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# The Chair: Fact or Fiction?

## Addressing the challenges faced by women leaders in academia

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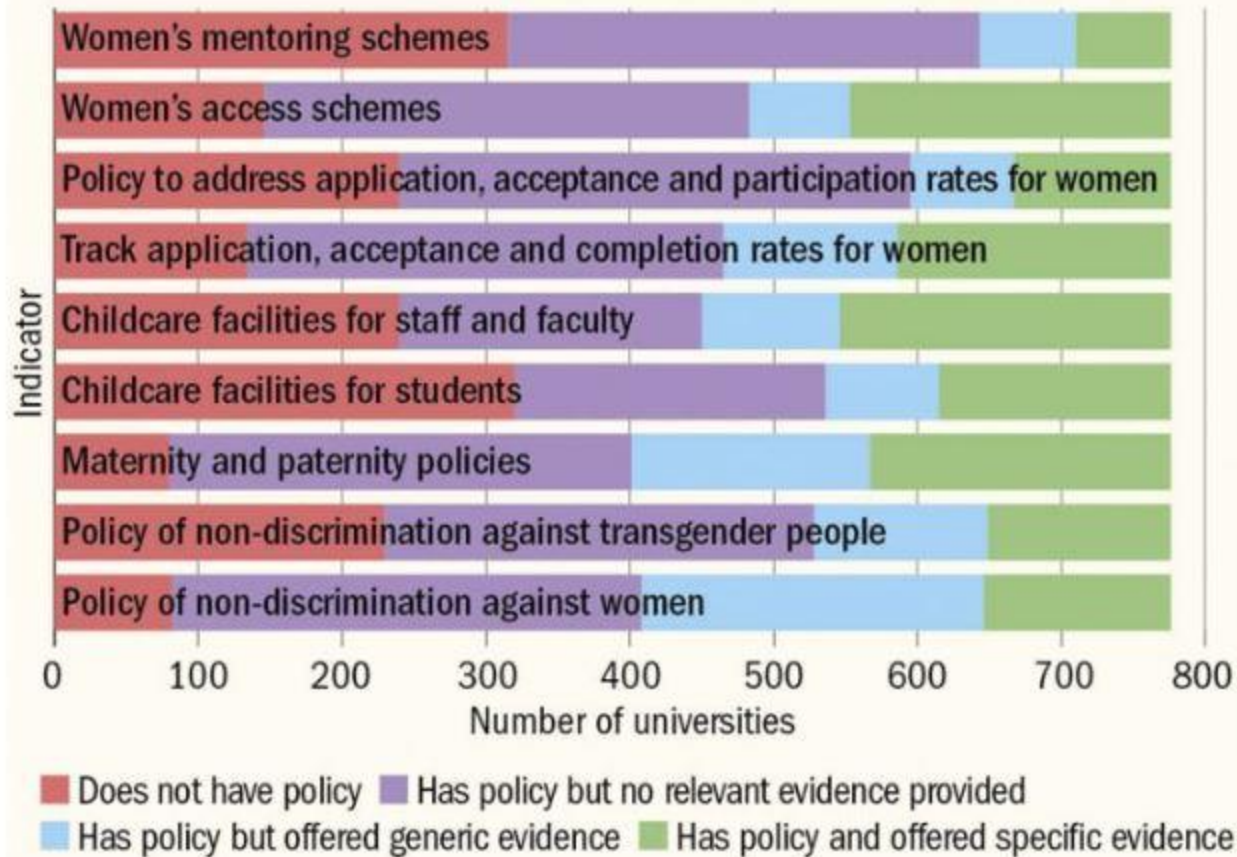


# The policy-practice gap

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## RHETORIC V REALITY: UNIVERSITY CLAIMS AND PROOF OFFERED

Universities' performance on gender equality indicators



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# Thirty years of slow progress, stagnation, and regression

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“There are so many articles, so much discussion, but over my 30 years it’s gotten worse.”

“Everybody talks about equality in science, but it does not actually happen.”

“... despite the top-ranked articles spanning a period of almost 30 years, they argue in the same words about gaps in knowledge and implementation needs.”

“There is actually nothing to suggest that further efforts to strengthen the impact of policy on sexual harassment (information, communication, revising policies) will change underreporting, policy awareness, or reporting behaviour as such.”

# What is holding back meaningful change?

## POLICY

**Gender equality programs**  
the policies put on paper that claim equality in the organization



## PRACTICE

**Inequality regimes**  
the practices and processes that maintain and reproduce inequality in the organization

**Formal norms**  
are undermined by the informal norms flowing from the inequality regime



**Informal norms**  
determine who is privileged, protected, supported and respected in the organization

**Gender Data Gap**

**Gendered performance criteria**

**Neglect of intersectionality**

**Neglect of power and privilege**

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# Causes of the policy-practice gap

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## Gender Data Gap

Organizations are made by males for males. Data on women is lacking or of poor quality. The little data available neglects intersectional aspects of inequality. You cannot manage what you do not measure.

## Neglect of intersectionality

Most gender equality programs benefit a very limited group of domestic, white, middle class, cis-gender women. Programs that ignore intersectional aspects of inequality will contribute to reproducing inequality.



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# Causes of the policy-practice gap

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## Neglect of power and privilege

Those mandated to implement changes often have received their power by the system they are being asked to change. System change requires acknowledgement of own privilege, which those at the top of the hierarchy rather not do.

## Gendered performance criteria

The hypercompetitive culture and steep hierarchies in academia lead to performance criteria that systematically privilege men. They require masculine traits (assertive, competitive), being always available and not having care responsibilities.





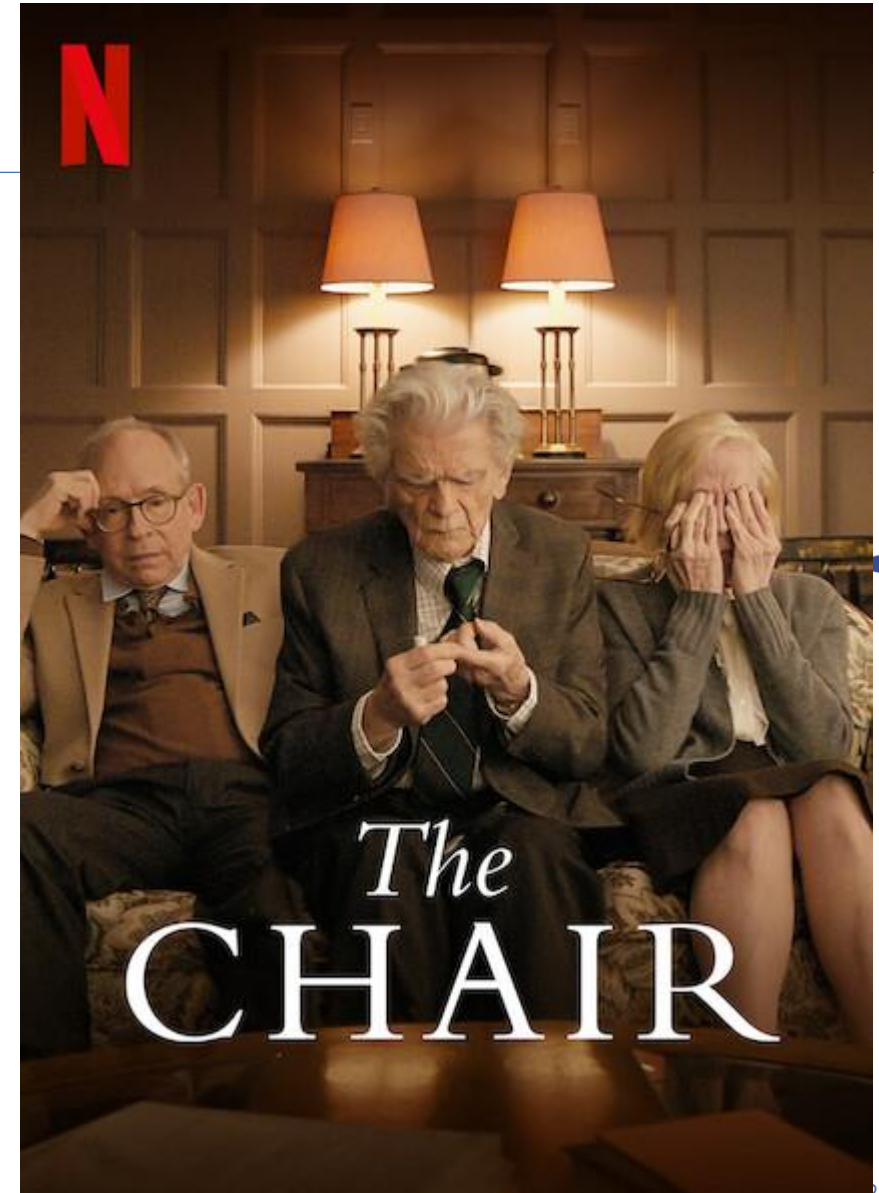
# Consequences of the policy-practice gap

Individual level	Organizational level	Societal and system level
<b>Ineffective policies</b> against harassment, discrimination and inequality; lack of sanctions sends strong signal of acceptability.	<b>Powerful networks of silence</b> HR, higher management, faculty boards, deans silence reporters.	<b>Corruption of higher education</b> Public money used to fund discrimination and harassment; public money wasted on ineffective policies.
<b>Ineffective reporting systems</b> allow organizational actors to silence, intimidate and retaliate against reporters.	<b>Lack of quality and innovation</b> Novel ideas of minority members are devalued & discounted.	<b>The profession loses</b> Senior scholars walk away, junior staff does not want to work in academia. Entire topics disappear.
<b>Career obstruction, trauma, detriment to mental and physical health</b>	<b>Institutional gaslighting</b> working in a pseudo-reality.	<b>Lack of systemic change, disengagement, inequality maintained and reproduced</b>
<b>Culture of fear, hopelessness, opportunism, survival benefit of the mean and mediocre</b>		

# Implications

## Gender Equality Policies

- In the policy instruments we are designing and implementing, we need to pay attention to questions such as:
  - Will all intended target groups benefit?
  - Are the incentives to successfully implement an instrument evident for all stakeholders?
  - How do we measure and monitor implementation and success of our instruments?



# Concrete example

## Gender Equality Plans

- Intersectionality
- Integrated approach
- Implementation
- Best Practices



3. An intersectional approach

4. An integrated approach towards diversity and inclusion – numbers, institutions, and knowledge

6. Overview of priority areas, available information, best practices and examples

[Link to Guide](#)



[About](#) [Gender Equality Actions](#) [Media](#) [Publications](#) [Events](#) [Synergies](#)



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Thank you for your attention!

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