Inspiring Leadership | **Leadership Foundation** for Higher Education

Women and Higher Education Leadership:
Absences and Aspirations

Stimulus paper

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Stimulus Paper Series

The Leadership Foundation is pleased to launch its new series of 'Stimulus Papers' which are intended to inform thinking, choices and decisions at institutional and system levels in UK higher education. The papers were selected from an open tender which sought to commission focused and thought-provoking papers that address the challenges facing leaders, managers and governors in the new economic environment facing the UK.

The themes addressed fall into different clusters including higher education leadership, business models for higher education, leading the student experience and leadership and equality of opportunity in higher education. We hope these papers will stimulate discussion and debate, as well as giving an insight into some of the new and emerging issues relevant to higher education today.

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Preface

Worldwide, the enrolment of women in higher education now exceeds that of men. Women's participation in higher education – as a result of the expansion of both capacity and opportunity – has, as Louise Morley says in this paper, increased sixfold during the last forty years.

The good news, however, ends there as the dramatic increase in the number of women students has not been matched by growth in the number of women in senior leadership roles in universities. Most academics and academic leaders are male and, even where there are marked increases in the representation of women in particular jobs – for instance at deputy level in Australian universities – this progress is not matched by the translation of those deputies into the top jobs. Some nations, most notably Sweden, have achieved real change by identifying the ways and means to benchmark progress in a range of significant career development activities, but this successful intervention provides an isolated example.

In this well-founded, stimulating paper, Morley makes some recommendations for the next steps to be taken if we are serious about addressing the current gender deficit in senior leadership roles in higher education. She makes the point that the collection of good global data will inform analysis of the barriers which have been encountered by those women who have attained leadership positions as well as the 'structures of inequality' which militate against the entry of larger numbers of women into these roles. Morley details a number of initiatives being run in a variety of countries – women's leadership programmes; gender mainstreaming; affirmative action, quotas and targets – but also looks positively toward the possibilities for reinvigorating the debate by developing a new set of values and challenges for leaders in higher education which 'include sustainability, social inclusion and creating knowledge for a rapidly changing world'.

This essay is not a lament, nor is it a throwing up of hands (or in the towel). Morley's work sets us a series of challenges; the most influential actors in the sector – chairs of councils and governing bodies, executive search firms, leadership development and human resource professionals and researchers working in the field of Gender Equality – need to pick them up and work towards an employee demographic in higher education that comes closer to a mirror of the student body.

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Abstract

This paper aims to stimulate discussion on women's participation in higher education (HE) leadership. The review examines international literature and the diverse theoretical frameworks and vocabularies that are marshalled to examine factors that may drive or depress women's aspirations and career orientations. The global literature can be classified into at least four analytical frameworks: gendered divisions of labour (Lynch, 2010); gender bias and misrecognition (Bardoel et al. 2011); management and masculinity (Billing, 2011); and greedy organisations and work/life balance challenges (Currie et al, 2002; Guillaume and Pochic, 2009). The paper also includes examples of structured interventions that have been developed to encourage more women to enter leadership positions in universities.

Feminising the academy?

Gender equality legislation and policy initiatives, changes in socio-economic gender relations and aspirations and the expansion of higher education opportunities have all contributed to increasing numbers of women undergraduate students globally (Leathwood and Read, 2009; Morley, 2011). Female enrolment ratios now exceed those of men in two out of every three countries with available data. The number of women enrolled in tertiary institutions has grown almost twice as fast as that of men since 1970 (UNESCO, 2010). A UNESCO global gender parity index that computes the ratio of female-to-male enrolments in higher education is now 1.08 meaning that there are slightly more women undergraduates than men enrolled worldwide. Globally, the number of female students rose sixfold from 10.8 to 77.4 million between 1970 and 2008 (UNESCO, 2010).

As Tables 1 and 2 below indicate, high rates of women's participation in HE have yet to translate into proportional representation in the labour market or access to leadership and decision-making positions. From the limited statistical data on the topic (e.g. Blandford et al., 2011; Lund, 1998; Singh, 2002, 2008; She Figures, 2003, 2006, 2009), it appears that a global gender gap remains in senior HE leadership. She Figures (2009), which are the datasets from the European Commission on women in tertiary education, reported that throughout the 27 countries in the EU, 13% of all institutions in the HE sector and 9% of universities awarding PhD degrees were headed by women. The highest shares of female rectors (vice-chancellors) were recorded in Sweden, Iceland, Norway, Finland and Israel. In contrast, in Denmark, Cyprus, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Hungary, no single university was headed by a woman when She Figures reported in 2009. The proportion of rectors that are women was also very low (maximum 7%) in Romania, Austria, Slovakia, Italy, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Belgium and Germany. This under-representation reflects not only continued inequalities between men and women, but missed opportunities for women to contribute to the future development of universities. There is a business case - skills and talent wastage - and also a social justice case - exclusionary structures, processes and practices.

Table 1: Percentage of women professors and heads of higher education institutions 1997 - 2003

No	Region/county	1997		1998		1999		2000		2001		2002		2003	
		P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H
	Region														
1	**EU**[2]	•	•	•	•	13[1]	•	15.2[1]	•	•	•	16[1]	•	15[1]	•
2	**Americas**	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
3	**Sub-Saharan Africa**	•	•	•	•	•	•	10[5]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4	**Asia**	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
5	**Australasia**	4.5[11]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
6	**Commonwealth**	9.9[10]	8.3[1]	9.9	6.9[3]	•	•	13.1[13]	9[13]	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Country														
1	**Australia**	4.4	14.8	9.4	•	15.4[8]	•	3.1[8]	•	3.3[8]	•	3.5[8]	•	3.6[8]	•
2	**Austria**	•	•	•	•	•	•	6.2[1]	•	•	•	9[1]	•	•	•
3	**Canada**	11.8	15.7	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4	**Ghana**	10	•	•	•	•	•	15[4]	•	•	•	•	•	14[4]	•
5	**India**	10.5	•	10.5	•	•	•	18	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
6	**Nigeria**	5	•	•	•	•	•	15[4]	•	12[4]	•	23[4]	•	23[4]	•
7	**Norway**	•	•	•	•	7	•	13.3[1]	•	10	•	16[1]	•	13	•
8	**South Africa**	8	•	8	8	•	•	7[4]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
9	**Sweden**	•	•	•	•	•	•	13.8[1]	•	•	•	14[1]	•	•	•
10	**Tanzania**	8.6	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	8[4]	•	8[4]	•
11	**The Netherlands**	•	•	•	•	5	•	6.3[1]	•	•	•	8[1]	•	•	•
12	**Uganda**	16.7	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
13	**UK**	8.6	6.7	•	•	13	•	12.6[1]	•	•	•	15[1]	•	•	•
14	**USA**	19.8	•	•	19.3	20.8	•	•	•	22.7	21.1	•	•	23.7	•

Table 2: Percentage of women professors and heads of higher education institutions 2004 - 2010

No	Region/county	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008		2009		2010	
		P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H	P	H
	Region														
1	**EU**[2]	15.3[1]	•	•	•	18[1]	•	19[1]	9	•	•	•	•	•	•
2	**Americas**	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
3	**Sub-Saharan Africa**	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4	**Asia**	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
5	**Australasia**	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
6	**Commonwealth**	•	•	•	•	15.3[14]	9.8[14]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
	Country														
1	**Australia**	3.8[8]	•	4.1[8]	•	4.5[8]	24	4.3[8]	•	4.4[8]	•	4.7[8]	•	4.9[8]	•
2	**Austria**	9.4[1]	•	•	•	•	•	14[1]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
3	**Canada**	•	•	•	•	•	15.7	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4	**Ghana**	7[4]	•	18[4]	•	7[4]	•	7[4]	•	10[4]	•	•	•	•	•
5	**India**	•	•	•	•	•	9.3	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
6	**Nigeria**	24[4]	•	15[4]	•	•	•	•	•	16[4]	•	•	•	•	•
7	**Norway**	15.7[1]	•	14	•	•	•	18[1]	•	•	•	20	•	•	•
8	**South Africa**	•	•	42.3[9]	•	•	0	19[4]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
9	**Sweden**	16.1[1]	•	•	•	•	•	18[1]	•	•	•	•	•	43[12]	•
10	**Tanzania**	7[4]	•	9[4]	•	8[4]	•	10[4]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
11	**The Netherlands**	9.4[1]	•	•	•	•	•	11[1]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
12	**Uganda**	6.1[4]	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	12[4]	•	•	•	•	•
13	**UK**	15.9[1]	•	•	•	16	•	17[1]	•	22[15]	•	15.7[1]	•	19.8[15]	14[15]
14	**USA**	•	•	25.1	•	24[6]	23	26.5	36[7]	•	•	28	•	•	•

P = Professors   H = Heads of institutions e.g. vice-chancellors, rectors, presidents

1
Grade A women (European Commission 2003, 2006, 2009)

2
EU 15 till 2004; EU 25 2004-2007; EU 27 2007-onward. Data from 1999-2003 have included EU 25 stats in this table. Figure for 2000 refers to EU 15 (European Commission 2003, 2006, 2009)

3
Vice-chancellor. Other senior management positions: 13.9% of registrars, 8.4% deputy vice-chancellors, 3.2% of pro-vice-chancellors, 8.5% deans of faculties (UNESCO 2002)

4
University of Ghana, University of Ibadan (and Bayero only for 2008 figure for Nigeria), University of Stellenbosch, University of Dar es Salaam, University of Makerere, respectively (Tettey 2008)

5
Figure approximated for Africa (Tettey 2010)

6
All HE institutions. Doctoral universities: 19.2%; MA universities: 28.7%; BA universities: 31.3%; associate degree universities: 47.1% (West and Curtis 2006)

7
Deans, as compared to 23% in 2006 women presidents of universities (Curtis 2011)

8
'Above senior lecturer' positions (Universities Australia)

9
University of Witwatersrand (Tettey 2010)

10
Only for professors (P) and executive heads (H). Deans 4% in 1997 (Lund 1998)

11
Australasia referred to as South Pacific (UNESCO 2002)

12
Peterson (2011)

13
Singh (2002)

14
Singh (2008)

15
Blanford et al (2011)<?>Absent leaders

Absent leaders

The pattern of male prevalence in senior leadership positions is visible in countries with diverse policies and legislation for gender equality. In the UK, in 2009/10, women were 44% of all academics. A higher proportion of staff in professorial roles was male (80.9%) than female (19.1%). Men comprised 55.7% of academic staff in non-manager roles and 72.0% of academic staff in senior management roles (Blandford et al., 2011). The 2012 HEFCE Report states that in 2010-11 most academics were still male (57%), and female academics were concentrated in less senior roles. She Figures (2009) reported that throughout the 27 countries in the EU, women's academic careers remain characterised by strong vertical segregation. The proportion of female students (55%) and graduates (59%) in the EU exceeds that of male students, but women represent only 18% of grade A (professorial) academic staff. In 70% of the Commonwealth's 54 countries, all universities were led by men in 2007 (Morley et al, 2005; Singh, 2008).

Davies (1996) observed that women enter adjunct roles but do not attain the most senior organisational positions. While HE reform has created new middle managerial positions including quality assurance, innovation, community engagement and marketing managers (Deem, 2003; Fitzgerald and Wilkinson, 2010; Morley, 2003; Noble and Moore, 2006), many women find themselves in "ivory basements" (Eveline, 2004), or the "velvet ghettos" of communication, finance, human resource management (Guillaume and Pochic, 2009). Ryan and Haslam (2007) theorised how women are often in unpopular and precarious management areas i.e. "glass cliffs", in which men and women are differentially selected for rewarding and unrewarding organisational tasks, and leadership roles associated with an increased risk of negative consequences. In some locations, there has been a feminisation of penultimate leadership positions. In Australia, for example, women constitute 40% of the pro-vice-chancellors but only 18% of the vice-chancellors (Bagilhole and White, 2011).

Women's absence from senior leadership is a recurrent theme in studies in the global north (Bagilhole and White, 2011; Blackmore and Sachs, 2001, 2007; Husu, 2000; Elg and Jonnergård, 2010). It has also emerged as a theme in studies from the global south in the past two decades, including studies from Ghana (Ohene, 2010; Prah, 2002); Kenya (Onsongo, 2004); Nigeria (Adadevoh, 2001; Odejide et al, 2006; Odejide, 2007; Pereira, 2007); Pakistan (Rab, 2010; Shah, 2001); South Africa (Dunne & Sayed, 2007; Shackleton et al, 2006), and Sri Lanka (Gunawardena et al, 2006). Lack of women in senior positions means that women are globally under-represented across all decision-making fora, including committees, boards, recruitment panels and the executive. This means that currently the expertise and skills of a significant part of the HE workforce are being under-utilised.

A (provocative) word about leadership

A powerful cultural ideology has emerged in HE reform suggesting that leadership is the essential ingredient in successful organisational transformation. Leadership is defined by Northouse (2007: 3) as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. The cultural ideology of leadership is discursively constructed suggesting that certain subjectivities, values, behaviour, dispositions and characteristics can strategically overcome institutional inertia, outflank resistance and recalcitrance, transform and provide direction for new university futures (O'Reilly and Reed, 2010, 2011). Leader identity is constituted through power relations (Haake, 2009). Formal leadership positions can empower incumbents to control resources and influence innovation and change. Potent cultural templates, or scripts, circulate for how leaders should be - often based on larger cultural and historical formations (Alvesson et al, 2008). There is an assumption that individual agency, unimpeachable characteristics and structural positions will result in some organisational members being authorised to exert and display managerial power. Leaders are expected to demonstrate authority and affective agency and to possess excellent interpersonal and communication skills. Leaders also have to negotiate intersections with other simultaneously held and contingent identities, and this is where some dissonance may occur, with cultural scripts for leaders coalescing or colliding with normative gender performances. This sometimes results in what Burt (1998) theorised as women having a legitimacy or credibility problem in organisations. The narratives of different expectations of progress for women and how certain people are identified, or identify themselves as legitimate leaders are open to further investigation.

A further complexity is that HE leadership can also be rotational and fixed term, involving multiple and conflicting affiliations, and unstable engagements with hierarchy and power (Cross and Goldenberg, 2009). While organisations such as the Leadership Foundation in Higher Education (see Middlehurst, 2007) offer management development programmes at all levels, often the transition to management can be the result of turn-taking and involves realignment to a completely new job without any training or support. Traditionally research leaders, with accrued academic capital, have been thought most appropriate for organisational leadership (Goodall, 2009). The re-alignment has to be effectively absorbed in order to demonstrate transferable leadership skills e.g. from leading research to leading whole or parts of higher education organisations. Leadership also involves an affective load that incorporates identity work to manage self-doubt and occupational stress, as well as dealing with conflict, anxiety, morale, disappointment, resistance, pessimism, recalcitrance in order to influence colleagues' subjectivities and guide them towards organisational goals (Acker, 2012; Chandler, 2010; Clancy et al, 2011; Watson, 2009). Herein lies some of the ambiguity in relation to women and leadership. While many women would relish the opportunity to influence innovation and change, it is pertinent to ask why women should desire or aspire to enter HE leadership, when it is potentially so problematic.

There are questions about who self-identifies, and is identified by existing power elites, as having leadership legitimacy. Research studies from the global south and

the global north are attempting to offer explanatory frameworks for women's absence from HE leadership. Common themes include: the gendered division of labour; gender bias and misrecognition; management and masculinity; and greedy organisations and work/life balance challenges. The next sections will engage with each of these themes.

The gendered division of labour

Lynch (2010) suggested that academia is constructed as a "carefree zone" which assumes that academics have no commitments other than to their profession. Leaders are constructed as "zero-load" workers, devoid of care responsibilities (Grummell et al, 2009a). The moral imperative on women to care for children, the sick and elderly means that women have negative equity in the workplace (Guillaume and Pochic, 2009; Lynch et al, 2009; O'Brien, 2007). Bardoel et al (2011) used the term bias avoidance to describe how individuals feel that they have to minimise or hide extended family commitments to achieve career success. Runte and Mills (2004:240) claimed that as it is women who invariably "navigate between parental and employee roles, they have to pay the 'toll' for crossing the boundary between work and family". Women academics caught between two greedy institutions - the extended family and the university - is a theme in research from Australia (Currie et al, 2002; Probert, 2005), Ghana (Adu-Yeboah and Dzama Forde, 2011; Tsikata, 2007), Ireland (Devine et al, 2011; Russell et al., 2009), Kenya (Kamau, 2006; Onsongo, 2004), South Africa (Moultrie and De la Rey, 2004), South Korea (Kim et al, 2010), and the UK (Raddon, 2002). A dominant view is that time expended on role performance in one domain depletes time available for the demands of the other domain (Runte and Mills, 2004). While the gendering of primary care responsibilities is a major consideration, it fails to account for why some women who are single or child/parent-free are also absent from HE leadership. Also, modern forms of gender identity and gender relations are also more multifaceted, fluid and varied than they were a couple of decades ago (Billing, 2011).

Gender bias and misrecognition

Misrecognition is the way in which wider society offers demeaning, confining or inaccurate readings of the value of particular groups or individuals. Eagly and Karau (2002) maintained that the incongruity between what it means to be female and what is seen to be managerial can produce at least two forms of prejudice: (1) less favourable evaluation of the potential for women to take on leadership roles compared to men and (2) less favourable evaluations of the actual behaviour of female leaders. How the leadership role is constructed determines the selection process in so far as particular qualities are normalised and prioritised (Grummell et al, 2009b; Smit, 2006).

Gender bias has been theorised in terms of the dominant group "cloning" themselves and appointing in their own image in order to minimise risk (Gronn and Lacey, 2006). This is often unintentional. Husu (2000) and Rees (2011) called for greater transparency and suggested that bias is likely to occur if assessments are based on obscure criteria and confidential evaluation processes. One example of accountability and transparency is Sweden where, in 2010, 43% of rectors/

vice-chancellors were women. There is a statutory requirement for public universities to provide gender statistics on students, doctoral students, teachers and professors, deans and heads of departments (Peterson, 2011). However, Van Den Brink et al's (2010) study of 13 universities in the Netherlands revealed a range of casual discriminatory practices in the appointment of professors that eluded formal protocols and objective criteria. The local logic of the institution and the organisational status quo are often informally invoked to determine who would be a comfortable fit (Grummel et al, 2009b; Pullen and Simpson, 2009). Women can still be perceived as "risky" appointments to senior positions (Ibarra et al, 2010).

Bias can exist at different stages of academic life, with women's skills and competencies misrecognised. Traditionally, HE leaders need to be able to demonstrate excellence in publishing and research (Deem, 2003; Fletcher et al, 2007). However, women account for only 29% of the world's researchers (UNESCO, 2010). Rees (2011) and Wenneras and Wold (1997) identified that gender bias exists in judgements of excellence - even by peers. Hence the importance of reviewing research resource allocation processes. In 2010, the Swedish Research Council identified goals for achieving gender equality that included achieving and maintaining equal gender distribution in evaluation panels; ensuring that the percentages of female and male applicants for grants correspond to the percentages of women and men among the potential group of applicants for research grants; and ensuring that women and men have the same success rates and receive the same average size of grants, taking into account the nature of the research and the type of grant (EU, 2011).

Management and masculinity

It has been hypothesised that leadership is defined according to normative masculinity (Binns and Kerfoot, 2011), with maleness seen as a resource, or form of career capital, and femaleness as a form of negative equity. Fitzgerald (2011) believed that the focus on productivity, competitiveness, hierarchy, strategy, and the inalienable logic of the market renders senior HE leadership a masculine domain. Femaleness is often perceived as irreconcilable with intellectual and managerial authority – a theme explored in Pakistan by Shah (2001) and in South Africa by Smit (2006), and theorised by scholars in the global north including Eagly et al (1992) and Valian (1999). These views suggest that women managers challenge a gender stereotype. The concept of social cognition suggests that we "think gender" and that we have deeply embedded notions of gender-appropriate behaviour and roles. When we think "leader", we think "male" (Sinclair, 2001).

A conventional view is that the skills, competencies and dispositions deemed essential to leadership, including assertiveness, autonomy and authority, are embedded in socially constructed definitions of masculinity (Knights and Kerfoot, 2004). In Sri Lanka, Morley et al (2006) found that leadership was perceived as demanding, aggressive and authoritarian and more fitting for males. Odejide (2003) reported how, in Nigeria, male leaders were preferred as they were thought to be more suited to dealing with student unrest. The imperative for tough,

detached and even ruthless decision-making led Devine et al (2011) to argue that masculinity is not equated with caring in the way that femininity is, so men can practise "care-less" masculinity without moral disapproval. This has implications for how women construct their leadership identities. In masculinised organisational cultures women leaders can sometimes find that they are the organisational "other" and must manage their otherness in order to succeed (Probert, 2005). This incongruence can involve minimising their gender difference in order to be treated equally to men (Bailyn, 2003). Managing identity, discrimination and other people's negativity can be an additional affective workload which deters women from applying for highly visible senior positions (Kram and McCollom Hampton, 2003; Morley, 1999).

Some literature suggests that women and men have innately different managerial dispositions. This approach is highly problematic as it essentialises male and female characteristics and posits that some women's highly developed skills, such as in communication, are innate (Billing and Alvesson, 2000). Binns and Kerfoot, (2011) discussed the "female advantage" literature (Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1990), which claimed the existence of superior female leadership traits such as empathy and relationality. It is erroneous to imply that women lead differently and such propositions create binds for women who do not fit the gender script. Muhr (2011) critiqued the dualism of leadership as masculine or feminine. Billing (2011) recommended more sophisticated frames of analysis and asked in what sense do work practices and norms still reflect the life situations and interests of men?

Greedy organisations

Global competitive pressure and performative audit and austerity cultures have intensified academic working hours generally and leadership is experienced as an all-consuming activity (Fanghanel and Trowler, 2008; Lynch, 2006; Morley, 2003). Devine et al (2011: 645) claim that "effective senior management required relentless commitment to the strategic goals of the organisation and an implicit assumption of their 24/7 availability to their management roles". Fitzgerald (2011) described leadership as exhausting, with unrelenting bureaucratic demands and institutional pressures. University leadership involves multiple, complex tasks and responsibilities including management of staff, strategy, finances and resources, operational planning, policy development, quality assurance processes, improving student outcomes, and engaging with community and the professions/industry (Currie et al, 2002). Women HE managers in Woodward's UK study (2007:11) reported "unmanageably large workloads". These observations have led to leadership being described as "greedy work" (Currie et al, 2002; Gronn and Lacey, 2006). Devine et al (2011), in their Irish study, discussed leaders requiring "an elastic self" in the context of new managerial reforms of higher education, and "a relentless pursuit of working goals without boundaries in time, space energy or emotion" (p632). Stress, wellbeing, work/life balance and sustainability are concerns in academic life (Barrett and Barrett, 2007; Edwards et al, 2009; Kinman et al, 2006, 2008).

Change interventions

It would be misleading to portray women as victims of all-powerful patriarchal organisations of knowledge production. Women are entering leadership positions and are being creative and innovative (Bagilhole and White, 2011; Blackmore and Sachs, 2007). There have been positive interventions for change in diverse national locations.

Thinking about women in organisations has focused on three areas - fix the women, fix the organisation and fix the knowledge (Schiebinger, 1999).

❙ Fix the women - enhancing women's confidence and self-esteem, empowerment, capacity-building, encouraging women to be more competitive, assertive and risk-taking.

❙ Fix the organisation - gender mainstreaming, institutional transformation e.g. gender equality policies, processes and practices, challenging discriminatory structures, gender impact assessments, audits and reviews, introducing work/life balance schemes including flexible working.

❙ Fix the knowledge – identifying bias, curriculum change e.g. the introduction of gender as a category of analysis in all disciplines, gender and women's studies.

Approaches that focus on one area, such as fixing the women without addressing organisational cultures that reproduce inequality, can be fundamentally flawed. Gender scholars have argued that rather than conceptualising the problem in terms of women's missing agency, the organisations themselves require transformation (Cockburn, 1991; Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Cockburn (1991:12) contrasted the "short agenda" e.g. individual women's achievement, with the "longer agenda" e.g. an engagement with gender and power. It is my view that a policy mix of interventions is required (Wroblewski and Leitner, 2011), as the following case studies exemplify.

Leadership programmes

Capacity development programmes to support women's career planning and development now exist in diverse national locations e.g. India (University Grants Commission, 2011). Several programmes run in the USA. For example, the Office of Women in Higher Education's Inclusive Excellence Group organises National Leadership Forums for women (ACE, 2012), and Higher Education Resource Services (HERS) institutes provided leadership development opportunities for more than 4,300 women faculty and administrators (White, 2011). Universities New Zealand has a Women in Leadership programme (2012). Programmes also exist at individual universities e.g. the University of Melbourne (2012). The case studies below profile two international programmes.

Case Study 1:
Gender programme from the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU)

The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) has run a gender programme since 1985 (ACU, 2010). This has sought to enhance and increase the participation and profile of women in the leadership and management of HE. It offers training workshops, training modules and international networking support.

The programme is underpinned by the following values and principles: a commitment to natural justice; a commitment to the principle that universities should reflect and represent their societies; a commitment to helping universities access the entirety of their human resource potential; recognition of the importance of having senior women as role models (not least to encourage more young women into science, engineering and technology); recognition of the need for the ACU to play its part in equipping women with the skills and confidence to bid for and assume leadership and management positions; and recognition that the improved recruitment of women into all levels of leadership and management in HE is integral to the overall development of universities in terms of both equity and quality.

Case Study 2:
HERS-SA

This South African programme focuses on developing women's participation in academic leadership and is described as a "self-sustaining non-profit organisation"

(see **www.hers-sa.org.za/page/about-hers-sa**).

It has been supported by international foundations including the Andrew Mellon Foundation, the Carnegie Foundation, and overseas development partners including the Department for International Development (DFID) in the UK.

The annual HERS-SA Academy (http://www.hers-sa.org.za/page/pro-dev-academy) attracts women from all over sub-Saharan Africa with over 900 women from South Africa and other countries across Africa having participated in HERS-SA programmes. Exchange programmes with HERS, USA also exist.

Activities include career development workshops, and opportunities for networking with women academic leaders at national and international conferences (Shackleton et al 2006).

Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming (GM) is a policy intervention promoted in the EU Treaty of Amsterdam (1997), and in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). GM is a strategy that makes women's and men's experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes (Tiessen, 2007). The first step is to identify the ways in which the status quo is designed with men in mind. The second step is to open systems up to accommodate men and women equally. The foundation of GM is gender analysis (Mukhopadhyay, et al, 2006). The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. Literature on GM is often critical of the gap between policy and implementation (Morley, 2010). However, GM can provide the opportunity for a policy mix of diverse measures and interventions, including policies, quotas, targets, and compilation of statistics. Case study 3 shows how a rigorous policy mix in Norway transformed a university.

> **The gender equality interventions below are reported as having led to a 55% increase in the numbers of women professors in 5 years (rising from 9% to 14%), and parity in the numbers of males and females recruited (Benediktsdotir, 2008).**
>
> ❙ **Gender analysis;**
> ❙ **Gender policy development;**
> ❙ **Appointment of equality advisors;**
> ❙ **Committees for equality issues that report to high level management;**
> ❙ **The allocation of a budget for equal opportunity;**
> ❙ **Quotas for recruitment;**
> ❙ **Qualification stipends;**
> ❙ **Mentoring for female PhD students;**
> ❙ **Postdoctoral staff and associate professors;**
> ❙ **Networking;**
> ❙ **A start package for women in male dominated fields;**
> ❙ **Career planning support for women;**
> ❙ **Mentoring and career counselling support is offered for women entering HE management.**

Case Study 3: Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

Affirmative action, quotas and targets

Affirmative action (AA) is a change intervention promoted in equity driven political agendas. Programmes include organisational goals for increasing the representation of historically excluded groups, timetables for their achievement and the introduction of strategies and practices to support targets (Konrad and Hartmann, 2001). Quotas and targets can be perceived as discriminatory (in this case against men) or as risking causing backlash and accusations of tokenism (Baez, 2003; Lihamba et al, 2006; Morley et al, 2006). Conversely, they can be seen as necessary and suitable, particularly in areas where gender segregation is entrenched, and can compensate for and tackle gender bias in recruitment and selection (OECD, 2008). They were a contentious topic in Lord Davies' (2011) UK report on women on boards. However, Norway introduced quotas in 2008 mandating at least 40% of each sex on publicly listed boards. Since then other European countries have, or are considering, legislation in the form of quotas (e.g. Spain, Iceland, Finland, France, Netherlands, Belgium and Italy). Case Study 4 illustrates an AA intervention that has produced auditable change.

Case Study 4:
Excellentia Programme,
Austria

Excellentia was implemented in 2005. The objective was to double the percentage of female professors at Austrian universities by 2010 (from 13% to 26%).

By 2011, women were 20% of the professoriate.

The programme offered extra financial incentives for the appointment of female professors and an annual budget of € 1,000,000 was allocated to the programme. Funding was provided through the Council for Research and Technology Development.

To qualify for an *Excellentia* grant, the appointment of an additional female professor had to increase both the absolute number and the overall proportion of female professors in a university.

Some basic parameters included:

▎ Appointment procedure rules and committees: the way appointment procedures are laid down (with a clear, precise process and candidate selection guidelines) can help to promote transparency and objectivity and thus contribute to gender equality in the appointment process.

▎ Awareness of gender equality issues: targeted internal communication of the goals can create awareness of discriminatory processes and increase the commitment to achieving these goals in all organisational units. This establishes responsibility for the advancement of women in the units and can be substantiated and monitored through internal target agreements and controlling.

▎ Qualified candidates: *Excellentia* funding could be specifically deployed to initiate measures to promote young female academics, thus helping to establish a broader base in the long term.

(Leitner and Wroblewski, 2008)

Mentoring

Social capital theory suggests that individuals accrue career benefits from their relationships. Male dominance of leadership can produce stability in relationships, networks and structures that impedes the possibilities for progress and change (Barrett and Barrett, 2010). Hence, mentorship, or the re-distribution of organisational and professional knowledge and social capital, has been perceived as a winning formula for women's career development (Chesterman, 2009; Eliasson et al, 2000). The effectiveness and value base of mentoring programmes have been subjected to critical scrutiny - are they aimed at assimilating women into dominant masculine corporate cultures (McKeen and Bujaki, 2007:218)? Devos (2008:195) believed that "these programmes are supported because they speak to institutional concerns with improving performance, while being seen to deal with the problem of gender inequity". Colley (2001:193) argued that mentoring was an individualised response to problems that may require more collective or structural solutions. De Vries (2010) was more positive and stressed the importance of clear objectives and reported successful mentoring interventions, such as at the University of Vienna, Austria (Nobauer and Genetti, 2008) and Flinders University, Australia (Gardiner et al, 2007). Positive outcomes for the Flinders programme included higher retention and promotion rates, higher average research grant amounts and more scholarly publications, all in comparison with a control group. A large-scale survey and interviews conducted in the USA found that mentorship was not translating into promotion for women, and that what was lacking was sponsorship. Sponsorship was more readily extended to male than female mentees (Ibarra et al, 2010). Using the construct of social capital, Kumra and Vinnicombe (2010) theorised sponsorship in terms of guidance and advice, access to key projects and assignments and help with setting up business deals. They, along with Eagli and Carli (2007), found that gender has a significant impact on access to and accumulation of social capital.

Conclusion

The global literature suggests that women and men in higher education are largely placed differently, with differential access to leadership, and hence to influencing meanings, discourses and practices (Marshall, 2007). While numbers have increased in some countries e.g. Sweden, it is indisputable that women are under-represented in senior leadership positions internationally. Interventions such as the *Excellentia* programme in Austria have achieved some quantitative change. However, it is still relevant to call for power itself to be theorised and to seek ways to "lessen the power of the male order, rather than to join the ranks" (Squires, 1999: 117–118). Gender in HE leadership is about more than focusing on women's under-representation. The gendered world of HE affects the very nature of knowledge production itself (Calás & Smircich, 2009; EC, 2011).

Discussions in the literature often rely on unproblematic notions of polarised gender identities in public and professional domains. Gender is treated as a demographic variable, rather than something that is in continual production e.g. via processes of knowledge production and distribution, opportunity structures and social relations in higher education. Metaphors of entrapment, waste and victimhood abound e.g. glass ceilings, leaky pipelines and ivory basements. Ironically, while much of the literature describes male norms, it often reproduces female norms and overlooks differences in age, ethnicities, sexualities and cultural and social class locations. The literature overflows with normative assumptions about childcare and innate, benign female dispositions and aspirations. As Ross-Smith and Huppatz (2010) observe, there has been a plethora of research on the barriers to women's advancement in management but less empirical research has concentrated on women who have spent prolonged periods of time in senior managerial roles. There is scant coverage of success stories of women accessing authority and facilitating change. Nor is there much consideration of the ambivalence or pleasures that many women experience in higher education - either by becoming leaders, or by making positive choices not to (Acker, 2012; Hey and Leathwood, 2009). Gender and generation also need to be considered as there is evidence that there are substantial generational differences between older and younger women in their confidence in seizing opportunities (Ledwith and Manfredi, 2000). It seems that we require a re-invigorated and re-textured vocabulary and expanded lexicon to focus on the leadership values and challenges that lie ahead for HE, which include sustainability, social inclusion and creating knowledge for a rapidly changing world, one in which gender relations are also in flux.

Women are entering HE leadership, albeit in low numbers. We need to build on this momentum to envision what type of sustainable and gender sensitive leadership is required for the university of the future (Morley, 2011). Some recommendations for addressing the lack of women in senior leadership include:

▌ Data - the co-ordination and compilation of a global database on female professors and senior leaders in higher education. Research Councils to compile statistics on gender in research applications and awards.

▌ Accountability - the inclusion of gender statistics in quality audits.

▌ Legislation - more rigorous implementation of the UK Gender Equality Duty (2007) and gender mainstreaming, with incentives.

▌ Development - the introduction of higher education leadership development programmes for women in the UK. These could be linked to similar programmes overseas for exchanges and networking. The inclusion of gender in management development programmes.

▌ Research - global inquiries into the enablers and impediments that women experience in career progression, and into the experiences of women leaders.

Counting more women into posts is important, but representational space cannot be the only goal for gender equality (Bonner, 2006; Neale and Özkanli, 2010). Corsun and Costen (2001:18) suggest that while "women and minorities may have been granted access to management positions, they do not have sufficient capital (economic, political, social and symbolic) to force a redefinition of the implicit — that is, white male —requirements of the field". Distinctions need to be made between women in academic leadership and feminists in academic leadership (Mauthner and Edwards, 2010). Feminist leadership is characterised by a commitment to social equity and change and awareness of gender issues and intersections with other structures of inequality. It also attempts to challenge unequal distributions and exercise of power, hierarchical structures and decision-making processes and discriminatory institutional practices. It is the gendered world itself that requires problematisation, not simply the exclusion of women or the existence of the male norm (Butler, 2004; Verloo and Lombardo, 2007). Leadership roles, embedded in the rationality of reform, the global knowledge economy and austerity measures, appear to be so over-extended that they represent an unhealthy virility test. We need to ask how leadership practices can become more inclusive and sustainable, with concerns about participation, equity and wellbeing as well as competitive advantage in the global academy.

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Acknowledgements

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