



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

Teachers' lives in transition:

Gendered experiences of work and family among
primary school teachers in northern Sweden,
c. 1860–1940

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Abstract

In this thesis, primary school teachers in a coastal area of northern Sweden c. 1860–1940 are studied with the overarching purpose to investigate the link between professional work and private life. Four sub-studies provide results on who the teachers were with regard to gender, professional status (teacher qualification) and socio-economic background, and on their family formation during the study period. Dis(similarities) over time and between the genders are analysed and discussed within a life-course framework, especially concerning women's possibility to become teachers and combine their employment with family formation. The findings are obtained through quantitative as well as qualitative analyses of multiple sources like digitised parish records, censuses, teacher registers and a diary. The latter provides unique insights into the everyday life of a young woman and her interaction with the local community through her teacher position and social networks. The results show both continuity and change. The recruitment pattern of primary school teachers in terms of social origin remained stable throughout the study period. A farming origin was most typical while children of higher professionals were most likely to become teachers, but this group alone could not cover the need for new teachers. National reforms of the teacher training and its increasing accessibility on a regional level had a big impact on the number, qualification, and gender composition of primary school teachers in the study area. Results on the dynamic link between work and family formation show that female teachers were among the first middle-class women to increase their share in experiencing motherhood. In the 20th century, an increasing proportion of women who entered the teaching profession returned to it after having children. Overall, the thesis results show that women teachers in contrast to their male counterparts experienced fundamental transitions in their professional as well as family life. This indicates a shift in the perception of a respectable woman teacher. In the 19th century, she could be either a teacher or a mother but rarely both at the same time. Along with changes in societal structures and gendered norms during the 20th century, teaching mothers became far more common suggesting that they enjoyed respectability. The variety of findings of this thesis and its mix of methods allow it to contribute to several fields within history, such as social history, historical demography, gender history and history of education.

Keywords: women teachers, family formation, fertility, social origin, socio-economic status, primary school teachers, life course, gender, professional life, private life, rural, Sweden

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Key terms

Swedish translations for less frequently used concepts, like ‘grammar schools’ (*läroverk*), are provided at the first occasion in the thesis, and thus not listed below.

Elementary school teacher
(*Folkskollärare*)

Introduced through the first elementary school act in 1842, teacher training was organised in all eleven diocesan capitals by the government. Eligible to teach in all six grades of the elementary school. From 1859 available for women and after 1862 an education length of three years. Same formal conditions for women and men until 1906 when male teachers got higher salary increments causing women elementary school teachers to form their own union.

Junior school teacher
(*Småskollärare*)

Introduced in 1858, mainly organized by the county council and private initiatives. First intended for the first two grades with pupils aged seven to eight years, but they came to teach in all grades (1 to 6), primarily in rural areas/remote schools. Initial teacher training spanned from a course over a few weeks up to two years. However, economic incentives for the municipalities to have junior school teachers with at least seven months of training were introduced in 1878. The school act of 1897 stated that the junior school teacher “should have undertaken training” but a degree as a formal requirement was not introduced until 1918, the same year that they could have permanent positions.

Primary school teacher
(*Lärare i skolans tidiga år*)

This term refers to both the elementary and junior school teachers jointly.

List of research articles included in this thesis

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- I. Marklund, Emil, “Who was going to become a teacher? The socio-economic background of primary school teachers in northern Sweden 1870–1950”, *History of Education*, Vol. 50 (1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760X.2020.1760946>
- II. Marklund, Emil, “Ett år med Ester. En mikrohistorisk undersökning av det sociala nätverket och känslolivet hos en småskollärare vid sekelskiftet 1900” [“One year with Ester: The social network and emotional life of a junior school teacher through a microhistorical lens”], *Historisk Tidskrift*, Vol. 137 (3), 2017.
- III. Sandström, Glenn & Marklund, Emil, “A prelude to the dual provider family – The changing role of female labor force participation and occupational field on fertility outcomes during the baby boom in Sweden 1900–60”, *History of the Family*, Vol. 24 (1), 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1081602X.2018.1556721>
- IV. Marklund, Emil, “Teaching and family: Either or both? Family formation and work among primary school teachers in northern Sweden, 1842–1937”, *Manuscript*.

1. Introduction

On the seventh of October 1859, Lena Katarina Andersdotter and her husband, the farmer Anders Andersson, had their sixth child – Helena Sofia Andersson.¹ According to the parish



records, the older brothers of Sofia later in life worked as a sailor, factor, and farmhand respectively while all her three sisters came to work as maidservants (*pigor*).² Sofia Andersson did not follow the path that her sisters shared with many other young women during the 19th century. Instead, at the age of seventeen, Sofia graduated in 1876 as one of the first junior school teachers in the town of Skellefteå, northern Sweden.³ Until then, no permanent teacher training had been established in the region and the seven-month course this training involved was taught by one of the male elementary school teachers.⁴

Figure 1. Sofia Andersson (1859–1931) with her husband Erik Stenlund (1843–1930) and their daughter Axelia who came to walk in the footsteps of her mother since she also became a junior school teacher. Photo from 1895.
Source: Photographer Franke, Skellefteå/Anton Rosendahl.

A few months after graduation, Sofia took up her first teaching position in an ambulatory smaller elementary school (*ambulatorisk mindre folkskola*), which altered its location between two neighbouring villages every semester. Sofia came to work in this ambulatory smaller elementary school for almost ten years while she continued to live in her parental home nearby the two villages where she was responsible for all primary education being the sole teacher. A few days before Christmas in 1888, Sofia requested to leave her position since she was getting married to a farmer, Erik Hansson Stenlund. Her sixteen-year older husband had outlived his two first wives and fathered seven children of whom four were still alive

¹ “Födelse och dopbok, vol. 54 (1851–1859), Skellefteå/Byske/Ytterstfors p. 292, Helena Sofia Andersson, row 28, DDB-ID 859002781”, INDIKO, Digitised parish records, Umeå University.

² Maidservant remained a common occupation among young women even though the farm service institution started to break up after 1860, see Börje Harnesk, *Legofolk: drängar, pigor och bönder i 1700- och 1800-talens Sverige*, Acta Universitatis Umensis 96 (Umeå: Umeå universitet, 1990), especially chapter 11.

³ The two main occupational groups in this thesis – junior school teachers (*småskollärare*) respectively elementary school teachers (*folkskollärare*) were merged and replaced by other titles through the curriculum of 1962, see detailed information in ‘Disposition and delimitations’, the last section in this chapter.

⁴ Kristian August Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden* (Skellefteå: Skelleftebladet, 1942), p. 69; Sven Nylund, *Småskollärarytbildningen i Sverige* (Stockholm: Ernst Westerbergs boktryckeri AB, 1942), p. 104–105; Rudolf Lundmark, “Lärare i Skellefteå sedan 1842.” (Skellefteå, 1937), Skolstyrelsen, Skellefteå landsförsamling, Skellefteå kommunarkiv, Sverige, p. 4.

when he for the third time stood at the altar. Sofia did not only become a stepmother of his four children, in 1893 she gave birth to a daughter.⁵ The marriage between Sofia and Erik lasted for more than forty years. Sofia never returned to teaching while Erik, besides farming, also served as a lay judge (*häradsdomare*) at the county district court. In the 1930 census, Sofia was registered within the household of a son from Erik's second marriage as a "farmer widow and former junior school teacher". Erik had died earlier during 1930 and the following year Sofia passed away at the age of 72.⁶

Moving back to the Christmas of 1888 when Sofia gave up her teaching due to marriage, this left the ambulatory smaller elementary school with a vacancy to fill for the upcoming spring semester. Recruited to replace Sofia was the thirteen-year younger junior school teacher Lovisa Ljuslinder. When comparing the life courses of Sofia and Lovisa, the resemblance over the first 25 years is striking. Both grew up on a small farm as the fourth child, they then graduated as junior school teachers in the town of Skellefteå at the young age of fifteen (Lovisa) or sixteen (Sofia). When Lovisa graduated in 1888, the seven-month junior school teacher training that Sofia had undergone in 1876 now consisted of two years.⁷ Both worked around ten years before marrying a farmer living in the village where they taught.⁸ After marrying Lovisa took the last name of her husband, Häggmark.⁹ At this stage, in their late twenties, their life courses started to diverge. While Sofia never taught after the marriage, Lovisa had a record of full time teaching also after her family formation.¹⁰ In 1944, when she was in her seventies, Lovisa was asked to recount her life as a teacher, published in a local school magazine:

In 1889, I received a teaching position at the ambulatory smaller elementary school in Sjöbotten-Holmsvattnet where I replaced the teacher Sofia Andersson from Bureå since she had married the lay judge Stenlund in Bölesvik. [...] The number of children was high during the first years but since the school attendance was very irregular it never occurred that all children were present. [...] My first period of service ended in 1902, when I withdrew to devote my time to my family. In 1918, I returned to service, this time as a teacher in an ambulatory smaller elementary

⁵ Lundmark, "Lärare i Skellefteå sedan 1842.", p. 45.

⁶ "1930 års folkräkning", Västerbotten, Bureå, p. 60, row 26, in Digitala forskarsalen, Specialsök, Folkräkningar, Sveriges befolkning, Riksarkivet, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/folkrakningar> (Retrieved: 03-09-2020); "Bureå kyrkoarkiv, Död- och begravningsböcker, (1921–1964), Helena Sofia Stenlund", November 17, 1931, Bureå församling, F Död- och begravningsböcker, vol. 1, Härnösands landsarkiv, Riksarkivet.

⁷ "Betygsbok för elever vid Vesterbottens länsseminarium", p. 21–22, Länsseminariet i Skellefteås arkiv, Terminslängder 1883–1892, D II a: 1, Landsarkivet i Härnösand, Riksarkivet; Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*, p. 70.

⁸ In Sofia's case her husband was also a lay judge, however as a secondary occupation.

⁹ Nils Häggmark, the spouse of Lovisa, was a farmer and son of Johan Olof Häggmark (1827–1895) one of the first ambulatory male elementary school teachers employed in 1850 and retired in 1883, see: Lundmark, "Lärare i Skellefteå sedan 1842.", p. 63.

¹⁰ Throughout the thesis family formation has been used exclusively for those that became a parent (to a biological or foster child), while those that married but had no notation of becoming a mother or father are excluded. The underlying argument for this decision is that married teachers that remained childless demonstrated more similarities with teachers that neither married nor had children.

school [...] My total service time was 25 years. [...] During my later period of service, I benefitted from the better salaries that were decided in 1918 and at the point of retirement I was granted a reasonable pension.¹¹



Figure 2. Junior school teacher Lovisa Häggmark (1872–1945, born Ljuslinder) with her husband Nils (1871–1931) and ten of their eleven children. The family photo, with all children except Astrid who died as an infant (1907–1908), was taken around 1920, a couple of years after Lovisa had initiated her second period of permanent teaching in 1918, a period that lasted to her retirement in 1929. Two of the daughters – Henny, back row first from the left, and Miriam, fourth from the left – also became junior school teachers like their mother.¹²
Source: Maja Åström/Skellefteå Museum.

The account of Lovisa provides insights into the development of an occupation over forty years including the everyday realities from life in school such as the high number of children and low attendance, but also improvements such as the reforms in 1918. Furthermore, the life courses of Sofia and Lovisa reflect central themes investigated in this thesis such as the socio-economic background of teachers, their family formation and everyday life and the link between work and family life. Time, gender, and teacher group have been of key importance

¹¹ The interview was conducted for a local school magazine and is reprinted in: *Sjöbotten – En by i Tiden* (Skellefteå: Centraltryckeriet, 2004), p. 161–162.

¹² Henny and Miriam, the two daughters of Lovisa that became junior school teachers, are also present in several of the sources used in this thesis, see Ruth Linder, *Sveriges småskollärarinnor i ord och bild*, vol. III (Uppsala: Biografiskt galleri, 1945), p. 1043, p. 1069; “Familjnyheter – Dödsfall – Henny Viklund,” *Norra Västerbotten*, January 20, 1984, p. 6; “Familjnyheter – Dödsfall – Miriam Jonsson,” *Norra Västerbotten*, May 21, 1974, p. 6.

when examining these themes. Firstly, the time frame of about eighty years (c. 1860–1940) enables a study of how the link between professional and private life developed over time during the establishment of primary schooling in Sweden. While the longitudinal studies of this thesis map out how empirical patterns regarding socio-economic background and fertility changed over time among teachers, analysis at the group as well as individual level adds information about how their lives developed. Secondly, gender has consistently worked as an important analytical category across the time period under study, due to varied conditions for women and men in general and in particular when being teachers. Thirdly, the different requirements and conditions among primary school teachers have been of relevance to consider, as the teachers are made up of two major groups, i.e. junior school teachers and elementary school teachers. The comparison of these two groups is further closely related to gender, class, and status. Nearly all of the junior school teachers were women while the elementary school teachers had a more even gender distribution and were more well-off, both in terms of salary level and socio-economic background.¹³

Work, family, and education in research and society

Both the link between work and family and the access to education on all levels, from primary education to university level, are two issues that have been historically studied and are of relevance to other research as well as society today. These two issues are discussed below as they are scrutinised in a historical setting in this thesis. How work connects to family, as Sofia and Lovisa exemplified, has been researched for a long period of time.¹⁴ This is not surprising, given that adults spend most of their time working, either through gainful employment or by engaging in unpaid household work beside experiencing a family life.¹⁵ That social roles and norms, often associated with gender, tend to influence the link between family and work has been shown by research both in historical and contemporary settings. Examples of such studies demonstrate how changing gender roles in relation to family and work have progressed over historical time, such as the transition from a male breadwinner

¹³ The different requirements and working conditions for the two groups are developed in the background chapter.

¹⁴ Exactly how and when the scholarly interest of these issues was initiated and developed can, of course, be discussed. Such discussion will not be initiated here, although the Google Books N-gram Viewer suggest a considerable increase in both the fraction of “family and work” respectively “work and family” starting from the late 1960s and the following thirty years, see “Google Ngram Viewer – Google Books,” <https://books.google.com/ngrams>, (Retrieved: 12-10-2020).

¹⁵ This is true even if the time available for leisure has increased rapidly in recent decades; see, Mark Aguiar and Erik Hurst, “Measuring Trends in Leisure: The Allocation of Time Over Five Decades,” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 122, no. 3 (August 2007): 969–1006, <https://doi.org/10.1162/qjec.122.3.969>.

model to a dual provider model. Scholars have also examined areas where work-life conflicts arise in everyday life and various ways to work toward a work-life balance.¹⁶

A great deal of previous research regarding the connection between professional work life and private life considers these issues within specific occupations, the conditions for teachers being no exception. These studies conclude that oral history is beneficial for studying the lives of women teachers, especially when combined with other sources and approaches. Research further suggests that women teachers combining work with family experienced more conflict from colleagues and bosses at their workplace than from family members. Studies have confirmed this pattern and added that the work duties in parallel with the responsibilities at home caused fatigue and less time for sleep and recovery. Relaxation, meaning of work and detachment from work are features found to improve the work-life balance and increase life satisfaction.¹⁷

Education and its implementation in various times and settings is another field in research experiencing an increasing interest. One theme within this field concerns the accessibility of education addressing a variety of issues such as primary education in sub-Saharan Africa, the impact of disability on education, and how gender, class and ethnicity influence both

¹⁶ Examples of the mentioned approaches include, Angélique Janssens, “The Rise and Decline of the Male Breadwinner Family? An Overview of the Debate,” *International Review of Social History* 42, no. S5 (September 1997): 1–23, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020859000114774>; Hans-Peter Blossfeld and Sonja Drobnič, eds., *Careers of Couples in Contemporary Societies: From Male Breadwinner to Dual-Earner Families* (Oxford [UK]; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Silke Aisenbrey and Anette Fasang, “The Interplay of Work and Family Trajectories over the Life Course: Germany and the United States in Comparison,” *American Journal of Sociology* 122, no. 5 (March 2017): 1448–84, <https://doi.org/10.1086/691128>; Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Nicholas J. Beutell, “Sources of Conflict Between Work and Family Roles,” *Academy of Management Review* 10, no. 1 (January 1985): 76–88, <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1985.4277352>; Leonie van Breeschoten and Marie Evertsson, “When does part-time work relate to less work-life conflict for parents? Moderating influences of workplace support and gender in the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom,” *Community, Work & Family* 22, no. 5 (October 2019): 606–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2019.1581138>; Jeffrey H. Greenhaus and Gary N. Powell, *Making Work and Family Work: From hard choices to smart choices* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016).

¹⁷ Margaret K. Nelson, “Using Oral Histories to Reconstruct the Experiences of Women Teachers in Vermont, 1900–50,” in *Studying Teachers’ Lives*, ed. Ivor Goodson (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992); Rachel Gali Cinamon and Yisrael Rich, “Work–family conflict among female teachers,” *Teaching and Teacher Education* 21, no. 4 (May 2005): 365–78, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2004.06.009>; Gürcü Erdamar and Hüsne Demirel, “Investigation of Work-Family, Family-Work Conflict of the Teachers,” *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 116 (February 2014): 4919–24, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.1050>; Anniina Virtanen, Jessica De Bloom, and Ulla Kinnunen, “Relationships between recovery experiences and well-being among younger and older teachers,” *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health* 93, no. 2 (February 2020): 213–27, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00420-019-01475-8>.

educational attainment and success.¹⁸ In Sweden, a recently published governmental report – *A Common Concern (En gemensam angelägenhet)*, conducted by the Commission on Equality (*Jämlikhetskommissionen*), examines access to education on different levels with a focus on the recruitment of students at higher levels. In addition to finding that socio-economic factors evidently correlate with educational attainment and students' results, this report refers to a spatial issue in the recruitment process concerning higher education. By using previous findings from economic research, the Commission wrote:

There is a geographical dimension in the recruitment, visible as a difference between centre and periphery or between urban and rural. Young men in the countryside are least interested in higher education. In regard to this, it is an important finding that geographical proximity matters. Research has shown that the expansion of universities and higher education to new places resulted in a widened participation in higher education.¹⁹

Furthermore, the low level of post-secondary education in rural areas is evident in contemporary official statistics. On a national level in Sweden, 28% of those aged 25 to 64 years had a record of partaking in higher education in 2019. Even though there are large regional differences, in approximately a quarter of the municipalities the number was less than half of the national average (<14%). In May 2020, less than ten days after the statistical report was presented, municipalities in rural northern Sweden issued a joint press release. In this announcement, they presented a collaboration to put pressure on universities and the Ministry of Education and Research to improve the comparatively low attainment and educational level in rural northern Sweden. To achieve this, the municipalities would promote the most demanded educational programmes and make the universities become more present in the municipalities.²⁰ Since then, the Swedish government has specified the measures to solve the persistent and increasing shortage of qualified primary school teachers

¹⁸ Keith M. Lewin, "Access to Education in Sub-Saharan Africa: Patterns, Problems and Possibilities," *Comparative Education* 45, no. 2 (May 2009): 151–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050060902920518>; Brenda Schick, Kevin Williams, and Haggai Kupermintz, "Look Who's Being Left Behind: Educational Interpreters and Access to Education for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students," *Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education* 11, no. 1 (October 2005): 3–20, <https://doi.org/10.1093/deafed/enj007>; Hetty P.J.M. Dekkers, Roel J. Bosker, and Geert W.J.M. Driessen, "Complex Inequalities of Educational Opportunities. A Large-Scale Longitudinal Study on the Relation Between Gender, Social Class, Ethnicity and School Success," *Educational Research and Evaluation* 6, no. 1 (March 2000): 59–82, [https://doi.org/10.1076/1380-3611\(200003\)6:1;1-I;FT059](https://doi.org/10.1076/1380-3611(200003)6:1;1-I;FT059); Linda Croxford and David Raffae, "Social Class, Ethnicity and Access to Higher Education in the Four Countries of the UK: 1996–2010," *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 33, no. 1 (January 2014): 77–95, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370.2013.873214>.

¹⁹ Jämlikhetskommissionen, *SOU 2020:46 En gemensam angelägenhet Vol. 1* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2020), p. 340, both translations derive from the English summary. See also, Kent Eliasson, *College choice and earnings among university graduates in Sweden*, (Umeå: Department of Economics, Umeå University, 2006); Sofia Tano, *Migration and regional sorting of skills*, (Umeå: Department of Economics, Umeå University, 2014).

²⁰ Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB), "Utbildningsnivå efter kommun och kön 2019" (Stockholm, 2020), <https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/utbildning-och-forskning/befolkningens-utbildning/befolkningens-utbildning/> (Retrieved: 21-10-2020); Akademi Norr, "Nu kräver 17 norrlandskommuner mer av universiteten," 2020, <https://www.akademinorr.se/news/pressmeddelande-nu-kraver-17-inlandskommuner-mer-av-universiteten/>. (Retrieved: 23-11-2020).

in Sweden. A number of these measures could be viewed as a response to the demand put forth by the rural municipalities. One such measure is that universities around Sweden are to initiate teacher education in collaboration with municipalities.²¹ In the county of Västerbotten, this collaboration will include twelve out of fifteen municipalities with Umeå University as the major training institution. Starting in the fall of 2021, this new programme will enable municipalities to hire unqualified teachers that over a period of five years will work half time as a primary school teacher while attending courses in a primary school teacher training programme (75% of full-time). In addition to Umeå, students attending the programme will participate in physical meetings in either Lycksele or Skellefteå.²² The research and societal interest with respect to two areas, concerning the link between professional work and private life, and the spatial issues of accessing education, exemplify two contemporary challenges that this thesis will examine and discuss in a historical setting.

Aim and research questions

The overarching purpose of this thesis is to investigate the link between professional work and private life among teachers from a life-course perspective, and how this link changed during the period 1860–1940. More explicitly, the teachers are investigated by examining their transitions across life by uncovering their socio-economic background, occupational status, family formation and possibility to return to teaching after becoming a parent. The thesis aims to answer the following questions:

1. Who were the teachers recruited to work in primary schools with regard to gender, socio-economic background, level of teacher training and geographical origin? In what way, if any, did the recruitment pattern change during the period under investigation?
2. What could the everyday life of a woman primary school teacher be like? How can teachers' position in local communities be understood?
3. What implications did the decision to become a primary school teacher have on family formation and the return to teaching after parenthood? How did these patterns develop over time with regard to gender and teacher group? In what ways did the development of family formation among women teachers differ from women in other occupational classes?

²¹ Regeringskansliet, "Så arbetar regeringen för att lösa lärarbristen," December 4, 2020, <https://www.regeringen.se/regeringens-politik/regeringens-atgarder-for-fler-larare/sa-arbetar-regeringen-for-att-losa-lararbristen/> (Retrieved: 24-01-2021).

²² Lärarhögskolan, Umeå universitet, "Arbetsintegrerad lärarutbildning," January 16, 2021, <https://www.umu.se/lararhogskolan/samarbeta-med-oss/arbetsintegrerad-lararutbildning/> (Retrieved: 24-01-2021).

This thesis makes use of quantitative as well as qualitative methods. It both benefits from and contributes to several subfields within history, such as history of education, gender history, historical demography, and social history. Addressing different fields and using a variety of methods is by no means a new or unique approach.²³ Still it has benefitted this thesis to research a subject such as teachers who have received limited interest in social history. The combination of methods has been of key importance to examining the link between professional work and private life since relevant data are found in diverse sources requiring different methodological approaches.

Rationales for studying the scientific problem through teachers' lives

The scientific problem investigated connects to the research above that in various ways addressed the link between professional life and private life. Besides finding out who became a primary school teacher, this thesis holds an interest for studying this link regarding how the teacher profession affected the possibility of engaging in family formation and how this link functioned and developed over a longer period in a historical setting.

The empirical focus on primary school teachers derives from several rationales. First, there are many primary school teachers and through their entanglement in the local community they are found almost everywhere. Their geographical presence in most places makes the findings of the work-life link among primary school teachers transferable to settings other than the one under study in this thesis, despite the need to always take contextual differences into account. Second, primary school teaching became among the first qualified occupations eligible to women in many countries. In Sweden, the teacher training for women teachers opened in the 1850s when many societal changes associated with urban-industrial processes were in an early stage. This comparatively early acceptance and training of women teachers enables a longitudinal study moving through large-scale societal changes. Third, as the teacher occupation was eligible to both sexes throughout the study period, it allows for gender comparison over time. Fourth, the two groups of primary school teachers in Sweden, i.e. junior and elementary school teachers, add yet another analytical category besides gender, which involves class dimensions due to the different conditions for the two groups.

²³ For a discussion on historical developments within the field of history and education, see chapter three 'History or education?' in Gary McCulloch and William Richardson, *Historical Research in Educational Settings, Doing Qualitative Research in Educational Settings* (Buckingham [England]; Philadelphia: Open University, 2000); For an introductory overview of mixed methods, see: John W. Creswell, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 2nd ed (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2011).

The thesis' major focus interest, i.e. the professional and private life of primary school teachers, has been identified as an area difficult to study historically due to a lack of reliable or accessible primary sources that inform about both work and family simultaneously. Other teacher-related developments, such as organisational, professional and legal changes concerning the history of education, were frequently analysed in previous studies.²⁴ Through a life-course approach, this thesis investigates primary school teachers who worked in a predominantly rural region considering their socio-spatial background, gender, level of teacher training and the time when they taught, in addition to their family formation.

Disposition and delimitations

The second chapter will provide a historical background including the development of Swedish society in general and the primary school system in particular. The third chapter positions this thesis in relation to various strands of previous research. The fourth chapter presents the life-course approach applied and discusses its connection to a number of key concepts used in the four sub-studies of this thesis, followed by a discussion of gender and class. An account of the sources, data and methods is found in chapter five, while chapter six shows a summary of the four sub-studies. In the seventh chapter, I provide an overall results discussion of the main findings before making a few concluding remarks in the eighth chapter.

Before the background chapter, there is a need to explain the considerations made to delimit the thesis in historical time, place and the group of teachers studied. In Sweden, the elementary school (*folkskola*) – Volksschule in German – existed as a school form between 1842 and 1962. These 120 years constitute the most extended time frame considered in this thesis, but the main period examined is the years between 1860 to 1940. These periods should be considered as approximate and overlapping rather than definite start and end

²⁴ Sofia Persson, *Lärarkets uppkomst och förändring: en sociologisk studie av lärares villkor, organisering och yrkesprojekt inom den grundläggande utbildningen i Sverige ca. 1800–2000*, Göteborg studies in sociology 33 (Göteborg: Department of Sociology, University of Gothenburg, 2008), p. 102. Another example mentioning the scarcity of sources can be found in, Christina Florin, *Kampen om katedern: feminiserings- och professionaliseringsprocessen inom den svenska folkskolans lärarkår 1860–1906*, Acta Universitatis Umensis 82, (Umeå: Umeå University, 1987), p. 52.

years of the thesis.²⁵ Spatial demarcations have been made with the intention of including enough teachers quantitatively to enable longitudinal and statistical analysis, and at the same time situate the study area to one geographical setting that shared many socio-economic and demographic characteristics in being mainly rural and situated in northern Sweden.

Regarding the primary school teachers examined, it should be mentioned that a divided/dual school system (*parallellskolesystem*) persisted in Sweden throughout the study period. This system included, on the one hand, public elementary schools (*folkskolor*), a form of schooling that was introduced and intended for the vast majority of school-aged children. On the other hand, this system included schools intended for the upper and to some extent middle classes, primarily grammar schools (*läroverk*) for boys, and also schools for girls and other private alternatives.²⁶ This thesis exclusively examines the teachers that came to teach in elementary schools. From 1880, these teachers were, with few exceptions, trained as junior or elementary school teachers. Being a teacher in the primary school system was the sole teaching

²⁵ Two of the sub-studies include empirical findings outside the main period although within the extended time frame: Article III examines the period until the 1960's, while Article IV briefly addresses the first qualified primary school teachers employed in the 1840s and 1850s. The main argument to start in 1860 rather than 1840 is that very few qualified teachers were employed in the northern area surveyed before the 1860s when junior school teachers and women elementary school teachers contributed to more rapidly increasing numbers. Ending the main study period in 1940 is similarly related to changes in the educational context and system. One of these being that a new generation of teachers, born in the 1920s, started to replace a large group of primary school teachers that had undergone training around the turn of the 20th century. A second argument to end the main period in 1940 is that the foundations of the public primary school system in Sweden started to change. This development meant new school commissions and the beginning of the end for the parallel school system, see chapter two below and Sixten Marklund, *Skolan förr och nu: 50 år av utveckling* (Stockholm: Liber utbildningsförlaget, 1984).

²⁶ The number of girls increased after the grammar school reform of 1927 which granted girls permission to public grammar schools. The two systems came to co-exist until the educational reforms of the 1960s. A few reforms from the late 19th century and onwards opened educational paths between the two forms of schooling. In 1894 the first path between the two school forms was opened when pupils that had passed the third grade of elementary schooling could apply to the first grade of the lower grammar school. Another fifteen years later, in 1909, an intermediate school of four years was introduced as an addition to the six-year elementary school. Pupils that finished the intermediate school became eligible to apply for secondary education, nevertheless throughout its existence grammar schools remained a path for the few rather than the many, see Germund Larsson, *Förbrytelser och förvisningar: bestraffningssystemet i de svenska läroverken 1905–1961*, Studier i utbildnings- och kultursociologi 12 (Uppsala: Uppsala universitet, 2018), p. 37–43; Christina Florin and Ulla Johansson, "Där de härliga lagrarna gro-": kultur, klass och kön i det svenska läroverket 1850–1914 (Stockholm: Tiden, 1993), Figure 3:1 on p. 84–85, see also; Ulla Johansson and Christina Florin, "Where the glorious laurels grow...": Swedish grammar schools as a means of social mobility and social reproduction," *History of Education* 22, no. 2 (June 1993): 147–62, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760930220203>; Åke Isling, *Kampen för och mot en demokratisk skola – 1. Samhällsstruktur och skolorganisation* (Stockholm: Sober förlag, 1980), p. 157–158.

opportunity for almost all of these teachers. However, in other parts of Sweden, there were educational institutions which hired primary school teachers.²⁷

²⁷ There existed contemporary pedagogical and caring institutions, that might have employed an occasional junior or elementary school teacher, although few of them were to be found in the examined area. One example of such an institution is a forerunner to the pre-school, so-called infant schools (*småbarnsskola*). Throughout the 19th century, primarily in urban environments of southern Sweden, approximately thirty infant schools were established although only a handful were still active in the 20th century. Another example was the philanthropic “work cottages” (*arbetsstugor*) introduced in the early 20th century. The intention was to reduce famine and aid children of poor families in rural parts of the northernmost region of Sweden. The infant schools have been scrutinised in, Britten Ekstrand, *Småbarnsskolan: vad hände och varför? ; en sekellång historia studerad med fokus på förändring av pedagogisk verksamhet från 1833 och framåt* (Lund: Pedagogiska inst, 2000), while the work cottages are examined in, Daniel Nilsson Ranta, *Nödhjälpen på villovägar: implementering av en filantropisk välfärdsidé, Norrbottens arbetsstugor 1903 – 1954*, Akademiska avhandlingar vid Sociologiska inst., A 52 (Umeå: Dep. of sociology, Umeå univ, 2008). Nevertheless, there are a few cases of trained primary school teachers, included in the empirical material of this thesis, that worked outside the elementary school for example as a governess in a richer family. The junior and elementary school teacher training should therefore be viewed as the criteria to be included rather than documented work in a junior or elementary school.

2. Background: A hundred years of development

This background chapter is structured into three sections describing different societal developments in Swedish society in the period 1840–1960, and especially between 1860 and 1940 as this constitutes the study period of this thesis. The three sections include an overview of the societal development (1), milestones in the national history of primary education (2), and of the area studied, mainly the establishment of primary education and teacher colleges (3).

Societal development in Sweden: Population, economy, and politics

The following overview of important developments in Swedish history regards the population, economy and political system, which in various ways affected teachers and the educational system.²⁸ Even though more than one million Swedes emigrated to North America between 1850 and 1950, the population of Sweden doubled from approximately 3.5 million in 1850 to 7 million in 1950.²⁹ The extent of this increase fluctuated considerably from decade to decade, mainly attributable to emigration in the 19th century. In the 20th century, the birth rates came to play an increasingly important role for population growth. For example, during the fertility decline of the 1930s, the yearly average of children born plunged to 90,328 on a national level in Sweden. This was the first time since the 1830s that the national yearly average of births dropped below 100,000. During the baby boom of the 1940s, the number of births recovered to an average of 123,419 per year. Consequently, the average annual population increase tripled, from an increase of 21,000 individuals/year in the 1930s compared to 63,000 individuals/year in the 1940s.³⁰

This variation in birth rates is important to my thesis as these rates affected the number of primary school teachers needed to teach the new generations. The predominantly rural area under study in this thesis followed the national population development in showing falling birth rates during the first half of the 20th century. However, this decrease occurred

²⁸ For literature in English that provides an overview of the Swedish history in the 19th and 20th century, see: Lars Kvarnström, “Swedish Society from 1866 to the Present,” in *A Concise History of Sweden from the Viking Age to the Present*, ed. Thomas Lindkvist and Maria Sjöberg, (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2018); Byron J. Nordstrom, *The History of Sweden*, Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2002), primarily chapter four and five, p. 63–122; Jörgen Weibull, *Swedish history in outline*, 2nd rev. ed (Stockholm: Svenska institutet, 1997), chapter five and six, p. 77–148.

²⁹ Hans Lundström, ed., *Befolkningsutvecklingen under 250 år: historisk statistik för Sverige*, Demografiska rapporter / Statistiska Centralbyrån, 1999:2 (Stockholm, 1999); Anna Lindkvist, *Jorden åt folket: nationalföreningen mot emigrationen 1907–1925*, Skrifter från Inst. för historiska studier 19 (Umeå: Inst. för historiska studier, Univ, 2007), p. 40–41.

³⁰ The yearly average for the two decades is calculated by using the national population on the last of December in 1929, 1939 and 1949. *Historisk statistik för Sverige Del 1. Befolkning 1720–1967* (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån, 1969), p. 98–99, 108.

approximately ten to twenty years later in my study area.³¹ The population growth occurred in tandem with an urbanisation process like in most West European countries.³² In the Swedish case, the urban share of the total population increased from less than 10% in 1850 to almost half the population in 1950. The area of northern Sweden examined in this thesis remained predominantly rural throughout the study period. In 1850, the urban share corresponded to 0.2% of the total population; a century later this had increased slowly although continuously to 17%.³³

Two of the driving forces behind the urbanisation in Sweden were the interconnected processes of industrialisation and a less labour-intensive agricultural sector. The mechanisation of the agricultural sector made many farmworkers in rural areas redundant while new industries in urban environments demanded workers. In the middle of the 19th century, about three quarters of the Swedish population worked within agriculture while industry and the tertiary sector accounted for the rest. A hundred years later, the situation was the opposite. In 1950, approximately 20% of the population worked within agriculture and its ancillaries, while the industrial sector was the largest, employing more than 40% of the workforce followed by the tertiary sector that supported about 35% of all employed. Regarding northern Sweden, the expansion of the sawmill industry had a profound impact on the local economy during the 19th century, as did the mining industry from the early 20th century. Of central importance, especially for the mining industry, was the improved infrastructure primarily made up of a national railway network that reached the remote and northernmost parts of Sweden during the first years of the 20th century.³⁴

³¹ Johan Junkka, *Shared practices: Social networks and fertility decline during the Swedish demographic transition, 1850–1950*, Report from the Demographic Data Base 34 (Umeå: Umeå University, Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies, 2018), p. 47, the area studied here is part of Västerbotten; Erland Adolf Gerhard von Hofsten and Hans Lundström, *Swedish population history: Main trends from 1750 to 1970*, Urval, 8 (Stockholm: Statistiska centralbyrån: Liber Förlag, 1976).

³² Henk Schmal, ed., *Patterns of European urbanisation since 1500* (London: Croom Helm, 1981).

³³ The urbanisation process in the studied area accelerated during the latter part of the 20th century; already in 1960 the urban share had increased by 10% in ten years (to 27%), *Historisk statistik för Sverige Del 1. Befolkning 1720-1967*; While the difference to the national figures has decreased, a small difference to the national average persists today. In 2018, the urban population of Sweden accounted for 87% while the corresponding number for the county of Västerbotten was 80%, see: Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB), “Folkmängd och landareal i och utanför tätorter, efter region. Vart femte år 2005–2018” (Stockholm), https://www.statistikdatabasen.scb.se/pxweb/sv/ssd/START__MI__MI0810__MI0810A/BefLandInvKvmTO/. (Retrieved: 24-11-2020).

³⁴ Lennart Schön, *En modern svensk ekonomisk historia: tillväxt och omvandling under två sekel*, 2. uppl (Stockholm: SNS Förlag, 2012), see chapter three, four and p. 14 for a diagram of the sector development; Lars Magnusson, *Sveriges ekonomiska historia*, Sjätte upplagan (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2016), p. 288–293.



Figure 3. Aerial photo of the town Skellefteå from the late 1920s. The junior school teacher training college can be seen in the western outskirts of the town, by following the tree-lined street to the left. At the time of the photo, the urban population was less than 3,000, a number that had already increased to 8,500 in 1940. The study area of this thesis and northern Sweden in general experienced a later urbanisation than the central and southern parts of the country.

Source: Skellefteå Museum.

Concerning developments in politics during the study period, the shift from a four-estate parliament to a bicameral system in 1866 and the introduction of universal suffrage, first practiced in 1921, were two milestones. The bicameral system of 1866, which included a first (upper) chamber and a second (lower) chamber, introduced public elections but all women and 80% of the men lacked suffrage. This reform meant an increased power for the agricultural aristocracy, the bourgeois and landowning farmers while members of the nobility and clergy, two of the former estates, experienced a reduced influence.³⁵ A fight for a gender equal and universal suffrage already existed in 19th century Sweden. After the turn of the century, the struggle for suffrage intensified and was organised, for example, by the National Association for Women's Suffrage in Sweden founded in 1903. Through parliamentary

³⁵ Bo Stråth, *Sveriges historia, 1830–1920*, Norstedts Sveriges historia, sjätte bandet (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2012), p. 162–163.

decisions in 1918 and 1919, women won suffrage and also became eligible to vote in the elections in 1921.³⁶

In addition to suffrage, other rights regarding women like their right to inherit, property ownership and access to some occupations gradually improved or opened from 1850. However, researchers have argued that this was primarily an effect of changes in the societal structure rather than an intended strive for gender equality. One reform, of particular interest to this thesis, was that women obtained access to elementary school teacher training in the late 1850s.³⁷ This and other developments concerning the public school system and teachers will be addressed in the next section.

Primary education in Sweden: Milestones and developments

This section will present reforms with a specific importance to the growing number of primary school teachers while other areas concerning the Swedish history of education will be less addressed.³⁸ The account below will follow the extended time frame of my thesis starting with the first national school act of 1842 in Sweden. Regardless of the role and impact of this act, which has been debated, it serves as a sufficient point of departure for this thesis as it made elementary school teachers emerge as an occupational title and profession.³⁹ My main interest concerns school acts and legal reforms introduced during the latter part of

³⁶ Josefin Rönnbäck, *Politikens genusgränser: den kvinnliga rösträttsrörelsen och kampen för kvinnors politiska medborgarskap 1902–1921* (Stockholm: Atlas, 2004), p. 23, p. 42–46; Many groups, for example those who did not pay enough tax or received poor relief, were excluded also after 1921. Limitations in the right to vote after 1921 until today are discussed in Annika Berg, Martin Ericsson, and Fia Sundevall, “Rösträtt för alla? Begränsningar i rösträtten efter 1921,” in *Rösträttens århundrade: kampen, utvecklingen och framtiden för demokratin i Sverige*, ed. Ulrika Holgersson and Lena Wängnerud (Göteborg: Makadam Förlag, 2018), 219–40.

³⁷ Karin Widerberg, *Kvinnor, klasser och lagar 1750–1980*, Publica (Stockholm: LiberFörlag, 1980), p. 64–72; An overview of how women rights in Sweden developed during the 19th and early 20th century is provided in: Gunnar Qvist, *Konsten att blifva en god flicka: kvinnohistoriska uppsatser*, Kvinnohistoriskt Arkiv 11 (Stockholm: LiberFörlag, 1978);

³⁸ For an overview of different perspectives on education, the history of different school forms and school subjects in Sweden, see Esbjörn Larsson and Johannes Westberg, eds., *Utbildningshistoria – en introduktion*, (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2019); The developments and discussions of the ideas that led up to the first national school act are presented in, Bengt Sandin, *Schooling and State Formation in Early Modern Sweden*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020); Lars Petterson, *Frihet, jämlikhet, egendom och Bentham: utvecklingslinjer i svensk folkundervisning mellan feodalism och kapitalism, 1809–1860*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis 168 (Uppsala: Stockholm: S. Academiae Upsaliensis; Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1992); Bengt Sandin, *Hemmet, gatan, fabriken eller skolan: folkundervisning och barnuppföstran i svenska städer 1600–1850*, Arkiv avhandlingsserie 22 (Lund: Arkiv, 1986); Different school subjects and pedagogical approaches to teaching in the 19th century are discussed in, Isling, *Kampen för och mot en demokratisk skola – 1. Samhällsstruktur och skolorganisation*; Åke Isling, *Det pedagogiska arvet – Kampen för och emot en demokratisk skola 2*, (Stockholm: Sober, 1988); Daniel Lindmark, *Reading, Writing and Schooling: Swedish Practices of Education and Literacy, 1650–1880*, Kulturens Frontlinjer 49 (Umeå: Inst. för litteraturvetenskap och nordiska språk, Univ, 2004).

³⁹ Egil Johansson and Stig G. Nordström, eds., *Utbildningshistoria 1992*, Årsböcker i svensk undervisningshistoria 170 (Uppsala: Föreningen för svensk undervisningshistoria, 1993). The anthology presents papers from a symposium that recognised the 150th anniversary of the first national school act in Sweden. Together, the nine contributions and three comments of these contributions, provide a good overview of how the establishment of a national primary school system can be interpreted from a traditionalist respectively liberal point of departure.

the 19th century and first decades of the 20th century that were important for primary school teachers. Then, this account ends with a brief overview of the developments between 1940 and 1960, a period when the Swedish school system went through fundamental changes.⁴⁰

In Sweden, the first national school act was passed in 1842 and stated that every parish must establish an elementary school within the following five years. Home education remained an option since this act placed no demands on the parents to send their children to school.⁴¹ During the following years and throughout the 1840s, there was an increase in the proportion of children taught in both permanent and ambulatory schools while home education reduced its share. During the 1850s, this progress was turned into a status quo with approximately one-third being taught at home, one-third in ambulatory schools and one-third in permanent schools.⁴² The first ten to fifteen years after the first school act have been characterised as a period of crisis due to the low number of pupils and their irregular attendance. Furthermore, there was a questioning of the whole act that had been formulated in a way that made it difficult to implement.⁴³ Given the diverse prerequisites between the dioceses in Sweden combined with a school act that placed most of the responsibility on a local level, Johannes Westberg, historian of education, has argued that the first school act had a greater impact in regions that had a lower number of schools prior to the act.⁴⁴

Two decrees in the 1850s revised the first school act and became central to continued establishment of primary schools for many decades. First, a decree in 1853 introduced a new type of school called “smaller schools” (*mindre skolor*).⁴⁵ These schools were considered to be an exception and intended for rural and remote areas where elementary schools were absent. Teachers in these smaller schools were not required to be qualified elementary school teachers or to have any further qualifications except that they themselves had a good conduct and met the educational level of the curriculum they were set to teach.

⁴⁰ This will be developed below but for an overview of the changes in the school structure in mid-20th century Sweden, see Marklund, *Skolan förr och nu*; Sixten Marklund, “Från parallellskolesystem till enhetsskola,” in *Ett folk börjar skolan: folkskolan 150 år 1842–1992*, ed. Gunnar Richardson (Stockholm: Allmänna förlaget, 1992).

⁴¹ For the first school act of 1842 and the following acts until 1921, see Bror Rudolf Hall, *Sveriges Allmänna Folkskolestadgar 1842–1921, Årsböcker i svensk undervisningshistoria 13* (Lund: Carl Bloms boktryckeri, 1924); School acts have also been adapted as the point of departure in an anthology presenting the 19th-century development in thirteen countries, see: Johannes Westberg, Lukas Boser, and Ingrid Brühwiler, eds., *School Acts and the Rise of Mass Schooling* (New York, NY: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2019).

⁴² Margitta Schelin, *Den officiella skolstatistiken i Sverige åren 1847–1881*, Pedagogiska monografier 20 (Umeå: Universitet och lärarhögskolan i Umeå, 1978), p. 29.

⁴³ Klas Aquilonius, *Det svenska folkundervisningsväsendet 1809–1860*, Svenska folkskolans historia, vol. II (Stockholm: Alb. Bonniers boktryckeri, 1942), p. 325–329; Åke Isling, *Kampen för och mot en demokratisk skola – 1. Samhällsstruktur och skolorganisation*, (Stockholm: Sober förlag, 1980), p. 120–124.

⁴⁴ Johannes Westberg, “Basic Schools in Each and Every Parish: The School Act of 1842 and the Rise of Mass Schooling in Sweden,” in *School Acts and the Rise of Mass Schooling*, 195–222, ed. Johannes Westberg, Lukas Boser, and Ingrid Brühwiler (New York, NY: Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2019).

⁴⁵ “Svensk Författningssamling, SFS 1853:65. Kongl. Maj:Ts Nådiga Kungörelse, Angående Förändrad Lydelse Af 1:A, 4:E, 5:E, Och 6:E §§ 1 Kongl. Stadgan Om Folkunderwisningen i Riket Den 18 Juni 1842.” (Stockholm, 1853).

The second decree was an outcome of the parliament sessions in 1856–1858 and meant that the junior school occupation saw the light of day.⁴⁶ The initiator was Count Torsten Rudenschöld, who had worked as an elementary school teacher after having moved down the social ladder. Rudenschöld was critical of the Lancastrian system that practiced monitorial education which had become increasingly common during the first half of the 19th century.⁴⁷ However, an abolishment of monitorial education without adding more teachers would contribute to a situation with too many pupils in relation to the number of elementary school teachers. In this situation, the junior school teachers emerged as a group that could help and be a substitute and cheaper alternative to the elementary school teachers without using the monitorial system. In 1864, a royal circular required all pupils to be divided into classes and taught directly by the teacher. This meant that the heydays of monitorial education came to a definite end.⁴⁸ The lack of trained elementary school teachers further contributed to a situation where junior school teachers came to work in three different positions within primary education. They could be a junior school teacher in first and/or second grade, or an assistant teacher to elementary school teachers, or a teacher in a smaller elementary school and usually teaching all grades, from the first to the sixth. All three forms of employment came to exist until the educational reform in 1962, but over time the proportions changed considerably between the groups. For example, the share of junior school teachers working in smaller elementary schools peaked at 30% in 1911 while the proportion of junior school teachers in the first and second grade increased continuously over the 20th century.⁴⁹

Between 1843 and 1875, elementary school teacher training only existed in the diocesan capitals of Sweden. When the training opened for women in the 1860s, the previously male

⁴⁶ “Svensk Författningssamling, SFS 1858:31. Kongl. Maj:Ts Nådiga Kungörelse, Angående Ytterligare Åtgärder till Folkundervisningens Befrämjande.” (Stockholm, 1858).

⁴⁷ For two accounts of the life and deeds of Torsten Rudenschöld, see: Gunnar Richardson, *Torsten Rudenschöld: samhällskritiker och skolreformator*, Skrifter från Skaraborgs länsmuseum 27 (Stockholm: Carlsson, 1998); Aquilonius, *Det svenska folkundervisningsväsendet 1809–1860*, p. 349–419.

⁴⁸ In Sweden the following two studies have examined different aspects of the rapid transition from the monitorial system to an education led by the teacher and structured through lessons, see: Agneta Linné, “The Lesson as a Pedagogic Text: A Case Study of Lesson Designs,” *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 33, no. 2 (February 2001): 129–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220270010000204>; Joakim Landahl, “Learning to Listen and Look: The Shift from the Monitorial System of Education to Teacher-Led Lessons,” *The Senses and Society* 14, no. 2 (May 2019): 194–206, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17458927.2019.1619314>.

⁴⁹ The share of junior school teachers that were employed as either assistant teachers in elementary schools or junior school teachers in smaller elementary schools was 28% at the start of the 20th century (1901), peaked at 30% in 1911, then continuously decreased over the following three decades 28% (1920), 23% (1930) and 12% (1940), see: Nils Olov Bruce, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1900–1920*, Svenska folkskolans historia, vol. IV, (Stockholm, 1942), p. 18, p. 230; Viktor Fredriksson, Lars Hofstedt, and Sigurd Paradis, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1920–1942*, Svenska folkskolans historia, vol. V, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers förlag, 1950) p. 221–222; see also, Gertrud Åberg, *Sveriges småskollärare och deras förbund 1918–1966*, Pedagogiska skrifter 259 (Stockholm: Sveriges lärarförbund, 1978).

teacher colleges in Stockholm and Skara turned into training facilities for women.⁵⁰ During the 1860s national public authorities increased their interest and control on the regional as well as the local level. The first national teacher training regulation for elementary school teachers was presented in 1862. Among other things, it stated that the teacher education was to be three years, with practical teaching exercises concentrated to the last year.⁵¹ Another development towards an increased involvement by national public administration was the establishment of a state school inspection, assisted by regional inspectors in service from 1861. They were to advise and suggest improvements to the teachers being inspected. Every third year, these inspectors provided a written account to the Minister of Education on school development at a regional level.⁵² The state school inspectors became a full-time profession in 1914, a reform that improved the quality of the reports.⁵³ The school inspectors provided statistics on the number of registered children and their attendance. In 1865, these numbers showed that approximately 65% of the children were registered in school. At the previous inspection, only half of the registered children, or every third of the total number of school-aged children, had been present in the visited school. The following decades experienced a substantial increase in both the number of children registered and the level of attendance. Important in this development was increasing resources to the county councils, state subsidy grants for teachers, and new regulations through the national elementary school curriculum of 1878, beside the second national school act of 1882.

The increased income from taxation on alcohol considerably promoted the economy of the county councils in Sweden during the 1860s and 1870s. In turn, these funds could help cover costs related to education such as the establishment of regional teacher training for junior school teachers. These improving training opportunities contributed to a reduction of unqualified junior school teachers, a group that had decreased to less than 10% of the active junior school teachers in 1897.⁵⁴ The state subsidy grant of 1875 relieved the high expenditures for the local level school administration. Moving from low levels, the grant

⁵⁰ The first elementary teacher training outside a diocesan capital opened for women in Falun in 1875 followed by another, also for women, in Umeå 1878. Anna Sörensen, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1860–1900*, Svenska folkskolans historia, vol. III, (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers förlag, 1942) p. 257; Persson, *Lärarkretsens uppkomst och förändring*, p. 154; Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, p. 121, p. 125.

⁵¹ Wilhelm Sjöstrand, *Pedagogikens historia III:2 – Utvecklingen i Sverige under tiden 1809–1920* (Lund: Bröderna Ekstrands Tryckeri AB, 1965), p. 186–187.

⁵² Sörensen, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1860–1900*, p. 13–27; Jakob Evertsson, “Folkskoleinspektionen och moderniseringen av folkskolan i Sverige 1860–1910,” *Historisk Tidskrift* 132, no. 4 (2012): 624–51; For a recent comparison of the school inspection in European countries, see Adrian Gray, *European school inspection and evaluation: history and principles* (Nottinghamshire: Bookworm of Retford, 2019).

⁵³ Torbjörn Nilsson, *Mellan rådgivning och kontroll: den statliga Skolinspektionen som skolexempel 1861–1991*. (Huddinge: Södertörns högskola, 2018); The reports from 1914 and earlier were less comprehensive, e.g. compare the reports issued between 1912 to 1917, see Frans Svedberg, N.J.F. Almkvist, “Folkskole- och nomadskoleinspektörernas årsberättelser 1912–1917”, Domkapitlet i Luleå stift arkiv 1904–1999, G IX vol. 4 1912–1917, Landsarkivet Härnösand, Riksarkivet.

⁵⁴ Nylund, *Småskolläraryrket i Sverige*, p. 49; Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, p. 125–126.

meant that two-thirds of the cash salary to elementary school teachers would be funded on a national level. For the junior school teachers, this was set to half their salary in 1875, then increasing to two-thirds in 1886. The national primary school system certainly improved through these reforms. However, it is important not to overemphasise this development and shortage of qualified teachers, and especially elementary school teachers, remained a recurrent problem. In more rural settings, for example, half-time reading and ambulatory schools continued to be a common phenomenon also during the first decades of the 20th century.⁵⁵

During the years around 1880, two new school regulations were introduced and they would have a long-term impact on the primary school system. The national curriculum of 1878 clarified that the junior school teachers were qualified and intended to teach the first two years of primary school. Similarly, elementary school teachers would normally be teaching in the following four years namely grade three to six. In order to classify the various forms of schooling, the 'Letter system' (*Litterasystemet*) introduced six recognised school forms from A to F. The different letters provided information on how many different age groups were taught in the same class of pupils and whether the school was permanent (A–D) or ambulatory (E–F).⁵⁶ In 1882, the second school act gathered regulations of the primary school system previously scattered in various acts. An important contribution of this act was that home-education was made far more difficult since children taught at home now had to undergo yearly examinations at the school council. The national curriculum of 1889 expanded the 'Letter system' of 1878 through the acknowledgement of additional school forms which entailed half-time reading and/or a junior school teacher as the sole teacher in all six grades.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Isling, *Kampen för och mot en demokratisk skola – 1. Samhällsstruktur och skolorganisation*, p. 128–130; More than every fourth (27%) of all primary schools were still ambulatory in 1914, see Mellberg, *Pedagogen och det skrivna ordet*, p. 51.

⁵⁶ "Normalplan för undervisningen i folkskolor och småskolor" (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner, 1878), p. 3–4; The use of letters came to be used in Sweden for close to a century, for example the A- and B-form were still mentioned in the 1969 curriculum, see Skolöverstyrelsen, "Läroplan för grundskolan, Lgr 69, 1 Allmän del" (Svenska utbildningsförlaget Liber AB, 1969), p. 110–111; While they are not found in the following curriculum from 1980, see Skolöverstyrelsen, "Läroplan för grundskolan, Lgr80, Allmän del – Mål och riktlinier. timplaner, kursplaner" (Liber utbildningsförlaget, 1980); For the development until 1920, Mellberg, *Pedagogen och det skrivna ordet*, p. 34–53.

⁵⁷ This acknowledgement of half-time reading and that the junior school teachers were eligible to teach in all six grades has been interpreted as conservative tendencies not least since the curriculum did not specify which forms were to be considered to be an exceptional form of schooling. For this and the establishment of the second school act, see Sörensen, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1860–1900*, p. 122–125; Sjöstrand, *Pedagogikens Historia III:2 – Utvecklingen i Sverige under tiden 1809–1920*, p. 331–333; Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, p. 102–105; Mellberg, *Pedagogen och det skrivna ordet*, p. 45–48.



Figure 4. The two junior school teachers Berti Östensson (left), Berta Lindholm (right) and their pupils in Kågeträsk, photo from the early 1920s. According to the 'Letter system' the school was a D1-school, which meant that the two junior school teachers conducted full-time teaching in all six grades, generally this was done by having one class with the younger children and one with the older. Only a few years earlier the school had been a half-time reading school where a single teacher taught two classes at different times (D2-school).⁵⁸
 Source: Skellefteå Museum.

During the first two decades of the 20th century, the public elementary school system in Sweden continued to consolidate. This process was seen in the rapid reduction of ambulatory schools and half-time reading. In 1901, a majority (51.1%) of the approximately 700,000 children attended half-time reading schools primarily in rural settings, and in 1920 this share had dropped to a quarter (24.9%).⁵⁹ However, a complete removal of smaller elementary schools and half-time reading in all parts of Sweden was not realised until the 1950s.⁶⁰

Sex-differentiated salaries became the trigger for women elementary school teachers to form their own union. Salary levels together with issues regarding employment security, pensions and teacher training were continuously subject to debate and investigation through publicly appointed committees such as the elementary education committee (*folkundervisningskommittén*) in 1906 and the school commission of 1918. The outcome of

⁵⁸ Edvard Göransson, *Svensk folkskolematrikel år 1922, Del I–III* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner, 1922), p. 239–240 [Part I], p. 217–218 [Part III]; Lundmark, "Lärare i Skellefteå sedan 1842.", p. 81, p. 158.

⁵⁹ Bruce, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1900–1920*, see p. 12–13 and p. 116–117, for the numbers in 1901 respectively 1920.

⁶⁰ Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB), "Statistisk årsbok för Sverige 1960," Sveriges officiella statistik (Stockholm, 1960), p. 256.

these investigations and other developments, such as secularisation, had a fundamental impact on the school system that went beyond the working conditions for teachers.⁶¹ The previously mentioned full-time state school inspection in 1914 was accompanied by the establishment of a national school board for elementary education (*folkskolöverstyrelsen [1914–1919]/skolöverstyrelsen [1920–1991]*), the government body for school issues reducing the importance of the cathedral chapter even more.⁶²

A series of parliamentary decisions between 1904 and 1908 improved the salaries and pensions for both junior and elementary school teachers.⁶³ The teachers argued that the increases were insufficient, and the struggle continued over the following decade. High inflation during World War I had increased the cost of living considerably and urged an introduction of temporary increments for teachers. Time-consuming work in commissions and the economic consequences of WWI delayed further improvements until 1918. The regulations of 1918 meant more than a 100% salary increase for all groups of teachers, however due to the high inflation the teachers were far from satisfied and the struggle for higher wages proceeded. In 1914, it was decided that the state subsidy grants would be increased to 90% of a primary school teachers' salary, which continued to be the case also after the reform in 1918.⁶⁴ In their continued struggle for higher salaries, the junior school teachers continued working for reduced differences compared to the elementary school teachers. At the start of the 20th century, a junior school teacher earned less than half of an elementary school teacher salary and after the changes in 1918, they had approximately two-thirds of an elementary school teacher salary. However, the junior school teachers and their newly formed union were not content as a considerable gap between the two groups of teachers continued to exist throughout the study period of this thesis. In 1947, a junior school teacher earned 70% of an elementary school teacher salary, while this had increased to 85% in 1962.⁶⁵

⁶¹ The formation in different unions is further presented in chapter three below. This included structural and ideological changes as well as a continuous process toward a more secular primary education, see for example: Isling, *Kampen för och mot en demokratisk skola – 1. Samhällsstruktur och skolorganisation*, p. 145–62; Tomas Englund, *Curriculum as a political problem: changing educational conceptions, with special reference to citizenship education*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis Uppsala Studies in Education 25 (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1986); Tomas Englund, *Perspektiv på svensk skolutveckling under 1900-talet utifrån skolreformerna 1918/19: Skolan som ideologisk statsapparat i den borgerliga demokratin* (Göteborg: Göteborgs universitet, 1981); Agneta Linné, *Moralen, barnet eller vetenskapen?: en studie av tradition och förändring i lärarutbildningen* (Stockholm, HLS, 1996), p. 189; The administrative dissolution between school and church has been addressed in, Lennart Tegborg, *Folkskolans sekularisering 1895–1909: Upplösningen av det administrativa sambandet mellan folkskola och kyrka i Sverige*, Årsböcker i svensk undervisningshistoria 122 (Stockholm, 1969).

⁶² Bruce, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1900–1920*, p. 65–72.

⁶³ Bruce, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1900–1920*, p. 274–288.

⁶⁴ Bruce, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1900–1920*, p. 292–298, p. 300–307.

⁶⁵ Åberg, *Sveriges småskollärare och deras förbund 1918–1966*, p. 22, 122–129; Bruce, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1900–1920*, p. 303; Viktor Fredriksson et al., *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1942–1962*, Svenska folkskolans historia, vol. VI, (Trelleborg: Tryckeri AB Allehanda, 1971), p. 393, p. 400.

The salary revision was one of many changes in 1918 and the following years. Pensions for all groups of primary school teachers were increased significantly. While previous pension increments had only included teachers that were still working, this increase included the retired primary school teachers as well. Major revisions of the school act, previously updated in 1897, were also introduced in 1918. Important issues at stake for junior school teachers were their right to permanent positions and that at least one qualified junior school teacher in every junior school should be entitled a permanent position. Junior school teachers in smaller elementary schools and those working as assistant teachers in the elementary school were not entitled permanent positions. Yet, these junior school teachers obtained an improved legal position since the use of temporary employment was restricted. Moreover, if a smaller elementary school was restructured into an elementary school, the junior school teacher concerned would be given the permanent junior school teacher position without competition.⁶⁶

In 1919, a new curriculum was introduced, that came to be in use until the mid-1950s. This reform halved the number of hours to study Christianity and shifted the purpose of primary schooling towards citizenship and the school as a preparation for adulthood. Tomas Englund recognises the curriculum of 1919 as an ambitious reform, however with no possibilities to be realised in a segregated society as well as school system. According to Englund, primary school teaching mainly experienced a long period of stability with few notable changes from the late 1920s to the mid-1940s. Englund argues that this period was characterised by secular patriarchalism with the introduction of a seventh school year in 1936 as the most notable reform.⁶⁷ Despite that Englund identifies the late 1920s and the following fifteen years as a period of continuity, three reforms during this period were of particular importance in relation to the study approach of this thesis. First, the state subsidy grants for school transportation in the 1930s were a prerequisite for the reduction of primarily rural schools in the following decades.⁶⁸ Second, the employment security of junior school teachers employed at a smaller elementary school or as an assistant teacher was successively improved during the 1930s.⁶⁹ Third, the reduction of junior school teachers trained in the 1930s on a national level. These changes will, however, be presented in the following section with a specific focus on the study area.

⁶⁶ Bruce, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1900–1920*, p. 314–321. p. 338–340.

⁶⁷ Tomas Englund, “Tidsanda och skolkunskap,” in *Ett folk börjar skolan: folkskolan 150 år 1842–1992*, ed. Gunnar Richardson (Stockholm: Allmänna förlaget, 1992), p. 96, p. 101–103.

⁶⁸ Fredriksson, Hofstedt, and Paradis, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1920–1942*, p. 90–92; Fredriksson et al., *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1942–1962*, p. 109–120.

⁶⁹ Fredriksson, Hofstedt, and Paradis, *Det svenska undervisningsväsendet 1920–1942*, p. 356–359.

In the 1940s and the subsequent decades, the Swedish primary school system underwent fundamental changes, which is one of the abovementioned reasons why the study period of my thesis ends at 1940. These changes included a number of commissions and structural reforms, one of which was the trial period for a nine-year comprehensive school (*enhetsskolan*) implemented from 1949 and throughout the 1950s. This reform was followed by a successive abolishment of the parallel school system in the 1960s. Through the curriculum of 1962 (*grundskolereformen*), the two groups of primary school teachers that this thesis centres upon – junior school teachers and elementary school teachers – were merged together into one group called “Grundskollärare”. Today, it refers to all primary/elementary school teachers in primary and middle school, from first to ninth grade. Furthermore, the curriculum of 1962 also meant that the nine-year comprehensive school was established on a national level (*nioårig grundskola*).⁷⁰

Area under study

The study area of this thesis consists of the two regions of Skellefteå and Umeå respectively (Figure 5). Both regions are situated in the county of Västerbotten, the second northernmost county in Sweden. During the main study period, the county of Västerbotten increased its population from c. 80,000 in 1860 to c. 220,000 in 1940. Approximately two-thirds of the population lived in the study area. The urban share of the population remained low from 1860 to 1940 but rose more rapidly from 1920 and onwards. Skellefteå received its town charter in 1845, and Umeå as early as 1622.⁷¹ In literature, Umeå is described as a centre for civil servants, merchants, and the bourgeois. In the Skellefteå region, agricultural production predominated until the late 19th century and has since been represented by industries, mining, and forestry but also small business establishments.⁷² Regarding education, both towns provided lower grammar schools and girls schools for children of primarily the upper and middle classes. Umeå also had a higher grammar school for adolescents. These educational circumstances, in addition to the fact that most children lived in villages in the

⁷⁰ For the development between 1940 and 1970 see, Sixten Marklund, *Vår skola: historik, reformverksamhet, dagens utbildningssystem, utvecklingstendenser*, (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1974); Marklund, *Skolan förr och nu*. The primary school teachers today are mainly differentiated and grouped by the grades and subjects they teach.

⁷¹ *Historisk statistik för Sverige Del 1. Befolkning 1720–1967*, p. 50–51, p. 62–65. The first attempt to establish a town in Umeå failed (1588), however the following attempt in 1622 was successful. The population in the two towns increased from 347 (1860) to 8,475 (1940) in Skellefteå and from 1855 (1860) to 13,710 (1940) in Umeå, however as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, in 1950 the urban population in the county were only 17% of the population.

⁷² Elof Lindberg, “Några ord om Västerbottens läns tre städer,” in *Svenska Stadsmonografier – Umeå, Skellefteå, Lycksele*, ed. Paul Harnesk (Stockholm, 1948); Björn Olsson, *Den bildade borgaren: bildningssträvan och folkbildning i en norrländsk småstad*, Kungl. Skytteanska samfundets handlingar, nr 43 (Stockholm: Carlsson, 1994); Sven Gaunitz et al., *Industrialismens Skellefteå*, Kulturens frontlinjer 37 (Umeå: Inst. för nordiska språk, 2002); Åke Sandström, *Skellefteå och Strängnäs: Moderniseringen av två svenska småstäder 1880–1914*, Studier i stads- och kommunhistoria 42 (Stockholm, 2018).

countryside, meant that a vast majority of the primary school teachers studied in this thesis taught in rural environments dominated by farmers.⁷³ This urban-rural division was typical of both regions and the absence of major contextual differences between them is the rationale to study the two regions jointly as one study area in this thesis.⁷⁴

Taken together, the study area includes eight parishes, six of which are situated in the Skellefteå region (6,240 km²) and two parishes in the Umeå region (1,153 km²), covering in total an approximate area of 7,393 km². All these parishes/regions are not included in every sub-study of the thesis, as Figure 5 shows, which is further explained in chapter five (sources and methods, see especially Table 1).

History of primary education in the area under study

The challenges to introducing compulsory schooling in rural northern Sweden were debated and well known already during the parliamentary discussions resulting in the first Swedish elementary school act in 1842. A minister from the northernmost diocese argued that there must be public schools available in the north as well, and that permanent schools as a custom should be avoided since ambulatory schools would be the only possible solution in these rural and remote areas. An enemy of enlightenment had also appeared in form of poverty, the minister continued. Provided its peculiarities and diverse conditions, northern Sweden was viewed differently than the middle and southern parts of the country. Another minister from one of the parishes included in this thesis proposed to introduce permanent schools with qualified teachers, which would also be responsible for examining the ambulatory schools in rural parts of the parish.⁷⁵ One core issue that came to be prevalent throughout the 19th century was how mass schooling could be structured and implemented in areas where the masses (of pupils) were relatively spatially scattered.

⁷³ Björn Norlin, *Bildning i skuggan av läroverket: bildningsaktivitet och kollektivt identitetsskapande i svenska gymnastiföreningar 1850–1914*, Umeå studies in history and education 4 (Umeå: Institutionen för idé- och samhällsstudier, 2010); Oswald Norrman, *Läroverket i Skellefteå 1861–1961: En minnesskrift på uppdrag av Skellefteå stad skriven och sammanställd till 100-årsjubileet* (Skellefteå: Västerbottens tryckeri AB, 1962); Louise S. Leijonhufvud, "Umeå kommunala flickskola," in *Svenska Stadsmonografier – Umeå, Skellefteå, Lycksele*, ed. Paul Harnesk (Stockholm, 1948), p. 118; In 1937, a total of 155 primary school teachers were employed in Skellefteå rural parish i.e. almost four times the 40 employed in the town parish, see *Folkskolans lärarekår i Luleå stift 1937* (Malmö: Skånetr., 1937), p. 265–284.

⁷⁴ This is further discussed in the first part of chapter five ('Sources and methods').

⁷⁵ Aquilonius, *Det svenska folkundervisningsväsendet 1809–1860*, p. 289.



Figure 5. Area under study in coastal northern Sweden, administrative borders from c. 1920. Articles I and III study all parishes in the area under study. The junior school teacher Ester Vikström addressed in Article II is represented by the black star in the parish of Byske, Skellefteå region. Article IV is situated in the Skellefteå region, primarily analysing the town and rural parish of Skellefteå, see chapter five for more information. Source: Johan Junkka, 2018, histmaps – R package to generate Swedish historical administrative boundaries. <<https://github.com/junkka/histmaps>>. (Retrieved: 17-06-2020).

This section maps out the establishment of a primary education system in the study area, i.e. a part of the remote area whose challenges the two ministers tried to highlight for the parliament in the 1840s. In many ways, the two ministers foresaw many of the challenges which likely contributed to a slower implementation of primary education in northern Sweden compared with the southern and central parts of Sweden. Nevertheless, in northern Sweden, coastal parishes such as Skellefteå and Umeå were well off compared to the vast and sparsely populated areas inland. The interior region of northern Sweden is also the native lands of the indigenous Swedish Sami population and a part of the cultural region of Sápmi which spans across northern Norway, Sweden, Finland and parts of the Kola Peninsula in Russia.⁷⁶ All eight parishes in the area under study will be described jointly. Although the timing sometimes differs, they all experienced similar challenges and improvements concerning the primary schools. The parishes bordering on the Gulf of Bothnia (Figure 5) generally progressed more rapidly than the two inland parishes of Norsjö and Jörn, which shared more similarities with other rural non-coastal parishes in Sápmi.⁷⁷ These two parishes had a small population distributed across a huge area, further complicated by underdeveloped roads and economic challenges, altogether causing a delay in the school establishment, which went on at a slow pace. For example, the more populated coastal parishes, such as the rural parishes of Skellefteå and Umeå, had both been able to hire a certified teacher and establish their first permanent elementary school in 1847.⁷⁸ In Norsjö

⁷⁶ The large inland areas of northern Sweden constituted a part of Sápmi, the native lands of Swedish Sami. The Sami population even used the coastal area under study as winter grazing areas for their reindeer. However, as with the previously mentioned infant schools and work cottages, no specific school for Sami children was introduced in the examined area so it will not be further discussed here. However, the Sami history of education has been addressed increasingly in recent decades, see: David Sjögren, *Den säkra zonen: Motiv, åtgärdsförslag och verksamhet i den särskiljande utbildningspolitiken för inhemska minoriteter 1913–1962*, (Umeå: Inst. för idé- och samhällsstudier, 2010); Otso Kortekangas, *Tools of teaching and means of managing: educational and sociopolitical functions of languages of instruction in elementary schools with Sámi pupils in Sweden, Finland and Norway 1900–1940 in a cross-national perspective* (Stockholm: Stockholms universitet, Historiska institutionen, 2017); Otso Kortekangas et al., *Sámi Educational History in a Comparative International Perspective*, (Palgrave Macmillan: 2019), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-24112-4>. The practice of winter grazing along the coast is discussed in: Bertil Marklund, *Det milsvida skogsfolket: skogssamernas samhälle i omvandling 1650–1800*, *Kulturens frontlinjer* 58 (Umeå, Institutionen för idé- och samhällsstudier, Umeå universitet, 2015).

⁷⁷ Until 1892 Jörn remained a chapel parish (kapellförsamling) to the parish of Norsjö, see: *Sveriges församlingar genom tiderna* (Stockholm: Skatteförvaltningen: Riksskatteverket, 1989), p. 188, p. 279.

⁷⁸ Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*, p. 36; Simon Johansson, *Umeå sockens skolväsen 1842–1942: En historisk översikt* (Umeå: A.-B. Nyheternas Förlag, 1942), p. 59; Several studies have examined the history of education at a local level, some of these were written for the hundred-year commemoration of the first school act in 1942. While other, later studies were written by both academics and authors that had been working as teachers. The following titles have been used to write the overview here, but these sources can be of further use to obtain more detailed information on a specific area or parish, see Johan Albert Lindahl, *Utdrag och anteckningar om folkundervisningen i Norsjöbygden: i anledning av folkskolans 100-års jubileum* (Skellefteå: Skelleftebladets boktryckeri, 1942); Göran Marklund and Hans Marklund, *Skola i glesbygd – En krönika i text och bild om folkundervisningen i Jörns socken* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1982); Stig Stierna, *Den föränderliga skolan, Skelleftebygdens historia 5* (Skellefteå: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1986); Ola Raninge, *Folkskoleseminarier i Umeå 1879–1968* (Umeå: Lärarhögskolan, Umeå Universitet, 1984); Ola Raninge, *Folkskolans framväxt och lärarnas insatser i södra Västerbotten 1842–1942*, *Licentiatavhandlingar vid Pedagogiska institutionen* 3 (Umeå, 1988); Simon Johansson, *Folkundervisningen i Umeå socken fram till kommunsammanslagningen 1/1 1965* (Umeå: A.-B. Nyheternas Förlag, 1990).

and Jörn, all primary schools remained ambulatory until 1868, more than 25 years after the first school act stipulated that all parishes must establish an elementary school within five years that preferably would be permanent. In 1887, a state school inspector reported that Norsjö and Jörn together had one permanent school and ten ambulatory schools, all staffed with one teacher each. These eleven teachers faced the hard task of educating one thousand children scattered over approximately 3,500 square kilometres. In comparison, the neighbouring rural parish of Skellefteå covered less than half of the area (< 1,700 square kilometres) and had about three times the number of pupils, teachers, and schools.⁷⁹

To trace the key developments in the examined area, I have modified the spatial stages of school establishment, framed by human geographer Torvald Gerger as early as the 1970s. Gerger identified five stages – an initial stage, an expanding second stage, a third stage when the number of schools stabilised and consolidated, a fourth stage of centralisation and a final stage of school closures. As the fourth and fifth stage both meant a reduction in the numbers of schools, these stages are merged into one stage below.⁸⁰ By applying Gerger's stages, intervals for the different stages in the establishment of the primary public school system in the study area will become evident. Even though this stage division is approximate, it helps to illustrate how this school system went from being non-existent to becoming settled. State school inspector reports (*folkskoleinspektörernas berättelser*) from the area and secondary literature on the local history of education constitute the main sources for the information I provide below.

The initial stage represents the development from the first elementary school act (1842) to the first efforts to organise teacher training *within* the area around 1875. Amongst the above-mentioned reforms, the school act of 1842 also stated that the parish minister would be the

⁷⁹ Anders J. Nordenstam, "Westerbottens Första och Södra Lappmarkens kontrakt samt Norsjö och Burträsk's pastorat af Westerbottens Andra kontrakt.," in *Berättelse om Folkskolorna inom Hernösands stift åren 1867–1868* (Stockholm: Nordiska bokhandeln, 1869), p. 57–71; Nils Thielers, "Nordmalings och Bjurholms pastorat af Ångermanlands nordöstra kontrakt samt Umeå stads- och landsförsamlingars, Vännäs, Degerfors och Säfvars pastorat inom Westerbottens första kontrakt.," in *Berättelser om folkskolorna inom Hernösands stift åren 1882–1886*. (Stockholm: Kungl. Boktryckeriet, 1888), p. 65–81; Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB), "Församlingsarealer den 1 januari 2000" (Stockholm), <https://www.scb.se/MIO802>, (Retrieved: 18-05-2020).

⁸⁰ Torvald Gerger, *Skolans geografiska utveckling i Sverige* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 1972), p. 32–35; Gerger differed between the fourth stage – where the concentration meant that smaller schools could close and pupils move to a larger school, and the fifth stage – in which the final school of a parish/school district closed. However, given the large parishes/school districts in the area examined in this thesis all school closures prior to 1960 would fall in to the fourth stage. In a later publication Gerger and Hoppe also merged the two last stages, see: Torvald Gerger and Göran Hoppe, *Education and Society: The Geographer's View*, Acta Universitatis Stockholmiensis 1 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1980), p. 46–52. Certainly the process of school closures, primarily in villages with a decreasing population, continued after the 1960's but since the school reform of 1962 marks the end of the extended period examined this have not been addressed here.

permanent chair of the school board, an arrangement that lasted into the early 1930s.⁸¹ One challenge these school boards faced was financing the reform. During this initial stage, the state subsidies were low and, in addition to paying salaries for the hired teachers in cash, they were also entitled to services in kind, such as sustenance and firewood.⁸² Few schoolhouses had been built at this time and there was a great need to hire rooms in villages that could be used as class rooms, and for a long period the quality of these spaces was inferior. In 1863, E. A. Rosenius, the first state school inspector for the three northernmost counties, reported that the rooms hired for ambulatory schools were the least suitable, but that the permanent schools had flaws as well, one of which was the impossibility to ventilate the classrooms due to fixed windows.⁸³ School expenditures were far from the sole costs for the parishes. It was only one cost among many for the parishes, including everything from poverty relief to more irregular although large expenditures, such as the construction of a new church.⁸⁴

Widespread poverty, as mentioned by the two ministers above, was occasionally intensified by crop failure. Sometimes this even pushed the primary school establishment into decline, like during the devastating famine in northern Sweden in the mid- to late-1860s.⁸⁵ In 1866, the number of active junior schools in the parish of Skellefteå dropped to six, compared to 35 in 1863 and 40 in 1868. Most likely, all these schools were never active at the same time, but the fact that only every sixth of the schools listed conducted any teaching at all illustrates the major impact of the famine. In the Skellefteå parish alone, between five to six hundred children were left to earn their daily bread by begging.⁸⁶ Another problem to overcome was that parents were occasionally reluctant to send their children to the schools. This reluctance certainly had different causes, but frequently they concerned one or more of the following reasons: Either the road to school was considered to be too long, sometimes due to the fact

⁸¹ Furthermore it was stated that the remaining members of the board were to be elected within the parish for a limited or unlimited period of time, see Hall, *Sveriges Allmänna Folkskolestadgar 1842–1921*, p. 4–5; Following a decision in 1930, effective from 1932, the vicar was no longer the permanent chair of the school board. However, church officials kept their right to conduct visitations in schools until 1958, see Mats Ekholm and Kerstin Lindvall, “Skolinspektioner – i tid och otid,” *Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige* 13, no. 1 (2008): 41–58; Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*.

⁸² See § 4 in the first school act, Hall, *Sveriges Allmänna Folkskolestadgar 1842–1921*, p. 5–6.

⁸³ Erik Anders Rosenius, “Folkskoleinspektörernas berättelser om folkskolorna i riket – Ångermanlands vestra, nordvestra och nordöstra Kontrakt samt Westerbottens och Norrbottens län,” in *Berättelse om Folkskolorna inom Hernösands Stift åren 1861–1863*. (Stockholm: Nordiska bokhandeln, 1863), p. 40.

⁸⁴ For a study of the poor relief in the Skellefteå region, see Elisabeth Engberg, *I fattiga omständigheter: fattigvårdens former och understödstagare i Skellefteå socken under 1800-talet*, Report from the Demographic Data Base 25 (Umeå: Demografiska databasen, Umeå universitet, 2005); In Norsjö parish officials argued that they could not establish an elementary school according to the first school act. In addition to the vastness and expenditures for teachers and school houses they also referred to the cost of establishing a new church as a third argument, see Lindahl, *Utdrag och anteckningar om folkundervisningen i Norsjöbygden: i anledning av folkskolans 100-års jubileum*, p. 5–6.

⁸⁵ The last major famine on a national level occurred in the 1770’s, but given the devastating consequences that the 1867–1869 famine had for northern Sweden it is often referred to as the “last great famine”, see Lars Magnusson, *An Economic History of Sweden* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 30; Martin Dribe, Mats Olsson, and Patrick Svensson, “Famines in the Nordic Countries, AD 536 – 1875,” *Lund Papers in Economic History. General Issues*, no. 138 (2015).

⁸⁶ Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*, p. 51–52.

that the ambulatory school during extended periods could be located in another village, or the children were needed for work at home (on the farm). Furthermore, the parents refused to pay the fee for schooling required during the first decades following the school act of 1842.⁸⁷

During this initial stage, there was no elementary school teacher training available in either the area examined or in other parts of Västerbotten county. Nonetheless, most parishes were successful in recruiting one or a few qualified male elementary school teachers. They had primarily undergone teacher training in Härnösand, the closest town with teacher training, but there were other teachers who had moved from diocese capitals further south in Sweden. The most common arrangement that developed in the coastal parishes from the late 1840s to the early 1870s was a permanent elementary school in a more populated part of the parish. For rural parishes, this could be close to the border of a town parish. When the first school in a parish was established, an elementary school teacher was recruited for this position, sometimes in combination with the duties of an organist and/or bell-ringer. Gradually, this permanent school was successively supplemented by a few ambulatory teachers who taught in a district by altering location between villages. When O.S. Thelaus in 1855 started as an ambulatory teacher in the northern district of Umeå, he came to teach in no less than eight different villages. In contrast, the remaining ambulatory schools in the early 20th century, commonly moved between two villages every semester. These early elementary school teachers, such as Thelaus, could only expect some support if any from a diverse group of unqualified teachers that was recruited from the local area. In all, the school establishment during the initial stage was slow during the thirty years that followed the first school act.⁸⁸

The following decades (1875–1910) are recognised as a stage of expansion, which was not limited to education since the region modernised in general, especially in more urban settings.⁸⁹ Primary education now became more regulated in Sweden through the two above-mentioned reforms, the national curriculum of 1878 and the second school act (1882). During these years, 1878 and 1882, there was a breakthrough for teacher training opportunities in the studied area, primarily for young women. This was because junior school teacher training, as well as women's elementary school teacher training were initiated in the

⁸⁷ Mats Sjöberg, *Att säkra framtidens skördar: barndom, skola och arbete i agrar miljö: Bolstad pastorat 1860 – 1930*, Linköping Studies in Arts and Science 141 (Linköping: Univ, 1996), p. 70–84.

⁸⁸ For more information on the development between 1842 and 1874, see, Lindahl, *Utdrag och anteckningar om folkundervisningen i Norsjöbygden: i anledning av folkskolans 100-års jubileum*, p. 5–11; Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*, p. 29–54; Raninge, *Folkskolans framväxt och lärarnas insatser i södra Västerbotten 1842–1942*, p. 43–47; Johansson, *Umeå sockens skolväsen 1842–1942: En historisk översikt*, p. 19–27.

⁸⁹ This was the case despite a small urban population which in some cases could be counted in hundreds rather than thousands, see Sandström, *Skellefteå och Strängnäs*, p. 148–153.

area. The former training accepted both female and male applicants, although in the early classes there were already few men and from then on their numbers decreased. The establishment of a junior school teacher training moved from provisional measures in the 1870s, to an ambulatory teacher training in the 1880s and finally an opening of two permanent teacher training facilities in the county of Västerbotten in the 1890s.⁹⁰



Figure 6. Women, a few men and children in front of the junior school teacher training college in Skellefteå, built in 1907. When opened, it came to replace less suitable buildings that had been in use since 1892. The college had three classrooms, a staff room and housing for three teachers. The exact year of the photo is unknown, but it originates from between 1908 and 1921.
Source: Skellefteå Museum.

The late 1860s and beginning of the 1870s saw the first initiatives from the county council to finance a complementary junior school teacher training for those already teaching. These training courses were usually held by one of the male elementary school teachers working within the same parish. From the mid-1870s and onwards, the county council gradually began to also finance the training of new junior school teachers.⁹¹ This training progressed into an eight-month course that started at different locations within the county every second year. As mentioned in the introduction, the period of training was increased to two years in

⁹⁰ Nylund, *Småskolläraryrket i Sverige*, p. 104–105; Raninge, *Folkskoleseminariet i Umeå 1879–1968*, p. 7.

⁹¹ Anders J. Nordenstam, “Westerbottens län.,” in *Berättelse om Folkskolorna inom Hernösands stift åren 1869–1871* (Stockholm: Nordiska bokhandeln, 1872), p. 51; Anders J. Nordenstam, “Westerbottens län.,” in *Berättelse om Folkskolorna inom Hernösands stift åren 1872–1876* (Stockholm: Nordiska bokhandeln, 1877), p. 119; Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*, p. 69–71.

1888. One state school inspector welcomed this decision and wrote in his report that the 23 junior school teachers with the two-year training were on average notably better in teaching than the 75 that only had one year of training. Finally, permanent junior school teacher training colleges were established in Lycksele (1890–) and Skellefteå (1892–), which came to replace the bi-annual ambulatory training. However, the shortage of junior school teachers persisted into the first decades of the 20th century. As one measure to solve this shortage, a third teacher training college for junior school teachers opened in Umeå for seven years (1904–1911).⁹²

Compared to the junior school teachers, the introduction of elementary school teacher training developed more rapidly in the study area. After a joint petition from the four northernmost state school inspectors in 1878, supported by regional authorities and the Minister of Education, it was decided that a teacher training for women elementary school teachers would be opened in Umeå the following year. In 1915, Nils Nyman, the head teacher, conducted a survey over the elementary school teacher alumnae from Umeå. He found that a yearly average of twenty women had been awarded an elementary school teacher certificate between 1882 and 1915 (a total of 682 women). The overview further showed that about 80% of them had been employed upon graduation (n = 546) and among these about one in five (n = 114) was employed in the county of Västerbotten.⁹³

According to Gerger, the transition from the second stage to the third would be to go from ‘school expansion’ to ‘school stability/consolidation’. Deciding when this move occurred largely depends on the definition of these two stages. As for this overview, I have set the year for this transition to 1910, because by then the vast majority of all primary schools in the investigated area had been established. Furthermore, in his state school inspector report for the county of Västerbotten, Frans Svedberg presented the first ever reduction of ambulatory schools, which in 1910 had decreased by 11% since 1904. Inspector Svedberg also reported that no primary schools in the county ambulated between more than two villages. Nevertheless, ambulatory schools accounted for one-third of all schools within the county

⁹² Lycksele is also situated in the county of Västerbotten, but outside the studied area, further west/inland. Johan Herman Unæus, “Södra Lappmarkens kontrakt, Bygdeå, Nysätra och Löfångers pastorat af Vesterbottens första kontrakt samt Skellefteå, Byske, Norsjö-Jörns, Burträsk och Malå pastorat af Vesterbottens andra kontrakt.” in *Berättelser om folkskolorna inom Hernösands stift åren 1882–1886*. (Stockholm: Kungl. Boktryckeriet, 1888), p. 84–85; Per Olof Lundkvist, “Säfvars, Bygdeå, Nysätra och Löfångers pastorat af Vesterbottens första kontrakt samt Skellefteå, Byske, Norsjö, Jörns, Burträsk och Malå församlingar af Vesterbottens andra kontrakt.” in *Berättelser om folkskolorna inom Hernösands stift åren 1887–1892* (Stockholm: Kongl. Boktryckeriet, 1894), p. 72; Nylund, *Småskollärarytbildningen i Sverige*, p. 104–107.

⁹³ Raninge, *Folkskoleseminariet i Umeå 1879–1968*, p. 6–8, 60–63. That smaller cohorts graduated from elementary school teacher training in the early 1890s was also the case for the other teacher training college in northern Sweden i.e. male elementary teacher college in Härnösand, see “Avgångsexamensbetyg 1887–1894,” *Folkskoleseminariet i Härnösands arkiv*, vol. 6, p. 15–18, Härnösands landsarkiv, Riksarkivet.

and remained a reality for the decades to come, although they were constantly decreasing. Svedberg continued to stress that the shortage of qualified elementary school teachers made it difficult to reduce the number of smaller elementary schools, where a junior school teacher was responsible for all six grades as a substitute while waiting for a qualified elementary school teacher. According to Svedberg this issue was somewhat relieved by the newly established elementary school teacher training in Luleå, but it was far from enough.⁹⁴ The difference in the number of graduated junior and elementary school teachers in the county of Västerbotten came to decrease. The closing of the junior school teacher training in Umeå in 1914 was followed (1918) by an expansion of the women elementary school teacher training in Umeå.⁹⁵ The consolidation during the first decades of the 20th century is evident in all parts of the studied area through various developments in the school organisation. In addition to the improvements in the national development, this consolidation included an increase in elementary school teachers and decrease in junior school teachers, more adequate school houses and fewer hired facilities and an increasing proportion of pupils in full-time education.⁹⁶ In 1929, the junior school teacher training in Skellefteå closed after 37 years of service. This was not unique to the training in Skellefteå. Through government measures, the number of graduated junior school teachers in Sweden went from 790 in 1923 to 298 in 1930, declining to only 10 in 1937.⁹⁷

The closure of the junior school teacher training in Skellefteå marks the transition to the last stage characterised by school concentration and closures according to Gerger. However, looking at the last years of the 1920s and beginning of the 1930s only provides an approximate indication of an ongoing shift, which was a complex process and took different guises in the subsequent decades. Some rural primary schools in the studied area had already shut down prior to 1930, primarily as a consequence of the decision to make an ambulatory school permanent in one of the two villages that the school previously had moved between.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Frans Svedberg, "Västerbottens södra och norra kontrakt samt Malå pastorat av Lappmarkens andra kontrakt.," in *Berättelser om folkskolorna inom Luleå stift åren 1905–1910* (Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söner, 1912), p. 2–5.

⁹⁵ The number of admitted applicants increased from 25 in 1917 to 46 the following year, see Raninge, *Folkskoleseminariet i Umeå 1879–1968*, p. 37.

⁹⁶ Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*, p. 85–86; Johansson, *Folkundervisningen i Umeå socken fram till kommunsammanslagningen 1/1 1965*, p. 55–59; Lindahl, *Utdrag och anteckningar om folkundervisningen i Norsjöbygden: i anledning av folkskolans 100-års jubileum*, p. 19–21; Marklund and Marklund, *Skola i glesbygd*, p. 254.

⁹⁷ Nylund, *Småskolläroutbildningen i Sverige*, p. 206, p. 228, p. 256.

⁹⁸ Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden*, p. 86; Johansson, *Folkundervisningen i Umeå socken fram till kommunsammanslagningen 1/1 1965*, p. 58–59. These early school closures also included cases where smaller elementary schools situated in a small village closed when a larger village (and school) existed just a few kilometres away.



Figure 7. Primary school teachers and the vicar on the stairs of the elementary school in Kåge on the final day of the term, June 1918. The two elementary school teachers to the right, the vicar, and the four women junior school teachers to the left. All four women junior school teachers came to work without interruption from graduation to retirement, having more than 160 years of service all together.
Source: Skellefteå museum.

By compiling information from two registers on primary schools, issued in 1922 and 1942, respectively, the local level school development in the area can be examined. In the early 1920s, elementary school teachers were employed in one third of the 216 schools while two-thirds were still smaller elementary schools, usually staffed with a single junior school teacher. Half-time reading was still practiced in 45% of the schools in 1921 and every fifth primary school ambulated between two villages. Two decades later, the number of schools had decreased to 163, all permanent and practicing full-time reading. Furthermore, three quarters of the primary schools now had one or more elementary school teachers employed meaning that the previously dominant school form, smaller elementary schools with a single junior school teacher, had decreased to only one quarter or 39 schools in 1942.⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Göransson, *Svensk folkskolematrikel år 1922, Del I*, p. 234–235, p. 238–243, p. 250; J. E. Lundbärj, *Sveriges folk- och småskolor* (Stockholm: Lindfors Bokförlag AB, 1943), p. 52–56, p. 94–95, p. 170–171, p. 301–303, p. 374–375. Lundbärj incorrectly lists the primary school in Karstråk as D3 (ambulatory and half-time reading) instead of D1 (permanent, smaller elementary school) which it had been since 1934/1935, see state school inspector report, Frans Georg Hedenmark, “Berättelse över skolväsendet i Västerbottens norra inspektionsområde under år 1934–1935,” 1935, Domkapitlet i Luleå stifts arkiv, G IX:9 1935–1939, p. 3, Landsarkivet i Härnösand, Riksarkivet.

In 1935, the aforementioned state subsidy for school transportation increased to 80% of the cost, an important reform for the sparsely populated area under study. The improved access to fuel following the end of World War II enabled a rapid increase in the number of school transports during the late 1940s and even more so in the 1950s.¹⁰⁰ Improved transportation, an increasing urbanisation and a development toward larger school units meant that a vast majority of all primary schools closed in the 1950s and 1960s.¹⁰¹ Gerger stated that the last step of the final stage was reached when the last school in the district had closed. In the study area, no of the parishes (school districts) has reached this final step to the present day, but the termination of rural schools during the latter half of the 20th century totally redrew the map of primary education. An illustrative example of this process is the school district of Jörn. In 1938, 31 villages in the district had a school, and five of these remained until the mid-1960s and only two until the mid-1980s.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Johansson, *Folkundervisningen i Umeå socken fram till kommunsammanslagningen 1/1 1965*, p. 50–51.

¹⁰¹ For two examples of this reduction see, Stierna, *Den föränderliga skolan*, p. 194–195; Johansson, *Folkundervisningen i Umeå socken fram till kommunsammanslagningen 1/1 1965*, p. 49–50.

¹⁰² Marklund and Marklund, *Skola i glesbygd*, p. 254–255.

3. Research overview

The main field of research that this thesis concerns includes studies on the social history of primary school teachers while it also has a specific interest in research on the connection between life and work. This chapter presents three strands of research that relate to the results and focus of this thesis. The first strand addresses issues regarding the professionalisation and feminisation of the primary school teacher occupation in Sweden. This research is primarily conducted on an aggregated or national level and is important to understand the formation and development of the different group of teachers addressed. The second strand represents research on teachers from a life history approach, which in contrast to the first strand emphasises individual teachers' lives and experiences more. The third strand presents historical research that has examined the role of teachers in relation to the surrounding local community.¹⁰³ Previous research that is accounted for elsewhere in this thesis, such as the development of the Swedish school system or studies discussed in Articles I–IV, will be discussed less below.

Primary school teaching: A gendered profession

As for the 19th century, sociologist Sofia Persson identifies class structures and patriarchal gender relations as two key processes that caused segregation between men and women in society at large as well as within the educational system. The uneven premises related to class and gender had an effect among both teachers and pupils. For the latter, it meant that only boys from the higher classes were eligible for higher education, and in elementary school, it was common that girls were given a shorter course than boys. Among teachers, this gender segregation spanned from the male grammar school teachers, who had the longest teacher training and highest salary, to the women junior school teachers, who had the shortest education and the lowest status and salary. In a more formal and material way, this hierarchy was also evident in the teachers' right to an official residence. This right was state-sanctioned and stated that male elementary school teachers had the right to an accommodation twice the size of women junior school teachers (90 sqm and 45 sqm respectively). One of few examples from the 19th century where women and men had equal rights was in the field of education, since elementary school teachers regardless of gender were entitled to the same salary until 1906.¹⁰⁴ In her examination of official records and previous research, Margaretha Mellberg compared the salaries between elementary school teachers and junior school teachers in the

¹⁰³ The separate strands should be understood as a thematical division rather than a presentation of different research traditions. Some previous studies, such as the work by Christina Florin as well as Margaretha Mellberg, certainly report findings that relate to more than one of the strands.

¹⁰⁴ Persson, *Lärarkets uppkomst och förändring*, p. 176, p. 184–186.

late 19th and early 20th century. Mellberg concludes that the junior school occupation remained a desirable occupation for women despite the low salary.¹⁰⁵

Christina Florin describes how the junior school teacher occupation when introduced in the late 1850s was intended for both men and women, but due to the low salaries nearly all applicants to the teacher training were women. Ten years later during the parliament sessions (1867), the discussions had changed, and women were now considered to be the most suitable for teaching children in the lower years. The proportion of women within the junior school increased extremely quickly. Already in the late 1860s, about 50% of the junior school teachers were women and at the turn of the century almost all of them were women. For elementary school teachers, there was a difference in the gender distribution between urban and rural teachers. Women elementary school teachers in rural schools increased their share from c. 10% in 1882 to c. 40% in 1920. Among urban elementary teachers there was a close to equal gender distribution from 1870 and onwards. The teacher training facilities for junior school teachers were more accessible and rooted in the local area since they were both more in numbers and more widespread than the equivalent facilities for elementary school teachers.¹⁰⁶

For 60 years (1858–1918), the junior school was separated legally from the elementary school and regulated differently although being incorporated in the same school system and frequently located in the same school building. Working conditions for the two groups of teachers are nearly incommensurable due to differences concerning teacher education, employment security and salary, which kept the groups apart. Throughout the 19th century, junior school teachers were not obliged to have a certificate. An increasing proportion of them had, however, some sort of teacher education although the length could vary from a few months to two years. From 1897, the elementary school act stated that junior school teachers should have a degree, while a teaching certificate became a requirement with the reforms of 1918, but at this point in time few employed junior school teachers were completely unqualified. The year of 1918 was important since the junior school teachers, as explained in the previous chapter, from then onwards could get positions on a permanent basis.¹⁰⁷

Previous research has shown that the salaries among junior school teachers were low, not only in comparison with elementary school teachers, but also when compared to other occupational groups. In 1900, male elementary school teachers, male unskilled labourers and

¹⁰⁵ Mellberg, *Pedagogen och det skrivna ordet*, p.167.

¹⁰⁶ Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, p. 39–41, p. 58. In the national curriculum of 1878, the junior school teacher was presumed to be a woman teacher (*lärarinna*), see; “Normalplan för undervisningen i folkskolor och småskolor” (1878), p. 3.

¹⁰⁷ Åberg, *Sveriges småskollärare och deras förbund 1918–1966*, p. 11–22.

women clerk assistants all had a yearly salary of around 700 Swedish crowns (SEK 700) while junior school teachers on average earned approximately SEK 300. Despite the low salary, the number of applicants to junior school teacher education was high, how could this be? Florin argues that becoming a teacher was one of few available occupational options open to women in the lower classes that did not entail hard manual labour. Furthermore, mothers or other women such as ‘school aunts’ (*skolmostrar*) had in general been responsible for the home-schooling prior to the 1842 school act. Provided these circumstances, Florin finds that the junior school teachers, due to their low salary and poor working conditions, became a proletariat of teachers that both made the cost of staff cheaper and simultaneously increased its quality.¹⁰⁸

Despite the differences in salary and job security, junior and elementary school teachers were initially organised within the same union, i.e. the General Elementary School Teachers’ Association of Sweden (*Sveriges Allmänna Folkskolläraryörening – SAF*), founded in 1880.¹⁰⁹ The constituting paragraph stated: “The purpose of the association is to work for the improvement of Swedish elementary and general education, through unity and a good spirit among Sweden’s teachers and to improve the teachers’ position in general.”¹¹⁰ In the subsequent decades, especially the part that stipulated ‘unity’ would be challenged. The executive committee consisted exclusively of male elementary school teachers until 1896 when the first two women teachers were elected.¹¹¹ Women teachers also continued to be severely underrepresented during the 20th century, and this was particularly true of the junior school teachers. They accounted for about half of the teachers, but only one representative out of fifteen committee members.¹¹²

In the early 20th century, it was clear that the General Elementary School Teachers’ Association of Sweden neither could represent nor would pursue all matters that were central issues for different groups of teachers. Persson explains this with prevailing patriarchal mechanisms, which in various ways reproduced the subordination of women teachers. For

¹⁰⁸ Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, p. 39–41; For an account of rural primary school teachers prior to the school act, see Carin Bergström, *Skolmostrar och läsmästare: lärare på landet före folkskolereformen 1842* (Stockholm: Nordiska museets förlag, 2000).

¹⁰⁹ Here I have adopted the translation used by Göran Sparrlöf in his dissertation, “*Vi manliga lärare*”: *folkskolans lärare och lärarinnor i kamp om löner och arbetsområden 1920–1963*, Doktorsavhandlingar inom den Nationella forskarskolan i pedagogiskt arbete 11 (Linköping: Inst. för beteendevetenskap och lärande, Linköpings univ, 2007), p. 246.

¹¹⁰ Molin, J., E. Hammarlund, and A.M. Stefanson. “De Svenska Skollärareföreningarnas möte (för bildande af en allmän svensk folkskollärareförening)” (A.L. Normans Boktryckeri-Aktiebolag, 1880); Persson, *Läraryrkets uppkomst och förändring*, p. 198.

¹¹¹ Åke Isling, “Lärarna organiserar sig” in *Ett folk börjar skolan: folkskolan 150 år 1842–1992*, ed. Gunnar Richardson (Stockholm: Allmänna förlaget, 1992), p. 164–166.

¹¹² Åberg, *Sveriges småskollärare och deras förbund 1918–1966*, p. 32.

example, male elementary school teachers had closer connections to the exclusively male parliament. It was also argued that male teachers should have high salaries to provide for their family. A third example being a form of patriarchal violence that affected women teachers; this included all aspects from strict moral demands on women teachers from the local society to the fear of being assaulted or raped.¹¹³ Within fourteen years, 1906 to 1920, three groups of teachers formed their own unions. As forementioned in the previous chapter the women elementary school teachers did so in 1906 because of the gender-differentiated salaries that were introduced the same year.¹¹⁴ In the meantime, junior school teachers around Sweden started to form local unions and, due to their disappointment with the salary review in 1918, they formed a national union.¹¹⁵ In 1920, the male elementary school teachers formed their own union through the apprehension that the general teacher union would not be able to pursue their specific interests.¹¹⁶ The junior school teachers, as an occupational title, came to exist for about a hundred years until the 1960's. Gradually, it waned through the introduction of a new curriculum and because the junior teacher training was merged with the training for elementary school teachers.¹¹⁷

In her thesis, Greetje Alida Bijl shows how women in the Netherlands became accepted as primary school teachers from 1878 as a measure to avoid a teacher shortage. These women had more limited career opportunities than their male colleagues and the law stated that these women would be prioritised for the first grades while the male teachers would work in the higher grades. Bijl further finds that women teachers either postponed marriage a few years or did not marry at all. The situations of Dutch teachers in Groningen that Bijl examines demonstrate many similarities with Sweden, such as fewer career opportunities for women teachers compared to their male counterpart. Interestingly, primary teaching opened for women in Groningen in 1878, the same year as the women elementary school teacher training in the studied area.¹¹⁸

¹¹³ Persson, *Lärarkets uppkomst och förändring*, p. 227–228; See also, Anna Maria Ursing, *Fantastiska fröknar: studier av lärarinnegestalter i svensk skönlitteratur* (Stockholm: Brutus Östlings Bokförl. Symposion, 2004), p. 127–129.

¹¹⁴ Persson, *Lärarkets uppkomst och förändring*, p. 229–337.

¹¹⁵ Åberg, *Sveriges småskollärare och deras förbund 1918–1966*, p. 32–34.

¹¹⁶ Sparrlöf, *Vi manliga lärare*, p. 10–12.

¹¹⁷ Åberg, *Sveriges småskollärare och deras förbund 1918–1966*, p. 14–15, p. 64–65; Persson, *Lärarkets uppkomst och förändring*, p. 314–315. The introduction of the curriculum in 1962 and a new teacher education program meant that the junior school teachers now became qualified to teach also in the third grade.

¹¹⁸ Greetje Alida Bijl, *Loopbaan en levensloop van onderwijzers en onderwijzeressen: sociale mobiliteit, huwelijk, inkomen, benoeming en ontslag in het openbaar lager onderwijs in Groningen, ca. 1850–1920*, (Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, 2014), p. 398–399.

Teachers in life histories

Following the second feminist wave in the mid-1970s and throughout the 1980s and 1990s, research that used a life history approach to study the history of teachers increased.¹¹⁹

Research projects that either mapped the lives of women teachers in public schools through archival sources or made interviews with retired teachers were conducted in numerous western countries.¹²⁰ These studies show that interviews and oral history approaches are useful to study teachers' lives in contemporary societies. The approaches also make teachers' lives visible and, of certain interest to this thesis, they can provide first-hand information such as experiences of family formation.¹²¹

The life history-oriented research on women teachers was particularly strong in the United States. Given that Sweden and the United States both experienced an extensive increase in the proportion of women teachers during the 19th century, this research provides important insights for this thesis. Madelyn Holmes and Beverly Weiss study the lives of 12 teachers in rural and urban settings between the early 19th and mid-20th century and conclude that the inception of public schooling provided women a new qualified occupation outside the home. Holmes and Weiss further find that quite a few of these women pursued careers as principals, and that mostly men became superintendents. The 12 portraits cover a time span over a hundred years and a vast area, as these teachers were active in states covering all cardinal directions of the United States. Holmes and Weiss summarise the benefits with their approach like this:

Our research has convinced us that broad-stroke, composite descriptions of teachers have obscured both the strengths women have brought and continue to bring to the teaching profession, and the nature of societal problems for which they often have borne the onus, however unrealistic that may have been.¹²²

Kathleen Weiler has studied American women teachers through a similar time span as Holmes and Weiss (1850–1950), but within a more delimited spatial area. Life histories in combination with other sources is used by Weiler to study women teachers working in rural

¹¹⁹ Alison L. Prentice and Marjorie R. Theobald, eds., *Women Who Taught: Perspectives on the History of Women and Teaching* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), p. 3–5.

¹²⁰ Ivor Goodson, ed., *Studying Teachers' Lives* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1992); Madelyn Holmes and Beverly J. Weiss, *Lives of Women Public Schoolteachers: Scenes from American Educational History*, Garland Reference Library of Social Science, v. 833 (New York: Garland Pub, 1995); Kathleen Weiler, "Reflections on Writing a History of Women Teachers," *Harvard Educational Review* 67, no. 4 (December 1997): p. 635–58, <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.67.4.jr17u2244k168470>; Consuelo Flecha García, "La vida de las maestras en España," *Historia de la Educacion* 16 (1997): p. 199–222.

¹²¹ It is arguable that previous studies adapting these methods are relevant given that they have had the possibility to interview an older group of teachers. In this study this is the case with the primary school teachers interviewed for the Rostad project (below).

¹²² Holmes and Weiss, *Lives of Women Public Schoolteachers*, p. 231–232.

parts of California, and especially the two counties of Tulare and Kings. One interesting result that Weiler comes across concerns the great differences between women teachers active in the urban and rural school environment during the latter part of the 19th century and first two decades of the 20th century. In urban environments, women school teachers were often seen as an authority by immigrant pupils, representing the United States of America. Feminist ideals and the view that they constituted a vision of the “new women” circulated among women teachers in cities. However, according to Weiler these urban women teachers were often used as pawns in political struggles on a local level. In contrast, Weiler pictures the women teachers in rural one- or two-room schools as professionals with high autonomy who made many decisions on their own since there were no higher authorities present. The rural teacher was also a public official and was expected to have high moral standards to provide cohesion in the community where she worked.¹²³ In line with how Holmes and Weiss discuss the opportunity structures in terms of career possibilities for women teachers, Weiler discusses the fortunate opportunities for women teachers to proceed as principals. A majority (62%) of the elementary school principals were women in 1905, and in the 1970s the corresponding percentage had dropped to 20%. One possible explanation of the high number of women principals at the turn of the 20th century was that most of these early principals were also teaching. When the principal occupation became more administrative, leaving the teaching practice behind, the share of women principals declined quickly.¹²⁴ Weiler’s work recalls the importance of employing a multifaceted approach to understand the circumstances under which women teachers worked and were active, and stress the need to include a gender perspective of the history of education.¹²⁵

By drawing on life histories and other sources, Kay Whitehead has studied different perceptions of the spinster teachers in Australia between the 1870s and 1940s. Whitehead nuanced the pejorative image of spinster teachers as being an old unmarried woman by showing how spinster also could have positive connotations of young female agency until they passed marital age. However, when the marriage ban for teachers was relieved and gradually abolished in the 1940s, unmarried women teachers became more negatively perceived in surrounding society.¹²⁶

¹²³ Kathleen Weiler, *Country Schoolwomen: Teaching in Rural California, 1850–1950* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 17.

¹²⁴ Weiler, *Country Schoolwomen*, p. 21.

¹²⁵ Weiler, *Country Schoolwomen*, p. 34–35.

¹²⁶ Kay Whitehead, “The spinster teacher in Australia from the 1870s to the 1960s,” *History of Education Review* 36, no. 1 (June, 2007): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.1108/08198691200700001>.

In the last five decades, Geraldine J. Clifford has examined the social history and life of women teachers.¹²⁷ In her extensive work *Those Good Gertrudes*, Clifford makes use of sources from over 70 archival institutions in 33 states in the United States.¹²⁸ She combines autobiographies, diaries, letters, oral history and interviews to (re)construct the lives of women teachers. Clifford describes the development of the teaching occupation on a national level and then uses individual cases to show how societal changes played out on a micro level. Concerning the feminisation process of the teacher occupation, Clifford argues that both the high number of teachers and high percentage of women teachers in the United States during the 19th century could be explained by the fact that it was a young nation. Foreign countries were more constrained to educational traditions and a more segregated labour market within the teacher occupation itself, which often meant that women teachers worked in primary school and their male counterparts in secondary school.¹²⁹

In Sweden, the life-history research regarding teachers is primarily represented by a project carried out during the 1980s and the early 1990s and by a few other studies from the same time period, not related to the project.¹³⁰ By studying alumnae from a women elementary school teacher training college in southeast Sweden (Rostad in Kalmar), the project followed the life courses among different teacher generations that finished their teacher training between the 1920s and 1960s. Through a combination of surveys and interviews, the Rostad project focuses on the teacher role among women teachers and its development over 50 years – from the 1930s to the 1980s. The oldest group of women teachers interviewed had themselves gone through primary school education approximately between 1915 and 1925. In primary school, none of them had a woman teacher that was married. Consequently, when they made their choice to become an elementary school teacher, they viewed this as a way of life which meant choosing the career prior to marriage and family formation. Later in life, however, all of them would marry and form a family.¹³¹

In the Rostad project, four groups of women elementary school teachers were also examined, groups that graduated in the late 1920s, during the 1930s, early 1940s and the 1960s.

Elgqvist-Saltzman showed that an increasing share of women teachers formed a family and

¹²⁷ For one of Clifford's' early publications see: Geraldine J. Clifford, "A History of the Impact of Research in Teaching," in *Second Handbook of Research on Teaching: A Project of the American Educational Research Association*, ed. Robert Morris William Travers, N. L. Gage, and American Educational Research Association (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1973).

¹²⁸ Geraldine J. Clifford, *Those Good Gertrudes: A Social History of Women Teachers in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), p. 439–442.

¹²⁹ Clifford, *Those Good Gertrudes*, p. 41–42.

¹³⁰ Inga Elgqvist-Saltzman, *Lärlarinna, kvinna, människa* (Stockholm: Carlssons, 1993), p. 191, p. 212. The main works written within the Rostad project and the individual works by Ekwall and Johannesson cited below were all conducted and published within five years 1988 to 1993.

¹³¹ Elgqvist-Saltzman, *Lärlarinna, kvinna, människa*, p. 14, p. 139.

kept their teaching position. Additionally, primary sources from a class gathering in 1945 for women elementary teachers that had graduated ten years earlier showed that those who only had one child were even encouraged by the principal to have more children. Elgqvist-Saltzman argues that the teacher shortage in combination with changing norms and laws meant that women teachers in the 1940s never experienced the previously strong resistance towards women that formed a family and kept their teaching position.¹³² It should be stressed that the empirical data used by Elgqvist-Saltzman and her colleagues within the Rostad project originated from a comparatively small sample, examining women elementary school teachers mainly active in southern Sweden. Rural teachers in northern Sweden could have considerably different conditions, especially the junior school teachers. However, the results of the interviews are of comparative relevance since these women elementary school teachers were contemporary with the teachers examined in this thesis.

Beside the Rostad project, the life-history approach is represented by Sven Ekwall, for example. Through the combination of interviews, notes, biographies, records, and other information, he has reconstructed the work and living conditions for seventeen rural teachers all born in the 19th century. In all, Ekwall's findings on the teachers' lives show a multitude of ways to enter the teacher occupation during the formative years of the primary school system.¹³³ Furthermore, Anna-Maja Johannesson has studied letter correspondence between her grandfather, primary school teacher, Jonas Asmundsson Blomberg, and fifteen of his male colleagues between 1850 and 1880. Johannesson uses the correspondence to discuss how the teachers demarcated their occupational territory and how teaching as a calling occupation (*lärarkall*) was used in this process.¹³⁴

¹³² Elgqvist-Saltzman, *Lärlarinna, kvinna, människa*, p. 139–145.

¹³³ Sven Ekwall, *Minnen och dokument II: Gamla småskolor och deras lärare: levnadsminnen och miljöbilder*, ed. Stig G. Nordström, Årsböcker i svensk undervisningshistoria 166 (Uppsala: Föreningen för svensk undervisningshistoria, 1991).

¹³⁴ Anna-Maja Johannesson, *Lärarnas villkor i de första decenniernas folkskola (1850–1880): ett hörn av verkligheten sett genom brev och sockenpapper* (Stockholm: HLS (Högsk. för lärarutbildning), 1989), see p. 10 for an overview of the letter correspondence.

Teachers in the local community

In the area under study, the history of primary school teachers has received a little less attention in previous research. However, one exception is the research conducted by Alison Mackinnon (2002). She studied the life story of Anna Eklund Stensson using parish records and provided demographic information on yet another 27 women teachers, born between 1859 and 1870. While emphasising that her results cannot be considered representative due to the small sample, Mackinnon finds that a majority of these women teachers had formed a family before the year 1900, that they primarily married farmers, and that many of the spouses were younger than the women teachers themselves.¹³⁵ In many ways, this thesis extends the study of Mackinnon, which she herself labelled a pilot study nearly 20 years ago. This thesis studies the same parish records and teacher register as Mackinnon, but advances the approach by analysing more teachers and additional sources, and with mixed methods. Certainly, there are differences between our individual approaches too. While Mackinnon emphasised the process of secularisation and examined spouses of teachers, this thesis focuses on the socio-economic background, family formation and other issues in teachers' lives. However, Mackinnon's main contribution to this study is not only found in her empirical results, but also in her call to combine qualitative and quantitative sources to study teachers' lives:

Here I argue for a series of micro narratives, to be placed alongside the grand narratives of quantitative demography, for a deeper understanding of fertility change. One of those key micro narratives was that of state-sponsored education for women.¹³⁶

In his study of four parishes situated in the south-western parts of Sweden, Mats Sjöberg has examined children in primary schools between 1860 and 1930. Sjöberg found that the first male elementary school teachers in general served for a long period of time, usually more than twenty years. In 1873, the state school inspector in the area reported that the quality of teaching in general was higher among the younger elementary school teachers while only 10 of 61 teachers in the junior school conducted a teaching that was approved by the inspector. Furthermore, when adding protocols from the church and school boards to the inspector

¹³⁵ Alison Mackinnon, "In a Class of Their Own? Swedish Women School Teachers and the Fertility Transition in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Interchange* 34, no. 2 (2003): 281–96, <https://doi.org/10.1023/B:INCH.0000015905.60078.a2>; A slightly reworked version of the article was also published in, Harvey J Graff et al., *Understanding Literacy in Its Historical Contexts Socio-Cultural History and the Legacy of Egil Johansson* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2009).

¹³⁶ Mackinnon, "In a Class of Their Own?", p. 293.

reports, Sjöberg found few cases of critique toward the early elementary teachers.¹³⁷ The deeds of Swedish primary school teachers in the local community have also been the theme for an anthology with nine contributions covering the period between 1860 and 1960.¹³⁸ In one of the contributions, Ingrid Hartman Söderberg studied the life courses of three sisters who all became elementary school teachers during the latter part of the 19th century. Through their engagement in early union formation, political associations, and other activities in the community, all three showed a high level of autonomy. Upon retirement after having taught in the same school district for 33 years, the middle-sister was awarded a gold medal from the Royal Patriotic Society. None of the three sisters married or had any children.¹³⁹

In his examination of the Sundsvall region, Johannes Westberg studied the funding of primary school buildings constructed between 1840 and 1900. Even though the materiality of the local school environment is more centred upon than the teachers, Westberg's findings are of relevance for the teachers examined in my thesis. For example, the primary school teachers' accommodation often was a part of the school building is of interest to the present study. Westberg shows how the teachers worked to get their room for living in a more silent and calm part of the school building, which was not always possible. Furthermore, a woman junior school teacher was dismissed after it was discovered that she had a nightly visitor in her home.¹⁴⁰ This incident exemplifies the challenges of combining private and professional life in the local community.

¹³⁷ Sjöberg, *Att säkra framtidens skördar*, p. 180–185; However, that the relation between elementary school teachers and the school board could be more problematic has been shown in another study by Sjöberg, see: Mats Sjöberg, "Den andra prövningen. Kommunen, lokalsamhället och det goda faderskapet," in *Samhällsbyggare i närmiljön: kvinnliga och manliga folkskollärares insatser i det lokala samhällslivet 1860–1960*, ed. Ann-Kristin Högman, Lars Petterson, and Sune Åkerman, Årsböcker i svensk undervisningshistoria 213 (Uppsala: Föreningen för svensk undervisningshistoria, 2010); See also, David Sjögren, "Folkskollärare i konflikt med skolråd och allmoge 1840–1900," in *Nationen så in i Norden: festskrift till Torkel Jansson*, ed. Henrik Edgren et al., *Studia historica in honorem Torkilli Helsingii edita 1* (Skellefteå: Artos & Norma bokförlag AB, 2013).

¹³⁸ Ann-Kristin Högman, Lars Petterson, and Sune Åkerman, eds., *Samhällsbyggare i närmiljön: kvinnliga och manliga folkskollärares insatser i det lokala samhällslivet 1860–1960*, Årsböcker i svensk undervisningshistoria 213 (Uppsala: Föreningen för svensk undervisningshistoria, 2010).

¹³⁹ Ingrid Hartman Söderberg, "Från filantropi till kommunalpolitik. Med tre systrar, tre folkskollärarinnor i samhällsutvecklingen" in *Samhällsbyggare i närmiljön: kvinnliga och manliga folkskollärares insatser i det lokala samhällslivet 1860–1960*, ed. Ann-Kristin Högman, Lars Petterson, and Sune Åkerman, p. 17–58; See also, Ingrid Hartman Söderberg, "Vidunder till kvinnor": *sju systrar som pionjärer i yrkesliv och offentlighet 1860–1935* (Örebro: Univ.-bibl., 2003).

¹⁴⁰ Johannes Westberg, *Att bygga ett skolväsende: folkskolans förutsättningar och framväxt 1840–1900*, (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2014), p. 64–66.

4. Theoretical framework

Theoretically, this thesis largely builds on perspectives and concepts developed within life-course research. Depending on the various questions addressed in the four sub-studies, the life-course approach is supplemented with further perspectives or concepts to interpret the findings. Below, I will first present some life-course research and recent theoretical developments in relation to how it has been put in to practice in this thesis. Then, I will explain the analytical tools for each sub-study and integrate them within the life-course theory. Finally, I will explain my use and understanding of gender and class concerning the teachers under study.

Life-course approaches

Life-course approaches have a long tradition of pioneering works dating back to the 1920s, but they came to be more continuously adapted, discussed, and developed from the 1950–60s and onwards. The life course, both as a method and theory, made its way into various research fields that shared an interest in studying how issues ranging from criminal behaviour to general health condition changed over the course of life.¹⁴¹ This thesis builds on previous work in history that has adapted life-course approaches with a certain interest of studies of women, exemplified by the work of George Alter on the life courses of women textile workers in 19th century Belgium. From a combination of quantitative approaches, Alter concluded that an individual-centred approach was preferable rather than viewing the household as a unit.¹⁴²

Sociologist Glen H. Elder Jr. has been one of the leading researchers in the theoretical and methodological development of the life-course approach since the mid-1970s, partially in

¹⁴¹ Some fields where the approach came to be influential were criminology, family history (demography), ageing research, and other fields within sociology and psychology. In 2000, the journal *Current Perspectives on Aging and the Life Cycle* changed the name into *Advances in Life Course Research* (ISSN: 1040-2608) a journal that two decades later still releases four volumes a year. Since 2014 *Historical Life Course Studies* (ISSN: 2352-6343) publishes research on primarily longitudinal studies using micro-level data. For an overview of the earlier developments within life-course research see, Walter R. Heinz and Regina Becker-Schmidt, eds., *Theoretical advances in life course research*, Status passages and the life course 1 (Weinheim: Deutscher Studien Verlag, 1991); Glen H. Elder Jr., Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Robert Crosnoe, “The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory,” in *Handbook of the Life Course*, ed. Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan, Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2003); Timothy J. Owens, “Preface,” *Advances in Life Course Research* 5 (January 2000): ix–xi, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1040-2608\(00\)80003-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1040-2608(00)80003-9).

¹⁴² George Alter, *Family and the Female Life Course: The Women of Verviers, Belgium, 1849–1880*, Life Course Studies (Madison, Wis: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), see the concluding chapter p. 196–203.

collaboration with Janet Z. Giele and other scholars.¹⁴³ Together with Kirkpatrick Johnson and Crosnoe, Elder has presented five principles (life-span development, agency, time and place, timing, and linked lives) which have been of major importance to life-course research.¹⁴⁴ When introducing these principles, Elder Jr. and colleagues wrote:

The life course paradigm that emerged from the complex interplay of forces [...] is best viewed as a theoretical orientation that guides research on human lives within context. As such, it aids scientists in the formulation of empirical questions, conceptual development, and research design. The life course provides a framework for studying phenomena at the nexus of social pathways, developmental trajectories, and social change.¹⁴⁵

In this thesis, *human lives within context* refers to the primary school teachers in an evolving school system and society. The *phenomena at the nexus of social pathways, developmental trajectories, and social change* of interest to my study consist of the various and dynamic links between teachers' professional life and private life, the latter in terms of their possibility to engage in family formation. This approach has had an impact both on the questions addressed and the multi-method approach. For example, the social pathway of teachers can be examined quantitatively by studying the socio-economic background and family formation in a long-term perspective among thousands of teachers as well as qualitatively by elucidating the everyday life of a single junior school teacher.

Using both quantitative and qualitative analyses help to answer the research questions although these two methodological approaches have their own advantages and disadvantages.¹⁴⁶ By positioning the findings within the life-course framework, the results from one study can confirm, strengthen or even question the findings from of another study. Furthermore, the life-course framework has helped me bring together the different sub-fields

¹⁴³ For works from the 1970s, see Glen H. Elder, *Children of the Great Depression: Social Change in Life Experience* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974); Glen H. Elder, "Family History and the Life Course," *Journal of Family History* 2, no. 4 (December 1977): 279–304, <https://doi.org/10.1177/036319907700200402>; For collaborations with Giele, see the following edited volumes: Janet Z. Giele and Glen H. Elder, eds., *Methods of Life Course Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 1998); Glen H. Elder and Janet Zollinger Giele, eds., *The Craft of Life Course Research* (New York ; London: Guilford Press, 2009).

¹⁴⁴ Elder Jr., Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Crosnoe, "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory", p. 3–19. In the second volume contributors were asked to relate their work to these five principles, see Michael J. Shanahan, Jeylan T. Mortimer, and Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, eds., *Handbook of the Life Course Volume II*, *Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research* (Cham Heidelberg New York Dordrecht London: Springer, 2016). This is also elaborated in the review by Karl Ulrich Mayer, "Review of Handbook of the Life Course, Volume II," *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies* Vol 7, no. 4 (2016): 441–44.

¹⁴⁵ Elder Jr., Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Crosnoe, "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory", p. 10.

¹⁴⁶ For a discussion on mixed methods see chapter five.

of history addressed.¹⁴⁷ Given the aim and the historical approach of this thesis, the importance and application of the five life-course principles will differ, as I explain below. Moreover, recent theoretical developments of these principles will be incorporated within the framework.¹⁴⁸

The first principle, *Life-span development*, stresses the need to investigate an extended time period of people's lives. In combination with contextual changes, this principle helps recognising the interaction between social change and individual life over time. *Agency* constitutes the second principle which, in contrast to theoretical approaches that address structural explanations or social influence to understand human behaviours, places a strong emphasis on the power to influence one's own life. The third principle concerns *Time and Place* and stresses that "the life course of individuals is embedded and shaped by the historical times and places they experience over their lifetime".¹⁴⁹ In addition to time and place, Elder et al. stress how historical events and developments can affect individuals and birth cohorts. The fourth principle concerns *Timing* referring to when in life something happens, such as becoming a teacher, as this event can have an impact on life and subsequent transitions or events, such as bearing children. The fifth principle, *Linked Lives*, considers the interpersonal networks an individual builds up over the course of life and can affect the direction it takes or what it entails. Often, this network, though not always, refers to family ties, but it can also include other close relationships. Elder et. al regard these principles as a way to move beyond research that is too age specific and to include history and the social context in order to recognise and understand individual decision-making.¹⁵⁰

The five principles are useful tools for conducting life-course oriented research and possible to apply in a historical context. However, this all-embracing approach has received criticism for being too general. Sociologists René Levy and Felix Bühlmann argue that the life-course principles should be understood as a broad paradigm rather than a conceptual framework. Below, I introduce four of the suggestions by Levy and Bühlmann on how to develop the principles theoretically.¹⁵¹ First, to advance the principle of life-span development they point

¹⁴⁷ Mackinnon has exemplified this by showing how historical demographers often account for women through their role in a changing family, while feminist historians more frequently emphasise power relations between women and men within these families, see Alison Mackinnon, "Fantasizing the Family: women, families and the quest for an individual self," *Women's History Review* 15, no. 4 (September 2006): 663–75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09612020500530893>.

¹⁴⁸ The summary of the five principles follows the account in: Elder Jr., Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Crosnoe, "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory", p. 11–14.

¹⁴⁹ Elder Jr., Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Crosnoe, "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory", p. 12.

¹⁵⁰ Elder Jr., Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Crosnoe, "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory", p. 11–13.

¹⁵¹ René Levy and Felix Bühlmann, "Towards a socio-structural framework for life course analysis", *Advances in Life Course Research* 30 (December 2016): 30–42, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcr.2016.03.005>.

out that (dis)advantages are not only accumulated over the life span, but are also dependent on social origin. Referring to Bourdieu, they suggest that both social origin and individuals' own capital acquisition benefit from being studied jointly. As for this thesis, this notion is primarily seen in Article I, which uses Bourdieu's forms of capital when analysing the socio-economic background of teachers.¹⁵² The accumulation of (dis)advantages is important in Article IV given its long-term approach when examining the increasing proportion of teachers who returned to teaching after having children. The study is long-term in two ways as it follows the teachers over most of their lifetime, as well as across almost a hundred years of time. Second, regarding the principle of time and place, Levy and Bühlmann argue that historical time must include the (historical) development of institutions of importance to the life course of the people and cohort(s) concerned. As for the primary school teachers of this thesis, the development of institutions refers to general societal development and even more to regulations that had an impact on teachers' work and employment security.

Concerning space, Levy and Bühlmann contend that public institutions like schools, unlike private companies, are geographically fixed in the sense that they rarely change location. For people within the designated area, this makes these institutions part of everyday life and part of the opportunity structures.¹⁵³ The public primary schools constitute the most present form of institution in this thesis and can be viewed as a two-folded opportunity structure. In addition to being a public institution, which most children encounter during childhood and adolescence, schools could also be considered an opportunity structure through employment openings for primary school teachers. However, for some groups, institutional structures could also work as a constraint depending on the qualifications requested. For example, women were excluded from formal teacher training in Sweden until the mid-late 1850s.¹⁵⁴

The individual power to steer one's life in one direction or another is the main argument when Elder Jr. et al. present the principle of agency. This leads to the third suggestion of theoretical development of Levy and Bühlmann, i.e. that agency needs to be analysed in relation to the actual structural setting. To be able to say something about how agency differs

¹⁵² Levy and Bühlmann, "Towards a socio-structural framework for life course analysis", p. 36–37. See also the discussion of forms of capital and discussion of social reproduction in, Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital" in *Sociology of Education: A Critical Reader*, ed. Alan R. Sadovnik (New York: Routledge, 2007), 83–95; Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Claude Passeron, *The Inheritors: French Students and Their Relation to Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

¹⁵³ Levy and Bühlmann, "Towards a socio-structural framework for life course analysis", p. 37–38, for a presentation and discussion of the origins and developments of the concept of opportunity structure and structure restraint, see Robert K. Merton, "Opportunity Structure: The Emergence, Diffusion, and Differentiation of a Sociological Concept, 1930s–1950s," in *The Legacy of Anomie Theory*, ed. Freda Adler and William S. Laufer, *Advances in Criminological Theory* 6 (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publ, 1995), p. 3–80.

¹⁵⁴ Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, p. 40.

within a group, social stratification and life course must be integrated.¹⁵⁵ In all sub-studies of this thesis, agency is an important factor, not least since many of the questions addressed concern issues along the life course when individuals are likely to have power over the decision to become a teacher or a parent, for example, or activities in everyday life. However, there is no intrinsic value in deciding whether an empirical finding primarily is due to individual agency or to a structural reason. Rather, my recurrent division of teachers into diverse sub-groups depending on birth year, gender and teacher group provides a clue and thus understanding of the connection between agency and structure. Fourth, and finally, Levy and Bühlmann extend the principle of linked lives beyond family ties: “We could argue that we speak of linked lives if there are important interdependencies and not just interpersonal relations that may remain temporary and non-obliging”.¹⁵⁶ This extension has been important to this thesis when studying the social network of junior school teacher Ester Vikström. Since she had moved 40 kilometres from her family to take up her teaching position, the closest social interactions in her everyday life came to be with individuals that she did not have any family ties to. In Figure 8, a conceptual model of the four sub-studies and how they link to life course theory is provided.

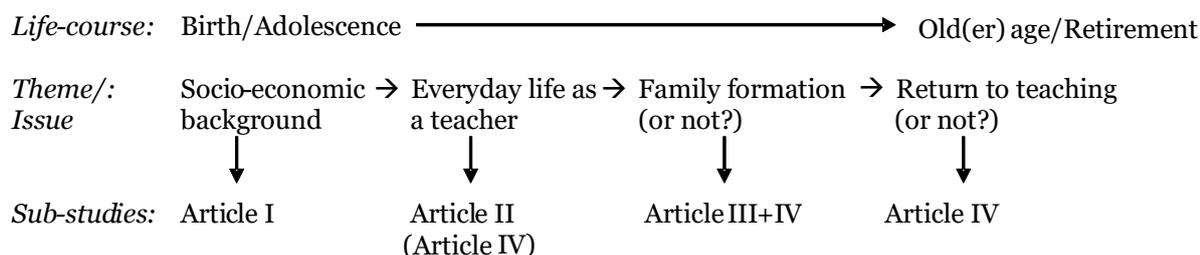


Figure 8. Conceptual overview of how the life-course theory has been operationalised in this thesis presented by the main issues addressed per sub-study.

Before discussing gender and class, there is a need to position the various theoretical concepts from the four sub-studies within the life-course framework. In Article I, the theoretical approach to study the socio-economic origin among primary school teachers draws on the capital theory as articulated by Pierre Bourdieu.¹⁵⁷ Taken together, the four forms of capital – cultural, economic, social and symbolic – form a useful analytical tool that helps explain why the probability of becoming a teacher differed depending on the socio-economic background. Furthermore, the capital theory approach has the advantage that it presents multiple explanations that are complementary rather than opposing. As suggested

¹⁵⁵ Levy and Bühlmann, “Towards a socio-structural framework for life course analysis”, p. 38.

¹⁵⁶ Levy and Bühlmann, “Towards a socio-structural framework for life course analysis”, p. 40.

¹⁵⁷ Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital”, p. 83–95.

by Levy and Bühlmann, these Bourdieusian concepts are also well-suited to combine with their thoughts on how to extend the principle of life-span development.

Life history and theoretical concepts from the life-course framework as well as from the history of emotions are applied in Article II. It investigates the everyday life and agency of a junior school teacher, Ester Vikström, through a microhistorical approach. The different concepts are used to uncover and systematise her work and deeds in the local setting.¹⁵⁸ Of specific interest is her social network and emotional life, two areas that call for different research approaches. As stated above, I used the life-course principles of agency and linked lives to examine her social network.¹⁵⁹ In the study of Ester's emotional life, I apply concepts developed within the history of emotions. This foremost focuses on the tension that can arise between emotional practices and emotional regimes according to concepts from Monique Scheer and William M. Reddy, respectively.¹⁶⁰

The concept of *caring professions* is applied in Article III. This concept derives from a pattern found in contemporary Western countries where women within so-called caring professions, such as nursing and teaching, tended to give birth to more children than women in other occupational fields within the same educational level.¹⁶¹ My co-author, Glenn Sandström, and I test this as a hypothesis on women that entered adulthood between 1900 and 1960 with a specific interest in middle-class women. As a more structurally motivated complement to the caring profession approach, we follow Geoffrey McNicoll's work on the importance of social insurance and pronatalist policies.¹⁶² This approach is one means to respond to the call from Levy and Bühlmann that agency is to be studied in relation to the structural setting.

¹⁵⁸ The approach is inspired by Jane Martin who writes about how agency and life history can be used and distinguished from biographical writing, see: Jane Martin, "London's feminist teachers and the urban political landscape" in *Women, education, and agency, 1600–2000*, ed. Jean Spence, Sarah Jane Aiston, and Maureen M. Meikle, Routledge Research in Gender and History 9 (New York: Routledge, 2010). p. 187–189.

¹⁵⁹ Glen H. Elder Jr., Monica Kirkpatrick Johnson, and Robert Crosnoe, "The Emergence and Development of Life Course Theory", p. 10–13.

¹⁶⁰ Monique Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and Is That What Makes Them Have a History)? A Bourdieuan Approach to Understanding Emotion," *History and Theory* 51, no. 2 (May 2012): 193–220, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2303.2012.00621.x>; William M. Reddy, *The navigation of feeling: a framework for the history of emotions*, (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹⁶¹ Trude Lappegård and Marit Rønsen, "The Multifaceted Impact of Education on Entry into Motherhood," *European Journal of Population / Revue Européenne de Démographie* 21, no. 1 (March 2005): 31–49; Katherine Michelmores and Kelly Musick, "Fertility Patterns of College Graduates by Field of Study, US Women Born 1960–79," *Population Studies* 68, no. 3 (September 2014): 359–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00324728.2013.847971>. See additional references on this matter in Article III.

¹⁶² Geoffrey McNicoll, "Institutional Determinants of Fertility Change," *Population and Development Review* 6, no. 3 (September 1980): 441, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1972410>; Geoffrey McNicoll, "Government and Fertility in Transitional and Post-Transitional Societies.," *Population and Development Review* 27 (2001): 129–59.

Gender and class

Class and gender constitute two of the most discussed, theorised, and disputed concepts within academia and beyond.¹⁶³ This section does not engage in these debates, but explains how the concepts of gender and class have been understood and practiced in this thesis. My initial understanding of gender and class in relation to the primary school teacher occupation originates from the pioneering work by Christina Florin. By using the concept of social closure, Florin shows how a hierarchy among the primary school teachers emerged as the professionalisation process of the teacher occupation progressed. Both gender and class affected the power balance in this hierarchy and shift over time, although always providing more favourable opportunities for men and elementary school teachers than for women and junior school teachers.¹⁶⁴

The gender perspective chosen for this thesis draws on the works of Beverley Skeggs on the concept of respectability, not only regarding gender, but also class. By drawing on feminist theory as well as concepts from Pierre Bourdieu, Skeggs sets out to study how working-class women become respectable subjects. She argues that class aspects should not be dismissed or abandoned, instead class should be revalued and incorporated with gender to understand how the production of subjectivity shifts through space and time. In doing this, Skeggs turns to Bourdieu's forms of capital, complemented by Toril Mois' work on the forms of capital as metaphors, to formulate a theoretical framework of her own.¹⁶⁵ Skeggs distinguishes between subject positions, discursive positions, and organisational structures – including social positions formed within these structures. The subject positions are used by Skeggs to explore the experiences among her women interviewees, whose positions are shaped by both discourse and structure. A discursive position, such as respectability, is less specific than subject positions because it is influenced by institutional organisations, which constitute the form and distribution of discourses available at a certain time. Discursive positions are further informed by subject positions, which Skeggs distinguishes from social positions:

Social positions are based on structural organization such as class, race and gender which circumscribe and access movement into certain subject positions. These structurally organized

¹⁶³ Needless to say, the concept of 'class' and its usage goes further back than 'gender' which gained ground in the 1970s and 1980s during the second feminist wave. However, this is largely a matter of wording which can be exemplified by returning to the Google Ngram viewer used in the introduction. A search for 'sex roles' shows that the term experienced an exponential growth in usage from 1965 to a peak in 1980 after which it lost fractions successively. 'Gender' had a similar exponential growth in usage but between the years 1980 to 1995 and has remained stable ever since, see "Google Ngram Viewer – Google Books." (Retrieved: 06-01-2021).

¹⁶⁴ Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, 1987, p. 173–177, the drawing on p. 177 demonstrates how this hierarchy could be illustrated.

¹⁶⁵ Beverley Skeggs, *Formations of class and gender: becoming respectable*, Theory, Culture & Society. Reprint. (London: SAGE, 2002), p. 6–10.

social positions enable and limit our access to cultural, economic, social and symbolic capital and thus the ability to recognize ourselves as the subject positions we occupy.¹⁶⁶

Social positions as defined in Skeggs' quote are central to this thesis while the subject position and subjectivity are less emphasised.¹⁶⁷ This is inevitably a consequence of the historical sources used. Whereas Skeggs could analyse subject position and the construction of subjectivity among her informants, these possibilities are limited when working with more aggregated and historical sources. Instead, my major analysis is recurrently placed on a collective level including individuals that shared the experience of being teachers, and/or women teachers. I argue that this collective level holds a similar kind of impact as the discursive position where Skeggs places respectability. For the collective group, the constant process of renegotiation, as in the case with respectability, occurs simultaneously through the influence of institutional organisations and from the individual subjectivity within the group. Following this line of argument, the discursive position of respectability among primary school teachers likely differed both in relation to time and space, including changing (institutional) structures, and even within the teacher group depending on gender and class. Certainly, the discursive position of being respectable was something utterly different for a male elementary school teacher compared to a woman junior school teacher, but also within the group of women teachers concerning differences between junior and elementary school teachers. It is important that these differences, related to class and gender, within the group of teachers can be simultaneously examined considering their social position as well as their respectability. In Sweden, the respectability concept has been adapted in research on the late 19th and early 20th century fertility transition. One of these studies concluded that respectability played an important role when smaller families became the norm.¹⁶⁸ Primary school teachers are typically, both in this thesis and in other writings, referred to or categorised as holding a middle-class occupation.¹⁶⁹ Skeggs did not study middle-class women, but working-class women as she conducted her longitudinal and ethnographical study and coined respectability as a theoretical concept. However, given that Skeggs found her informants through caring courses and the fact that all these working-class women worked within a caring profession, there are parallels to the teachers in this thesis.

¹⁶⁶ Skeggs, *Formations of class and gender*, 2002, p. 12–13.

¹⁶⁷ Certainly, the microhistorical approach in Article II is one exception, although the social position of a junior school teacher in the local community is continuously addressed.

¹⁶⁸ Respectability is used as a part of the explanation for why a large family never became the norm when the 1930s baby bust was turned into a baby boom, see Sofia Kling, *Vi våga ej helt leva: barnbegränsning, sexualitet och genus under den svenska fertilitetstransitionen*, Report from the Demographic Data Base 28 (Umeå: Univ. Inst. för historiska studier, 2007), p. 250–254, see also, Junkka, *Shared practices*, p. 28–30.

¹⁶⁹ See for example, Tom Ericsson, Jørgen Fink, and Jan Eivind Myhre, eds., *The Scandinavian Middle Classes 1840–1940* (Oslo: Unipub forl. - Oslo Acad. Press, 2005); For a discussion of teachers and class see, Jennifer Ozga and Martin Lawn, *Teachers, professionalism and class: a study of organized teachers*, *Sociology of education* 42 (London: Routledge, 1981), chapter two is of certain interest.

As a complement to Skeggs, there is a need to address the duality of class background – socio-economic origin and occupational class in terms of teacher group. In doing this, I find Erik Olin Wright’s outline of macro and micro processes within class analysis useful. Wright argues that a combination of laws (legal rules) and power relations results in a situation where economic resources are under the control of some people more than others. In the following step, this division of resources leads to a situation where opportunity hoarding and social closure arise within the social positions. Wright identifies stratification analysis as an approach that can accommodate both class background and individual class. Thus, he states that individuals’ life conditions are dependent on their social background in combination with (individual) attributes, which both determine the level of economic well-being for people.¹⁷⁰ Economic factors, such as income, are not the focus of this thesis, but are nevertheless relevant given that the yearly salary of junior school teachers ranged from 30 to 70% of the elementary school teachers over the whole study period. Furthermore, the stratification approach enables a class analysis that accounts for both the socio-economic background and the individual status agency.

The life-course framework, the theoretical notions from the four sub-studies and discussion of gender and teacher group (class) work as a theoretical point of departure for this thesis.¹⁷¹ It also works to accommodate the broad spectrum of source material and research methods, which will be described in the next chapter.

¹⁷⁰ Erik Olin Wright, “Logics of Class Analysis,” in *Social Class: How Does It Work?*, ed. Annette Lareau and Dalton Conley (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008), 329–49, my description builds on Figure 11.4, p. 346. Through references to Frank Parkin the concept of ‘social closure’ was adapted by Christina Florin in her thesis, see Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, 1987, p. 76–78.

¹⁷¹ This composition of theoretical concepts into a framework has been constructed to enable a discussion of friction between concepts such as ‘continuity and change’ and ‘agency and structure’, respectively. For two examples where continuity and change have been used in a life-course perspective, see: Vern L. Bengtson, Glen H. Elder Jr., and Norella M. Putney, “The Life Course Perspective on Ageing: Linked Lives, Timing, and History,” in *Adult Lives: A Life Course Perspective*, ed. Jeanne Katz, Sheila Peace, and Sue Spurr, 1st ed. (Bristol University Press, 2011), 9–17, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1t895q0>; Glen H. Elder, Valarie King, and Rand D. Conger, “Intergenerational Continuity and Change in Rural Lives: Historical and Developmental Insights,” *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 19, no. 2 (1996): 433–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/016502549601900212>. Much of the discussion of the link between agent/agency/action and structure/structural derives from the work of Anthony Giddens in the late 1970s and 1980s, see for example: Anthony Giddens, *Central Problems in Social Theory: Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis*, Reprinted, Contemporary Social Theory (London: Macmillan, 1979); An overview of the issue is provided in Willy Guneriussen, *Aktör, handling och struktur: grundproblem i samhällsvetenskapen* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1997); From time to time the issues have also been discussed within historical research, for two Swedish examples see: Arne Jarrick and Johan Söderberg, “Aktörstrukturalismen. Ett nytt hugg på humanvetenskapens gordiska knut,” *Historisk Tidskrift* 111, no. 1 (1991): 59–84; Maria Sjöberg, “Marknad, bönder och kön. En fråga om likhet och skillnad,” *Historisk Tidskrift* 123, no. 2 (2003): 299–315.

5. Sources and methods

This chapter is structured into five concise parts, starting with an overview of the sub-studies in this thesis (Table 1). I will then present each source used (2), followed by some ethical considerations (3), an outline of the mixed methods applied (4) and finally the contributions from co-authors (5).

Digitised parish records constituted the key data when the thesis project started, but as it progressed the parish records were supplemented by two other main sources. These sources, a diary from a junior school teacher and a teacher register, have contributed qualitative information on the teachers under study in comparison to the parish records. Through the combination of parish registers/population databases hosted at the Centre for Demographic and Ageing Research (CEDAR), the teacher register and the diary enabled me to uncover the lives of the early public teachers that came to work in the rural area under study. The overview in Table 1 provides basic information of each individual article including the geographical area, time period, main objective, sources and methods used and publishing journal.¹⁷²

Table 1. Overview of the four articles, presented by the area and period under study, main objectives, sources, and methods used and publishing scientific journal (when applicable) for the different articles.

Article	Area	Period	Main objective (1), sources (2), methods (3), journal (4)
I	Skellefteå & Umeå Regional level > 1000 teachers	1870–1950	1. Socio-economic background 2. Digitised parish records: POPLINK 3. Quantitative: Parametric – Logistic regression 4. <i>History of Education</i> (2021:1)
II	Furuögrund, a small coastal village Local level, 1 teacher	1901–1902	1. Social network and emotional life 2. Diary, parish records, censuses 3. Microhistorical approach 4. <i>Historisk Tidskrift</i> (2017:3)
III	Skellefteå & Umeå Regional level > 1000 teachers	1900–1960	1. Fertility – Family formation 2. Statistics Sweden, digitised parish records: POPLINK 3. Quantitative: Non-parametric survival analysis 4. <i>The History of The Family</i> (2019:1)
IV	Three parishes in the Skellefteå region Local level > 500 teachers	1840–1940	1. Return to teaching after family formation (or not?) 2. Teacher register, digitised parish records (POPUM & National Archives), national registers, teacher biographies, censuses, etc. 3. Combined quantitative and qualitative: Birth cohorts studied through life-history & collective biography approaches. 4. <i>Manuscript!</i>

¹⁷² The fourth sub-study is not yet published and therefore a research paper rather than a research article, however for consistency “Article” has been used for all sub-studies throughout this text.

The number of teachers (Table 1) examined in the different studies varies greatly due to the research questions addressed. Articles I and III primarily represent a quantitative approach, allowing and requiring a high number of teachers in order to conduct statistical analyses and obtain significant results. In contrast, Articles II and IV entail a more qualitative approach, given that a different kind of source material was examined. Most of the teachers in the articles based on qualitative analysis are included in the quantitative articles.¹⁷³ Basically, Articles I, II and III relate to three research questions, in following the same order. The meso-level approach in Article IV has served a two-fold purpose by partly contributing to the third research question, and partly providing complementary findings to the first two questions.

Articles I and III cover slightly different time periods but use the same databases and selection criteria for identifying teachers. Most important in this selection process was to exclude teachers in other parts of the school system, such as secondary and grammar school teachers, as well as lecturers and head teachers. Regional differences between teachers in the two geographical areas of Skellefteå and Umeå were checked, although no differences were encountered concerning either their socio-economic background (Article I) or their reproduction patterns (Article III). Since no regional differences were found, and due to the rural/urban arguments presented in the regional background (see chapter two), the two regions are analysed jointly throughout the thesis. Furthermore, all individuals in Articles I and III, including teachers, are anonymous due to data protection laws and ethical considerations. As explained in the background and below in the ethical consideration section, no digitised church registers are available from the Umeå area prior to 1900, which is why only teachers after this year are analysed. Article IV combines digitised parish records from the Skellefteå region with the teacher register mainly covering Skellefteå rural parish (*Skellefteå landsförsamling*), Skellefteå town parish (*Skellefteå stadsförsamling*), Bureå (part of Skellefteå rural parish until 1918) and Byske (part of Skellefteå rural parish until 1875). Furuögrund, the coastal village in which Ester Vikström lived, worked, and wrote her diary, which Article II makes use of, is situated in the parish of Byske, Skellefteå region.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ The few primary school teachers that are not present in the quantitative data set are teachers active in the Skellefteå region, born in the early to mid-19th century that had migrated or died prior to 1870.

¹⁷⁴ See also Figure 5, in chapter two.

Sources

The parish records, a teacher register and a diary of a junior school teacher constitute the main sources used. For complementary sources, such as censuses, data from Statistics Sweden, national teacher registers and teacher biographies, I refer to the individual sub-studies.

The CEDAR-databases: POPUM and POPLINK

The two databases used to retrieve data for this dissertation are interrelated since POPLINK is an extension forward in time of the older database POPUM and both databases are part of the Demographic Data Base (DDB). Hosted at the CEDAR, Umeå University, POPUM consists of demographic data from the late 17th century until 1900 while POPLINK provides data for the period 1900–1950 being linked with the existing data in POPUM. Main sources for Articles I and III are population data from the database POPLINK. Another smaller dataset from POPUM is used in Article IV in combination with the teacher register. Administrated and kept at a local level, parish registers included everyone that lived in the parish. These registers were introduced in the late 17th century and in use until 1990 serving as the official civil population registration system in Sweden. Parish registers include a handful of different types of records each keeping record of demographic events like births, marriages, migration, and deaths. Another kind of record, the catechetical examination, was kept and recorded all individuals in the parish.¹⁷⁵ Through the catechetical examination lists, it is possible to study for example the literacy and catechistical knowledge.¹⁷⁶ However, for this thesis and indeed other studies using longitudinal data, an important feature of the catechetical examinations is that they were reported annually, thereby they are useful to determine the population under observation in a given year.

Essential to this thesis is the occupational information included in the parish records, which enables the identification of teachers and classification of them into groups of teachers, i.e. junior school teachers and elementary school teachers.¹⁷⁷ The occupational data of the teachers' parents have been crucial to determine the socio-economic background studied in

¹⁷⁵ Annika Westberg, Elisabeth Engberg, and Sören Edvinsson, "A Unique Source for Innovative Longitudinal Research: The POPLINK Database," *Historical Life Course Studies* 3 (March, 2016): p. 21–24.

¹⁷⁶ The study of literacy through catechetical examination was conducted by Egil Johansson in his dissertation (1972); his subsequent work came to form the early Demographic Database (DDB) which today is hosted at Centre for Demographic and Ageing Research (CEDAR). The POPLINK and POPUM-databases used in this dissertation are both parish register databases that over many decades have been digitised and developed by DDB and CEDAR, see Egil Johansson, *En studie med kvantitativa metoder av folkundervisningen i Bygdeå socken 1845–1873* (Umeå, 1972); Daniel Lindmark, "Från Bygdeå till Budapest. 30 år av utbildningshistorisk projektforskning," in *Arkiven i forskningens tjänst: 20 år med Forskningsarkivet vid Umeå universitet* (Umeå: Forskningsarkivet, Umeå universitet, 2003), p. 41.

¹⁷⁷ Westberg, Engberg, and Edvinsson, "A Unique Source for Innovative Longitudinal Research.," p. 24–25.

Article I. The parish registers' information on the number of children born was a prerequisite for conducting the analysis in Article III. The reason for using the older, relational database POPUM in Article IV is that it allows identification of 19th century teachers by their names.¹⁷⁸ Given that full names and biographical information are provided, the parish registers could be linked to the teacher register and additional sources. Due to ethics restrictions for using the POPLINK database, all data after 1900 are anonymous, disabling the similar source linkage for primary school teachers that graduated in the 20th century. However, since the teacher record presented below refers to the parish registers used, it was possible to cross-check information by assessing digitised materials online at the National Archives.

The diary by Ester Vikström

In Article II, the social network and emotional life of a junior school teacher is thoroughly investigated. Written during 15 months between the summer of 1901 and the autumn of 1902, the diary provides unique insights into everyday life of a teacher at the turn of the 20th century. The diary was saved by one of Ester's daughters until the late 1980s when it was handed over to an archive institution, which also made a typewritten transcription of the diary. In my thesis project, I thus had access to the diary both in its original version and the transcription, which was scanned and OCR-coded to enable searches for key words and crosscheck identified themes.

¹⁷⁸ For more information on the POPUM data base, see, Pär Vikström, Sören Edvinsson, and Anders Brändström, "Longitudinal Databases – Sources for Analyzing the Life-Course: Characteristics, Difficulties and Possibilities," *History and Computing* 14, no. 1+2 (2002 [publ. 2006]), p. 116–118.

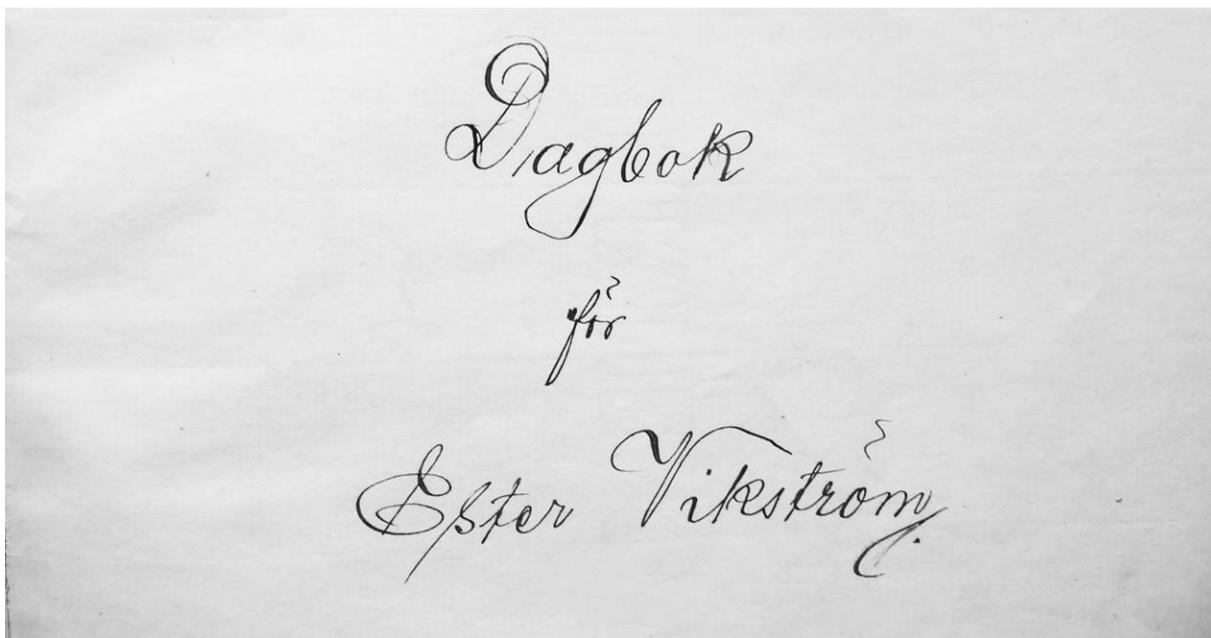


Figure 9. The very first page of Ester's diary, on top of the page she had also added "Furuögrund" – the village in which she worked and lived.

Source: Photo by author

Teacher register

The source materials for constructing the biographical collection and individual life courses of teachers in Article IV consist of a teacher register in combination with information on the same individuals from the parish register (POPUM database) or digitised parish records at the National Archive. The teacher register, except some additional comments and updates, was constructed by the elementary school teacher Rudolf Lundmark in 1937. He wrote it as a contribution to a memorial publication on the 100th anniversary of the first elementary school act.¹⁷⁹ Through the use of information from the school board, service records, church registers and additional sources, and with some help from the vicar and a few others, Lundmark compiled an overview of the teachers in the rural parish of Skellefteå from 1842 until the late 1930s. In total, the register includes close to five hundred teachers who had taught in the area at some point. This register provides information on when and where a teacher worked, for example, and their teacher degree and reason for leaving service, etcetera. When combined with other sources, this register constitutes a unique source for studying the connection between work and family over the course of life.

¹⁷⁹ This memorial publication was published in 1942, see, Kristian August Fellström, *Folkundervisningen i Skelleftebygden* (Skellefteå: Skelleftebladet, 1942). The foreword on p. 3 holds some information about the project, on p. 99–103 information on 29 teachers from the teacher register is printed.

Source criticism

My source criticism in this thesis is similar to what Maria Ågren has called ‘constructive source criticism’, which emphasises the importance of using complementary sources, as well as systematising them into databases.¹⁸⁰ There are advantages, as well as limitations associated with the multiple sources from which my findings are drawn. A lot of advantages come with the digitised parish records, as they provide structured and systematised data, which cover basically all individuals and thus the whole population present in an area at a certain point in time. Of course, the parish records have limitations too, one being that they have limited information on individuals that migrated into the area. This had some drawbacks for Article I, since the study of the socio-economic background of teachers had to be limited to those where the occupation of the father was known, i.e. primarily those who were born in the area. The individual occupation notation was used to discern the primary school teachers from non-teachers. This was noted by the parish minister, consequently in cases where someone had multiple occupations, the minister could write another occupation. However, by comparing the occupational data in the parish registers with other sources, such as national registers on primary school teachers, it was possible to validate that basically all listed as teachers in these sources were also noted as teachers in the parish registers.

The diary of Ester Vikström stresses the importance of examining the unpublished primary source even if there is access to a transcript. In the passages where Ester had written in secret code, the transcriber had only repeatedly written “x”, but by accessing the primary source, I was able to crack the code and uncover more sides of the life of Ester. When working with a diary, it is important to acknowledge that the information shared is a selection by the person writing. As for the teacher register, it is equally important to acknowledge that it is a secondary source compiled by an elementary school teacher in 1937 that used different primary sources. The information was validated in two ways, by spot-checking the information against the primary source and by adding additional sources that could confirm or reject the information provided.

The combination of sources on teachers has been one key to the approach and results of this thesis, governed by the idea that more data can provide more answers to the questions raised. The following example highlights how limitations of one source can be compensated for by

¹⁸⁰ Maria Ågren, “Källkritik,” in *Metod: guide för historiska studier*, ed. Martin Gustavsson and Yvonne Svanström (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2018), 41–65; The advantages of combining multiple sources have also been emphasised in, Janken Myrdal, “Source pluralism as a method of historical research,” in *Historical knowledge: in quest of theory, method and evidence*, ed. Susanna Fellman and Marjatta Rahikainen (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Pub, 2013), 155–90.

another source. Detailed information on family formation is found in the parish records, such as date of marriage and number of children born. Furthermore, the parish records hold occupational information on an individual level. However, the parish records are limited in the sense that they cannot confirm that someone actually performed the occupation reported in these registers. For example, someone listed as a 'teacher' might have been a trained teacher, but without holding a teaching position. Similarly, a 'wife' or a 'former teacher' in the parish record could be a teacher in service. In contrast, the teacher register provides specific data on the length of service periods for individual teachers, while there is little information about their family and household. Consequently, by merging the teacher register with the parish record and additional sources it was possible to obtain more knowledge about the teachers studied given that the different sources both could validate each other and contribute new information. In a similar way, the censuses provided extra information on the individuals that Ester wrote about in her diary.

Ethical considerations

The wide range of sources used in the sub-studies of this thesis causes different ethical considerations given the different nature and origin of these sources.¹⁸¹ None of the articles makes use of sensitive information as stipulated in article 9.1 in the General Data Protection Regulation regarding ethnicity, religious or political beliefs, union membership and others.¹⁸² Below, I discuss some ethical considerations in relation to the datasets/databases used in Article I, Article III and to some extent in Article IV, followed by the diary and then the teacher register.

In 2013 and 2014, when the specifications for the comprehensive datasets were constructed, the authority that provides the data still required ethics applications. All three of these applications DNR 2014/412-31Ö (Article I), DNR 2013/165-31Ö (Article III) and DNR 2014-337-320 (adding the Umeå region in Article III) were approved by the regional ethics board. In addition, the analysis of Article I and Article III is carried out at an aggregated level and all teachers studied are anonymous. The diary by Ester Vikström is subject to a completely different set of ethical considerations. Two things that helped me in the decision to conduct the study was the fact that Ester died about 100 years ago, but also that the daughter of Ester

¹⁸¹ For literature that discusses various features of research ethics in a quantitative and qualitative context, see: Abigail T. Panter and Sonya K. Sterba, eds., *Handbook of Ethics in Quantitative Methodology*, Multivariate Applications Series (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011); Kevin Love and Christopher Pole, eds., *Ethics in Social Research* (Bingley, U.K.: Emerald, 2012).

¹⁸² Article 9.1 "Processing of special categories of personal data" Regulation (EU) 2016/679, General Data Protection Regulation (European Union, 2016), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj> (Retrieved: 16-10-2018), p. 38.

had given the diary to an archival institution, consenting to public access to the diary. Furthermore, while the content of the diary is personal and emotional, few passages could be interpreted as providing sensitive information. Before publishing the article, I also considered if any of the information could be offensive to Ester's present-day descendants and found that this was not the case. Concerning the teacher register, it provides information on the teachers, including their names. However, the information could not be classified as sensitive and they are also frequently found in other secondary sources such as village history books.

Methods

The different methods used in the four sub-studies are presented below, while each of these studies details further information. I will also provide an account of the mixed-methods approach taken in my thesis as a whole.

In Article I, logistic regression was used as the main method to study binary outcomes, such as the probability of becoming a teacher depending on gender and socio-economic background.¹⁸³ The variation in probability of becoming a teacher was then analysed in relation to descriptive statistics of the actual numbers. In Article II, the diary of Ester Vikström was analysed by combining a narrative and a critical approach of text analysis.¹⁸⁴ The themes examined, i.e. Ester's social network and emotional life, were constructed after the content of the diary was analysed and then structured into different themes. Article III makes use of non-parametric survival analysis to study family formation among all women depending on social class and especially concerning women in the middle class where teachers are found. The results were presented as Kaplan-Meier survival curves showing the proportion of childlessness when the different groups of women reached the age of 50.¹⁸⁵ In Article IV, source pluralism was used to merge a high number of sources holding information

¹⁸³ Fred C. Pampel, *Logistic Regression: A Primer*, Sage University Papers Series, no. 07-132 (Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2000).

¹⁸⁴ Giovanni Levi, "On Microhistory," in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. Peter Burke, 2. ed (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001); Christoph Reinfandt, "Reading Texts after the Linguistic Turn: Approaches from Literary Studies and Their Implications," in *Reading Primary Sources: The Interpretation of Texts from Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century History*, ed. Miriam Dobson and Benjamin Ziemann, Routledge Guides to Using Historical Sources (London ; New York: Routledge, 2009), 37–54.

¹⁸⁵ For a brief introduction to Kaplan-Meier estimates, see Bee-Choo Tai and David Machin, *Regression Methods for Medical Research* (Chichester, West Sussex, UK: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), p. 123–125.

on primary school teachers. Then I constructed collective biographies to account for differences related to birth year, sex, and level of teacher training.¹⁸⁶

The research approach of this thesis draws on previous work developed within the field of mixed-methods research, a field that has primarily been defined and discussed by social scientists.¹⁸⁷ In the abundance of possible research approaches, I have used a convergent parallel design, as formulated by John W. Creswell, having adapted it for research within history. By using multiple methods, in my case studying different data using qualitative and quantitative methods, the intention is to obtain a deeper understanding of the research problem. Creswell has developed a basic flowchart on how to implement this. In the first step, both the qualitative and the quantitative strands of research are designed, and data collected. In a second step, the findings are analysed with methods related to the approach, e.g. descriptive statistics when using quantitative approaches and theme development in qualitative research. In the third step, the findings are merged by comparing the different results and synthesising them. In the fourth and last step, the merged results are discussed and analysed in terms of how they taken together can serve to gain a deeper understanding, and how the results can be interpreted in case they diverge.¹⁸⁸ In this thesis, Creswell's first two steps have been undertaken in the four sub-studies, while the third and fourth step correspond to the results discussion and concluding remarks provided below (chapter seven and eight).

Finally, it should be clarified that three of the sub-studies in this thesis have either a clear quantitative approach (Articles I and III) or qualitative approach (Article II), suitable for convergent parallel design procedures. However, in Article IV both quantitative and qualitative analyses are used jointly, thereby sharing more similarities with the procedure Creswell calls embedded design.¹⁸⁹ This can be seen in how individual life-stories, sources examined qualitatively, are continually used to gain information, which is then related to previously assembled data, i.e. descriptive statistics on a more aggregated level, data composed through quantitative measures.

¹⁸⁶ Myrdal, "Source pluralism as a method of historical research"; For a study one example using collective biography see, Per-Olof Grönberg, *Learning and Returning: Return Migration of Swedish Engineers from the United States, 1880–1940*, Report from the Demographic Data Base 22 (Umeå: Department of historical studies, Umeå University, 2003).

¹⁸⁷ For an overview of different definitions R. Burke Johnson, Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, and Lisa A. Turner, "Toward a Definition of Mixed Methods Research," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research* 1, no. 2 (April 2007): 112–33, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1558689806298224>.

¹⁸⁸ Creswell, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, p. 77–80; See also, John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2014), p. 219–223.

¹⁸⁹ Creswell, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, p. 90–95.

Contributions from co-authors

One of the four articles was co-authored, Article III: Sandström, Glenn & Marklund Emil, “A prelude to the dual provider family – The changing role of female labor force participation and occupational field on fertility outcomes during the baby boom in Sweden 1900–60”, *History of the Family*, Vol. 24 (1), 2019. Both authors collaborated in all steps of the research process. Sandström had the main responsibility of devising the statistical approach while we collaborated on the programming necessary to create the analytical dataset based on different data sources from CEDAR (POPLINK database) and Statistics Sweden. In the writing of the manuscript, I specifically provided my expertise regarding the history of primary school teachers, while Sandström contributed his comprehensive knowledge regarding family dynamics and fertility research. We jointly wrote up the results of the paper, as well as the discussion of the implications of our main findings.

6. Summary of articles

The four articles that together constitute the empirical base of this thesis share the research interest to study parts of the life courses of teachers, and when and how professional life and private life in terms of family intersected or were connected. Chiselled out from this research approach were the following research themes researched with various methods in four sub-studies:

Article I) The socio-economic background of primary school teachers also including occupational reproduction and feminisation.

Article II) The everyday life of a young woman junior school teacher in a local community through a study of her social network and emotional life.

Articles III–IV) The family formation of primary school teachers and how this changed over time is a re-current theme in Articles III and IV, both of which examine different aspects of this theme.

Article III compares how the proportion that became mothers developed through a comparison of women teachers with other middle-class women's occupations, such as nurses and clerical workers, and other women. In Article IV, the comparison concerns differences within the group of teachers depending on gender and teacher group using both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The main issue investigated is the practise of returning to teaching after family formation, and how this varied depending on gender, teacher group and over time.

Article I: Who was going to become a teacher? The socio-economic background of primary school teachers in northern Sweden 1870–1950

Through longitudinal data and a comprehensive dataset, this article studies the probability of becoming a primary school teacher in late 19th and first half of the 20th century, depending on the socio-economic background using occupational information of the father. Previous studies paying attention to this question have mostly used smaller and/or synchronic sources to examine the social stratum/class, which future primary school teachers came from. Gender and primary school teacher group were used in this study to identify differences and similarities among the teachers. The two groups of teachers are junior school teachers with a shorter teacher training and elementary school teachers with a longer period of training. The research approach further enabled an empirical analysis of the 19th century feminisation of the primary school teacher occupation and the less studied question of occupational reproduction between primary school teachers and their own children.

Digitised parish records were used that include biographical information along individuals' life courses, such their birth, occupation, marriage, birth of children, migration, death, etc. The paternal occupational information of (future) teachers at the time of birth was of particular interest and used to denote the socio-economic background. The different occupations were then grouped to a modified HISCLASS-classification scheme to study a total of six occupational groups beside a group which lacked occupational information. The empirical findings were retrieved through a statistical approach, logistic regression, to estimate the probability of becoming a teacher in combination with more descriptive findings, which was then analysed and discussed by using the forms of capital, as formulated by Pierre Bourdieu.

In the primarily rural area examined, the feminisation process of the primary school teacher occupation increased successively over a period of 60 years. The probability of becoming a teacher grew from 0.5% for women born in the 1840s to the 1890s when the chance to sometime work as a teacher peaked at 3%. Male teachers saw a more modest increase from 0.1% to a probability of c. 0.9%. This process of feminisation is comparable with the similar process in the United States while other Nordic countries (Denmark, Iceland, and Norway) experienced this process to slower and lesser extent. The analysis of the occupational reproduction shows (expectedly) that primary school teachers were more likely to have children who entered the same occupational track. Most interestingly, there were large differences within the group of teachers, since only 5.6% of the male teachers had a teaching mother while the corresponding share among women teachers was 17.8%. The combination of increasing access to teacher training within the studied area for women, the feminisation of the teacher occupation and more other occupational opportunities for men are likely the three leading explanations of this gendered pattern.

One main contribution of this study when it comes to socio-economic background is the importance of taking both descriptive statistics and probability estimates into account when examining comprehensive larger data. For example, the absolute numbers reveal that approximately half of the junior school teachers had a farming father while this was true for only about a quarter of the elementary school teachers. Overall, four out of ten primary school teachers came from a farming household which is not to be considered surprising given the time and area studied. By adding the paternal occupational record of everyone in the area, including non-teachers, it becomes possible to calculate how big the probability of becoming a teacher was while also considering the total size of the social class.

This article clearly demonstrates that the probability of becoming a teacher increased along with social class, largely determined by the occupation of the father. The highest probability levels were found among children of higher professionals born between 1871 and 1900, experiencing an almost 10% chance of becoming a primary school teacher. One exception to the increased class/increased probability-pattern was higher-level managers whose children experienced a chance of becoming a teacher in line with the children of farmers, which was a low level in comparison with other groups in the middle and upper strata. Applying the forms of capital, this was interpreted as a situation where social and inherited cultural capital seemed to have played a more important role in the decision of becoming a primary school teacher. This was while economic capital, presumably high in the group of higher-level managers, rather worked as an impediment in the process of becoming a teacher. In relation to the junior school teachers, the elementary school teachers had a higher socio-economic background and had more frequently migrated into the area. Finally, a high number of farmer children and especially daughters of farmers became teachers. This was the case even though children of other social groups had a much higher probability of becoming a primary school teacher. A teacher training in the area under study in combination with a situation where there were not enough children of the higher classes to cover the need of primary school teachers in an expanding school system is together likely to explain this result.

Article II: One year with Ester: The social network and emotional life of a junior school teacher through a microhistorical lens

Through a microhistorical approach, this study aims to explore the public and private life of Ester Vikström, a junior school teacher in northern Sweden. The 19-year-old Ester kept a diary between 1901 and 1902, which serves as the point of departure to study how she reported her social network and emotional life. Following previous arguments for conducting microhistory, this study argues that it is a mode of research, which obtains results through an in-depth focus on one study object that would have remained unknown with other approaches. For example, through microhistory, it is possible to address the many and different interpersonal connections that one individual has. Female agency, life history and various concepts from life-course theory and history of emotions are operationalised to analyse Ester's diary. The life-course principle of linked lives also serves as an important approach to scrutinise her network in the local community. Ester's account of her emotional life benefits from the concepts of emotional practices and emotional regimes as formulated by Monique Scheer and William M. Reddy, respectively. The information from the diary was complemented by additional historical sources, such as parish records and censuses to obtain more information about Ester and the people she interacted with in the local community.

The main findings show that Ester was surprisingly active in the local community and had a broad social network, which included social ties on all levels in the local social hierarchy. This was the case even if she had grown up in another parish and only lived about a year in the village. Ester had her closest friends among sea captains' wives, maidservants and a dock worker's family, a family in which she would find her future husband. Furthermore, Ester established friendships with the most prominent persons in the community, like the doctor and the vicar, even if they lived in the neighbouring town a few kilometres away. Her everyday life in the village included involvement with numerous associations, such as the home sewing association, the temperance movement, and a choral society. Ester taught in a one-room school that had a one-room apartment which she shared with her grandmother. Occasionally, the classroom was used to host the activities of the associations she participated in. Through her diary Ester shared her emotional life by recounting her experiences and thoughts, which included a wide spectrum of different emotions: Ester's physical and psychological status, her thoughts and empathy in the case of accidents or diseases, the interaction with her students, etc. One category of emotions and thoughts is distinguished from the others, i.e. the relationship with her fiancée and future husband Emil. This can be seen in Ester's diary because she uses cipher when she writes about her feelings for Emil. Her custom to write in code when expressing her deepest and most personal emotions can be viewed as a way to write about something that was not really accepted by the predominant emotional regime in the village and at the time.

In the concluding remarks of this study, I argue that the two themes studied, i.e. Ester's network and her emotional life, hold a symbiotic relationship which provides insights to both her public and private life during an intriguing and eventful phase of the pathway to adulthood. Ester used her agency to integrate into the local community. In addition to mapping this networking process, the study of her emotional life, what she thought and felt during these encounters, contributes to a more complete picture of her everyday life. If either of the two themes had been omitted, the understanding of the remaining theme would be reduced. This also serves as an argument for a microhistorical approach to answer the research questions put forth in this study. More aggregated methods would not be able to grasp all the nuances reached here by thoroughly scrutinising one diary and adding sources when applicable. These aforementioned additional sources were important both to complement the diary and validate some of the information Ester provided. The following example highlights both how the two themes benefit from each other and how additional sources can provide pieces to the puzzle of unfolding the life of a woman teacher.

In one passage of the diary, Ester describes how the vicar instructed her to carry out his duty and teach young teenagers prior to confirmation. My initial interpretation of this was that the older male vicar practised his power to make the young woman teacher do a task that in fact was his responsibility. However, after the diary had been analysed through the two themes, a close friendship surfaced. Ester described the vicar solely in positive words and he also held an important position in her social network. Remaining records confirmed that the vicar indeed was the inspector of the junior school teacher training in Skellefteå where Ester graduated. Given that Ester had no other personal connection to the village where she came to work, it is probable that the vicar encouraged her to apply for the position. Having all this in mind, the situation where the vicar delegates his teaching to Ester should rather be interpreted as an act of trust and confidence in her teaching ability. Lastly, the example shows the importance of not limiting the microhistorical approach to a single historical record, but to use multiple complementary sources, which can be used to assess and credit the main source, in this case Ester's diary.

Article III: A prelude to the dual provider family – The changing role of female labor force participation and occupational field on fertility outcomes during the baby boom in Sweden 1900–60

This study focuses on the connection between labour force participation and having children and how this developed between 1900 and 1960, with a specific interest in middle class women such as teachers, nurses, and clerical workers. Recent research on the European baby boom-period from the late 1930s to 1960 shows fertility differentials by women's educational gradient in that their fertility decreased in a number of Western countries during this period. The exact causes behind this reduction is not known and debated, neither do we know if a specific group of middle-class women spearheaded this development toward having more children. To examine this issue a longitudinal and individual-level examination of the fertility among almost 55,000 women born in 1880–1939 was conducted. Through a Social Power coding scheme (SOCPO), the women included were divided into groups depending on their occupation and a group of women that had no occupational information prior to the birth of the first child. This was then used to study the women's fertility on a more aggregated level and particularly within the middle class. Further, to enable a study over time, the women were divided into three birth cohorts. Kaplan-Meier estimates were used to study the parity progress to child one, two and three comparing middle-class women with other social classes and groups within the middle class, such as nurses, teachers, and clerical workers. We adapted the notion of human capital investments to analyse and discuss how the link between educational investments and fertility developed over time. In addition, since our approach entailed a specific comparison of middle-class women with approximately the same

amount of human capital investments, we adapted ‘caring professions’, a concept that has derived from contemporary studies in demography. These studies have found that among highly educated women those educated in healthcare and teaching experience higher levels of total cohort fertility as well as lower chances of remaining childless.

One major result concerns the group of middle-class women in comparison with the four other groups of women – those with no occupational record, farmers, unskilled workers, and skilled workers. The impediment on having children among middle-class women was evident in the first two birth cohorts that turned 20 between 1900 and 1939. This is probably due to human capital accumulation through education and labour market participation. However, the chance of having children among working women with no record of post-primary education (unskilled workers) remained closer to women with no occupational record at all than those with middle class occupations. The shift between the second and third birth cohort was clear. Women who turned 20 between 1940 and 1959 showed very small class differences in the proportion that had one or two children.

Another major finding of this study concerns differences within the middle class, examined across four groups – nurses including midwives, teachers, office clerks including secretaries and ‘other middle class’. Women with no occupational record prior to the first child were also included as a reference group. The main empirical findings can be summarised in four points. First, clerical workers in the first birth cohort and nurses in the first two birth cohorts were less likely to have children than women teachers and the remaining group of middle-class women. Secondly, teachers, clerical workers and other middle-class women showed a continuously and even decrease in the proportion who remained childless. For nurses this shift was more immediate. Among those turning 20 between 1920 and 1939 close to 50% remained childless while this plunged to 12% in the following birth cohort. Thirdly, clerical women workers were most likely to only have one child, and this was true for all birth cohorts although it was most evident in the first birth cohort. Finally, as mentioned above, among middle-class women that turned 20 years of age between 1940 and 1959, the proportion who had one or two children showed very small variations related to class. However, middle-class women were 10–15% less likely to have a third child compared to women with no education.

In addition to confirming the more convergent fertility behaviour across the socio-economic strata in the 1940s and 1950s found in previous research, this article makes some key contributions. White-collar women in the middle class were important agents in reducing fertility differences, given that the share that remained childless within this group decreased sharply. This was especially true for women within the caring professions, such as teachers

and nurses, which accounted for the largest increase in the chance of having one or two children. Middle-class women in the last birth cohort also became forerunners on the path toward the two-child norm since they were less inclined to have more than two children. This fast development in the mid-20th century indicates that reforms regarding pronatalist policies in combination with better employment security in the late 1930s and 1940s were important improvements that made women employed in the public sector, such as teachers and nurses, to have more children.

Article IV: Teaching and family: Either or both? Family formation and work among primary school teachers in northern Sweden, 1842–1937

This article examines whether and how the link between work and family formation changed among primary school teachers between 1842 and 1937. Of certain interest is the return to teaching after family formation, how this functioned in practice and if it shifted across time. A teacher register compiled by an elementary school teacher, Rudolf Lundmark, for the 100-year anniversary of the first Swedish school act constitutes the major source. Created by information from parish records, minutes from school board meetings and service registers, this compiled teacher register accounts for nearly all primary school teachers that served in the rural parish of Skellefteå during the period of investigation. By adding more data from national teacher registers, censuses, teacher biographies, the teacher register by Lundmark was expanded but also validated. This detailed data enabled me to construct collective biographies of almost 600 teachers showing both how their lives developed professionally as well as socio-demographically in order to analyse the link between work and family.

Methodologically the primary school teachers were first divided by birth year, gender, and level of teacher training – no record of training, respectively junior school or elementary school teacher certificate. In a second step, four birth cohorts were constructed (1791–1859, 1860–1879, 1880–1899 and 1900–1914). In a third step, the unqualified teachers were removed, and a brief account were provided for the few qualified teachers born prior to the 1860s. In sum, close to 500 ($n = 477$) teachers were included while 118 teachers (approximately 20%) were excluded in the third step. This yielded the three birth cohorts remaining and the three groups of teachers for the main analysis, i.e. women junior school teachers, women elementary school teachers and male elementary school teachers. This study focuses on the meso-level in that teachers belonging to the same age and teacher group are studied together. However, by using examples from the life histories of individual teachers, the micro-level is also present. My research approach enables a discussion of the findings both in relation to the three groups of teachers but also how family formation and

the practice of returning to work after parenthood developed over time for the different groups of primary school teachers.

The main findings of this study show that the male elementary school teachers that had children continued to work while approximately one in five remained childless. More changes over time characterised the two groups of women teachers, although these changes were dissimilar between the two groups. Among the group of junior school teachers, the share that remained childless fluctuated between 40 and 50%. The share that returned to teaching after family formation increased gradually from low levels in the oldest birth cohort to a situation in the youngest birth cohort where it was more common to return to teaching than not. Furthermore, the type of teaching position they returned to changed. The older women junior school teachers commonly returned as a short-term substitute while the younger women tended to return to a full-time permanent position. Among women elementary school teachers born prior to 1880, eight of 36 had records of family formation and only one of these eight women taught again. Women teachers that never formed a family commonly had long teaching careers that could range from 30 to 40 years. In some cases, especially if a woman teacher had served in the same school for multiple decades, she was honoured and decorated upon retirement. This changed rapidly in the two younger birth cohorts where a majority of the women formed a family and among those who did, it was more common to teach again than it was to leave teaching permanently.

In conclusion, by studying primary school teachers through a life-course approach of collective biographies, this study contributes to the understanding of women's family life and paid work in Sweden and how it developed from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. The study period coincides with increased political rights for women, in general, and improved conditions for women teachers, in particular. Providing these improvements for women teachers to combine family formation and teaching should not be considered remarkable. Rather, the main contribution of this study lies in the great variation of how the link between family formation and work developed across the life course on a group level and differences within the teacher groups comprising a variety of teachers of both genders. Women teachers that entered adulthood and finished teacher training before 1900 saw small possibilities of having children and then returning to long-term teaching and employment. However, some women showed that it was possible to do both, i.e. become a mother without giving up teaching despite no supportive structures. Most of the women teachers that came of age after 1900 came to teach and be employed also after motherhood. Those that became mothers in the 1920s and especially in the 1930s experienced possibilities of keeping the same teaching position while temporarily being on maternity leave. Consequently, women

teachers that reached adulthood in the interwar period and wished to combine family and teaching had comparatively good chances of doing so. This suggests that the present-day practice of entering and exiting paid work multiple times over the course of life was established, at least in this middle-class group of women, well before the 1940s.

7. Results discussion

First, this chapter presents the main findings of the thesis by returning to the three sets of research questions. Second, the results are positioned within the life-course framework and discussed, especially with regard to how they relate to time, gender, and teacher category.

Teachers' lives: Background, everyday life, and family formation

The first set of research questions addressed the individuals who entered teacher training and became primary school teachers: *Who were the teachers recruited to work in the primary schools with regard to gender, socio-economic background, level of teacher training and geographical origin? In what way, if any, did the recruitment pattern change during the period under investigation?*

The few qualified teachers recruited during the 30 years following the school act of 1842 were all male elementary school teachers that had been trained in one of the diocese capitals in the southern parts of Sweden. In the late 1870s, when continuous teacher training was established within the area under study, the number of teachers increased rapidly. The fact that all training within the county of Västerbotten was intended for educating women teachers, likely boosted the ongoing national level feminisation process of the primary school teacher occupations even more in this county.¹⁹⁰ In the 1870s, this process was also the result of three reforms introduced two decades earlier: smaller elementary schools (1853), junior school teachers (1858) and opening the elementary school teacher occupation for women (1859). After the introduction of a state subsidy reform in 1875, when much of the expenditures moved from the local to the central level, this spurred the establishment of teacher training and primary schools. Consequently, both the number of qualified teachers and established schools increased considerably between 1880 and 1900.

In numbers, women junior school teachers were by far the most common teacher category among those born before 1900. The vast majority of these women teachers were recruited from the parish where the teacher training college was located or from a neighbouring parish. A restructuring process of the teacher training in the late 1920s and throughout the 1930s opened more training positions for elementary school teachers and fewer positions for junior

¹⁹⁰ See Article IV for brief examples (life trajectories) of the early male elementary school teachers and Article I regarding the feminisation. That no male elementary school teacher training was established in the area in combination with the well-documented feminisation of the primary school teacher occupation in the 19th century likely contributed to the speed and extent of the feminisation. See, James C. Albisetti, "The Feminization of Teaching in the Nineteenth Century: A Comparative Perspective," *History of Education* 22, no. 3 (September 1993): 253–63, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0046760930220305>; Florin, *Kampen om katedern*, 1987.

school teachers. This meant that elementary school teachers became more numerous than the junior school teachers among teachers born after the turn of the century. Furthermore, since nearly all junior school teachers were women, the shift to an increasing share of elementary school teachers also meant that the proportion of male teachers increased.



Figure 10. The junior school teacher training college in Skellefteå was extended in 1921 to be able to fit parallel classes, however only eight years after this renovation the college closed completely in 1929. Photo from 1922. Source: Skellefteå museum.

Elementary school teachers, especially those who were women, came from a higher socio-economic background than the junior school teachers, a result that confirms previous studies by Florin. More interestingly, my results also show that close to 20% of the daughters followed the occupational path of their teacher mother and became primary school teachers themselves. Notably, the recruitment pattern of future teachers from different social classes shows very small differences across the whole study period. Children of higher professionals were four times more likely to become a primary school teacher than children of farmers. However, this higher probability had a small impact on the absolute numbers since the group of farming fathers was about 60 times larger than the higher professionals. In all, more than 40% of the primary school teachers came from a farming background while less than 4% had a father belonging to the group of higher professionals. In sum, these results show that

having a relatively high social status background did increase the probability of becoming a teacher. Yet, the relatively small size of the white-collar stratum in the population meant that a majority of the individuals that ended up as primary school teachers had a social background in farming and working-class occupations. Additionally, the results demonstrate that there was a strong occupational reproduction among daughters of women teachers in that they tended to become teachers themselves to large extent.

The second set of research questions concerned social relationships in teachers' lives:
What could the everyday life of a woman primary school teacher be like? How can teachers' position in local communities be understood?

In the last two decades of the 19th century, the birth numbers of girls that later came to be trained women junior school teachers peaked. Ester Vikström was one among the several hundred women in this group that came to choose the path of teaching. My examination of Ester's diary reveals that she lived a highly active life where household duties, teaching and social activities filled her days while the diary itself provided a forum to reflect and express her emotions. Born outside wedlock in 1882, as the daughter to an unskilled farmworker and a maidservant, Ester's junior school teacher certificate certainly improved her social position compared to the position of her parents. The extensive social network of Ester indicates that she was a sociable person. Her lonely days were few and the circle of friends and acquaintances included a great variation of social classes including workers and maidservants, as well as the doctor and the vicar.

As the sole teacher in a village, Ester seems to have experienced autonomy similar to the autonomy Kathleen Weiler found in her examination of teachers in the rural settings of the United States. Weiler explained this autonomy through the absence of higher school officials, and this was also true for Ester since her officials lived approximately five kilometres away. However, these officials were part of her professional life, as well as her personal social network, like the vicar who was both a friend of Ester and her superior as the head of the school board. When she experienced problems with one of the school girls and her parents, Ester visited another household in the village to borrow their telephone and call the vicar to ask for advice. This exemplifies how being the only teacher in the local context also could be a vulnerable position given the lack of support from other officials or colleagues. Conflicts and arguments with other members of the local community were infrequent and Ester seemed to have been both respected and appreciated by her surrounding peers in the village. Ester was not the only example of primary school teachers who were respected in village where they worked and lived. Occasionally, this was manifested by other women teachers and even in

more straightforward manners. My results (Article IV) reveal how the villagers lined up along the road to politely greet the two women teachers of the local community when they went out for a walk. My findings further show that these two women teachers shared a workplace and household for more than 30 years, and that none of them ever married or had any children, like Ester did. The different trajectories concerning the presence or absence of family formation in women teachers' lives are discussed below.

The third set of research questions concerned how family formation developed over time among women teachers and their possibility of returning to teaching after becoming a mother: *What implications did the decision to become a primary school teacher have on family formation and the return to teaching after parenthood? How did these patterns develop over time with regard to gender and teacher group? In what ways did the development of family formation among women teachers differ from women in other occupational classes?*

The examination of the parish records and data from Statistics Sweden shows that the family formation patterns among women in the middle class, among whom the lion's share were teachers, nurses, or clerical workers, underwent substantial changes from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. In the studied area, half of the middle-class women born between 1880 and 1899 remained childless, a number that dropped to approximately 20% in the group born between 1920 and 1939. In comparison, rates of childlessness ranged from 15 to 20% among women in farming and women with no occupation registered in the parish records throughout the study period. The fact that half of the women remained childless also meant that the other half formed a family, usually after only a few years of teaching. This created a demand for a constant influx of new young women teachers that could replace those leaving for family duties. The perception of women teachers as being unmarried and sticking to teaching until old age, which Whitehead found was typical for the spinster teacher she examined, only held for about half of the teachers in this study. However, given that unmarried teachers often devoted several decades of their lives to teaching, there is little wonder that the general image of them was that they were all unmarried and remained single. My thesis results clearly show that their lives were far more complex than so and often included both work and family formation and increasingly did so as time went by.

On the one hand, the rapid changes in family formation in the middle class, where the teachers are found, can be an outcome of pronatalist policies and improved employment security in the late 1930s and 1940s. On the other hand, these improvements cannot explain the occupational differences in fertility that already existed within the middle class in the

early 20th century. One such difference was that, among women born from 1880 to 1919, the proportion of nurses who had one child or more was 10 to 15% lower than the share among women teachers. Drawing on previous research by Åsa Andersson (see Article III), cultural factors might explain these differences. Nurses were expected to refrain from marriage and live nearby their workplace in a type of housing designated solely for nurses in order to work most of their time. According to Andersson, this pattern persisted as a norm until the 1940s. Provided this explanation and comparing nurses with the contemporary conditions for women teachers, housing was one major difference indeed. Even though teachers could have their homes in direct connection to, or even as a part of, the school building, there were important differences that help explain why teachers started to form families earlier in time and to a higher degree than other middle-class women, such as nurses. The primary schools were more scattered geographically than health service facilities were, and the teachers had frequent contact with the local community. All teachers may not have had such an extended social network as Ester had, but they were more incorporated in the local community through their frequent interaction with pupils and parents compared with nurses, who were largely situated in an urban environment. Additionally, even if unmarried women teachers occasionally shared a household, unisexual environments were more typical for nurses given the custom to live together in the hospital where they worked. When this type of housing changed in the 1940s, combined with pronatalist policies, this caused the proportion of nurses that formed a family to increase rapidly and they came to form a family more frequently than other women, including women teachers.

Women teachers born in 1900–1919 constituted the group of all middle-class women that postponed family formation the most. In this group, approximately six out of ten women teachers experienced motherhood, among those who did it was more common to have the first child after the age of thirty than before. Among women teachers in the following birth cohort (1920–1939) that had at least one child, approximately 70% entered motherhood before the age of 30. The group of male elementary school teachers demonstrated small differences over time concerning family formation. On average, four out of five male teachers formed a family while only one in five of them either remained childless or left the area under study through migration before fathering any children, which resembles figures for all men on a national level. All male teachers that formed a family continued to teach after having children with no absence from their position.¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ The data (Article IV) includes two male teachers with no teaching record upon parenthood, however this is explained by the fact that they had left teaching for another occupation prior to becoming a father.

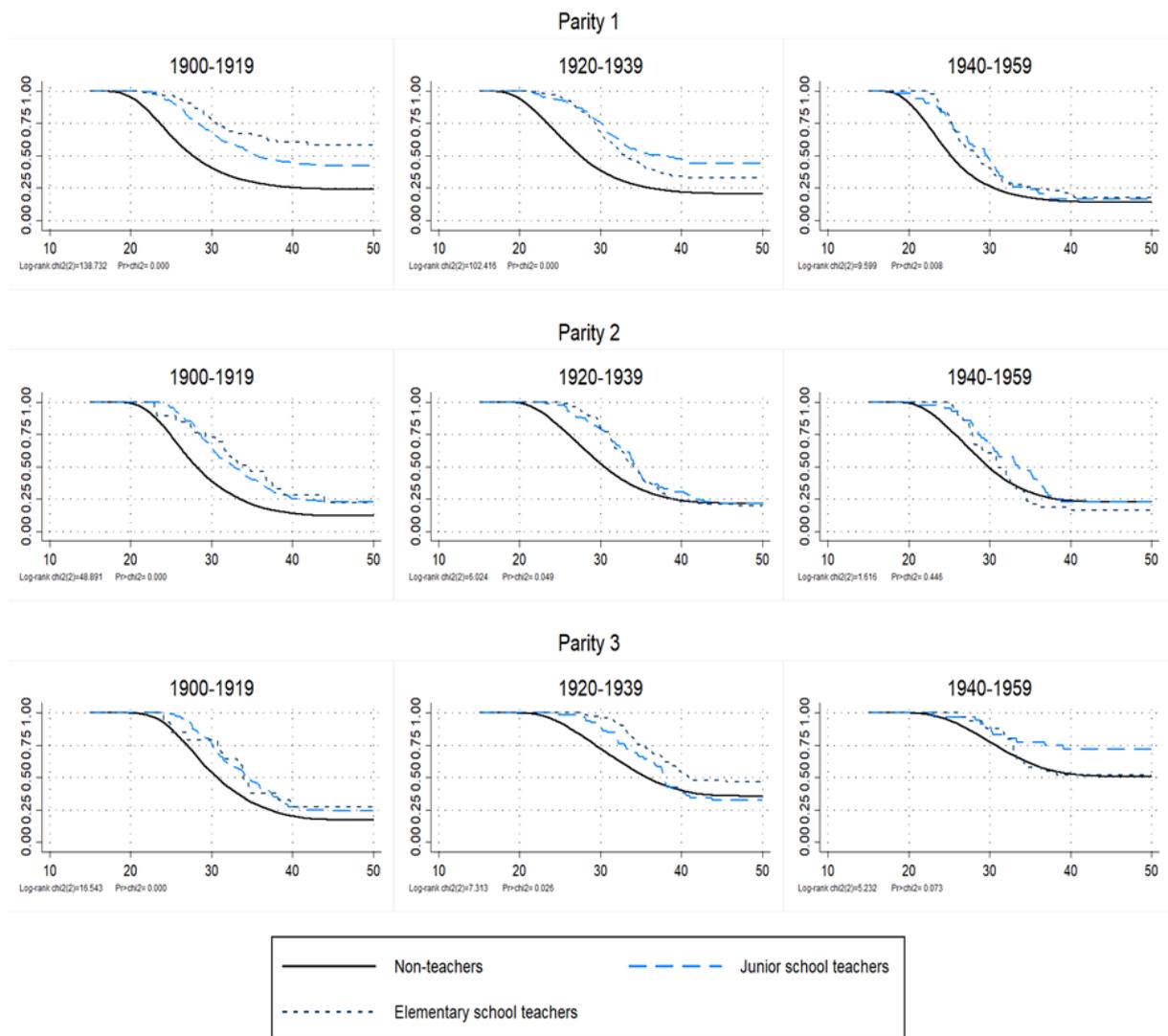


Figure 11. Kaplan-Meier estimates of the proportion not having experienced first, second and third birth as a function of the woman's age among the two groups of teachers compared to non-teacher women by risk cohorts, 1900–1959. Start of observation within each cohort at the age of 20, subsequently women in the 1900–1919 cohort were born between 1880–1899.
 Source: POPLINK-database, Demographic Data Base, CEDAR, Umeå University.

A more complex pattern was found among the two groups of women teachers, both concerning their family formation (see Figure 11) and return to teaching after becoming a mother. This became obvious through a closer analysis of the fertility differences within the group of teachers, conducted in exact the same way as the Kaplan-Meier curves in Article III.

When comparing the women junior school teachers with women elementary school teachers in the study area (Figure 11), the latter stand out as forerunners concerning family formation. First, close to 70% of the women elementary school teachers formed a family among those born 1900 to 1919. For those in the same group born twenty years earlier (1880–1899), the proportion was below 45%. This increase of 25% was absent among the examined women junior school teachers, who also experienced a slightly reduced share of family formation,

although both age groups reached just above 50%. Second, women elementary school teachers (born 1900–1919) demonstrated a reduction in having a third child earlier in life than the junior school teachers, or for that matter than other women did, i.e. women in occupations other than teaching or having no work reported in the parish records.

Interestingly, in the last cohort (born 1920–1939) the group of women teachers being most likely to have a third child shifted once again in the study area. Half of the women elementary school teachers with two children proceeded to a third child, which was the same level as women with no occupational record. Simultaneously, among women junior school teachers the share that experienced a third child plunged from 70% to 25%. A combination of empirical findings in previous research and from two of my other sub-studies (Article I and IV) is helpful to discuss these differences and provide possible explanations. In the wake of the low fertility numbers of the 1930s, Elgqvist-Saltzman shows how women elementary school teachers were encouraged to have more children in the 1940s. Through oral history, she was able to confirm that women elementary school teachers, at least to some extent, responded to this call. Furthermore, the lack of elementary school teachers in the 1940s meant a great demand for trained teachers. Consequently, women elementary school teachers who were married and involved in family life were no longer questioned in the same way as they had been only ten years earlier.

Both previous research and this thesis have shown that women elementary school teachers came from a background with higher social status than their junior school counterparts did. In combination with a higher salary, this suggests that elementary school teachers, at a group level, were better off to support a third child. Among women junior school teachers, the societal and educational developments in the late 1930s and early 1940s seem to have worked in the opposite way. When more of them kept a full-time teaching position in parallel with forming a family, a majority ended up with two children while fewer had three children or more. Obviously, in the studied area of northern Sweden, women junior school teachers gave birth to fewer children, not only in relation to the women elementary school teachers, but also in comparison with mothers in all other social groups within the area during the baby boom that followed World War II.

Teachers' lives within the life-course framework

There is reason to return to the life-course framework in order to demonstrate and discuss how its principles are useful to grasp the findings overall and their implication for obtaining information on primary school teachers in the past. This section will consider this before I make some final remarks regarding continuity and change in the lives of teachers during the 80 years my thesis has investigated them.

In this thesis, the principle of *Life-span development* has been used to emphasise the importance of examining an extended period of time to account for contextual changes that can affect individual life. Following the argument from Olin-Wright, this means I have analysed both the social origin of the individuals and their own capital acquisition over the life course suggested by occupational status. The principle has been highly relevant in the examination of two crossroads addressed in the thesis, i.e. to become a teacher or not and to form a family or not. One important contextual change for the primary school teachers was the establishment of a geographically close teacher training in the late 1870s. Without doubt, it opened up a new occupational opportunity for young women in the study area. Daughters of higher professionals had by far the highest probability of becoming a teacher while daughters of farmers remained most numerous among women teachers as a group. However, *Life-span development* in the sense of becoming a teacher was an option for the few rather than the many since only 1–2% among the children of farmers became teachers.

Consequently, children of farmers that entered teaching were those who most successfully acquired educational capital and viewed the teaching track as desirable (*Agency*). Societal processes that implied increasing educational opportunities could thus affect the life-span development differently depending on the age of the individuals that experienced these processes. This notion brings the principle of *Timing* to the fore. One of my results uncovers the increased opportunities of combining teaching and family formation that opened up for women teachers in the 20th century. For younger women teachers, the changes in the 20th century had the consequence that a higher share went on to start a family. For women teachers who already formed a family, the same changes meant a lower threshold to returning to work after being out of the labour force while their children were small.

The establishment of a teacher training in the area is illustrative of how the principle of *Time and Place* matters. The close access to this training was of the utmost importance to young generations growing up in the region under study, and especially for women. Until the late 1930s, the teacher training organisation worked as an impediment to young men in the area who wanted to become elementary school teachers. These men had to migrate to another

county to attend teacher training, which meant an additional cost and effort in comparison with young women who could attend this teacher training closer to where they grew up. Among adolescent women, junior school teacher training remained a more accessible option from the late 1870s to the late 1920s when changes worked in favour of elementary school teacher training. Consequently, the *Time and Place* to access teacher training had a great impact on the constraints different individuals faced concerning the decision to become a primary school teacher or not. Furthermore, the vast majority that started teacher training were in their late teens or early twenties, leaving the principle of *Timing* important also in this selection process.

The combinational effect of *Time and Place* and *Timing* becomes evident by the birth year of those who went on to become qualified teachers. Few women born in the early 1850s became certified teachers while this was far more common among those born a decade later given that they were then in the age-interval to enter the first accessible teacher training colleges. In this way, women (and men) from different birth cohorts experienced very different opportunity structures regarding their possibilities of acquiring human capital by attending post-primary education, such as teacher colleges. Similarly, junior school teacher training within the area was still accessible for those born in the first decade of the 20th century. For those born in the following decades, they were far more likely to enter elementary school teacher training since this was the only teacher training supplied in the area when they reached adolescence.

The previous section primarily addressed structural factors to explain the thesis results on the primary school teachers examined. Most likely, individual teachers had various ways and strategies to form their lives within these structures. The principles of *Agency* and *Linked Lives* are useful to balance the structural perspectives in the examination of teachers' lives. Without doubt, the primary school teachers were influenced by their societal structures, but they also had some possibility to steer their lives in a certain direction. The examination of the diary by Ester Vikström illustrates how both *Agency* and *Linked Lives* could be useful to map and describe the social network of Ester. These two life-course principles also fulfil a more analytical purpose, which serves to gain a deeper understanding of the subject under study by applying multiple perspectives. However, such an analytical approach can demonstrate discrepancies between the structural and agent-oriented principles/perspectives. As with the lives of junior school teachers and the everyday life of Ester, these discrepancies become visible when comparing the general image of women junior school teachers with how Ester experienced holding such employment.

Previous research in school history, primarily contends that junior school teachers had a subjugated position in the school system through lower salaries and less employment security than their elementary school teacher colleagues. Moreover, as found in this thesis, in comparison with the elementary school teachers, the junior school teachers came from a lower social origin suggesting lower levels of inherited forms of capital. My examination of Ester's everyday life showed that despite her low-status background and female gender, it was possible to achieve a high degree of upward social mobility and as the sole teacher become an important woman within the local community. The *Agency* and autonomy Ester demonstrated through all her activities was probably one key for her to form a large social network, especially since she was a newcomer in the village where she started to work. It seems as if Ester's *linking of lives* through her extensive networks promoted her independence and agency. In this way, Ester's diary illustrates how human life can develop out of both individual agency and of complex interactions through factors and circumstances in the surroundings which the life-course principles help to analyse. My adaption of the two life-course principles that concern *Agency* and *Linked Lives* has not been limited to interpreting the life of Ester Vikström, rather they have been important throughout the analysis, especially in relation to the life-histories in Article IV. However, it is important to remember is that *Agency* and *Linked Lives* can be analysed and discussed even when there is no qualitative information of the individual experiences like in a diary, for instance. For example, parish records and censuses inform about how people's lives are linked together, or not, in providing data on the household composition and on relatives like children, parents or a spouse, and the occupational data can work to indicate agency as employment and access to an income tend to increase independence.

Basically, all five principles are needed to provide a more holistic account of the subject under study. This is exemplified by the notion of a respectable woman teacher and how this notion changed over time. When norms and gendered expectations on a structural level did not associate the respectable woman with being both a teacher and a mother, women could use their agency to challenge this structure. For example, when Lovisa Häggmark, whose life course was recaptured in the introduction of this thesis, returned to teaching in 1918 this was not yet an established practice. Through her individual agency she challenged the norm and seemed to have been able to do so and still have her respectability intact.

8. Concluding remarks: Continuity and change in teachers' lives

This concluding chapter will focus on how the link between work and life functioned and developed among primary school teachers during the study period (c. 1860–1940). Whether and how the results obtained represent continuity or change is discussed concerning how women teachers experienced the link between work and life.

The overall recruitment of primary school teachers from different social groups showed only minor variation throughout the whole study period. Teachers born in the 1860s had approximately the same proportional probability of coming from a certain social class as those born in the 1920s. Daughters and sons of higher professionals continually showed the highest probability of becoming primary school teachers, however this group was far too small to meet the increasing demand for teachers. Instead, a majority of these future teachers were recruited from households led by a father who was a farmer (44%) or unskilled worker (18%). This suggests that the primary teacher occupation worked as a path for upward social mobility, especially for women but also men. The life course of Ester Vikström represents and embodies such a transition, a trajectory she shared with hundreds of other women teachers. However, being junior school teachers, they had a low salary and their upward social mobility primarily worked to improve their social status based on their cultural capital while it did not imply any substantial increase in economic assets.

This thesis finds that the geographical proximity to a teacher training college was of great importance for increasing the accessibility of the teacher occupation, especially for women living in Västerbotten. However, the form and presence of these colleges changed over the examined period. Young women who constituted a potential resource for becoming future junior school teachers and probably found this job to be attractive, depended strongly on this training being accessible in the study area. However, adolescences of both sexes who were prospective future elementary school teachers were less affected by the socio-spatial impact of proxime access to a teacher training college, given that they migrated more and over longer distances both to acquire teacher education and to take up available teaching positions. The availability of junior school teacher training followed a supply and demand-pattern where the authorities adapted the number of training positions to meet regional demand for teachers. Between the late 1870s and 1920s, the demand for new junior school teachers was difficult to meet due to two reasons. First, the expanding school system throughout the 19th century increased the number of teachers needed. Second, as my thesis shows, in the large group of women junior school teachers born in the 19th century, between one-third and 50% left

teaching permanently when they formed a family. Consequently, in addition to replacing teachers that had retired or migrated, the recently graduated junior school teachers needed to staff positions in newly established schools and replace those who had left for marriage or family formation. Furthermore, the findings of this thesis suggest that the recurrent perception of women teachers as being unmarried and keeping their teaching position until old age without ever forming a family on their own needs substantial revision. In the late 1920s, the need of junior school teachers shifted rapidly from a shortage to a surplus. This shift occurred all over Sweden and has in this thesis been explained by the historical fertility decline and, a political intention to have more elementary school teachers and that the expansive phase of the public primary school system was over.

In sum, two key changes over time are discerned regarding the link between women teachers and family formation. The first change concerns the share of women teachers who formed a family, which increased significantly during the study period. The second change that comes to the fore is how women teachers increasingly returned to teaching upon their family formation. It is important to point out that these two changes developed simultaneously. Especially among women junior school teachers, the share who continued to teach after having children increased prior to the decrease in childlessness. This suggests that the opportunity structures were changing and gradually enabled young women teachers to form a family in addition to providing greater possibilities for them to return to paid work and their teaching position after family formation. Finally, the results suggest that when an increased share of women teachers kept their teaching position after getting married and having children, this decreased the demand for new teachers as a previously vacant permanent position turned into a temporary position as a substitute for a teacher on maternity leave. These findings can complement and nuance previously established structural explanations of the teacher surplus in the 1930s, such as low birth numbers.

The mixed-methods approach of this thesis has enabled me to cover all three levels of analysis (macro, meso and micro level). My analyses of digitised parish records concern macro population level comparisons of teachers with non-teachers (Article I and III). In my sub-study based on the teacher register (Article IV), meso group level is taken into consideration by making intra-group comparisons between men and women teachers and between junior and elementary school teachers. My study of Ester's diary is a micro level analysis concerned with one single woman junior school teacher supplemented by additional sources to obtain more information on her and other individual in the local community. A mixed-methods approach primarily holds benefits in researching the subject under study from different angles, but it also has drawbacks. Initially, one big challenge was to construct a

research design that could bring together the findings from different data, requiring qualitative as well as quantitative analysis. In this process, I came across sources, for example Ester's diary and the teacher register, that provided unexpected and interesting findings beyond the research questions initially raised, and so the research work needed constant modification. However, when the research questions, source materials and methods work together, this will generally benefit any approach. In this thesis, one such benefit is present in the joint discussion based on the results on teachers' family formation (Article III) and the return to teaching after that among women teachers (Article IV). Another benefit is how my results from studying the life of Ester (Article II) prove useful when discussing the low socio-economic background among junior school teachers (Article I). While previous research on the history of teachers has addressed less diverse sets of materials and methods, at least in the same study as this thesis does, my sub-studies show how a mixed-methods approach through its complementary results helps to answer the questions raised and provides to a more holistic picture of teachers' lives. However, it also raises new questions that need to be answered in future studies, as I explain below.

The link between professional and private life constitutes an inexhaustible source of new research topics even when limiting the scope to teachers and the history of education. I will highlight three areas, which I find of particular interest to explore in future research provided the findings and lessons from this thesis. First, the spouses of primary school teachers deserve more in-depth analysis, preferably by comparing women and men and junior and elementary school teachers as in this thesis. A thorough study of their marriage patterns and partners could yield more information about whether and how their spouse played part in their return to teaching after having children. Second, this thesis has focused on the lives of primary school teachers, a similar research approach would be conceivable in the study of other occupational groups in the school system and thereby contribute to the (social) history of education. For example, a combination of parish records with school records could help reveal how life developed among children depending on form of schooling (teacher qualification, ambulatory or permanent, half-time or full-time, etcetera). Third, more studies of teachers in other geographical contexts, such as urban environments, would be useful to assess how the spatial setting affected teachers' lives. From previous research, we know that towns such as Stockholm for a long period of time hired elementary school teachers rather than junior school teachers, although little is known about the life trajectories of these urban teachers.

In the outline, I stated that this thesis benefitted from and contributed to primarily four sub-fields within history, i.e. social history, historical demography, gender history and history of

education. As for social history, one significant contribution is my investigation of the link between professional and private life. Particularly the findings concerning how the socio-economic background in combination with individual acquirement of capital could be useful for studies on the recruitment patterns of professions other than teaching. That teachers were an integrated part of the local community bears further significance for social history. My examination of Ester's diary reveals unique information on what everyday life could be in the village where she worked and lived. The changing norms of what it meant to be a woman teacher and the increasing possibilities of combining family formation with paid work holds implications relevant for both historical demography and gender history. For historical demography, the empirical findings contribute evidence on how women teachers spearheaded the shift in fertility, which meant that educated middle-class women came to have children to the same extent as less educated women and, thus how they participated in the baby boom in the 1940s. My results reflect how the respectable woman teacher went from being either a mother or a teacher to a combination of both, which is of special interest to gender history. The main contributions to history of education can be summarised in relation to the three strands of previous research outlined in chapter three. The first strand concerns the feminisation and professionalisation process of the primary school teacher occupation. By studying the teachers from their birth year, my findings show how the feminisation process intensified during the latter part of the 19th century in the rural area studied. Some other thesis findings have implications for the professional process, as for instance how the qualifications of primary school teachers successively improved during the study period. Starting from a large share of unqualified teachers prior to 1880, followed by an era where women junior school teachers (1880–1930) were most numerous, and finally a stage from 1930 and onwards when elementary school teachers, i.e. those with the longest training, increased in numbers at the expense of junior school teachers. In relation to the two strands of primarily qualitative research that either make use of life-history approaches or study teachers' activities in local communities, my thesis emphasises that these two strands can benefit from being combined with more quantitative approaches in the study of teachers' lives.

In the introduction, I referred to the governmental report *A Common Concern* to highlight how spatial issues concerning the access to teacher education continue to exist in present-day Sweden. Clearly, other factors such as the salary level and working environment also impact how many that would enter teacher training, however here the focus will be on the spatial dimensions of teacher training. Given the new measures to increase the number of primary school teachers, it can be argued that previous measures, such as distance teaching, have been insufficient to compensate for the increasing demand of primary school teachers. As

mentioned in the introduction, one of the new measures is a programme that will enable municipalities to employ unqualified teachers to work in a primary school while participating in teacher education. In the county of Västerbotten, this work will be led by Umeå University and the students in this programme will start in autumn 2021. As a historian of education, I note that the physical meetings for these teacher trainees will be located in the same two towns that used to have teacher training colleges for junior school teachers in Västerbotten. These historical training colleges had a certain ‘practice school’ (*övningsskola*) within the same building. In the practice school, the future teachers continuously taught while being under training, an arrangement that bears similarities to the new (2021) teacher programme. As noted in this thesis, the junior school teacher training college in Skellefteå closed in 1929, while the teacher training relocated from Lycksele to Umeå in 1966. The findings of this thesis, as well as the reintroduction of more spatially scattered distribution of teacher education in 2021, suggest that the proximity to teacher training has been and will continue to be of great importance today as well as in the future.

This thesis began by telling about the lives of Sofia Andersson and Lovisa Häggmark, as they reflect major themes examined in this thesis. I will conclude my work by returning to them or rather to three of their daughters, as they followed their mother’s occupational trajectories and became junior school teachers themselves. Axelia, the daughter of Sofia, was born in 1893 five years after her mother left teaching due to marriage. In 1913, at the age of 20, Axelia graduated as a junior school teacher and started her first teaching position in an ambulatory smaller elementary school not far from the village where her mother Sofia took up her first position 37 years earlier. After four years, Axelia moved to a permanent smaller elementary school in another village where she worked as sole teacher and taught two classes, a total of approximately 40 pupils. In 1921, she married a farmer, but in contrast to her mother, Axelia kept her teaching position for another one and a half years. When Axelia got pregnant in 1924, she left the teaching position at the age of 31. Just three years later, she died from an infectious disease at the age of 34, outlived by her mother Sofia. Years after the death of Axelia, the vicar K.A. Fellström wrote a few lines in the teacher register stating that she had been an excellent teacher, having succumbed to all her duties after the marriage. The two daughters of Lovisa that became junior school teachers, Henny (1898–1984) and Miriam (1902–1974), experienced similar life courses as Axelia had done until her early death. After graduation in 1918 respectively 1922, they both taught in villages within 10 kilometres from where they grew up. Henny as well as Miriam got married and had one son each and both returned to teaching after having children. In 1956, Henny was awarded the artic bramble distinction for her deeds in the sphere of teaching as well as in her household.

The life histories of these three women teachers exemplify how the opportunity structures had changed when they became mothers. All three of them kept her teaching position when they got married, both Henny and Miriam taught also after they had their children. Their life courses were no longer an exception, rather they adapted to the new norms that had emerged and become established since their mothers were in their age, according to which they could combine their professional life with family formation.

Svensk sammanfattning

Lärarliv i förändring: Genus, arbete och familj bland folkskolans och småskolans lärare i norra Sverige cirka 1860–1940

Mellan 1860 och 1940 utvecklades det svenska folkskolesystem från en relativt ny och rudimentär organisation till en nationellt väletablerad institution. I detta framväxande skolsystem skedde under 1800-talet en successiv förflyttning där undervisningsansvaret av barn flyttades från hemmet och föräldrarna till skolan och dess lärare. Utvecklingen innebar ett behov av att utbilda kvalificerade lärare till folkskolan och denna nya yrkesgrupp växte snabbt under 1800-talets andra hälft. Den här avhandlingen handlar om de lärare som kom att arbeta i detta framväxande skolsystem. Mer specifikt undersöks småskollärare och folkskollärare vilka var yrkesverksamma i delar av Västerbotten under perioden 1860 till 1940. De undersökta områdena inkluderar Skellefteå respektive Umeå stads- och landsförsamlingar samt ytterligare fyra församlingar i Skellefteåtrakten – Bureå, Byske, Jörn och Norsjö. Avhandlingen syftar till att analysera lärarnas levnadsbanor både utifrån deras yrkesliv och privatliv med ett särskilt intresse för kopplingen mellan dessa två. I syftet inkluderas frågeställningar kopplade till lärarnas socio-ekonomiska bakgrund, yrkets status och deras möjligheter att kombinera yrket med familjebildning. Det breda anslaget i undersökningen av lärarnas levnadsbanor och möjligheter att förena arbete med familj innebär att resultaten är relevanta för ett flertal fält inom historieämnet så som utbildningshistoria, genushistoria, historisk demografi och socialhistoria.

I avhandlingen undersöks olika källmaterial med både kvantitativa och kvalitativa metoder för att kartlägga och jämföra lärarnas levnadsbanor över tid och efter kön samt lärargrupp (folkskollärare respektive småskollärare). Det omfattande källmaterialet möjliggör tre analytiska nivåer. På en övergripande makronivå har digitaliserade kyrkoböcker använts för att med primärt kvantitativa metoder studera lärarnas socio-ekonomiska bakgrund samt kvinnliga lärares familjebildningsmönster. Tack vare en matrikel över samtliga lärare i Skellefteå landsförsamling var det möjligt att genomföra analyser på gruppnivå motsvarande mesonivå för att studera länken mellan arbete och familjebildning och hur den förändrades över tid för olika grupper av lärare. På individnivå utförs en mikrohistorisk undersökning av en kvinnlig småskollärares vardagsliv genom att studera hennes dagbok med ett särskilt fokus på hennes sociala nätverk och känsloliv. I samtliga delstudier tillfogas information från ytterligare källor som folkräkningar, nationella lärarmatriklar, lärarbiografier och statistiska uppgifter från Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB). I diskussionen av de empiriska resultaten används ett flertal begrepp med teoretiska implikationer vilket bland annat inkluderar genus,

livsförlopps-principer, Bourdieus kapitalteori, humankapital, respektabilitet och olika koncept från det känslöhistoriska fältet.

Avhandlingen består av fyra delstudier som påvisar såväl förändring som kontinuitet över tid i lärarnas yrkesliv och familjebildning. Den första delstudien kartlägger lärarnas socio-ekonomiska bakgrund via kyrkböcker och kvantitativa metoder. Resultaten visar att lärarnas socio-ekonomiska bakgrund förändrades marginellt över tid och var starkt präglad av den landsbygdsmiljö som dominerade undersökningsområdet under hela tidsperioden. Detta innebar att både lärare som var födda i mitten på 1800-talet och de som föddes under de första årtiondena på 1900-talet vanligen kom från ett hem där fadern var jordbrukare. Högst sannolikhet att bli lärare hade dock barn och framförallt döttrar till högre tjänstemän, men det var alltför få för att kunna täcka det stora behovet av småskollärare och folkskollärare. Undersökningen fann vidare att döttrar till kvinnliga lärare var mer benägna att följa sin moders yrkesmässiga bana än vad söner samt döttrar till manliga lärare var.

I två av delstudierna undersöks länken mellan arbete och familj genom att analysera i vilken utsträckning lärarna dels bildade familj, dels återtog sin yrkesutövning därefter, samt hur detta förändrades över tid. I första hand fokuserar dessa delstudier på kvinnliga små- och folkskollärare, inte minst då de manliga lärarna i hög grad bildade familj och fortsatte undervisa utan uppehåll över hela tidsperioden. I delstudien som jämför lärarinnors barnafödande över tid med andra medelklasskvinnor, övriga yrkesgrupper och kvinnor utan känt yrke används anonymiserade data från digitaliserade församlingsböcker som länkas till uppgifter om samma individer från Statistiska centralbyrån. Resultaten visar att kvinnliga lärare och andra kvinnor med medelklassyrken fram till 1940-talet födde färre barn än övriga kvinnor. Utvecklingen mot att det blev vanligare att bilda familj för dessa yrkesverksamma kvinnor såg dock olika ut beroende på yrkesgrupp inom medelklassen. Kvinnliga lärare visade en tidigare och mer successiv övergång till att fler födde barn medan denna förändring genomfördes senare men snabbare bland sjuksköterskor. Att kvinnor i medelklassen under mitten av 1900-talet kom att föda lika många barn som övriga kvinnor förklaras av en rad samverkande förändringar. Dessa förklaringar innefattar dels reformer som ökade anställningstryggheten för kvinnor vilka även syftade till att öka födelsetalen, dels genom en förskjutning av normer som gjorde det mer accepterat för kvinnor att fortsätta förvärvsarbete efter familjebildning. Sammantaget visar undersökningen att kvinnor verksamma inom så kallade "caring professions", dit lärarinnor och sjuksköterskor hör, fick barn i högre utsträckning än kontorsarbetare och övriga kvinnor inom medelklassen. Lärarinnor och sjuksköterskor blev även föregångare till den framväxande tvåbarnsnormen då deras

benägenhet att skaffa ett tredje barn minskade tidigare än bland kvinnor inom andra yrken och de som saknade yrkesnotering.

I delstudien som undersöker i vilken utsträckning lärarinnor återvände till läraryrket efter familjebildning används en lärarmatrikel från 1937 som utgångspunkt tillsammans med information från ytterligare 17 olika källor. Resultatet visar att det var ovanligt att återvända till läraryrket efter familjebildning bland de kvinnor som tog lärarexamen före år 1900. Lärarinnor inom de båda grupperna småskollärare respektive folkskollärare uppvisade dock olika mönster som förändrades över tid. Småskollärarna upplevde ett konstant utflöde där mer än hälften av kvinnorna lämnade yrket när de gifte sig eller fick barn. Under 1900-talet blev det allt vanligare att de kvinnor som lämnat läraryrket för familjebildning återvände till kortare eller längre tjänstgöring som lärare. Längre fram kom också en växande andel att behålla sin lärartjänst under perioder med graviditet och små barn. Bland folkskolläraryrket var det en hög andel av de födda före 1880 som aldrig bildade familj. När det sedan under 1900-talets början blev vanligare även för dem att bilda familj kom de likt småskolläraryrket ofta att återvända till yrket senare i livet när barnen var något äldre.

Den mikrohistoriska delstudien utgår från en dagbok som småskolläraryrket Ester Vikström skrev mellan 1901 och 1902. Analysen visar hur Ester etablerade ett omfattande socialt nätverk i lokalmiljön som innefattade personer med en varierad klasstillhörighet, från pigor och arbetare till prostens och doktors. Resultatet ger också en unik inblick i känslolivet hos en ung lärarinna vid sekelskiftet 1900. Vidare visar Esters levnadsbana på möjligheten att använda läraryrket för uppåtående social mobilitet. Ester föddes utom äktenskapet till föräldrar utan kvalificerade arbeten, mindre än tjugo år senare var hon en respekterad småskollärare i ett lokalsamhälle, detta trots att hon var relativt nyinflyttad.

Det var inte bara Ester som upplevde detta utan en slutsats i denna avhandling är att läraryrket på lokal nivå under en lång tid förblev ett yrkesval som innebar en uppåtående social mobilitet, detta då en majoritet av lärarna under hela studieperioden växt upp i jordbrukarfamiljer. Bland småskollärarna framträdde denna sociala mobilitet främst i termer av ökat kulturellt kapital, inte ekonomiska tillgångar, något som även det kan exemplifieras genom den mikrohistoriska studien av Ester Vikströms dagbok. Ester var en bland väldigt många unga kvinnor som rekryterades regionalt, utbildade sig till småskollärare och därefter kom att undervisa barn i samma skolväsende som de själva bara några år tidigare varit elever i. Under mer än ett halvt århundrande, mellan 1870-talet och in på 1930-talet, utgjorde småskolläraryrket lejonparten av lärarna i den undersökta landsbygdsmiljön och då ofta som den enda läraren i en mindre folkskola.

Två förändringsprocesser gällande länken mellan yrke och familj framträder tydligt i redogörelsen av delstudierna ovan, den ena innebär att andelen lärarinnor som bildade familj ökade över tid och den andra att det blev successivt vanligare att återvända till läraryrket efter familjebildning. En viktig slutsats är att dessa två förändringsprocesser inträffade parallellt snarare än att den ena föregick den andra. Under studieperiodens första sextio år, 1860–1920, utgjordes den respektabla kvinnliga läraren av en kvinna som antingen undervisade men inte hade barn, eller av en tidigare lärare som bildat familj och lämnat yrket. De efterföljande årtiondena innebar att det blev möjligt för kvinnliga lärare att kombinera egna barn med förvärvsarbete utan att riskera varken sin respektabilitet eller sitt yrke. Mot slutet av undersökningsperioden var det till och med vanligare att lärarinnorna bildade familj och senare återvände till läraryrket än vad det var att lämna sin tjänstgöring permanent vid familjebildning. Denna utveckling och normförskjutning innebar att en grupp yngre kvinnliga lärare som fick barn under sent 1920-tal och framåt kunde behålla sina lärartjänster under tiden de var hemma med barn. För en tidigare generation kvinnliga lärare, födda under 1800-talet och som därmed hade äldre eller vuxna barn, ökade istället möjligheterna att återvända till det läraryrke de långt tidigare lämnat för familjebildning. Det faktum att kvinnliga lärare oftare kom att behålla sina tjänster i kombination med lägre födelsetal och andra strukturella förändringar innebar att det från mitten av 1920-talet och under 1930-talet blev svårare för nyexaminerade lärare att få fasta tjänster direkt.

Genom att studera lärares socio-ekonomiska bakgrund, familjebildning och vardagsliv med olika metoder men med utgångspunkt i ett livsförloppsperspektiv har denna avhandling bidragit med ny kunskap om hur lärares liv förändrades under en omvälvande tidsperiod. Även om avhandlingens fokus har varit på de lärare som arbetade i den framväxande små- och folkskolan inom ett avgränsat geografiskt område i norra Sverige, bär resultaten också en mer generell relevans exempelvis för att förklara länken mellan förvärvsarbete och familj för i första hand kvinnor inom andra yrkesgrupper under samma tidsperiod.

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POPUM database

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