Should Gendered Work Practices in Academia be a Personal Responsibility?

Dr. Ita Richardson

Talk Summary

- My Background
- Gender Information - UL
- Science Foundation Ireland funding
- Gender Audit @UL
- FESTA
- Conclusion

My Background

- Senior Lecturer in University of Limerick
  - Lecture to UG/PG, Principal Investigator on Software Engineering Research Grants, PhD supervisor, Responsibilities within Department
- Interest in Women's Issues
  - Worked in IT Support / Development in Industry
  - Faculty member in Engineering colleges within University

Actions to Support Women

- Childcare facility lobby group
- Development of S&E courses for Women
- Grants to support Women's progression
  - Atlantic Philantrophies, Science Foundation Ireland, European Union
- Founding Chair of UL Women's Forum
- Former member of UL Equal Opportunity committee

Equality Culture at UL

- Women's Studies Research Group
- Childcare on campus
- Equal Opportunities committee
  - Chaired by Vice-President Academic & Registrar
- Atlantic Philanthropies funding has resulted in
  - Equal Opportunities Manager, UL Women's Forum, Equality training for Management, Springboard Training female administrators, lecturers, researchers
- Initiatives for students
  - Women in Engineering Bursaries
- EU funding for Female Empowerment in Science and Technology Academia - FESTA

Representation of Women in UL

(2005 – 2007- 2011)

- Lecturer: 31% - 40% - 45%
- Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor, Professor: 8% - 17% - 29%
- Female academics (2007 / 2011):
  - Increase from 6 to 12 Professors
  - Decrease from 4 to 2 Associate Professors
  - Decrease from 27 to 26 Senior Lecturers

Women in UL

Level	% in UL	% Sc & Eng
Professor	29	0
Associate Professor	11	8
Senior Lecturer	34	14
Lecturer	45	21
Research Fellow	44	44
Research Assistant	47	47
Research Student	44	34
PhD Graduates	54	61
UG Graduates (FT)	49	60

SFI Planning & Development Grants

- University of Limerick awarded grants to carry out a Gender Audit
- Principal Investigator – Dr. Ita Richardson
- Audit carried out during 2007, published in 2009

Lack of Female Researchers was recognised at National Level by Science Foundation Ireland

Study

- Reviewed publications & relevant reports
- Survey: 69 questions focusing on:
  - General Information; Academic Information; Job Responsibilities; Promotion Issues; Personal Qualities for the Job; Active Support – Goals for Achievement; Training; Career Perceptions and Thoughts; Domestic Situation; Demography; Encouragement
- Focus groups

SFI Funded Researchers

- Information & Communications Technology and Biotechnology
- From 2000-2005 >800 applications for funding
  - 11% applications from female researchers
  - 9% awards were to female researchers
- In SFI Research Frontiers Programme (2005) 698 applications were received
  - 136 (19.5%) were from female researchers
  - 16% of the grants awarded were to female researchers

Where are the women?

Respondents – Science & Engineering

- Survey
  - Faculty 101 (45%), female – 41%, male - 59%
  - Research staff 25 (20%), female - 40%, male – 60%
- Three focus groups
  - Male junior lecturer/lecturer/researchers
  - Female junior lecturer/lecturer/researchers
  - Mixed gender senior lecturer/associate professor/professor

Results

- No substantial gender biases at UL through overt institutional generation.
- Females more involved with teaching and caring for students at their detriment for research opportunities.
- Females spend less time on research - fewer grant proposals, papers, editorships, keynote talks
- Male / Females spend comparable time on administration (female slightly higher)
- Females have fewer appointments to national / international bodies

RESEARCH OFFICE 13

RESEARCH	% Female	% Male
Keynote /plenary/invited speaker external conference/workshop	36	63
Editor of scientific/technical journal or book	17	28
Member of the Editorial Board of an Academic Journal	15	32
Reviewer for International Journal	44	78
Assessor for grant giving bodies	22	55
Appointment to National/international bodies	24	42

Results

- Females have lower membership of Appointment boards, Promotion Boards
- Females are less engaged in developing, executing and evaluating policy
- Females have a higher lack of mobility
- Males have a higher contribution to raising admissions
- Types of committees varies – more females on course committees, more males on 'policy' committees
- More females have never married; fewer remained married

RESEARCH OFFICE 14

Appointments and Promotion

- No indications of adverse gender barrier to promotion, appointments or starting salaries (October 2006-October 2007) with stable selection of gender
- Female faculty were appointed by panels - approximately 33% women
- Male faculty were appointed by panels - approximately 17% women
- 25% women cf. 43% men - members of appointment boards
- 12% women cf. 32% men - members of promotions boards

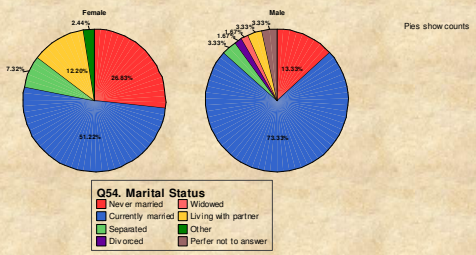
RESEARCH OFFICE 17

RESEARCH	% Female	% Male
Applied for and received external grant aid	36	73
Patent applied for and received	2	22
Forged links with external partners (e.g. industry, agriculture)	51	82
Professional consultant	22	70
Attracted postgraduate research – personal contribution	36	75
External examiner (research)	34	68

Awards by Gender	Female	Male
Nominated only	1	3
Nominated and Shortlisted only	3	4
Received award	9	29
Excellence in Research	3	21
Excellence in Teaching	2	2
Service to Community	1	1
Research, Community, Other	1	2
Teaching, Community	2	1
Other		2

Time spent working for UL	Female (mean)	Male (mean)
Number of Hours Worked for UL	50.83	46.50
Percentage Time Spent – Research	18.72	34.33
Percentage Time Spent – Teaching	42.39	35.23
Percentage Time Spent – Administration	22.78	24.42
Percentage Time Spent - Work related to policy (not doing it)	3.31	0.77
Percentage Time Spent - External Organizations	5.89	3.77
Percentage Time Spent - Other	5.22	0.14

Marital Status



RESEARCH OFFICE

22

Hours spent working for UL	Female (mean)	Male (mean)
Weekday – Research	8.97	18.58
Weekday – Teaching	20.78	14.91
Weekday – Administration	14.37	11.26
Weekday – Travel	5.53	3.98
Weekend – Research	2.88	2.92
Weekend – Teaching	2.09	0.76
Weekend – Administration	1.26	0.56
Weekend – Travel	0.29	0.18

Should Gendered Work Practices in Academia be a Personal Responsibility?

RESEARCH OFFICE

23

Support and Mentoring

- Female faculty demonstrate higher lack of mobility (41% women cf. 18% men)
- Female and male faculty and researchers have comparable mentor support
- Women are more likely to have opposite sex mentors
- Support is comparably forthcoming for women and men if they request it – women are less likely to request it
- Female and male faculty are comparably likely to be offered help with their endeavours without asking for it

RESEARCH OFFICE

21

Personal Responsibility

- Improve our networking capabilities
- Become aware of promotions policies
- Understand recruitment procedures
- Learn to ask for support
- Prioritise what is important
- Input to system change
- Ask to participate
- Promote each other's capabilities

RESEARCH OFFICE

24

Institutional Responsibility

- Ensure institution is not gender-biased
- Provide supports for female staff
- Provide mentors for female staff
- Implement change where change is needed
- Ensure management are aware of gendered requirements

Actions Implemented

Mentoring

- Mentoring scheme

Career Development for Women / Asking for Departmental Support

- SpringBoard training provided by UL
- 20 women per annum

International Women's Day Conference

- Held in UL since 2010
- International and National Guest Speakers

Actions Implemented

Balance of Workload

- National Agenda & UL strategic plan includes introducing a faculty allocation model

Training in Promotions Policy

- Training on promotions has commenced

Membership of External and Internal Bodies

- Academic & Researchers sub-groups within UL Women's Forum

Receipt of FESTA funding (HR involvement)

- European Union funding has been received

FESTA – EU Funded

- Female Empowerment in Science and Technology Academia
- Seven Universities in Europe
- Focus on Science & Technology
  - In UL, Faculty of Science & Engineering

FESTA
Female Empowerment in Science and Technology Academia

FESTA – EU Funded

- Aim: To find ways for European universities to retain and fully employ the competencies and capacities of the whole research force, regardless of gender
- Argument: It is not women who are lacking essential characteristics for being good researchers, but that the academic environment is lacking essential characteristics for fostering the research potential of women

FESTA – EU Funded

- Implementing changes in the working environment of academic researchers
- Encouraging female researchers in science and technology to stay and make a career in the academy
- Remove some of the hurdles which make it more difficult for them than for their male peers to reach their professional goals.

FESTA – Work Packages

- Enhance awareness raising at individual, organization and scientific community level
- Improve both formal and informal decision making processes to make them more transparent
- Develop an objective notion of scientific excellence to be used in recruitment processes and assessments of research

FESTA – Work Packages

- Improvement of meeting culture and other interactional patterns
- Better understanding of resistance against structural change towards gender equality and how it can be overcome
- Project commenced 1st March 2012 for 5 years

Conclusion

- Academics have a personal responsibility to develop their own careers
- University of Limerick can implement initiatives to help overcome some issues
- Issues, such as Researcher career progression, cannot be addressed in isolation
- University cannot address all issues, but they will be able to support many of them
- FESTA funding is another step in this direction

Acknowledgements

- Science Foundation Ireland
  - Development Grant which funded the study
  - Short Term Travel Fellowship
- EU FESTA grant
  - Seventh Framework Programme, Capacities Programme, Science in Society, 287526
- Team who worked on the Gender@UL project

Gender Audit @ UL

Thank you
& Questions

http://gender.lero.ie/Default.aspx