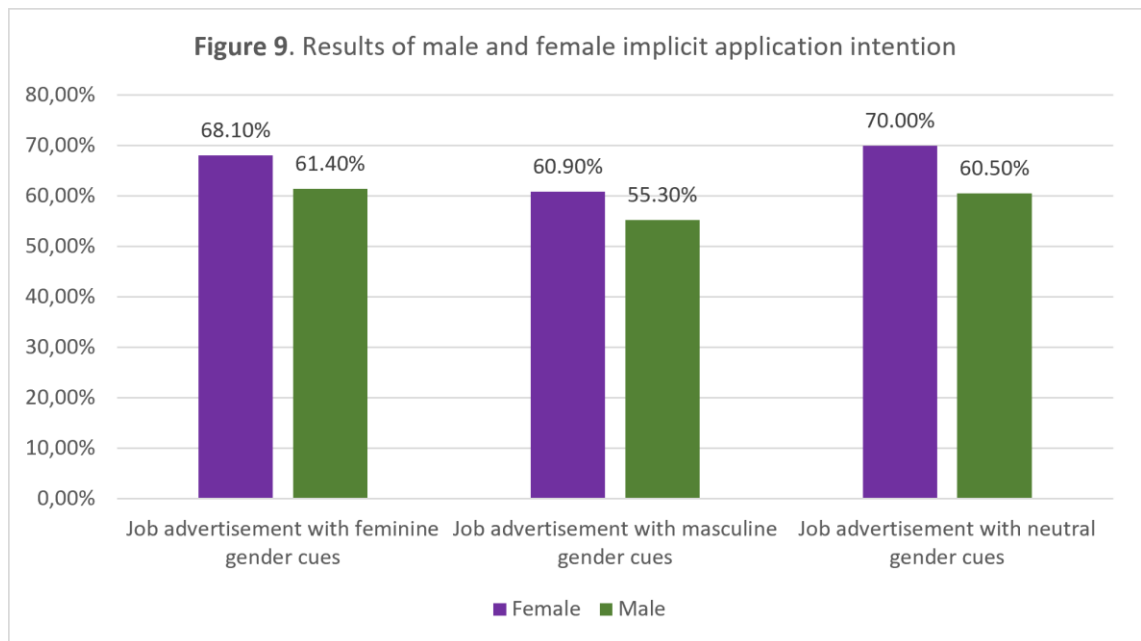
9.4 Male and female perception towards implicit cues in job advertising: application probability

H4. The expressed application probability towards job advertisements containing (male versus female versus neutral) implicit cues differs between male and female respondents.

I ran Pillai’s mixed-design ANOVA test (also called MANOVA) to find out whether there is a difference between male and female perception when exposed to job advertisements containing non-disclosed male/female/neutral signal configurations.

To evaluate this hypothesis, I measured the mean values of gender (men vs. women) and job advertisements (containing male cues vs. female cues vs. neutral signal configurations). With the implementation of the MANOVA statistical method, I could observe the application probability of both genders in the case of each job advertisement type. Respondents could place a slider and evaluate three types of job advertisements on a 0–100 scale. Each job advertisement appeared on a different page so that respondents could only observe one at a time.

Due to the violation of normality testing ($W(435)=0.971$ $p<0.001$), I changed the significance level from 0.05 to 0.01. The result of running Pillai’s MANOVA test indicated that there is a difference in the probability of job application between the three distinct job advertisements (male versus female versus neutral) in terms of gender (Pillai’s Trace = 0.032, $F(3, 435) = 4.823$, $p=0.003$). To find the differences between the three job advertisements, I ran a post hoc test.



The result of Pillai's MANOVA test shows that there is a significant gender difference in the likelihood of responding to the male advertisement $F(1, 435) = 4.366, p=0.037$. On average, women applied for the ad with masculine signal configurations 60.9% of the time, while men applied for the ad with masculine signal configurations 55.3% of the time.

The result of Pillai's MANOVA test shows that there is a significant gender difference in the likelihood of responding to the female advertisement $F(1, 435) = 6.808, p=0.009$. On average, women applied for the ad with feminine signal configurations 68.1% of the time, while men applied for the ad with feminine signal configurations 61.4% of the time.

The result of the Pillai's MANOVA test shows that there is a significant gender difference in the likelihood of responding to the neutral advertisement $F(1, 435) = 13.72, p<0.001$, with women responding to the ad with female neutral signal configurations on average 70% of the time and men responding to the ad with female neutral signal configurations on average 60.5% of the time.

These percentages conclude that, overall, women are more likely to apply to all three types of job advertisements, showing a displacement of masculinization and leaving behind the preference for communal (feminine) wording versus agentic (masculine) wording.

Being one of the most outstanding and surprising results, the neutral job advertisement yielded the biggest difference between male (60.5%) and female (70%) application

probability. Even more interesting is that men would apply with a higher probability percentage to both the neutral job advertisement (60.5%) and to the female job advertisement (61.4%) than to their “most fitting” masculine one (55.3%). These results suggest that when the description – and especially the listed attributes of the ideal candidate – of a job advertisement does not refer to either female or male characteristics, it may increase the application probability for male job seekers.

Based on the above results, two main conclusions can be drawn. On the one hand, in all three types of job advertisements, the female respondents showed the highest application probability, and on the other hand, both men and women chose the neutral job advertisement with the highest probability (women with 70% and men with 60.5%). This means that both genders are more likely to apply to a job advertisement that represents neutral, or, in other words, gender-fair language rather than gender-based crafted verballity, respectively.

Instead of using masculine or feminine forms of words, gender-fair language promotes equal treatment and can even influence behaviour in, for example, organisational decision-making or the hiring process (Horvath, 2015). In their field experiment, Carpio and Fujiwara (2023) analysed the effects of implementing gender-neutral language in job advertisements with an exclusively female pool. The results of the experiment show that the use of gender-neutral language led female respondents to positively reassess job characteristics included in the job ads. In addition, Vervecken et al. (2013) aimed to test whether children’s perceptions vary when exposed to stereotypically male jobs with gender-fair language in their descriptions. The authors found that when, instead of male-congruent linguistic form, gender-fair (pair form) language was used, young girls considered pursuing male-dominated occupations. This is an important finding given the fact that by using gender neutral language, children may be encouraged to consider a wide range of academic professions. Similarly, Stout and Dasgupta (2011) had participants read job descriptions that described the ideal candidate using either masculine terms (e.g., *he, him, guys*) or gender-fair language (e.g., *he or she, his or her, employees*). They found that female participants were more motivated to pursue the job when they read the gender-fair version.

Role theorists argue that an individual exists with various social roles, and these roles affect the way they behave and perceive themselves, but also the way others see their

behaviour (Anglina et al., 2022; Tubre and Collins, 2000). Specifically, the organisational role theory (ORT) has laid the ground to research in human resource management (HRM) and, moreover, provided an important framework for the understanding of work roles within a firm (Cardina and Wicks, 2004). Developed by Katz and Kahn (1966, 1978), the ORT argues that “the division of labour principle necessarily requires employees to enact specific work roles to perform their required tasks effectively and efficiently” (Katz and Kahn, 1978 in Wickham and Parker, 2007, p. 441). The authors further explain that when new employees enter a firm, they will enact specific roles that are “expected” from them by the other members of the organisation. If these roles do not meet the expectations of other colleagues, repercussions may occur, which may manifest in a lower level of commitment and even an increased willingness to resign. Thereby, in light of the results, neutral wording in the job advertisement could have been a desired choice for both male and female applicants, as according to the ORT, their career entrance identity is not primarily defined by their gender (or any other societal factors, like race, culture, religion, etc.), but by their working role. Such role-related expectations may influence the behavioural intention of the individual and also impact his or her job choice.

The respondents of the questionnaire fall in the category of Generation Z (born from 1996 to 2010) (Guld, 2022), which also denotes a salient feature in work-related attitude. According to the Labour Market Expectations investigation conducted by PwC Hungary (one of Hungary’s best-known tax advisory firms), university students’ job-choice preferences are undergoing a social transformation that influences labour market expectations. More than 9,700 university students participated in a preference study, which concluded that their job-choice preferences resemble the general expectations of employees in many ways, yet they differ markedly in a few key aspects. For instance, the participants argued that open and respectful communication, a supportive environment and constructive feedback are all considered basic pillars in today’s workforce. Following open communication, financial stability and work-life balance also play a pivotal role in their employee expectations (PwC, 2025). The results are further supported by Székely and Pillók (2022), who introduced a list of challenges Hungarian youth (specifically Generation Z) are exposed to. Overall, 8,000 participants (between the ages of 15 and 29) were asked in a large-scale research questionnaire about their ten “hot-burning” issues, and while they placed lower importance on family-related issues, the top three challenges included the unpredictable future, financial hardships, and lack of purpose. Therefore, it

becomes evident that the weight of realising a stable, both personally and professionally satisfying career entrance as an inexperienced job seeker results in a more resilient attitude that needs to emphasise an employee's role.

In conclusion, Hypothesis 4 has been supported, as the expressed application probability towards (male versus female versus neutral) job advertisements differs between male and female respondents. This part of the results is in line with previous studies that have reported similar findings (e.g., Carpio and Fujiwara, 2023; Horvath, 2015; Stout and Dasgupta, 2011; Vervecken et al., 2013; Wille and Derous, 2018).

9.5 Explicit intention formation

Intention is viewed as the organiser of everyday behaviour in people's lives. "Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behaviour; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, to perform the behaviour" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181). Because the implicit, not conscious, attitude is often in dissociation with the explicit, self-reported attitude, it is pivotal to study the possible explanations for this discrepancy.

One main advantage of considering both directly and indirectly elicited associations is that it may enable the researcher to gain a more comprehensive knowledge of the attitude as well as the belief system of the respondents. By doing so, the research can gain a complex understanding of both theoretical and methodological considerations; moreover, make a unique contribution to the current literature by encapsulating whether indirect measures produce a stronger association than direct evaluations in the perception of gender stereotypes. However, while the not consciously retrieved indirect evaluations can effortlessly reveal all those automatic evaluations the individual holds towards objects, ideas or social groups, the self-reportedly measured direct attitude implies a more considered interpretation. By doing so, respondents might not produce a significant difference in intention formation.

H5a. *The explicitly expressed intention of male and female respondents is less likely to differ in the female worded intention formation.*

H5b. *The explicitly expressed intention of male and female respondents is less likely to differ in the male worded intention formation.*

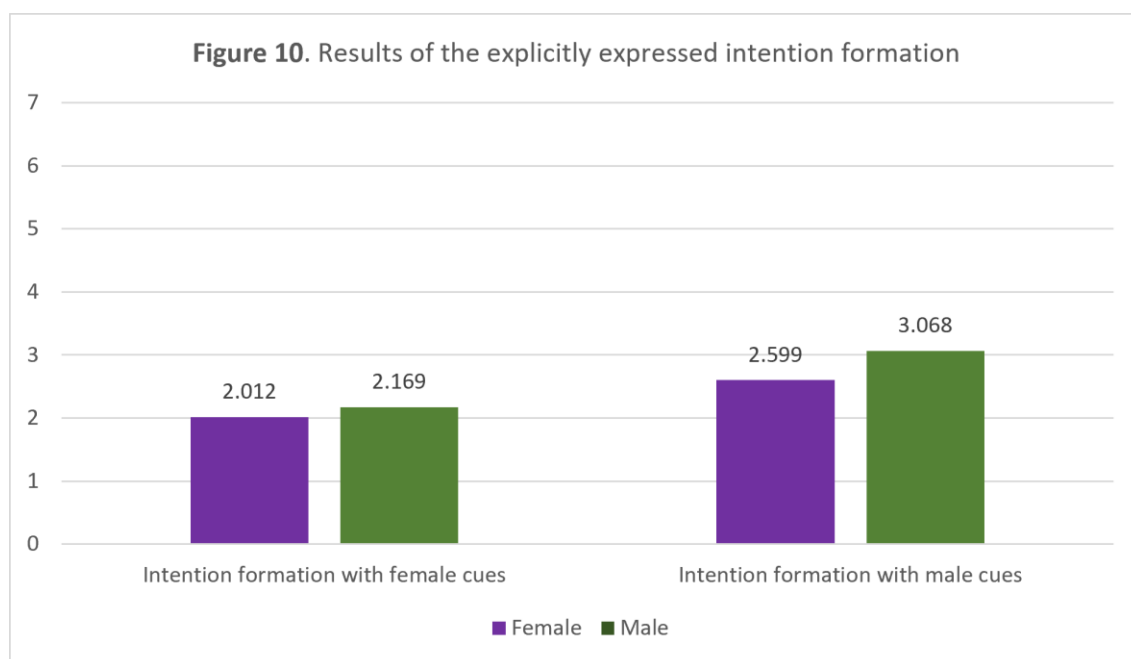
Viewed as a central factor in the theory of planned behaviour, intention can predict human behaviour through behavioural dispositions, such as personality traits and social attitude (Ajzen, 1988, 1991). Based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour questionnaire (Ajzen, 2006), respondents were asked to evaluate a statement that measured explicit (conscious and self-reported) intention. Based on Gaucher et al.'s (2011) and Denier et al.'s (2021) word inventories, and on Baxter et al.'s (2022) gendered wording theory, two statements were created, each containing a gender stereotype-congruent linguistic cue. Students were asked to evaluate both statements on a 7-point Likert-scale.

The statement containing a masculine-typed cue (*confident* and *team-management*): *In my future workplace, it is my intention to confidently manage a team.*

The statement containing feminine-typed cue (*belonging* and *valuable member*): *In my future workplace, it is my intention to be a valuable member of a team.*

Strongly agree : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : _ : Strongly disagree

I ran an independent sample t-test to measure whether there is a difference between male and female respondents when they edirectly (consciously and through self-report) evaluate their behavioural intention in an imaginative job application situation.



On one hand, Figure 10 indicates that there is no difference between men and women in the statement which refers to explicit (direct) intention formation containing female signal

configurations (*In my future workplace it is my intention to be a valuable member of a team.*) ($U=20,138$ $p=0.362$). The average score of male respondents is 2.169, and the average score of female respondents is 2.012. On the other hand, results show that there is a difference between men and women in the statement which refers to explicit intention formation containing male signal configurations (*In my future workplace it is my intention to confidently manage a team.*) ($U=21,955$ $p=0.014$ $r_B=-0.149$). The effect size indicates a weak difference between men ($M=3.068$) and women ($M=2.599$) in favour of men. These results impose two main implications, one rooted in social psychology and the other in organisational communication.

Implicit and explicit social stereotypes tend to differ when individuals express their attitudes towards a behavioural object in question (Fazio et al., 1995). “(...) explicit and implicit measures tap into different sources of information that affect decisions” (Dunlap and Barth, 2023, p. 21). The developmental sources hypothesis suggests that implicit beliefs are reflective of early childhood experiences, while explicit beliefs are formed by recent events and stem from a socially desirable responding (Dunlap and Barth, 2023; Greenwald and Banaji, 1995; Rudman et al., 2007). For instance, if we grew up in a household where the breadwinner was strictly the father, and the mother was exclusively responsible for the household and nurturing, our implicit evaluations of family-related social roles will be congruent with a gender stereotypical worldview. Another possibility is that our more recent experiences complement this view and develop a more favourable, stereotype-incongruent perception of gender roles. In their research, Rudman et al. (2007) tested the developmental sources hypothesis and conducted research on the explicit and implicit attitudes of respondents towards smoking, body weight, and childhood dreams. The authors applied the Implicit Association Tests and predicted that early childhood experiences produce stronger sources for implicit attitudes (compared to explicit attitudes). Their results found evidence for implicit attitudes being indeed strongly influenced by early childhood experiences; moreover, such early experiences are suspected to be acquired through an associative learning system (influenced by emotion), while explicit attitudes are considered to stem from a reflective learning system (influenced by accuracy) (DeCoster et al., 2006). Following Rudman et al.’s (2007) findings, both male and female respondents in my research evaluated the male-typed intention formation (*confidence* and *team-management*) more than the female-typed intention formation (*belonging* and *valuable member*), which presupposes that confidence

and team-management are recent developments for the respondents, influenced by socially desirable responding. Operationally, stigmatised or unfavourable attitudes are viewed as prejudicial. If the attributes of *belonging* or *valuable member* are seen as less favourable by the individual, it will have implications for the self, whether to explicitly report on these or not. Therefore, due to self-justification motives, self-reports are expected to be biased (Rudman et al., 2007).

Another explanatory factor lies in what organisation values that men and women consider important and what they desire to achieve as employees. As seen in Figure 9, although the effect size indicates that there is a weak difference between the mean values of male and female respondents ($U=21,955$ $p=0.014$ $r_B=-0.149$), on average, both genders were more likely to positively evaluate the masculine stereotype-congruent intention statement (male $M=3.068$; female $M=2.599$). Thus, *confidence* and *team-management* resulted in being dominant organisational values that young job seekers seek as potential candidates.

Organisational culture constitutes a key component in shaping employee values; nevertheless, it operationalises what those beliefs, goals, and organisational norms are that an individual desires to develop and acquire once stepping into a working role (Fitzgerald and Desjardins, 2004). “An organisational value refers to implicit and broad goals that can guide the behaviour of individuals at work (Chatman, 1989 in Fitzgerald and Desjardins, 2004, p. 123).

In recent years, Hungarian higher education has experienced shifts that have led nearly all institutions to place a stronger emphasis on market orientation (Heidrich et al., 2022). Several influential ideas have emerged regarding market orientation in higher education. According to Clark’s (1984), the state–market–university community triangular model determines the operational mode of a given higher education system. Because the labour market is part of this system, market orientation plays an essential role in students’ attitudes towards organisational values. The last two decades have resulted in significant institutional changes – like the Bologna Process, the diversifying structure of higher education, and model changes – which have led to meeting the needs of a more diverse student body (Polónyi and Kozma, 2020). Therefore, a possible explanation for respondents positively evaluating the intention to confidently perform in an organisation can be due to the intensified competition on the Hungarian labour market (Heidrich et al., 2022).

Lastly, important to mention that this block of the questionnaire asked participants to imagine that they are actively browsing jobs, and by doing so, they see numerous job advertisements. All evaluated statements were part of an imaginary scenario, which may have encouraged participants to also imagine a fitting organisation in accordance with their beliefs and social expectations. Because there was no labelled organisation at the beginning of the block, the attributes *belonging* and *commitment* might have posed a challenge to perceive and relate to.

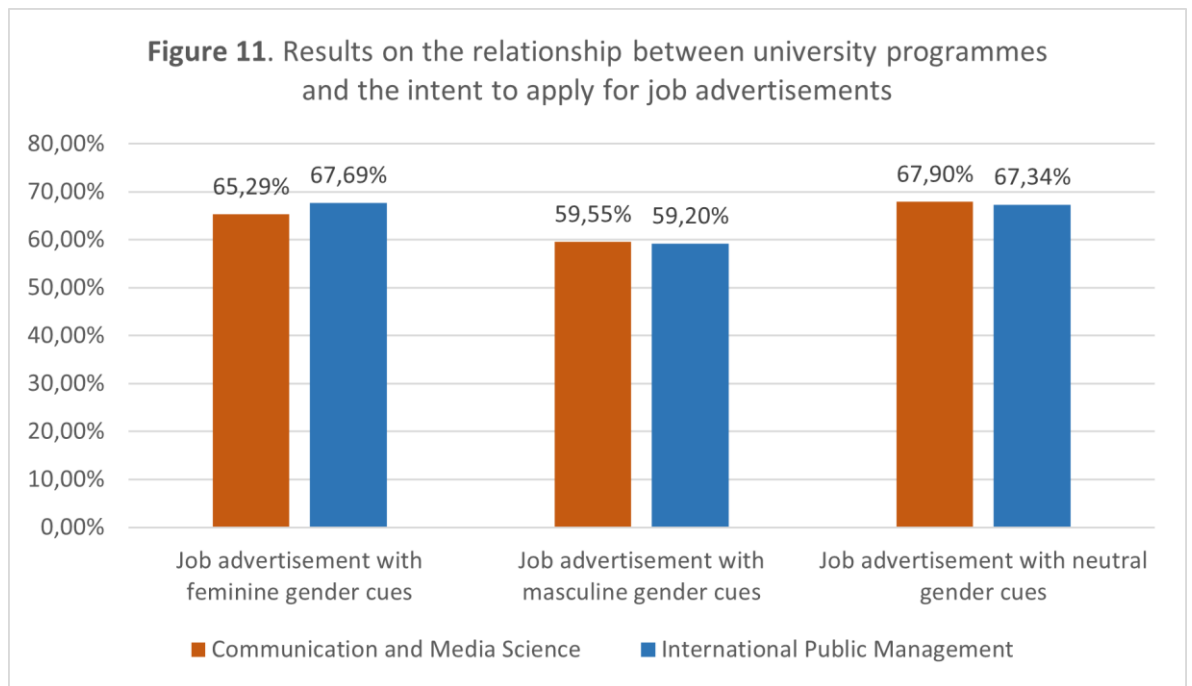
Consequently, Hypothesis 5a and Hypothesis 5b are both supported: there is no statistically significant difference between male and female explicit behavioural intention in a job application situation.

9.6 The connection between application intention and university programmes

H6. Respondents' university programme influences the application probability towards male versus female versus neutral gender worded job advertisements.

The questionnaire has been completed by students from 4 different study programmes: Political Science, International Public Service Relations, Communication and Media Science and International Public Management. In case of two university programmes, the respondents were only marginally represented (International Public Service Relations, N=3; Political Science, N=2) compared to the other two dominant programmes (Communication and Media Science, International Public Management); therefore, the overall 5 respondents from the two underrepresented programmes have been excluded from the sample, resulting in a total of 430 respondents for the H6 testing. The Communication and Media Science programme is composed of 23.6% males and 76.4% females, whereas the International Public Management programme is composed of 29% males and 70% females.

I ran Pillai's MANOVA test to find out whether there is a difference between male and female respondents in the likelihood of applying to a different job advertisement (including male versus female versus neutral signal configurations) based on the university programme they are enrolled in (namely Communication and Media Science and International Public Management).



Due to the violation of normality testing ($W(435)=0.971$ $p<0.001$), I changed the significance level from 0.05 to 0.01.

The result of running Pillai's MANOVA test is that there is no significant difference in the application probability between the three (male versus female versus neutral) advertisements, considering the two analysed university programmes (Pillai's Trace = 0.006, $F(1, 435) = 0.847$, $p=0.469$). In other words, students from both the Communication and Media Science programme and the International Public Management programme show a similar mean percentage when evaluating the application probability of each job advertisement separately.

The smallest difference was observed in the case of the advertisement with male cues, since on average, 59.55% of Communication and Media Science students and 59.2% of International Public Management students would apply for it.

A slightly bigger difference can be observed when students rated the application probability towards the advertisement containing neutral cues. On average, 67.90% of the Communication and Media Science students and 67.34% of the International Public Management students would apply to this advertisement.

The biggest difference between the programmes can be seen in the case of the female-worded job advertisement. On average, 65.29% of the Communication and Media Science students and 67.69% of the International Public Management students would

apply to this advertisement. Yet this difference (0.4%) between the two programmes is still considered minimal; therefore, not statistically significant.

Based on the statistics above, two crucial results shall be highlighted: there is a slight difference in the application probability towards the three different kinds of job advertisements (male versus female versus neutral), yet there is no significant difference in the application probability between the two university programmes (Communication and Media Science and International Public Management). This means that male and female respondents in both programmes are similarly likely to be drawn to a given job advertisement, yet the type of gendered wording of the advertisement causes nuanced differences in the probability percentage. These results imply several explanatory factors regarding the antecedents of male and female career choices.

In line with Kagan's (2009) perspective, science can be categorised according to three different cultures: natural science, social science, and humanities. Natural scientists are concerned with the prediction of natural phenomena as well as material processes. In contrast to that, humanists aim to better understand human reactions to certain social events, whereas the purpose of social scientists is to explain human behaviour and psychological states. The field of social science is viewed as being the closest to communal (versus agentic) characteristics, which is known to be a female-stereotypical attribute. Research has shown that women and men strongly differ in their college major choices, with men being overrepresented in Science, Engineering, Technology, and Mathematics (STEM) fields (Card and Payne, 2021; Delaney and Devereux, 2025). Although the gender gap has slightly narrowed, women remain underrepresented in STEM fields, which are generally viewed as male-stereotyped, agentic fields (Diekmann et al., 2010; Dunlap and Barth, 2023; McKinnon and O'Connell, 2020).

Based on the findings of Wang and Degol (2017), there is a general tendency that women who have a high performance in both mathematics and verbal ability are more likely to choose a non-STEM career path. The authors collected reasons that stand behind this tendency and conclude that simply being good at math-related fields does not mean that one will automatically pursue a math-related career. "When individuals feel capable and interested in math and science, they are more likely to pursue STEM occupations" (Su et al., 2009 in Wang and Degol, 2017, p. 120); however, capability and interest are not the only influential factors in an individual's life concerning career-related decision-making.

Wang and Degol (2017) summarise three main factors that may lead to the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields: (1) cognitive factors (cognitive ability and relative cognitive strength), (2) motivational factors (lifestyle values, field-specific ability beliefs, and career preferences), (3) sociocultural factors (gender-related stereotypes and biases). As confirmed by Hypothesis 4b, female respondents showed a stronger capability (perceived behavioural control) in a job application situation than male respondents. This suggests that those women who choose a study programme within the field of social sciences may also have a stronger perceived capability.

While STEM fields in higher education (and in the labour market as well) are generally dominated by men (McKinnon and O'Connell, 2020; Wang and Degol, 2017), the purpose of the research was to observe students from social science programmes, which have a rather gender-mixed composition. Based on the MTA ranking²⁵, the Communication and Media Science and International Public Management study programmes fall in the category of social sciences. The findings of the MANOVA test suggest that, in general, the respondents of both study programmes are more likely to apply to a job advertisement that either contained feminine or neutral wording. This result is in line with the results of Hypothesis 1, which indicated that there is a difference in the probability rate of job application between the three advertisements (male versus female versus neutral) in terms of gender (Pillai's Trace = 0.032, $F(3, 438) = 4.823$, $p=0.003$). After running a post hoc test, the results showed that both male and female respondents chose the neutral job advertisement with the highest mean probability value (women with 70% and men with 60.5%). Both findings of Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 6 point to the fact that job advertising that favours neutral, gender-fair linguistic tools is more likely to attract both male and female job seekers, which is nevertheless true for students coming from social science university programmes. The gender composition of the respondents is not equally distributed: the International Public Management programme is composed of 29% males and 70% females, and the Communication and Media Science programme is composed of 23.6% males and 76.4% females. On one hand, the unequal distribution of male and female respondents could play a distorting role in the results, on the other hand, this unequal composition (favouring women) is hardly a surprise, as much research talks about the biased stereotype in career choice orientation, which uses generalized

²⁵ <https://mta.hu/doktori-tanacs/tudomanyagi-nomenklatura-106809>

concepts like “masculine STEM field” and “feminine social science field” (Card and Payne, 2021; Delaney and Devereux, 2025; Dunlap and Barth, 2023).

Occupational gender stereotypes may evolve due to the assumptions about whether a male or female individual holds the necessary attributes to succeed in a certain occupation (White and White, 2006). “The gender gap in STEM majors is fuelled by perceptions that STEM professions do not afford the communal goals (helping others, working with people, making a positive impact on society) that women typically value and are associated with female-dominated people-oriented majors” (Dunlap and Barth, 2023, p. 20). This phenomenon is explained by the goal congruity theory (GCT), which says that female career choices, in general, are motivated by the willingness to fulfil communal roles (being altruistic and caring for others), more so than agentic roles (desiring prestige and status), which is highly valued by males and associated with STEM fields (Diekmann et al., 2017; Dunlap and Barth, 2019; Freund et al., 2012). The theory draws on the idea that different career goals generate different perceived goal affordability, which may attract or deter the career interest of individuals (Diekmann et al., 2016). Gender bias in occupational aspirations as well as work preferences becomes well established in late adolescence and early adulthood, which means that the career trajectories offered by high school are a fundamental stage in the life of a young individual, who stands at the beginning of career selection (Correll, 2001; Wang and Degol, 2017).

A similarly influential theory on female career choice, the social cognitive career theory (SCCT), embraces all the possible career-related variables that may directly or indirectly impact an individual (Lent et al., 1994). The SCCT asserts that following the learning experience stage, there are basic core contextual (barrier and support) and person (self-efficacy, interest, outcome expectations, and goals) variables that influence career-related choice behaviour (Lent and Brown, 2006). The theory further emphasises that career development is not something linear, but a rather complex process that involves a multi-angle perspective on the work-related attitude and goal-fulfilment of men and women. Both theories, the GCT and SCCT, are considered fundamental theories that laid the ground for a wide array of research offering explanation to the gender segregation in the labour market context (Delaney and Devereux, 2025; Leibing et al., 2023; Tellhed et al., 2017).

By testing Hypothesis 6, we could observe that the application probability of male and female respondents to the three differently gender worded job advertisement reports no significant difference in terms of the study programme respondents are actively enrolled in (Pillai's Trace = 0.006, $F(1, 435) = 0.847$, $p=0.469$). Nuanced differences, however, could be explored between the three job advertisements. While respondents showed the lowest preference for the job advertisement with the masculine-typed wording, the job ads with the neutral and feminine wording resulted in a higher application probability. A possible explanation for this would be that people who engage in social science studies might also be more likely to select a career that aligns with communality, such as cooperation, caring, and nurturing roles (Delaney and Devereux, 2025; Kagan, 2009; Leibing et al., 2023). In their study, Nosek et al. (2009) reported that self-reported stereotyping did not yield significant validation of differentiations; however, implicit stereotypes prevailed in the case of science and math achievements of boys. The authors state the following: "Changing implicit stereotypes is not just a matter of influencing intentions; it also requires consideration of the social realities that shape minds without intention" (Nosek et al., 2009, p. 17). This is a defining statement, as the dissertation takes a similar position on the influence of implicit stereotypes.

Overall, International Public Management students would apply for the advertisement with female cues (67.69%), and Communication and Media Science students would apply for the advertisement with neutral cues (67.90%). Consequently, H6 is not supported, since the respondents' university programme they are actively enrolled in does not significantly influence the type of job advertisement (male versus female versus neutral) they would consider applying to, and there is no significant difference between the two study programmes either.

9.7 Summary of the results

In the previous chapter, the thesis presented the results of the research questionnaire along with their explanatory factors. Given the fact that there are six main hypotheses (and twelve sub-hypotheses altogether), Table 3 briefly serves as a comprehensive summary of all empirical findings.

Hypotheses	The results of the empirical research
H1a. The preference for male work values differs based on gender.	There is a significant difference between men and women in the explicit (conscious) evaluation of male, female, and neutral work values. Gender

H1b. The preference for female work values differs based on gender. H1c. The preference for neutral work values differs based on gender.	stereotypes are prevalent, as men are more likely to place higher importance on male work values (M= 16.13), whereas women find both male (M= 16.74%) and female (M = 16.65%) work values equally important.
H2a. Feminine gender cues implicitly (not consciously) influence female respondents. H2b. Masculine gender cues implicitly (not consciously) influence male respondents.	Explicit and implicit perception of women shows a significant correlation, since a co-movement can be observed between the two variables. Whereas in the case of male respondents, results suggest no significant correlation between explicit and implicit perception.
H3a. The three components of intention formation (attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) correlate with male intention formation in the case of male respondents. The subjective norm component (as opposed to the attitude toward behaviour and perceived behavioural control) shows the strongest effect on intention formation. H3b. The three components of intention formation (attitude toward behaviour, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control) correlate with female intention formation in the case of female respondents. The subjective norm component (as opposed to the attitude toward behaviour and perceived behavioural control) shows the strongest effect on intention formation.	In the case of both male and female respondents, there is a significant correlation between behavioural intention and the three components of intention formation. Male respondents show the strongest correlation between intention formation and social norm (external social expectations). Female respondents show the strongest correlation between intention formation and perceived behavioural control (capability).
H4. The expressed application probability towards job advertisements containing (male versus female versus neutral) implicit cues differs between male and female respondents.	There is a significant difference between male and female implicit (not conscious) application probability in the case of the three job advertisements (male, female, neutral). Women are most likely to apply to the job ad with neutral cues (70%), while men are most likely to apply to the job ad with feminine cues (61.40%). The biggest difference in male and female application probability can be observed in the case of the job advertisement with neutral cues (Female = 70%, Male = 60.50%).
H5a. The explicitly expressed intention of male and female respondents is less likely to differ in the female-worded intention formation. H5b. The explicitly expressed intention of male and female respondents is less likely to differ in the male-worded intention formation.	On one hand, there is no difference between men and women in the statement which refers to explicit intention formation containing female cues (<i>belonging</i> and <i>valuable member</i>), while on the other hand, there is a difference between men and women in the statement which refers to explicit intention formation containing male cues

	(<i>confidence</i> and <i>team-management</i>). Overall, men and women were both more likely to positively evaluate the masculine stereotype-congruent intention statement, placing higher value on confidence and team-management.
H6. Respondents' university programme influences the application probability towards male versus female versus neutral gender worded job advertisements.	There is no statistically significant difference in the application probability between the three job advertisements (male, female, neutral). Students from both the Communication and Media Science programme and the International Public Management programme show a similar mean percentage when evaluating the application probability of each job advertisement separately. Small differences can be observed: while respondents showed the lowest preference for the job advertisement with the masculine-typed wording, the job advertisement with the neutral and feminine wordings resulted in a higher application probability.

Table 4. Summary of the empirical research results (*own construct*)

10. Discussion

The thesis aimed to answer the research question of whether gender-framed advertisement configurations influence the choice preferences of job applicants. The empirical findings of the thesis clearly demonstrate that there are clear-cut differences between Hungarian male and female university students when exposed to different types of job advertisements that contain non-disclosed gender-related (male vs. female vs. neutral) signal configurations, which in turn affect their job preference and application intention. Hypothesis 4 aimed to find out if non-explicitly presented gender-related signal configurations embedded in job advertisements give rise to different attitudinal preferences. H4 was supported, as female respondents would apply to the advertisements containing neutral configurations with a 70% probability, whereas male respondents were more likely to apply to the advertisement containing feminine configurations with a 61.40% probability. These results highlight a shifting tendency, stepping away from classical gender stereotypical congruence connecting men with agentic wording and women with communal wording, and instead moving towards a stereotype-incongruent job preference that challenges the widely accepted, socially and culturally embedded societal norms.

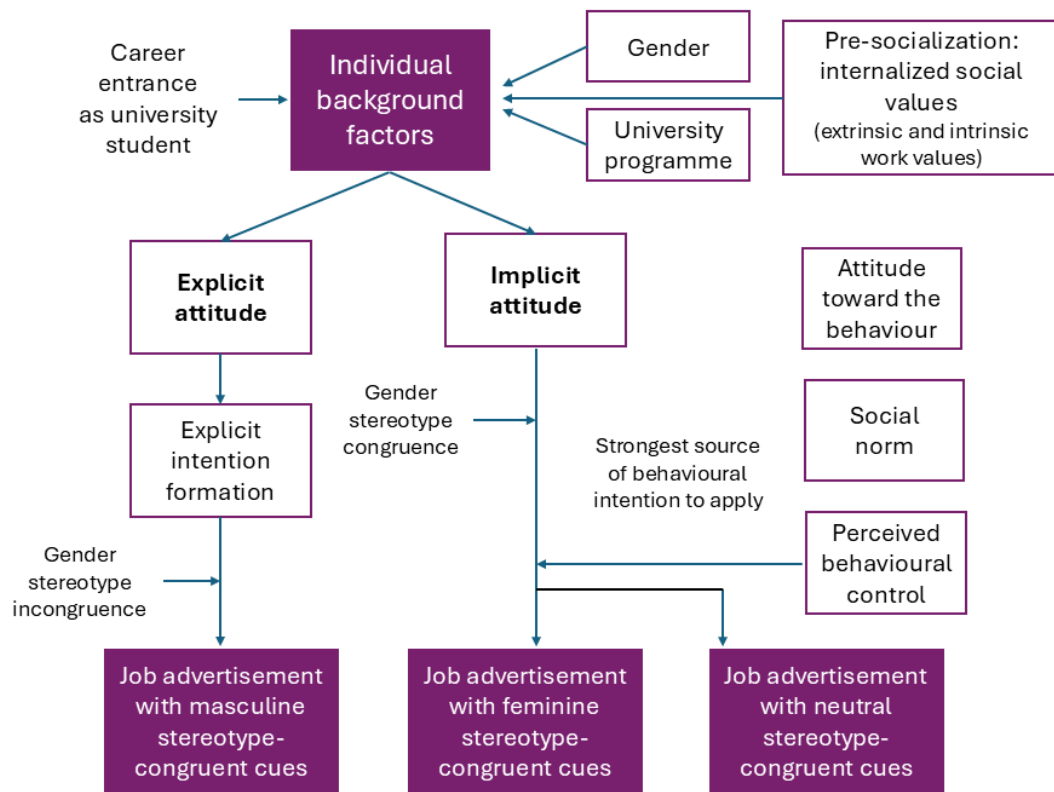
Linguistic gender differences are not, however, the only distinguishing sources of attitude formation. Results, in general, concluded that explicit (conscious, self-reported) and implicit (not conscious, automatic) variables may elicit varying attitudes from the respondents. Based on the research results of the dissertation, this section suggests two distinct models – about men and women separately – that present the assessed factors influencing the initial stage of career entrance and therefore determining university students' attitudes towards job application intention. Figures 12 and 13 represent the two models for male and female respondents, respectively.

Entering the world of employment can pose a great challenge for career entrants. The workplace has undergone major changes in the last several decades, which have left their mark on the nature of work and on the expected social skills of job seekers (Ryan and Morgenroth, 2024). The globalisation of various companies, the increased use of information technology, and the implementation of different work strategies resulted in more dynamic career pathways, yet also gave rise to a more uncertain organisational and societal environment (Hedge and Rineer, 2017). This dramatically distinct career landscape made employees deviate from traditional, long-term employment and set out in pursuit of professional growth, promotional opportunities, and increased marketability. Although the transformation of workplaces generally impacts all career entrants, it also highlights important differences in the way Hungarian male and female young adults cope with such organisational and human resource expectations.

Women's career trajectories have long been an "obstacle course". They are paid less than their male counterparts, even if performing the same role (International Labour Organisation, 2022). They are overrepresented in occupations and sectors that are low in status (UN Women, 2025), and they are dramatically underrepresented in leadership positions (World Economic Forum, 2025). Although some initiatives (gender equality practitioners, government, or other organisations) aimed to "fix" women for the sake of a more balanced organisational equality (Ryan and Morgenroth, 2024; Schmader et al., 2022), such strategies failed to address the systematic factors that catalyse gender inequality (Ryan, 2023). These insights are clearly supported by the findings of my thesis. As my results suggest (visually showcased by Figure 12), Hungarian female university students' background factors do not entirely align with stereotype-congruent traits. They evaluated both intrinsic (characteristic of women) and extrinsic (characteristic of men) work values to be similarly important (H1), indicating a very pivotal hallmark of pre-

socialisation: female university students implicitly internalise and place high importance on both male and female work values, which goes against their stereotype-congruence of preferring exclusively “female-fitting” intrinsic values. This ambivalent evaluation supports the idea that women experience a higher education-to-work transition phase (Silvia and Carvalho, 2021) in which it becomes natural to change job-related priorities and give greater weight to financial stability and career advancement opportunities (which are seen as extrinsic work values). Therefore, these transitioned factors seem to be implicitly embedded in female job seekers, who, without any conscious understanding, underline the value of acquiring skills that represent both masculine and feminine traits.

Figure 12. The visual model presents the results of female respondents’ explicit and implicit attitude and intention formation towards job advertisements (*own construct*)



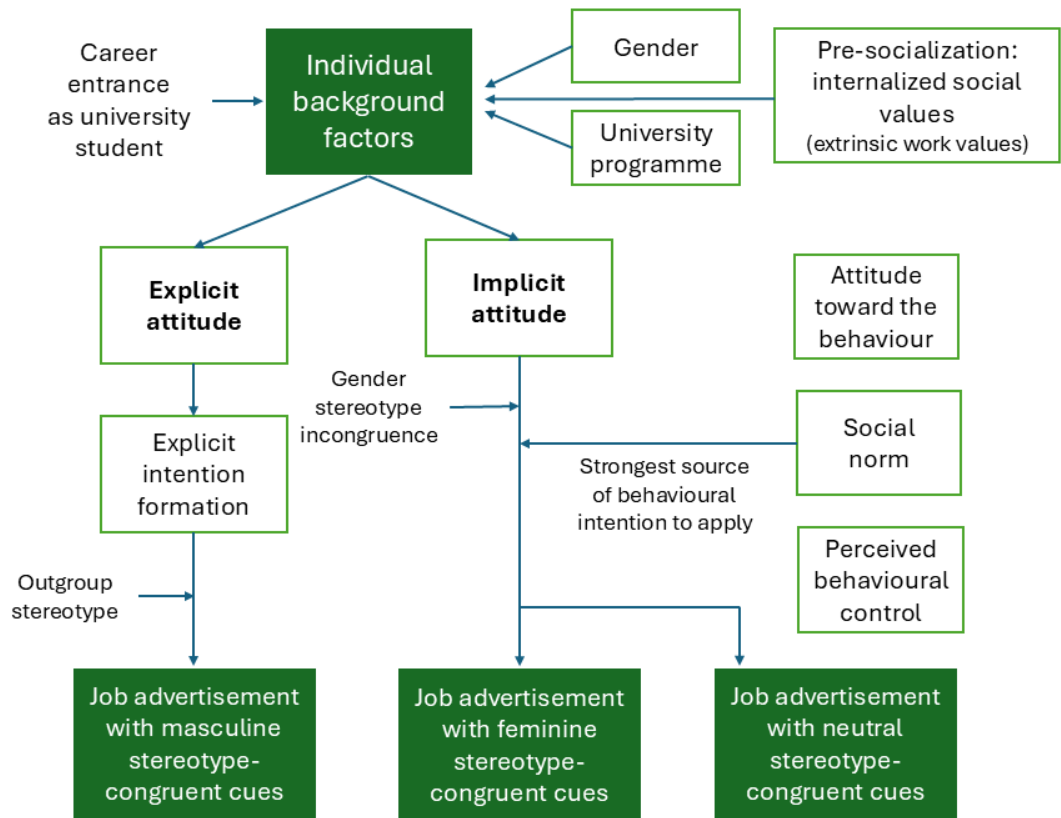
Besides social values, gender, university programme, and career orientation are also influential variables in female perception towards application intention, as the distinction between explicit and implicit attitudes shows (Figure 12). Although women implicitly rated ability as the most important factor in intention formation (H3b), a disruption appears in the process: when they evaluated explicitly (consciously), they placed greater importance on masculine traits, which denotes a stereotype-incongruent attitude. Female

job seekers are aware of the masculine skills and expectations emphasised by the labour market, and they may consciously shape their application intentions in alignment with these norms. “Women’s deficits are seen in relation to societal and organisational ideals - ideal workers, ideal team members, ideal leaders (and even ideal humans)” (Perez, 2019 in Ryan and Morgenroth, 2024). Rooted in gendered organisations, such ideals are primarily associated with male stereotypes, which are evidently persistent in the modern world of employment (Kossek et al., 2021). This idealised picture of a worker continues to encapsulate masculine abilities and traits, including working long hours, prioritising work over family, and striving for high status (Kelly et al., 2010; Ryan and Morgenroth, 2024). Thus, as the research supports, the image of the “ideal worker” is vividly present in the Hungarian labour market, one that prioritises masculine characteristics in terms of successful career orientation.

In contrast to self-reported, explicit intention formation, female respondents formed a different attitude when subtle linguistic cues were embedded as implicit variables. Evidence suggests that women, on average, are more likely to report a lower level of ambition than men; nevertheless, they are also more likely to opt out sooner from organisations (Antecol, 2011; Fouad et al., 2023). However, instead of looking at the behavioural intention (e.g., intending to leave the firm), these results reflect on the actual behaviour of female employees (e.g., actually leaving the firm). Based on the findings of the thesis, among the three components of intention formation, the ability component produced the strongest association with conscious intention formation in the case of women. This means that women unconsciously perceive a strong sense of ability when forming behavioural intention, yet it may decrease when performing the actual behaviour. Their strongest application intention was perceived in the case of the job advertisements with neutral (70%) and feminine (68.10%) gender-framed signal configurations, which aligns with stereotype-congruence, accentuating an attraction towards female traits. Important to note that the job advertisement with neutral cues showed the strongest significance for female respondents, further supporting the higher education-to-work transition phase (Silvia and Carvalho, 2021) and the goal congruity theory (Diekmann et al., 2017). While the former emphasizes the tendency that regardless of gender, professional opportunities and earnings dominate the preference of career entrants, the latter posits that women’s career choices are generally driven more by the desire to fulfil communal roles – such as altruism and caring for others – than by agentic motives, such

as seeking prestige and status, which are more strongly valued by men and closely associated with STEM fields (Diekmann et al., 2017).

Figure 13. The visual model presents the results of male respondents' explicit and implicit attitude and intention formation towards job advertisements (*own construct*)



Since the 1960s, vocational psychology researchers have been inclined towards career development and work choices (Gottfredson and Becker, 1981). Career development is defined as the process of making decisions about work-related aspects when transitioning from adolescence to adulthood (Fouad et al., 2023; Kunnen, 2013). A strong career pathway can be determined by the needs, expectations and acquired skills an employee holds, which may influence how the firm designs its career development systems for the sake of a progressive working environment.

Although for a long time it was believed that these defining, life-shaping decisions would last a lifetime (Parker, 1966), today an employee makes numerous decisions that affect their career (Hedge and Rineer, 2017). “A widespread assumption in vocational psychology is that aspirations for particular types of work play a significant role in determining the kinds of jobs people eventually obtain” (Gottfredson and Becker, 1981,

p. 121). However, these aspirations may only be reflections of the kinds of work-related experiences we have had, and these may not function as determinants of the future behaviour we perform (Roberts, 1968). As the visual model in Figure 13 encapsulates, the implicit (not conscious) and explicit (conscious) response systems of male respondents strongly differ in terms of job preference and intention formation. Extrinsic, “male-fitting” values were rated the highest, meaning that male participants tend to place greater importance on work values that are characteristic of masculinity. More specifically, *pay* and *promotion* (male stereotype) were consciously rated more important than *work itself* and *altruism* (female stereotype) or *environment* and *coworkers* (neutral). This pattern becomes evident in conscious evaluations, resulting in men showing a stereotype-congruent attitude towards explicit signals (these results are sustained by Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 5). Through explicit intention formation, men are more likely to act in accordance with their outgroup stereotypes (comprehending their own gender as an externally perceived group) and thus prefer a job advertisement that contains male cues. In addition, another interrelated result (H3a) pointed out that the strongest source of male intention formation lies in the social norm component, which refers to the motivation (and even pressure) the men experience from their surroundings. Such expectations and gender norms have developed from socio-cultural and historical factors that may largely influence the image of femininity and masculinity, and the way they are perceived (Mshweshwe, 2020). When men self-reportedly evaluate statements that encapsulate their own gender, the picture of a so-called “ideal man” can be activated, which strengthens a dominant form of masculinity, and contributing to the preservation of a hegemonic masculinity (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Young et al., 2025), to the breadwinner ideology (Cullen et al., 2015; Kalleberg and Marsden, 2019), as well as to a status syndrome (Marmot, 2004). These prevailing male-focused social norms collectively suggest that Hungarian male university students experience substantial societal pressure and are expected to meet elevated standards in their careers.

At the same time, in contrast to explicit intention formation, implicit tendencies reveal a preference for more feminine attributes (H4), which may stem from the not conscious self-prioritising of a more neutral identity – one that places greater emphasis on intrinsic values as well. Although male respondents showed a 61.50% probability of applying to the job advertisements with female signal configurations, the job advertisement with neutral signal configurations closely follows this preference with a 60% probability. This

result shows the same attitudinal preference as female respondents: both men and women implicitly prioritise the working role over other gender-congruent roles, which further supports the organisational role theory (Cardina and Wicks, 2004). In addition, men's not conscious preference for communal signals can be characterised by a non-hegemonic masculinity, which contradicts the principles of patriarchal ideology by displaying men in a negative, even 'toxic' manner (Wailing, 2019), furthermore contributing to gender inequality (Allen, 2025).

Overall, the findings indicate a clear discrepancy between implicit and explicit attitudes among the examined Hungarian male university students: on the one hand, explicit signals elicited stereotype-congruent attitudes, while on the other hand, implicit signals elicited stereotype-incongruent attitudes. This divergence raises important questions regarding the expectations placed on male university students at the outset of their careers, which largely impacts their organisational behaviour, job choice, and most importantly, the interconnection between self-efficacy and the perceived Hungarian social expectations.

As outlined above, sharp gender differences have been yielded in the results of the thesis; there is, however, a dominant similarity. Respondents expressed their implicit intention to apply most strongly for the advertisement containing neutral cues (H4): male students with 60.50%, and female students with 70%. These percentages show a significantly high tendency (compared to the other application probability percentages in the case of H4) for men and women to implicitly (not consciously) prefer a working role over their respective gender role. Thus, neutral signal configurations – identified in the word inventories introduced by Gaucher et al. (2011) and Denier et al. (2022) – can be seen as powerful tools in Hungarian job advertisements that can activate both male and female implicit attitudes towards increased organisational attraction. Such gender-neutral configurations (Figure 7) may enable male and female career entrants to position themselves in possible employments, which may strengthen their job-matching processes as they stand at the beginning of creating their own career trajectories.

Career choice is considered one of the most fundamental tasks in late adolescents' identity development. In the life-span stage theory, introduced by Erikson, "identity development is the main developmental task in late adolescence" (Kunnen, 2013, p. 1). When university students implicitly chose the job advertisement with neutral signal

configurations, they placed their work identity as a primary source of social cognition, while femininity and masculinity became a background identity (Hedge and Rineer, 2017). To explain gender as a background identity, a female employer–male employee relation serves as a good example. Although the central identities of employer and employee are institutionally defined, gender as an implicit background identity “imports an added set of meanings that may implicitly modify how actors perform the activities (...)” (Ridgeway, 2011, p. 70). Therefore, the female employer may exercise the gendered display of her leadership skills and agentic concern for the employee, while the male employee may act as a hierarchically subordinate part of the organisation with the gendered expression of openness and communal attributes. In short, gender identity and working identity do not collide, but rather complement one another in an organisational setting. This process facilitates the development of individual organisational identity, as a perceived fit between the individual’s social identity and the organisation increases the job seeker’s attraction toward the position (Wille and Derous, 2017).

The early career stage exerts a significant influence on behavioural intention: in both genders, a shift toward the neutral option can be observed, indicating that, overall, gender functions as an implicit background identity among the participating university students. At the same time, organisational identity – closely tied to the prospective job role – emerges as a salient and influential factor. Overall, the results of the thesis suggest that work values, implicit and explicit linguistic cues, and gender categorisation significantly influence how Hungarian university students perceive career entrance and the kinds of job advertisements they would intend to apply for.

11. Conclusion

The world of work is a critical arena for men and women. When young job seekers enter the higher education-to-work transition phase (Silvia and Carvalho, 2021), they already have an initial and rather inexperienced understanding of the labour market. Through their pre-socialisation phase, individuals acquire various interpretations of how a man and a woman should behave, what type of organisational roles they should occupy, or where their “most fitting” place is on a hierarchical ladder. By setting specified expectations distinctively crafted to masculinity and femininity, they become embedded into societal norms, and as a result, potential candidates are trapped in the realisation of “ideal” traits

that perpetuate gender inequalities. Considering the other side of recruitment, human resource management may take advantage of such gender biases and stereotypes and thus choose to integrate male-typed or female-typed verbal signals in their job descriptions for the sake of an increased Person-Organisation Fit.

The routine process of automatically categorising others may implicitly elicit gender stereotypes in our minds, which ultimately leads to a so-called “gender game” that shapes our behaviours in social relations (Ridgeway, 2011). This “game” offers employers recruitment tools, and instead of explicit verbal signalling, human resource management may non-explicitly address male and female potential applicants through subtle, yet stereotypical, gender-framed signal configurations. Gaucher et al. (2011) were the first to document a systematic difference between male and female attraction towards different kinds of jobs. They found that women are more likely to be attracted to job advertisements that use communal traits (e.g., kind, communicative, patient, people-oriented), and men are more likely to prefer job advertisements that use agentic traits (e.g., confident, team-manager, goal-oriented, leadership skills). Such subtle feminine or masculine configurations may implicitly influence how individuals perceive organisational culture, job fit, and career orientation, even when no explicit reference is present.

The above-mentioned research findings laid the ground for the dissertation. By building on already existing literature on gendered wording and organisational behaviour, the thesis took a step further and studied the attitudes and job preferences of young job-seeking students towards male, female, and neutral signal configurations in job advertising. By investigating the underlying mechanisms of university students’ job choice, the research findings may contribute to a more comprehensive model of applicant attraction as well as retention, highlighting the affective components of social cognition that operate beyond conscious awareness.

11.1 Novelties of the research

The dissertation set two main goals. First, a theoretical goal that looks at the multidisciplinary nature of the thesis; second, a methodological goal, which proposes a novel analytical direction in implicit attitude. The two goals were the following:

- From a theoretical point of view, to define the influential factors of the early stage of career entrance and define the variables that report gender differences in attitude and intention formation towards male and female linguistic cues. As

Figures 12 and 13 present, entering the job market includes a collection of individual-based characteristics that can create a clear division between the way a man and a woman perceive the importance of work values, organisational expectations, and career opportunities. Therefore, it was important to assess the gender-related aspects that stand in correlation with young job seekers' application intention and job preference. By approaching the dissertation from a multidisciplinary angle – intertwining organisational communication, social psychology, human resource management, and gender linguistics – the aim was to propose a model that encapsulates the interconnectedness of the listed research fields and propose an alternative understanding of career communication.

- From a methodological perspective, the scope of the research was to test the adequate applicability of Ajzen's theory of planned behaviour questionnaire on job seekers' intention formation towards job advertisements. Based on reviewing and synthesising a wide array of research, and to the best of the author's knowledge, no study has been identified that has carried out a similar investigation into the perception of Hungarian word embeddings in job advertising among Hungarian university students in the higher education institutions of Budapest.

The theoretical and methodological relevance of the dissertation can be highlighted in its research results. As the thesis has been built on a systematic literature review (offering a comprehensive summary of the implemented methods of my research field), a research questionnaire (serving as the main source of data collection), and overall, twelve hypotheses and a research question, prominent findings have been yielded from the data analysis. The novelties of the thesis can be presented as follows:

1. Identification of differences between implicit and explicit attitude formation:

As Figures 12 and 13 showcase, respondents' attitude formation differs in whether they perceived and evaluated an explicit (conscious, self-reported) or implicit (not conscious, automatic) verbal signal configuration. Men and women exhibit opposing attitudes in terms of explicit (conscious) and implicit (not conscious) perception of the presented cues. Male respondents' explicit attitude formation is fuelled by stereotype-congruence, preferring masculine configurations, while their implicit attitude aligns with stereotype-incongruence, preferring both female and neutral configurations in job advertising. Female respondents reported just the opposite of male attitude formation: female respondents' explicit attitude is

grounded in stereotype-incongruence, showing an increased probability of choosing male-typed attributes, but when exposed to non-explicit signal configurations, women tend to prefer more feminine and neutral signal configurations in job advertising. Overall, explicit and implicit attitude formation significantly differ between male and female respondents.

2. Identification of differences between male and female intention formation:

Behavioural intention formation is composed of three main pillars: attitude toward the behaviour, social norm, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1999, 2006). Respondents evaluated statements that were formulated according to these three components. On one hand, female intention formation yielded the strongest statistical correlation with perceived behavioural control, which indicates the capability of the individual. This result positively highlights female self-efficacy, perceiving themselves as capable of applying to a given job advertisement (which is the antecedent of actually performing a specific job). On the other hand, male intention formation resulted in the strongest correlation with the social norm component, that is, the perceived social pressure from members of the individual's environment. Amongst others, the finding can be primarily explained by the male-specific status syndrome, increased levels of male stress, and social expectations imposed on men.

3. Organisational behaviour and identity formation: An identical implicit preference emerges across respondents. Both male and female university students would apply to the job advertisement with the neutral wording, with the highest probability percentage (Male=60.50%, Female=70%). Approaching the result from the role congruity perspective, young career entrants are more likely to perceive their gender as a background identity and foreground their worker identity, which they unconsciously associate with a neutral description (versus male and female stereotypical descriptions). This logic can be pivotal for human resource specialists in talent management.

4. Hungarian language as the catalyst of gender stereotypes: The linguistic basis of the dissertation's research is served by the three main sources: the word inventories of Gaucher et al. (2011) and Denier et al. (2022), and the gendered wording conceptualisation of Baxter et al. (2022). The findings suggest that differently gender-framed (male vs. female vs. neutral) advertisement configurations were associated with differences in participants' application

evaluations. As H2, H4, and H5 indicate, words that hold reference to either femininity, masculinity or neutrality will, in fact, influence how the recipient evaluates his or her “fitting” job choice.

5. **The shift of women towards masculine orientation:** Gender discrimination and segregation at work have long been issues in organisational scenarios. A shifting tendency can be observed as female university students show a strong preference, both implicitly (H4) and explicitly (H5), towards masculine stereotypical attributes. More specifically, female respondents were more likely to positively evaluate extrinsic work values (stereotypical to men) and explicit intention formation containing masculine stereotype-congruent words (namely, confidence and team-management) than those with feminine stereotype-congruent words (typical to women).
6. **Development of a novel methodological approach in implicit attitude measurement:** So far, the research questionnaire developed to measure behavioural intention (namely, Ajzen’s theory of planned behaviour questionnaire, 2006) has been less implemented in organisational contexts. Therefore, it has been one of the research scopes to test the questionnaire’s applicability, whether it is feasible to measure intention formation towards job advertising, especially those that contain three distinct variables (female, male, and neutral wordings). The study explored the applicability of TPB-based measures to job-application intention in a recruitment-communication context.

11.2 Significance and applicability

The present research aimed to address non-disclosed gender-related signal configurations that may generate gender bias by being non-explicitly communicated in job advertisements, limiting the application intention of young job-seeking university students. Based on the listed novelties in section 11.1, it can be concluded that the present dissertation constitutes a significant contribution to the field of communication studies, and therefore, its research findings are of substantial value for further theoretical and practical applications.

As labour markets become more competitive and organisations strive to attract diverse talent, the subtle linguistic cues embedded in job advertisements have gained strategic importance. Within the examined sample, the dissertation asserts that gendered wording is not merely a stylistic choice but rather a psychological stimulus that shapes perception,

attitude, and ultimately behavioural intention. The relevance of this topic emerges from several interconnected theoretical, methodological, and practical considerations, which have also been one of the main objectives of the thesis.

The findings reveal a striking divergence between directly and indirectly assessed evaluations and intention formation among male and female respondents. This distinction is crucial because recruitment research has historically relied heavily on explicit, self-reported measures, often overlooking the automatic, implicit processes that shape job seekers' perceptions and attitudes. By demonstrating this divergence, the thesis may contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how job seekers interpret gendered language and how human resource management should consider more conscious wording in their job advertising.

When crafting advertisements, it is crucial to consider subtle elements that might lead to unintended outcomes, such as self-limiting behaviours or gender segregation. Organisations should avoid employing solely masculine gender markers in their advertisements, as these signals may suggest that women are incompatible and thus should be avoided. The findings signify the importance of tailoring recruitment communication to the psychological drivers of male and female potential candidates. Understanding these mechanisms is essential for all kinds of organisations that seek to reduce gender disparities in application rates and improve the inclusivity of their hiring processes. On one hand, knowledge about the increased attraction to neutral wordings offers actionable guidance for recruitment specialists and those who work in the field of human resource management and graphic design for job advertising. On the other hand, leveraging these results, the implementation of online and offline training programmes and corporate workshops may also prove effective in enhancing work-related values and perceptions, as well as in reducing gender-based occupational segregation. The linguistic auditing of existing job advertisements, the development of validated Hungarian wordlists, and the emphasis that neutral phrasing alone does not eliminate organisational discrimination – therefore, monitoring the gender composition of applicants, job requirements, and offered benefits remains essential.

The result of the thesis also contributes to the growing field of gender linguistics, particularly within the Hungarian context. By drawing on established word inventories (Baxter et al., 2022; Denier et al., 2022; Gaucher et al., 2011), the research revealed that communal and agentic wording, grammatical features, and feminine–masculine–neutral

signal configurations all significantly influence job seekers' perceptions of fit. Considering the results that concern university students' work-related reflections and attitudes, the novelties of the dissertation could be utilised in two ways:

1. The integration of the findings into university course curricula, through which students gain a deeper understanding of both the theoretical and practical dimensions of career communication;
2. The incorporation of these insights into university-based career counselling services, enabling counsellors to place greater emphasis on conscious career orientation and career development.

Overall, the reduction of gender discrimination and the promotion of gender diversity demand ongoing efforts. An inclusive and supportive work environment should be characterised by mutual respect and collaboration between men and women to enhance organisational objectives. It is impractical for all current employees to hold identical gender ideologies; therefore, it becomes essential for organisations to hire, evaluate, and promote employees equally, irrespective of gender disparities.

11.3 Limitations

Like most research, this dissertation also has its limitations that are categorically presented in this section.

1. **Sampling and data collection:** Although the participating programmes were selected according to predefined criteria, the sampling procedure did not constitute probability-based stratified sampling in the strict statistical sense. Participation depended on institutional access, lecturers' willingness to host the data collection, and students' presence in the selected classes. The sample should therefore be understood as a criterion-based, institutionally clustered convenience sample. The relatively large sample size (over 400 responses) improves statistical precision within the observed sample but does not compensate for the non-probability nature of recruitment.
2. **Demography:** Although the sample of 7 universities ensured an adequate size and institutional diversity, it does not represent the entirety of Hungarian higher education – for example, students from rural universities, smaller towns, or young people living in labour-market environments different from Budapest. Students in Budapest may differ in several respects, including socio-economic background,

access and exposure to job opportunities, corporate and employer-branding communication, career aspirations, labour-market mobility, and international experience.

3. **Participating institutions:** Out of the nine institutions contacted, seven agreed to participate, which raises the issue of institutional self-selection. It is conceivable that those institutions or instructors who were more open to the study were also more sensitive to gender- and equality-related topics, more receptive to research collaboration, or more positively disposed toward the subject matter.
4. **Disciplinary domain:** The sample consisted exclusively of students enrolled in Hungarian-language social science programmes, specifically Communication and Media Studies, International Public Service Management, and International Public Service Relations. Given that women are overrepresented in social science education, and that different disciplinary areas may be associated with distinct work-related values, professional identities, and gendered associations, the findings cannot be generalised beyond this population.
5. **Linguistic and signalling constraints:** The creation and translation of the Hungarian job advertisements mark another limitation. Three Hungarian, personally crafted job advertisements (each containing exclusively one type of wording: feminine, masculine, and neutral) constituted one of the main foundations of the research; however, their content was based on English language word inventories (Denier et al., 2022; Gaucher et al., 2011). Although the translation from English to Hungarian was ensured by two psychologists, two cognitive linguists, a statistical expert, and a communication researcher, the translation of the attributes can easily become subjective, thereby distorting the original meaning of the expressions. It is important to highlight that a job advertisement does not constitute a single, isolated organisational sign; rather, it represents a composite semiotic assemblage comprising multiple linguistic, instrumental, and symbolic elements that may jointly convey interconnected or even contradictory meanings. These meanings are perceived and interpreted holistically by the recipients. In the present study, expectations related to workload, weekend work, benefits, and differences in work–life balance could interact with gender-coded expressions and, in combination, influence applicants’ intention to apply (Drover et al., 2018; Ganesan et al., 2018). From the perspective of the market signalling theory (Connelly, 2011; Spence, 1973), the three

advertisements represented distinct semiotic configurations rather than experimentally equivalent stimuli differing solely in their gender-coded phrasing. Consequently, participants may have responded to the combined influence of linguistic cues, job-related characteristics, and lifestyle-shaping expectations. This limits the extent to which the observed differences in application intention can be attributed exclusively to gender-coded language.

6. **Methodology:** To the best of my knowledge, Ajzen's (1999, 2006) theory of planned behaviour questionnaire has not yet been applied in Hungary for examining organisational attitudes and intention formation. Therefore, being the first to explore and translate into practical application a given research approach is built on risk and possible failure. As Ajzen and Fishbein noted, "attitudes may be influenced by moods and emotions" (2000, p. 3). However, the research did not measure either moods or emotions, primarily due to my lack of adequate psychological knowledge to deeply investigate such personality-centred attributes, and also because the dissertation is contextualised in the field of communication science.
7. **Gender imbalance:** The proportion of female respondents ranged between 70% and 76.4%, which constitutes a limitation insofar as the overall sample averages may primarily reflect the response patterns of women, while the smaller male subsample provides reduced statistical power. As a result, the precision of gender-based comparisons may differ. In addition, program effects and gender effects may partially intertwine. At the same time, the predominance of women is a characteristic feature of the disciplinary context and therefore cannot be treated merely as a technical sampling error.
8. **The researcher's presence as a factor influencing participation and response behaviour:** My personal presence (introducing myself, asking engaging introductory questions, and remaining in the room during questionnaire completion) may have increased the response rate and improved data quality; however, it could also have elicited social desirability pressure – for instance, by reducing participants' subjective freedom to decline participation – and the situational dynamics associated with my presence may have varied across institutions.
9. **Age- and life-situation constraints:** The target group consisted of BA students and young individuals considered to be at the beginning of their careers, which is

in itself legitimate and well-justified; however, participants' actual job-search experience may have varied substantially.

10. **Other selection constraints:** The questionnaire was completed by students who were present in class and consented to participate, a group that may differ from absent students in terms of academic engagement, motivation, sense of responsibility, or career orientation.

11.4 Recommendations for future research directions

The last section of the dissertation offers possibilities for expanding the present research. In the course of reviewing the literature review and conducting the empirical research, I identified several directions for future research that would be worthy of studying.

Besides building on direct and indirect gender-related signaling cues, job advertising may largely impact job seekers through its brand-focused visual characteristics, namely through pictures, logos, colours, typography, design, and overall aesthetics. Therefore, it would be a logical next step for further research to focus on implementing the same methodological framework of Ajzen's questionnaire (2006), yet studying university students' implicit attitudes towards the visual dimensions of job advertising. It could also be intriguing to test whether a showcased picture of either a man or a woman embedded in a job advertisement elicits a similar stereotype-congruent or incongruent effect as the present dissertation has yielded.

Literature on organisational communication asserts that an employee's work values may positively correlate with a higher organisational commitment. Although the study of employee commitment was not in the scope of the dissertation, it would be intriguing to conduct longitudinal research and explore whether the examined work values differ across men and women once they leave the higher education-to-work transition and operate as fully integrated employees. Based on the results of the thesis, it could be hypothesised that those university students who placed a higher importance on intrinsic work values may experience an increased work commitment.

As the dissertation in its current form is fully quantitative, it would also be a highly interesting angle to approach the topic in focus from a qualitative perspective, looking at the cross-cultural differences in languages. Hungarian is known to be a gender-neutral language, using no explicit reference to men or women. By measuring the gendered wording of job advertisements written in both gender neutral and gendered languages

(e.g., Spanish, German), it could produce a novel list of linguistic distinctions that highlight the cultural differences of nations and serve as a useful tool in international applicant attraction.

Furthermore, the examined target group of the thesis was constituted of young university students belonging to Generation Z (between the ages of 18 and 24), which already placed the research in a specific context and constrained its generalizability. As for future research, research on middle-aged men and women also represents a meaningful area of inquiry, as they are situated in a more advanced stage of their careers. This raises the question of how their gender and work identities have developed under the influence of organisational culture; moreover, whether ageism shows correlation with the same intention formation components as the thesis has found in the case of men (social norm) and women (perceived behavioural control).

Lastly, the dissertation, in its present form, studied the intention formation of career-entrant university students toward gender-related non-explicit signal configurations. However, it would contribute to a deeper understanding by examining male and female differences from their self-reported perspectives. Such an examination could be executed through discussions in focus groups, where students could share their past experiences, personal work-related expectations, and perceptions about gender differences in organisations. The instrument-development consultations offer a similar opportunity: only 4 experts in different fields have been asked about the research topic. Therefore, by conducting participant interviews, experts in the relevant fields (such as sociology, HR management, and organisational communication) could provide sufficiently detailed and nuanced accounts of specific situations, including the conduct of a job interview or the process of composing the content of a job advertisement.

In conclusion, the last section of the thesis summarised some of the research directions that are worth considering for further extension. I believe the present thesis stands as a valuable collection of evidence that the triangular interconnectedness of male and female career socialisation, linguistic effects, and recruitment gives solid ground to the rhetoric of job advertising.

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Appendix A

Figure 1. The questionnaire’s original Hungarian job advertisement containing masculine stereotype-congruent linguistic cues (*own construct*)

A munkakör leírása:
Folyamatos koordináció és kapcsolattartás az üzleti és támogató területekkel: információk begyűjtése, összehangolása, jóváhagyások, határidők menedzselése. Részvétel szakmai rendezvények szervezésében: meghívók, prezentációk előkészítése, regisztrációk kezelése, rendezvény lebonyolítása.

Rád van szükségünk, ha magadra ismersz:

- Átlátod az összetett helyzeteket, de nagy figyelmet fordítasz a részletekre is
- Arra törekszel, hogy mindenből a legjobbat hozd ki
- Angolul is jól kommunikálsz
- Magabiztosan összetartasz egy csapatot
- Krízisben nem ijedsz meg, hanem határozottan kezeled a helyzetet
- Jól bírod a nyomást és a stresszt

Téged várunk, ha úgy érzed, hogy:

- proaktív vagy és kezdeményező
- elemző gondolkodással bírsz
- szereted a kihívásokat és a dinamikus mindennapokat
- megbízható vagy és könnyen alkalmazkodsz másokhoz
- keményen dolgozol a célok eléréseért

Mit kínálunk számodra?

- Utazási lehetőség
- Munkavégzés változatos helyszíneken
- A hétköznapi munkaidő kiváltása hétvégékkel
- Betegségbiztosítás

Figure 2. The questionnaire's original Hungarian job advertisement containing feminine stereotype-congruent linguistic cues (*own construct*)

A munkakör leírása:
Folyamatos koordináció és kapcsolattartás az üzleti és támogató területekkel: információk begyűjtése, összehangolása, jóváhagyások, határidők menedzselése. Részvétel szakmai rendezvények szervezésében: meghívók, prezentációk előkészítése, regisztrációk kezelése, rendezvény lebonyolítása.

Rád van szükségünk, ha magadra ismersz:

- Átlátod az összetett helyzeteket, de nagy figyelmet fordítasz a részletekre is és arra törekszel, hogy mindenből a legjobbat hozd ki
- Ha emberközpontú vagy és szervezett
- Angolul is jól kommunikálsz
- Ha fontos számodra, hogy egy csapat értékes tagja legyél
- Ha erősnek érzed a soft skill-jeidet

Téged várunk, ha úgy érzed, hogy:

- jó a kommunikációs készséged
- elkötelezett vagy a munkád iránt
- kedvesen, empátikusan állsz az emberekhez
- törődsz másokkal és a környezeteddel
- kreatív és megfontolt vagy krízishelyzetekben

Mit kínálunk számodra?

- Kizárólag hétköznapi munkaidő
- Cafeteria, egyéb juttatások
- Gyermek és családi kuponok
- A munka-élet egyensúlyának tiszteletben tartása

Figure 3. The questionnaire's original Hungarian job advertisement containing neutral stereotype-congruent linguistic cues (*own construct*)

A munkakör leírása:
Folyamatos koordináció és kapcsolattartás az üzleti és támogató területekkel: információk begyűjtése, összehangolása, jóváhagyások, határidők menedzselése. Részvétel szakmai rendezvények szervezésében: meghívók, prezentációk előkészítése, regisztrációk kezelése, rendezvény lebonyolítása.

Rád van szükségünk, ha magadra ismersz:

- Átlátod az összetett helyzeteket, de nagy figyelmet fordítasz a részletekre is
- Arra törekszel, hogy mindenből a legjobbat hozd ki
- Angolul is jól kommunikálsz
- Ha nem okoz problémát a multitasking vagy a monoton munka
- Ha nem ijedsz meg a könnyű fizikai munkától

Téged várunk, ha úgy érzed, hogy:

- Precízen végzed a munkádat
- Elkötelezett vagy és lelkiismeretes
- Nyitott vagy új feladatokra
- Szem előtt tartod a professzionális munkavégzést

Mit kínálunk számodra?

- Biztonságos, nyugodt környezet a munkavégzéshez
- Nemzetközi lehetőségek
- Utazás esetén szállás biztosítása
- Rugalmas munkabeosztás

Author(s)	Title	Year	The theoretical (linguistic forms) referring to diversity in gendered wording	Theoretical outcome of the article
Vervecken et al.	<i>Changing (s)expectations: how gender fair job descriptions impact children's perception and interest regarding traditionally male occupations</i>	2013	Gender fair form of language: "also called gender inclusive, because they make explicit reference to both sexes" (p. 209)	The generic use of masculine form (e.g., <i>policemen</i> , <i>frontman</i>) was in correlation with children's restrictive, gender exclusive thinking with male occupations. Gender fair pairs (he-she) have a positive influence on a more balanced perception about gender.
Horvath and Sczesny	<i>Reducing women's lack of fit with leadership positions? Effects of the wording of job advertisements</i>	2015	Gender-fair linguistic forms: "are associated with a greater cognitive inclusion of women and weaken the male bias in mental representation" (p. 1)	Introducing gender-fair expressions in advertising leadership positions can lead to an increased female application in personnel selection procedures.
Hodel et al.	<i>Gender-fair language in in job advertisements: a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural analysis</i>	2017	Gender-fair language: "symmetric treatment of women and men in language" (p.385)	Gender-fair language is more likely to be used in countries representing gender equality (Switzerland, Austria). The equal treatment act is an external pressure for countries to abide by gender-fairness in the language of advertising.
Wille and Derous	<i>Getting the words right: when wording of job ads affects ethnic minorities' application decision</i>	2017	Behavioural wording: "puts the traits in a behavioural/situational context" (p. 538)	When dispositional wording and negative meta-stereotype trait was presented, ethnic minorities may infer that recruiter hold a negative stereotype about them. This is in line with Spence's signalling theory (1973) and the social identity theory (Highhouse et al., 2007)
Wille and Derous	<i>When job ads turn you down: how requirements in job ads may stop instead of attracting highly qualified women</i>	2018	Negative meta-stereotypes in behaviour-like wording: "puts a trait in a behavioural/situational context and may signal to women job seekers that recruiter will pay attention to how they <i>behave</i> in a concrete situation than to how they <i>really are</i> " (p. 466).	Supporting the theory of symbolic attraction (Highhouse et al., 2007): person requirements communication through a job ad can subtly influence female job seekers' perception and attitude.
Hentschel et al.	<i>Kick-starting female careers: attracting women to entrepreneurship programs</i>	2018	Gender-fair language: "(...) word pairs (which refer to both men and women explicitly and symmetrically) evoke higher associations of women" (p. 195)	Testing visual and verbal variables: when both a masculine linguistic form and a male-typed image was present in the job advertisement, women's reaction was the most negative.
Lindqvist et al.	<i>Reducing a male bias in language? Establishing the efficiency of three</i>	2019	Gender-fair language: "(...) nouns, verbs, and adjectives are conjugated	By implementing a feminization strategy and by creating new words, male bias

	<i>different gender-fair language strategies</i>		feminine/masculine gender” (p. 110)	may be eliminated from language.
Lambrech and Tucker	<i>Algorithmic bias? An empirical study of apparent gender-based discrimination in the display of STEM career ads</i>	2019	Algorithmic discrimination: “if women were less likely to click on the ad, an algorithm trying to maximize click probability might be more likely to show the ad to men than to women” (p. 2966)	Call for revisiting discrimination-related policies: the use of algorithm tools in advertising policy making can be responsible for the equal attraction and eventually, application of both men and women.
Ningrum et al.	<i>Text mining of online job advertisements to identify direct discrimination</i>	2020	Discriminatory word patterns: the occurrence of direct discrimination that appear in online job advertisements. “(...) refers to the practices which express explicit and clear distinction, exclusion or preference on one or more grounds which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment on a certain group of people” (p. 3)	Among the five most common types of discrimination, age (66.27%) and gender (38.76%) is dominant. Employers are more likely to show their preferences more towards male applicants (24.02%), than female applicants (14.74%). In high-status positions women are less likely to be employed.
Mao et al.	<i>Discouraging gender-biased job seekers by adopting job advertisements</i>	2020	Based on the male breadwinner ideology and visually featured women in job advertising: “male job seekers who embrace a male breadwinner ideology are likely to see women featured in job ads as an impediment to the development of male dominance at work” (p. 171)	Male job seekers with a strong social dominance orientation, as measured by the male breadwinner ideology, are likely to be disinterested in organizations that prominently feature women in their job ads.
Breese et al.	<i>An exploration of gender bias in information technology job advertisements</i>	2020	Gender-biased job market postings: “job listings often include subtle biases that discourage different candidates from applying for a position” (p. 191)	Male bias in gender wording seems to be eliminated, and in fact, a shift toward female bias could be found.
Hentschel et al.	<i>Sounds like a fit! Wording in recruitment advertisements and recruiter gender affect women’s pursuit of career development programs via anticipated belongingness</i>	2020	Gender stereotypical wording: “gendered pronouns, position titles, pictures, and applicant requirements in recruitment advertisements can influence women’s attraction to organizations and their interest in positions or career opportunities” (p. 582)	Testing the lack of fit theory (Heilman, 1983) and the signalling theory (Spence, 1973) in the context of career development: both theories have been supported (if female-typed signals are mentions/included in job advertisements, it may increase the likelihood for women to apply).
Kuhn et al.	<i>Gender-targeted job ads in the recruitment process: facts from a Chinese job board</i>	2020	Gendered ads: “tend to reinforce, rather than counteract existing stereotypes of male and female work, with requests for men most common in jobs like construction, driving, security services and upper	Men are more likely to receive a callback in a gender-mismatched application than women. Explicit gender request in job advertising needs to be regulated for the sake of equal application opportunity.

			management, and requests for women dominating in ‘helping’ and customer contact jobs like receptionists, clerks, and customer service” (p. 1)	
Fatfouta	<i>What do they really want? Effects of the wording of job advertisements on narcissists’ perceptions of organization attraction</i>	2021	The relationship of narcissistic personality disorder and communal vs. agentic wording in job advertising: “drawing job seekers’ attention to open job vacancies and providing job and organizational information” (p. 154)	Agentic work environment is expected to satisfy the high-status, narcissistic needs. Organizational attraction varies through the agency-communion model of narcissism.
Chaturvedi et al.	<i>Words matter: Gender, jobs and applicant behaviour</i>	2021	Gendered words: “words predictive of an employer’s explicit preference” (p. 2)	The presence of communal (feminine) and agentic (masculine) words are supported: pleasant, mature, proactive, and punctuality were found as appealing to women, while energetic, passionate, ethical and physical traits were found to be associated with men.
Hu et al.	<i>Balancing gender bias in job advertisements with text-level bias mitigation</i>	2022	Gender signalling in job advertising: “agentic attributes (e.g., active and adventurous), are usually considered to be masculine, and communal attributes (e.g., considerate and sympathetic), are often considered feminine” (p. 3)	A gender debiasing strategy is introduced: in cases when employers aim to attract female employees into a male-dominated industry by including more feminine words.
O’Brien et al.	<i>Gender coding in job advertisements for academic, non-academic and leadership positions in emerging medicine</i>	2022	Gender-coded language: “the usage of words that are typically associated with men or women, may arise in advertising as a covert and subtle way of perpetuating gender inequality within a given organization, or it may arise in a more organic way through social role theory (...)” (p. 7)	Cross sectional study of EM jobs (advertised on 13 academic and non-academic medical job databases)
Aluko et al.	<i>Do job advertisements promote gender inequality in the construction sector?</i>	2022	The study aims to explore the differences between job adverts for male (construction manager) and female (social worker) dominated sectors of the economy by comparing word usage.	Based on the word inventory of Gaucher et al. (2011), job advertisements containing masculine wording decrease female belongingness and appeal to apply to an academic job.
Denier et al.	<i>BIAS Word inventory for work and employment diversity, (in)equality and inclusivity</i>	2022	Gender bias in job advertising: “the language used in job advertisements contains explicit and implicit cues, which signal employers’ preferences for candidates of certain ascribed	The first comprehensive word inventory offering lists of words that serve as a theoretical foundation for future research in gender bias and labour market inequalities.

			characteristics, such as gender and ethnicity/race” (p. 1)	
Arceo-Gomez et al.	<i>Gender stereotypes in job advertisements: what do they imply for the gender salary gap?</i>	2022	Stereotyped language in job advertising: “describe jobs on employment search websites may induce women to apply for jobs described with stereotypically feminine (communal) characteristics and men to apply for jobs with stereotypically masculine (agentic) characteristics” (p. 66)	Explicit female targeting in job advertising could be observed in specifying physical appearance, working hours and communal terms. Therefore, communal wording was justified.
Baxter et al.	<i>Masculine men do not like feminine wording: The effectiveness of gendered wording in health promotion leaflets in the UK</i>	2022	Communal vs. agentic gendered wording: “the use of words stereotypically associated with males or females” (p. 2)	Based on message-audience concept and the homophily theory, women started to adopt agentic traits by which they are slowly changing their traditional, stereotypical roles in the (British) society.
Mihaljević et al.	<i>Towards gender-inclusive job postings: a data-driven comparison of augmented writing technologies</i>	2022	Gender-stereotypical linguistic constructions: “(...) generalized assumptions or preconceptions that affect behaviours and judgments which can influence others’ evaluation of work-related skills, or career choices, but also one’s own self-perception” (p. 2)	HR software may complement and aid the hiring process, yet technological trust should not surpass human decision-making in recruitment.
Carpio and Fujiwara	<i>Do gender neutral job ads promote diversity?</i>	2023	Gender-neutral language in job advertisements: “the uses of “grammatical gender” where every noun is assigned to a male or female gender” (p. 3)	The use of gender-neutral language was found to be rare in fields such as IT or programming, therefore, its effectiveness may increase where women are present in a higher extent.
Castilla and Rho	<i>The gendering of job posting in the online recruitment process</i>	2023	Gender-neutral job postings: “gendered wording/criteria persists in job ads, specifically in male-dominated occupations, despite the prohibition by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 of explicit language indicating an employer’s preference for candidates of a particular gender” (p. 1)	Offering both theoretical and practical evidence for gendered language mechanism that may decrease organizational inequality.

Table 1. Detailed results of article examination focusing on theoretical findings and definitions of gendered wording (*own construct*)

Author(s)	Title	Year	Research scope	Method(s)	Main research findings
Vervecken et al.	<i>Changing (s)expectations: how gender fair job descriptions impact children's perception and interest regarding traditionally male occupations</i>	2013	Whether children's perceptions of stereotypically male jobs can be influenced by the words implemented to showcase an occupational title.	Three experiments with 809 primary school students	When stereotypically male occupations (e.g., police officer) were showcased in pair forms (instead in its generic masculine form, e.g., policemen), children were more likely to perceive women as successful.
Horvath and Sczesny	<i>Reducing women's lack of fit with leadership positions? Effects of the wording of job advertisements</i>	2015	Whether linguistic forms influence the perceived incongruity of women with leadership positions, a phenomenon particularly accentuated in high-status leadership roles.	Hiring-simulation experiment (questionnaire-based)	Linguistic forms that explicitly and symmetrically reference both women and men (such as word pairs) possess the potential to diminish the perception of women's incongruity with high-status leadership roles.
Hodel et al.	<i>Gender-fair language in job advertisements: a cross-linguistic and cross-cultural analysis</i>	2017	How the utilization of gender-fair language correlates with linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic variances among countries with grammatical gender languages.	Content analysis on job titles from four European countries (Switzerland, Austria, Poland, and Czech Republic)	Gender-fair job titles were more prevalent in countries with higher levels of egalitarianism (such as Switzerland and Austria) compared to those with greater acceptance of hierarchies and inequalities (such as Poland and the Czech Republic). Furthermore, gender-fair job titles were more common in female-dominated sectors (e.g., healthcare, food services) than in male-dominated sectors (e.g., constructional steel and metal work).
Wille and Derous	<i>Getting the words right: when wording of job ads affects ethnic minorities' application decision</i>	2017	Whether the type of required trait as well as the wording of traits affected ethnic minorities' job attraction, qualified ethnic minorities and majorities' decision to apply.	Two field experiments	Ethnic minority job seekers were less drawn to job advertisements targeting traits associated with negative meta-stereotypes about their group. The attitudes and behaviours of ethnic minority job seekers are likely to align with their social identity in order to maintain a positive sense of self.
Wille and Derous	<i>When job ads turn you down: how requirements in job ads may stop instead of attracting highly qualified women</i>	2018	How the person requirements presented in a job advertisement influenced a female job seeker's attraction as well as decision to apply to the described job.	Two experiments (218 female Belgian job seekers)	Female job seekers felt less inclined towards a job when the job advertisement demanded a trait associated with negative meta-stereotypes. Qualified female job seekers applied to a lesser extent when a negatively meta-stereotyped trait was communicated in a trait-like manner.
Hentschel et al.	<i>Kick-starting female careers: attracting women to entrepreneurship programs</i>	2018	How gender-specific characteristics of advertisements influence women's application behaviour for early	Experiment	Women reported considerably lower perceived fit, interest and intentions to apply when a masculine linguistic form was employed instead of a gender-fair word pair.

			career opportunities within the traditionally male-dominated context of entrepreneurship.		
Lindqvist et al.	<i>Reducing a male bias in language? Establishing the efficiency of three different gender-fair language strategies</i>	2019	To what degree can language reforms eliminate male bias, in case when utilizing traditional presumed gender-neutral pronouns and nouns, paired pronouns (e.g., he/she), or newly created pronouns challenging the binary notion of gender.	Two experiments (online surveys in English and in Swedish)	A feminization strategy utilizing paired pronouns he/she and a neutralization strategy employing newly created gender-neutral English pronouns like <i>ze</i> or Swedish pronoun <i>hen</i> appeared to effectively eliminate the male bias.
Lambrecht and Tucker	<i>Algorithmic bias? An empirical study of apparent gender-based discrimination in the display of STEM career ads</i>	2019	Why can advertisement algorithms produce discriminatory outcomes for male and female applicants?	Field test	The research findings can be summarized in three main points: men tend to encounter more impressions of the advertisement compared to women; younger women observe fewer advertisements than younger men; and on average, women are more inclined to click on an advertisement if they encounter it.
Ningrum et al.	<i>Text mining of online job advertisements to identify direct discrimination</i>	2020	How is job discrimination transmitted through the job-hunting process in difference occupations in Indonesia.	Text mining technique by a designed method called Direct Discrimination Detection (DDD)	Female job seekers experience a much higher disadvantage and jeopardy than their counterparts: marital status, physical appearance and religious preferences are considered at women.
Mao et al.	<i>Discouraging gender-biased job seekers by adopting job advertisements</i>	2020	Strategically adapting job ads and discouraging gender ideology to be the determinant in applying to a job.	Between-subjects experiment	Male job seekers who adhere to a male breadwinner ideology are inclined to interpret the inclusion of women in job advertisements as indicative of an organization's intention to enhance gender diversity.
Breese et al.	<i>An exploration of gender bias in information technology job advertisements</i>	2020	How does technology-specific (explicit/implicit) wording contribute to gender bias in job advertisements.	Keyword-based content analysis on a chosen job portal (postjobsfree.com)	The current information technology-specific job advertisements do not include gender bias that favours male applicants. Feminine words appeared far more frequently than masculine words
Hentschel et al.	<i>Sounds like a fit! Wording in recruitment advertisements and recruiter gender affect women's pursuit of career development programs via</i>	2020	To what extent do gender cues in recruitment advertisements influence women's expectations of belongingness and perceived application success, as well as their intentions to apply to career	Two studies in German (video-based study, experimental vignette study)	Stereotypically masculine wording in recruitment advertisements led to women, but not men, reporting lower anticipated belongingness, decreased expected success of an application, and reduced application intentions.

	<i>anticipated belongingness</i>		development programs?		
Kuhn et al.	<i>Gender-targeted job ads in the recruitment process: facts from a Chinese job board</i>	2020	The way in which explicit employer requests for applicants of a specific gender influence the recruitment process on a Chinese job board.	Content analysis (followed by a regression analysis) on internal records (ads, resumes, applications) of XMRC.com	Gendered job advertisements steer workers' applications away from jobs requesting a gender different from their own. Additionally, employers may penalize those workers who apply to gender-mismatched jobs.
Fatfouta	<i>What do they really want? Effects of the wording of job advertisements on narcissists' perceptions of organization attraction</i>	2021	How narcissists who self-enhance in communal domains (e.g., trustworthiness, friendliness and helpfulness) respond to hidden, systematic wording differences in job advertising.	Experimental study (Communal Narcissism Inventory, Organizational Attraction Scale)	Communal narcissism exhibited a positive correlation with company attractiveness and intentions to apply for a job, with this relationship being stronger when agency (but not communion) was emphasized.
Chaturvedi et al.	<i>Words matter: Gender, jobs and applicant behaviour</i>	2021	Employer strategies aimed at recruiting female or male applicants, whether through explicitly stated gender preferences or implicit hints within the job ad text.	Text analysis on 160.000 job advertisements	The advertised wages are lowest in jobs where employers express a preference for women, even when this preference is implicitly conveyed through text analysis, and these jobs also attract a larger share of female applicants.
Hu et al.	<i>Balancing gender bias in job advertisements with text-level bias mitigation</i>	2022	How the text of a job ad should be (re)worded to avoid gender-explicit words.	A gender-debiasing algorithm; three-step method: evaluation model of gender bias in words, model probability distribution, guidance	Debiasing strategy: in a male-dominated industry female applicants can be attracted by integrating negative bias (not zero bias)
O'Brien et al.	<i>Gender coding in job advertisements for academic, non-academic and leadership positions in emerging medicine</i>	2022	The objective is to assess the presence of gender-coding in emerging medicine (EM) job advertisements and to investigate potential differences between academic versus non-academic roles or administrative versus non-administrative positions.	Cross-sectional study of EM jobs (advertised on 13 academic and non-academic medical job databases)	Job advertisements for EM physicians often feature more masculine-coded language. Nearly all job advertisements for emergency medicine physicians in this study included at least one gender-coded word.
Aluko et al.	<i>Do job advertisements promote gender inequality in the construction sector?</i>	2022	The study aims to explore the differences between job adverts for male (construction manager) and female	Text mining (four-step text analysis)	The term "leader" is one of the most frequently used words in job advertisements for construction manager roles. These findings indicate that the content of job adverts tends to reinforce gender

			(social worker) dominated sectors of the economy by comparing word usage.		stereotypes associated with employment in the construction sector.
Denier et al.	<i>BIAS Word inventory for work and employment diversity, (in)equality and inclusivity</i>	2022	The aim is to produce a word inventory that is able to identify biased wordings in job advertising.	Expert coding of job advertisements (qualitative coding methodology)	The term "inventory" directly addresses the wider social construction of gender, sexuality, ethnicity/race, and immigration status, along with the resulting inequalities in the labour market.
Arceo-Gomez et al.	<i>Gender stereotypes in job advertisements: what do they imply for the gender salary gap?</i>	2022	Whether advertisements using language that express stereotypes about women are associated with lower salaries compared to those that do not express such stereotypes.	2.5 million job advertisements have been examined from 3 different Mexican websites: single-word analysis, bigram analysis as well as category analysis.	Advertisements containing "communal" words, often associated with women, specify salaries that are 13 percent less than those without such words. Conversely, ads with "agentic" words, typically related to men, offer salaries that are 8 percent higher than those without such words.
Baxter et al.	<i>Masculine men do not like feminine wording: The effectiveness of gendered wording in health promotion leaflets in the UK</i>	2022	The research aim was measuring the impact of gendered wording and the gender of the endorser on the effectiveness of leaflets promoting walking.	Mixed-methods sequential design (questionnaire, semi-structure interviews, behavioural intentions, advert credibility)	The dominant gender role identity was a factor explaining the preferences of respondents for a presented stimuli: males with a strong masculine gender role identity differed in their evaluations of "communal" wording from all other groups.
Mihaljević et al.	<i>Towards gender-inclusive job postings: a data-driven comparison of augmented writing technologies</i>	2022	How a currently developed software in human resource management operates to screen the appearance of gendered wording in job advertisements.	Screening 160.000 job posts with four different German software technologies	The four technologies yield varying results, despite being grounded in similar and partially overlapping scientific theories and findings.
Carpio and Fujiwara	<i>Do gender neutral job ads promote diversity?</i>	2023	Whether the use of gender-neutral language in job advertisements in a gendered language (mostly Spanish) affect the gender composition of job applicants.	Two field experiments with: 1. a hiring platform (Get on Board), 2. an NGO (Laboratoria) providing training for women in the tech sector	The use of gender-neutral language in job postings affects several aspects: it enhances the perceived attractiveness of the position, influences beliefs about the company's culture of inclusion, and impacts the proportion of women working in the company.
Castilla and Rho	<i>The gendering of job posting in the online recruitment process</i>	2023	The research goal was to measure the degree to which the recruiting language used in job advertising influences the actual pre-application	Field experiment, large-sample observational study	Both the language used in job advertisements and the gender of the recruiters have no practical effects on the way men and women behave during a hiring process.

			behaviour of job seekers of different genders.		
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Table 2. Detailed results of article examination focusing on methodology (*own construct*)

Appendix B

Kutatási kérdőív

Start of Block: Első rész

Kedves Kitöltő!

A Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem kommunikációtudományi doktori hallgatójaként disszertációm keretein belül a munkaerőpiaccal kapcsolatos vélekedéseket vizsgálom alapszakos hallgatók körében. A kutatásban való részvétel, a kérdőív kitöltése ÖNKÉNTES és NÉVTELEN, az adataid semmilyen módon nem lesznek azonosíthatóak. A vizsgálatban való részvétel a jelen kérdőívsomag kitöltését jelenti, ami kb. 15 percet vesz igénybe. A kérdőívekben nincsenek jó vagy rossz válaszok. Fontos, hogy minden kérdésre válaszolj, és hogy ezt teljesen őszintén tedd, az eredmények csak így használhatóak. A kitöltést bármikor félbeszakíthatod, ami nem jár semmilyen következményekkel. A kutatást dr. Sass Judit (szervezetpszichológus, tanszékvezető egyetemi docens) felügyeli.

Kontakt: Szabó Kincső (tanársegéd, kommunikációtudományi doktori hallgató; kincso.szabo@stud.uni-corvinus.hu). Köszönöm szépen a segítséget és a kitöltésre fordított időt!

Hozzájárulok a Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem vizsgálatában való részvételhez. Kijelentem, hogy a vizsgálat céljáról és jellegéről kielégítő tájékoztatást kaptam. A vizsgálatokhoz való hozzájárulásomért anyagi ellenszolgáltatást sem én, sem hozzátartozóm nem kapott. Tudomásul veszem, hogy azonosításomra alkalmas személyi adatokat a vizsgálat vezetője bizalmasan kezeli, azokba másoknak nem enged betekintést. Tudomásul veszem, hogy a vizsgálati adatok kutatási és nem diagnosztikai célokat szolgálnak, ilyen jellegű szakvéleményre a vizsgálatok elvégzését követően igényt nem támasztok. Tisztában vagyok azzal, hogy a

válaszadás bármikor következmények nélkül megszakítható. Beleegyezik Ön, hogy a kérdőívekben kitöltött eredményeit a vizsgálatvezető felhasználhassa a kutatásához?

☐ Kijelentem, hogy elmúltam 18 éves. A fentebb leírtakat elolvastam, megértettem és hozzájárulok, hogy az adataim felhasználásához. (1)

☐ Nem járulok hozzá. (2)

Page Break

Kérlek, jelöld meg, általában mennyire fontosak számodra az alábbi tényezők egy munkában:

	Egyáltalán nem fontos (1)	Kissé fontos (2)	Inkább nem fontos (3)	Semleges (4)	Inkább fontos (5)	Nagyon fontos (6)	Teljes mértékben fontos (9)
Fizetés (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Előléptetés (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mentorálás (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Munkatársak (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maga a munka (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Altruizmus (mások segítése) (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Státusz (társadalmi elismertség) (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Környezet (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

Szerinted melyik területen figyelhető meg a legnagyobb mértékű nemi szakadék nemzetközi szinten (a világ összes országában átlagosan)?

- ☐ Politikai részvétel (a férfiak és nők egyenlő részvétele a politikai életben) (1)
- ☐ Gazdasági esélyegyenlőség (a férfiak és nők egyenlő foglalkoztatása a munkaerő-piacon) (2)
- ☐ Iskolázottság (a férfiak és nők egyenlő iskolázottsági szintje) (3)
- ☐ Egészségügy (a férfiak és nők egyenlő bánásmódban-részesítése az egészségügyben) (4)

Page Break

A Gazdasági esélyegyenlőség arra a jelenségre utal, amely szerint a férfiak és nők egyenlő eséllyel vehetnek részt és lehetnek foglalkoztatottak a munkaerő-piac által kínált lehetőségekben. Szerinted Magyarország hol helyezkedik el világviszonylatban az országok ranglistáján „Gazdasági esélyegyenlőség” kategóriában a nemek tekintetében?

1 16 30 45 59 74 88 103 117 132 146

Kérlek, helyezd el a csúszkát az 1. és 146. helyezések között.



Page Break

Az Iskolázottság arra a jelenségre utal, amely szerint a férfiak és nők egyenlő mértékű iskolai végzettséggel rendelkeznek. Szerinted Magyarország hol helyezkedik el világviszonylatban az országok ranglistáján „Iskolázottság” kategóriában a nemek tekintetében?

1 16 30 45 59 74 88 103 117 132 146

Kérlek, helyezd el a csúszkát az 1. és 146. helyezések között.



Page Break

Szerinted egy szervezetben milyen gyakran fordul elő, hogy **férfi a vezető és nő a beosztott**?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Kérlek, jelöld meg 1 és 100 százalék között.



Page Break

Szerinted egy szervezetben milyen gyakran fordul elő, hogy **nő a vezető és férfi a beosztott**?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Kérlek, jelöld meg 1 és 100 százalék között.



Page Break

Általában szívesebben helyezkedem el olyan pozícióban, amelynek magas a szakmai elismerése.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Egyáltalán nem igaz	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Teljes mértékben igaz

Page Break

Általában szívesebben helyezkedem el olyan pozícióban, amellyel sokat lehet keresni.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Egyáltalán nem igaz	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Teljes mértékben igaz

Page Break

Kérlek, jelöld meg, hogy általában milyen mértékben találsz igaznak az alábbi állításokat. Az 1 a legkevésbé igaz, a 7 a leginkább igaznak vélt állítás.

A nők inkább választanak olyan munkát, ahol a(z)...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
társadalmi felelősségvállaláson van a hangsúly. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
közösségi munkán van a hangsúly. (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
összetartozáson van a hangsúly. (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

A férfiak inkább választanak olyan munkát, ahol a(z)...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
társadalmi felelősségvállaláson van a hangsúly. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
közösségi munkán van a hangsúly. (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
összetartozás van a hangsúly. (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

A férfiak inkább választanak olyan munkát, ahol a(z)...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
proaktivitáson van a hangsúly. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
önálló munkán van a hangsúly. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
önérvényesítés van a hangsúly. (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

A nők inkább választanak olyan munkát, ahol a(z)...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
proaktivitáson van a hangsúly. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
önálló munkán van a hangsúly. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
önérvényesítés van a hangsúly. (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

A nők inkább preferálnak olyan munkát, amely...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
emberi kapcsolatokra épül. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
társadalmi felelősségvállalásra épül. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

A férfiak inkább preferálnak olyan munkát, amely...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
emberi kapcsolatokra épül. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
közösségi felelősségvállalásra épül. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

A nők inkább preferálnak olyan munkát, amely...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
önállóságra épül. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
elemző gondolkodásra épül. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

A férfiak inkább preferálnak olyan munkát, amely...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)
önállóságra épül. (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
elemző gondolkodásra épül. (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

Szerinted milyen gyakran fordul elő Magyarországon, hogy ugyanazért a munkáért kevesebb pénzt kapnak a nők, mint a férfiak?

- ☐ Soha (1)
- ☐ Ritkán (2)
- ☐ Néha (3)
- ☐ Gyakran (4)
- ☐ Mindig (5)
- ☐ Nem kívánok válaszolni (6)

Page Break

Szerinted milyen gyakran fordul elő Magyarországon, hogy ugyanazért a munkáért kevesebb pénzt kapnak a férfiak, mint a nők?

- ☐ Soha (1)
- ☐ Ritkán (2)
- ☐ Néha (3)
- ☐ Gyakran (4)
- ☐ Mindig (5)
- ☐ Nem kívánok válaszolni (6)

End of Block: Első rész

Start of Block: Második rész

Kérlek, képzelj el, hogy állásokat keresel, amelyekhez számos álláshirdetést találsz. Az alábbiakban a képzettségeidnek minden pontjában megfelelő álláshirdetések mondatait olvashatod. A skálák segítségével pedig értékeld az egyes pontokat.

Page Break

1. A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan a nyomás és stressz kezelése számomra...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Élvezetes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Élvezhetetlen
Kellemes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Kellemetlen
Jó	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Rossz
Értékes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Értéktelen
Ártalmatlan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Hátrányos

Page Break

2. A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan az utazási lehetőség számomra...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Kellemes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Kellemetlen
Ártalmatlan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Hátrányos
Jó	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Rossz
Értékes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Értéktelen
Élvezetes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Élvezhetetlen

Page Break

3. A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan emberközpontúnak lenni számomra...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Kellemes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Kellemetlen
Ártalmatlan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Hátrányos
Jó	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Rossz
Értékes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Értéktelen
Élvezetes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Élvezhetetlen

Page Break

4. A munkakörömhöz kapcsolódóan a kizárólag hétköznapi munkaidő számomra...

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Ártalmatlan	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Hátrányos
Kellemes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Kellemetlen
Jó	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Rossz
Értéktelen	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Értékes
Élvezhető	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Élvezhetetlen

Page Break

5. Elvárás, hogy legyek proaktív és kezdeményező.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Nagyon valószínű	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem valószínű

Page Break

6. Elvárás, hogy legyek kedves és empátikus az emberekkel.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Nagyon valószínű	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem valószínű

Page Break

7. Legyek képes könnyen alkalmazkodni másokhoz.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Teljes mértékben igaz	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem igaz

Page Break

8. Legyek képes megfontolt lenni krízishelyzetekben.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Teljes mértékben igaz	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem igaz

Page Break

9. Keményen dolgozom a célom eléréséért.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Teljes mértékben rajtam áll	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem rajtam áll

Page Break

10. Elkötelezett vagyok a munkám iránt.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Teljes mértékben egyetértek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem értek egyet

Page Break

11. Szándékom, hogy a jövődőbeli munkahelyemen magabiztosan összetartsak egy csapatot.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Teljes mértékben egyetértek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem valószínű

Page Break

12. Szándékom, hogy a jövődőbeli munkahelyemen egy csapat értékes tagja legyek.

	1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 (7)	
Teljes mértékben egyetértek	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Egyáltalán nem valószínű

Page Break

Kérlek, olvasd el figyelmesen az alábbi álláshirdetést:

A munkakör leírása:

Folyamatos koordináció és kapcsolattartás az üzleti és támogató területekkel: információk begyűjtése, összehangolása, jóváhagyások, határidők menedzselése. Részvétel szakmai rendezvények szervezésében: meghívók, prezentációk előkészítése, regisztrációk kezelése, rendezvény lebonyolítása.

Rád van szükségünk, ha magadra ismersz:

- Átlátod az összetett helyzeteket, de nagy figyelmet fordítasz a részletekre is és arra törekszel, hogy mindenből a legjobbat hozd ki
- Ha emberközpontú vagy és szervezett
- Angolul is jól kommunikálsz
- Ha fontos számodra, hogy egy csapat értékes tagja legyél
- Ha erősnek érzed a soft skill-jeidet

Téged várunk, ha úgy érzed, hogy:

- jó a kommunikációs készséged
- elkötelezett vagy a munkád iránt
- kedvesen, empátikusan állsz az emberekhez
- törődsz másokkal és a környezeteddel
- kreatív és megfontolt vagy krízishelyzetekben

Mit kínálunk számodra?

- Kizárólag hétköznapi munkaidő
- Cafeteria, egyéb juttatások
- Gyermek és családi kuponok
- A munka-élet egyensúlyának tiszteletben tartása

Mennyire valószínű, hogy erre az álláshirdetésre jelentkezni?

Kérlek, helyezd el a csúszkát 0 és 100 között (amelyen 0 a legvalószínűtlenebb és 100 a legvalószínűbb).

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Csúszka elhelyezése: ()



Page Break

Kérlek, olvasd el figyelmesen az alábbi álláshirdetést:

A munkakör leírása:

Folyamatos koordináció és kapcsolattartás az üzleti és támogató területekkel: információk begyűjtése, összehangolása, jóváhagyások, határidők menedzselése. Részvétel szakmai rendezvények szervezésében: meghívók, prezentációk előkészítése, regisztrációk kezelése, rendezvény lebonyolítása.

Rád van szükségünk, ha magadra ismersz:

- Átlátod az összetett helyzeteket, de nagy figyelmet fordítasz a részletekre is
- Arra törekszel, hogy mindenből a legjobbat hozd ki
- Angolul is jól kommunikálsz
- Magabiztosan összetartasz egy csapatot
- Krízisben nem ijedsz meg, hanem határozottan kezeled a helyzetet
- Jól bírod a nyomást és a stresszt

Téged várunk, ha úgy érzed, hogy:

- proaktív vagy és kezdeményező
- elemző gondolkodással bírsz
- szereted a kihívásokat és a dinamikus mindennapokat
- megbízható vagy és könnyen alkalmazkodsz másokhoz
- keményen dolgozol a célod eléréséért

Mit kínálunk számodra?

- Utazási lehetőség
- Munkavégzés változatos helyszíneken
- A hétköznapi munkaidő kiváltása hétvégékkel
- Betegségbiztosítás

Mennyire valószínű, hogy erre az álláshirdetésre jelentkeznél?

Kérlek, helyezd el a csúszkát 0 és 100 között (amelyen 0 a legvalószínűtlenebb és 100 a legvalószínűbb).

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Csúszka elhelyezése: ()



Page Break

Kérlek, olvasd el figyelmesen az alábbi álláshirdetést:

A munkakör leírása:

Folyamatos koordináció és kapcsolattartás az üzleti és támogató területekkel: információk begyűjtése, összehangolása, jóváhagyások, határidők menedzselése. Részvétel szakmai rendezvények szervezésében: meghívók, prezentációk előkészítése, regisztrációk kezelése, rendezvény lebonyolítása.

Rád van szükségünk, ha magadra ismersz:

- Átlátod az összetett helyzeteket, de nagy figyelmet fordítasz a részletekre is
- Arra törekszel, hogy mindenből a legjobbat hozd ki
- Angolul is jól kommunikálsz
- Ha nem okoz problémát a multitasking vagy a monoton munka
- Ha nem ijedsz meg a könnyű fizikai munkától

Téged várunk, ha úgy érzed, hogy:

- Precízen végzed a munkádat
- Elkötelezett vagy és lelkiismeretes
- Nyitott vagy új feladatokra
- Szem előtt tartod a professzionális munkavégzést

Mit kínálunk számodra?

- Biztonságos, nyugodt környezet a munkavégzéshez
- Nemzetközi lehetőségek
- Utazás esetén szállás biztosítása
- Rugalmas munkabeosztás

Mennyire valószínű, hogy erre az álláshirdetésre jelentkeznél?

Kérlek, helyezd el a csúszkát 0 és 100 között (amelyen 0 a legvalószínűtlenebb és 100 a legvalószínűbb).

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Csúszka elhelyezése: ()



End of Block:

Start of Block: Harmadik rész

Nemed:

☐ Férfi (1)

☐ Nő (2)

Page Break

Születési éved:

☐ 2004 (1)

☐ 2005 (2)

☐ 2006 (3)

☐ 2007 (4)

☐ Egyéb (5) _____

Page Break

Hol élsz jelenleg?

☐ Budapest (1)

☐ megyeszékhely (2)

☐ város (3)

☐ falu vagy község (4)

☐ külföld (5)

Page Break

Dolgozol jelenleg az egyetem mellett?

☐ Igen (1)

☐ Nem (2)

Page Break

Azon a területen dolgozol, amit tanulsz?

☐ Nem, jelenleg nem dolgozom (1)

☐ Nem, más területen dolgozom (2)

☐ Igen, szakmai gyakorlatot végzek (3)

☐ Igen, részmunkaidőben dolgozom (4)

☐ Igen, teljesállásban dolgozom (5)

☐ Egyéb (6) _____

Page Break

Azon a területen dolgozol, amit tanulsz? = Igen, szakmai gyakorlatot végzek

And Azon a területen dolgozol, amit tanulsz? = Igen, részmunkaidőben dolgozom

And Azon a területen dolgozol, amit tanulsz? = Igen, teljesállásban dolgozom

Kérlek, írd le röviden milyen területen dolgozol:

Kérlek, jelöld meg, hány órában dolgozol:

- ☐ 40 órában (1)
 - ☐ 30 órában (2)
 - ☐ 20 órában (3)
 - ☐ Alkalmi diákmunkákat válllok (4)
 - ☐ Külső megbízással vagyok szerződötve (6)
 - ☐ Egyéb (7) _____
-

Kérlek, válaszd ki a listából, milyen szakon tanulsz jelenleg:

- ☐ Kommunikáció- és médiatudomány szak (1)
 - ☐ Politikatudomány szak (2)
 - ☐ Államtudományi osztatlan szak (3)
 - ☐ Közigazgatás szervező szak (4)
 - ☐ Nemzetközi tanulmányok szak (5)
 - ☐ Nemzetközi igazgatási szak (7)
 - ☐ Egyéb (8) _____
-

Page Break

Azt a gimnáziumot, ahova jártál, mi jellemzi a legjobban?

☐ Inkább humán-fókuszú volt a gimnáziumi képzésem. (1)

☐ Inkább reál-fókuszú volt a gimnáziumi képzésem. (2)

End of Block: Harmadik rész

Appendix C



Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem
Rektorátus
Eseti Kutatásetikai Bizottság
Budapest, 1093 Fővám tér 8.

Iktatószám: KRH/297/2024
Ügyintéző: Ágai Krisztián
Mellék: 5196
Melléklet: -

Tárgy: Szabó Kincső kutatásetikai engedély iránti kérelme

Kutatásvezető: Szabó Kincső doktorandusz
Email: kincso.szabo@stud.uni-corvinus.hu
Szervezeti egység: Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem, Szociológia és Kommunikációtudomány Doktori Iskola
A kutatási projekt megnevezése: Egyetemi hallgatók attitűdvizsgálata álláshirdetéseken rejlő implicit nemi utalások felé.

NYILATKOZAT

Az Eseti Kutatásetikai Bizottság a benyújtott kutatásetikai engedély tárgyában hiánytalanul kitöltött ellenőrző kérdőív és szakmai alátámasztó dokumentumok alapján a kérelemnek helyt ad és a kutatáshoz

a kutatásetikai engedélyt megadja.
A kutatást az ellenőrző kérdőívnek megfelelően kell lefolytatni

INDOKOLÁS

Szabó Kincső, az általa 2024. szeptember 19-én benyújtott kérelmében kutatásetikai engedély kiadását kérte a grémiumtól, amely kérelmet a testület az alábbiak szerint bírálta el. A becsatolt dokumentumok, úgymint a hivatkozott pályázathoz készített projektterv, az e célból készült és a kérelmező által hiánytalanul kitöltött nyilatkozat, az erről rendelkező 2/2020. (V. 26.) számú a BCE Eseti Kutatásetikai Bizottsága felállításáról, a kutatásetikai engedélyek kiadásáról szóló Rectori rendelkezés (RR) 6.§-ban megfogalmazott elveknek megfelelnek, a készülő kutatás az egyetem kutatási stratégiájával, valamint intézményfejlesztési tervével összhangban van. A kutatás folyamán a hivatkozott RR 2.a., 2.b és 2.c mellékleteiben kiadott nyilatkozatok kitöltése és aláírása minden esetben szükséges. A rendelkező részben foglaltak szerinti döntést a Bizottság 2024. október 15-i ülésén hozta meg.

Budapest, 2024. október 16.



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