

## **Structuration Effects on Women Pre-service Student Teachers' Subject Choices**

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**ABSTRACT** The paper explores the effect of societal pressures on pre-service female student teachers' choices to train as primary, high school or mathematics and science teachers. Data on 3288 pre-service student teachers from a School of Education at a university in Gauteng, South Africa was collected. The students' choices as per their gender were analysed. The results revealed that although female students were in the majority, a few of them opted to teach at high school especially in mathematics and science. The study found that the number of female teachers was inversely proportional to the increase in school grade. Content analysis of interview data showed that gender stereotypes strongly influenced course selection as most female student teachers feared acting against common expectations. The study also found that lack of role models of women in careers subsuming mathematics and science, seem to affect female students' attitude to mathematics and science. Recommendations on increasing women's access to mathematics and science education are suggested.