

GOVERNING WOMEN. ACADEMIC CAREERS, NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT, AND GENDER IN BUSINESS SCHOOLS (0284)

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In this paper the focus is on the careers of academic women in two business schools in two different country contexts, namely in Finland and in the UK. When taking into consideration that Finland has been a forerunner in women's education and that gender equality has been on agenda since late 1990s in the UK (Husu, 2000; Bagilhole, 2000), it might not be surprise that the proportion of female PhD was 54 percent in Finland and 45 percent in the UK in 2010 (European Commission, 2013: 51). However, for some reason, this is not reflected in the professorial level. The percentage of female in grade A positions was 24 in Finland and 17 in the UK; the term A position refers here to 'the single highest grade/post at which research is conducted' (European Commission, 2013: 87, 91).

Obviously, good intentions have not materialized into more equal outcomes in academia. The existing research indicates, on the one hand 'doing' gender in certain fields and disciplines aligning with masculine representations have excluded women, on the other hand intentional gender practices tend to be overridden by unreflexive gender practices that favour men over women (Powell, Bagilhole, and Dainty, 2009; Fotaki, 2013; van den Brink, 2010). Not surprisingly, it has been concluded the exclusion and inclusion of women from 'the academy can be achieved through several distinct mechanisms' (Le Feuvre, 2009: 20).

One of the mechanism influencing on academic women is the higher education governance. Teelken and Deem (2013) have pointed out that the implementation of new governance approaches has not only strengthened the existing status quo but also created more subtle forms of discrimination. Slightly in similar lines, Musselin (2013) has noted that the position of academic elite has been reinforced by the policy instruments evaluating research performance. As academic women are in minority in the highest posts in academia; consequently, the policy instruments or new governance approaches that reinforce existing power relations may have negative implications for academic women. Following this, this research focuses on the intersection of higher education policy and gender in two business schools, the research question this paper stresses is; how are the careers of academic women,

working in two business schools, constructed and maintained under condition of 'New Public Management' (NPM).

Taking a social constructionist stand and drawing on practice theory, business schools are perceived as fields of practices in which different sets of seeing, doing and saying, in other words practices, shape subjects and objects and mobilize knowledge (Gherardi, 2006: xiii-xiv). Following this, it is scrutinized how academic practices, such as teaching and research, have been reconstructed by NPM and how this reconstruction has shaped the careers of academic women. To scrutinize this issue, this study draws on 25 semi-structured, qualitative interviews conducted with academic women working in two business schools, one in the UK (10 interviews) and another in Finland (15 interviews). The data collection took place between November 2014 and March 2015.

In the UK, the implementation of NPM has meant increased market orientation, quality assurance and audits, and student-based funding (Brown, 2013). While the funding allocated through the Research Excellence Framework, (REF) has decreased (Brown and Carasso, 2013), being submitted to REF is essential for those who want to be research active. Following this, there is a division between teaching focused and research focused career paths. Some women have moved from teaching focused career to research and teaching career path whereas others have decided to stay in teaching focused career paths.

In Finland, the implementation of NPM has taken place mainly through the structural development of universities which has led to changes in the administration and finance of universities, as well as in the legal status (Tirronen and Nokkala, 2009). Following this, certain academic practices, such as academic research, have become more market-oriented (Ylijoki, Lyytinen and Marttila, 2011), which is confirmed in this research. However, Finland does not have a national research audit. While research is an important factor in career progression, there are no clear division between teaching focused and research focused career paths. Instead, women often work on fixed-term temporary contracts; consequently, the career paths of academic women consist of a series of positions and research focused and, following this, the academic careers often are a bit accidental.

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