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Abstract

The aim of this article is to unravel the gendered practices in ambition and challenge the hegemonic masculinity within it. Our findings are based on a qualitative study using focus groups in which Dutch men and women, full-timers and part-timers, constructed different meanings of ambition. The men and women in our study used three manifest discourses of ambition in the workplace, regarding individual development, mastery of the task, and upward career mobility. A critical analysis of these three discourses indicates how cultural and organizational norms on gender and working hours affect these constructions of ambition. We argue that a fourth discourse, ‘ambition as a resource’, is a major driving force of inequality. ‘Ambition as a resource’ is the dominant hegemonic discourse in organizations, and its power effects mitigate the impact of other discourses on ambition, revealing the potential for change when different discourses of ambition are valued.

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ambition, critical discourse analysis, discourses, focus groups, gender practices, hegemonic masculinity, part-time work, power, social constructionism

Introduction

Surprisingly, the concept of ambition is a relatively understudied phenomenon, while related concepts such as career motivation, aspiration or the need for achievement are well researched topics (e.g. Day and Allen, 2004; London, 1983, 1993). Where it has been researched, ambition is often studied from a social psychological perspective, in which it is seen as an individual characteristic or personality trait (Bicknell and Liefoghe, 2006; Judge et al., 1995). It is ambition (or the lack of it) that is often invoked to explain women's slow career progression: women 'lack the ambition' to pursue a career (see e.g. Hakim, 2000; Vianen and Keizer, 1996). In our view, this perspective has two important shortcomings. First of all, ambition is defined narrowly as a particular one-dimensional orientation on and prioritization of work, upwards career mobility, influence, power, a high salary and full-time working (Elchardus and Smits, 2008; Larimer et al., 2007; Sools et al., 2007). If ambition means that those aspects of work are valued over other areas of life, men fulfill the criteria of 'the ambitious worker' more often than women (Sheridan, 2004). Second, we would question whether this restricted notion of ambition can capture the variety of interpretations that people apply to it. Studies that focus on ambition as a personal trait (Bicknell and Liefoghe, 2006; Judge et al., 1995) do not take into account the complexity of power-related interactions through which ambition emerges. In our view, ambition is constructed in social interaction through multiple discourses.

We draw on a social constructionist perspective (Berger and Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2003; Gergen, 1999; Searle, 1995) to examine what constitutes ambition for women and men, taking into account the historical and cultural specificity of the concept of ambition and the social processes and interactions that construct ambition. To analyze the power dimension, we use the concept of hegemonic masculinity. Many different conceptualizations of hegemonic masculinity can be found in the literature (e.g. Alvesson, 1998; Collinson and Hearn, 1994; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Panayiotou, 2010). What these conceptualizations have in common is their acknowledgement that manifestations of hegemonic masculinity maintain status and power inequalities between women and men, and also between men (Connell, 1995).

The aim of our research is to unravel the gendered practices in ambition and to challenge the hegemonic masculinity within it, by examining how the men and women employees in our study construct ambition and how their constructions of ambition relate to constructions of gender and part-time and full-time work. We observed multiple and layered discourses on ambition. When talking about ambition, the men and women in our study clearly use three manifest types of discourse of ambition in the workplace, regarding individual development, mastery of the task, and upward career mobility. A critical analysis (Fairclough, 1992) of these three discourses indicates that, in the course of power-based social processes and interactions, our respondents habitually ascribe ambition to full-time workers and men, and to a lesser degree to part-time workers and

women. We argue that a fourth, implicit – though dominant – discourse of ambition is a major driving force of this inequality. This discourse, which we label ‘ambition as a resource,’ is a specific manifestation of hegemonic masculinity. We argue that this dominant discourse mitigates the impact of the other manifest discourses on ambition, such as individual development and mastery of the task. The contribution of this study is that it uncovers the power effects of hegemonic discourses of ambition, revealing the potential for change when the different discourses of ambition are valued and appeals are made to the ambitions of different groups of workers.

Context

As this study was carried out in the Netherlands and conducted in Dutch, it is relevant to mention here that the Dutch word *ambitie* bears a close linguistic resemblance to the English word *ambition*. We argue that there is more than linguistic similarity here, because cultural understandings of ambitions, and especially gendered ambitions, are translatable into different western cultural contexts. Stereotypes about agentic, assertive men and communal, caring women (Rudman and Glick, 2001) are widely recognized and often invoked to explain the imbalance in the numbers of men and women in top positions (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] Employment outlook, 2010).

Nevertheless, some knowledge of the specific historical and cultural Dutch context is necessary to understand the social construction of ambition and the gendered practices in ambition. Dutch women only began to enter the labor market in large numbers in the late 1980s. In 1983, the labor market participation of women in the Netherlands (38.7%, Bruyn-Hundt, 1988) was – with Ireland – the lowest in Europe. The lack of childcare facilities, combined with cultural norms that stigmatized working mothers, meant that a family set-up with a male breadwinner and a female caretaker was common practice in the Netherlands. This has changed rapidly since then and the current labor market participation of women is 71.5 percent, which is second only to Denmark within Europe (Merens et al., 2011). Most women who entered the labor market did so by taking up part-time jobs.

Part-time work is a key characteristic of the Dutch labor market. It accounts for 37.1 percent of all employment in the Netherlands, compared with an average of 16.6 percent in other OECD countries (OECD Employment outlook, 2010). The official definition for part-time work in the Netherlands is 35 hours or less (CBS, 2010). The vast majority of working women (74%) – and even 88 percent of working women with children younger than 11 years old (Portegijs, 2009) – and a significant proportion of men (22%), work 35 hours or less (Merens et al., 2011). Although norms relating to working mothers have changed since the late 1980s, women are still regarded as the primary caregivers who, ideally, work no more than three days a week. Full-time work for fathers is no problem, but, owing to the Dutch ‘motherhood ideology’ (Van Engen et al., 2009), long working hours for mothers are not accepted by large parts of the Dutch population. The current dominant model is known as the ‘1.5 earner model,’ with fathers in full-time and mothers in part-time employment (Merens et al., 2011).

In this context, organizations are creating and offering many part-time positions, especially in sectors that employ many women, such as the health care sector (81%

women), education (60% women) and the financial sector (46% women) (Merens et al., 2011). One feature is the existence of ‘mother contracts’: flexible, part-time contracts in which working hours are adjusted to Dutch school hours (08:30–12:00 and 13:15–15:15). Although it is sometimes claimed that these ‘mother contracts’ are also meant for fathers, as the name indicates, these work arrangements are designed particularly for women who take care of children. Notably, mother contracts are presented as a way of accommodating women’s choice for part-time work. Although part-time work has become widespread, it is also a contested practice within organizations. Notions relating to gender and the number of hours worked have become intertwined with implicit expectations about ambition (Taskforce DeeltijdPlus, 2010). In particular, among more senior ranks, the commitment and performance of part-timers is often questioned (Sheridan, 2004). Part-time workers are often seen as non-ideal, even imperfect, workers who are less committed to the organization and not ambitious in their careers (Dick and Hyde, 2006; Mescher, 2011). This image is gendered too, as the vast majority of working women work part-time. As a result, in Dutch organizations, cultural images persist that full-time working men are ambitious and that part-time working women are not. What is more, the ambitions of part-time working men are not questioned, whereas often people have reservations about the ambitions of full-time working women (Benschop et al., 2009).

Since an increasing proportion of the Dutch work force works part-time at some point in their career, this study looks particularly at how people relate their working hours to their ambitions. Do traditional gender practices in organizations still apply today, or are changes occurring that challenge the established constructions of ambition?

Theorizing ambition, gender and part-time work

To build a framework that helps unravel the gendered practices in ambition, we draw on a social constructionist approach (Burr, 2003) to ambition. As ambition is located within the context of time- and space-specific social and cultural processes, we focus on ambition as a product of social interaction, as a form of saying and doing (Martin, 2003) that is based on implicit and explicit cultural norms and rules. Our social constructionist approach relates to a Foucauldian analysis of ambition as a set of multiple discourses. A set of multiple discourses refers to a dynamic set of meanings, representations and practices that produce, reproduce, challenge and adjust a particular event. In that sense, discourses define the objects of both our knowledge and our actions (Foucault, 1972; Hall, 2001). Social practices such as ambition are surrounded by a number of discourses, offering different views and different options for action. These discourses will not all have an equal impact on people’s actions. Some of these discourses – mostly the ones that express common sense notions – are more dominant or prevalent than others (Burr, 2003). Hence, in our study we analyze the dynamic set of multiple discourses regarding ambition, and their respective impact on the gendered practices in ambition.

Gendered practices in ambition

Approaching ambition as a social construction is relevant to understanding the gendered practices in ambition. Ambition is often seen as an individual characteristic, as a

personality trait that makes it possible to distinguish between ambitious and non-ambitious individuals (Bicknell and Liefoghe, 2006; Judge et al., 1995). However, we depart from this view of ambition as a trait, because it ignores the fact that ambition is a social and relational construct and that ambitions, particularly in the context of work, are fostered through social interaction and through positive feedback, support and encouragement from peers and superiors (Fels, 2008; Kaplan et al., 1991; Murphy, 2007).

The social and relational character of ambition implies that it is not a neutral concept but one that is power-laden and based on implicit and explicit norms and rules. The power dimension of ambition is expressed in the distinct constructions of ambition as either positive or negative (Larimer et al., 2007). Ambition can refer to a desire to carry out multiple responsibilities competently and help work toward collective goals, and this is evaluated as positive ambition. Negative ambition, meanwhile, refers to self-interested behavior and an individualistic craving for power (Larimer et al., 2007).

Both constructions of ambition are culturally significant and intertwined with gender. Sools et al. (2007) conducted a study on gender and ambition in the Netherlands, and found that a strong equality ideology makes openly striving for status and power socially undesirable. Sools et al. (2007) confirm the distinction between positive and negative ambition in the Dutch context, noting that positive ambition is related to learning, growth and self-realization, and negative ambition in contrast is related to hierarchy, status, prestige and salary (Sools et al., 2007). Sools et al. (2007: 424) refer to what they call the pragmatic ‘paradox of ambition’, which arises through interaction and which calls for people to communicate to those around them that they want to gain promotion without openly showing that they want to.

This ‘paradox of ambition’ is gendered because it is particularly important for women to present their career ambitions, as it is not self-evident that women would have such ambitions. Sools et al. (2007) indicate that there are many gender stereotypes surrounding ambition. They note that it is generally taken for granted that men are ambitious to progress in their careers, so there is no need for men to make their ambitions explicit. For women, and in particular women with caretaking obligations (children, the elderly), this is different. These women are expected to take up part-time work and give up their career ambitions. Hence, part-time working women do indeed have to articulate and prove their ambition before they are recognized as career candidates (Benschop, 1996). At the same time, they need to do this carefully, as being openly ‘careerist’ would be a breach of the ‘gender rules’ for women too (Benschop et al., 2009). Many scholars have noted that ambitious women, who strive for leadership and management roles, have to walk a fine line between the Scylla of masculine, overconfident behavior and the Charybdis of excessively modest, feminine behavior (Alvesson and Billing, 2009; Eagly and Karau, 2002; Heilman et al., 2004; Phelan et al., 2008; Valian, 1999; Van den Brink and Benschop, 2012).

The gendered and power-laden nature of ambition is further illustrated by research that looks at ambition and challenging tasks. Taking on ‘challenging tasks’ is seen as an indication of the ambitions of those who do these tasks (Bass and Stogdill, 1990). ‘Challenging tasks’ are defined as those that involve solving new problems, dealing with uncertainties, overcoming difficult obstacles and making risky decisions (De Pater,

2005). In management and organization literature, challenging tasks are usually linked to leadership and managerial positions. Unsurprisingly, earlier research (Brouns et al., 2004; De Pater, 2005) demonstrates that such positions are performed by men more often than by women. The linkage between challenging tasks and managerial positions implicitly excludes tasks such as teaching young children or taking care of sick or elderly people, which are for the most part performed by women. That these latter tasks, which may in reality be just as challenging, are not valued in the same way illustrates how the concept of 'challenging tasks' is a gendered construction. A recent study involving mid-level positions concluded that gender differences in ambition did not explain the gender differences in performing challenging tasks, as no differences were found between women and men when it came to ambition (De Pater et al., 2010). The authors pointed toward two other explanations. First, the gendered difference in challenging tasks may result from the task allocation decisions of supervisors who are less willing to assign such tasks to female subordinates than to their male counterparts (De Pater et al., 2010). Second, when women do take on challenging tasks, there is a fair chance that the tasks will be seen as less challenging (Fletcher, 1998). According to gender stereotypical lines of reasoning, women are not seen as ambitious and as a consequence the jobs they are allocated will probably not include challenging tasks. The notion that men are more risk-tolerant and women tend to avoid risks thus remains intact and undisputed (Bass and Stogdill, 1990; Karakowsky and Elangovan, 2001).

In her study on women and ambition, Fels (2008) shows convincingly that women are often granted less recognition and appreciation for their achievements and how this hinders the articulation of their ambitions. Hence, gender differences in challenging tasks may negatively affect women's career progression, which makes gender a highly relevant issue when it comes to showing or having ambition, because women do not benefit from support, recognition and challenge in the same way as men do. The persistency of gender inequalities hints at the impact of hegemonic masculinities in the social practices of ambition.

Hegemonic masculinities

We contribute to the body of knowledge on gender and ambition by incorporating the notions of hegemonic masculinity and masculinities to come to a better understanding of the dynamics of gender practices that both sustain and challenge the gendered implicit and explicit norms and rules of ambition. Masculinity is a set of characteristics that – within time- and place-specific cultural constraints – are typically ascribed to men. Masculinity is a social construct, which is produced and reproduced in social institutions and through social interaction. Many different conceptualizations of hegemonic masculinity can be found in the literature (e.g. Alvesson, 1998; Collinson and Hearn, 1994; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Panayiotou, 2010). It is important to note that hegemonic masculinity is not the same as male dominance. Hegemonic masculinity does not refer to individual men or male physiology, but to the characteristics that in our subcultures, implicitly and sometimes explicitly, are ascribed to men, and that men are expected to possess and to aspire to. There are multiple masculinities within different areas of life. Here, we will take Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005)

definition of hegemonic masculinity, which refers to a hierarchy of masculinities in which non-hegemonic masculinities are subordinate to a hegemonic masculinity. Hegemony addresses relations of power and ideology, including the prevalence of that which is 'taken for granted' and 'common sense' (Hearn, 2010). Hegemonic masculinity is not a fixed phenomenon, but a specific configuration of a gendered practice that is culturally and historically contingent, and open to challenge and change (Connell, 1995; Hearn and Collinson, 2006). Hearn makes the case for the examination of the hegemony of men 'to address the double complexity that men are both a social category formed by the gender system and dominant collective and individual agents of social practices' (Hearn, 2010: 174). This is relevant to our study of ambition as it helps us to explore the connections between various interpretations of ambition and the varying forms of masculinities and femininities at work (Martin, 2003).

In the empirical section of this study, we will examine how men and women construct various meanings of ambition, gender and part-time work. We will analyze these meanings in terms of distinct discourses of ambition and we will argue that one of these discourses can be understood as a specific manifestation of hegemonic masculinity. As such, this discourse functions as the sometimes implicit but dominant organizational discourse in discussions on ambition. It reinforces the existing inequality between full-time workers and men on the one hand, and part-time workers and women on the other hand, when it comes to the opportunities to realize their ambitions.

Research methods

To examine the multiple discourses of ambition, we held six focus groups. The rationale for using focus groups was to generate data and insights that would have otherwise been less accessible, without the social interaction of a group (Morgan, 1997). In focus group settings, interviewees can react and add to the questions of the interviewers and to each other's stories and experiences in their own terms (Bloor, 2001; Wilkinson, 1998). The ability to turn the interaction in the interview over to the participants provides focus groups with particular strength (Morgan, 1997), which offers the researcher a unique possibility to reflect on the co-construction of meanings between people. 'Group work ensures that priority is given to the interviewees' hierarchy of importance, their language and concepts, their frameworks for understanding the world' (Kitzinger, 1994: 108–109). As such, this method was especially appropriate for this research as it provided insight into how organization members construct their ambitions in relation to each other and how their constructions vary according to the context that they work in.

Data collection

The six focus groups were evenly divided between two organizations, one in the traditionally female-dominated health care sector and the other one in the gender-balanced financial service sector. Both organizations offer ample opportunities for part-time work, and make for interesting contexts in which to study gendered constructions of ambition. Participants were informed about the project via intranet and email, and had the opportunity to volunteer for the focus groups. In total, 35 people between 24 and 56 years old

participated in the study. There were 25 employees who worked part-time (19 women and six men) and 10 managers (six women and four men), of whom three women worked part-time. There were three mixed focus groups, as well as one with men only and two with women only.

Power and group dynamics are always involved in the relationship between researcher and research subjects (Alvesson and Sköldberg, 2009). Compared with face-to-face interviews, researchers have less control over focus groups (Wilkinson, 1998), but the identities of researchers do influence the conversations. Reflecting on the relationship between researchers and those being researched is therefore crucial. All the focus groups contained between three and eight participants and had been facilitated by two female members of the research team and a female research assistant who took notes and fully transcribed the recorded sessions. With the exception of one male researcher, all the researchers were women of various ages (31–60), mothers and non-mothers, with different work patterns (full-time and part-time) and different moderating styles (Morgan, 1997). We are aware that the identity of the researchers could have had an effect on the extent to which people felt free to talk about their ambitions and choosing alternative career paths. Our academic identities could also have been the cause of people giving socially desirable answers in relation to ambition.

It is not only the relationship between researcher and the researched that should be reflected on, but also the dynamics among the research participants themselves. Participants can collaborate or collude effectively to intimidate and/or silence a particular member, or to create a silence around a particular topic (Wilkinson, 1998). Participants with higher status will talk more, be more successful at introducing topics, interrupt more, and receive more positive feedback from their listeners (Smith-Lovin and Brody, 1989). These group dynamics can influence the outcomes, tone and way of talking about a subject. We therefore organized separate focus groups for managers and employees because employees may not have felt comfortable talking about their career plans and ambition with their supervisors present, and managers may not be willing to reflect on issues with their subordinates present. In addition, a vast body of research on gender and communication indicates that women and men construct their gender identities and professional roles in workplace communication (Holmes, 2006). Inspired by Holmes, we focus on how interviewees draw on gendered discourses in their social constructions of ambition. In a focus group comprising both women and men, there may be a tendency for men to dominate, which would then produce knowledge from a privileged position (Arendell, 1997; Nagy Hesse-Biber, 2007). We take these group effects (Morgan, 1996) into account in our analysis.

A topic list (see Appendix A) was used to question respondents about the meaning of ambition. We asked participants about what constitutes ambition for them, and which factors may stimulate or hinder their ambitions. The interviewees were asked about the connections between ambition, sex, and the number of hours worked. We also asked them about the characteristics of 'the ambitious worker.' Tapping into the topic from the participants' points of view rather than starting with the researchers' points of view provided an opportunity to discover new ways of thinking about the issue. The quotes in this article are translations of the original Dutch excerpts. We are aware that translating from one language to another can lead to possible inadequacies, but with regard to phrasing

and content, we have stayed as close as possible to their original words. We refer to our interviewees using pseudonyms.

Data analysis

To analyze our empirical material, we drew on critical discourse analysis (CDA), which focuses on the role of discourse in constituting and sustaining unequal power relations (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Phillips and Hardy, 1997). ‘Critical discourse analysis assumes that the constructions individuals make operate not only to “make sense”, but also to reproduce or challenge ideological systems of beliefs that exist in society at large’ (Dick, 2004: 203). This method enabled us to reveal the social constructions of ambition and the gendered meanings and experiences of those constructions, and to show how the various discourses of ambition reproduced or disrupted power relationships within the organizations. We used Fairclough’s (1992) three dimensions of discourse (text, discursive practice and social practice) to ‘analyze the relationship between individuals, the social relationship of the researcher/researched, and the dominant ideological systems of knowledge and belief’ (Dick and Cassell, 2002: 962). This helped us to approach discourses of ambition as part of a broader set of social and discursive practices that reproduce or challenge power relationships. We addressed three issues:

- 1) Which discourses feature in respondents’ constructions of ambition? This issue is addressed at the text level. The analysis focused on patterns of variation within these texts related to ambition. When dealing with inconsistencies in and between texts, we discovered a variety of discourses of ambition;
- 2) How are respondents’ discursive constructions of ambition related to a broader set of discursive practices? This dimension focused on the relationship between productive and interpretative processes and the text (Fairclough, 2010). The analysis showed how ambition was intertextually related to the discourses of time, gender, work, career and family;
- 3) How is inequality reproduced or challenged in these constructions of ambition? This third issue addressed the dimension of social practice and was concerned with the ideological and hegemonic functions of discourse (Dick and Cassell, 2002). This dimension gave us a way of exploring the norms and rules that are taken for granted but contribute to the production, reproduction or transformation of relationships of power (Fairclough, 2010).

Findings

Three discourses of ambition

We started each focus group by asking interviewees: ‘What does ambition mean for you personally?’ Interviewees came up with various interpretations of ambition: developing talents, developing the organization or the task, extending interests and skills, learning new things, self-fulfillment, wanting to be the best, avoiding stagnation, finding a work–life balance and not getting bored. Although we heard expressions of ambitions that

related to family life, hobbies, politics and sports, the majority of the interviewees talked about their personal ambitions in the field of work, which may well have been owing to the fact that the focus groups were taking place in the workplace. The three prominent discourses of ambition in the workplace given by the participants were 'individual development', 'mastery of the task' and 'upward career mobility.' The first discourse was exemplified in the following statement:

Albert: It [ambition] has something to do with self-development, it has something to do with making use of your own talents and to some extent to the goal you're striving for. To develop that to a level of competence. And simply put that into practice. (Part-time employee, professional service)

Albert constructs ambition as an individual phenomenon. In the words that he chooses, the terms 'self-development', 'own talents', 'goal you're striving for', and 'competence' all point to ambition as development at the personal level. We label this 'the discourse of individual development.' Barbara, meanwhile, refers to another discourse:

Barbara: Actually, I am rather ambitious, as I want to do the work that I do . . . I want to do that well. That's my ambition . . . yes, I might have to formulate it in this way. I would like to do my work as well as possible, so I want to develop as much as possible in this work. (Part-time employee, health care)

In this excerpt, we observe a shift from the individual to the task. Barbara emphasizes that the work should be done well, and expresses her ambition to carry out that work to the best of her ability. We refer to this discourse as 'the discourse of mastery of the task'. In the following excerpt, we can see a third interpretation of ambition:

Claire: I also really see ambition as personal growth. It does not necessarily have to be higher up the ladder. It can also be broadening your knowledge. An example for me is, are you striving toward a goal, a step, it does not need to be vertical. Can also be horizontal if that can broaden your knowledge . . .

Dennis: Yes . . . It does not necessarily have to be a management function, it also can be in the broader domain or something else, but for me it is about developing the things you have and do. (Part-time managers, professional service)

The excerpt consists of two accounts in which a third discourse of ambition – namely 'the discourse of upward career mobility' – is constructed in negative terms. Dennis agrees with Claire's statement that ambition does not necessarily involve moving up the career ladder. The fact that they mention this interpretation of ambition indicates that upward mobility is an important discourse of ambition, but it is not a discourse that the participants in our study were often prepared to associate themselves with. This reluctance to identify with upward career mobility can be explained by the positive and negative connotations of ambition and the explicit and implicit cultural norms and rules associated with ambition.

Positive and negative connotations of ambition

Overall, in the focus group discussions, the two discourses of ambitions ‘individual development’ and ‘mastery of the task’ are constructed as positive and desirable. In contrast, many interviewees were at best ambivalent about the discourse of ‘upward career mobility’. Several interviewees mentioned that focusing solely on a higher position was evidence of a ‘one-track mind’ and would detract from one’s ability to develop multiple skills and interests. The interviewees distanced themselves from or even disapproved of ambition as ‘upward career mobility’:

- Eveline:* To me, ambition is more . . . uuh . . . I do not think it is the right word. I see it more like development, as progress and deepening. Ambition is more a word for . . . pursuit, a goal you have to realize, compulsively. And with me, it is more like development, and moving on and yes . . .
- Fay:* Yes, it feels a bit like a negative word, but you mean . . .
- Eveline:* No, ambition does feel negative to me, like ‘she is ambitious’, you know, and that is totally not me . . .
- Fay:* Yes . . . I do not see it like that, that negative meaning, that feeling of ambitious, because ambition can also be something very beautiful, right? It can be a goal, and what matters is the way you reach that goal, right? . . .
- Eveline:* I think that they [people who aspire to top positions] leave a lot of things, [laughs], in terms of development . . . because they are compulsively trying to reach the top, they rush by a lot of experience in life, in work experience or in development. (Part-time employees, health care)

This discussion focused on the connotations of ambition. Eveline constructs ‘ambition’ as compulsiveness and pursuit, which she sees as negative and wants to distance herself from. This could be related to Dutch socio-cultural practices, in which a strong equality discourse means that it is inappropriate to express one’s superior position over others. What she does value is development, progress and deepening. Fay agrees with the negative appreciation of ambition as compulsiveness and pursuit, but she also sees a positive side, mentioning the ‘beauty’ of ambition. Ambition is not negative in itself, she continues, but the means by which ambitions are sometimes achieved can arouse positive or negative feelings. In the discursive practice of this women-only focus group, we observe that the discourse of ‘individual development’ is constructed as positive, whereas the discourse of ‘upward career mobility’ is more ambiguous and contains both positive and negative connotations. These findings resonate with the study of Sools et al. (2007), which also distinguishes between positive and negative sides of ambition in the Dutch context.

However, the discourses of ‘individual development’ and ‘mastery of the task’ can also be perceived negatively. Some interviewees gave examples of colleagues and friends who they considered to be too ambitious, because they did not spend enough time with their family and were too self-centered:

- Gina:* You can be too ambitious. A friend of mine was so ambitious . . . she started a course and worked during weekends and nights to finance her study. She has two teenagers at home, well, well, those children were sold short. She only thought about her own ambitions, and her husband too, and they were sold short. And then things go wrong . . . Attention, simply the

attention and being there for your kids as a mom. She didn't have the time for that. Never. I don't want to be like that. Never, never. I prefer having time for my kids and my husband. (Part-time employee, health care)

Gina voices strong sentiments about her friend with too much ambition who failed in her duty to her family. She constructs a meaning of ambition that equals selfishness, emphasizing that her friend 'only thought of her own ambitions' at the expense of spending time with her children. Her aversion is shown by her firm rejection of that ambition – 'never, never' – which she links to her own identity as a mother.

We note how the discourses of 'individual development' and 'mastery of the task' lose their positive connotation when the combination of work and private life issues is at stake. It seems that the way in which ambitions are achieved raises these concerns, not so much the specific discourse of ambition (development, mastery or upward career mobility). In order to understand this better, we need to examine more closely the discursive practices regarding gender, caretaking responsibilities and working time.

Ambition, gender and part-time work

The issues of gender, caretaking responsibilities and working time all raise the question of how the various discourses of ambition relate to both full-time and part-time work, and to women and men. In the focus groups with part-timers, we note that they argued that upward career mobility and management functions were more difficult to reconcile with part-time work, as the following excerpt illustrates:

Kate: . . . It seems to be at odds with what I've just said [ambition and number of hours is not related], but that is not the case. In my opinion, if I work 24 hours, I do not work enough hours to manage a whole department, very simple. (Part-time employee, professional service)

In spite of her view that ambition is not directly linked with part-time work, Kate argues that aiming for a management position implies working longer hours. She was not the only one to stress that it was self-evident – 'very simple' – that management positions require long hours. The norm is that upward career mobility toward management positions involves working full-time or at least almost full-time.

However, in most of the focus groups, strong beliefs were expressed regarding the relationship between ambition and the number of hours worked. First of all, according to interviewees who work in part-time jobs, part-time work itself does not necessarily limit their level of ambition regarding the mastering of the tasks:

Helen: I don't have the feeling that I am less ambitious due to the fact that I work three days a week instead of five days, you know. I discussed this with a colleague who has kids at home too, and we agreed that we are extra motivated to do our work extremely well, because we only work part-time, you know.

Iris: Yes, that you want to deliver as much quality as possible in the hours that you are working?

Helen: Yes! Yes, exactly! (Part-time employees, health care)

Jane: There are many part-time employees that are very ambitious in their work. They don't show up at half past seven and say 'toodle-oo' at four o'clock 'I've earned my money for today!' They certainly show passion and ambition in their work. (Part-time employee, health care)

These women explicitly challenge the view that working part-time is incompatible with professional ambitions. In the first excerpt, Helen stresses that she is extra motivated because she 'only' works part-time. Because there is less time, it is more important for her to use the time available to provide the best possible care. Jane denies that part-timers simply 'work their hours' and go home, implying that part-timers are willing to put in an extra effort when needed because they are passionate about their work. We encountered this passion for work in the context of the hospital in particular, where the well-being of patients is at stake. The positive connotation of ambition as drive and passion was not restricted to working long hours as far as these two part-timers were concerned. They drew on the discourse of 'mastery of the task' to underline that working part-time and being ambitious were fully compatible. This discourse helped them to disconnect ambition and working time, allowing them to identify positively with 'quality' and 'passion'. This argument was especially prominent in the focus groups with part-timers (both men and women), since they may have been accustomed to challenging stereotypes about part-time workers ('say "bye" at four o'clock') and they may have used the focus group as a platform to express their opinions about the prejudices of colleagues.

However, in our focus groups, the relationship between the discourse of ambition as 'individual development' and part-time work is primarily driven by cultural norms and rules about gender. We note that the motives for working part-time are predominantly related to child care. Both men and women in the professional service organization emphasized that their organization is known as a caring employer that provides many opportunities and freedom for employees to organize their work and combine it with caring for children. In the focus group with female part-timers, the issue of prioritizing family over individual development through extra training and courses was raised repeatedly:

Helen: The training would almost take six months, and I thought that that was a rather substantial investment. And then I start to feel guilty, like, I already work three days and the children start to say things like 'oh you cannot do that to me again, can you?' or 'you have to leave again?' and then I start to feel guilty. And then I think, I would also like to spend time with them and that holds me back. And actually that is number one for me. What you just said about that friend . . . I also have a friend like that who completely goes for her own development and has been studying for years – and having a nice time with her kids, well, there is no time for that.

Gina: There is no time for that.

Helen: No, there is no time for that. (Part-time employees, health care)

In this interactive context, several gendered norms and rules emerge. When Helen considers working more than three days a week, the implicit cultural norm that three days is the optimum for working mothers emerges. The idea of selling her children short by spending more time at work makes this participant feel guilty. The Dutch motherhood ideology (Van Engen et al., 2009) prescribes that mothers should put their children first.

Friends who do not adhere to this ideology are condemned. In the discursive practice of the focus groups with female part-timers, we heard many mothers identify with the hierarchical order of 'family first and work second'. This is a strong norm as it is also invoked by Olivia, who agreed with the consensus in her focus group, stating:

Olivia: The main thing is that in any case I want to pick up the children from school two days a week and I want to be there. So that is the basis for looking further. I do not want to let go of that. I do realize that in spite of my ambitions . . . when my first was born I had the same as you, I said: 'I want to keep working 32 hours,' but I was almost shot for this standpoint, both in the private sphere and at work. Like: 'that is impossible because you have a child'. Then I started to work 24 hours. I was dead miserable with 24 hours, because I could not do what I wanted in that job. (Part-time employee, professional service)

The cultural norms relating to gender and working time emerge very clearly in Olivia's account. Her priorities are clear ('the main thing'): she wants to be there for her children after school two days a week. While she appears to accept the family-first norm, she does not adhere to the three-days'-work norm – 'I was almost shot' – and she talks about her struggle with that – 'dead miserable'. We use the notion of 'frozen ambition' to capture how women like Olivia temporarily, and as a response to the pressure of cultural norms about working mothers, put their ambitions regarding 'individual development' on ice, usually so that they can take care of their children.

Unreachable goals and frozen ambition

Analyzing our findings so far, we find indications of gender inequality. At the *textual* level, the part-time working women in our focus groups describe their ambitions in terms of 'individual development and personal growth', and 'mastery of the task'. They relate negatively to ambition as 'upward career mobility' and they agree that working part-time – self-evidently – hinders upward career mobility, but does not prevent them from developing professionally and further mastering their jobs. At the level of *discursive practices*, these constructions of ambition were produced in the context of work. When caretaking responsibilities are brought into the discussion, we see that the connotations of ambition change. Then the norm is that 'kids come first', even if that obstructs employees from achieving their ambition of developing their knowledge and skills through further training and courses. At the level of *social practices*, organizational and societal norms on part-time work and gender reproduce inequality. The widespread organizational norm that it is impossible to combine part-time work and managerial responsibilities is accepted as a matter of course. This implies that upward career mobility is not simply seen as a negative ambition, but also as an unattainable goal for part-timers. The previously mentioned Dutch motherhood ideology prescribes that mothers should not work more than three days a week and that good mothers must be available whenever their children need them. These organizational and societal norms make it acceptable for part-time working mothers to freeze their ambitions and not invest in further development. Only one aspect of ambition 'the mastery of the task' remains available for part-timers and is not frozen. 'Mastery of the task' is constructed as a form of ambition that does not require an extra investment of time. We will further analyze this in the section on hegemonic masculinity below.

The question arises whether this analysis only applies to the female part-timers in our study. The discussions in the focus group for working fathers seemed to confirm this. Of course, our research methods do not allow for generalizations, but most of the part-time working men in our focus groups stated that they had chosen this particular employer because they could combine working in four-days part-time jobs with occupying higher functions. The majority of men in our study were highly qualified but worked in part-time jobs at a high level, allowing them to maintain their ambition for upward career mobility while having the opportunity to take care of their children. Noticeably, the men in our study valued both work and care; for example:

Peter: On the one hand it is career oriented, because I want to make a move, more salary, and the other things that come with that. And in a certain phase of your life, which I am in, it is finding balance between how can I keep working at a level that is appealing and also be able to play a very important role for my children. And that is a personal ambition, since it takes a lot of energy to find the combination . . . Once, I considered going back to three days at work. However, then you reach a whole other level in jobs, with all due respect. (Part-time employee, professional service)

Peter emphasizes the balance between ‘working at an appealing level’ and ‘playing an important role for my children’. Combining these two ‘takes energy’ but is not impossible for him, and nor does he refer to any personal feelings of guilt or societal disapproval. Let us note how Peter legitimizes his choice not to reduce his working hours to three days, ‘because then you reach a whole other level in jobs, with all due respect.’ His words suggest that a high-level job comes first for him, which is in keeping with his upward career mobility drive. As this was a focus group of only men, these particular accounts might have been affected by the cultural norms on men and fathers in the Netherlands. It is not the convention for men to put their family first, and part-time working men are still a minority in the Netherlands (Van Beek et al., 2010). Even when speaking among peers in the focus group, who had all made a similar choice to work part-time, the dominant norm – that men should value their work highly – may have inspired the interviewees to emphasize their professional ambitions. In the Dutch context, we would argue that it is not surprising that we see the part-time working mothers in our study restricting their working hours on the basis of their identity as a good mother, and the part-time working fathers taking their decisions about working hours on the basis of both retaining their career prospects and meeting their family responsibilities.

Our analysis of the interrelationship of ambition, gender and part-time work brings inequalities to the surface. The following section elaborates on the ideological and hegemonic functions of discourse to arrive at a better understanding of how inequality is reproduced or challenged through the constructions of ambition.

Ambition as a resource

Apart from their opinions about what ambition meant for them personally, we asked the interviewees to describe the characteristics of an ambitious colleague or subordinate. We noticed a striking difference between the focus group members’ opinions about their own ambitions and their opinions regarding ‘the ambitious worker’. In addition to the three

discourses presented previously, we found a fourth discourse of ambition that surfaces when managers and colleagues describe the ambitious employee. The following interaction between members of the focus group with managers illustrates this:

- Robert:* How I recognize an ambitious employee is by how . . . that is one who is a bit ahead . . . , indeed . . .
- Sarah:* Task-focused yes . . .
- Robert:* He does not just take the lead but is enthusiastic too . . .
- Tess:* Takes on tasks, easily takes on work . . .
- Robert:* Well, yes, and you delegate tasks relatively easily to those people, as you know that they will say yes. Let's put that first . . .
- Sarah:* . . . and they like doing something in addition to their normal tasks, so to say.
- Tess:* They are more enthusiastic about doing extra tasks . . .
- Sarah:* They never say words like 'that is not in my job description' . . .
- Robert:* And what we do as well, of course, has to do with mindset, like, who do you send for extra schooling, for example? Those are the people who want more. This year, I offered the opportunity to my employees to do a special training. And absolutely nobody wanted that! . . .
- Tess:* . . . I have that . . . with part-timers, that I say . . . well, you may obtain a higher level certificate, with a salary raise, and then they tell me well, no, that is not so . . . while I really want them to obtain that knowledge. Yes, and then people say like well . . . [whining tone:] 'yes, but I have to deal with my family too and the children and all . . .' (One part-time manager, two full-time managers, health-care)

This discussion among managers showed that, for them, ambitious employees are those who take on 'extra tasks', are 'enthusiastic' and go beyond their immediate 'job description'. The managers talk appreciatively about employees who volunteer for challenging, significant and wide-ranging tasks. Managers are willing to delegate such tasks and trust that their request will not be refused. As such, ambitious employees are those who can be trusted to help the manager out, who have the attitude and mindset for doing something extra. We label this fourth discourse of ambition, 'ambition as a resource'. Here, ambition is constructed as 'resource' that benefits organizational performance, provided that the goals of employees contribute to the organizational goals and there are quick returns on the investment. As such, ambition as a 'resource' is directly related to discursive practices of HRM, in which the human 'resource' is mainly valued in terms of performance and utility (Doorewaard and Benschop, 2003). This became even clearer when the conversation in the focus group turned to employees who do not fit the profile, who turn opportunities down and refuse to develop their knowledge and skills. Who are the employees whose ambitions are considered a resource for the organization and which are the employees whose ambitions are considered less useful? To analyze this, we examine the discourse of 'ambition as a resource' as a manifestation of hegemonic masculinity.

Hegemonic masculinity

During our focus groups we observed many examples of stereotypical expectations regarding the relationship between 'ambition as a resource', gender and working hours.

The following quotes illustrate how people invoke the discourse of ‘ambition as a resource’ when ascribing ambitions to particular groups of employees:

- Sarah:* . . . and the male analysts always did additional things. That also applied to some women, but there were 90 percent women and only 30 percent were willing to do something extra. And among the men, that was 100 percent. The men also did some IT-related tasks, they take on extra tasks most of the time. And they become ‘superusers’ or they did ‘gas’ or ‘inductions’ or yes, in my opinion it was just always the men that were more ambitious. Can I say it like that? No, that is not true but . . . (Full-time manager, health care)
- Wendy:* You could see that people were content when they were working full-time, and then they started to work part-time, and then suddenly the passion goes away. Yes, those are people who, in my view, become less ambitious or ambitious in another area. (Full-time manager, professional service)

At the *textual level*, these interviewees explicitly connect ‘ambition as a resource’ to specific groups: they point to men and full-timers respectively. Sarah ascribes the ambitions of men to their willingness to do extra tasks and Wendy notes a transition when full-timers become part-timers, they lose their ‘passion’ and become ‘less ambitious.’ At the level of *discursive practices*, we observe how hegemonic masculinity manifests itself in the discourse of ‘ambition as a resource’. Hegemonic masculinity in organizations has been elaborated in the concept of the ideal worker (Acker, 1992). This ideal worker is a disembodied worker, whose characteristics are presented as abstract and neutral (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998) but include masculine qualities such as being continuously available, prioritizing work and being task-oriented (Acker, 1992; Tienari et al., 2002). All these characteristics correspond perfectly with the discourse of ‘ambition as a resource’. This can be explained when we consider the level of *social practices*, in which organizational norms on availability, flexibility, long hours and prioritizing work produce inequalities. We argue that ‘ambition as a resource’ is the dominant organizational discourse which, implicitly and sometimes even unconsciously, influences the way in which members of an organization think, articulate and act in regard to ambition within organizations. It is our argument that the discourse of ‘ambition as a resource’ is a manifestation of hegemonic masculinity that affects the other discursive constructions of ambition at work. The hegemony of the discourse of ‘ambition as a resource’ implies that people are better capable of achieving their ambitions of upwards career mobility, personal development and task mastery, if they are continuously available, task-oriented and prioritize work. This means that people do not adhere to the discourse of upward career mobility for themselves when they feel they lack the time to put in the long hours or go the extra mile. It also means that the ambition of individual development is frozen because people anticipate that the organization would only invest in their development if they prioritize work over care responsibilities. Even the ambition of mastery is affected by the hegemonic discourse of ‘ambition as a resource’, although our respondents explicitly decoupled it from availability and working hours. As we stated earlier, previous research (e.g. De Pater, 2005; Sools et al., 2007) indicates that the tasks performed by part-time workers in general and women part-time workers in particular are often regarded as less challenging, compared with the tasks performed by men and full-time

workers. 'Mastering the task' may be important for women who work part-time, but supervisors do not automatically acknowledge the ambition of these women. Hence, although all employees are supposed to perform according to the model of the ideal worker (Acker, 2006), the discourse of 'ambition as a resource' is confined to particular groups of employees – in this case, to full-time workers and to men.

The hegemonic masculinity in the discourse of 'ambition as a resource' has several consequences for employees who do not conform to the model of the ideal worker, and whose individual ambitions are disregarded altogether. Part-time women in particular face this problem:

- Vicky:* My motivation for taking part in this focus group is that I always . . . I looked on the website and the advertisement . . . Also because of [my] frustrations about the opportunities for upward career mobility in the past. Maybe I will finally lose that frustration.
- Interviewer Alexandra:* What do you think caused those problems with career mobility?
- Vicky:* Because in that time, during a long period, I went from 24 to 28 hours, finally to 32 hours and then I think I am not another person because I work 32 hours now. My capacities did not change at once because I work 32 hours. (Vicky: part-time employee, professional service, Alexandra: full-time researcher)
- Ulla:* I have a female boss, one of the few. And she really wanted to lead one of the new departments. She was rejected, because she works part-time. They want people who work seven days a week, and that is the whole point. (Part-time employee, professional service)

Vicky links her frustrations about limited career opportunities to the fact that she works part-time, stressing that it is only her working hours that have changed over time, not her capacities. Ulla's account indicates that part-timers do not qualify for high-level jobs such as managerial positions, suggesting that part-time work is only allowed in low-level functions. The low-level jobs that are deemed suitable for part-timers do not provide many opportunities for individual development and growth. This produces inequalities for part-timers who are given fewer opportunities to show and develop their ambitions at work. Although the discourse of 'ambition as a resource' does not explicitly exclude women as ambitious workers, implicit norms and rules on gender and working hours prescribe that Dutch women work part-time.

The dominant discourse of 'ambition as a resource' leads to inequality for part-timers and women, and in particular the combination of these two groups, the part-time working women who are implicitly constructed as employees without the ambitions that could benefit the organization, while the ambitions of full-timers and men are taken for granted. However, the first section of our findings showed that part-timers and women may draw on different discourses of ambition, but do express ambitions nonetheless. This means that there is probably an untapped, though potentially useful, pool of ambition that could be put to work for the benefit of employees and employers both.

Discussion and conclusion

The point of departure for this study was the need for theoretical insights into the construction of ambition in organizational contexts. To develop those insights, we conducted focus groups with part-timers and full-timers, men and women, and managers and employees to examine their social constructions of ambition. Through a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2010), we were able to reveal the cultural norms and rules that underlie discourses of ambition and explain how these contribute to persistent gender inequalities in the workplace. This study has unraveled gendered practices in ambition in the Netherlands with its unusual proportion of part-time workers (74% of women and 22% of men work part-time) and strong motherhood ideology. It extends previous work on gender and ambition that indicates that part-time working women are seen as less committed to the organization and as not ambitious (Dick and Hyde, 2006; Sools et al., 2007). The key theoretical lessons of this study concern the socially constructed nature of ambition, the specific norms and rules about time and gender in the workplace, and their power effects on different groups of employees.

First, ambition is a relevant but understudied phenomenon that is used to ascribe inequalities at work to individual traits and preferences, especially when it comes to gender inequalities and the alleged lack of ambition of women (see for instance Hakim, 2000). Departing from an individual trait approach, our work is grounded in social constructionism (Burr, 2003). From social constructionism we derived the problematizing and challenging of notions of ambition that are taken for granted. This approach helped us to distinguish between the three manifest discourses of ambition in the workplace: the discourse of 'individual development', the discourse of 'mastery of the task' and the discourse of 'upward career mobility'. It also helped to understand how these three discourses were valued differently; development and mastery were constructed as positive and desirable, whereas upward career mobility was seen as negative because of the narrow-mindedness it entails.

Second, our critical discourse analysis also brought to the surface how cultural norms and rules on working time and gender are embedded in discourses. Cultural norms were invoked specifically for part-time working mothers who were 'selling their families short' if they were too ambitious in their work. Almost all of the part-time working men and women in our focus groups took for granted that part-time jobs cannot be combined with an upward career mobility ambition. Some part-time working mothers anticipated the cultural norms and coped by 'freezing' their work ambitions temporarily, putting their families first, and working part-time. In contrast to mothers, working fathers were not expected to give up or freeze their professional ambitions. The men in this study have not reduced their working hours as drastically as the women. Working hours and priorities are habitually presented as individual choices, overlooking the pressure of cultural and historical norms that result in hegemonic standards.

Third, our analysis deepened the insights in how gender inequality is produced and reproduced in and through the discourses of ambition. The three discourses surfaced when we asked what ambition meant for interviewees personally. A fourth discourse of ambition emerged when we asked the focus group participants to describe 'the ambitious colleague or subordinate'. We labeled this fourth discourse 'ambition as a resource'

because here ambition was constructed as a useful resource for the organization. 'Ambition as a resource' was particularly valued by managers, who underlined the need for commitment, willingness to go the extra mile without complaining and taking the initiative to improve processes and services. 'Ambition as a resource' was habitually ascribed to full-time workers and men. The notion of hegemonic masculinity (e.g. Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005) helped us to understand the precise functioning of 'ambition as a resource'. Our analysis indicates how hegemonic masculinity manifests itself in the discourse of 'ambition as a resource'. When discussing ambition as a resource, many interviewees, both managers and employees, formulated the gendered characteristics of the abstract ambitious worker, whose characteristics include masculine qualities such as being continuously available, prioritizing work and being task-oriented. In these descriptions we recognized the gendered characteristics of the 'ideal worker' (Acker, 1992). We argue that the discourse of 'ambition as a resource' functions as the dominant organizational discourse, as a specific manifestation of hegemonic masculinity, mitigating the impact of the other discourses. Individual development, mastering your tasks and upward career mobility may be important constructions of ambition, but when it comes to crucial decisions regarding allocating challenging tasks, career openings and promotions, 'ambition as a resource' is the prevalent construction. Thus, the implicit connection between the dominant discourse of ambition as a resource and specific groups of employees brings about inequalities in organizations. Full-timers receive more support and recognition for their ambitions and there is a pool of ambition among part-timers that remains untapped when working long hours is taken as a proxy for 'ambition as a resource'. Furthermore, the inequalities are not confined to hours worked as gender inequalities are entangled with working hours. Cultural and historical norms in the Netherlands entail a hegemonic masculinity in ambition. There is a pattern of masculinity that is socially constructed through the contrast with a model of femininity (Martin, 2003), which is embodied by women who work part-time and prioritize their care responsibilities over their work responsibilities. Men and women working part-time jobs thus still relate to and confirm a notion of ambition that links to the norm of hegemonic masculinity.

Our study also has important practical implications. The hegemonic masculinity of ambition can be challenged and the notion of ambition as a resource can be stretched. Disregarding discourses of ambition as individual development and mastery is costly, not just in terms of the responsibility of organizations to counter inequalities, but also in terms of sound talent management. This study shows that organizations are losing out when they do not systematically explore the opportunities to influence and encourage the ambitions of all their employees. Managers who acknowledge that there are multiple constructions of ambition do not make assumptions about ambitions based on the hours that employees work or their care responsibilities. A re-evaluation of individual development and of mastery is called for. Our study suggests that there is much hidden potential to be tapped in ambitious part-time workers and women.

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Appendix A Topic list

1. Introduction
 - a. Name, age
 - b. Where do you work and what is your job?
 - c. How many hours do you work?

- d. Are you in a relationship?
 - e. Do you have any children?
2. Ambition
- a. What does ambition mean for you personally?
 - b. Do you consider yourself as being ambitious? Why do you consider yourself to be ambitious, or not?
3. Ambitions in working life
- a. What ambitions do you have in your working life?
 - b. Do you see a relation between the ambitions you have and the number of hours that you spend at work?
 - c. What do you need to be able to realize your ambitions?
 - i. In your organization? (Two features of support: career support and work-life balance support)
 - ii. In your home/family?
 - iii. In your social environment?
 - iv. Individual factors?
 - d. What keeps you from realizing your ambitions?
 - i. In your organization?
 - ii. In your home/family?
 - iii. In your social environment?
 - iv. Individual factors?
4. Ambitious employees
- a. How do you recognize an ambitious employee? Can you describe an ambitious employee in your organization?
5. Does being a man or a woman matter in ambition?

Appendix B is an online data supplement. To view it please go to <http://hum.sagepub.com/content/66/5.toc> and follow the link with this article.