



Genuine Intent or Obligation: Understanding Assumptions and Outcomes of Gender Equality Efforts within Academia

Oprigtig intention eller forpligtelse:
Antagelser om og effekter af ligestillingstiltag i akademien

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1. Introduction

I never doubted that I wanted my master thesis to focus on women. I am a feminist, and the gender equality debate and issues of discrimination and sexism have interested me very much for several years. Inspired by a conversation with some colleagues of mine at the Department of Marketing and Management at the University of Southern Denmark, I looked into research on women in Academia in Denmark. My initial research revealed that a markedly unequal distribution of the sexes exists within top academic research posts (e.g. Ståhle 1993, 1998, 2005, 2007, 2011, etc.), and that this is not a new discovery (e.g. *“Women – Quality – Research”*, 1997; *“Gender Equality within Research”*, 1998; ETAN report, 2000; *“Helsinki Group...”*, 2002; *“All Talents in Play – More Women in Research”*, 2005; *“Women in Research – All Talents in Play”*, 2015; *“Recommendations...”*, 2015). On the contrary, the issue of women’s disadvantaged position within Academia has received considerable political attention during the past 25 years. The intention was to increase the share of female academics and to improve gender equality. During this time, research studies and expert panels alike have concluded that managerial policies and practices are key if Academia wants to foster a working environment which attracts and retains female talent (e.g. *“Recommendations...”*, 2015). Nevertheless, statistically, progress has been minor (e.g. Henningsen, 2002).

It must be assumed that when Danish politicians state their intention of improving gender equality within Academia, universities must obey and make at least some degree of changes in managerial policies and practices as recommended. The current situation therefore begs the question: If not significant improvements to the relative share of female researchers, what then have been the outcomes of managerial initiatives implemented to improve the gender balance within Academia? And how have the women of Academia experienced the managerial initiatives installed for the improvement of their working conditions? These questions form the foundation of this master thesis.

This thesis contains an analysis of managerial policies and practices which are implemented or adapted with the purpose of improving opportunities and working conditions for female academics. The Faculty of Science at the University of Southern Denmark (SDU) constitutes the case and object of analysis. The analysis is based on the theory of *human resource management* (HRM). Furthermore, the discussion of this thesis concerns how female academics have felt and experienced the outcomes of managerial gender equality initiatives and changes. The discussion is based on seven qualitative interviews with female researchers at the Department of Biology and the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science (IMADA), at the Faculty of Science at SDU.

1.1. Thesis Statement

Women in Denmark have had access to the same higher education as men for 140 years. Nevertheless, Danish female researchers still struggle to reach the highest levels of Academia (Rosenbeck, 2014). This problem has received considerable national (e.g. *“Gender Equality within Research”*, 1998; *“All Talents in Play – More Women in Research”*, 2005; *“Women in Research – All Talents in Play”*, 2015; *“Recommendations...”*, 2015) as well as international (e.g. *“Helsinki Group...”*, 2002) political attention based on the premise that society misses out on too much research talent and valuable science when women are excluded from the academic elite. Therefore, the aim of this master thesis is to examine how the issue of gender equality is incorporated into human resource management policies and practices in Academia in Denmark. Furthermore, this thesis will include a discussion of assumptions and outcomes of gender equality efforts, as well as whether and how gender equality efforts have been able to impact the careers of female researchers as experienced by the women themselves.

As such, this thesis is not functionalist and does not aim at presenting a variety of practically applicable recommendations for the further improvement of women’s position within Academia in the future. The objective of this thesis is to present a snapshot of the present circumstances for female academics by examining assumptions and outcomes associated with gender equality efforts, based on the experiences of the women. The combination of an in-depth managerial analysis with a discussion of the receiving end of gender equality efforts implies a novel approach which will contribute to the research on the topic by introducing new theorisations about the challenges facing women in Academia. This thesis takes a qualitative approach, and as the scope of the research on which this thesis is founded is very limited it does not aim at quantification. Though quantification may be problematic, the findings of this thesis will hopefully prove useful to university management and gender equality responsables within Academia, as this thesis strives to arrive at an exhaustive and rich in detail analysis of the complex multitude of gender equality efforts which are implemented within the particular case departments at SDU. An exhaustive and rich in detail analysis serves as a strong foundation upon which readers may individually evaluate the credibility and strength of arrived at theorisations and interpretations.

1.2. Elaboration

Historically, Academia was reserved for men. However, it has been 140 years since women were first admitted into Danish universities. Especially since the 1960s and 1970s, the percentage of female university students has steadily risen. It was therefore expected, as the number of female graduates rose and the catchment area for research positions became increasingly gender balanced, that the number of female researchers would rise correspondingly. However, the number of female researchers never did rise significantly (Rosenbeck, 2014: 141, 190). Today, women represent 56 per cent of university bachelor and master students in Denmark (*“Women in Research – All Talents in Play”*, 2015: 5). Whereas, women represent a share of merely 31,5 per cent (2013) of the entire academic staff distributed among assistant

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professors (40.6 per cent female), associate professors (30.6 per cent female) and professors (18.4 per cent female) respectively (Ibid.: 8-9).

As these numbers indicate, there is still far to go if an equal distribution of the sexes at the top levels of Academia is what we want. According to the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science it is. Following the argumentation of their report "*Women in Research – All Talents in Play*" (2015), the efforts made to achieve gender equality within research reflect a wish that the respective representation of the sexes within Academia should mirror the corresponding representation of the sexes among university students and within society in general. Everyone should have the same opportunities to fully develop and deploy their talent, including within research. When women are systematically excluded or choose to opt out of careers within Academia, society loses valuable research and wastes scientific talent (Ibid.: 5). Therefore, this problem must be solved and the gender balance improved.

Today, equal rights and opportunities for women and men are taken for granted as fundamental aspects of Danish culture and of our self-concept, and Danish politicians have demonstrated their commitment to gender equality, e.g. by introducing the concept of *gender mainstreaming* to the Danish Act on Gender Equality in the year 2000 (Online resource 4). Gender mainstreaming legally obligates all levels of public administration and planning, incl. universities, to integrate a gender equality perspective into all management policies and practices. As such, in principle, nothing should restrict the opportunities of women for professional and personal self-actualisation. Nevertheless, women still do not manage to reach the top levels of Academia to the same extent as men. Thus, Academia constitutes a thorn in the gender equal Danish society's flesh because, despite political intention and many attempts, solving the problem of women's underrepresentation within research has turned out to be more easily said than done. Academia has proven itself cumbersome and resistant to change (e.g. Ståhle, 1993; Henningsen, 2002; Rosenbeck, 2014). Therefore, this thesis will, building on particularly the theoretical framework of Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. "*Homo Academicus*", 1988; "*La domination masculine*", 1998), examine e.g. the change-resistant nature of Academia, women's role within Academia, as well as expressions of resistance to gender equality efforts within the academic world.

Though the issue of gender inequality within Academia has proven almost unsolvable, Danish as well as international politicians are not giving up. As a result, at intervals, the issue of women in research politically reappears. For instance, during the 1990s, the European Commission put gender in research on the agenda, and in 2002 the EU appointed so-called Helsinki Group concluded that the world of Academia, which was not traditionally associated with human resource management (HRM), would benefit from the introduction of HRM practices and policies – or that, at least, the engendering and modernising of existing personnel administration practices – might potentially improve working conditions for women and thereby the position of women in Academia ("*Helsinki Group...*", 2002).

Two reports from 2015 repeat this conclusion ("*Women in Research – All Talents in Play*" and "*Recommendations...*"). These reports emphasise that if we want to improve the gender balance within Academia in Denmark, we need to pay particular attention to the attraction, continuous development, and retention of young female researchers, as well as issues of work-life balance, since having a family to care for while trying to establish a career causes stress and strain on researchers. Therefore, there is a

noticeable need for talent management and career development efforts, and for family friendly personnel policies. In short, the key to the solution of gender inequality within Academia lies within HRM.

Evidently, it has long been agreed how society is most likely to succeed in improving the academic gender balance. It is clear that a wish to change the situation exists, however, since progress has been limited, it must be concluded that all the attempted efforts have led to much debate and little long-term, systematic action and change. Therefore, the objective of this thesis is to contribute to the research on the topic by examining assumptions and outcomes of gender equality efforts within Academia through an exhaustive overview of gender equality initiatives at three levels of the organisation of SDU – university, faculty, and department level, and through interviews with the receiving end of gender equality efforts, the women.

For further information about the issue of gender equality within Academia, I recommend the reader to look at the two short texts within the *Appendix* called *A Historical Overview of Women in Danish Science* (p. 127) and *The Leaky Pipeline* (p. 130). They were both intended to form part of the *Theoretical Foundation* chapter, however, due to limitations to this thesis in terms of size, they were moved to the Appendix. The first text relates, based on the book by Rosenbeck (2014), how the position of women within science has changed in the 140 years during which Danish women have had access to Academia, and the latter is an introduction to two contradictory metaphors, which are used in the debate about gender in Academia.

2. Methodology

This thesis examines two perspectives on the topic of women in Academia: On the one hand, the focus is organisational, i.e. the analysis is centred on human resource management policies and practices which are implemented or adjusted with the objective of improving gender equality at the Faculty of Science at SDU. On the other hand, the focus of this thesis is individual; the perspectives of the women, i.e. their personal experiences of the assumptions and outcomes of these management initiatives. The analysis of such different perspectives requires different theoretical and methodological approaches. The following chapter contains a review of the theoretical and methodological considerations and choices which have been made in the course of the development of this master thesis.

2.1. Epistemological and Ontological Considerations

At the overall level, the aim of this thesis is to connect HRM gender equality efforts with the experiences of women in Academia in order to examine assumptions and outcomes of these HRM efforts. This kind of project requires an *interpretivist* approach, as interpretivism emphasises the intention to *understand* human action in contrast to positivism which seeks to causally *explain* human action (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 17-18). The fundamental assumption of the interpretivist epistemology is that social reality constitutes meaning for human beings and that human action therefore is meaningful. It is the task of the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of people's everyday sense- and meaning-making processes and based here upon interpret their actions and their social world from their points of view. As such, interpretivism is often associated with the method of *emphatic identification* on the researcher's part with the research objects (Ibid.: 20).

However, the main deficiency of interpretivism is that it is founded on the *realist* assumption that the researcher is able to objectively grasp and represent the subjective meanings associated with a given action by the particular person doing that action, e.g. that person's beliefs, goals and desires. However, assuming that objectivity is possible is rather out of keeping with today's social sciences. As such, this thesis rejects interpretivism's realist stance and instead assumes that the subjective sense-making processes of a person, cannot be dismissed from consideration when interpreting his or her actions because such sense-making processes are constitutive of that action. This means that to be able to understand human action, the researcher must understand the context within which that action occurs. Therefore, interpretivist epistemologies are often linked with the concept of the *hermeneutic circle*, which holds that in order to understand the part – e.g. the individual action of a person – the researcher must understand the whole, incl. the person's beliefs and desires, or the institutional or organisational context within which this action takes place (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 23). This way, understanding part and whole as individual entities interdependently strengthens the researcher's understanding of both.

In relation to this thesis, the link between part and whole within the hermeneutic circle is as follows: In order to grasp the experiences (the parts of the circle) of the informants, it was necessary to accumulate a comprehensive understanding of the *whole* beforehand, i.e. a) to understand what has already been scientifically examined and concluded in relation to the issue of gender in Academia, b) which methods and theories have been useful in these studies, and c) which management policies and practices are currently at work at SDU to improve gender equality. Obtaining a thorough understanding of the overall context, the individual experiences of the women, as well as the interdependent relationship between these two perspectives, are essential to assessing as well as understanding assumptions and outcomes of gender equality initiatives at SDU.

From the above account of the applied approach, i.e. how a thorough literary review formed the basis of the interviews, follows that this thesis is “loosely” inductive. This means that theory provides guidelines for the classification and organisation of empirical data, or in other words; opinions, pieces of information, events, and incidents were grouped thematically based on theory (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 405). Analysis, reflections, and conclusions based on these theoretical groupings then constitute new theorisations which represent a contribution to current knowledge on the subject. Such theorisations are inductive because they are entirely dependent upon which topics are raised by the informants during the interviews.

Furthermore, this thesis is founded on a *constructionist* ontology. Constructionism holds that social contexts and phenomena, linguistic categories, and the meanings associated with these are social accomplishments; that they are constructed through interaction between people (Ibid.: 23). Linguistic categories serve the purpose of classifying the social world which surrounds us, which helps us to grasp more easily the contexts within which we exist as human beings (Ibid.: 24). The fact that interaction between people is continuous implies that social contexts and phenomena, as well as the linguistic categories we use to talk about them, are dynamic and in a constant state of revision (Ibid.: 23). From this dynamic nature of contexts, phenomena, and categories further follows that they do not constitute in any way an *essence*. Social phenomena and linguistic categories are only meaningful because the members of the context to which these phenomena and categories belong attribute meaning to them (Ibid.: 24). Thus, to understand the meaning attributed to social contexts, phenomena, and categories the researcher’s focus should be on the versions of reality presented by the members of the context being studied, and on the construction of that reality through its members’ interpretations of it (Ibid.: 536).

Constructionism also refers to a different kind of construction, namely the construction of knowledge generated by the researcher within her interpretation of social reality. Consequently, the researcher’s account of a social context will only represent one possible account and not the definitive (Ibid.: 23). The researcher’s values are detectable in every stage of the research process, incl. choice of topic, formulation of research question, choice of method, etc. To acknowledge that research cannot be value-free necessitates an alternative approach in order to ensure a reliable research process and valid research results; the researcher must constantly exhibit *reflexivity* about the part played by her personal values and biases, as they will influence not only *how* the researcher sees things but also *what* she sees (Ibid.: 30).

Alternatively, some feminist researchers have argued for consciously value-laden research, because feminist research is typically carried by political intentions to contribute to the emancipatory project of feminist activism. Feminist researchers emphasise the importance of replacing the postulate of neutrality with *conscious partiality*, which is achieved through empathetic identification with the research object (Ibid.: 30-31).

I, as researcher, place myself somewhere in between the two above-mentioned standpoints, i.e. reflexivity and conscious partiality. My feminist conviction is not a piece of clothing that I can take off when starting a research project, especially one which centres on women. Moreover, even the premise for this thesis is essentially feminist, as this thesis assumes that gender equality does not exist within Academia. However, as I engage in critical analysis, I simultaneously critically scrutinise my own convictions. For example, in the cases when my informants have stressed that they do *not* feel disadvantaged, or that they do *not* experience gender inequality, I must focus on the theoretically founded conclusions that I have drawn from the data and based here upon determine whether the premise is legitimate or not.

Moreover, as I am a student of HRM – and not sociology or gender studies – this thesis is first and foremost an analysis of HRM. The parallel drawn between HRM efforts in relation to gender equality and the outcomes of these efforts as experienced by the women, is intended as a contribution to understanding the underlying assumptions of these efforts of both implementers and recipients. As a result, the purpose of this thesis is to present a snapshot of the present situation for female Academics based on a foundation of past research on the topic and the experiences of the women themselves. Having a past and present rather than a future orientation helps to maintain the focus of this thesis on what it has set out to do, i.e. analyse HRM, in contrast to participate in the emancipatory project of feminism.

2.2. Human Resource Management Analysis

2.2.1. Defining Human Resource Management

During our lives, most of us have experiences with the concept of *human resource management* (HRM) and its implied practices. Today, human resource management is the most common term used to refer to management activities within the employment relationship (Boxall & Purcell, 2008: 2) and HRM is generally accepted as an absolute necessity to organisational performance (and hence survival) in every organisational context from companies to public administration and non-profit organisations. Despite the fact that HRM has existed for around 30 years, the definition of HRM remains a work in progress. Organisations must constantly adapt management to meet the endless changes which characterise today's globalised world, and, therefore, management theories must also be adapted to the changing circumstances of society (Rowley & Jackson, 2011: xxvi). Nevertheless, the intuitive attempt at a definition would refer to human resource management as "*the management of human resources*". However, it may legitimately be questioned whether humans can ethically be categorised as 'resources' and how the relative value of such resources, i.e. individuals at all levels of the organisation, would then be measured and rewarded (Ibid.: xxvi). As such, the solution might be to simply define HRM as "*the management of people*" which is a significantly broader and more inclusive view (Ibid.: xxvi).

Such a definition is inherently *functionalist* in nature as it stresses the application of HRM, however, in the case of this thesis, the functionalist perspective may not make much sense, as the objective of this thesis is not to analyse the realisation of HRM practices as compared to theoretical prescriptions. Therefore, this thesis adopts a *critical-evaluative* perspective according to which »[HRM] *should be understood as a cultural construction comprising a series of metaphors redefining the meaning of work and the way individuals relate to their employers*« (Legge, 2005: 123). This view is particularly valuable to this thesis as such metaphors imply a means for understanding how employment not only concerns what the employee can do for the organisation, but what the organisation can and must do for the employee. Though this thesis is founded on a constructionist definition of the concept of HRM, the *Analysis* within this thesis will be based upon what may, in a functionalist frame of reference, be considered key HRM concepts and activities: Recruitment and selection, retention, motivation and commitment, employee performance assessment, appraisal interviews, talent management, incl. competence and career development, team work, leadership, culture management and psychological contract, work-life balance, and, finally, diversity management (Rowley & Jackson, 2011).

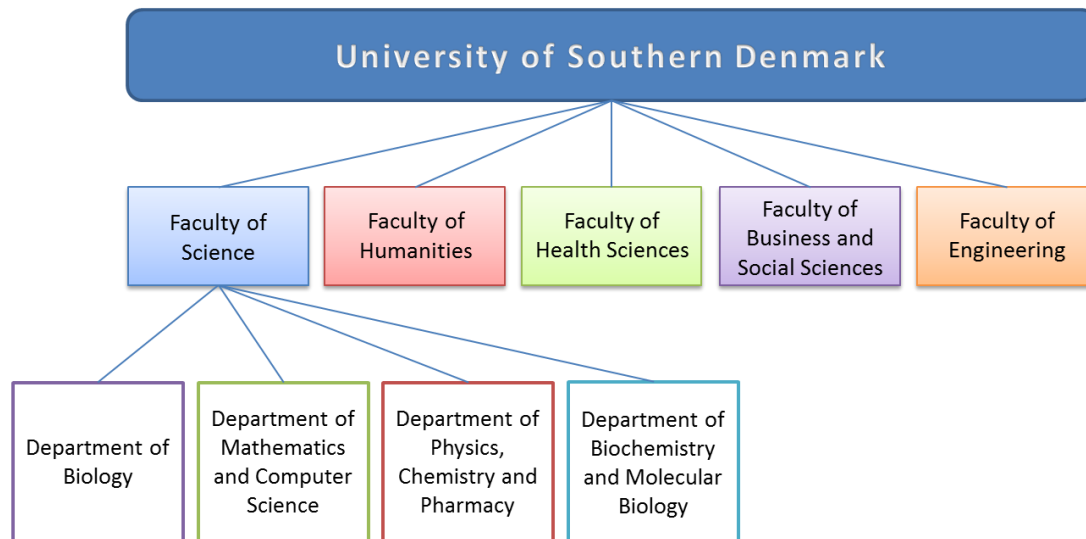
2.2.2. Approach for Human Resource Management Analysis

The HRM analysis is based on a series of ethnographic interviews with relevant people, incl. Jakob Ejersbo (Interview notes, p. 117) who is head of HR Development unit, a sub-unit of HR Service at SDU. The ethnographic interviews furthermore include an interview with the project leader and task leader of FESTA at the Faculty of Science at SDU, Eva Sophia Myers and Liv Baisner (p. 119), as well as the department

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managers of the Department of Biology and the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science (IMADA) respectively, Marianne Holmer (p. 115) and Martin Svensson (p. 113). Jakob Ejersbo, Liv Baisner, Marianne Holmer and Martin Svensson are all members of SDU's Gender Equality Committee. The choice of these informants is based on the assumption that the responsibility for gender equality efforts at the University of Southern Denmark is distributed and shared between three levels as illustrated by Figure 1:

Figure 1



Within the University of Southern Denmark box at the top level, we find the SDU Gender Equality Committee and HR Service with Jakob Ejersbo's HR Development unit. FESTA represents the faculty level below, and Marianne Holmer and Martin Svensson represent the department level. This way, all actors involved in gender equality efforts in the case of the Faculty of Science at SDU should be included.

Additionally, as part of the ethnographic research, I had the opportunity to participate in a meeting with SDU's Gender Equality Committee. The edited version of the notes which I took during the meeting are available in the *Appendix* on p. 122.

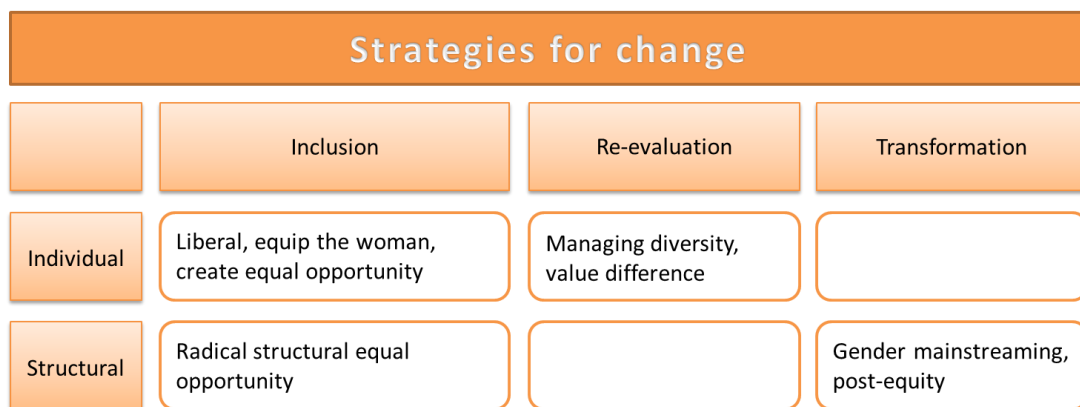
The choice of ethnographic interviews for the mapping of HRM gender equality initiatives is based on the strengths of the ethnographic method in relation to studying organisational contexts and cultures. Ethnographic studies within organisational and managerial research may e.g. concern how cultural norms are constructed (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 441). Ethnographic research usually involves a large degree of participation in and observation of the context which is being studied on the researcher's part, however, due to limitations in time available to the realisation of ethnographic investigations, this has not been possible. As such, it is crucial that the ethnographic researcher gains access to a wide range of individuals who are especially relevant to answering the particular research question. A wide sample of informants ensures the collection of many different perspectives, so that many management areas and practices can be included (Ibid.: 458).

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Moreover, in order not to rely too heavily on the information provided by key informants, the ethnographic researcher must continuously compare data with alternative sources, such as official documents (Ibid.: 453). The ethnographic interviews were semi-structured (please see below for detailed description of semi-structured interviews), and the interview guide is available in the *Appendix* on p. 126. The questions of the interview guide were developed based on the knowledge I had gathered in relation to the topic of women in Academia through a thorough literary review, incl. Bloch (1999), Henningsen (2002), Rosenbeck (2014), and reports such as “*Helsinki Group...*” (2002) and “*Recommendations...*” (2015), etc.

Next, the analysis of HRM efforts is based on a model originally developed by Benschop and Verloo (2012) and adapted by Benschop and van den Brink (2014) as illustrated below:

Figure 2



Source: Benschop and van den Brink, 2014
Adapted from Benschop and Verloo (2012: 280)

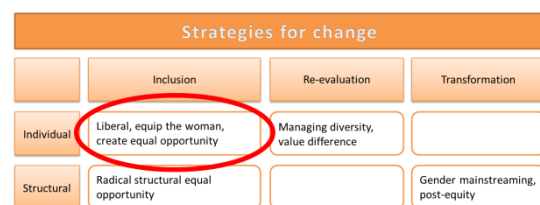
The model by Benschop and her associates (2012, 2014) is developed based on the premise that despite the fact that gender equality legislation of most Western countries does in fact acknowledge social, structural, and systemic gender discrimination, this kind of legislation is not successfully addressing the complexity of gender inequality within organisations. Current legislation (Danish Act on Gender Equality, online resource 4) requires for discriminatory practices to be abolished, however, change is difficult because gender inequality is embedded within the subtle and covert processes and practices of organisational life (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 332).

The model by Benschop and van den Brink, Figure 2, reflects the feminist debates of *sameness versus difference* in relation to gender, and *structure versus agency*. The latter concerns assumptions as to whether gender inequality is the effect of societal structures or an outcome of individual actions. In relation to the sameness versus difference debate, people who believe that men and women are essentially the same simultaneously believe in objectivity and meritocracy, whereas people who perceive men and women as different believe that objectivity is impossible because human beings are inherently biased (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 279).

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Gender equality strategies can either focus their efforts on the organisation or on organisational members, which in the model is illustrated by the horizontal levels; individual and structural. Gender equality efforts targeted at either the individual or structural level entail different strategies depending on the desired outcome, represented in the model by the vertical columns. Desired outcomes of gender equality efforts may be either inclusion, re-evaluation, or transformation. As evident in the illustration above, the model does not include the intersections of *structural re-evaluation* or *individual transformation*. Individual transformation may involve “equipping” particularly men for a life in a transformed, more gender equal workplace and society. However, not surprisingly, no such strategy has ever been pursued or written about. Though there may also exist gender equality strategies which would be characterised as *structural re-evaluation*, they are most likely not very well-known either. As such, this model includes the most commonly applied and scientifically examined strategies (Ibid.: 282).

First, *individual inclusion* strategies aim at ensuring equal opportunities for all, regardless of the social groups that people may belong to. Initiatives under the individual inclusion category are based on a meritocratic assumption, because merit is perceived as the most efficient way to achieve fair competition and a fair distribution of rewards and resources among organisational members. Concrete efforts belonging to this group include employee development courses in which women are taught political and strategic skills in order to “play the game” on equal terms with men (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). Critics of these approaches state that efforts are carried by a “fix the women” assumption, and that from this perspective the rules of “the game” are not questioned and the gendered organisational structures and routines are not addressed (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 333).

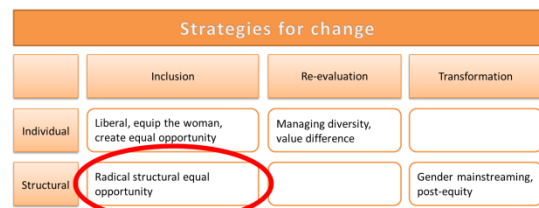


Individual re-evaluation is carried by a different logic. According to this approach, diversity among organisational members should be celebrated as the organisation will benefit from having employees from all social groups. Diversity management recognises the different circumstances which gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, education, work-style, etc. pose for people. Therefore, due to their individual backgrounds and circumstances, organisational members should be assessed and rewarded on their unique contribution to the organisation and not based on specified, standardised evaluation criteria. Practical initiatives in relation to managing diversity include e.g. training activities to improve teamwork, conflict management, and to learn to recognise and comprehend other people’s skills, approaches, and understandings. Though the individual re-evaluation strategies acknowledge the inevitably biased nature of human beings, in the same way as individual inclusion strategies, individual re-evaluation leaves the organisational structures and culture untouched (Ibid.: 336).

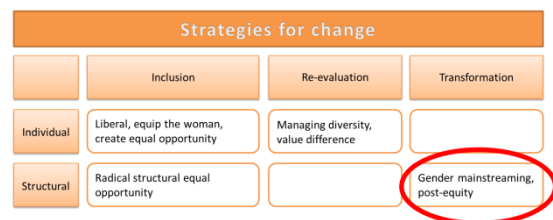


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Now we turn to gender equality strategies in which efforts are targeted at the organisation. First, *structural inclusion* can be characterised as a revolutionary or radical approach, because it aims at equality of outcome and it does not refrain from direct intervention to achieve this goal. Radical approaches are critical towards meritocratic assumptions and of power hierarchies within organisations, and the discriminatory effects of these for minority groups. Structural inclusion includes e.g. the controversial measures of gender quotas and preferential selection (Ibid.: 337). The challenge concerning radical intervention is that though quotas inevitably increase female representation, the likelihood that the women hired will stay is quite small, as they are forced into a system which resists them (Ibid.: 332). Other initiatives within this category include efforts to eliminate structures which hinder the professional advance of women, for instance by introducing flexible working arrangements (Ibid.: 338).



Finally, *structural transformation* involves much more fundamental and far-reaching strategies »as the goal is to transform organisational processes and routines so that they no longer reproduce gender inequality« (Ibid.: 338). The concept of *gender mainstreaming*, which was introduced to Danish legislation in 2000, is an example of a structural transformative approach.



Through collaboration between organisational members – particularly policy and decision-makers – and gender experts, policies, practices, and routines which foster and maintain gender inequality are identified and re-designed. Gender mainstreaming attempts to introduce alternative discursive constructions of masculinity and femininity with the objective of transforming organisational systems, norms, and conceptions of identity (Ibid.: 338).

Another structural transformation strategy is known as the *post-equity* approach. The post-equity approach is similar to gender mainstreaming, however, rather than taking a top-down perspective, it involves all organisational members. Post-equity is based on the premise that gender is essentially power relationships which shape social structures, knowledge, and identities. Based on Karl Weick's (1984) concept of *small-wins*, post-equity aims at transforming organisational practices, norms, and culture through a persistent effort of incremental changes in order to ensure minimal resistance and lasting change (Ibid.: 333). The results of persistent efforts are new narratives which contribute to embedding changes in gender power relations within the organisation (Ibid.: 338). Critical to the success of structural transformation strategies is the sincere involvement and political will of key figures within the organisation (Ibid.: 38).

Finally, the strength of the model by Benschop and her associates lies in its ability to discuss the objectives and content of gender equality strategies and to assess their performance in terms of discursive as well as material outcomes (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 278). Furthermore, though the model is a means for analysing gender equality strategies as opposed to specifically analysing HRM strategies, this model has been chosen as it demonstrates just how closely gender equality efforts are in fact tied to key HRM areas, for instance; a) *equip the women* strategies imply employee training and development, b) *equal opportunity* strategies involve ensuring transparency and fairness in recruitment, promotion, and reward

distribution processes, c) *managing diversity* and *value difference* strategies concern redefining criteria for employee performance assessment, creating positive and embracing work cultures, as well as making work processes more efficient and profitable, and d) *gender mainstreaming* and *post-equity* strategies concern extensive organisational development and change management. By emphasising just how tightly HRM and gender equality efforts are linked, the model by Benschop and her associates indeed proves ideal for the purpose of this thesis.

2.3. Approach for Interviews and Discussion

The *Discussion* chapter (p. 64) is based on seven semi-structured, qualitative interviews with women from the Department of Biology and IMADA at SDU. The approach underlying the interviews is based on Brinkmann and Kvale's (2015) metaphor of the *traveller*. Interviews founded on the traveller metaphor are *exploratory* which means that the interviews are dialogues, rather than question and answer sessions (p. 58). The travelling interviewer takes what Brinkmann and Kvale label the *participant* position which implies that the interviewer does not perceive statements made by the informant as neutral facts to be analysed. The participant-interviewer treats her data as situated meaning-making, interactively constructed by herself and her informant. Furthermore, she consciously allows for meaning to be challenged and contradicted during the interview (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015: 109), as well as for herself to learn and change during the interaction (Ibid.: 58). As the interview meaning-making process is interactive, the interview informants may also learn from something that the interviewer has said (Ibid.: 34).

Brinkmann and Kvale's (2015) conceptualisation of the qualitative research interview is founded on the tradition of phenomenology which aims to uncover the informant's *life world*. The notion of life world refers to the informant's lived everyday world, independent of scientific explanations and interpretation. Life world accounts will then subsequently form the basis for scientific abstractions of the social world (Ibid.: 30, 32). Scientific quality is ensured through nuanced accounts of phenomena and high levels of precision in descriptions, as well as consistent and meticulous interpretation (Ibid.: 33). The realisation of the interview is *semi-structured*, i.e. it is loosely directed by an interview guide which contains the topics to be covered and suggested question (Ibid.: 31). The semi-structured interview allows for the informant to take the interview in unexpected directions, especially if such directions imply that the researcher must critically assess her own presuppositions and hypotheses (Ibid.: 35).

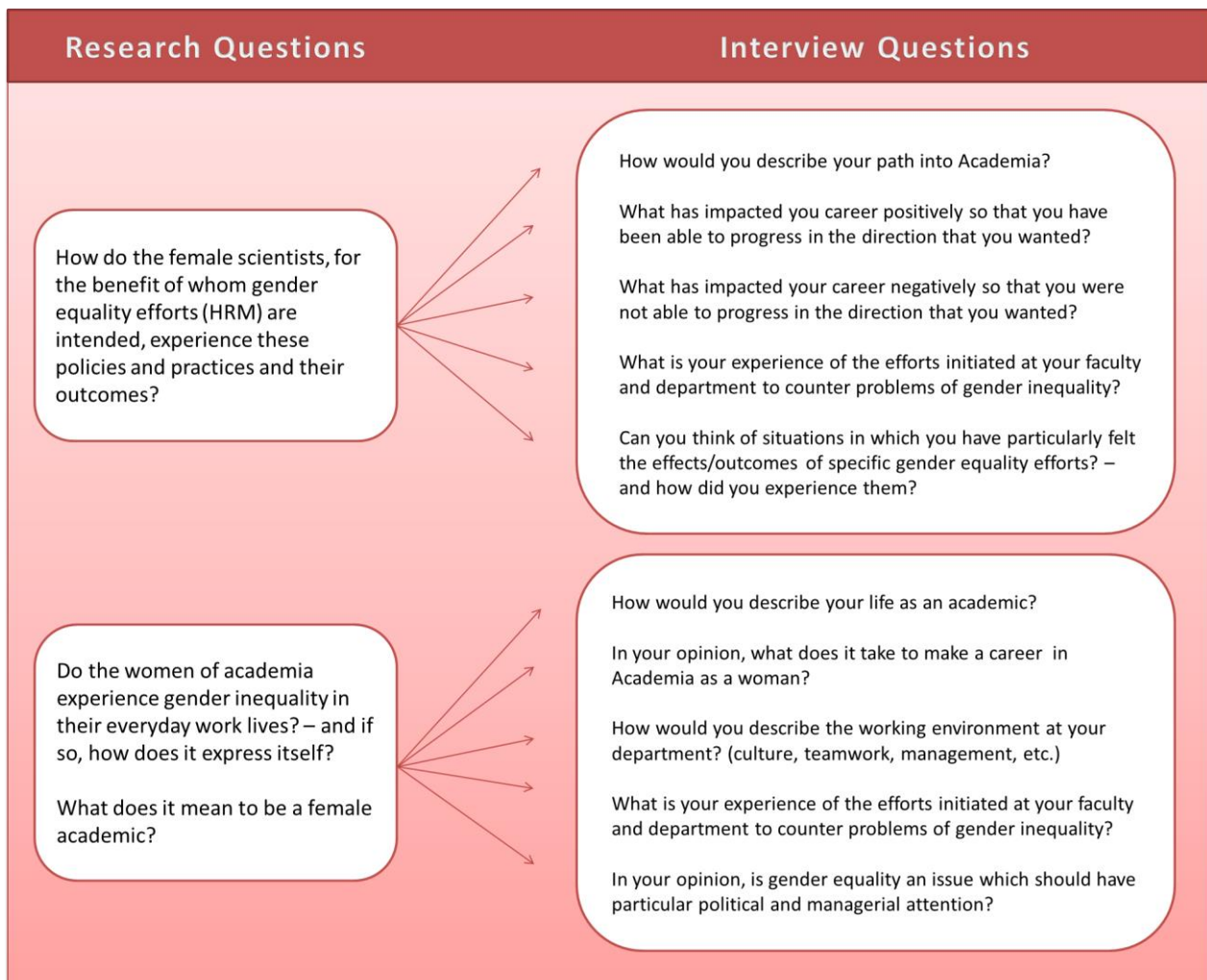
The practical preparation for the interviews on which this thesis is based started already in the sampling phase. The informants are Ph.D.s, postdocs, assistant professors, and associate professors. It was my intention to have representatives of all academic levels, but the interview appointment I had with a female professor was unfortunately cancelled and could not be re-scheduled. The criterion of having all academic levels represented was based on the assumption that this way a full representation of the challenges which face women in the course of an entire academic career path would be ensured. Nevertheless, the main challenge for academics is to achieve tenure. With several associate professor informants, a thorough account of an academic career, until the security of tenure is obtained, is guaranteed.

Furthermore, I intended to have the same amount of female informants from Biology and IMADA, as I wanted to compare the experiences of the women between the two different departments. However, it quickly became clear that there were not sufficient female employees at IMADA to live up to this criterion. Therefore, the *Discussion* will not distinguish between the two departments, but will be at a general level. One of the reasons that I did not manage to get enough informants from both departments was that I wanted to ensure *informed consent* (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015: 93-94). During the ethnographic work of mapping HRM efforts, many of the informants – incl. the department managers – asked to have access to the final version of this thesis. As a result, it is plausible to assume that e.g. the department managers will be able to recognise who the female informants are, despite anonymity, as the interviews concern the personal experiences of the informants. I encouraged my informants to take this risk into consideration before accepting my invitation to participate which led to two refusals.

Moreover, the interviews are not transcribed because the *Discussion* will not be at a close-to-text level. The discussion is based on a thematic grouping of prominent topics brought up by informants during the interview, as well as on a focus on narratives of informants' experiences and the meanings of those narratives. The narrative approach is appropriate to the discussion of female academics' work experiences, because narratives reflect cultural norms. In Coffey and Atkinson's (1996) words: »*They [narratives] also express – and indeed enact – the social conditions of power and influence in everyday life*« (pp. 75-76). In the *Appendix* on p. 91, instead of transcripts, my notes from each of the interviews are available. The interviews are numbered by one to seven in order to indicate when quoting in the text from which interview the citation came. Furthermore, in the attempt to protect my informants as much as possible, the audio recordings of the interviews are not attached when handing in the final thesis.

Next, the development of the interview guide is based on Brinkmann and Kvale's (2015) framework as illustrated in the adapted model (Figure 3) below in which research questions are translated into interview questions. The interview guide ensures that the researcher obtains the information prerequisite to answering the research questions, as well as contributing to a dynamic and natural conversational flow (p. 158). The questions are open and allow for the informant to determine direction and highlight what is important to her, as e.g. in the case of »*How would you describe your path into Academia?*« and »*What has impacted your career positively/negatively?*«. Or questions may be direct as expressed in e.g. »*In your opinion, is gender equality within Academia an issue which should have particular political and managerial attention?*«. The full interview guide is available in the *Appendix* on p. 125.

Figure 3



An interview which concerns the informants' life worlds requires the interviewer's capacity to demonstrate high levels of *empathy* (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015: 98). This approach entails the risk of "over-identifying" with research subjects which could either imply that the researcher loses sight of what she is studying (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 417) or that critical analysis becomes difficult due to feelings of loyalty towards the informants. Moreover, ideally, the exploratory approach to interviewing should be free of predetermined formats of the social world. However, any research design must necessarily be a product of the researcher's considerations as to what she expects to discover, and which research methods she believes to be most appropriate to arrive at these discoveries (Ibid.: 420). This fact becomes problematic, e.g. in relation to feminist research – and this thesis – when a research subject disagrees with the premise that women are disadvantaged compared to men. This raises the difficult question of how far the researcher's identification with the informant can and should stretch (Ibid.: 501).

2.4. Methodological Limitations

Points of criticism concerning the qualitative research approach have already been touched upon in different connections in the preceding chapter but will be summarised here. The primary criticism of the qualitative research approach resides in challenges of validity and reliability. For instance, to improve reliability, theoretical and practical methodological considerations must be thoroughly explained (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 410). This is what I have attempted in this chapter. Moreover, external validity refers to the degree to which research results can be quantified and generalised across social settings. As such, validity represents a challenge to qualitative research, as qualitative studies often imply significant levels of specificity of context and small samples (Ibid.: 410). However, issues of external validity may be less relevant, as this thesis does not aim at quantification but rather to present a snapshot of present gender equality initiatives within the particular case of the Faculty of Science at SDU, as well as to assess the assumptions and outcomes of these initiatives as perceived and experienced by female researchers.

In the attempt to contribute to a better understanding of challenges facing women in Academia, this thesis takes a novel approach. By connecting a managerial analysis with a discussion of the experiences of the receiving end of managerial gender equality practices, *thick descriptions* (Ibid.: 413) are ensured. The concept of thick descriptions refers to scientific accounts which are very rich in detail. The reason why it is advisable for qualitative researchers to include considerable detail is that behaviours, values, and so on can only be understood through a thorough understanding of the social context. As such, thick descriptions serve as a strong foundation from which readers may judge for themselves as to the credibility of the findings of this thesis and the generalisability of these findings to other contexts (Ibid.: 413).

Furthermore, *relevance* has been suggested as one further, alternative quality criterion for research. In Denmark, within politics and the media, the topic of women's disadvantaged position within Academia is indeed highly relevant. I had more or less decided to pursue this topic for my thesis already before Christmas last year, 2014. However, that the issue would receive such media coverage during the past eight months I could not have predicted. With the publication of the report "*Women in Research – All Talents in Play*" on 12 February as well as the "*Recommendations...*" report by the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science on 30 April, this topic has been discussed within as well as outside of Academia.

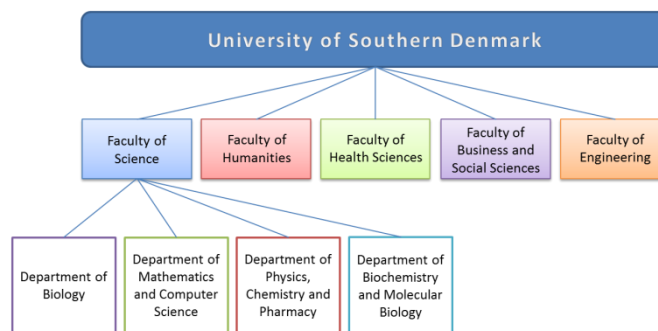
A final, and not unimportant, criticism to discuss in relation to this thesis concerns subjectivity. Firstly, as this thesis is based on a research design carried by interviews, critics may claim that findings are too person-dependent (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015: 198). In relation to mapping HRM gender equality initiatives, relevant people were asked to account for the efforts for which they themselves or their unit are responsible. As a result, such accounts represent the individual informant's interpretation of such efforts. Therefore, in order to ensure that the analysis is as comprehensive as possible, cross-references between SDU, faculty, and department level were made (cf. Figure 1). Moreover, to further verify informants' accounts of gender equality efforts, these accounts were compared with relevant documents, incl. gender equality strategies, action plans, and online information.

Moreover, as described above, the objective of the interviews is to uncover the informants' life worlds, which is why subjectivity is unavoidable and even encouraged. To move from subjective life world accounts as presented by interview informants to credible and strongly empirically founded theorisations lies with the researcher. As such, both researcher and reader know that the researcher's findings will necessarily only represent one possible interpretation (Bryman & Bell, 2007: 414). The interpretation which the researcher *has* reached is dependent on the biases of that researcher. As described above, I have chosen an in-between stance, i.e. between the critically self-reflexive and consciously value-laden stance. An unrecognised bias may entirely invalidate the results of an interview inquiry (Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015: 198), however, a recognised and consciously maintained bias, on the other hand, has the potential of strengthening research findings by e.g. highlighting specific aspects of the investigated context, which contributes to a multi-perspectival interpretation. This way, several and differing interpretations of the same case is not necessarily a weakness, but can in fact represent a strength (Ibid.: 198). From this perspective, ethical considerations which I may have had in relation to balancing a loyal, feminist commitment to my informants with my scientific agenda to produce solid and credible research may indeed prove less important, as including both perspectives may increase scientific quality.

2.5. Introduction to the Case

2.5.1. FESTA

The choice of the Faculty of Science at SDU as case for this thesis is based on the particular circumstances of this faculty. The Faculty of Science is part of the European Union's gender equality programme "*Female Empowerment in Science and Technology Academia*" – known as FESTA. FESTA is financed by the EU's seventh frame work programme and aims to encourage female researchers to pursue academic careers, and to contribute to the establishment of working environments in Academia which embrace diversity and ensure that the competences of all employees are valued and fostered (FESTA report "*Gender at the Faculty of Science, University of Southern Denmark*", 2014). Seven European universities participate in the FESTA programme and SDU is the only Danish university. Practically, involvement in the FESTA project entails seven work packages, out of which the Faculty of Science at SDU participates in five. These will be examined in the *Analysis* chapter.



FESTA's work is based on the assumption that Academia is founded on deeply rooted gender norms about how people structure their work and family lives. These structures imply that academic employees are assumed to have a partner, who is the primary caretaker of domestic obligations, while the researcher can focus on his or her work. Due to our historically bound gender socialisation, such norms frequently favour the life paths and opportunities of men, from which follows that female researchers often face contradictory expectations between the private and professional spheres. Therefore, FESTA perceives Academia as a sloped playing field which disadvantages women, and FESTA's work, as a result, involves attempts to level out that playing field. FESTA believes that women represent an unexploited resource within research, and that since international scientific competition constantly increases, all talents must be allowed to flourish and compete (FESTA at SDU, online resource 12)

In Denmark, overt and deliberate discrimination based on gender is illegal. Consequently, FESTA assumes that differential treatment between women and men within Academia is caused by subtle patterns of behaviour and culturally determined perceptions and stereotypes which remain unquestioned because people are rarely conscious about them (Berges et al., 2011: 1300). Therefore, FESTA works to document these patterns and raise awareness about them in order to change organisational practices (FESTA at SDU, online resource 12). The involvement of the Faculty of Science in FESTA reflects an ambitious attempt at improving women's position within Academia. Consequently, the Faculty of Science comprises a particularly interesting case for the analysis of gender equality efforts within Academia.

2.5.2. The Department of Biology and the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

This following section contains information about the field of the natural sciences and its development in terms of gender distribution over the years. Based on this statistical data, it is evident that significant variations exist in terms of gender distribution within and between position categories – Ph.D., postdoc, assistant prof., associate prof., and professor – and the scientific areas of biology, mathematics and computer science. A statistical foundation to support the claim that women are challenged within the scientific field of the natural sciences supports the premise of this thesis as a whole, and serves as an important starting point for understanding the case of this thesis; the Department of Biology and IMADA.

First, based on an analysis carried out by Henningsen (2002) based on statistics from the University of Copenhagen, I will take a look at the historical development of the representation of women within the scientific areas of biology, mathematics, and computer science. Though the statistics which form the basis for this retrospect are from the University of Copenhagen, I assume that they are representative for the general development at other Danish universities during the period of time between 1970 and 2001.

Figure 4

Share/percentage of women among permanent scientific staff (assistant prof., associate prof. and prof.) at the Faculty of Science at Copenhagen University 1970, 1996 and 2001 categorised based on subject area.

Subject Area	Share of Women					
	1970		1996		2001	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mathematics / Computer Science / Physics	11	7%	8	5%	10	7%
Biology (incl. Sports)	30	21%	30	20%	28	20%

This model is adapted by the author based on data from Henningsen (2002) p. 13

As evident from Figure 4, biology was already in 1970s a favoured scientific area among women. The subject area of biology includes botany, zoology, physiology, and sports. The number and percentage of women within the biological subject area remains relatively steady between the three sample years. Though the number of women drops from 30 to 28, the percentage stays at 20 per cent, which is likely due to changes in the total number of staff. Turning to the mathematics, computer science, physics subject area, the number of and share of women is significantly lower than within the biological area. As within biology, the number of women within mathematics, computer science and physics drops between 1970 and 2001, but the share stays at 7 per cent. In sum, we see no improvement to the representation of women within the two fields.

Genuine Intent or Obligation: Understanding Assumptions and Outcomes of Gender Equality Efforts within Academia

In Figure 5 below, scientific fields within the biology subject area are analysed individually. What is particularly striking is that those biological areas with comparatively high shares of women have high shares during the entire time frame, such as botany and physiology. Within sports, the percentage of women is doubled, whereas e.g. within zoology the share of women has dropped noticeably from 12 to 7 per cent. Mathematics and computer science, on the other hand, remain stable and low during the entire time frame. Henningsen (2002) points to the fact that these tendencies reflect the share of women among master students (p. 13). During the 1990s, the share of women enrolled to study biology surpassed the share of men, whereas within mathematics and especially computer science, women remain a minority (Henningsen & Højgaard, 2002: 3).

Figure 5

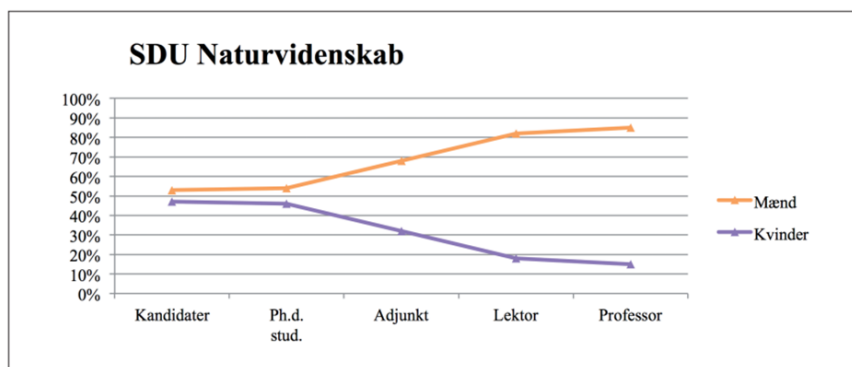
Share/percentage of women among permanent scientific staff (assistant prof., associate prof. and prof) at the Faculty of Science at the University of Copenhagen 1970, 1996 and 2001 categorised based on department / scientific area.

Department /Subject	Share of Women					
	1970		1996		2001	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Mathematics	2	6%	3	7%	2	5%
Computer Science	1	13%	0	0%	1	4%
Botany	12	26%	9	19%	8	21%
Zoology	9	12%	8	13%	4	7%
Physiology	8	36%	10	33%	9	36%
Sports	1	20%	3	30%	7	41%

This model is adapted by the author based on data from Henningsen (2002) p. 12

Based on this information from the University of Copenhagen, it is clear that among the natural sciences, considerable variations exist between individual scientific areas. This knowledge is important when assessing Figure 6 which illustrates the representation of women (*kvinder*) and men (*mænd*) within research position categories at the Faculty of Science (*naturvidenskab*) at SDU; i.e. Ph.D., associate prof. (*adjunkt*), associate prof. (*lektor*), and professors. For example, the total share of female master students (*kandidater*) is just below 50 per cent, though we know that within the study of biology women are overrepresented, and that women only represent a few per cent of mathematics and computer science master students. Furthermore, significant decreases in the share of women occur between the Ph.D. and assistant professor stage of an academic career, as well as between the assistant professor and associate professor stage. This data supports the claim that women are challenged in successfully completing the initial career stages of an academic career, and that a large portion of female researchers opt out before achieving the security of tenured employment as associate professor.

Figure 6



Share of men and women respectively at the Faculty of Science within the University of Southern Denmark based on position category, 2013
 Model extracted from report: "Recommendations by the Task Force for More Women in Research" 2015, p. 57
 Model based on data from *Statistics Denmark* and *The Ministry of Higher Education and Science*

Turning to biology specifically, in Figure 7, we see that in the Ph.D. group women far outnumber men. Almost three out of four Ph.D. students are female, which reflects the gender distribution among master students. However, the career step between Ph.D. and assistant professor marks a noteworthy drop in the share of women, and even more dramatic is the percentage drop noted between the assistant professor and associate professor categories. Among permanent scientific staff – associate professor and professor – only three are female, which represent a share of merely 11 per cent for the two categories combined.

Figure 7

Biology

Ph.d.			Postdoc			Assistant Prof.			Associate Prof. (excl. External Lecturers, incl. Adjunct Associate Prof.)			Professor (incl. Prof. MSO, Prof. Emeritus, Adjunct Prof.)		
Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%
30	22	73,333	21	7	33,333	6	3	50	17	1	5,8824	10	2	20

This model is developed by the author and based on data from the web page of the Department of Biology at SDU: http://www.sdu.dk/Om_SDU/institutter_centre/I_Biologi/Medarbejdere [Accessed: 09.07.2015]

** Professor MSO = with special responsibilities

Genuine Intent or Obligation: Understanding Assumptions and Outcomes of Gender Equality Efforts within Academia

At IMADA, we find four female Ph.D.s, however, only one is directly employed at the department. The remaining three are *organisationally* placed under IMADA but, in practice, they belong to the secretariat of the Faculty of Science. In the remaining position categories, evidently, women are highly underrepresented. Gender distribution at IMADA, similarly to Biology, reflect the gender distribution among master students.

Figure 8

Mathematics and Computer Science

Ph.d.			Postdoc			Assistant Prof.			Associate Prof. (excl. External Lecturers)			Professor (incl. Prof. MSO**, Adjunct Prof.)		
Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%
32	4	12,5	6	0	0	8	1	12,5	15	3	20	10	0	0

This model is developed by the author and based on data from the web page of the Department of Math and Computer Science at SDU: http://www.sdu.dk/Om_SDU/Institutter_centre/Imada_matematik_og_dataologi/Medarbejdere [Accessed: 09.07.2015]

** Professor MSO = *with special responsibilities*

There is, however, one thing which sets the two case departments apart. According to their online employee lists, at IMADA, women represent a share of 15 per cent of the total staff when secretaries, project coordinators, and librarians are included. At the Department of Biology, the total share of women amount exactly to 50 percent; 71 women and 71 men. Similarly, within in the group of women, we find job categories such as laboratory technicians, administrative personnel, secretaries, project coordinators, etc. Of the total number of women, only 36 belong to the academic position categories. And interestingly, among non-academic staff, only a very few are men. As such, women are undeniably present at the Department of Biology, however, there is a discrepancy in terms of women's overrepresentation at the lower levels of the job position hierarchy and men's overrepresentation in the top.

3. Theoretical Foundation

3.1. “Gender in Organisations” vs. “Gendering Organisations”

In their chapter within *The Oxford Handbook of Gender in Organization*, Calás, Smircich and Holvino (2014) categorise two meta-theoretical approaches within gender and organisation studies; *Gender in Organisations* and *Gendering Organisations*. They note that though the two approaches represent markedly different assumptions about gender leading to strikingly different research conclusions and practical outcomes, the two approaches are both still followed today.

The older of the two approaches, *Gender in Organisations*, is characterised by the *gender versus sex* dichotomy which was especially prominent in the 1960s and 1970s. According to this distinction, sex refers to the *natural*, i.e. biological and physiological, differences of men and women. Gender, on the other hand, refers to culturally constructed perceptions of masculinity and femininity, e.g. gender identity or gender roles, particularly based on the historical professional and domestic division of labour between men and women.

The *Gender in Organisations* perspective reflects the *liberal feminist* assumption of *abstract individualism* which states that “*all men (humans) are created equal*” and, thus, that women are in all ways equal to men. As such, studies within the *Gender in Organisations* literature have typically asked the question: How is it possible for the number of women in positions of authority in organisations to remain so low in a society which champions the ideal of meritocracy with its assumed gender neutrality, objective assessment, and fair outcomes? (Calás et al., 2014: 27, 20). Statistics reveal that when it comes to managerial promotion, women do not get it because they are held to different standards of evaluation. Therefore, this literature claims that gender stereotypes about status, traits, and roles based on the historical position of women deemed women unfit for managerial advancement (Ibid.: 21).

In response hereto, the women typically attempt to act counter-stereotypically by acting “less like a woman” which, based on gender stereotypes, means acting assertively and not expressing emotions. Yet, by doing so, the women risk social reprisal for being “too manly”. Thus, the *Gender in Organisation* literature essentially places the challenges of working around gender stereotypes in the laps of women, and it provides no solution regarding how best to succeed (Ibid.: 23, 29). Though this perspective acknowledges that subconscious gender assumptions exist, it does not address how such assumptions might potentially be countered. This way, Calás, Smircich, and Holvino claim, that the *Gender in Organisation* approach has tended to obscure the conditions promoting inequalities in organisations (Ibid.: 19).

Literature within the second approach, *Gendering Organisations*, is based on a social constructionist ontology which rejects the sex category as natural, and instead states that both sex and gender are social processes (Ibid.: 26). Taking this processual view entails that our understanding of *gender* shifts from being something humans *have* to something humans *do*. The process of ‘doing gender’ is self-reinforcing because, when people produce and enact social categories, those categories are simultaneously reified as social structures which prescribe resources and restrictions for people’s behaviour (West & Zimmerman, 1987: 126). From the *Gendering Organisations* perspective (as e.g. in Lorber, 1994), *gender* is perceived as a historically and culturally institutionalised system; patriarchy. This system is produced and reproduced in

social relations of domination and subordination which precede any particular person in any particular organisational context (Calás et al., 2014: 27). Within the patriarchy, domination and inequality has become naturalised under ideologies of meritocracy. Therefore, research within the *Gendering Organisations* approach has typically examined how gender is done within the organisation by scrutinising the conditions which create and perpetuate inequality (Ibid.: 25, 28).

According to the authors, Calás, Smircich, and Holvino, the second approach, *Gendering Organisations* holds greater potential for theorising gender in organisations with the objective of reducing gender inequality because the processual view permits for social structures to change since they depend on social reproduction (Ibid.: 26). Thus, the making visible of those gendering processes which perpetuate unequal, gendered power relations within organisations might potentially contribute to different conceptualisations of gender inequality. If people no longer subconsciously conceptualise gender inequality as a natural and an inevitable fact, it is assumed that reproduction will end and that systematic change is possible (Ibid.: 29). Nevertheless, the authors furthermore add that though the *gendering* theory and research have brought the reproduction of gender inequality in organisations out into the open, paradoxically, they have also stressed the complication associated with the eradication of gender inequality and that the process involved in achieving this holds no guarantees (Ibid.: 34).

3.2. Pierre Bourdieu

The following section contains a brief introduction to the work and theory of French sociologist, Pierre Bourdieu. A primary interest of Bourdieu's throughout his work was the study of social structures of dominance based on a wondering about how structures of dominance seemingly persist so easily, with relatively little resistance (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 23). Bourdieu's work includes both studies of Academia (e.g. "*The Specificity of the Scientific Field*" 1975 and "*Homo Academicus*" 1988) and of gender relations ("*La domination masculine*" 1998). Though Bourdieu himself only to a limited extent linked these two areas, the fact that he has applied his theory of practice for Academia and gender relations serves as a solid foundation for the choice of Bourdieu for the discussion of this thesis (Bloch, 1999: 2). In his theory of practice, Bourdieu attempts to theorise people's actions and the contexts in which these actions occur (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 21). In Bourdieu's terminology, human practice is termed *habitus* and contexts are termed *social fields*. These concepts will be explained below.

Significant for Bourdieu, is his rejection of the finality which characterises the sociological opposition between *subjectivism* and *objectivism*. Instead, Bourdieu situates his theory in between (McLeod, 2005: 14). Webb et al. (2002) state that the notions of habitus and the field were a means for Bourdieu of thinking *beyond* the subjectivist-objectivist split (pp.: 31-32), as these concepts introduce the individual as an agent which is subjectively structured by her or his socialisation and thereby is capable of acting interactively with the surrounding objective structures (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 13). This way, according to Bourdieu, human practice must be understood within the interdependent relationship between agency and context, or habitus and field (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 36).

Bourdieu defines habitus as the generative principle which produces human practices (Ibid.: 36). Within this 'generative principle' lies the dispositions, incl. knowledge and understandings, values and attitudes, which imply a tendency for behaving in particular ways. The term 'disposition' therefore entails the *option* to act in a particular way – or not – thus, allowing for some degree of improvisation (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 33, 36-37; and Bourdieu, 1977: 78). Furthermore, Bourdieu explains how habitus is *embodied* within people through their socialisation into the fields that they are part of and that, in its bodily nature, habitus therefore is *durable* and *transportable*. That habitus is durable and transportable means that it stays with people when they move across fields during their lives (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 42, 38-40). At the same time, habitus is susceptible to modification, because when people tend to incorporate into their own the habitus of the members of a given field which pass through or become member of (Ibid.: 42-43). As such, the habitus concept reflects how people are inherently resistant to change but not unchangeable. A person's habitus will change with new experiences, but never radically, because everything new will be perceived and valued through filters that the person brings with her from previous stages of her life. Mobility and change in people's lives imply that there will never be exact congruence between people's habitus even within the same field. There will always be people who are torn between two conflicting positions which can indeed cause great sufferings (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 42-43).

Next, as we have already established, habitus and the field are closely and interdependently related. The field refers to a sort of social microcosm that has at least some degree of autonomy and specificity which distinguishes it from other social spaces. A field usually has a set of admission requirements, it has its own specific varieties of capital, the possession of which implies power, and finally, a field typically has a history which remains highly influential in the present (Ibid.: 182). Nevertheless, Bourdieu emphasises that he does not conceive of fields as static entities, but rather that because fields are constituted through the interactions between institutions, rules, and the practices of people, fields are to Bourdieu fluid and dynamic in nature (Ibid.: 22).

One further aspect of the fluid and dynamic nature of cultural fields, concerns the processes when people or groups of people within a field attempts to designate what constitutes capital and determine how that capital is to be distributed (Ibid.: 22). This designation and distribution of capital is done by those in power within the field. Therefore, they seek to sustain their own powerful position by maintaining the value of the particular form of capital which they possess whereby sustaining the current social order (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 88-89). Therefore, understanding the importance of capital is essential to understanding the concept of the field and its social dynamics. A part from referring to financial resources, capital can also refer to intangible aspects of a person, e.g. culturally significant attributes, such as prestige, status, authority, which in Bourdieu's terminology is known as *symbolic capital* (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 22).

In several of his works, Bourdieu has analysed the social classes and how they remain the same over time in society. Children of families belonging to the higher social classes are taught to present themselves in accordance with their societal position, in terms of clothing, behaviour and language, i.e. they have *cultural capital*. As a result, a particular habitus is associated with belonging to the upper and powerful levels of a given field. People of the lower classes will always aspire to the privileges of the powerful in society and therefore attempt to imitate their lifestyle, e.g. by attempting to incorporate their habitus. This way, the *dominated* groups, people with less capital, are perceiving – and admiring – the *dominating* groups through categories determined by the *dominating* groups themselves, which as a result reflects and supports the

interests of the dominating groups. People of the dominated groups and their attempts of imitation will always be *misrecognised* (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 53), as their behaviour will be judged as forced and unnatural by those from the upper classes. They are victims of what Bourdieu calls *symbolic violence*, i.e. treated as inferior, denied resources, and limited in their social mobility and aspirations (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25). Consequently, the dominated groups *must* realistically adjust their level of ambition and expectations concerning attainment of capital due to the limitations they will inevitably face through their position within the field, their habitus, educational background, social connections, etc. In Bourdieu's words, »*the subjective hope of profit tends to be adjusted to the objective probability of profit*«. The fact that dominated groups tend to 'accept their lot' leads to the reproduction of relationships of symbolic domination (Ibid.: 2002: 23; Bourdieu, 2000: 216).

Striving for status and recognition undoubtedly reflects many aspects of human practice. Nevertheless, according to Bourdieu, this striving is only conscious as a rare exception. It is rather a matter of a deep-rooted, socialised way of behaving (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 67). As Bourdieu explains it, habitus makes a 'virtue of necessity', which means that people do not consciously weigh their aspirations against the objective probability of obtaining recognition. Such calculations are always already made. The improbable has already been ruled out as unthinkable through people's submission to the existing relationships of domination within the field. Therefore, people make a virtue of refusing that which they cannot get and by choosing the inevitable (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 42; Bourdieu 1990: 54)

As part of his analysis of power relationships between the social classes, Bourdieu focused on the educational system in France. To Bourdieu, schools are first and foremost an institution which reinforces the existing relationships of domination within society by covertly distributing cultural capital (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 71). Schools do not recognise children's knowledge, language, attitudes, and behaviours as a culturally determined social inheritance. In fact, since the school system is – in its own self-image – objective and meritocratic, the possibility that children's backgrounds are reflected in their educational performances is definitively ruled out. Knowledge, language, attitudes, and behaviours are perceived as manifestations of individual talent, intelligence, and effort. Therefore, leaving the preconditions of the children out when assessing educational performance, implies favouring the culturally and financially advantaged children (Ibid.: 72). Finally, it should of course be noted that the French educational system is significantly different from the Danish system. Nevertheless, the kind of biases which are at work when, due to meritocratic ideals, social class is ruled out as an important factor in relation to assessment of individuals are similar to the gender biases which are detectable within Academia.

Since higher education, historically, was the prerogative of men of the higher social classes, it was men in possession of cultural and financial capital who defined the social field of Academia. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and *doxa* help to understand, how, over time, the academic culture has created barriers towards the entry of new scientific disciplines and new groups of people into the scientific community (Rosenbeck, 2014: 7). *Doxa* refers to everything self-evident and given, e.g. subconscious values of members of the academic field which are never questioned (Ibid.: 29).

In his analysis of Academia, Bourdieu distinguishes between two kinds of capital: academic and scientific capital. *Academic capital* refers to an institutional power possessed by the people who are in charge of political and financial decision-making concerning the university. These people essentially contribute to the reproduction of the structures of Academia. On the other hand, the esteemed researchers with internationally acclaimed scientific work behind them possess *scientific capital* (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 173-174). This group of people contribute to the definition of what constitutes *real and good* science – and what does not. Academics in possession of academic and scientific capital determine which scientific areas are considered prestigious and important and how scientific work is carried out correctly. Therefore, it is extremely significant if this group of capital-advantaged academics are men. People will, generally, have a preference for other people with similar values and interests as themselves, e.g. research interests. As such, when women favour other research areas than men, they are less likely to be rewarded, and if female researchers apply other scientific methods, the scientific quality of their work will be undervalued. In sum, women are misrecognised as academics (Rosenbeck, 2014: 210).

Furthermore, Bourdieu emphasises that the relationships of domination within specific fields reflect the relationships of domination within the societal field of power (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 172). It is no surprise that, historically, women have been dominated by men. However, being a ‘woman’ or ‘man’ today entails much more ambivalence and dissonance, because what it means to be woman or man varies between the many different contexts, within and across which we live our lives (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 59). Though the situation for women in the western world has undoubtedly improved, ‘gender’ is an institutionalised category. Through thousands of years, gender has been embedded within the objective structures of society and people’s subjective, mental structures (Ibid.: 57; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 154). In additions, according to Bourdieu, cultural perceptions of femininity and masculinity are inscribed into people’s bodies through their upbringing and socialisation. Children are taught the *proper* ways of walking, talking, behaving, etc. through pedagogical reprimands and particularly through imitation of other people’s behaviour, e.g. their parents (Ibid.: 57). Social relations are thus embedded into bodily conduct and mental structures, whereby historically conditioned gender differences appear biologically determined. This way, cultural and biological understandings of gender become blurred (Ibid.: 58).

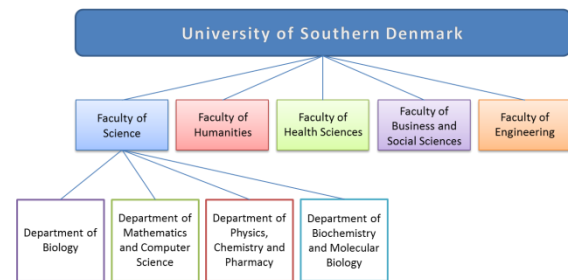
Furthermore, bodies are central to Bourdieu’s analysis of relationships of domination. He argues that people confirm and reproduce social relationships of domination through our bodily conduct, what he calls bodily *hexis*, in accordance with the role as either dominating or dominated (Ibid.: 52). The power to dominate – or exercise symbolic violence – follows from the possession of symbolic capital and the power to determine a field’s perception and assessment categories, e.g. as we saw in the case of Academia; what is considered *good* science, important scientific areas, and how a scientist looks and acts is determined by male academics. The position as a possible victim of symbolic domination follows from having incorporated the perception categories determined by the dominating groups within a field (Ibid.: 51).

Finally, central to understanding the functioning of symbolic violence and relationships of domination within Bourdieu’s theoretical framework is that it happens with the victim’s complicity. Or in other words, victims of symbolic violence do not perceive the social stigmatisation and sanctions which they are subjected to as such, but rather as the natural order of things. Male domination is possible because women misrecognise it as natural and inevitable (Bianciotti, 2011: 75; Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25).

Based on his analysis of gender relations and male domination, it is not surprising that feminist theorists and researchers have adopted Bourdieu's theoretical framework and concepts. The concepts of habitus, the field, doxa, and hexis represent powerful tools for analysing the persistence of difference and inequality (McLeod, 2005: 20). In Bourdieu's own words, awareness-raising in terms of the fundamental social structures which regulate and influence the lives of people is essential to the emancipatory project of sociology (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 53). However, in his theory, Bourdieu's focus is on the reproduction, continuity and durability of relationships of domination over time, as opposed to on change and liberation. Therefore, feminist criticisms of Bourdieu include e.g. a rethinking of the habitus-field relationship in less deterministic and rigid terms, and with a stronger emphasis on the possibility for improvisation and inventiveness alongside the structural regulation of objective, structures of society and subjective, mental structures within individuals (Bianciotti, 2011: 81; McLeod, 2005: 17). Feminist theorists, for instance McNay (1999, 2000), suggest a re-theorisation of gender building on change and instability. McNay argues, due to the historical improvements to women's positions and possibilities within society, modern women move in and out of diverse social fields (McNay, 1999: 112). Within these fields, their experiences of autonomy and subordination vary. It is this variation, which implies dissonance and disjunction between experiences of gender within different fields, which is both evidence of and produces change (McLeod, 2005: 22). The challenge which faces feminist, Bourdieuan researchers is essentially a reflection of the challenge which faces their object of study: How do women's encounters with different social fields further embed or reconfigure gender habitus in new but old ways? And how might women's experiences of dissonance and contradiction prompt reflexivity in relation to the self? (Ibid.: 25)

4. Human Resource Management Analysis

Recalling Figure 1, re-shown here on the right, this chapter covers an analysis of selected human resource management (HRM) policies and practices at three levels within University of Southern Denmark: a) the overall level represented by university management and administration, as well as the HR Development unit under the HR Service department, b) faculty level represented by the



Faculty of Science, and c) department level represented by the Department of Biology and the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science (IMADA). This approach has been employed because responsibility for gender equality efforts at the University of Southern Denmark is distributed and shared between these three levels as illustrated. The analysis of each organisational level at SDU will focus on HRM policies and practices which are either implemented or adapted with the purpose of accommodating and improving issues of gender inequality. This way, an exhaustive analysis is ensured. However, though I did in fact perform an exhaustive analysis, due to limitations in terms of size, this Analysis chapter contains only those gender equality efforts which are most relevant to this thesis. The most relevant gender equality efforts are chosen based on the degree to which they are connected with the topics addressed by the informants during the interviews, and those which were less relevant had to be cut out. As such, the majority of the gender equality efforts examined within this chapter will reappear in the Discussion.

Gender equality efforts at the various levels within SDU include:

Figure 9



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As described above in the *Methodology* chapter, the information which forms the foundation for this analysis has been obtained through interviews with relevant informants (such as the director of the HR Development unit and department managers), from meetings in which I have participated (such as SDU's Gender Equality Committee), and written information material (incl. strategy documents, reports, as well as information from various web pages).

Figure 10



The analysis is based on the model by Benschop and Verloo (2012), and Benschop and van den Brink (2014), including the four categories of gender equality strategies: individual inclusion, individual re-evaluation, structural inclusion, and structural transformation.

Cf. Figure 2

Strategies for change			
	Inclusion	Re-evaluation	Transformation
Individual	Liberal, equip the woman, create equal opportunity	Managing diversity, value difference	
Structural	Radical structural equal opportunity		Gender mainstreaming, post-equity

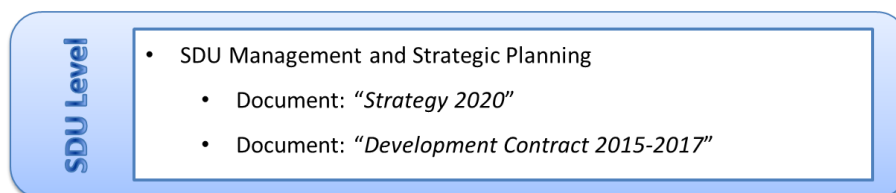
Source: Benschop and van den Brink, 2014
Adapted from Benschop and Verloo (2012: 280)

4.1. University of Southern Denmark Level

4.1.1. SDU Management and Strategic Planning

During the past 25 years, gender inequality within research has repeatedly been put on the political agenda. Politicians have stressed the importance of improving gender equality within Academia e.g. by publishing reports, value statements, and recommendations (e.g. *“Gender Equality within Research”*, 1998; *“All Talents in Play – More Women in Research”*, 2005; *“Recommendations...”*, 2015, etc.) and by introducing *gender mainstreaming* into Danish legislation. Based on this knowledge, it may be assumed that this political attention to the topic of gender inequality within Academia and intention to create improvement should be reflected within strategic planning of the University of Southern Denmark. There are two documents available on the web page which describe SDU’s strategic direction; SDU’s official *“Strategy 2020”* and the legally required *“Development Contract 2015-2017”*.

Figure 11



When reading through these documents, gender equality does not stand out as an area which is given particular attention. In the *“Strategy 2020”* document, gender equality is not mentioned. Focus areas of SDU’s strategy instead involve e.g. internationalisation and engagement in society. In SDU’s *“Development Contract 2015-2017”*, however, as one of the very last points, gender equality is mentioned (p. 9):

7.2. The University of Southern Denmark wishes the gender distribution of permanently employed, academic staff to reflect the gender distribution of the students and of society as a whole, in order to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to develop their talent.

The University of Southern Denmark has a target of increasing the share of women with 1 percentage point per annum. All measures will be based on permanently employed, academic staff.

Starting Point - 2013	2015	2016	2017
29,40%	30,40%	31,40%	32,40%

The development contract includes no further comments as to how these targets are to be achieved. The development contract is an agreement between individual Danish universities and the Ministry of Higher Education and Science which typically runs during three to five years. The individual university chooses one group of focus areas, and another group of mandatory focus areas are formulated independently by the university, based on societal priorities selected by the Minister. *“Increased social mobility – more talents in play”* is the title of one of these mandatory focus areas, and as such, it does not point directly to a gender

perspective although it does include the catchphrase often used by the Ministry in relation to gender equality within Academia; “*all talents in play*” (Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science, “*Letter concerning Development Contracts*”). It may seem surprising that the mandatory focus areas outlined by the Ministry do not include gender equality explicitly, but only an open point within which gender may or may not be included. Recalling the recent publications from the Ministry (“*Women in Research – All Talents in Play*”, 2015; “*Recommendations...*”, 2015) emphasising the importance of improving opportunities for female academics, it is evidently an area in which the Ministry has invested considerable resources. Nevertheless, from the national Danish political level, no unmistakable indication is expressed that strategic attention to issues of gender equality within Danish universities is a priority. The explanation for this may be that as universities are legally required through *gender mainstreaming* to incorporate a consideration for gender issues in planning and decision-making processes, gender equality might be perceived as “already taken care of”.

Furthermore, based on the SDU “*Strategy 2020*” and “*Development Contract 2015-2017*”, indications of intention in relation to gender equality are likewise rather vague from SDU’s top management. As illustrated by the excerpt above, there is a specified percentage target set for improvements to gender representation during the coming years, which is of course very concrete. However, according to the “*Strategy 2020*” document, gender equality is not a strategic priority at the same level as e.g. internationalisation and societal engagement. The task of SDU’s executive board, when establishing the university’s future orientation, is of course to ensure its survival – and to survive, simply put, the university needs money. According to Benschop and van den Brink (2014), decision makers often need to see evidence of the profitability of gender equality before engaging in efforts at the strategic level (p. 340). If an undeniable financial advantage as an outcome of increased gender equality was presented, e.g. through improved competitive advantage and increased organisational effectiveness, perhaps, intentions to improve the gender balance might be more determined (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 281).

Based on the relatively limited attention paid to gender equality at the strategic level of SDU, it seems that the values that underlie gender equality efforts are based on a sense of obligation. The percentage target presented in the development contract may only be included because the law and gender mainstreaming requires public institutions to incorporate consideration for gender in planning processes (Danish Act on Gender Equality, online resource 4; Tools for Gender Mainstreaming, online resource 5). This kind of obligation does not necessarily imply genuine, whole-hearted efforts. As Eva Sophia Myers explained in my interview with the FESTA team, people are usually divided between two perspectives: One, from which people believe that gender is not an important factor today, and that gender inequality is a problem of the past, and two, from which people believe that gender is indeed the basis for subtle, systemic discrimination, and that gender inequality is alive and well today, although in different and less easily perceptible ways than previously (Interview notes on p. 119). These two perspectives most likely influence the level of commitment which people feel for the project of gender equality.

Nevertheless, genuine intent for improving the gender balance at SDU becomes more evident within the “*Action Plan for Gender Equality at the University of Southern Denmark 2014-2015*”. In contrast to the development contract, the action plan contains detailed information about visions for gender equality at

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SDU, placement of responsibilities, concrete actions, and success criteria. As all except one point mentioned within the SDU action plan are also included in the “*Gender Equality Strategy*” of the Faculty of Science, these points will be discussed below under *Faculty of Science*.

Figure 12



4.1.2. Career Development

A part from outlining the university’s strategic direction, there is only one point within the gender equality action plan for which SDU, through its HR Development unit, is responsible: point 3.2. “*Competence strategies which include career development activities*”.

Figure 13



This point involves, at faculty and department level, the development of career strategies for scientific staff which include competence development and career development courses. SDU’s HR Development unit design and provide such courses, with the objective of supporting female researchers’ step by step advancement through the academic hierarchy, and ultimately to ensure a larger group of women who are qualified for associate professorships and full professorships.

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In his interview (Notes, p. 117), Jakob Ejersbo accounts for the assumption underlying the career development programme in the following way:

If the problem is not a bunch of evil men who does not want female researchers around, then it has to be some obstacles within the academic system, which are holding the women back. So we are working systematically with 'dressing' the women so that they are capable of handling these obstacles.

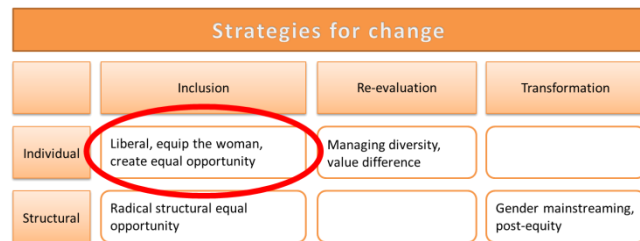
Career development efforts are key to retaining young researchers within Academia (e.g. “*All Talents in Play – More Women in Research*” 2005, “*Women in Research – All Talents in Play*” 2015, etc.). These efforts involve encouraging young researchers to think strategically about their careers, and teaching them how best to do this. Jakob Ejersbo explains that career planning has not traditionally been as common within Academia as e.g. within business, because academics generally are sceptical regarding the usefulness of plans in a constantly changing environment due to e.g. political decisions, changes in research strategies, funding options, etc. Therefore, these courses help academics by ensuring for the individual researcher the best possible CV and thereby the best possible conditions for professional progression. Furthermore, the courses have the additional benefit that they allow researchers to network across departments and faculties. Having positive professional or even personal relationships within the work sphere implies mutual support between people which both women and men need in competitive environments (Faculty of Science, SDU: “*Gender Equality Strategy*”; FESTA web page, online resource 3).

The career development programme was originally targeted on women specifically and was titled “*Career development for young female researchers*”. However, the female participants found the restriction based on sex problematic. There is a clear tendency that female researchers resist having their sex emphasised, even when it involves being part of a course which is meant as a positive opportunity for them. Resistance may be due to the competitive environment of Academia, within which participating in a course to strengthen your career prospects may indicate insecurity or a kind of resignation, that you might not be able to make it without a variety of tactical tricks up your sleeve (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). Not surprisingly, this is not a signal which anybody would want to send.

Moreover, it turned out that young male researchers were equally interested in participating in the career development course, and therefore the course became open for everyone. The fact that young male researchers also expressed a wish to participate in the career development programme may perhaps be an indication that not even young men today possess the tactical skills which historically were indispensable to successfully making a career in Academia. It is possible that people today have simply developed in a direction which does no longer correspond with the historically founded academic system, i.e. that people and Academia have in fact “grown apart” (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 59). Considering the inflexible and change-resistant nature of Academia (Rosenbeck, 2014: 121-122), this scenario does not seem wholly unlikely.

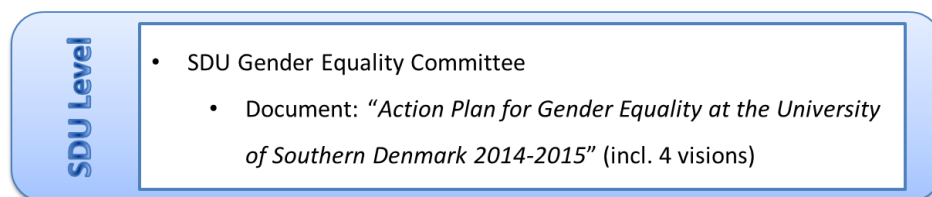
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According to Figure 2 – the model by Benschop and her associates (2012, 2014) – the HR Development unit’s career development programme would be categorised as an *individual inclusion* strategy, as it is based on an “equip the women” assumption. According to individual inclusion strategies, the world of Academia is characterised by the principles of meritocracy which means that individuals are assessed objectively based on their merit, and liberal equality which implies that everyone are equally entitled to achieving promotion and rewards. This means that those individuals who are assessed ‘best’ will be justly and fairly rewarded (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). Problems arise when research and statistics then demonstrate that in practice, women are in fact disadvantaged.



The assumption underlying Benschop and van den Brink’s (2014) analysis of the individual inclusion strategies reflects Calás et al.’s examination of the Gender in Organisations perspective (cf. p. 25). The Gender in Organisations perspective entails a belief in meritocracy, while it simultaneously acknowledges the existence of subconscious gender assumptions (Calás et al., 2014: 19). As such, women are assumed not to possess the skills which enable them to thrive in their careers – the skills that men supposedly *do* possess. This lack of professional career skills is due to sex-role socialisation based on the historical professional versus domestic division of the sexes. As a result, career development courses represent a systemised means for teaching women those strategic career tactics which are necessary in a world created and dominated by men. Or in other words, from a critical perspective, women are taught to behave less like women and more like men to be able to keep up with the ‘rules of them game’ (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). However, in Bourdieu’s words, female academics will always be misrecognised as *real* academics, although they adopt the habitus associated with the field of Academia (Rosenbeck, 2014: 7, 210; Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 53).

Figure 14

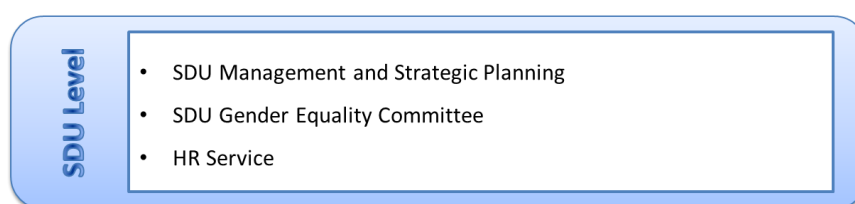


Nevertheless, the action plan document states that these career development courses have been held several times with great success. Also, both of the interviewed department managers, Marianne Holmer and Martin Svensson, as well as some of the informants expressed their satisfaction with the course. Consequently, managers and participants feel that career development courses do indeed make a positive difference for the participants. However, the critical point is that individual inclusion strategies do not aim to change the system, its power relations, or its subtle mechanisms of discrimination (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). Therefore, I argue that by adopting strategic career tactics, i.e. presumed masculine behaviour, women contribute to the reproduction of male domination within Academia. Accepting and

incorporating the habitus and perception categories determined by the dominating group within a field implies being placed in the position dominated (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 51). Power relations within a field will stay unchallenged as long as dominated groups reproduce their status as dominated, such as e.g. when women misrecognise it as natural and inevitable that they must change their behaviour in order to be included within a field (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25). As such, until the habitus and doxa of Academia are challenged, Academia will remain a masculine culture (Rosenbeck, 2014: 121-122).

4.1.3. The SDU Gender Equality Committee

Figure 15



We now turn to the Gender Equality Committee of SDU. The Gender Equality Committee is appointed by the vice-chancellor of the university and is essentially instituted to carry out tasks assigned by him. The Gender Equality Committee is e.g. responsible for the development and continuous revision of the gender equality action plan (cf. “*Action Plan for Gender Equality at the University of Southern Denmark 2014-2015*”). Furthermore, the chairman of the committee reports on progress and ongoing work to the Executive Board, and approval from the Executive Board must be granted when the Gender Equality Committee itself has specific wishes in relation to future projects, initiatives, and so on. While researching at SDU’s web page for this brief introduction, I was surprised to find that the Gender Equality Committee is rather invisible. They have no web page and they are not mentioned anywhere within the SDU web page. Since the committee is appointed directly by the vice-chancellor, the work of the committee only involves a very small amount of stakeholders. This way, it is not so surprising that the Gender Equality Committee is not mentioned online in relation to other aspect of the SDU organisation.

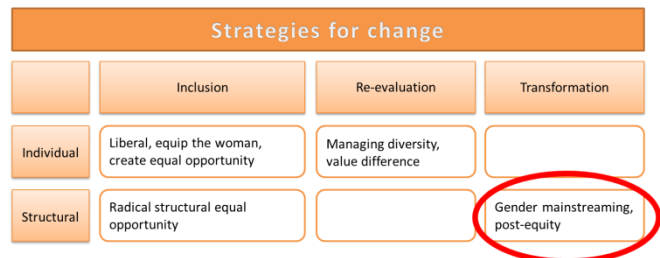
The fact that the vice-chancellor of SDU has appointed a gender equality committee indicates a wish to link gender equality efforts closely with university management. According to Benschop and van den Brink (2014), within the concept of gender mainstreaming, the necessity of embedding gender equality efforts within management is central (p. 338). As chairman of the Gender Equality Committee, Ole Skøtt, also stated during the meeting in which I participated:

The gender equality committee is deeply anchored within university management because it is part of the annual cycle of managerial tasks, and also because the committee’s members represent management of the various faculties and departments. (Meeting minutes, p. 122)

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Gender mainstreaming requires organisational actors involved in policy-making and implementation to collaborate with gender experts to collectively identify and change the policies and practices which reproduce and foster gender inequality at work (Benschop and van den Brink, 2014: 338). Among SDU's Gender Equality Committee's members we find heads of faculties (e.g. chairman Ole Skøtt, who is the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences), department managers (incl. Marianne Holmer, Department of Biology, and Martin Svensson, IMADA), as well as the task leader from FESTA, Liv Baisner, who based on her daily work with gender equality at the Faculty of Science contributes with her expertise on gender in Academia.

Committee members, who represent management of either faculty or department level, will be able to introduce initiatives discussed and decided on within the Gender Equality Committee at their faculties and departments respectively, without having to pass the responsibility for implementation on to someone else, who may have other



priorities. By involving both people responsible for policy-making and implementation, *structural transformation* gender equality strategies, such as gender mainstreaming, have a high potential for creating results with sufficient economic, political, and bureaucratic support (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 283).

However, gender mainstreaming has been criticised for failing to address feminist theories of *intersectionality*, which draw attention to the privilege of the category of gender above other social categories such as ethnicity or class (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 284). As such, according to critics, to be successful, gender equality efforts are recommended to incorporate a diversity perspective. Diversity was also discussed at the Gender Equality Committee meeting in which I participated. Arguments were proposed for changing the Gender Equality Committee into a 'diversity committee'. None of the committee members disagreed with the point that, as SDU strategically strives for increased internationalisation, diversity should be addressed. However, arguments against a diversity focus included e.g. the risk of diversity efforts, particularly in relation to international staff, overshadowing gender equality efforts. Diversity is a popular concept, but it is also loose, and committee members questioned what it actually means. Some further doubted whether diversity efforts are indeed capable of simultaneously countering issues of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, class, sexuality, age, disability, etc. or whether addressing each issue with efforts developed specifically for that particular issue might not prove a better approach.

By taking a diversity perspective, the scope of gender equality efforts would change from striving for *transformation* to striving for *re-evaluation*. According to Benschop and van den Brink (2014), *individual re-evaluation* strategies are founded on a "value difference" logic, i.e. differences between organisational members



should be celebrated as people by virtue of their differences make unique contributions to the organisation and as such, when fostered and used, differences constitute competitive advantage for the organisation. Implementation of diversity management strategies necessitates a re-evaluation of qualification and

performance criteria, so that what constitutes useful qualifications and good performance is not defined and exemplified by the dominant group within a field. In relation to gender, re-evaluation implies abolishing a hierarchical ordering of masculine and feminine attributes and skills, for instance by evaluating collaboration, communication, listening, building and nurturing relations (assumed female strengths) equally to directing, talking, thinking, and doing (assumed male strengths). However, not surprisingly, this approach entails a high risk of reinforcing heterosexual gender stereotypes as well as privileging expressions of masculinity and femininity associated with white, middle-class (Benschop and van den Brink, 2014: 336).

Finally, genuine intent on committee member's part is key. If members, managers and staff, participate in the Gender Equality Committee because they have to, i.e. due to obligation, their efforts and involvement will be accordingly. However, I argue that if members, perhaps especially managers, are ardent believers of the need for and value of gender equality efforts, the likelihood that the organisation will see concrete improvements is much higher. The notion of genuine intent will be further discussed below.

4.1.4. The Matrix

The concept of *The Matrix* (c.f. the movie from 1999 with Keanu Reeves in the lead role) is not new as a metaphor for gender inequality, or for the patriarchy. If you google it, you will get quite a lot of hits. However, I do not know, and have not been able to find out, who the original author or creator of this coupling is. I was first introduced to the metaphor of The Matrix in the context of gender inequality at a meeting at SDU on 26 February 2015 in which Nina Groes, the director of *Kvinno* (the Danish Centre for Research and Information on Gender, Equality, and Diversity), was speaking. She said something along the line of »*Gender inequality is just like The Matrix; once you realise it is there, you see it everywhere*«. This was an analogy that I could relate to. In *The Matrix*, the main character Neo is given the chance to see that the world is in fact not, what everyone thinks it is. If he chooses the blue pill (picture), Neo rejects the chance to see the world for what it really is, he will wake up in his bed, and everything will stay the same. By choosing the red pill, on the other hand, he will see that humans are in fact slaves of machines, and that the world we think we live in, is a computer programme – called *The Matrix* – developed to blind us from the truth. Once this is realised, there is no going back.



I had the same experience of having my perceptions of how the world was turned upside down when I first realised that Danish society perhaps was not as gender equal as I had assumed. Without knowing what an epiphany feels like, I expect that that might have been what it was. Things sort of fell into place, things made sense in a new way. The fact that one of my female informants (6, p. 106) described having had a similar eye-opening experience made me think that this is exactly what Eva Sophie Myers was referring to when she was talking about people being divided between two perspectives: People who believe that gender inequality is a problem of the past, and people who believe that that gender inequality still exists today, although in different and more subtle ways than before. There are the “believers” who have taken the red pill, had the epiphany, seen the light, etc. and the “non-believers” who have either not yet had the chance to take the red pill or who chose to take the blue pill instead.

So, we might ask: What difference does it make whether people believe that Danish society is either gender equal or unequal? The answer is: quite a big difference. The group of people who have not yet taken the red pill believe in liberal equality, meritocracy, and people's ability to objectively assess the competencies and performances of others. This group of people will reject the claim that gender is a factor which implies significant limitation to the opportunities of women within the assumed gender neutral and equal, modern Danish society. When gender equality efforts are discussed, they will dismiss these as unnecessary or even as rendering the situation of men disadvantaged. Part of this group will be so strong in their belief in objectivity and equality that they will openly resist gender equality efforts. This group of people would choose the blue pill, if they had the option. It is no surprise, that some people would rather stay unaware of inequality, since realising unfairness implies having to make up one's mind concerning whether to act on this unfairness or not. It is simply easier to stay voluntarily and deliberately ignorant.

Another part of the group of people who believe in equality will be less rigid. Once presented with evidence, they are susceptible and open to adjusting their beliefs. Or they may be made aware of their own gender biases from having them called out by another person or from catching their biases 'in the act'. This is why taking the red pill is so difficult; because it involves realising that we are all flawed. Even as a feminist, I haven occasionally exposed my own gender biases and it made me simultaneously ashamed and thankful; ashamed to realise that I had them, but thankful to be in a position where they *are* discovered so that I have the chance to work with, around and against them. In sum, despite the shame and the self-reflection that it entails, taking the red pill should be seen as a positive opportunity for getting to know yourself better and for limiting the negative consequences of gender biases.

In relation to gender equality efforts, typically, the drivers and passionate change agents behind are people who took the red pill. Either they chose to take it when the opportunity was presented to them, or perhaps realising the existence of gender inequality was a gradual process. In either case, having realised the biased nature of people, they reject the possibility of objective assessment and dismiss meritocracy as a utopic ideal, and consequently perceive gender equality efforts as giving women a handicap. As such, this group of people have *genuine intent* for improving gender equality because they feel morally compelled to do so. They have a genuine belief in the importance of gender equality efforts and therefore push and encourage the development of gender equality legislation, policy, and action.

In comparison, if a person – who believes that Denmark is a gender equal society and who believes that objectivity is possible – is in charge of gender equality efforts, this person will probably not have genuine intent. It makes sense that if a person does not believe that gender inequality exists, his or her first priority will not be to focus all attention and resources to gender equality efforts. Efforts will be based on legal obligation or on outside pressures, such as when the gender equality debate is receiving a lot of coverage and attention in the media. Legal requirements include e.g. gender mainstreaming.

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However, criticisms regarding the concept of gender mainstreaming concern the rather vague formulations as to what actually to do:

Gender mainstreaming is about integrating gender and gender equality into core areas – care for the elderly, education policy, activation of the unemployed and so on.

The Danish Act of Gender Equality states that gender equality must be incorporated into all levels of public planning and administration – that is gender mainstreaming. (Tools for Gender Mainstreaming, online resource 5)

As such, gender mainstreaming sounds like a rational approach, but in practice it seems unlikely that people, if they believe that men and women are equal, will take the time and trouble to consider all possible gendered consequences and outcomes when developing a new strategy or budget, etc.

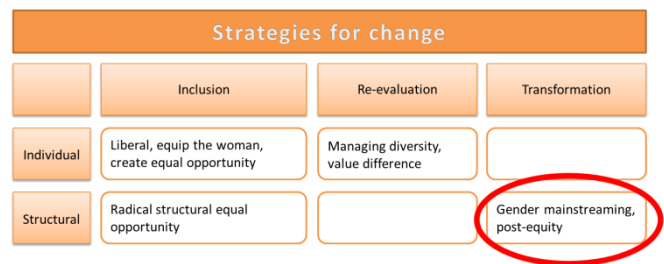
The fact that genuine, passionate advocates of gender equality efforts and “non-believers” often have to collaborate on gender equality efforts implies many challenges. Reaching common problem definitions and deciding on necessary solutions involves a process of much bending and stretching, as well as the ability to cope with resistance. Resistance is inevitable as non-believers see the work that they are forced to participate in as an assault on meritocracy, and believers will be compelled to accept compromises perhaps much less radical or extensive as they would like (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 283). Gender equality efforts should of course not become a “religious” struggle, or a struggle between the red team and the blue team. Ideally, equality should be a common struggle which benefits everyone. Nevertheless, I find it hard to believe that gender equality efforts will really begin to take hold before policy makers and change agents at all levels realise that we are *all* restricted by gender stereotypes, much more than we would like to admit (Berges et al., 2011: 1300). People need to see and experience *The Matrix* before they will be ready to adapt their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours accordingly. At least we should provide them with a selection of gender studies, and then they could do with them whatever they wanted – but they would have a choice: to read them or not, enlightenment or ignorance, change or status quo, red pill or blue pill.

As an example of the challenges which the collaboration between believers and non-believers imply, SDU’s decision (in 2009) to hire a gender equality consultant can be mentioned. The intention was for this consultant to assist university management in gender equality efforts by organising and carrying out activities to support female researchers’ careers (Report about Gender Equality Consultant, online resource 11). However, the woman hired for the job only stayed for two years, and no replacement was hired. Jakob Ejersbo (p. 117) explained that it did not work to have one person ‘above’ gender equality efforts, and that successful efforts are the ones that are carried out close to the daily lives of female researchers. An anonymous source further stated that the consultant was not given much latitude in terms of her work by university management, and that she was frustrated by the resistance which her efforts were met with. Based on the contradictory circumstances experienced by the consultant, it would not seem likely that management, on the surface, may have wanted her help, however, that when she suggested extensive or demanding changes support seemed to run out.

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Recalling the discussion of Benschop and Verloo's (2012) examination of *structural transformation* gender equality strategy category, managerial collaboration with gender experts is central to e.g. gender mainstreaming. As described above, this kind of collaboration may constitute challenges as it necessitates a large degree of willingness for compromise. The

aim of gender mainstreaming is transformation, consequently, the changes required in order to achieve this are profound. Therefore, there is a risk that inadequate economic, political, and bureaucratic support will prevent efforts to transform organisational structures from succeeding (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 283). Both Jakob Ejersbo (p. 117) and the FESTA representatives, Eva Sophia Myers and Liv Baisner (p. 119), mention the story about the consultant as a disappointing experience, which is likely to serve as argumentation of university management for not attempting such progressive measures again.

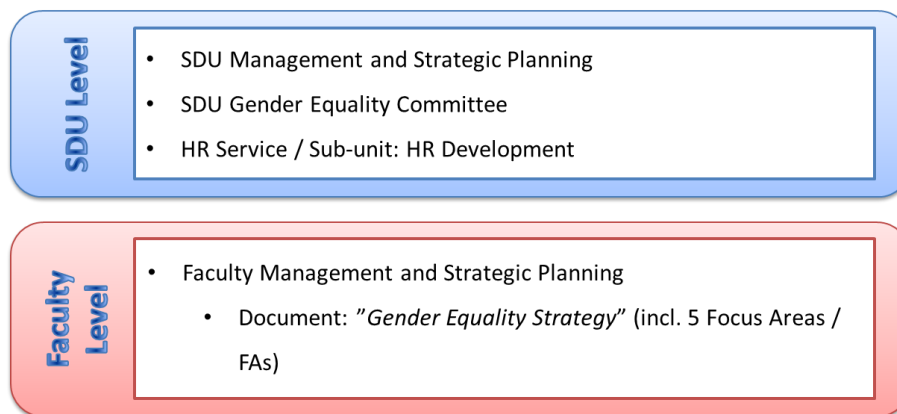


4.2. Faculty of Science Level

4.2.1. Faculty Management and Strategic Planning

Having covered gender equality efforts at the SDU level, the analysis now moves on to faculty level at the Faculty of Science. Since the share of women within the associate professor and professor position category dropped from 17.6 per cent in 2010 to 16.1 per cent in 2012, the Faculty of Science at SDU felt it necessary to develop a Gender Equality Strategy (Faculty of Science, SDU: “*Gender Equality Strategy*”).

Figure 16



This strategy contains five focus areas incl. action plans and targets for each area. Gender equality efforts at the Faculty of Science are distributed between faculty administration, the faculty’s gender equality committee and FESTA. However, efforts and responsibilities imply considerable overlap. As such, to avoid repetition, some initiatives will be examined in the following paragraph and others will be examined below under the *FESTA* paragraph.

Figure 17

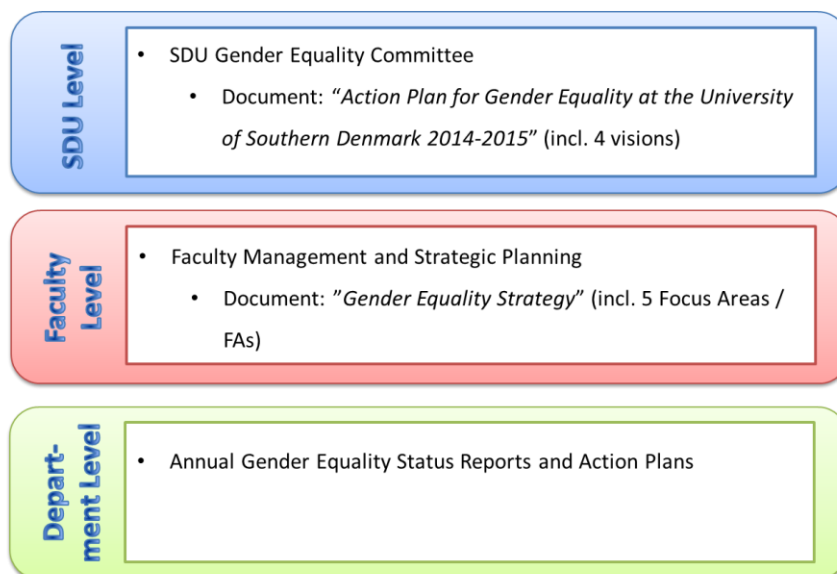


4.2.1.1. Focus Area 1

Within Focus Area 1 – FA1 in Figure 17 – lies the intention of embedding gender equality efforts within management practices. As described above in relation to SDU's Gender Equality Committee, the importance of embedding gender equality efforts within management cannot be underestimated. Without the proper political, financial, and bureaucratic support, as well as the genuine intent of managers, gender equality efforts risk failure (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 283).

Moreover, at the Faculty of Science, department management is obligated to develop gender equality status reports and action plans every year which must be approved by faculty management. Having integrated this requirement into the annual cycle of managerial tasks, department managers are forced to reflect on gender issues, incl. detecting and improving areas with particular underrepresentation. In the case of lack of improvements from year to year, department management is held accountable. Finally, individual department action plans contribute to the overall gender equality strategy of the faculty which is delivered to the SDU Gender Equality Committee also yearly, which is illustrated by Figure 18 below (FESTA Interview, notes p. 119).

Figure 18



Evidently, the interdependent collaboration between department, faculty, and SDU level is highly structured. The annual report from department management serves as foundation for the development of the faculties' reports. The faculties' reports are included within the university's annual report, and conclusions of the overall SDU report contribute to the development of or adaptations to SDU's gender equality action plan. This way, continuous monitoring of progress is ensured at each level; department,

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faculty and for the entire university. To demonstrate progress is of course essential when time and resources are invested. Evidence of progress also helps to legitimise previous gender equality efforts and stress the importance of carrying on. Furthermore, following Benschop and van den Brink (2014), the structural transformative *post-equity* gender equality strategy emphasises the need for generating narratives about the success of past gender equality effort, which are assumed to contribute to embedding already achieved improvements and to increase support for future gender equality initiatives (p. 338-339).

Strategies for change			
	Inclusion	Re-evaluation	Transformation
Individual	Liberal, equip the woman, create equal opportunity	Managing diversity, value difference	
Structural	Radical structural equal opportunity		Gender mainstreaming, post-equity

4.2.1.2. Focus Area 2

Focus Area 2 concerns two key HRM areas; recruitment and retention. Recruitment within Academia happens as follows: An assessment committee looks through the total pool of applicants and selects the ones who live up to the minimum requirements. Then, an appointments committee chooses the candidates who are invited for interviews, and finally management conducts the interviews and selects the appropriate candidate for the position. In relation to this process, it has been established that gender balanced assessment and appointments committees increase the number of women hired (e.g. Reisby, 1999; Ståhle, 2005; Analysis carried out at SDU, internal document). According to the “Recommendations...” (2015) report, recruiters have a tendency to ‘hire in their own reflection’ (p. 12). This means that both men and women committee members will generally be more likely to prefer a candidate who reminds them of themselves. Therefore, if committees consist of only men, the chance that a man will be hired is proportionately higher, whereas the presence of women in committees will improve diversity in recruitment (e.g. “Women – Quality – Research”, 1997; “All Talents in Play – More Women in Research”, 2005 “Recommendations...”, 2015). As a result, the Faculty of Science has implemented the requirement that assessment and appointments committees must have female representation.

Re-designing recruitment processes are typically part of efforts for *creating equal opportunities* at the structural level. Gender equality strategies belonging to the *structural inclusion* category perceive organisational structures as creating differential opportunities for women and men, and as such direct change efforts at processes and practices of recruitment, promotion, and evaluation with the aim of making them more transparent (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 337). Structural inclusion strategies involve direct intervention as they are carried by a dismissal of objectivity and a recognition of gender biases as inevitable, and they are, as such often considered radical.

Strategies for change			
	Inclusion	Re-evaluation	Transformation
Individual	Liberal, equip the woman, create equal opportunity	Managing diversity, value difference	
Structural	Radical structural equal opportunity		Gender mainstreaming, post-equity

Direct intervention tends to generate resistance as it involves top-down interference in daily operations. (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282). By posing a requirement of female representation in assessment and appointments committees, the Faculty of Science has recognised the need for direct intervention to counter gender inequality despite risks of resistance and obstacles.

One such obstacle was described by the manager of IMADA, Martin Svensson (Interview notes, p. 113). He relates that the research teams within his department face significant challenges when attempting to live up to the requirement of female representation within assessment and appointment committees. As the share of female researchers at IMADA is so low, recruiters from IMADA must contact eligible female professors elsewhere in Denmark or abroad to serve on committees. However, Martin Svensson explains that these 'outside' female top academics often turn down the department's application, since it requires too much of their time. Consequently, as Benschop and Verloo (2012) point out, there is a risk that gender equality efforts, e.g. in the shape of administrative requirements, may easily develop into merely additional bureaucracy instead of meaningful gender change (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 285).

Similar requirements of female representation have been introduced in relation to Ph.D. evaluation committees. However, several of my informants describe how at times it can be difficult to find qualified female researchers to participate:

We are many [female Ph.D.s] who do not mind being evaluated by only men, because we know that we are being evaluated fairly. At least I would rather be evaluated by only men, when these men are experts within my field of research, than have women present who perhaps do not know as much about my field, just for the sake of having a woman there. (Informant 4, p. 100)

Recalling The Matrix metaphor, it would seem that informant 4 has not taken the red pill since as, within this quote, she expresses a strong belief in meritocracy. She feels that such gender equality interventions are unnecessary since Ph.D. evaluation committee members – of course – are capable of assessing her and her fellow female Ph.D.s objectively. From a critical perspective, the underlying assumption of her statement may also be an indication of her complicity to the relationship of domination between the sexes (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 51).

4.2.1.3. Focus Area 3

Focus Area 3 stresses the importance of career development activities. As courses offered by the HR Development unit at SDU were examined above, the points made in that connection will not be repeated here. However, Focus Area 3 further emphasises the need for training managers in gender aware career counselling, particularly relating to how the careers of women and men tend to develop differently within Academia. For example, male researchers' careers develop much faster than those of women because their main scientific production, i.e. publication of scientific articles or books, happens during their Ph.D., postdoc, and assistant professor years. This means that they qualify for advancement early. Women, on the other hand, are set back if they have children during those stages of their careers because, naturally, maternity leave limits their scientific production ("*Women – Quality – Research*", 1997; "*All Talents in Play*

– *More Women in Research*”, 2005, etc.). Therefore, various initiatives have been implemented at the Faculty of Science to support female researchers in relation to absence due to maternity leave and in relation with creating an appropriate balance between work and family life.

For example, one quite progressive measure undertaken by the Faculty of Science (which is not mentioned in the gender equality strategy) concerns the faculty’s maternity leave fund which was initiated in 2012. The assumption behind the establishment of this fund was that it is a social responsibility to support women and men when they have children. Therefore, the fund lifts the expenses of maternity (and paternity) leave from department level to faculty level. This way women and men will never have to argue for their right to parental leave directly with the superior who is going to pay. In practice, the foundation matches parental leave reimbursement from the Danish state 1:1, which allows departments to freely allocate resources where it is needed, e.g. to hire a temporary replacement. This practice reduces the financial uncertainties associated with employing young women (The Faculty of Science’s Maternity Leave Fund, online resource 8). As this initiative is believed to be an important step forward for improving women’s position within Academia, this initiative is currently in the pipeline for implementation at the remaining faculties at SDU (FESTA interview, p. 119).

In addition, researchers have the possibility to keep ongoing contact with their departments during their maternity/paternity leave. Ongoing contact is optional, but offered because it provides the researcher at least some degree of professional progression during absence from the work place. However, this does not imply that the researcher on leave is expected to perform work related tasks. Furthermore, after a maternity leave of at least six months, researchers are entitled to a period of time without teaching responsibilities. This enables the researcher to catch up on neglected research activities, limiting the setback – in terms of lack of publications – which maternity leave otherwise implies for women (University of Southern Denmark, “*Information about The University of Southern Denmark – Initiatives For Gender Equality Between 2009-2014*”).

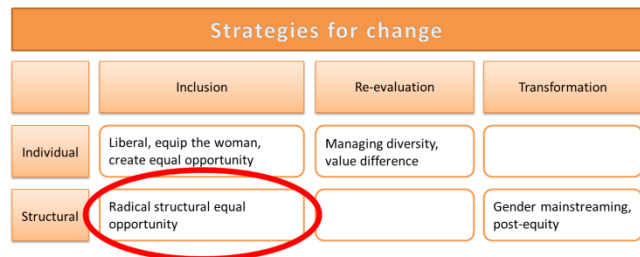
Due to variations in career paths between women and men in Academia, career plans must be adapted to the individual researcher’s need. The ability of managers to consciously incorporate a consideration for gender differences requires training opportunities in relation to gender awareness. Training activities should further include thoroughly informing managers and supervisors about all aspects of gender equality efforts enabling them to fully inform their female colleagues, which also, based on the interviews with my informants, seems to be lacking (Informant 4, 5 and 7, pp. 100, 103, and 110).

4.2.1.4. Focus Area 4

Next, Focus area 4 is closely related to the above made points concerning the differing career paths of women and men. Focus Area 4 aims at ensuring an appropriate *work-life balance* for academics. By establishing a flexible and accommodating working environment, researchers are supported to structure their work in order to, over time, nurture their professional development while not compromising personal obligations.

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Flexible working arrangements are typically part of *structural inclusion* gender equality strategies to *create equal opportunities*, as they aim »to change the sloped playing-field into a level playing-field« (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282). Within Academia, there seems to exist a perception of what constitutes the *right* way of ‘doing’ a research career. It appears that there is not a lot of room for alternative career paths.



There is no doubt that it takes more than a 37 hour working week to make it as a researcher. As Jakob Ejersbo expressed it:

The objective of the academic system is that the least skilled researchers are sorted out, while the best researchers are sent onwards in their careers. As such, Academia is an extremely tough process of elimination permeated by competition. Similarly, it is not those musicians or athletes who practice and work out from eight to half past three every day, who make it to the top. (Notes, p. 117)

As a result, women who have children are challenged. According to several sources (Hakim, 2004; Danish Nurses’ Organisation, Domestic Chores and Child Care: online resource 19; Statistics Denmark, Men and Women 2011: online resource 20), women still tend to take on the majority of domestic work tasks, or at least demonstrate a greater willingness to prioritise the family and the household over their careers than men. As such, to ensure that women in Academia have the best possible conditions for balancing family and work, they are allowed the flexibility to structure and organise their work lives to fit their situation. Martin Svensson mentions the following measures to increase flexibility: a) the establishment of teaching teams, so that teachers can substitute for each other, b) if a researcher prefers to work from home, the department is willing to provide the equipment to establish a home office, or c) providing the researcher with a work phone may help increase contact between researcher and department. Finally, as a rare exception, one female researcher has also been allowed to work part time. Such initiatives benefit women, and all of the informants mention flexibility as the primary advantage of working at the university. However, women simultaneously risk being put on the side-line simply because they spend less time at the work place than their colleagues, which tends to block or slow down career advancement (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282; Mommy Track, online resource 9 and 10; FESTA interview, notes p. 119). Further challenges associated with flexible working arrangement include the risk of burnout, since the division between work and private life becomes blurred and it becomes increasingly difficult to actually be ‘off’ work (Larsen, 2010: 288; Beardwell & Claydon, 2010: 148-154).

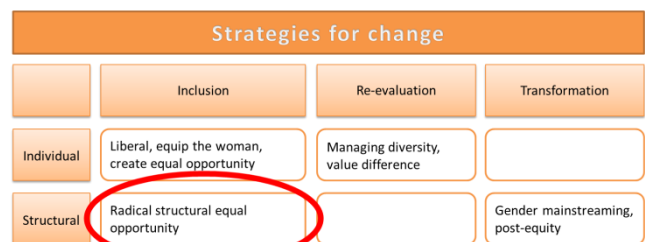
Furthermore, according to e.g. Allen and Castleman (2001) and Henningsen (2002), as well as several of the informants, the insecurity and instability which an academic career track entails is the primary reason that women opt out of Academia. A Ph.D. fellowship lasts three years, a postdoc employment typically lasts one or two years, and an assistant professorship usually last three to four years (Djøf, Conditions of Employment for Researchers, online resource 18). This means that every time a contract ends, the researcher is compelled to consider his or her options. The uncertainty associated with not knowing where one’s career is heading is challenging, especially for researchers with small children, as they not only have

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themselves to provide for but also their families (*“Recommendations...”*, 2015: 46). In order to protect researchers from being stuck in fixed-term employments, a rule has been implemented which states that a researcher can only be employed in the same fixed-term job position for four years. This means that after four years the researcher must be permanently employed, or at least change job position (Retsinformation, online resource 21). Paradoxically, this rule can become an obstacle for researchers if the department does not have the resources to hire the researchers, as the consequence will then be that the researcher must look for employment elsewhere.

Similarly to the discouraging prospect of a highly disrupted career track, many young female academics view the internationalisation requirement as a big hurdle. If a researcher has done his or her Ph.D. in Denmark, it is expected that he or she must go abroad for a period of time to gain international experience. For families with small children, the need for stability and security may make international mobility seem like an enormous and perhaps unwelcome change. When going away for a one or two year period, the partner of the researcher would have to find employment abroad as well since living on only the income of the researcher might be tight for a family with children (*“Recommendations...”*, 2015: 43). Therefore, Focus Area 4 states that the Faculty of Science strives to develop new and improve existing programmes which aim to make international mobility more attractive by ensuring at least the financial foundation which makes a stay abroad possible for researchers with family.

As a final point in relation to attraction and retention, the Faculty of Science’s decision (a few years back) to earmark two assistant professor positions for female researchers should be mentioned. Quite a lot of resources were invested in ensuring very attractive ‘packages’ for each of the two positions. Both positions were filled, however, the female researchers who were hired did not stay long. According to Eva Sophia Myers and Liv Baisner from FESTA, the problem was that the positions were not part of research teams, and that the women therefore became isolated. Furthermore, some of the women’s colleagues did not appreciate that such attractive research positions were earmarked for women, as it meant that the money invested in those positions were kept outside of fair competition. Earmarked recruitment – or preferential selection – belongs to the category of *structural inclusion* gender equality strategies. As mentioned, structural inclusion is often considered a radical approach because it accepts the necessity for direct intervention to ensure a measureable increase of the representation of women (Benschop & van den Brink 2012: 337). Moreover, the approach is contested as it represents management’s interference and thereby a loss of control of mid-level managers and staff, and some even perceive earmarked job positions for women as discriminatory against men (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282).



The negative experience of the Faculty of Science at SDU with preferential selection, described above, clearly illustrates the resistance that structural inclusion strategies face. The earmarked positions were likely perceived as a ‘violation’ of meticulous and transparent recruitment procedures, as well as meritocracy and democracy. However, the central ideas of structural inclusion strategies are that they aim at disturbing the status quo, and that they do not rely on consensus of the entire organisation (Benschop &

van den Brink, 2014: 344). Benschop and van den Brink (2014) state that preferential selection may indeed increase the number of women within the organisation, *»but if gendered processes do not change, these women might leave again«* (p. 347). This means that when structural inclusion strategies are attempted with no concern for the context into which women are recruited, there is high risk that initiatives will fail. Gendered work policies, practices, and routines must be addressed as they will fight the presence of the women who are hired through radical approaches, because these women embody everything that opponents believe: That resources set aside for attractive earmarked positions for women are taken from the shared pool, which means less for the men, and that radical gender equality strategies imply that less qualified women will take the place of more experienced and skilled men (Ibid.: 344). Obviously, a person – more or less – perceived as an incompetent thief will not be made to feel welcome. In sum, the Faculty of Science now uses a gender equality initiative which was essentially doomed to fail as the primary argument against trying similar initiatives in the future.

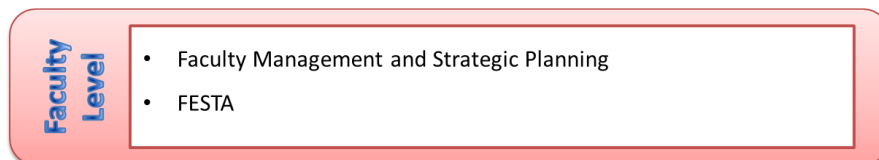
4.2.1.5. Focus Area 5

Finally, Focus Area 5 aims to increase awareness of gender equality issues and to create an environment which embraces diversity. However, as awareness-raising is a central part of FESTA's work at the Faculty of Science, these efforts will be examined in the following paragraph.

4.2.2. FESTA

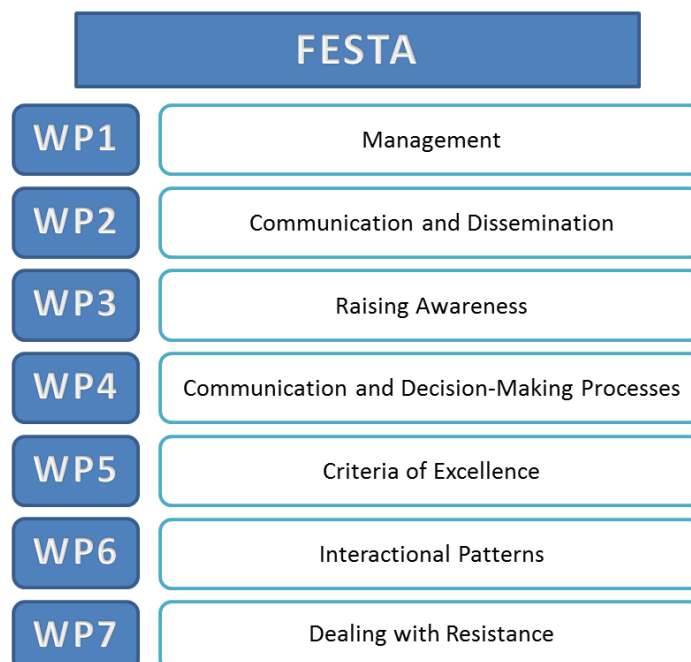
As described in the *Methodology* chapter, initiatives for the improvement of gender equality within the Faculty of Science at SDU are coordinated through the EU programme “*Female Empowerment in Science and Technology Academia*”, also known as FESTA.

Figure 19



During its first four years, the FESTA programme at SDU has revealed that more men than women have been hired for new associate professor and professor positions at the Faculty of Science, which means that development is currently going in the wrong direction. This emphasises the need for FESTA’s work, and stresses the importance of taking action in order to change the present development. As previously mentioned, FESTA’s work is practically carried out through various activities belonging to seven work packages. However, FESTA at SDU does not participate in work package number four and five which, as such, will not be included in this analysis.

Figure 20



4.2.2.1. Work Package 3

Work package three raises awareness of gender inequality within Academia at two levels; individual and organisational. At the individual level, this work package aims to provide female academics with a thorough knowledge of career development and promotion prospects in the course of an academic career, to ensure that these women understand the strategies that are necessary in order for them to progress in their careers. The analysis of career development activities is available above.

At the organisational level, raising awareness involves the collection of relevant gender statistics and disseminating it within the Faculty of Science. The wastage of women (cf. *The Leaky Pipeline*, p. 130) becomes very visible when looking at the statistics, which was also clearly illustrated by the statistics presented in the introduction to the case of this thesis on p. 20. Therefore, it is FESTA’s responsibility to develop and communicate statistics and information about gender inequality to managers at the faculty. An increased knowledge about and understanding of gender inequality improves informed decision-making among management and academic staff, e.g. in relation to developing gender equality strategies and action plans, and may foster a general incorporation – *mainstreaming* – of the gender issue into daily activities within departments (FESTA official webpage, online resource 3; FESTA at SDU, online resource 12).

Awareness-raising activities are part of *structural transformation* gender equality strategies. This category of strategies are characterised by an intention to change not only policies and procedures, but to transform gendered norms and values, and to develop new discursive constructions of femininity and masculinity (Benschop & van den Brink, 201: 338).

Strategies for change			
	Inclusion	Re-evaluation	Transformation
Individual	Liberal, equip the woman, create equal opportunity	Managing diversity, value difference	
Structural	Radical structural equal opportunity		Gender mainstreaming, post-equity

The objectives and actions described within work package three reflect the approach implied by the *post-equity* strategy, particularly in relation to the collaboration between faculty and department management with gender experts, in this case represented by FESTA. Gender experts have to educate management about gender inequality in order for change to happen. Or in other words, gender experts must offer management the red pill.

In Benschop and van den Brink’s (2014) words, »[the post-equity] strategy requires that actors [management as well as staff] are willing to learn about gender inequality, to put aside their personal interests, positions, and values [...]« (p. 346) (emphasis added). Since the post-equity strategy assumes gender to be »an axis of power«, the approach requires for dominating groups to willingly relinquish their power in order to improve equality. Not surprising, such a request is likely met with resistance (Ibid.: 340). This is the reason that the post-equity strategy propounds an approach of minor, incremental changes achieved through experimentation which is believed to reduce resistance, as opposed to radical gender equality interventions which are associated with strong opposition (Ibid.: 338). Furthermore, the fact that the post-equity strategy is based on a perception of gender as »an axis of power« means that gender is construed as a power-based social construction of women and femininity, men and masculinity, and their relationship. As a result, the success of post-equity interventions necessitate that involved parties are able

to change their perceptions from gender as an individual characteristics to gender as a social construction (cf. the *Gendering Organisations* perspective p. 25). As meritocracy implies perceiving gender as an individual characteristic, and meritocracy is particularly salient within Academia, such a shift is easier said than done. However, raising awareness by presenting evidence, incl. statistics and research, of the impact of gender on e.g. recruitment or criteria of qualification will contribute to university management and staff realising their own, Academia's, as well as society's subtle gender biases and thereby the constructed nature of the identity category of gender (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 338).

When management has been instructed by FESTA, it is the responsibility of department managers to present and disseminate gender statistics and information among their staff. Traditionally, the issue of gender has been perceived as controversial and irrelevant. Therefore, ideally, acceptance of and goodwill towards discussing gender inequality will gradually increase, as management and staff become accustomed to hearing of and talking about this issue. Though Eva Sophia Myers and Liv Baisner state that it has indeed become easier to talk about gender during the four years that the faculty has been involved with FESTA, there is still far to go (Interview notes, p. 119). For instance, Martin Svensson describes how the female researchers at IMADA often feel uncomfortable and 'singled out' when gender equality is discussed, and they do not feel that gender equality efforts concern them. Since in their minds, gender equality efforts are equivalent to e.g. preferential selection, women fear, just as their male colleagues, that less competent women will take the place of better qualified men (Ibid.: 344).

Therefore, raising awareness is the key to changing underlying gendered assumptions; from FESTA to management, and from management to staff. However, through the interviews, I was surprised to hear that several of my female informants (1, 3 and 7, pp. 91, 97, and 110) had never heard about FESTA, and that several could not recall a situation in which gender had been addressed by management (3, 4 and 5 pp. 97, 100, and 103). Evidently, there is still progress to be made in relation to work package three.

4.2.2.2. Work Package 6

Through work package six, FESTA attempts to change interactional patterns in two ways: By changing formal and informal meeting structures, and by improving Ph.D. supervisory practices. One important aspect of Ph.D. supervision involves that supervisors help young female researchers to establish a strong and supportive social and professional network within male-dominated research communities, and helping them to find ways to survive and compete (FESTA official webpage, online resource 3). The importance of social affiliation and women's networks was examined above.

Furthermore, in relation to the focus of work package six on Ph.D. supervisory practices, FESTA carried out a project based on interviews with Ph.D. students within the Faculty of Science at SDU. According to Eva Sophia Myers and Liv Baisner, this project revealed how young female researchers within the natural sciences are confronted with various narratives which present a career in Academia as irreconcilable with having children. These stories have become deeply ingrained within the culture of the natural sciences. As such, Eva Sophia Myers wonders:

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What does it do to these women that they constantly hear these stories? And what if we told them other stories? – that it is possible to combine a research career with having a family. And if the women also had role models, women who prove this, instead of having only women at the top who have sacrificed everything for their careers to compare themselves with. (Interview notes, p. 119)

There is no doubt that issues of work-life balance are some of the primary concerns of female researchers, which is evident even from my small sample of informants. Informant 1 (p. 91) emphasises how she has decided to leave her computer at the office, when she finishes work, because she has seen several severe cases of stress among her colleagues. Informant 4 (p. 100), who is a Ph.D. student, calls her three years as Ph.D. her “egoist years” during which she has been allowed to work with what she loves. Once these three “egoist years” are over and she and her boyfriend start having a family, her focus will be her family and not her work. Especially Informant 5 (p. 103) is quite reconciled. She sees no way for her to continue her career within Academia, as she already feels constantly guilty for not performing sufficiently at work while simultaneously feeling inadequate as a mother.

Such narratives are rooted in traditional gender roles and the historical exclusivity of Academia for men, which imply that the researcher is assumed to have a partner, who takes care of children and household, while allowing the researcher to focus on his work. Due particularly to the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s and 70s, this division of labour between women within the domestic sphere and men within the professional sphere is largely outdated today (Rosenbeck, 2014: 119-121). Consequently – and presumably – combining a research career within family life should not be as unlikely today as it used to be. Liv Baisner even speculates if these women would actually experience this problem, if their surroundings stopped telling them about it. As such, it is essential to change interactional patterns and to educate Ph.D. supervisors so that young female researchers’ personal lives are not turned into a problem, when it is rarely the case for young male researchers. Wishing to have family, or wanting to have time to take care of their children, does not mean that female academics are less committed to research or that they are not ambitious or focussed on their careers as well (FESTA at SDU, online resource 12).

Next, the second aspect of work package 6 concerns meeting culture. FESTA works to restructure decision-making processes to ensure that key decisions are made during meetings and not at informal encounters in the hallway or by the coffee machine. The more decisions are made within the meeting room, the better democratic processes are ensured as everyone will have the opportunity to be heard. Therefore, FESTA has given seminars in inclusive meeting management for department management and research team managers because skilled and diversity-conscious meeting management will allow for minority groups to get their say (FESTA official webpage, online resource 3; FESTA at SDU, online resource 12).

The second aspect of work package 6 reflects the *individual re-evaluation* category of gender equality strategies; i.e. the closely related *managing diversity* and *value difference* approaches. From the managing diversity perspective, everyone are perceived as diverse – incl. e.g. women, religious and cultural minorities, introverts, colleagues who



do not speak Danish, LGTB, etc. Even men are regarded as diverse (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 281) as the approach also includes differences of education, work-style, and work-orientation (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 336). The *individual re-evaluation* category stresses the need to discard the hierarchical order which values the characteristics, interests, and opinions of the dominating group above those of others (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 281). The argument for embracing diversity lies within its potential for improving efficiency. Each person represents a unique contribution to the organisation, which constitutes a significant benefit for the organisation's overall performance and which should therefore be valued (Ibid.: 281, 284).

According to the value difference strategy, embracing the perspectives of women – and other minority groups – will contribute to critically questioning the practice of power institutions (Ibid.: 281). For instance, informant 3 (p. 97) mentioned a situation during which she was participating as the only woman in the development of a job announcement for a vacant position. While talking about requirements of the candidate, informant 3's male colleagues would constantly say »*this guy* [that we are looking for]«. Informant 3 was annoyed by this way of talking about a hypothetical person, who might just as well be female. However, as she was the only woman, she was also bothered by the fact that she was the only one to realise it and as such the one who would have to address it. As informant 3 did so, she felt ridiculed which, she said, would probably keep her from confronting gender issues again. Finally, according to Marianne Holmer (p. 115), one female employee at the Department of Biology, has been less reluctant to call attention to her colleagues' gender biases, when she has experienced them. Marianne explains how this employee, in some situations, when her male colleagues said or did something biased, has pointed out to them how that made her feel. Fortunately, her colleagues have been open-minded and positive towards this confrontational approach. This situation is of course the ideal outcome of diversity embracing working cultures and inclusive meeting management efforts.

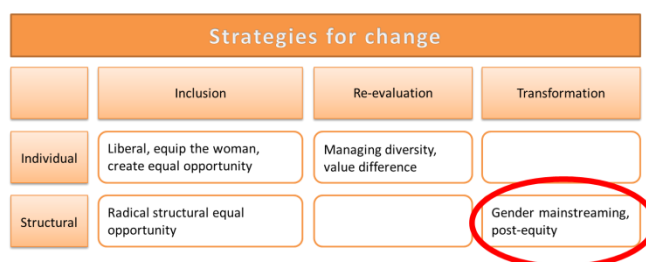
4.2.2.3. Work Package 7

Finally, work package seven addresses resistance to structural changes towards gender equality. This involves studying mechanisms and expressions of resistance and exploring various ways of handling resistance (FESTA official webpage, online resource 3). During my interview with the FESTA team, efforts targeting resistance were not specifically discussed. As such, the following examination is based on issues of resistance mentioned in relation to other topics.

Following the argumentation of the "*Recommendations...*" report (2015), debate in Denmark concerning gender equality and gender equality efforts is highly polarised. This way, the debate mainly becomes a matter of for or against, instead of being about all the various methods and approaches which can be taken, and the differences in scope which different gender equality strategies imply (p. 48). This reflects the recurrent issue of this thesis; red pill versus blue pill, believer versus non-believer. FESTA approaches the issue of the strongly divided gender equality debate with their awareness-raising efforts. The assumption is that continuously addressing issues of gender inequality will in time normalise hearing and talking about

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the topic. This approach simultaneously contributes to the mainstreaming of the gender issue, i.e. the automatic and constant consideration for gendered outcomes in relation to planning and decision-making (Tools for gender mainstreaming, online resource 5). Nevertheless, the FESTA team states that it is a matter of finding the appropriate balance, as constantly having gender equality as the primary focus point of discussions may lead to a strengthening of resistance instead.



Furthermore, FESTA's various work packages is also a way of dealing with resistance, as FESTA by targeting different aspects of organisational life – concrete policies, practices, and routines, as well as culture, values, and norms – takes an overall approach similar to the *post-equity* strategy. The post-equity strategy is based on Karl Weick's (1984) concept of *small-wins* achieved through persistent, incremental changes, which are assumed to limit resistance, compared to radical gender equality interventions (Benschop & Verloo, 2014: 38).

Next, the most common argument against gender equality efforts within Academia is that they constitute a threat to scientific quality. This kind of reasoning has several explanations. Historically, due to their close connection with the domestic sphere, women were almost per definition considered subjective. As such, their entry into the field of Academia was opposed by men, since women in this way represented a threat to the ideal of scientific objectivity (Rosenbeck, 2014: 143). Over time, the notion of objectivity became deeply ingrained within all areas of Academia, incl. recruitment, Ph.D. evaluation, approval for publication, peer review, allocation of funds and scholarships, etc. Therefore, when gender equality proponents claim that women are disadvantaged and subjected to gender biases, they simultaneously claim that Academia does not live up to its own celebrated ideal of objectivity which is a severe attack. Moreover, the fact that politicians and university management then decide to engage in actual interventions to fight gender inequality implies an actual assault on Academia's time-honoured practices, particularly when gender equality efforts involve differential treatment. In a world which champions objective assessment, differential treatment constitutes a short cut around normal criteria of qualification. As such, it is not surprising that those groups of people who have been de-qualified, will argue that such measures are ruinous to fair competition, and even that those who have been selected cannot represent the best qualified when an entire category of researchers have been excluded from the assessment process.

Department manager at IMADA, Martin Svensson, has often experienced these kinds of concerns from his employees. Martin is convinced that despite scepticism, most people do indeed support gender equality. However, in their minds, equality is achieved by *equal treatment* which reflects their belief in objectivity and meritocracy, and gender equality efforts are equated with *differential treatment*. Consequently, Martin is very aware of the need for him to continuously communicate that neither university, faculty, nor department management are interested in creating a solution which is bad for everyone in order to live up to political gender goals and requirements. Everyone agrees that hiring an unqualified researcher is a bad idea, because it will negatively affect research quality at the department, which will impact the department's scientific reputation and working environment (Interview notes, p. 113).

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Problems arise when department staff begins to talk. For instance, one of the informants (2, p. 93) related a story which circulated after an incident in relation to the recruitment of a new colleague. The hiring research team had selected a male applicant as their preferred choice, however, management chose a woman. Consequently, the word around the corridors was that she was only hired because of her sex. Further, informant 2 stated her own thoughts on the matter:

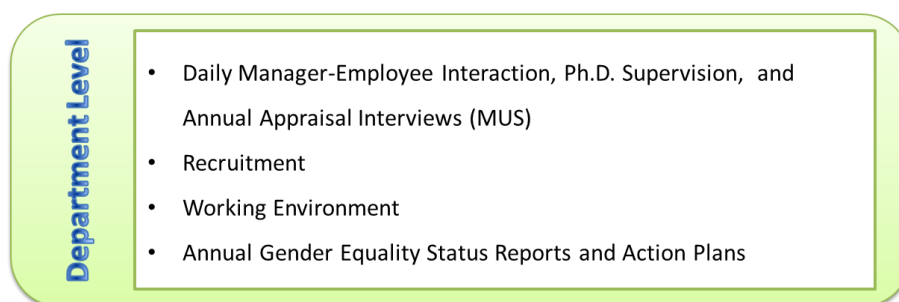
I would not want to be hired for a job, just because I am a woman. I do not want that label attached to me - that I should have been hired just to equal out some percentage.

However, as she also notes, how she can ever be sure whether she was hired because she was the most competent candidate, or because she is a woman. In addition it does not help, that informant 2 has experienced older male colleagues joking about new female colleagues being hired because of their sex, which makes informant 2 doubt whether *she* is in fact qualified. This reflects Eva Sophia Myers' thoughts as to what negative stories about women's chances for succeeding in Academia actually do to the women. Women may laugh when jokes are made, but jokes and stories may at the same time leave traces within the women which they do not even realise have an impact on them. Therefore, as illustrated by the example mentioned by Marianne Holmer, women within Academia should be encouraged to share their experiences when gender biases, stereotypes, or subtle discrimination is at work, and Academia must be taught to welcome the experiences of women, if it genuinely wants change.

4.3. Department Level

Since several of the focus points of the HRM analysis at the department level have already been covered above, they will not be examined in this section as well. Topics already mentioned include Ph.D. supervision, recruitment, and the annual gender equality status reports and actions plans. Though they have theoretically been discussed in relation to SDU and faculty level, responsibility for their practical execution lies at department level.

Figure 21



4.3.1. Working Environment

Working environment, of course, involves many aspects of daily life within an organisation, however, at the Department of Biology, manager Marianne Holmer has chosen to focus especially on issues concerning work-related stress. It is becoming increasingly common for employees within the department to suffer from severe stress which requires long periods of absence in order to recover. Nevertheless, stress remains a taboo (Informant 1, p. 91). Therefore, stress and mindfulness are addressed within workshops at the annual staff day. It is a difficult topic to discuss, since openly acknowledging that you are under pressure implies showing vulnerability within a tough competitive environment. As such, Marianne recognises the courage it took for a female employee to come to a meeting concerning issues of stress and tell the remaining staff about her illness (Interview notes, p. 115). This reflects the points made above concerning encouraging women to share their experiences, especially because men are equally at risk of becoming stressed. The fact that women and men today, typically, both have full time careers, requires that taking care of house and children is a shared responsibility to a larger extent than previously. As such, male academics are just as likely to experience issues of work-life balance and work-related stress as women.

4.3.2. Daily Manager-Employee Interaction and Annual Appraisal Interview

Jakob Ejersbo explains that the annual appraisal interview (AAI) is carried out by the department manager based on a concept developed by the HR Development unit (Interview notes, p. 117). The AAI is an opportunity for manager and employee to sit down and discuss the performance, future goals, and well-

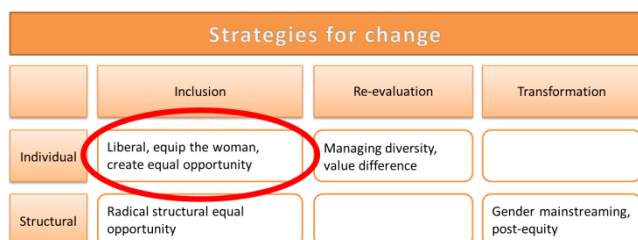
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being of the employee in a structured manner (MUS, online resource 15). Furthermore, as employees just as often work as part of teams, an annual group appraisal interview, has also been implemented. The focus of the group interview is the working environment, team work processes, the well-being of members within the team, team-spirit, etc. (GRUS, online resource 16).

Martin Svensson (Interview notes, p. 113) describes how some of his employees feel that the AAI is a rather unnecessary initiative. As the department is located within a fairly small physical area at the university, Martin and his colleagues see each other more or less daily and talk regularly, as such employees tend to perceive the interview situation as rather artificial. Therefore, Martin realises the need for him to communicate the value of the AAI. To Martin, the AAI is an important process as it implies a method for systemising especially career development efforts for the individual researcher. The challenge is that many researchers believe that career planning is a waste of time, as Academia is a dynamic world, in which political and strategic decisions, funding options, and many other factors may entail that career goals and plans cannot be realised in the end.

At the Department of Biology, department manager, Marianne Holmer (Interview notes, p. 115), describes how she occasionally sends female researchers to certified career coaches. The coach is able to assess how the individual researcher may best strengthen her CV and future career options. Informant 1 describes (p. 91) how she benefited from a series of coaching consultations, and that she would have liked similar career counselling now that her current employment is coming to an end. Informant 4 (p. 100), on the other hand, describes how she has never had any actual career counselling and has never participated in any career development courses. She feels that she would have benefited from having had that opportunity.

Briefly summarising the discussion from above, career development activities belong to the *individual inclusion* category of gender equality strategies. Such efforts are founded on an “equip the women” assumption, which means that women must be taught the necessary career tactics to be able to succeed in a world dominated by men. Women are the target of efforts, and the organisation is not addressed (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335).



According to Bourdieu, women will always be misrecognised as academics, even though they adopt the habitus associated with the dominant group of the field (Rosenbeck, 2014: 7, 210; Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 53). As such, career development activities should in principle not make much difference – or positive outcomes of such activities experienced by women may be explained as some sort of placebo effect. Nevertheless, the positive experiences of female researchers who have benefitted from participation in such activities should not be underestimated. As such, from a more optimistic angle, the fact that women in Academia feel that such tools and tactics are useful to them may instead be an indication that other gender equality efforts aimed at the organisation may indeed be successful. For instance, the application of gender equality strategies such as *managing diversity*, *value difference*, *gender mainstreaming*, and *post-equity* ideally contribute, in each their various ways, to creating an academic culture which embraces and values women.

4.4. Preliminary Conclusion

In sum, this analysis demonstrates that SDU, the Faculty of Science, and the departments of Biology and Mathematics and Computer Science engage in quite a considerable variety of gender equality efforts. Compared with the model by Benschop and Verloo (2012), and Benschop and van den Brink (2014), efforts examined above represent all four categories, i.e. individual inclusion, individual re-evaluation, structural inclusion, and structural transformation.

Strategies for change			
	Inclusion	Re-evaluation	Transformation
Individual	Liberal, equip the woman, create equal opportunity	Managing diversity, value difference	
Structural	Radical structural equal opportunity		Gender mainstreaming, post-equity

Within the individual inclusion category, we find career development efforts. Without ignoring the fact that participants express satisfaction with the experience, I argue that these efforts cannot stand alone. Following Bourdieu’s claim that women will always be misrecognised as academics, even though they adopt the academic habitus, implies that achieving equality requires more than efforts targeting the women (Rosenbeck, 2014: 7, 210; Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 53). Furthermore, I argue that women, by accepting the need for changing their behaviour by adopting the historically masculine, academic habitus reproduce their own position as dominated within Academia (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 51). As individual inclusion strategies do not address structures and norms which contribute to the reproduction of gender inequality within Academia, the habitus and doxa of Academia, as well as the power relations within the field, remain unchallenged (Rosenbeck, 2014: 121-122; Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25).

The category of individual re-evaluation gender equality strategies potentially has a broader scope than individual inclusion strategies. Individual inclusion implies that women adapt to the world of men, whereas individual re-evaluation involves that the world of men must adapt to women (and other social categories). To achieve a culture which embraces diversity, including gender, requires the de-hierarchising of male and female characteristics, skills, competences, and values, etc. (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 336). Concrete efforts examined in the above analysis include efforts to introduce inclusive meeting management and to encourage women to share their perspectives, e.g. when they experience gender stereotypes. Diversity management is a loose concept, and the literature provides very little prescription as to how, in practice, to achieve it (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 281). Nevertheless, often, diversity is perceived as an all-encompassing and inherently positive concept. However, at SDU, it appears that e.g. the diversity aspects of nationality, culture, and ethnicity might overshadow the gender issue, due to SDU’s strategic focus on internationalisation.

Gender equality efforts which target the structural level of organisations include e.g. the structural inclusion category which is often associated with radical gender interventions. Radical gender equality strategies, such as gender quotas and preferential selection, are contested measures as they involve top-down interference and, thus, a loss of control for middle-management and staff (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282). At the Faculty of Science, the only genuinely radical approach which has been attempted is

preferential selection, i.e. the earmarked research positions for which two women were hired. Based on the argumentation of Benschop and van den Brink (2014), I argue that this effort was essentially doomed to fail, as a highly gendered organisation, such as Academia, will resist and exclude the women hired through radical strategies. As such, radical approaches must be accompanied by strategies which aim to change organisational structures, systems, procedures, norms, and values (p. 344, 347). In addition, I argue, that SDU's and the Faculty of Science's posing requirements e.g. in relation to gender balanced assessment, appointments, and Ph.D. evaluation committees, involves radical efforts as well. Efforts to create equal opportunities at the structural level target interventions at biased processes. Such efforts are met with resistance because they entail an assault on Academia's meritocratic self-image (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282-283).

Lastly, the structural transformation category of gender equality strategies involves the most wide-ranging and fundamental change processes. The gender mainstreaming and post-equity strategies target efforts not only at structures and procedures, but at the academic culture, norms, and values in order to create new narratives of gender equality, as well as new discursive constructions of femininity and masculinity (Benschop & van den Brink, 2011: 338). Gender mainstreaming and post-equity necessitate particular willingness on management's side to collaborate with and learn from gender experts (Ibid.: 346). In order to incorporate a constant gender awareness into daily management practices, as well as planning and decision-making processes, management must understand gender stereotypes and biases. Such willingness is linked with the Matrix metaphor, i.e. whether managers believe that gender inequality exists or not.

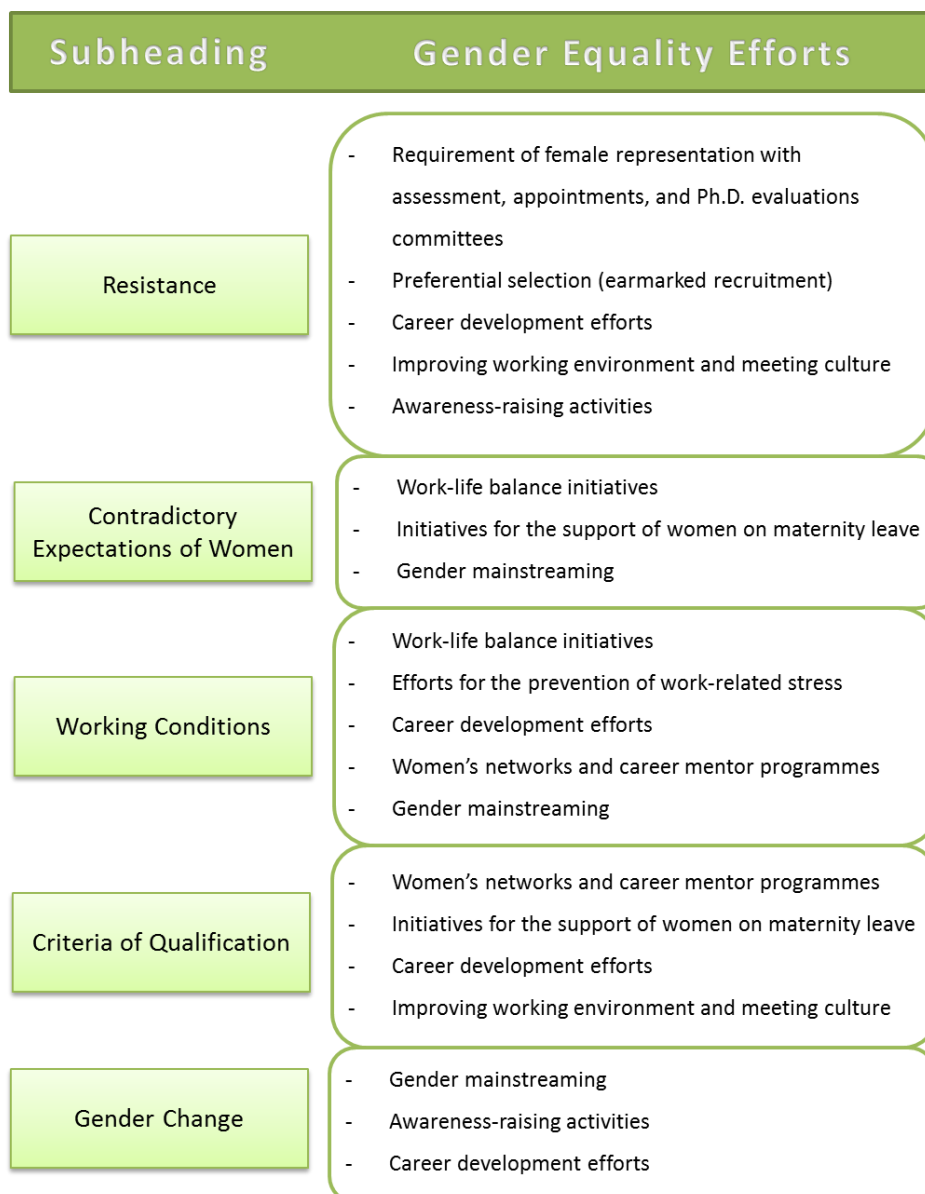
Structural transformation strategies are realised through incremental changes and experimentation, and I claim that the total amount of efforts implemented at both SDU, faculty, and department level can be characterised as such when examined together. By targeting different aspects of the organisation and its members, and by employing different measures in relation to different aspects of gender inequality, all four categories of the model are represented. Benschop and Verloo (2012) state that, previously, gender equality strategies were typically attempted and discussed individually. However, combining efforts may potentially have mutually reinforcing effects (p. 284-285). For instance, recalling the point mentioned in relation to career development courses: According to Bourdieu, career development activities should, in principle, not make any difference as women will always be misrecognised as academics. As such, the fact that the women who have participated in the courses express satisfaction may be an indication that other efforts aimed at the organisation, such as managing diversity, value difference, gender mainstreaming, and post-equity, have been successful in creating a culture which, to a larger extent than before, is capable of including women.

In addition, this analysis has clearly illustrated how the involvement of believers and non-believers implies different outcomes for gender equality efforts. People who believe that gender inequality exists, i.e. people who have taken the red pill, demonstrate genuine intent in relation to decision-making and implementing practical initiatives to improve gender equality. Whereas, people who believe that gender inequality does not exist will likely stick to legal requirements. Paradoxically, legal requirements in Denmark involve gender mainstreaming which necessitates a willingness and openness among decision-makers to learn about their own gender stereotypes and biases. This contradiction simultaneously points to the challenges and necessity of gender equality efforts.

5. Discussion

The following chapter contains a discussion of assumptions and outcomes of gender equality efforts at the Faculty of Science at SDU, based on the experiences of seven female informants – researchers at the Department of Biology and IMADA. Opinions, experiences, and stories of the informants are discussed based on the theoretical framework and concepts of Pierre Bourdieu, which were described within the *Theoretical Foundation* (p. 25). The subheadings of this chapter represent those topics which were most salient within the interviews. These topics are closely connected with the gender equality efforts which were examined within the *Analysis* (p. 31), which is illustrated by Figure 22.

Figure 22



5.1. Resistance

Within the *Analysis*, expressions of resistance in relation to different aspects of gender equality efforts were examined. From a Bourdieuan point of view, expressions of resistance to gender equality efforts are in fact manifestations of a subconscious wish, from both women and men, to sustain the current relationship of domination between the sexes. Men resist gender change as gender equality will imply a loss of power for them (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 88-89; Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 340), and women resist gender change as they, through their position as dominated, have been taught to misrecognise the symbolic violence, to which they are subjected, as the natural order of things (Bianciotti, 2011: 75; Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25).

We saw an example of this kind of misrecognition in relation to the requirement of female representation within Ph.D. evaluation committees. Both informant 1 (p. 91) and 4 (p. 100) find this requirement silly and unnecessary as they are certain that all-male committees are capable of assessing the work of female Ph.D. students objectively. Calás et al. (2014) define gender as a historically and culturally institutionalised system (p. 27). Central to the maintenance of this system is that domination and inequality have become naturalised under ideologies of meritocracy (Ibid.: 25). According to Bourdieu, the power to dominate within a field is interdependently connected with the power to determine perception and assessment categories (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 51). Meritocracy functions as such a category. Consequently, when women use meritocratic argumentation to resist gender equality efforts, they employ the perception categories which render acts of subtle discrimination and symbolic violence natural and inevitable to everyone, including themselves (Ibid.: 53).

In Bourdieu's analysis of the French school system, children's knowledge, language, attitudes, and behaviours are perceived as evidence of talent and efforts, as opposed to being unavoidably determined by their social backgrounds (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 71-72). In the same way, culturally and historically determined perceptions of women and femininity are definitively ruled out as filters which may influence academics' assessment of women's qualifications. Objectivity is a central aspect of Academia's doxa, i.e. those subconscious values of members of the academic field which are never questioned (Rosenbeck, 2014: 29). Consequently, the mere implying that academics are biased constitutes a severe attack on their own and Academia's self-perception (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282-283).

Similar expressions of resistance are associated with radical gender equality efforts, such as preferential selection. Based on a recognition of the inherently biased nature of human beings, radical approaches accept the need for political or managerial direct intervention to ensure a measurable increase of the representation of women (Benschop & van den Brink 2012: 337). Informant 2, 4, and 5 all mention stories concerning preferential selection. Informant 4 (p. 100) describes that every time a position is vacant, people say that it will probably be filled by a woman, and informant 5 (p. 103) relates that there is often a lot of talk about how new female colleagues are hired because they are women. Neither informant 2, 4 nor 5 would want to be advantaged because of their sex. They stress that they would only want to be hired if they were the best qualified candidate for the job.

Meritocracy is founded on assumptions of liberal equality and sameness. Liberal equality refers to the assumption that men and women are equally entitled to rewards, and that distribution of rewards based

on objective assessment is fair (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). And sameness refers to the assumption that men and women are the same, which rules out the necessity for differential treatment of women (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 279). As such, to people who believe in meritocracy, the most horrific situation imaginable involves being awarded or given something without having been objectively assessed as most worthy of receiving it. Therefore, it is no surprise that informant 2, 4 and 5 resist gender equality efforts. However, by employing meritocratic reasoning for rationalising Academia's consistent systemic discrimination of women, informant 2, 4 and 5, by adopting the perception categories determined by the dominating group, submit themselves to the existing relationship of domination as well as contribute to the continuous misrecognition of female scientists as equal to male, and to the reproduction of Academia's doxa, i.e. Academia as an inherently masculine culture.

Furthermore, in connection with the analysis of radical gender equality approaches it also became clear that resistance may stem from a feeling of loss of control. Radical approaches imply direct intervention and top-down interference in daily operations (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282). Informant 2 (p. 93), for instance, mentions how frustrating it was when her research team had appointed a male candidate as their preferred choice for a vacant job position, but management chose a woman instead. Based on such experiences, it is understandable that several of my informants equate gender equality efforts with radical approaches, since such gendered outcomes are very tangible and easily detectable. As several of my informants (1, 4, and 5) have not yet taken the red pill, they may not notice the small adjustments and changes and their effects, which are also implemented in the name of gender equality. If they knew about and understood the different assumptions, targets, methods, and outcomes that gender equality efforts imply, discussions about gender equality may become more nuanced and not only concern *for* or *against* ("*Recommendations...*", 2015: 48).

Next, women resist having their sex emphasised. This resistance is rooted in the same perceptions of sameness and liberal equality as described above. Moreover, Jakob Ejersbo (p. 117) explained how the course called "*Career development for young female researchers*" was changed to "*Career development for young researchers*" because the women criticised the title. As described in the *Analysis*, one explanation for this resistance may be found in the competitive culture of Academia (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). However, when the word 'female' is deleted from the course title, assumptions challenging meritocracy are neutralised. And based on the statements of informant 1 (p. 91) and 5 (p. 103), the career development course offered by the HR Development unit was very beneficial to them. Informant 3 even states that, through the career development course, she learned about sociological mechanisms and differences between men and women. This way, it would seem that the course has provided her with a little bit of the red pill. Nevertheless, as was also pointed out in the *Analysis* chapter (p. 37), career development initiatives risk contributing to the reproduction of gender inequality within Academia, by aiming to adapt women's behaviour in accordance with the historically male-determined habitus of the academic world (Priour & Sestoft, 2006: 51). Therefore, career development programmes should be combined with gender equality strategies which aim to change the gendered structures, procedures, norms, and values of the world of research (Rosenbeck, 2014: 121-122; Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25).

Finally, informant 6 (p. 106) describes an experience in which the research foundation behind her research centre had required that the women of the team sat down together to discuss issues of gender inequality. None of them knew what to say, and no one wanted to admit to having experienced sexism or

discrimination, as they felt that they were in this way presenting themselves as victims, and that they would be perceived as “*whiners*”. They are intelligent and independent women, and they are accustomed to the academic habitus with its historical, masculine roots. Naturally, they reject placing themselves in the position of victims. However, from a critical Bourdieuan perspective, the women are thus perceiving the world, and themselves, through the categories designated by the dominating group within the field. The application by dominated groups of perception categories determined by the dominating group supports the primary interest of the dominating group, i.e. to stay in power (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 53). Imagining that the women in the meeting, had taken the chance to share their experiences of situations in which gender was at work, may have had the potential of countering the reproduction of the academic doxa. Common for all of the informants of this thesis is that they state that gender is not an issue in their everyday work lives. However, during several of the interviews, once I started telling them about research on gender in Academia, it typically reminded them of similar situations that they had experienced, in which gender was in some way at work, which they, in the situation, may simply not have realised. This way, by learning to recognise situations in which gender is at work, and through the wish to share such experiences with each other, women have the power to realise their own role in the reproduction of gender inequality, which involves e.g. their dismissal of the significance of gender. From the acknowledgement that, in many instances, gender *is* an issue follows a rejection of the possibility of meritocracy, which is the first big step towards improving gender equality within Academia.

5.2. Contradictory Expectations of Women

The most prominent topic within the data set was the contradictory expectations which my informants experience within and between work and family life. Especially informant 5 (p. 103) struggles. Since she had her two children, her priorities have changed radically. She always imagined herself as a career woman, but now her family comes first. Informant 5 does not see herself continuing her career within Academia, and her supervisor knows this, so his primary focus is to support her to simply complete her Ph.D. The primary reason for informant 5’s likely opt-out is that to become a successful researcher requires much more than a normal work week of 37 hours, constant publishing, and work during holidays. At the same time, informant 5 is constantly seeing articles about how horrible a parent you are, if your children are left in day care from morning until evening, etc. Similarly, informant 4 does not see herself continuing her academic career either. She calls her Ph.D. years her “*egoist years*”, because now, before she has children, she has the time to focus on her work and her passion for research. From this follows, I assume, that once she has children, she will enter the “*family years*” during which her own interests and wishes are second.

Moreover, informant 5 has experienced how her workplace implicitly expects female researchers to work while on maternity leave, as there may e.g. be time for a publication or two during the first weeks until the child is born. Whereas, at the same time, when informant 5 has discussed this with friends and family, she has been met with shock and indignation, as they would never dream about working while on leave. In addition, her friends and family have reproached informant 5 for only having had eight months’ maternity leave.

Bourdieu states that a person's habitus will change e.g. when she enters into new cultural fields. However, the habitus which a person assimilates within a new field will always be conditioned by the habitus which the person brings with her from previous fields. Movement and change in people's lives imply that they will experience incongruity and even conflict between the doxa and habitus associated with various fields, which may indeed cause great sufferings (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 42-43). Taking a Bourdieuan perspective on the contradictory experiences of informant 4 and 5 (and 1 p. 91 and 7 p. 110), implies several things. In his definition of the 'field', Bourdieu stresses that strong historical roots, which are highly influential in the present, add to the specificity of the individual field (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 182). As such, through their upbringing and socialisation, women experience the habitus associated with the domestic field as e.g. portrayed by their parents. Though the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 70s undoubtedly improved equality within Danish homes (Rosenbeck, 2014: 119-121), the informants may have noticed and incorporated differences between the behaviours of their mothers and their fathers. Traditionally, motherhood was considered the essence of being a woman (Ibid.: 85). Consequently, when women enter into the academic field, which historically was the exclusive privilege of men, conflicts are bound to occur. Inherent within the academic doxa and habitus lies the assumption that working 60-70 hours per week is natural. Working this much may be possible and indeed professionally fulfilling for female researchers, until they face the domestic doxa and habitus of being a mother from which follows an expectation that they are needed to ensure the wellbeing of the child.

Informant 4 describes that her boyfriend is willing to be the primary caretaker of their children, and though she trusts him to do so, informant 4 believes that she would be envious of the time that he would spend with the children which she would not. Informant 5, on the other hand, believes that the mother is the most important person in a child's life. Assuming that such feelings may be representative of the feelings of a large part of women in general, well then universities are challenged in their efforts to retain female researchers. According to Bourdieu, dominated groups do not need to consciously weigh their chances of success, such calculations are already made. Academia is made by and for men, and what these women perceive as their independent choice to opt-out, from a critical point of view, represents their submission to and reproduction of the relationship of domination within a field which will do everything in its power to exclude them. This way, women's leaving Academia represents their refusing what they cannot get, success, by choosing the inevitable – to leave (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 42; Bourdieu, 1990: 54).

Evidently, this issue concerns quite fundamental assumptions about gender which are at work within Academia, and they are as such extremely difficult to change. Following Bourdieu's argument that relationships of domination within individual fields reflect relationships of domination within the power field, i.e. society (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 172), gender change is necessary at a larger, societal scale. Nonetheless, the application of structural transformation gender equality strategies within Academia may contribute to gradually changing discursive constructions of femininity and masculinity, which may disperse as women and men adopt and take such alternative constructions with them as they pass into other fields. So, apart from persistently addressing gendered assumptions at the cultural-normative level, in its efforts to improve gender equality, Academia cannot do much more than adjusting those HRM mechanisms which improve working conditions, work-life balance, and conditions of maternity leave. However, in this connection, informant 7 mentions (p. 110) that she enquired about the gender equality initiative which allows for researchers who have been absent due to maternity leave to get a teaching-free period afterwards in order to catch up on neglected research activities (Faculty of Science, *Gender Equality*

Strategy", 2014). Her request was denied based on the argument that she had had an entire year without teaching when she was on leave. So obviously, genuine intent at the policy-making level is not enough, people responsible for implementation need the red pill as well.

5.3. Working Conditions

Closely linked with the contradictory expectations which female researchers experience when they have children are issues of work-life balance. Gender equality efforts for the accommodation of problems of work-life balance examined within the *Analysis* chapter (p. 50) concerned structural inclusion strategies, including creating equal opportunities at the structural level particularly by introducing flexible working arrangements (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 338; Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282). Martin Svensson, department manager at IMADA, explained that such arrangements may include e.g. setting up a home office or providing the researchers with a work phone (Interview notes, p. 113).

In relation to the discussions of efforts for the prevention of work-related stress at the Department of Biology (cf. p. 60), informant 1 (p. 91) relates how she has made significant changes to her working arrangements. She now maintains a strict division between work and home life, and leaves her work computer at the university. Informant 1 has seen several severe cases of stress among close colleagues, and though she realises that performance expectations within Academia are very high, she is not willing to risk her health for it. Informant 4 (p. 100), similarly, is very clear about not wanting to work around 60 hours per week, which she sees other Ph.D. students do. Furthermore, though their work contracts state a working week of 37 hours, informant 2 (p. 93) labels this an implicitly accepted minimum, and informant 5 (p. 103) often feels guilty as she never knows exactly when she has done enough. Informant 2 emphasises the possibility to work flexibly, e.g. by sometimes working during weekends, as one of the primary advantages of her job. Nevertheless, knowing that she was working during the weekend, informant 2 still feels guilty if she decides to leave early one day during the week.

Actually, all seven informants mention the possibility to arrange and organise their work as the primary benefit of their jobs. However, flexibility entails an increased risk of stress and burnout, as the division between work and private life becomes blurred, and it therefore becomes difficult to actually be 'off' work (Larsen, 2010: 288; Beardwell & Claydon, 2010: 148-154). For instance, informant 4 describes how, whenever an email pops up on her work phone, she becomes distracted and curious to see, what the email is about. Similarly, informant 7 (p. 110) relates that she leaves the office around 2 or 3 in the afternoon, and then works during the evening when her child is in bed. Sometimes, this is annoying, as she is never really done. Informant 7 works part time which is a rare exception, and she describes how the process to get it and the administration in relation to keeping it is rather irksome. Part time is, apparently, not recommended within Academia. Informant 5's (p. 103) statement that there is no possibility for part time, which is one of her main reasons for not wanting to continue her career at the university, confirms this. The argument against part time is that researchers risk working more or less the same amount of hours as before, but getting paid less. Informant 7 states that her being on part time means that she probably works around 37 hours per week, i.e. what her contract actually stated on full time. One explanation that management, as a rule, advises against part time may be that women risk being side-lined, which may slow

down or, at worst, prevent career advancement (Benschop & Verloo, 2012: 282; Mommy Track, online resource 9 and 10). I assume that the reason that informant 7 was granted part-time is that she is an associate professor, and is as such not at risk for not qualifying for tenure, which e.g. informant 5 may be.

Issues of work-life balance are founded in the dilemma examined above, which arises when female researchers are faced with both the traditionally feminine doxa and habitus of the domestic field, associated with being a mother, and with the traditionally masculine doxa and habitus of Academia in relation to their work. According to the above discussion based on Bourdieu's theoretical framework, women are complicitly subjected to the relationship of domination between the sexes in two ways. First, women's choice to opt out of Academia under arguments of responsibility to their children, represent female researchers' rationalising to themselves the limited chances of success within a world which favours men (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 42; Rosenbeck, 2014: 110, 194). And second, as the power relationships within Academia reflect the power relationships within society, women furthermore face a cultural subjection based on gendered values and norms which are rooted in the historical role of women; traditionally, women were first and foremost mothers (Rosenbeck, 2014: 85). Though Bourdieu does not distinguish, McNay (2000) states that within the various fields that women move in and between, experiences of autonomy and subordination vary (p. 71-72). As such, there may be several explanations for women leaving Academia. Either domination within Academia is so strong that women are excluded, or perhaps societal domination is so strong that women, in general, are more likely than men to assume household and child rearing chores. Nevertheless, following McNay's perspective further entails the possibility that some women choose home life because within the domestic field *they* may in fact constitute the powerful group. If home life allows female researchers to achieve the recognition, status, and power, which Academia denies them, then their choice to leave indeed makes perfect sense. However, such conclusions are outside of the scope of this thesis – these points are merely reflections.

Next, another recurrent issue addressed by my informants during the interviews concerns the disrupted nature of an academic career track. As such, every time a contract ends, the researcher must start applying for funding to prolong employment or look for employment elsewhere. The uncertainty associated with not knowing whether they will have a job in a matter of months is stressful, especially for families with children (*"Recommendations..."* 2015: 46). Informant 4 (p. 100) and 5 (p. 103) confirm this assumption by mentioning 'endless' short, fixed-term employments as one of the central reasons that they cannot see themselves continue within Academia. Informant 1 (p. 91) describes that, in relation to the transitions between her Ph.D. and first postdoc, as well as between her first and second postdoc positions, things more or less solved themselves and the money was found. Whereas now, when her current postdoc is coming to an end, she has no idea about what is going to happen, and it is very nerve-racking. In connection with the previous transitions, informant 1 benefited from career development programmes and career coaching, and she feels that having at least talked to her managers concerning whether the department would like for her to stay would help her calm down at present.

On the other side are informant 3, 6, and 7 (pp. 97, 106, and 110). Their experiences have been quite different. For instance, informant 3 describes how she considers herself very lucky, as she only worked for a short period of time as a teacher at another Danish university. Soon after she finished her Ph.D., an assistant professor position opened at SDU, which she applied for and got. Informant 3 says that what was particularly crucial to her rapid progression was the fact that her former colleagues saw the value of her

work and wanted her back, and therefore made sure to find a position for her. The story of informant 7 is similar, and she likewise only spent a few months teaching at another university, before an opening at SDU occurred. Though informant 7 knew that her former colleagues wanted her to return, she says, it was lucky timing that everything happened so quickly. Finally, informant 6's story is a bit different, as she was working as a freelance science writer before she started her research career. A friend told informant 6 that she would never actually be able to sell her writings, unless she had 'some weight behind her name', i.e. a Ph.D. Therefore, she contacted a professor at SDU and was welcomed, to begin with, to do a voluntary project which later turned into her Ph.D. Characteristic of informant 6 is that if she wants something, she makes it happen. However, without the support and encouragement of her supervisors and managers, this would not have been possible. As such, like in the cases of informant 3 and 7, informant 6's story emphasises the importance of *people* to the career progress of researchers. Interestingly, these informants are the ones within the sample who have already made it through the main part of those several short, fixed-term employments which an academic career entails.

As such, following the recommendations of many publications (incl. "*Women – Quality – Research*", 1997; ETAN report, 2000; "*All talents in play All Talents in Play – More Women in Research*", 2005; "*Recommendations...*", 2015) gender equality efforts may include working deliberately to strengthen female researchers' networks, e.g. by introducing formalised mentor programmes or by setting up women's networks. Compared with informant 3, 6, and 7's career paths, it would seem that this recommendation is sound. Benefits of mentorships and networks include improving feelings of social affiliation within Academia, and providing mutual professional support and sparring between researchers, which are highly needed within the competitive academic environment (Faculty of Science, SDU: "*Gender Equality Strategy*"; FESTA web page, online resource 3).

According to the *Gendering Organisations* perspective, based on patriarchal theories (e.g. Lorber, 1994), gender is perceived as a historically and culturally institutionalised system which is produced and reproduced through social relations of domination and subordination (Calás et al., 2014: 27). The patriarchy is defined as a social network between men which excludes women from important societal positions and resources within certain institutions and organisations, incl. Academia (Rosenbeck, 2014: 143-144). Accepting this definition makes sense in relation to the above discussion about the importance of network to the career advancement of women. First, the establishment of women's networks, including academics with both academic and scientific capital, will undoubtedly strengthen young female researchers' opportunities. For instance, academics with academic capital have the political power to change structures and processes which constitute obstacles to women's careers, as well as the financial power to allocate resources to areas where they will benefit women the most (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 173-174; Rosenbeck, 2014: 199, 210, 225, etc.). And second, as illustrated by the career paths of informant 3, 6, and 7, strong networks tend to open up doors for young researchers. However, if formalised networks and mentor programmes included both women *and* men might imply the additional benefit of minimising the resistance associated with efforts carrying the gender equality label (Informant 6, p. 106). Also, formalised networking between women and men may potentially contribute to breaking down gender stereotypes, i.e. serve as a mechanism for taking the red pill, which would potentially add to processes of structural transformation.

Next, in relation to the various short, fixed-term employments which a researcher must usually complete before qualifying for tenure, within Danish legislation, a rule has been implemented which states that a researcher can only be hired within the same fixed-term job position for four years (cf. p. 51) (Retsinformation, online resource 21). Informant 1 (p. 91) and 4 (p. 100) mention this rule as a big obstacle to the research careers of women, which informant 1 is experiencing in her own career at the moment. Informant 4 states that she does not know exactly what the argumentation is for having this rule, but that she assumes »*that it concerns gender equality*«. This rule has, presumably, been implemented to protect researchers from being stuck in countless fixed-term employments without progression. However, if the department does not have the resources to hire the researcher faced with the 'four year rule', the researcher is forced to look for work elsewhere. This example clearly illustrates the risk of unintended side effects of a gender equality initiative which is implemented to ensure career progression. Understandably, the fact that my informants only experience the negative consequences of this rule adds to resistance and strengthens the negative discourse associated with gender equality efforts. Unfortunately, in relation to gender equality efforts, it seems the exception rather than the rule that positive outcomes are easily noticeable. Remember e.g. the discussion above of the requirement of gender balanced assessment, appointments, and Ph.D. evaluation committees (Faculty of Science, SDU: "*Gender Equality Strategy*"). This requirement is based on the assumption that ensuring female representation will limit gender biases during evaluation and recruitment processes ("*Recommendations...*", 2015; Analysis carried out at SDU, internal document). The concrete outcome of such initiatives, which target the subconscious cultural perceptions, norms, and values of people, will only gradually become visible, e.g. when the representation of women increases. However, as long the academic culture remains masculine, everyone will probably keep on passing the recruitment of female researchers off as unfair expressions of preferential selection. Since, as informant 2 (p. 93) says, it is impossible to know whether a female researcher is hired because of her sex, or whether she was indeed the most qualified candidate.

The final significant topic which reoccurs within the dataset of this thesis is the issue of international mobility. According to the "*Recommendations...*" report (2015), international mobility is essential to the careers of young researchers as it ensures them experience with other research environments, cultures, and methods, as well as international network, personal growth and professional development. Nevertheless, international mobility constitutes a big hurdle for many young female researchers with families, as they imply immense change and uncertainty. The children must be taken out of their normal surroundings, and the researcher's partner must find a job at the destination or be willing to take care of the children during the time of the stay (p. 43).

As such, based on the same reasoning, for informant 1, 2, 4 and 5 (p. 91, 93, 100, and 103), the prospect of going abroad for a considerable period of time, in relation to e.g. exchange during Ph.D. or a full postdoc employment, seems rather problematic or outright unattractive. Informant 1 went with her boyfriend abroad for two years before they had their child. She feels that he made a sacrifice to come with her, and she would therefore not want to ask the same of him again. Informant 2 addresses the insecurities which the application process associated with international scholarships involves. She has experienced having met a new boyfriend in the six months' time which passed between the application deadline and when the response was given, which was of course a difficult situation. Informant 4 stresses the outlook of short employments and moving from country to country as the main deterrent factor, whereas informant 5 rejects the idea of going abroad all together due to her two small children.

On the other hand, we find informant 3, 6, and 7, who seem to take a different approach. Informant 3 relates that her husband followed her abroad for six months during her Ph.D. She describes how he did not manage to find a job during this time, and that he, as a result, took care of their child. Informant 3 further adds that she has always enjoyed having the possibility to go abroad, e.g. for conferences. Informant 3 has always trusted her husband and family to take good care of the children, and since travelling makes her happy, they have to make it work. Similarly, informant 6 describes how her boyfriend was willing to move with her to Odense and support her for a year while she worked voluntarily on a project at SDU. After some years, her boyfriend was ready to move back, so now informant 6 has a rather long commute. She further states that, though their children are older now and go to school, moving abroad would not be completely impossible. However, neither informant 3, 6, or 7 have had to go abroad for a longer period of time, such as for instance informant 1 has.

Evidently, there seems to be three distinguishable tendencies among the informants. Informant 4 and 5 have already made up their minds that they do not see themselves continuing within Academia after their Ph.D.s are done. Then we find informant 1 and 2 sort of on the middle ground. They are a bit further in their careers than informant 4 and 5, and would like to continue their research careers. However, they have both experienced many obstacles and are very aware of the disadvantages which the academic research environment entails. And finally, informant 3, 6, and 7 represent a different experience. Informant 3 and 7 describe how they passed through the necessary career steps relatively easily before achieving tenure, and informant 6 points to her own motivation as the main driver behind her progress. Similarly, informant 3 says that many students and Ph.D.s think that it would be interesting to do a Ph.D. However, she further states that if passion, curiosity, and determination *within them* are not the key driving forces, the students are not likely to succeed.

Examining the cases of all the informants within the sample indicates that informant 3 may be right. Informant 1, 4 and 5 were encouraged to do their Ph.D.s, whereas informant 2, 3, 6, and 7 all enquired themselves with the relevant people as for the possibility to do a Ph.D. In sum, there may be a connection between the form of motivation behind entering a research career and a researcher's ability to uphold her professional motivation over the years despite the many challenges and obstacles, which she will inevitably encounter. And perhaps, the challenging academic working conditions may more quickly outweigh the benefits of a research career, for researchers who had not themselves considered the option of a research career before being 'tapped on the shoulder', than for researchers who dreamt of this career. Naturally, this does not mean that researchers should stop encouraging talented students to consider a Ph.D. as a career option, but that this group of Ph.D.s may need particular efforts of career development and planning activities, so that uncertainty in relation to future career steps is minimised.

5.4. Criteria of Qualification

According to Bourdieu, the concept of 'field' refers to a social space which is distinguishable from other social spaces. Individual fields have specific types of capital which members strive for, as the possession of capital implies power (Priour & Sestoft, 2006: 182). Furthermore, what constitutes capital within a field is designated by the powerful groups within that field, who, as a result, seeks to maintain the value of the

capital which they possess in order to sustain their own powerful position (Ibid.: 88-89). As described above, following Bourdieu's analysis of Academia, field-specific types of capital characteristic of the academic world include academic and scientific capital. Academics who are members of committees and boards with political and financial decision-making authority possess academic capital, whereas internationally acclaimed researchers with huge scientific productions possess scientific capital (Ibid.: 173-174).

Within the data set, striving for scientific capital is salient, as well as the contradictions which the informants experience in this connection. For instance, informant 1, 2, 5 and 7 (p. 91, 93, 103, and 110) described the frustrations that finding the proper balance between teaching and research related tasks causes. For example, informant 2 likes to teach, and she is good at it. However, by focusing her time and energy on preparation for lectures, supervising students' assignments, and so on, she is actually doing herself a disservice. If she wants to qualify for future career steps, the key criterion of qualification is the amount of publications in her portfolio, i.e. the amount of scientific capital which she possesses. In reality, she would be better off if she prepared only 80 per cent for lectures while increasing the time she spends on research, because preparing 120 per cent for classes and getting excellent teaching evaluations from students implies no recognition at all. Evaluations must be merely *acceptable* in order to be approved by department management, which is surprising as high quality teaching and student graduation rates are what keeps the money coming.

Bourdieu states that striving for status and recognition is a central aspects of human practice (Ibid.: 67), from which follows that informant 2's frustrations are completely understandable. The area of her work which is perhaps most important to her produce no comments of praise or satisfaction from her workplace. At my own job at the Department of Marketing and Management at SDU, I have participated in monthly staff meetings, during which the department manager mentions all the researchers of the department who have had research published since the last meeting. The entire staff applauds their colleagues' research achievements. No one ever applauds good teaching, but maybe they should?

Furthermore, women are, as was established above, often set back in relation to their scientific production, if they decide to have children. Maternity leave implies absence from their research, which limits the time they have, during the early stages of a research career, to ensure for themselves the best possible foundation for career progress by publishing ("*Recommendations...*", 2015: 45). Some women may be away from their work place for about a year several times during their Ph.D., postdoc, and assistant professor years, and as a result they will not be able to live up to the amount of publications of their male competitors in the race for associate professor positions.

Therefore, not surprisingly, men far outnumber women among permanently employed scientific personnel ("*Gender Equality within Research*", 1998; ETAN report, 2000; "*Recommendations...*", 2015, etc.). At the Department of Biology, female associate professors and professors amount to 11 per cent, and at IMADA 15 per cent (cf. p. 23-24). We further know that being qualified for tenure requires scientific capital and that the means for getting it are publications. Bourdieu states that capital advantaged groups will work to maintain the value of the type of capital which they possess and which ensures them their powerful position (Priour & Sestoft, 2006: 88-89). Consequently, as long as men represent the majority group among tenured scientific staff, they will work to maintain publications as the most crucial criterion of qualification

within Academia. Over time, books and scientific articles have become manifestations of scientific capital, the amount of which, this way, is easy to measure. However, as informant 7 expresses it, measuring teaching skills is perhaps more difficult, as students may also give excellent evaluations if the teacher cuts the curriculum in half. Assuming that there is a connection between some women's leaving Academia and a lack of recognition for their teaching efforts and competences, universities would benefit from the introduction of alternative criteria of qualification, since, presumably, good teachers should be very attractive to an institution which provides education. As such, if academics with academic capital, e.g. management, decided to introduce *educational capital* as a criteria of qualification, by finding a method for measuring and valuing teaching skills and results at the same level as research accomplishments, there may be a chance that some women – and indeed some men – would be more likely to stay within Academia due to increased motivation based on professional recognition, as well as improved possibilities for qualifying for future career advancement.

5.5. Gender Change

The above discussions emphasise that gender inequality within Academia is a complex problem, the causes for which are found in both the structures and processes of the academic system, as well as at a fundamental, cultural-normative level within the specific field of Academia and within Danish society as a whole. Consequently, gender change within Academia is a very distant prospect, as it will require more than gender equality efforts at the universities. In fact, the findings of the above discussion have left me somewhat disheartened, as it seems that historically-rooted, cultural perceptions of gender constitute a strong regulative force for women, even in the 21st century. Though the informants all state that they do not experience gender inequality in their everyday lives, the application of Bourdieu's theoretical framework implied that a) this dismissal of the existence of gender inequality, b) resistance to gender equality efforts, c) the attempts of female researchers to adopt the academic habitus, d) the use of meritocratic reasoning, and e) women's choice to opt out of Academia, are essentially *all* interpretable as women's complicity to and reproduction of the relationship of domination between the sexes. This is of course a discouraging outcome of a thesis which is based on the premise that gender change is necessary.

Bourdieu places his theory in between the polarised sociological perspectives of subjectivity and objectivity, which in his view allows for individuals to improvise independently within the limits of the structures and values of institutions and society (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 31-32; Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 13). However, the significant number of female researchers who opt out of Academia may be an indication that the regulation implied by subjectivism, in many cases, is stronger than agency within people. This conclusion reflects the feminist critique of Bourdieu's theory which holds that Bourdieu's focus is too strongly on the reproduction and durability of relations of domination, as opposed to on change and liberation (McLeod, 2005: 17; McNay, 1999: 112). In Bourdieu's view, it seems that reproduction has no end. On the other hand, Calás et al. (2014) point to the dependence of the gender categories, and the relationship of domination between the sexes, on their own constant reproduction as exactly the aspect of gender inequality which holds the possibility for change. If people are able to construe perceptions of gender in a different manner, and to reconceive of gender inequality as undesirable and potentially

abolishable, as opposed to natural and inevitable, change will follow (p. 26, 29). Such projects are, not surprisingly, more easily said than done (Ibid.: 34). Nevertheless, in relation to the introduction of alternative discursive constructions of masculinity and femininity, and the embedding of gender change within organisations through the development of new narratives and stories, the *Analysis* of HRM gender equality efforts pointed to the promise of structural transformation gender equality strategies (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 338).

Female researchers may themselves contribute to this transformative process. As mentioned above, McNay (1999) stresses how women's feelings of autonomy and subordination vary as they move within and between diverse social fields (p. 112), and that it is this feeling of ambivalence and dissonance which both bears evidence of and produces change (McLeod, 2005: 22). Unlike previous times, today, women are allowed access to public and professional life (Rosenbeck, 2014: 110). However, when cultural norms and values associated with the times in which women were confined to the home are still at work at present, it makes sense that women experience ambivalence and dissonance in relation to their surroundings' expectations to the role that they are supposed to play. McLeod (2005) state that these experiences of dissonance and contradiction may prompt self-reflexivity (Ibid.: 25), and the data set has made evident that, sometimes, they do. For instance, informant 1 (p. 91) and 2 (p. 93) reflect on what insecure future career prospects have meant and will mean to their personal lives. Informant 1 is soon ending her current contract, and does not know what is going to happen afterwards. Informant 2 has experienced to apply for an international scholarship and meeting a new boyfriend while waiting for the reply. Informant 3, 6, and 7 (p. 97, 106, and 110) have all reflected on issues which have arisen for them in relation to balancing families and careers. However, it seems they have somehow managed to make it work – aided by supportive supervisors, managers, and colleagues and occasional lucky timing. And finally, informant 4 (p. 110) and 5 (p. 103) likewise reflect on issues of combining family and work life, but they see no way of finding a balance.

As such, all the informants have reflected upon the different ways in which they have experienced the contradictory expectations of women. Nonetheless, it seems that it is only in the cases of informant 2, 3, 6, and 7 that these reflections have led to the women engaging in some degree of confrontation with the systems and subconscious values which perpetuate gender inequality within Academia. For instance, informant 3 has not only confronted her male colleagues in a situation in which they automatically assumed that a new colleague to be male, but also participated in gender equality committee work. Informant 6 confronts gender inequality by raising awareness of gender stereotypes through her work and participation in gender equality efforts. Moreover, though informant 2's enquiry was turned down, she tried to impact the academic system by suggesting increased flexibility between teaching and research related tasks to her managers. And finally, informant 7 is confronting the system as she has been granted permission to be on part time, which is very unusual. Informant 2 and 7 may not perceive their efforts as challenging or confrontational, but rather as attempts of improving their individual situations. However, as informant 1, 5, and 7 – like informant 2 – mention the issue of criteria of qualification which the balance between teaching and research related activities imply, and since informant 5 mentions the impossibility of part time as one of her reasons for leaving Academia, informant 2 and 7 may, by trying to solve their own personal challenges, contribute to solving challenges which face other women as well.

Furthermore, today, male researchers may to an increasing degree be facing similar challenges as women within Academia concerning contradictions between the expectations of the work place and need for presence and participation at home (Rosenbeck, 2014: 119-121; Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 59). For instance, informant 1 (p. 91) relates how a hard-working, very strict, and ambitious male colleague had had to reduce the efforts and time which he attributed to his work, after he became a father. Informant 2 (p. 93) describes how she experiences a big difference between how older male colleagues compared to how younger male colleagues treat women. And finally, in the *Analysis* (p. 36), the fact that young, male researchers had expressed a wish to participate in the career development courses offered by HR Development was interpreted as a manifestation of young men today being equally challenged in relation to living up to the requirements and competitive environment of Academia. Assuming that the claim that Academia and people have in fact grown apart is sound, would imply that gender equality efforts might exchange its gender focus with an inclusive employee focus and target equality efforts at the basic working conditions of Academia in order to bring the academic system into the 21st century, e.g. by allowing for individuality. However, though working conditions may improve, there are still some aspects of what it means to be a woman and a man which gender equality efforts cannot change. Women get pregnant and give birth which will, as such, to a very large extent be a concern for the careers of women. Nevertheless, as informant 2 and 6 (p. 106) agree »*gender equality starts within the home*«, and if men started taking their equal share of paternity leave, the problem would indeed be reduced for women (*“Recommendations...”*, 2015: 45). And later, while the children are young and it becomes difficult for both parents to juggle careers and family, in informant 2, 3, and 5’s experience, women are still more likely to compromise with their professional ambitions for a period of time by going on part time or settle for lower-level jobs.

Finally, it must be stated that this *is* a critical analysis which means that interpretations become sort of exaggerated. As mentioned above, it is essentially possible to interpret everything that women do as their complicit reproduction of gender inequality. Therefore, this thesis must not ignore that none of the informants experience gender discrimination, inequality, or sexism in their everyday work lives. It would be immoral to disregard their lived experiences completely. Informant 6 states that though there may be the occasional ‘nut case’ guy around, she really rarely meets genuinely sexist men. She suggests that instead of actual discrimination or sexism, what is more likely at work are gender stereotypes. Therefore, in her opinion, gender equality efforts should change their focus from women to everyone, as gender stereotypes work between women and men, between women, between men, and within women and men individually. By raising awareness about stereotypes, people may realise the level of control which stereotypes involve by limiting our possibilities for acting, seeing and perceiving.

Lastly, some people may wonder and ask: What difference does it make that women are underrepresented within research? It makes an imperative difference when men’s overrepresentation means that the brain power, potential innovation, rethinking of methods and practices, etc. which women’s knowledge may imply and which, historically, women were excluded from putting to use, remains unexploited (cf. informant 6, p. 106). Women’s experiences, perspectives, and competencies constitute a source of yet to be discovered brain capacity, which when unleashed will benefit not only science but all of society (*“Recommendations...”* report, 2015: 45). This is of course a grand statement, but is it really plausible? According to Rosenbeck (2014), following Bourdieu, it may just be. For all of Academia’s history, western men have constituted the unmistakable majority group, and not only the majority group, they have at the same time maintained their status as the powerful group within the field. According to Bourdieu, the

possession of academic and scientific capital entails the power to define what constitutes real and good science, to determine how scientific work is correctly to be carried out and which scientific areas are considered prestigious and important (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 173-174). Furthermore, human beings are biased towards preferring people who are similar to and have similar interests as themselves (*“Recommendations...”*, 2015: 12). Within Academia, this means that if women favour other research topics and areas than men, or if female researchers apply different scientific methods than men, such as e.g. feminist theory compared to a positivist approach, the scientific quality of their work will be undervalued (Rosenbeck, 2014: 210). Consequently, having women and other minority groups genuinely included within Academia is not only a matter of fairness and equality, but their different experiences, positions, and perspectives have the potential of improving science by challenging traditional demarcations of what constitutes science and what does not. A wider understanding of the concept of science will allow for the contributions of women to become more visible and recognised in their own right. Furthermore, in Bourdieu’s view, education is first and foremost an institution which reinforces the existing relationships of domination within society (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 71). Universities, therefore, also have the power to counter this reinforcement e.g. by increasing the presence of women among top research positions and university management, by ensuring female teachers for students, and by ensuring that female theorists and authors are represented within teaching curriculums.

6. Conclusion

The objective of this thesis was to examine how the issue of gender inequality is incorporated into human resource management policies and practices in Academia in Denmark, based on a study of the case departments of Biology and Mathematics and Computer Science within the Faculty of Science at the University of Southern Denmark. This objective was achieved through the application of the Benschop and van den Brink (2014) and Benschop and Verloo (2012) model. Through the analysis, this model proved itself a powerful tool for addressing underlying assumptions, methods, and objectives of gender equality strategies, as well as their discursive and material outcomes. Furthermore, by connecting the managerial analysis of HRM gender equality efforts with a discussion of how recipients, the women, perceive and experience such efforts and their effects, this thesis provides an in-depth and multi-level snapshot of circumstances for women within Academia.

The findings of the *Analysis* indicate that the combination of a multitude of efforts may have the benefit of complementary effects. By highlighting how gender equality strategies 'fill in' the deficiencies of each other, the *Analysis* simultaneously stressed the strengths and contradictions and challenges associated with each of the various approaches. For instance, despite participants' expressions of satisfaction with career development programmes, such efforts are in fact carried by an assumption of women's lack of professional career skills. Therefore, career development courses must be supplemented with strategies which do not perceive the fact that female researchers behave, think, do research differently, and take different career paths than men as an expression of women's deficiency, but which, on the contrary, aim to teach Academia to embrace and value those differences. At the Faculty of Science this has been attempted e.g. by training department and research team managers in inclusive meeting management. However, though value difference approaches may increasingly allow for women to be recognised in their own right as opposed to compared with male standards, diversity approaches do not address structural discrimination. As such, additional efforts which e.g. limit the impact of gender biases in recruitment and evaluation processes must be employed. The requirement by the Faculty of Science of female representation within assessment, appointments, and Ph.D. evaluation committees represents such an effort. As administrative requirements involve managerial interference in daily operations, such approaches are often met with considerable resistance. Resistance emphasises the need for strategies like gender mainstreaming which raise awareness about those sociological mechanisms and gendered cultural norms and values which make gender equality interventions necessary. Nevertheless, gender mainstreaming requires that powerful groups must demonstrate willingness to relinquish their powerful position, which is of course paradoxical, since if people were actually willing to do so, there would be no problem.

Evidently, gender inequality within Academia is a very complex problem, especially since, to my surprise, gender equality efforts entail significant levels of resistance. Resistance is an equally complex problem which was, in this thesis, identified to be founded in several things. First, effects of gender equality efforts which target gendered norms and values, such as inclusive meeting management, are intangible and difficult to detect. This way, the *Discussion* emphasised how the informants typically associate gender equality efforts with initiatives which e.g. require additional administration or which spur controversy and debate, such as earmarked recruitment. Consequently, many academics only have negative associations of gender equality efforts, though they may in fact be benefitting from efforts in ways that they do not notice.

Therefore, awareness and understanding of different efforts must increase to allow for a more nuanced gender equality debate, which does not simply concern for or against.

And second, this thesis has demonstrated how resistance to gender equality efforts is closely linked with Academia's championing of the meritocratic ideal. Obviously, when individuals perceive women and men as equals, initiatives which seek to give women a professional handicap are perceived as pointless or outright anti-competitive. As a result, female researchers cannot think of anything worse than being benefited because of their sex, as it implies that they may not have been considered worthy when compared to male competitors. Regrettably, such talk about women's insufficient qualification tends to stay with the women and linger within the academic culture.

Taking a Bourdieuan perspective, the *Discussion* pointed to how meritocracy represents a mechanism which contributes to the maintenance of the historically and culturally institutionalised system which 'gender' constitutes (Calás et al., 2014: 27). From an unwavering belief in meritocracy follows that women misrecognise the social stigmatisation which they are subjected to, such as hallway talk about how women are only hired because of their sex, as natural and inevitable and not as those acts of subtle discrimination and symbolic violence which they really are. As such, according to Bourdieu, expressions of resistance to gender equality efforts represent subconscious attempts, from both women and men, to protect the current relationship of domination between the sexes (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 88-89; Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25). Men resist gender change as gender equality will imply a loss of power for them, and women resist gender change because they have no other option due to their position as dominated. This way, what has become particularly salient within this thesis is how antiquated, historical perceptions of gender, still today, are at work at a societal level, within Academia, and within and between individuals. For example, the contradictory expectations to the role of women experienced by the informants are both evidence of significant gender change having already happened, and the need for further improvement, especially at the cultural-normative level. Academia needs to replace stories which present the categories of 'mother' and 'academic' as mutually exclusive, with stories which embrace the idea that it may indeed be possible to be both a devoted mother and a talented, ambitious researcher. Allowing such alternative stories to become embedded within the academic culture may encourage more women to stay.

The use of Bourdieu's theoretical framework for analysing gender inequality within Academia has provided a thorough understanding of the contradictions which female researchers experience within and between the traditionally feminine domestic field and masculine academic field, as well as the continuity and the durability of the relationship of domination between the sexes (Bianciotti, 2011: 81; Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 23). Nevertheless, the conclusions of this thesis should not be misinterpreted as accusations of discrimination against men. I believe that what has become particularly clear is that gender inequality is a result of women's – just as much as men's – reproduction of gendered, historically-rooted, cultural norms, values, and stereotypes. As such, gender inequality is within us all at a subconscious level. Gender equality efforts therefore need the support and participation of both women and men, as it is in the interest of everyone to allow for women to fully deploy their talent and contribute to society with new knowledge and valuable research. However, in order for men to feel included, the 'gender equality' label may need to be discarded.

Finally, this thesis has identified how particular ways of perceiving gender equality and approaching gender equality efforts are closely connected. For instance, within this thesis, the metaphors of *The Matrix*, the red and the blue pill have made evident how individuals are divided between people who believe that gender inequality exists and people who do not. People who have taken the red pill, believe that humans are inherently biased and that women and men are different, and who simultaneously demonstrate genuine intent in relation to improving gender equality. On the other hand, people who have not taken the red pill, or who chose the blue pill, dismiss the idea of gender inequality, by insisting on the possibility of objectivity and meritocracy, while their participation in gender equality efforts are typically based on some kind of obligation. This thesis points to people's feelings of genuine intent or obligation as crucial determinants of assumptions and outcomes of gender equality efforts, and the overall conclusion must inevitably be that as long as the majority of policy and decision-makers, as well as responsible for implementation, apparently, only address the issue of gender equality due to obligation, real, substantial gender change within Academia is a very distant prospect.

7. Perspectives

This final short chapter contains some reflections on the conclusions reached during the development of this thesis. I cannot take credit alone for all of these thoughts, as some of the following points were inspired by my interview with informant 6 (p. 106).

To begin with, based on this thesis and especially the statements of the informants, Academia does not come off as a particularly attractive place to work. As such, many people agree that only the truly idealistic and passionate researchers will be motivated to stay, because research is like a *calling* to them. Second, particularly within scientific fields such as biology and chemistry, talented scientists are sought after within business. And a job within business usually pays more, it does not require teaching activities, it has the same supportive maternity leave conditions, it has an actual option for part time arrangements, and it usually includes an attractive package of benefits. So, I think that it is not surprising that women opt out of Academia. Simple listing renders the pros for business compared with the cons for Academia unignorable.

According to my critical analysis of women's submission and complicity to the power relationship between the sexes, the women choose the inevitable. This means that the women withdraw because they know subconsciously that Academia will exclude them eventually anyway. Choosing the inevitable further involves subconsciously rationalising this choice so that it seems, to the women themselves, that they are making deliberate, conscious, independent decisions concerning their lives, though in reality they had no other option (Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 42). By analysing my informants this way, I felt that I was being condescending and not giving them the credit which they deserve. They are modern, independent, and intelligent women. Of course, they will choose the unmistakably more attractive alternative and seek employment in the business world. Though critics may claim that such considerations are problematic for a researcher as they imply partiality, I claim that they reflect the never-ending sociological opposition between subjectivism and objectivism. As such, women's leaving Academia is either interpretable an expression of submission to societal structures and regulation or their individual, independent, rational choice. Nevertheless, the outcome is still the same – they leave. Ideally, their individual, independent, rational choice would be that they would stay in Academia and *fight* for their careers and for the gender change that Academia so desperately needs. However, the learning process which I have been through during the development this of thesis has left me rather pessimistic as to the probability of this ever happening.

Furthermore, from the very start of the process of working with this thesis, it surprised me how much resistance gender equality efforts face. To some extent, it would make more sense to me if men alone resisted gender equality, as they may believe that improved circumstances for women would imply lessened circumstances for them. However, not only men resist gender equality, women do too. This thesis concluded how women rationalise and defend their subordinate position, whereby gender change becomes extremely difficult and the status quo is sustained (Prieur & Sestoft, 2006: 88-89; Web, Shirato & Danaher, 2002: 25). And commonly, both men and women simply reject the existence of gender inequality all together. When men and women reject the existence of gender inequality they choose voluntary ignorance. Voluntary ignorance is the easy way out, as people this way say *»this does not concern me«*. Or, they may perceive gender equality as a matter of women against men – women as the victims, men as the

bad guys – or that gender equality means disadvantaging men in order for women to thrive. If this is their view, naturally they will not want to be involved. However, if gender equality is construed, in informant 6's words, as a »*fight among humanity, about how it is to be a person in the world*«, I believe that only very few would be able to reject the values, intentions, as well as the means for achieving gender equality. And I believe that men *should*, just as well as women, be frontrunners of gender equality. They have mothers, girlfriends, wives, and perhaps daughters. And do these men not want to ensure a world which embraces the women in their lives, which allows for them to flourish and thrive, and which enables them to reach the very top of their professions if they have the talent and will to do so? I cannot imagine a modern man who would not wish this for his daughter.

But what can be done to commit men and women to the gender equality project? Informant 6 suggests that gender equality efforts should abolish their gender focus and label. What the labels of 'woman', 'man', feminine and masculine mean, to a large extent, involves stereotypes. If we addressed inequality as '*stereotype awareness*' or '*countering biases*', perhaps men would not feel that efforts were an implicit accusation of discrimination against them. Stereotypes limit us. When we meet a person for the first time and, based on our first-hand impression, decide that we do not like that person, we may in fact be cheating ourselves of the chance to meet a new best friend. Or a hiring university department may be cheating itself from the best researcher they ever had. They will never know. Learning to recognise when our stereotypes are at work, and to look beyond our stereotypes, may potentially constitute a liberation of the mind through which we allow ourselves to see past those patterns which normally limit us to what is safe and familiar. And not only in terms of people, freeing ourselves from our stereotypes may indeed mean unleashing unknown brainpower by opening up for new ways of perceiving and approaching knowledge and science.

Finally, I am wondering why gender awareness of gender equality should not be a strategic priority of the SDU at the same level as e.g. internationalisation (SDU, "*Strategy 2020*"). Informant 6 described how she imagined a glorious future for SDU, branded, renowned, and admired as "*the gender aware university of Denmark*". Gender awareness 2.0 might entail that not only is the university working to increase the share of women within research and management, but gender awareness is incorporated into teaching, e.g. by training university teachers in gender awareness, by requiring that curriculums must include female authors and theorists, and that whenever relevant, feminist theory. However, it seems that the brand of "*the gender aware university of Denmark*" does not come off as sexy as "*the international university of Denmark*", which is what SDU is aiming at currently. Nevertheless, the attractiveness of gender equality may increase if a monetary advantage followed. Informant 6 suggested that if research councils and foundations posed requirements in relation to consideration for gendered aspects, incl. gender biases inherent within the research process or gendered outcomes, researchers would have to comply. Everybody follows the money. However, addressing the potential and responsibility of research councils and foundations for leading the way for gender equality is outside the scope of this thesis.

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9. Appendix

9.1. Interview Notes

9.1.1. Informant 1

1. Career Path

Informant 1's career path has been characterised by coincidences. She never decided to pursue a career as researcher, it just more or less happened by itself. In relation to her bachelor project, her supervisor invited informant 1 to go with her abroad for a time, and after the bachelor again to another country to do field research. Finally, after that, informant 1 was offered her Ph.D. at SDU. So basically, informant 1 has simply followed her interest and taken the chance to 'do her hobby'.

After her Ph.D., informant 1 went on a Danish scholarship abroad as postdoc for two years, and finally now, she is hired as postdoc at SDU. When her current postdoc position ends, she is not allowed to continue as postdoc, due to the '4-years rule' (Retsinformation, online resource 21), and she does not know whether management wants her to stay at SDU, or how that is going to be possible, if they do. Informant 1 regrets that she has not yet had the courage to bring up this topic with her supervisor. It is difficult to address, however, at the moment she feels insecure and would rather know, if they do *not* want her to stay, than not know anything at all.

In the transitions from Ph.D. to postdoc, and from one postdoc to the other, informant 1 has not experienced much insecurity, as things have more or less solved themselves. The money has been found for her to continue, but this time feels different as nothing is certain.

Informant 1 would like to continue at the university, however, as she sees more and more cases of stress among her colleagues, she also wonders whether a research career is worth risking one's health.

Furthermore, informant 1 has previously participated in career development courses and seen a career coach, which she experienced as very helpful. She feels that she would really benefit from such courses or coaching now, in her present uncertain situation.

As informant 1 has already had her boyfriend join her abroad during her two year postdoc position, she would not want to ask that of him again. Further, she has a child now, and moving – even within Denmark – appears unattractive at the moment.

Informant 1 stresses flexibility as the primary advantage of the job as researcher, she has the opportunity to plan and structure her work as it suits her. Moreover, informant 1 further states that she enjoys both teaching and research, and that she has handled the administrative tasks which come with teaching better than she expected. However, the dilemma is that if a researcher prioritises teaching, more administration follows, which takes time from research. And not prioritising research implies fewer publications, from which follows that getting the funding, that informant 1 is most likely going to need soon, will be much more difficult. Informant 1 feels that it is very difficult to find the proper balance between tasks.

2. Stress

Informant 1 has seen several close colleagues burn out with work-related stress. It is an issue which she keeps in the back of her mind always, and it has meant that she has restructured her work life considerably.

Previously, informant 1 was convinced that balancing career and family would not be a problem, however, after having had her first child she had to change that standpoint. She now leaves her work computer at the office when she finishes in the afternoon, and keeps the evenings reserved for her family. She maintains this division between work and private very strictly, and though she has not discussed this decision with her supervisor or with department management, she believes that they will see it as a strength that she is conscious about preventing stress. As she says, they have no right to expect more of her, though she is of course aware that expectations and performance criteria within Academia *are* very high.

Informant 1 describes how the department makes an effort for raising awareness about work-related stress by giving workshops and having research teams discussing it. But stress is taboo, and it is difficult to address with colleagues, people with whom you may not be particularly close with, your private concerns and worries.

When looking back, she might have noticed signs of her colleagues' stress, however, she did not talk to them about it because it is personal, which she now regrets. She says, *"Nobody talks about it, I did not either, and I should have"*.

Despite increased awareness of issues of stress, informant 1 does not feel that they are getting to the core of the problem. She describes a situation during a stress workshop, during which a male colleague had said *"I do not think that I am capable of being stressed"*. A statement like that makes it extremely difficult for someone else to say *"Well, I think that I can"*.

Informant 1, moreover, wonders whether stress may not be a general tendency and problem of society today. Perhaps people are subjected to more pressure, or contradictory pressures and expectations, which make it difficult to ever feel sufficient and fully present in what people are doing, e.g. in relation to work versus family.

To informant 1, it has been comforting to see how a male colleague, who had previously been very strict in terms of working hard, meeting deadlines, creating good results, had had to reduce the efforts and time which he attributed to his work, after he became a father. The fact that she was not the only one to prioritise her family and child, made her feel less guilty about her choice.

Her colleagues have, in addition, been nice to informant 1, as they know that she does not have the same energy and time as before she had her first child. When she came back from her maternity leave, they did not have many, many tasks waiting for her to do, which was a relief. Her colleagues do not have the same expectation for her as before.

3. Gender Equality

Informant 1 feels that gender equality is a word which is often heard at the university, and she experiences that it is received well when it is addressed.

Moreover, informant 1 does not experience any differential treatment within her research team, and in general, gender inequality is not an issue which is present during her everyday work life.

Informant 1 says that though she does not feel it, she will not rule out that there may be issues of gender inequality within Academia that she does not notice. Informant 1 realises that though there are women at the department, they are primarily within the 'lower degree' of the hierarchy. She further wonders whether women willingly accept lower job positions, as they imply more security and freedom to take care of a family.

Informant 1 herself feels that she would appreciate more feedback and positive encouragement in relation to her work, which she does not receive. She wonders whether maybe men are more self-confident and do not need this in the same way. At the annual appraisal interview, she is not asked how she is doing at the work place. It rather concerns how many publications she is working on.

When talking about gender equality initiatives, informant 1 describes how the requirement that female Ph.D.s must have at least one female Ph.D. evaluation committee member is seen as superfluous by many Ph.D.s. They are certain that they will be assessed fairly, and they would rather have male committee members who have knowledge within the specific research area, than have women that do not know of the topic. The female Ph.D.s have no problem signing an application for dispensation in relation to this rule.

Finally, informant 1 believes that gender equality is not solved by forcing it, however, that the mind-set of people and people's ways of thinking and understanding have to be changed.

9.1.2. Informant 2

Quotes:

I would not want to be hired for a job, just because I am a woman. I do not want that label attached to me - that I should have been hired just to equal out some percentage.

1. Career Path

Informant 2 had the perception that to become a Ph.D. student, someone should have tapped her on the shoulder. However, she mentioned to her bachelor thesis supervisor that she was interested in a Ph.D., and ended up getting a scholarship.

After the Ph.D., informant 2 was granted money by an external institution to carry out research as postdoc at the research centre, to which she already belonged at SDU. She has since had her postdoc position

renewed. She further mentions the stress associated with having to 'apply for her own salary', i.e. that each time a fixed-term employment ends, a researcher has to seek funding externally. The application process and wait for reply is difficult. Though informant 2 sometimes feels that she could use more feedback and positive encouragement during her everyday work, she always knew from her research team leader that he wanted her to stay.

Informant 2 describes that it is tough to be employed in these short, fixed-term employments as Ph.D. and postdoc, and assistant professor. As fixed-term employee you do not have the same rights as a permanently employed researcher, however, you have the same responsibilities e.g. in relation to teaching. Informant 2 repeatedly stresses the difficulties she experiences with her situation. She is paid by the external institution to carry out research, while the university requires her to teach. Focusing on her teaching activities takes time from research, and focusing on her research takes time from teaching. As she likes teaching tasks and thesis supervision very much, she typically ends up focusing on that. She says that she feels guilty, as she, when she spends her time on teaching, is actually not doing the task which she paid to do by the external institution.

2. Working Environment

Informant 2 has never experienced any differential treatment or sexism within the research team that she belongs to. She does not end up 'being the secretary' who has to order coffee and book the meeting room, as she has heard other young female researcher describe their experience.

Sometimes informant 2 would have liked a bit more structure in relation to meetings, and she would like to have minutes from each meeting, whereas this does not matter to her male colleagues. They say "*If you need minutes, you can write them yourself*", however, informant 2 does not want to write for everyone, when they would not do the same for her, so she writes minutes for herself. Also, during meetings, it can be difficult, however, that there is no official team leader who can sometimes act as the bad guy and make difficult decisions e.g. in case of disagreement.

Her research team is a positive collaboration, which means that members of the team 'give and steal' to and from each other. She has experienced the opposite abroad, where it was essential to keep one's cards close to the chest, and that the individual researcher would always do what is best for him or herself. This kind of environment does not suit informant 2 very well.

Informant 2 critiques the overall set-up of working conditions within Academia. First, you may work 60-70 hours per week, but you get no overtime for it, and there is no possibility to negotiate your salary. Second, as described above, informant 2 typically spends more time doing teaching-related tasks, because it is important to her that her teaching is good. However, prioritising her teaching over research is actually doing herself a disservice as giving good lectures to students is not followed by any recognition, and if she wants permanent employment, the only thing that counts are her publications. She feels that she has two options: To prepare 120 per cent and get the satisfaction of very positive feedback from her students, or prepare 80 per cent for her lectures, publish more, and get recognition from her managers, colleagues, and the department. Whether student evaluations are very good or just acceptable does not make a difference.

All that counts is that her teaching is evaluated satisfactorily by students, which is then approved by management. Informant 2's nearest manager, of course knows the effort that informant 2 puts in her teaching, however, department management basically only cares about whether she carries out the lectures that she is required to do, and that she publishes many articles.

Previously, informant 2 has actually enquired with her manager if it would be possible for her to stretch her external funding a little longer and focus more on teaching and less on research, but management turned that request down. She has no objectives of publishing in the leading journals or winning the Nobel prize, however, some of her colleagues have. She wonders why there is no flexibility which may allow for the most ambitious researchers to focus on their research and not having to teach first-year students, while allowing for the motivated and skilled teachers to focus on teaching. Informant 2 sees the fact that teaching activities give no recognition as the primary challenge in this relation, and publishing gives all the recognition. As such, researchers who want to teach are not valued in the same way as researchers who want to do research, though teaching is one of key 'services' which the department provides. Informant 2 states that she believes that Academia should change its perception of a good employee, so that motivated and skilled teacher are not perceived as second-rate researchers, but as highly competent within their preferred field and an important asset to the university.

Finally, as assistant professor, informant 2 would have the possibility to do her postgraduate teacher training, which she would like to. But her external funding is of course not willing to pay for the time that such training takes, and the department is only willing to pay if she teaches 50 lessons more.

3. Work-life Balance

Informant 2 knows women who have opted out of careers within Academia, as they have felt it impossible to work as researcher and teacher while having a family. They say that it is impossible for both husband and wife to have a career, as no-one would then have time to take care of the children. "Gender equality starts within the home", informant 2 says. If the husband does not want to support that the wife has a career, well then the university cannot do anything to help the woman along. Informant 2 believes that women are probably more likely to give up a career to have time for the children, compared with men, which therefore puts the women in a difficult situation. Informant 2 believes that Academia is, in many ways a man's world. It was created by men and perhaps it is also designed to better suit the lives of men.

As informant 2 cares very much for her teaching and supervisory tasks, she sometimes needs to answer students' emails during e.g. vacations, because she knows that they depend on her reply. But she feels that she can manage to find an appropriate balance.

Furthermore, informant 2 points to the opportunity to arrange and structure your work time as you like as a benefit of the job. Though informant 2 is getting better at allowing herself to leave early some days, if she has been working during the weekend, she cannot help feeling guilty when she does.

4. International Mobility

Informant 2 did a three month stay abroad during her Ph.D. and applied for a longer stay as postdoc afterwards, but got the postdoc position at SDU instead.

The challenges associated with international mobility are significant. E.g. the time delay in relation to receiving a response for a position abroad makes any planning difficult, i.e. a researcher does not know whether she has been approved for a position until maybe five months after application deadline, and then if she is approved departure may be one month later. During this one month, she will have to rent out her house, find accommodation abroad, book flights, pack, etc. Informant 2 further experienced that in the time between application deadline and reply she found a new boyfriend, so what would happen to that relationship in case she was leaving?

Informant 2 further mentions that, the difficulties of moving abroad are of course even more overwhelming if you have a husband and children. The husband would have to quit his job and find a new one abroad, or would have to be willing to stay home with the kids, if finding a job is not possible. Again she stated “gender equality starts within the home”, as such, if the husband is not willing to make sacrifices for the career of his wife, then international mobility – and even mobility within Denmark – is more or less impossible.

5. Gender Equality

Informant 2 does not feel that gender equality is a topic which is talked about now, as much as it was a few years back; neither in formal settings nor in the corridors.

Informant 2 mentions a situation in which a research team had appointed a male candidate as their preferred choice for a vacant job position, however, management chose a woman. From this followed that it was assumed that she was hired as part of gender equality efforts and because of her sex.

It is, nevertheless, impossible to know whether a female researcher is indeed hired because of sex, or whether she in fact was the most qualified candidate.

Furthermore, she emphasises that there is a big difference between how older male colleagues treat young female researchers, and how young male colleagues treat female researchers. Informant 2 believes that there is a generation difference in this sense. Older male colleagues may, for instance, joke about how newly hired female researchers are hired *just* because they are women. Though these kinds of jokes do not affect informant 2 as much as they used to, she recalls that it may have made her doubt whether she was in fact as qualified as her male colleagues.

Informant 2 believes that gender equality efforts are important, as is it striking that so few among the permanently employed staff are women. However, she states that women should not be forced into a job structure which does not suit them, e.g. in relation to many short, fixed-term employments. If the reason that many women give up their academic careers is that they cannot combine family and work life

appropriately, well then Academia has to change the system in some way, though informant 2 does not know exactly how.

9.1.3. Informant 3

1. Career Path

After having finished her master, informant 3 started working as an upper secondary teacher, however, she did not feel completely satisfied with that job. It was okay, but she missed the chance to really lose herself in a research topic; to work with something, only because it was interesting to her, and for the sake of the project in itself. So informant 3 contacted her master thesis supervisor, who helped her to find a Ph.D. supervisor within her research area at another university. The supervisor supported informant 3 as she was developing her research proposal, while working as a teacher. When she was granted funding, she wanted to take that money to SDU, and was hired as a Ph.D. there.

Apart from helping her with her Ph.D. dissertation, her supervisor did not contribute with much in terms of informant 3's career. As they did not see each other in their daily work, because they were at different universities, he did not introduce her to network, bring her to conferences, etc.

Informant 3 had not considered the possibility of a research career, until she found out that upper secondary was not the place for her. She says that no-one knows whether they are capable of completing a Ph.D. until they are in it. She describes how many Ph.D.s are driven by creating a good result, however, she was driven by the process; it was most important that she had fun while researching and writing, and the topic and project remained interesting and motivating to her. And then she would afterwards decide whether to continue within Academia or not.

While informant 3 was a Ph.D., future career prospects and options were not discussed.

When she finished, informant 3 found a university teaching job in Denmark. She considers herself very fortunate, that she did not have to go abroad for a longer period of time, even though it was tough to commute between cities. And she did not have to do several postdoc employments before progressing. She only had the teaching job for a short period of time, before an assistant professor position was posted at SDU, which she applied for and got. Clearly, someone at her department at SDU saw that her specific research area would be an important addition to the teaching competences and research areas of the department, and made sure to find a position for her. Informant 3 believes that the most essential thing to get hired as researcher is that someone wants you and is willing to do the work to get you.

Later in her career, informant 3 felt that she would have benefitted from career counselling and advice in order to qualify herself in the best way possible for future advancement within the academic hierarchy. To qualify, what matters the most are publications. However, the university requires that a researcher teaches, and teaching requires preparation and administration. Informant 3 felt a bit alone with her concerns and the career choices that she had to make. If a young researcher has a mentor or benefactor, he or she may give advice and lobby the researcher's interests to decision-makers.

2. International Mobility

Informant 3 has not been abroad for a longer period of time, and she has never experienced that this has been counted as a disadvantage or weakness.

During her Ph.D., informant 3, her husband, and child went six months abroad. During this time, her husband did not manage to find a job, and he therefore took care of their child.

Later in her career, informant 3 saw short stays abroad as positive opportunities to have a break from the everyday home life, and see other places for a change, gather energy, and collaborate with new people. She did not worry about being away a few weeks each year, as she trusted the people at home to take good care of the children. She says it is about the approach the researcher takes. As long as the children are okay and happy, and travelling makes the researcher happy, then a family has to make it work.

3. Work-Life Balance

Before informant 3 had children, she had this 'pink' image about how it would be. That the baby would sleep on her arm, while she was writing. However, reality was different and her first child required all her attention. It was more demanding and difficult than she had expected. Informant 3 and her husband have shared child rearing and care taking responsibilities. They both have flexible jobs, which made it easier to take turns at delivering children in day care and picking them up in the afternoon.

Informant 3 experienced that her priorities changed, when she had children. Her children became most important in her life. Nevertheless, she was still motivated to do research, and never wanted to leave Academia. The primary benefit of a research job is the flexibility which, especially the early employments imply, i.e. Ph.D. and assistant professors, as well as the opportunity to lose oneself in a topic.

4. Gender Equality

Informant 3 feels demotivated in relation to gender equality efforts. It has been discussed and addressed with initiatives and efforts for years, but she feels that they never have any real effect.

She was part of a committee of women, at one point, which discussed gender inequality and developed suggestions for improvements. However, in the end there was no money to carry out the suggestions.

Informant 3 mentions a situation during which she was participating as the only woman in the development of a job announcement for a vacant position. While talking about requirements of the candidate, informant 3's male colleagues would constantly say "*this guy* [that we are looking for]". Informant 3 was annoyed by this way of talking about a hypothetical person, who might just as well be female. However, as she was the only woman, she was also bothered by the fact that it seemed that she was the only one to realise it and as such the one who would have to address it. As she did so, she felt ridiculed which, she felt, would probably keep her from confronting gender issues another time.

She further mentions the earmarked research positions which were posted and filled at the Faculty of Science a few years back. Informant 3 describes these recruitments as discouraging failures.

The one positive experience that informant 3 has had with gender equality efforts was participating in a career development course for young female researchers, in which she felt that she really learned about sociological mechanisms and differences between men and women, as well as 'the rules of the game' and how to make it as a researcher within Academia.

Nevertheless, informant 3 experiences that, particularly in the USA, diversity is receiving more attention than previously. For instance, when people are organising a conference, they make sure to invite both young and old speakers, male and female, and representatives from different geographical areas of the world.

Informant 3 states that she thinks it is highly positive when especially men are frontrunners of creating gender equality, and awareness; when they show that they genuinely care.

5. Working Conditions

Informant 3 states that advantageous conditions in relation to maternity leave will not solve the gender issue within Academia alone. Women have to want to succeed. As she herself was paid by external funding, maternity leave was never a problem in her case.

In addition, working conditions have to significantly improve, e.g. work load and requirements have to be lowered. Researchers constantly have to adapt to political decisions from both the national level and within the university. New requirements e.g. include thinking innovatively, collaborating with businesses, communicating research results to the wider public, and all these initiatives adds to the amount of administrative tasks.

Better working conditions will benefit both men and women, however, informant 3 wonders whether perhaps women more quickly to give up and say "*this is not good enough*". With the possibility of employment and better working conditions in business, only the 'silly idealists' will endure. And it seems that there may be more silly idealists among men than women.

Furthermore, informant 3 states that she has never experienced sexism or differential treatment during her career. At the department, she is not a woman, she is an employee. She hears stories about other departments, in which corridor talk concerns how female professors are only hired because they are women.

Informant 3 recognises that to make it as a researcher takes much determination, passion and will. She has experienced several students who thought it would be interesting to do a Ph.D., however, if passion and motivation within them are not key drivers, the students will likely not succeed. Researchers need to get a kick out of what they do. And apart from that, to succeed a researcher needs people around her who see the importance and contribution of the work that she is doing.

9.1.4. Informant 4

Quote:

We are many [female Ph.D.s] who do not mind being evaluated by only men, because we know that we are being evaluated fairly. At least I would rather be evaluated by only men, when these men are experts within my field of research, than have women present who perhaps do not know as much about my field, just for the sake of having a woman there.

1. Career Path

When making career choices, informant 4 has always simply followed her interest. After her master degree, she got a job as a upper secondary teacher, but was simultaneously encouraged to apply for research funding by her master thesis supervisor. Informant 4 enjoyed the process and work in relation to her master thesis, so when she was granted the money, she resigned as upper secondary teacher after a short time and started her Ph.D.

Informant 4 was surprised to get the money, as she had always assumed that only the 'really brainy' students would be good enough to do a Ph.D. and she had never perceived herself as such.

During her time as a university student, informant 4 has had various jobs as teacher and instructor, so she has had some degree of experience and routine in relation to teaching, which she has benefitted from during her time as Ph.D. She further enjoys teaching and communication is a topic which she cares about. Perhaps due to this routine, informant 4 has not experienced it as difficult to establish an appropriate balance between teaching and administrative related tasks and her research.

In a few months, she will be handing in her dissertation and informant 4 has no idea, what she is going to do, when she finishes. Ideally, she would like to continue within Academia, as the flexible and varied working days suit informant 4 very well. She often works during weekends, and therefore also feels that it is okay to take an afternoon off once in a while, when her work is not flowing or if she has personal things on her mind. On days when her work is going really well and she is very efficient, then she will stay and work extra hours.

However, informant 4 knows that if she wants to continue within her current field of research, she will have to go abroad to find relevant research centres. Taking this road would imply short employments, and moving from country to country, and the thought of unemployment every second year stresses informant 4 already. With plans of starting a family these prospects seem more or less impossible to informant 4.

2. Work-Life Balance

Informant 4 knows several Ph.D.s who can easily spend 60-65 hours per week working. She is very clear about not wanting that for herself. She is certain that they are not more productive or efficient than she is,

because she allows herself to take breaks. Furthermore, informant 4 is very conscious about her contract which states 37 hours of work per week, and then it makes no sense for her to work much, much more.

Though informant 4 is good at prioritising, and not thinking about work when she is at home, she emphasises her work phone as the primary cause of work-life issues. It is very distracting when work mails pop up on the screen, and it is difficult to not want to check and see, what people are writing.

Informant 4 further states that within a competitive world like Academia, to be successful, a researcher must work many hours. So she cannot see how it will be possible to have time to enjoy being with her boyfriend and children, which is what she dreams about. Informant 4 has talked with her boyfriend, and if she wants to pursue a research career, he is willing to take on most of family child caring tasks. Informant 4, however, knows that, over time, she would start to envy her boyfriend the time that he would have with their children, which she would not have.

Informant 4 calls her three years as Ph.D. her “egoist years” during which she has been allowed to work with what she loves. She knows that once she and her boyfriend start having a family, these “egoist years” will be over and her focus will be her family and children.

3. Working Environment

Though members of her research team primarily focus on their own projects, informant 4 is happy with the working environment of the team and the department.

She mentions that she has felt several times a bit left to herself, i.e. she has never participated in any career development courses, and when she has sought career advice and tried to talk to her nearest manager, she has only been advice to publish more.

Now that her Ph.D. will soon be over, she would have liked to have someone to talk to about the future and her options.

She recalls the headmaster of the upper secondary school, at which she was teaching for a short time, who said to her, that doing a Ph.D. was the worst thing that she could do for herself. If she wanted to go back to teaching upper secondary or wanted to find a job in business, having a Ph.D. is usually seen as a disadvantage. Ph.D.s are perceived as too specialised, and employers will typically assume that a Ph.D. only takes a job outside of Academia, until a position within Academia becomes available.

4. Gender Equality

Informant 4 does not experience discrimination or sexism in her everyday work life, and as she interacts with many women during her work, she does not feel that gender inequality is an issue.

However, she does mention, how when she e.g. goes to conferences or presentations to talk, that she feels that young women generally are evaluated more severely. Informant 4 is very conscious about how she

dresses and presents herself, as she wants to be taken seriously. This challenge may both be based on assumptions of gender, but also on age, as she is also relatively young.

She experiences that men more easily charm and converse with other men, and that if she would try to talk to men in that way, it would not be received well. And further if she tries too hard to be seen as intelligent and serious, she will more likely be perceived as prudish. Therefore, due to her interest in communication, informant 4 tries to read the person with whom she is talking and adapt her communication as well as possible to that particular individual.

In general, she feels that gender equality efforts are a little silly. For instance, she feels that the requirement of female representation within Ph.D. evaluation committees cause more trouble than actual benefits. Informant 4 would not mind having only men in her committee, as long as they were experts in her research area, rather than having a woman there who is not. Though informant 4 recognises that there may be a reason for this rule, she would have wished that it was the same for both men and women. If a mixed committee ensures a more fair evaluation, the requirement of female representation within Ph.D. evaluation committees should also include male Ph.D.s. It annoys informant 4 that this rule is specifically aimed at women.

Also, informant 4 experiences little formal talk about gender equality efforts, but much negative talk around the corridors. She says that every time a position is vacant, people say that it will probably be a woman. This kind of talk annoys informant 4, as she does not want to be hired only because of her sex.

She even related a story about a male acquaintance of hers who applied for a position at the department, and people were joking with him that he would have better chances of getting it if he changed his name from Lars to Laura.

Furthermore, she mentions the rule which limits researchs' possibility for keeping the same postdoc position for more than four years as gender equality effort which is actually backfiring. Informant 4 says that she does not know exactly what the argumentation is for having that rule, but that she assumes that it concerns gender equality. She describes a situation concerning a particular colleague, but, in her experience, this rule becomes a major obstacle for many.

Nevertheless, she does recognise that it is though provoking that so many women graduate from university, and that among permanently employed staff, the share of women is minimal.

Lastly, informant 4 relates a story about how an Italian colleague, on a field trip, was trying to be macho and gentlemanly. He was carrying equipment and bags, however, his attempts were not received well. The women felt that this way he was not acknowledging their capacity of taking care of themselves and doing their work. If he had not demanded to carry more, they would have been perfectly fine carrying it themselves. Informant 4 believes that his behaviour was also an expression of not feeling sufficient among these very practical, hands-on, and competent women.

And finally she remembers a previous boyfriend of hers, who did not like that she made more money in her job than he did, and who could not handle her being 'the smart one'. Informant 4 thought this kind of mind-set was completely antiquated.

9.1.5. Informant 5

1. Career Path

After having finished her master degree, informant 5 felt that she needed a change of scenery and she therefor found a job as teacher at an upper secondary school. However, when her former master thesis supervisor tapped her on the shoulder, as a Ph.D. position became vacant, she decided that this was a here and now opportunity that she had to take advantage of. So she applied and was hired.

She had right away mentioned to her supervisor that she and her boyfriend were thinking about having children, and the supervisor said that many women had had children while doing a Ph.D. before her, and that it would be no problem.

Informant 5 considered the advantages and disadvantages of starting on a Ph.D. The advantages, to informant 5, included the flexibility of being able to structure and organise the working day as she prefers – working weekends, evenings, and from home when it is practical – and the extreme degree of immersion within one specific topic. Whereas the disadvantages include the short, fixed-term employments, the insecurity and instability associated with a disrupted career path, international mobility, and high work performance expectations, and no possibility for part-time.

Though informant 5 previously had no doubt that she was a career oriented woman, this changed dramatically when she had her children. Now she prioritises her children and family first unconditionally, and her supervisor knows this and understands that for informant 5, now, the main thing is simply finishing her dissertation. As a student, she used to be extremely result-oriented and ambitious, but now, realistically, she has adjusted her expectations because she knows that she is not willing to do the hours that it takes to create a really good dissertation.

From this change in priorities, which informant 5 has experienced, further follows that she does not see herself continuing within Academia. And she believes that her supervisor knows this, though they have never talked about it. Informant 5 does not talk career in the long term with him, as she senses that he is not willing to invest in her future, since she is not willing to work as much as other researchers.

She cannot rule out completely the possibility that once her children are older and do not need her as much as now, informant 5 may again be motivated to return to Academia.

2. Working Conditions

Informant 5 feels that her current situation involves much ambiguity and confusion, as the specific working conditions of a Ph.D. scholarship is not stated explicitly within the contract. She feels that if she knew more specifically what was expected of her, it would be easier to say *“now I have done what I have to, and it is okay for me to call it a day”*. Nevertheless, informant 5 still has a guilty conscience constantly, as she never feels that what she does is enough. Informant 5 was told during a career development course at SDU that it is quite okay to work 37 hours per week. The result will be mediocre, but it is entirely up to the individual

researcher. In reality, how the Ph.D. student does in the end makes no difference to the supervisor. Knowing this made informant 5 calm down, and start believing that she would be able to finish after all.

In relation to the above, informant 5 has experienced the annual appraisal (AAI) interview as highly contradictory. As a Ph.D., the AAI is carried out by a member of the Ph.D. evaluation committee. This implied that the person interviewing informant 5 did not know her at all, nor her private situation, and it further meant that this person was much harder in his expectations to her and said that she should publish more. Having reconciled herself with the fact that her supervisor accepted her choice to focus on her family and adjust her ambitions to only finishing her dissertation, this experience was highly demotivating for informant 5

Furthermore, in informant 5's experience, requirements for Ph.D. students seem to vary greatly. In some departments they assess more loosely if the Ph.D. student has given the courses which is required, and in others, it seems that they will make Ph.D.s teach as much as possible. Furthermore, informant 5 feels that preparation for classes always take much more time than what has been allocated in advance, which means that teaching-related tasks take time from research. There is a clear tendency that female researchers resist having their sex emphasised, even when it involves being part of a course which is meant as a positive opportunity for them. Resistance may be due to the competitive environment of Academia, within which participating in a course to strengthen your career prospects may indicate insecurity or a kind of resignation, that you might not be able to make it without a variety of tactical tricks up your sleeve (Benschop & van den Brink, 2014: 335). Not surprisingly, this is not a signal which anybody would want to send. And further, they may feel that such initiatives are unnecessary as meritocracy ensures them fair evaluation and opportunities for advancement.

3. Maternity Leave

Informant 5 has had two children during her Ph.D. and she feels that this is not popular among her colleagues. Though it has never been said explicitly, she reads between the lines of her colleagues' comments that they feel that she has taken advantage of the situation, and that it would have been 'proper' to wait until after finishing with having her second child.

Department management has, on the other hand, never implied anything and have been positive and supportive in both cases.

Nevertheless, informant 5 experienced that there was an unspoken expectation that female researchers should work while on maternity leave. The last six weeks until due date are perfect for writing an article, when the woman is only waiting. During her second maternity leave, informant 5 had mentioned to her supervisor that she intended to finish an article, but in the end she lacked the motivation. Her supervisor was disappointed. In comparison, when informant 5 has talked to her friends and family about the expectation to work during maternity leave, they found it almost shocking and would never dream about working while on leave. Furthermore, her friends and family think that informant 5 was crazy when she had a maternity leave of only 8 months.

3. Work-Life Balance

As such, informant 5 experiences quite a lot of contradictory expectations between her work life and her private life. She is constantly seeing articles about how horrible a parent you are, if your children are left in day care from morning until evening, and the children need to be with their parents during holidays etc. At the same time, her work requires much more than a normal work week of 37 hours, constant publishing, and even work during holidays. To informant 5, it is impossible to combine those areas of her life and she constantly feels insufficient and guilty.

Though informant 5 and her boyfriend have had the opportunity to take turns at flexing their work days, and change between delivering children to day care and picking them up in the afternoon, informant 5's boyfriend does not feel the same kind of pressure or the same difficulties in combining career and family. Informant 5 believes that this is connected with women being 'softer' than men, and that women are generally more self-critical and severe on themselves. If men believe more in themselves, they are more likely to relax and to be sure that what they do is good enough.

4. International Mobility

A big issue for informant 5, is the requirement within a Ph.D. scholarship of going abroad. She regrets now that she did not take the chance to go abroad before she had children, because then she would have loved to stay somewhere for six months, whereas now, *one* month seems absolutely horrible.

Going abroad for one month is the minimum, and the problem is that professionally it makes no significant difference for the researcher, it is simply to live up to the requirement in order to be able to finish.

As informant 5's children are very young, they cannot be away from their mother for long and she cannot bear to be away from them. She even mentions a story about an acquaintance of hers, who had been away from her baby for 3 months, and the baby had forgotten her. This is the worst thing that could happen to informant 5. She imagines the neglect and trauma that a separation like that implies for the child, as the mother is the most important person in a baby's life.

The arrangement of informant 5's stay will be that her parents will come for one week and take care of the children, and her boyfriend will come for another week and take care of the children, and then she will be away from the children for two weeks. Informant 5 would have wished that there was some kind of financial support to solve issues of international mobility, because this arrangement implies significant expenses for her and for her family – in order for her to do something which she does not really want to do.

Informant 5 knows other families that have gone abroad, but in those cases it has been the husband who got a job, and then, conveniently, the wife would tag along and stay home with the children during that time. As informant 5's boyfriend earns twice the salary as informant 5, it would make no sense for him to give up his career to go abroad for a longer time, if informant 5 was to pursue e.g. a postdoc position somewhere.

5. Gender Equality

Informant 5 is certain that it takes a particular type of woman to make it as a researcher within Academia. She finds it characteristic of the women she knows in the top that they are strong, self-confident, and do not need other people's recognition. Though informant 5 does not know exactly how much time these women actually had for their children, she is discouraged when she hears jokes about how children of female researchers are calling the office to hear if their mother is coming home for dinner. Informant 5 feels that these women must be harder than herself in some way, that they do not feel guilty for being away from their children the whole day or for longer periods of time abroad.

Informant 5 does not feel that gender inequality is a problem in her every day working life, however, she does experience differences between men and women occasionally. For instance, while collaborating with a female partner, she felt that the other woman was humble in a way towards informant 5's area of expertise and was not too proud to ask for help when informant 5 knew something that the partner might benefit from. In another collaboration with a male researcher, this man clearly expressed that informant 5 could not teach him anything.

In relation to gender equality efforts, informant 5 feels that initiatives often feel artificial and forced. Hiring women because they are women is forced, according to informant 5, as the best candidate should always be chosen – man or woman. She further adds that there is often a lot of talk about new female colleagues having been hired because they are women. Informant 5 would not want herself to be advantaged because of her sex, she would only want to be hired if she was the best qualified.

Informant 5 does recall having heard department management address gender inequality in a formal setting, and informant 5 does not see that gender inequality is a topic which needs much attention. She feels that it is understandable that women, while they have small children, choose to focus their attention at home.

9.1.6. Informant 6

1. Career Path

Informant 6 always knew that she liked science, and after her master degree she worked for some time as a freelance science writer. She was able to sell some articles, but not very much. A friend of informant 6 said that it was obviously because she did not have a Ph.D. – especially as a woman. But informant 6 further states that she would never have done a Ph.D. if she did not think that it was fun.

Having discovered the research area which interested her the most, informant 6 found out that she would either have to go to the States or to SDU to work with it. So she emailed SDU and arranged with a professor that she would do a voluntary project for a year, which eventually turned into being her Ph.D. project.

The main drivers behind her striving were always the interest and curiosity which she felt for her area. However, informant 6 emphasises the impact of other people who wanted the best for her as particularly important to her career progress: The friend who said, to be recognised as a researcher she needed the

title – i.e. needed some weight behind her name, and the professor at SDU who welcomed informant 6 and her idea.

Informant 6's boyfriend has been her guide. He was willing to move to Odense and to support her for a year while she was working unpaid on the project, and he is always reminding her to not let herself become distracted when she has been offered different opportunities and to always keep track of her passion. Otherwise, she says, that she would have been in a high risk of ending up in a classical 'good job' somewhere, which was not really right for her.

Quite soon, informant 6 will be 'on the market' again job-wise. A though international experience is recommended, informant 6 believes that it is not the most important criteria of qualification. As her Ph.D. was a collaboration between SDU and a university abroad, she has some international experience, and further she has collaborated with many researchers from other countries, and therefore also has quite a large number of publications behind her.

Furthermore, informant 6 sees her work experience from outside of Academia as a central strength of hers, that she has a different sense of self-responsibility and independence. If she wants something, she makes it happen. She says that she does not ask for permission, as a young, inexperienced researcher may do.

2. Working Environment

The research team which informant 6 belongs to at SDU is brilliant, she says. The topic which they work with is particularly interesting to informant 6, and the working environment is very nice, which is mainly due to the research team leader – which was also the one who invited informant 6 to come to SDU to begin with and her Ph.D. supervisor.

Informant 6's Ph.D. was a collaboration between SDU and a university abroad, and both her supervisors were very supportive. As she says "*Of course they were not bias-free, but really not sexist in any way*". If she had an idea, they would both say "*go ahead*".

After several years in Odense, informant 6's boyfriend was ready to move back where they came from before, so now informant 6 has quite a long commute. Therefore, informant 6 is really taking advantage of the opportunity to work flexibly. She works some days at home, some days in Copenhagen, and some days at SDU. And she actually enjoys the opportunity to change between locations from day to day, which adds a little bit of variation to work life.

Informant 6 has two children, and she feels that her family is now less mobile than previously. But on the other hand, she does not see going abroad or moving for a job as completely impossible.

3. Gender Equality

Informant 6 has no recollection of gender equality efforts at the university.

In informant 6's experience, most women think "*it is very bad that women earn less than men, but it is not going to my case, because my boyfriend does the dishes half of the times, so I am probably fine*". At the same time, informant 6 notices among her friends who have children, that in reality, it typically becomes the very classical division of professional work for men and house work for women

However, it was not until a few years ago, when the foundation behind the research centre, in which informant 6 works, required that the women of the centre sat down and discussed gender, that informant 6 actually became aware of the issue. She realised that, apart from it being the first time that gender was ever discussed, it was also the first time that the women of the group sat down together without their male colleagues. Informant 6 describes that nobody knew what to say, and nobody wanted to be the '*whiner*' or come off as the victim, so everyone rejected gender as an issue, which informant 6 has later learned is known as '*voluntary ignorance*'. They voluntarily reject the existence of the problem. Nevertheless, the women had to say something at the annual meeting, and informant 6 was chosen to speak. So she had to look into gender research, and once she started learning about gender biases and stereotypes »*there was no going back*«. Then informant 6 could not ignore it anymore. When she realised her own biases, she was shocked and ashamed. She would never have guessed that *she* was gender biased.

Once informant 6 realised the existence of gender biases and stereotypes, she also noticed how women, in general, are more cautious with each other than men with men, or women with men. Though women may be friendly with each other, they seem to size each other up, in a way that men do not. Informant 6 thinks that it is considerably more easy and relaxed to be around men, as they are not as reserved. This way, informant 6 realised that by being reserved and assessing other women, she was indeed affecting other people with her biases. She states that, though there are '*nut case*' guys out there, informant 6 really rarely meets sexist guys, and in her experience control is much stronger between women than it is between women and men. Informant 6 describes that the first time a woman meets another woman, there is always this moment when they assess whether they like each other or not.

Informant 6 further reflected about the significance of stereotypes, she sees it in her children. People need stereotypes to understand the world, however, as adults we should be able to put them aside, as they limit our way of seeing and perceiving. Informant 6 believes that by holding on to our stereotypes, we miss out on new patterns, new ideas, and immense brainpower. Informant 6 imagines how freeing ourselves from stereotypes may release an enormous wealth of knowledge. Freeing ourselves from stereotypes has consequences far beyond the issue of women and men, it has the potential to unlock our brains, informant 6 says. And it may not only unlock new solutions, or new applications, medicines and innovations, it may also potentially unlock happiness, satisfaction and joy, when we really start to think outside of our normal patterns.

Moreover, informant 6 has talked to the FESTA project representatives, and she thinks that it is so sad that they face such head wind. As she says, informant 6 would wish they had a nice job. And maybe FESTA's work would be easier, if it was presented differently and concerned '*stereotype awareness*' as opposed to gender equality. In informant 6 experience, when gender equality is brought up, both men and women

think about the 'poor women' and the 'evil men'. Informant 6 further states that for her, gender equality is not fight between men and women, it is fight among humanity, concerning how it is to be a person. And particularly when management sees gender equality as implicitly accusing men of being 'the bad guys', then no wonder they do not want to get involved. Informant 6 believes that the only way to raise awareness is by sneaking information in in relation to how biased we all are.

In relation to decision-makers, informant 6 is sure that if they have not spent an honest 15 minutes trying to understand the complexity of the problem, then their approach to gender equality efforts will be accordingly. Informant 6 further describes that, in relation to a gender equality seminar, a female colleague of informant 6 did not feel that she needed to participate as her mother had told her, when she was a child, that she could be anything she wanted when she grew up.

Informant 6 thinks that modern gender equality efforts have been presented backwards. In the beginning of the 20th century, when women protested for the votes, of course, they had to say *women* have to vote. Now, informant 6 believes, that efforts would benefit from being presented as not a gender issue, but as a way to harvest brainpower. She thinks that the discussion should be presented from another angle, though exactly how is very tricky.

Though informant 6 earlier did not particularly like the label feminist, she would characterise herself as feminist today. She says, "*you cannot be upset with the word feminism using the category feminine, when all history of humanity is called mankind.*" However, she would still prefer if it was something more neutral such as 'stereotypes awareness'.

Though informant 6 does her share in relation to gender awareness through her work, she is not interested in humanities. In reality she would prefer being able to focus all her attention on her own research. Her primary wish is to be a good teacher, and for someone to present her with the tools for teaching with gender awareness.

In addition, informant 6 has very clear suggestions as to what to do to solve issues of gender inequality: Teachers at all levels should be taught to teach with gender awareness, and at Ph.D. level, management should set up a systemised mentorship programme to help women to network. At the postdoc level focus should be on career coaching, e.g. in relation to training negotiation, which is difficult for many women who are 'pleaser types', and finally the research foundations should demand gender awareness. Everyone follows the money, so if the money says "*we look favourably on this*" it would really make a difference. This way, even the non-gender conscious people would *have* to get involved.

Informant 6 does not believe in radical approaches, and efforts should stay clear of the gender label. A mentorship programme, for example, should be open to everyone, as men, who are less vocal would also benefit from having a mentor. And then a side effect of these small adjustments and initiatives would be that the gender distribution would gradually even out.

9.1.7. Informant 7

1. Career Path

Informant 7 really liked being a student and saw a Ph.D. as an opportunity to study for three years more. Informant 7 enjoyed working on her master thesis and was motivated to learn more, in addition, she was a student at SDU and really liked the environment. Informant 7 had a bit of doubt as to whether she would be good enough to do a Ph.D., so she contacted her master thesis supervisor, who thought it was a good idea and encouraged her to apply.

Once informant 7 had started her Ph.D., she knew that she would like to continue doing research. She was working with people with whom she got along very well and work was fun. As such, to informant 7, Academia was never a cold working environment, as it is said to be.

During her Ph.D., informant 7 got to know a foreign young, female researcher, like herself, and together they started a very productive collaboration. As such, when she finished her Ph.D., informant 7 had quite a considerable amount of publications behind her, which of course was an advantage when she had to look for employment.

After her Ph.D., informant 7 got a postdoc position at another Danish university, however, relatively quickly afterwards an opening occurred at SDU. Informant 7 knew that her former colleagues wanted her to stay with them, but it was coincidence and lucky timing that everything ran so smoothly.

In Academia, it is not common for researchers to be hired at the same university as where they did their Ph.D. Normally, it would be expected for the researcher to go abroad or at least elsewhere to gain experience before maybe returning. Nevertheless, this was not necessary in informant 7's case, and she felt that she had a big advantage in the recruitment process, as her former colleagues knew who she was and what she stood for, so there was no need for her to 'sell herself'.

Informant 7 believes that women are disadvantaged in the recruitment process, as they may be less self-assertive and self-confident than men. Informant 7 further states, that though men and women may be equally qualified, if the man is better at presenting himself as the best candidate, it may be more likely that he will also get the job.

2. Working Environment

Informant 7 has never experienced discrimination or differential treatment due to her sex. She sometimes hear other female researchers' stories, from their departments, about how they experience sexism. Informant 7 has, on the contrary, always felt an equal part of the research team, and has benefited from her professional network of both men and women, which has helped her find her way when she felt a bit lost in her career. She further sees the benefit of establishing women's network, for the same purpose.

Furthermore, informant 7 perceives the working conditions and the way of talking with each other as key factors for creating an environment which will attract and retain female researchers. In informant 7's case, she considers herself lucky, that she became a member of a strong and supportive research team.

3. Work-Life Balance

Informant 7 states that work and private life cannot be separated completely, however, that having the possibility of arranging one's work flexibly helps.

Though it is not very common and not considered advisable, she works part time, which in reality means that she works approximately 37 hours per week. As she has her child to take care of, she is able to leave around 2 or 3 in the afternoon, and then work later, when her child is in bed. Informant 7 feels that it is sometimes annoying that she is never really *done* working, but on the other hand, she is always motivated to work, when it concerns topics which interest her.

Working part time implies that informant 7 gets 2/3 of the teaching and administrative workload as her colleagues, but she has never experienced that this has caused any negative comments or sulking on their part.

Informant 7 believes that having the opportunity of working part time not only benefits herself, but also the university in the long run, as it enables her to combine career and family life without risking burnout.

4. Gender Equality

Informant 7 does, as mentioned, not experience sexism or discrimination in her every day work life. However, she does recall incidences in which gender has been at work. For instance, informant 7 mentions a situation in which a male student, though ashamed, admitted to her how she had had to prove her competences as a teacher and researcher to him. Though she thought that it was surprising, it only confirms that gender does play an important role. Informant 7 again points to how men's perhaps stronger sense of self-confidence may project to others an image of them being better qualified, though it may not be the case. And therefore women may have to work harder to convince people of their skills and qualities.

Though informant 7 does not know of FESTA, she recognises that gender equality regularly has been put on the agenda at the university and faculty. She is not completely reconciled concerning her personal opinion about gender equality efforts, and though most women make the conscious choice about leaving Academia, she further believes that the causes for that choice may in fact be things that did not need to result in such a dramatic decision – to leave. For instance, she emphasises that changes should be quite fundamental, and that Academia must embrace the fact that women are capable of being both devoted mothers and competent and ambitious researchers at the same time. Women are only challenged while their children are young. Once they grow older and more self-reliant, women may want to return their focus to research and “*go all in*”.

Furthermore, informant 7 does not believe in drastic and radical gender equality efforts. She mentions the story about the earmarked assistant professor positions, and how a lot of money was invested, and it all came to nothing. It is difficult to find the perfect match for the department, when only women are considered. Informant 7 instead suggests that it would be better to 'catch' the perfect female researcher exactly when she shows up.

Gender equality, generally, strongly divide people in informant 7's experience. It is a sensitive topic, and informant 7 says that everyone knows not to open the topic, if they are ready to go into a heated discussion. Informant 7 feels that there is room in their team to talk about most things, and even when people disagree the nice atmosphere is quickly restored.

Informant 7 relates how a male colleague of hers has spotted what gender means within their research team. He sees how, at an overall level, the women have less time to talk during meetings, and are less likely to interrupt to get their say than their male colleagues. And in informant 7's own experience, it is not uncommon that, in situations with many men, women who *do* interrupt are perceived as being too assertive and vocal.

A personal experience of informant 7's concerned her maternity leave. She took a full year's maternity leave, and had heard about the option of having a teaching free period of time afterwards, in order for her to focus on her research. However, in reality, when she enquired after that option, it was not possible, and argumentation for refusing was that she had had an entire year without teaching while she was on her maternity leave.

Moreover, informant 7, who works within a very male-dominated research area, describes how she and another female colleague arranges a "cake meeting" for female students twice a year which allows for the young women to get to know each other. Some of the women think that it is a nice initiative, and others question why they should need to get to know each other simply because they are women. Though some of informant 7's male colleagues joke about why there is no cake for them, informant 7 believes that they think that the initiative is a good idea.

Lastly, informant 7 considers the difficulties which assessing quality of teaching and the skills of a teacher, as opposed to the quality of research and skills of a research. A researcher is skilled when his or her research is published within the most esteemed journals, which is simultaneously a sign of high scientific quality. Good evaluations from students may be a result of good teaching, but it may also be an indication that the teacher has cut the curriculum in half, as informant 7 describes it. Informant 7 feels that it is very contradictory that teaching skills are not recognised at the same level as research, when good teaching is central to the finances of the department.

9.1.8. Martin Svensson

Department Manager of the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science

Date: 26 March 2015

1. Annual appraisal interview

The Department of Mathematics and Computer Science (IMADA) is located within a fairly small physical area at the university, which means that there is a close relationship between staff and management, and that Martin is often in contact with his employees. As such, the annual appraisal interview (AAI) can, to some, seem as a rather artificial dialogue and a unnecessary administrative initiative. Martin stresses the necessity of communicating the importance of the AAI, to systemise manager-employee communication and to focus on career development efforts for the individual researcher.

Young foreign researchers who come to the department are more used to thinking strategically about their careers compared to Danish researchers. The older employees are typically focused on their teaching and research here and now, and many of the younger researchers think that planning is a waste of time, as many factors may affect the goals that they set and imply that these goals cannot be realised in the end.

2. Recruitment and retention

Recruitment at IMADA works in the following way:

- Department manager and research team manager develop the job announcement together, which must be approved by the research team in which the new employee is going to be a member
- Hereafter, an appointments committee is created which selects the candidates who are invited for an interview
- The interview both includes a formal interview with the dean of the faculty, and the candidate is also given the opportunity to meet her or his potential future colleagues – and the colleagues get a chance to meet their potential new team member. Both current employees and the candidates will this way have a possibility of assessing if they will be able to work well with each other.

In particular in relation to foreign employees, retention is of vital importance, as the only way that they are likely to stay is if they, as well as their families, are successfully integrated socially and are able to establish a well-functioning everyday life.

3. Gender equality efforts at IMADA

Martin often experiences a great deal of scepticism from the employees' part concerning management efforts in relation to gender equality. Though Martin believes that most people support equal treatment for

all social groups, he feels that his employees are worried that gender equality efforts will mean that female researchers who are less qualified will be hired just to reach political gender representation goals – even though there may have been a better qualified male candidate. Therefore, the most important task for Martin is to communicate that no one is interested in creating a solution which is bad for everyone, i.e. hiring less qualified researchers, because this will negatively affect research quality and standards at the department, which will be at the expense of the department's reputation and working environment.

The awareness-raising efforts of FESTA involve that department managers must give presentations about gender equality, e.g. by presenting statistics about gender distribution. Martin believes that seeing 'the leaky pipeline' (cf. p. 130) illustrated through numbers has had an eye-opening effect for many, which simultaneously has the effect of decreasing resistance to gender equality efforts.

With merely five female researchers (out of a total of 70) at the department, they often feel exposed and uncomfortable when the issue of gender equality is addressed. They fear, just as well as their male colleagues that gender equality will be at the expense of scientific quality. Also, the women currently working at IMADA may not feel that gender equality efforts concern them, but rather – in Martin's word – some women within the imagination of management.

Martin himself has also increased his gender-awareness, which he exemplifies with a story of a female researcher, who had – after it had been announced that the department was currently under tight budget – come to Martin and said that she would not apply for reimbursement of travel expenses. Martin had said to her that though it was considerate of her, she should know that none of her male colleagues would have done the same, and that she of course should apply for having her travelling expenses covered.

IMADA furthermore engages in workshops for research team managers in relation to inclusive and embracing meeting management, as well as gender awareness in relation Ph.D. supervision.

Martin emphasises the importance of positive social relationships to succeeding within Academia, because researchers use their research teams and colleagues for professional sparring. Employees who in one or the other way seem 'alien' to the environment (e.g. through a unique research area) will not stay long at the department, because they will not establish a strong sense of belonging. Therefore, international employees are particularly sensitive in this regard, and particular efforts to socialise and establish them professionally within the department must be attended to.

Statistics in relation to recruitment indicate that broad job announcements and the requirement of at least three qualified applicants improve female researchers' chances of being hired. Consequently, such initiatives are assumed to have a motivating effect for female researchers.

Furthermore, in relation to the requirement which states that assessment and appointments committees in relation to recruitment must have female representation, Martin relates that the research teams within his department face significant challenges when attempting to live up to this rule. As the share of female researchers at IMADA is so low, recruiters from IMADA must contact eligible female professors elsewhere in Denmark or abroad to serve on committees. However, Martin Svensson explains that these 'outside' female top academics often turn down the department's application, since it requires too much of their time.

In relation to issues of work-life balance, several different initiatives have been tried:

- Establishment of teaching groups, which means that teachers can substitute for each other.
- A research career is flexible, as there is no requirement for employees to come to the workplace, therefore, for some it may be preferable to create a working area at home for which the department is willing to provide computer and other equipment.
- Something as simple as providing the researcher with a work phone may prove beneficial to increasing contact between researcher and department.
- There must not be anything which speaks against a researcher going on maternity leave, and it must on the other hand not be a burden for the remaining researchers that their colleague is on leave. Therefore, the department has quite generous maternity leave policies, i.e. it is possible to hire a temporary substitute for the researcher on leave.

9.1.9. Marianne Holmer

Department Manager of the Department of Biology

Date: 23 March 2015

1. Turn-over time

An important factor for the slow pace in which outcomes of gender equality efforts become detectable, is the slow turn-over time in which scientific staff is replaced. Researchers typically achieve tenured employment around the age of 40 and for the most part work until they are close to 70 years old. This means that it requires new funding to create new permanent research positions.

2. Political dimensioning of higher educations

The bachelor degree of biology is not affected by the political dimensioning (Dimensioning, online resource 23), however, the master programmes are. Marianne had planned to work on new master programmes for which additional staff would be necessary. In this process she intended to incorporate a gender perspective and focus on the recruitment of female researchers and teachers.

3. Internationalisation

It is more often the rule than the exception that young researchers are expected to go abroad for long periods of time to obtain international experience and to establish international network. If a researcher has a Ph.D. from Denmark, it is a requirement that the researcher completes one or two postdoc employments abroad. It is a general tendency within Academia that internationalisation and mobility is the

key to ensuring an attractive CV. This appears to put off women more than men, especially if they have small children.

4. Recruitment

The department intends to, as far as possible, develop broad job announcements, as it is part of the faculty's gender equality strategy. However, this intention is in practice often difficult to realise as the funding that lies behind job openings often is quite narrowly defined. Also, the intention is that for each job opening there must be three qualified applicants to improve fair competition, and if three cannot be found, the job cannot be filled. At the moment, this is intended to be introduced as a genuine requirement.

5. HRM activities at the Department of Biology

- Individual annual appraisal interviews
- Team appraisal interviews
- Establishment of good personal, social relationships and well-functional research teams

At the individual annual appraisal, Marianne focuses on how the particular female researcher can strengthen her CV, and she is happy to offer the option of a career coach to help the researcher with this process. Marianne also intends for all her female Ph.D.s to participate in the career development courses offered by HR Development.

5. Gender equality efforts at the Department of Biology

Opinions about gender equality efforts vary significantly among employees. The older employees rarely see the advantages of engaging in gender equality efforts. They usually only comply with gender equality requirements, because they are requirements.

Marianne is of the opinion herself that differential treatment is necessary to make noticeable progress. Nevertheless, she mentions that some years back two ear-marked associate professorships were filled. However, the woman who was hired at Biology was not connected with any research team and she became isolated. Furthermore, Marianne, despite considerable effort, could not attract the research's husband which, together with a long commute, in the end became the reason that the woman resigned.

Marianne also stresses the importance of establishing a culture which embraces the experiences of women, i.e. that is interested in hearing and understanding how women experience and perceive the working culture at the department. Within one particular research team at Biology, one woman who has a personal interest in gender issues has contributed to establishing a gender aware culture, simply by talking about it. But to do this requires a team manager who welcomes the effort. Also, at a workshop about mindfulness and work-related stress, one female researcher told the entire staff about her absence due to stress. In a

competitive working environment, not many (men) would have the courage to stand up and show vulnerability like that. Nevertheless, it is essential to increase focus on work-related stress as it could affect male researchers as well as female.

Another aspect of gender equality which has had quite a lot of attention at the Department of Biology is to ensure that female students as soon as possible in their studies are acquainted with female teachers. Female teachers can function as role models for the female students, who will then be made aware of the possibility to enter into a career of research and teaching at the university. Also, the Department of biology uses female student instructor as teaching assistants.

Finally, through FESTA, department managers at the Faculty of Science are required to develop annual gender equality reports which forces the managers to reflect about the current status on the gender balance and developments.

9.1.10. Jakob Ejersbo

Director of HR Development, sub-unit of HR Service at SDU

Date: 11 March 2015

Quotes:

If the problem is not a bunch of evil men who does not want female researchers around, then it has to be some obstacles within the academic system which are holding the women back. So we are working systematically with 'dressing' the women so that they are capable of handling these obstacles.

The objective of the academic system is that the least skilled researchers are sorted out, while the best researchers are sent onwards in their careers. As such, Academia is an extremely tough process of elimination permeated by competition. Similarly, it is not those musicians or athletes who practice and work out from eight to half past three every day, who make it to the top.

1. Structure and organisation of HRM responsibilities

SDU's HR Service is divided into five main areas:

1. Salary
2. Staff's office
3. International staff's office
4. Competence development
5. Working environment

Employee development is mainly the responsibility of the individual employee's nearest manager, however, the HR Development unit creates and offers all kinds of courses, which are sold to participants from the different SDU departments.

The assumption underneath the variety of courses offered by the HR Development unit is that SDU is a heterogeneous organisation, and that courses which are relevant for one group of employees, may not be for another.

HRM within a university is a different thing from HRM within a company.

In relation to annual appraisal interviews (AAI), the HR Development unit has developed a concept for the conduction of AAI and offers to train and advice managers from the various university departments in how best to carry out the AAI.

At a more general level, HR Development offers management consultants to university managers at all levels. Managers at the university are either trained managers hired externally, or researchers who have been recruited internally. Externally recruited managers typically have no or little knowledge of management within the context of the university, and researchers hired for management position typically have no particular qualifications being managers. As such, both groups may benefit from consultation.

2. Gender equality efforts within HR Development

There are two approaches to gender equality efforts:

- A soft approach, in which small adjustments are made
- Or, differential treatment such preferential selection or quotas

HR at SDU take a soft approach. Overt gender discrimination is illegal, and it is highly unlikely that we are dealing a group of men who are refusing women access to top research posts. As such, there must be something – mechanism, structures, systems – which prevent women from advancing. Therefore, we need to prepare the women and equip them with the tools necessary for overcoming the challenges which they will face during their careers in Academia.

HR Development offers a course which was originally titled '*Career development for young female researchers*', however, it was changed for '*Career development for young researchers*' as the women found the label problematic and because the men were interested in participating as well. Nevertheless, the course can be particularly prioritised for women, as it required an extra effort to retain the women within an academic career track. HR Development furthermore offers management training, which is part of efforts to ensure a larger share of women among university management. Nevertheless, Academia is a tough competitive environment which is meant to screen out the less skilled researchers and send the most talented onwards in their careers. As such, there is risk that the Danish system might become so soft and protective of people, that Danish researchers will not live up to the standards of foreign researchers.

Career planning has not traditionally been as common within Academia as e.g. within business, because academics generally are sceptical regarding the usefulness of plans in a constantly changing environment due to e.g. political decisions, changes in research strategies, funding options, etc.

Jakob refers to Nina Smith, professor of economics at Århus University, who has said that the reason that women do not remain employed at the universities is that the universities are not pleasant places to be employed. Women have higher requirements for the environments of their workplaces. Consequently, if we want to retain women within Academia, a much greater focus must be placed on human resource management activities. However, Jakob adds that in a survey of researchers who had resigned their job at the university, job satisfaction and well-being at the workplace did not appear to have been less among female researchers as compared male researchers.

Until now, differential treatment and radical approaches have not been discussed within the gender equality committee at SDU, as it is believed that it does not work. As Academia is heavily founded on principles of objectivity and fairness – scientific objectivity, peer review, quality criteria and standards, etc. – differential treatment is considered destructive to fair competition. There are several examples of progressive initiatives in relation to gender equality efforts which were unsuccessful, e.g. a gender equality consultant was hired but resigned relatively quickly. The conclusion was that it did not work to have a responsible ‘above’ actual, practical gender equality measures. The responsible should be as close to daily procedures and processes as possible. And furthermore, the mere label of ‘gender equality’ causes considerably controversy and might be faced with resistance which undeniably has impeded the work of the consultant. Similarly, some years back, the Faculty of Science offered and filled two earmarked attractive assistant professorships, however, these women also left quite quickly afterwards. Therefore, these kinds of initiatives have been abandoned.

9.1.11. FESTA

Project leader Eva Sophia Myers and task leader Liv Baisner

Date: 20 March 2015

Quote:

What does it do to these women that they constantly hear these stories? And what if we told them other stories? – that it is possible to combine a research career with having a family. And if the women also had role models, women who prove this, instead of having only women at the top who have sacrificed everything for their careers to compare themselves with.

1. Recruitment

Gender balanced assessment and appointments committees in relation to recruitment are now required at the university, and if this is not possible either an exemption is necessary or an explanatory report. The Faculty of Science has also experimented with posting several job categories at the same time, i.e. assistant prof., associate prof. and professor, which has increased the total number of applicants for each position as well as improved competition.

Eva Sophia states that if the Faculty of Science was to achieve the desired gender balance, they would either have to fire men or exclusively hire women. This is of course not feasible. Furthermore, if gender equality is constantly a focus point in discussion, this risks strengthening resistance towards gender equality efforts.

2. Maternity/paternity leave

The Faculty of Science has decided to cover all additional expenses in connection with employees going on maternity or paternity leave. This relieves the pressure off the employees when going to their nearest manager to ask for leave, knowing that it will cost the department nothing. This initiative is expected to be introduced to SDU's remaining faculties in the long term.

In 2012, the Faculty of Science established its maternity leave fund. The assumption behind the establishment of this fund was that it is a social responsibility to support women and men when they have children. Therefore, the fund lifts the expenses of maternity (and paternity) leave from department level to faculty level. In practice, the foundation matches parental leave reimbursement from the Danish state 1:1, which allows departments to freely allocate resources where it is needed, e.g. to hire a temporary replacement. This practice reduces the financial uncertainties associated with employing young women.

3. FESTA

The work that FESTA is doing, e.g. gender research within the faculty, has the positive side effect that it increases awareness of the problem just by putting it on the agenda. Eva Sophia says that during the three years that the Faculty of Science has been involved with FESTA, it has become easier to talk about gender issues compared to before. It has become more accepted.

Awareness-raising efforts concerning gender equality involves gathering data and statistics, which serves as a legitimising foundation for further discussions of gender issues. This data and statistics have furthermore been the basis for developing a gender equality strategy at the faculty.

Previously, departments were required to develop gender equality reports regularly, however, it had no real consequences if they did not. Now, at the faculty, such reports are actual requirements, and department management is held accountable if they do not provide a report.

Genuine Intent or Obligation: Understanding Assumptions and Outcomes of Gender Equality Efforts within Academia

In terms of employee training and development efforts, the Faculty of Science has discussed introducing management training with a career development focus in order to strengthen the managers' capabilities to advise employees in relation to career progress and decisions, as well as develop local supplementary career development courses (to the ones offered by HR Development).

In relation to meeting culture, FESTA works on training managers towards an open and inclusive environment at meetings. That is, training managers to create a safe environment in which minority groups will be heard, in which people of opposing opinions – as compared to the majority – are encouraged to speak their minds.

Eva Sophia mentions prior attempts at progressive, differential treatment initiatives, in which two women were hired through earmarked positions. The women became isolated, and the way they were hired was perceived as extremely anti-competitive. Opinions of such efforts depend on the perspective that people take. If you believe that men and women have equal opportunities, then differential treatment is correctly anti-competitive. However, if you believe that women are challenged and do not have equal opportunities, then these initiatives are basically giving women a handicap.

They further mention the story about the gender equality consultant hired by SDU. The initiative was not successful and the consultant relatively quickly resigned.

Several of the initiatives that FESTA are working on are in the pipeline for introduction at an overall level at SDU.

Through their investigative and analytical work, FESTA has performed 24 interviews among Ph.D. students and postdocs. Liv is surprised about the difference in academic fields. During her studies, she was never met with comments about if she wanted to make a career it would have to be at the expense of having a family. Yet through the interviews, it became evident that women with the natural science are still confronted with these stories and warnings. Liv is wondering if these narratives have become so ingrained in the natural scientific culture that, even though conditions for women have improved significantly, these stories persist. There have been introduced many personnel policies and practices which help researchers combine a research career and family life. Performance requirements within Academia are high in terms of publications, however, requirements for a sales person in the business world would probably be equally high.

Eva Sophia adds a series of questions:

- What does it do to these women, that their surroundings tell them these kinds of stories?
- Where within the women do these stories take root? (she gestures to her chest)
- Why are these stories still told today when things have noticeably changed?
- What would happen if we started telling different stories? – that it *is* possible to be a researcher and have a family?

If the women had role models who prove this, instead of only women who have sacrificed everything to succeed within Academia, they might actually start believing that they could make it as well. Finally, the question is, if the women would actually perceive a problem of combining work and family (which many in

the interviews carried out by FESTA indicated that they did), if they were not constantly told that there is a problem.

9.1.12. Meeting Minutes: SDU's Gender Equality Committee

Date: 20 May 2015

Quote:

The gender equality committee is deeply anchored within university management because it is part of the annual cycle of managerial tasks, and also because the committee's members represent management of the various faculties and departments. (Chairman, Ole Skøtt)

1. Update from Faculties and HR Service

Faculty of Engineering: Currently, focus is on recruiting female students for engineering studies, however, the representative from the faculty is waiting for feedback from the gender equality committee to move on. The chairman of SDU's gender equality committee, Ole Skøtt, pushes the engineering representative on this point, to which the representative answers "We are working on it, but it is difficult to change things".

Faculty of Science: The representative of the Faculty of Science, comments of several ongoing projects: Currently the department managers are developing gender equality reports. This process forces them to reflect on status and developments concerning gender. Also, in relation to gender equality awareness-raising activities, the faculty is changing a new initiative from a gender awareness *course* for management to a gender awareness *workshop*, which means that the activities will involve active input from participants. Finally, the faculty is discussing internationalisation, i.e. the possibility of changing the requirement of international experience among young researchers through long stays abroad during the Ph.D. and postdoc employments with several shorts stays, or postpone a long stay abroad until later in the researcher's career. This would increase the likelihood that young female researchers with family and children would be able to internationalise. In previous times, the requirement of international experience was not so prominent in Academia, as it is now. It was accepted as possible to establish international network and produce internationally acclaimed research, despite not having worked abroad for long periods of time.

Faculty of Business and Social Science: Working on a new strategy which contains topics similar to the ones presented in the "Recommendations by the Task Force for More Women in Research" report.

Faculty of Health Sciences: The faculty is currently in a process in which subcommittees of 2-3 people are working on various gender equality projects. At the overall level, the faculty is working on increasing awareness of gender equality efforts through e.g. presentation of results of previous gender equality projects for not only managerial personnel, but for everyone within the staff who might be interested.

HR Service: The career development course is now offered in English as well as Danish, for the benefit of young foreign research personnel. HR is currently developing its strategy for 2015-2020 which especially focusses on cross-functional and –departmental actions and talent recruitment and retention.

2. Feedback from University Management Board

Within the minutes from the last university management board meeting, all which is mentioned in relation to gender equality is “The recommendations presented by the Gender Equality Committee have been noted.” – the gender equality committee wonders what exactly that entails.

3. Maternity/paternity leave

When going on maternity leave, researchers can apply to their faculties to cover expenses for a laboratory or scientific assistant who can carry on the research project, while the researcher is away. Not all research projects can be paused, e.g. laboratory work, but must be carried on continuously to not risk ruining the research, and researchers should not feel forced to go to work while on leave. Therefore it is the task of the faculty to ensure that the researcher’s work will not be wasted, and that the researcher can focus on taking care of her/his baby while on leave.

At the Faculty of Science, a fund covers all expenses in relation to parental leave. However, in the cases of Ph.D. students who are partly externally financed, administration of funds in relation to parental leave becomes much more complicated.

Though it may have been the intention to introduce the same kind of parental leave funding to other faculties as at the Faculty of Science, all faculties now have new deans than previously, which means that what may previously have been promised might very likely have been forgotten by now.

4. Gender representation among university management

By systemising management development programmes, the risk of male managers ‘reproducing themselves’ through informal recruitment of new managers is decreased.

Management development programmes equip researchers with the tools necessary for filling the position of research team manager. However, researchers have different perceptions of what the research team manager position entails: Some perceive it as actual management which provides the researcher with valuable experience and qualifications, and others perceive it as an administrative, practical function, e.g. set up meetings, etc., which therefore leaves the position unattractive as it does not provide the researcher with useful qualifications.

Organisational structures within departments are constantly changed, which means that when research teams are re-structured, some research team managers are no longer needed or new ones are required.

The research team manager is crucial to gender equality efforts, as she or he is responsible for daily manager-employee contact, annual appraisal interviews, etc.

5. Gender equality versus diversity

The committee representative from the university library questions the regulative foundation of the committee, and why it only concerns gender (women/men) and not diversity from a broad perspective, for instance, in relation to the large portion of international employees, research and service personnel, employed at the university.

The discussion among committee members concerns the following questions:

- Is it a value at the same level that we should support and foster diversity equally to gender equality?
- Do diversity and gender equality call for the same approaches in the work to support and foster each of them?
- Is there a risk that gender equality efforts will be overshadowed, if other social categories are included into the work of the committee?
- What does diversity in fact mean?

Discussion of diversity among committee members especially concern international staff at the university. It is the strategy of the university to strengthen internationalisation, which increases the need for focus on issues of diversity. It may be preferable to urge university management to set up an individual diversity/internationalisation committee (similar to the gender equality committee).

9.2. Interview Guides

9.2.1. Interview Guide for Female Informants

Career

How would you describe your path into Academia?

What kind of thoughts did you have about choosing Academia as a career? – which factors spoke in favour of a career in Academia and which factors spoke against it for you?

Career Development

What has impacted your career positively so that you have been able to progress in the direction that you wanted?

→ Have you used e.g. career or competence development courses?

→ Have you felt that sparring with your nearest supervisor has helped you?

What has impacted your career negatively so that you were not able to progress in the direction that you wanted?

→ Have you experienced competition in Academia negatively during your career?

→ Have you experienced problems finding an appropriate work/life balance?

Working Conditions

How would you describe your life as an academic?

What does it mean to you to be a female academic?

In your opinion, what does it take to make it in Academia as a woman?

How would you describe the working environment at your department? (culture, teamwork, management, etc.)

Gender Inequality

In your opinion, is gender equality an issue which should have particular political and managerial attention?

What is your experience of the efforts initiated at SDU to counter problems of gender inequality?

What is your experience of the efforts initiated at your faculty and department to counter problems of gender inequality?

Can you think of situations in which you have particularly felt the effects/outcomes of specific gender equality efforts? – and how did you experience them?

9.2.2. Interview Guide for Ethnographic Interviews concerning HRM

How is the gender equality perspective incorporated into management policies at the University of Southern Denmark and the Faculty of Science?

Which practical measures do SDU and the Faculty of Science take to solve problems of gender inequality?

How are gender equality efforts at SDU, faculty and department level connected?

In your experience, what are the most effective measures to counter issues of gender inequality within Academia?

In your experience, what have been less effective measures to counter issues of gender inequality?

In your opinion, is gender equality an issue which should have particular political and managerial attention?

How do you perceive the general opinion among management toward gender equality efforts?

How do you perceive the general opinion among staff toward gender equality efforts?

In which direction do you see future gender equality efforts heading?

9.3. Additional Reading for Fun

9.3.1. A Historical Overview of Danish Women in Science

When women first entered Danish universities in the 1870s, it was a man's world which met them. During the nineteenth century, science was characterised by a discourse which problematised the female body, even though science had assigned women their own particular place in the world through that very same body. Due to the discovery of female physiology and the part that women played in the reproductive process, women were granted an area in which they were superior to men, and motherhood consequently became the essence of being a woman (Rosenbeck, 2014: 85).

Men were made part of society through the emergence of the modern sciences; history, and social and cultural studies, whereas women were *naturalised* and "*left*" with the natural sciences, biology and medicine, which legitimised that doctors of that time could address all aspects of female life, including upbringing and education. So, since women primarily were valuable to society by virtue of their wombs, women were expected not to exhaust themselves and to take care of their bodies and leave intellectual life to men, because hegemonic discourse stated that the mind and the ovaries could not develop simultaneously (Ibid.: 76-77, 94, 70, 106).

This way, a polarisation between female, domestic life and the professional, public lives of men was created which continued to characterise Danish society until the feminine revolt of the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore, the minute women moved outside of the domestic sphere, focus was on their bodies. Not surprisingly, prostitutes, women of the streets, were considered indecent. In much the same way, the first academic women were a threat to decency simply because they dared to enter into public life. However, it was not only the challenge of societal moral, but these women defied the "*over-exertion theory*" – the idea that women were too weak to study and that it would hurt their reproductive abilities – and laid their claim to reason and intellect. But it was not easily granted (Ibid.: 110, 123, 126).

Nielsine Nielsen (1850-1916) was the first Danish woman to apply for university. She wanted to become a doctor. When the University of Copenhagen received her application, lawyers realised that there was no law which prohibited the admittance of women. When women thereafter started to enter universities, it was not because society needed them or their qualifications, but rather that a general increase in school attendance among girls and young women, and the tendency for e.g. home economics schools to become increasingly theoretical, created a desire among the girls themselves for further studies. Thus, the women were the drivers of this change (Ibid.: 40-41).

On an overall level, Danish women's entry into Academia – and resistance to it – can be divided into three levels: First, difficulties to get in at all, next, difficulties to be accepted as researchers, and finally, limited possibilities to use their knowledge, make money and gain recognition. The first generation of female academics came from the upper classes and brought with them significant cultural and social capital, still, they did not succeed in progressing professionally within Academia. Nielsine Nielsen, for instance, never managed to write her dissertation, though she had gone to England to gather data. Through her career, she practiced medicine as a doctor, not as researcher, and became a specialist in venereal diseases. In fact, only a few women of that time strived towards careers within research, and those who managed to achieve it

were not working at the universities. In fact, it took exactly one hundred years, from Nielsine Nielsen's graduation, until Denmark had its first female university professor in 1985; also within medicine (Ibid.: 45, 137, 44-45, 48).

Evidently, progress has been extremely slow. If we look at the strategy of female academics during the first 50 years, it was characterised by gratitude for having been admitted but not particularly by a desire for professional, academic advancement or a wish to change the academic system. In addition, the fact that the number of women in Academia remained very low for a long time renders the continued resistance to their presence the more interesting. Women who were admitted had grades above average and should in principle be welcomed as students of high potential; however, their academic development and advancement was most frequently obstructed by the academic institution and its members. Due to their close association with domestic life, women were almost per definition regarded as subjective and thereby viewed as a threat to scientific quality carried by the ideal of objectivity. Next, it has been claimed, that Academia is so deeply rooted in masculine tradition that scientific practice is closely connected with masculine practice. Furthermore, criteria of scientific qualification cannot be understood independently from the power and hegemony of men. As such, even though the first academic women attempted to live up to the norms and demands of Academia, they were most likely doomed to fail simply because they were not men (Ibid.: 131, 121, 143, 210, 139).

For nearly one hundred years Academia remained the same. While the 1870s' women's movement contributed to the entry of women into the universities, the women's movement of the 1970s problematised scientific practices and questioned the content of academic teaching. Because of the dramatic increase in the number of students during the 1960s, the youth rebellion of 1968, the Danish university expansion and the women's movement of the 1970s, a societal demand arose for women to become part of scientific professionalism, for universities to change discourses about women and femininity and to establish departments for women's and gender studies and research. Moreover, the women's movement also included a feminist criticism of positivism and its ideal of objectivity, and a request for greater recognition of the role of the subject and context in the research process. Behind this criticism lies a wish for change away from the scientific self-conception that science is above and beyond the "*merely human*" and that scientists know what is best for society, towards strategic, cross-disciplinary, applied sciences which contribute to the solution of societal problems (Ibid.: 139, 141, 143, 228-229).

Next, an important aspect of the emancipation of women, which has impacted all working women immensely, is of course that which relates to marriage and children. In 1922 and 1925, Danish marriage legislation was changed to include financial areas, custody, establishment and annulment of marriage, etc. The immediate critique of this legislation concerned the idea of "*gender equality*" which was considered too abstract a concept, as well as a fad which would disappear in time. Furthermore, the man, it was claimed, was stripped of his authority and respect, and the destruction of societies' two ground pillars – marriage and family life – was the inevitable consequence of these new laws built on feminism and values of equality (Ibid.: 101-102, 42, 105).

It was a general pattern among the first generation of female academics not to marry, but as the decades passed, more and more academic women attempted to combine marriage, motherhood and an academic career. Societal changes during the twentieth century created improved opportunities for female professionals in general: Both the development of contraceptives leading to fewer children and technological development in terms of household equipment and appliances considerably lightened the work load of mothers and housewives, and finally, after World War II, the market's need for female labour made working women increasingly common. While the marriage legislation of the 1920s ensured legal equality between spouses, men were still not expected to take part in housework. This changed when the women's libbers of the 1960s and 70s challenged the traditional gender roles and demanded men to do their share of domestic chores. Therefore, today, as "practical" gender equality to a much larger degree characterises family life in Denmark, the issue of combining family and children with an academic career is a challenge which faces both women and men (Ibid.: 119-121).

Furthermore, since around 1990, gender inequality in Academia has been on and off the political agenda in Denmark and in Europe. It was expected that the imbalance of the sexes in top research positions would eventually even out by itself, when the catchment area would gradually become more equal between the sexes, as, after the 1960s, more and more women finished their university studies. When this did not occur, several research projects about gender in Academia were initiated in order to understand the nature of the problem (Ibid.: 67, 190).

These projects e.g. pointed to men and women's different manners of reacting emotionally and displaying competitiveness as being restricting to women's behaviours in comparison to men, and that if women violate these norms they risk losing social and scientific standing. Some researchers have concluded that the reason that so few women succeed in reaching the top in Academia, is that women underestimate their own abilities and lack self-confidence and for that reason do not apply. Others claim that the women who refrain from applying are simply being realistic. However, looking at women as the problem will not suffice without examining the structures which contribute to their exclusion. All this indicates that universities are permeated with ideas about gender, and that this persistent emphasis on objectivity and meritocracy obstructs the institution from acknowledging discrimination (Ibid.: 193-194, 224, 210).

Other political initiatives include both a practical and a legislative approach: From 1998 until 2001, 78 million were budgeted by the Danish state for the *Female Researchers in Joint Action* project, known as the Freja Project. From more than 300 applications, 16 research projects were selected and granted funds. With this level of attention, the project was considered a great success, although its results were not significant enough to impact statistics. Also, along with the introduction of the concept of *gender mainstreaming* to Danish legislation in 2000, public institutions became obligated to develop a gender equality report every two years. At the international level, the European Union's 7th Frame Work Programme (2007-2013) includes intentions of a contextualisation of European Research, i.e. that the solution of societal problems are to be a primary driver of scientific research, and that Academia is to reflect all of society and include all groups of citizens and their different interests in scientific work (Ibid.: 213, 213).

Following the intention of the European Union, as mentioned above, Rosenbeck (2014) emphasises the need for *diversity*. Women and other excluded groups will bring different experience, positions and perspectives into Academia which has the potential of improving science by challenging traditional demarcations of what constitutes science and what does not. With a wider understanding of the concept of *science*, the contributions of women will become more visible. A more equal distribution of the sexes – and more diversity in general – within Academia is not only an issue of fairness, but will with a wider science concept positively impact scientific quality (Ibid.: 222, 230, 243, 247-248).

9.3.2. The Leaky Pipeline

The debate relating to women's minority status within Academia has been characterised by two main perspectives, which will be explained in the following chapter. The older of the two is known as the *pipeline metaphor*, and has commonly been used by researchers and writers addressing the issue of women's continued concentration within low levels and insecure employment of organisations; e.g. companies and universities (Allen & Castleman, 2001: 151). The pipeline metaphor represents the simple and intuitively appealing idea that if more women are sent into one end of the pipeline, more women will eventually come through and out at the other end. Thus, the pipeline metaphor is based on the belief that current gender inequality is a legacy of the past, and the assumption that social and organisational change suffers from an unavoidable time delay, which means that effects of progress will not be detectable until after a given period of time has passed. This means that people have limited control over the solution to the problem of gender inequality, because it will happen on its own accord. As such, the pipeline metaphor rejects that gendered power processes continue to exist in education and employment which means that gender equality interventions are deemed superfluous (Allen & Castleman, 2001: 151-152).

Critical voices have long been calling attention to the deficiencies of the pipeline metaphor. First, Allen and Castleman (2001) claim that the pipeline metaphor fails to address the influence of complex, contextual variables which work as obstacles to women's career advancement within Academia. For example, the pipeline perspective includes no consideration for possible structural, organisational, and operational changes, and for the fact that such changes are likely to significantly impact the context in which gender equity is expected to steadily improve (Ibid.: 157). This view, furthermore, entails that programmes installed to support the career advancement of women in Academia are portrayed as harmful to the naturally occurring change process towards gender equality – the effects of the pipeline – and, even, occasionally as giving women an unfair advantage over men (Ibid.: 154).

Second, the rejection of gendered organisational dynamics implied by the pipeline model means that e.g. the construction of conceptions of *merit* as a gendered process is dismissed, though the issue has been documented repeatedly (Ibid.: 156). This way, the pipeline metaphor reflects the meritocratic ideal that people are assessed objectively, which means that if women are screened out it is a result of their inferior qualifications. This view has been termed *the deficit model* of gender inequality. Thus, in summary, the pipeline metaphor presumes a direct *cause-effect correlation*: More female graduates will lead to more female researchers, and better qualifications will lead to better jobs for women (Ibid.: 157).

In the 1990s, Ståhle was commissioned to examine statistics relating to gender in Danish research, and within his various publications (1993, 1995, 1998, 2005, etc.), Ståhle used pipeline argumentation to explain that the low share of women in high-level research positions was the result of a low share of women in recruitment positions; i.e. few female master students to recruit for Ph.D. scholarships, few female Ph.D. scholars to recruit for assistant professor positions, few female assistant professors to recruit for associate professor positions, and few female associate professors to recruit for full professorships. This line of thought implies that the problem would solve itself over time, as the tendency within higher education, at the time of Ståhle's reports, was for still more and more women to graduate. Ståhle concluded that more female bachelor and master students would inevitably improve the catchment area for Ph.D. scholars which would improve the gender balance of the catchment area for assistant professor positions, and so on (Henningsen, 2002: 1).

As noted in the historical overview, already in the 1960s and 1970s, in relation to what might be termed the *genuine* entry into universities of Danish women, followed by the university expansion, pipeline reasoning was central to the expectation of an imminent improved gender balance in Academia. As such, in his work, Ståhle reaffirmed what had been the commonly accepted expectation for decades; a positive outlook for gender equity in research. Nevertheless, others offered alternative interpretations of Ståhle's statistics and less optimistic predictions. For instance, Henningsen and Højgaard (2002) concluded that Ståhle's statistics gave no occasion for optimistic predictions and claimed that the share of women among researchers did not increase in direct ratio to an increased share of women within the catchment area. In their working paper, Henningsen and Højgaard use an opposing metaphor, *the leaky pipeline*, to describe how the number of women gradually decreases as they pass through the pipeline; i.e. during the various steps of their academic careers.

Henningsen and Højgaard describe how women's defection from Academia is a complex problem which starts already at upper secondary level. For example, young men and women tend to choose different categories of subjects and these choices are, or at least were according to Zeuner and Linde (1997), characterised by a traditional gender polarisation. These choices tend to lead young women to higher educations within e.g. medicine, psychology, sociology, anthropology, languages, biology, etc. because women's life strategies generally are based on a wish to "do good" and for their education and work to benefit others; in Zeuner and Linde's words on *saviour strategies*. In the study, saviour strategies were negatively associated with business studies and finance, as well as the traditional "hard" sciences, such as math, computer science, physics, engineering, and philosophy (Henningsen & Højgaard, 2002: 10). The leak occurs at the transition from upper secondary to university because several of the studies preferred by young women have restricted enrolment through admittance quotas and very high grade average requirements. Within the studies preferred by young men, on the other hand, the number of places available is higher than the number of applicants. This means that the percentage of rejections within studies preferred by women is significantly higher compared to studies preferred by men, which potentially makes women's transition from upper secondary to university more difficult than men's. Evidently, political structuring of higher education, dimensions of studies, and the system of admittance have highly gender differentiating effects (Ibid.: 10-11). Nonetheless, the fact that women at present represent 56 per cent of Danish university students indicates that the challenges inherent in these obstacles, in practice, do not prevent young women from entering or that young people's education choices have changed during the last 20 years – since Zeuner and Linde's study.

Next, having completed their university studies, we see a discrepancy between men and women in relation to their transition rates between master degree and Ph.D. scholarships. Several variables are at work: First, studies such as psychology and anthropology are popular choices among young women, however, these areas offer a comparatively small number of research positions. Simultaneously, within studies generally preferred by men, academics and administratives have worried that e.g. the technical area and the natural sciences would not be able to attract *enough* qualified master students for research careers (Ibid.: 11-12). This probably explains why the percentage of women within governmental research institutions is higher than within Academia. In 1999, the share of women within governmental research institutions was 35 per cent and 27 per cent within Academia. As such, if women want to do research they have better chances of succeeding outside of the university (Ibid.: 8, 12). Second, statistics from 1992-1994 suggest that women are more likely to have their Ph.D.s funded by private companies or organisations rather than by the university, as compared to men. Though, we cannot know whether it was the choice of these women themselves to apply for funds outside of Academia or if their applications were rejected by the universities, it is problematic, as this tendency draws female researchers away from academic careers and into the private sphere, which constitutes another leak of the pipeline (Ibid.: 12).

Henningsen and Højgaard emphasise, that the situation varies from research area to research area. It appears that women have a higher chance of being granted a Ph.D. scholarship within research areas which already have a high share of women such as law and biology (Ibid.: 19). However, completing a Ph.D. programme is no guarantee of achieving tenure within Academia. After the Ph.D. follows another three years of temporary employment as assistant professor which means that the average age for obtaining tenure in Academia in Denmark is 40 years old. This very long career path is considered yet another leak, because women may simply choose to opt out. The years of insecure employment within Academia usually coincide with the period of time of a woman's life during which some will have children, and women are generally more concerned than men about the difficulties of starting a family while establishing a success research career (Ibid.: 22, 24).

Finally, in their working paper, Henningsen and Højgaard state that potential for an improvement of the gender balance within the top levels of academic research has existed for quite a long time, still the share of women in associate professor and professor positions has not increased significantly. The share of women within the catchment area has long been sufficient to allow for improvement to happen: The percentage of women in the assistant professor group exceeds the percentage of women within the associate professor group, just as the percentage of women within the associate professor group exceeds the percentage of women within the professor group. Therefore, the authors conclude that women are not as likely to be hired as men. If they were, the gender ratio among newly recruited associate professors would reflect the gender ratio among assistant professors, and the gender ratio among newly recruited professors would reflect the ratio among associate professors. This is not the case (Ibid.: 15-16).

The metaphor of *the leaky pipeline* represents the complexity of the wastage of female talent within Academia much more adequately than its predecessor; *the pipeline metaphor*. The image clearly depicts that leaks happen all the way through the long path of an academic career, which concurrently emphasises that a multitude of factors are causing the problem, and that, therefore, the solution will have to be multi-faceted (Ibid.: 25).