



The ideal academic:

Competitive, performance oriented, unlimited availability, independent, not that collegiate and supportive of colleagues and students (e.g., Bleijenbergh, van Engen, & Vinkenburgh, 2013)



Academics as superheroes: How the exceptionally masculine occupational stereotype in academia affects women (and men)



Dr. Ruth van Veelen
Social and Organisational Psychology
r.vanveelen@uu.nl



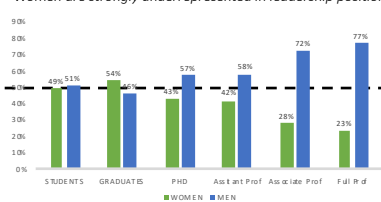
Utrecht University



~GAP 1: THE LEADERSHIP GAP~



Women are strongly underrepresented in leadership positions



~GAP 2: THE REWARDS GAP~

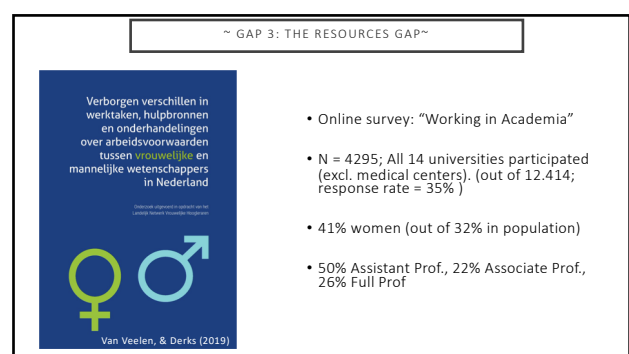
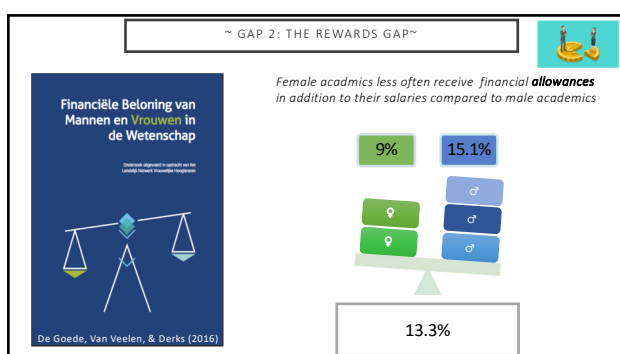
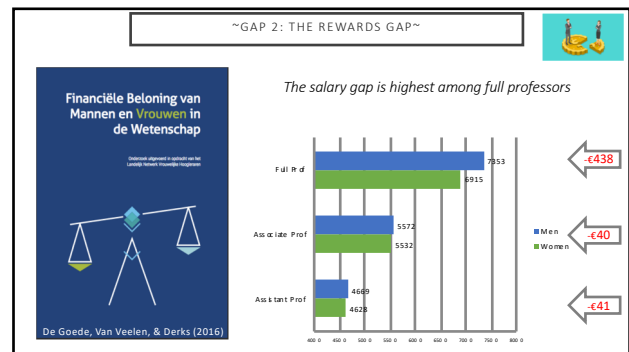
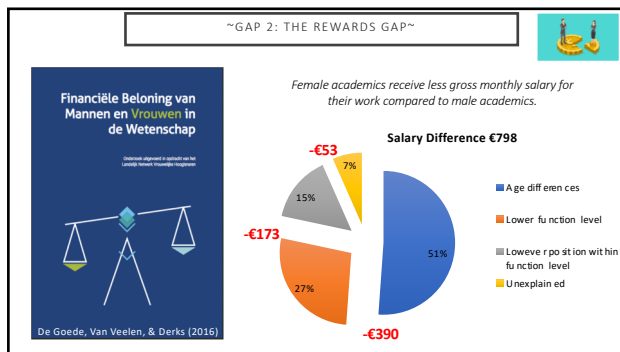
Financiële Beloning van Mannen en Vrouwen in de Wetenschap

Onafhankelijk onderzoek in opdracht van het Landelijk Netwerk Vrouwelijke Hoochleraren



De Goede, Van Veelen, & Derks (2016)

- N = 10.795 academics from all 14 Dutch Universities (excluding medical centres)
- 29.5% women
- Financial reward information:
 - Gross monthly salary (1.0 FTE)
 - Allowances (e.g., performance bonus, labour market-related bonus, bonus for temporary substitution, bonus for other reasons)
- 49% Assistant Prof.; 23% Associate Prof.; 29% Full Prof.



~GAP 3: THE RESOURCES GAP~

Verborgen verschillen in werktaken, hulpbronnen en onderhandelingsvoorwaarden tussen **vrouwelijke** en mannelijke wetenschappers in Nederland

Gendered differences in work tasks, resources and bargaining conditions between **women** and male scientists in the Netherlands

Women academics in the sample...

- ...were **younger** (biological and academic age)
- ...more often held a **non-Dutch** nationality
- ...less often had **children**
- ...held **lower status** positions
- ...less often held a **permanent** contract
- ...less often held a **fulltime** contract

Stepwise statistical control for personal- and work characteristics

Van Veelen, & Derks (2019)

~GAP 3: THE RESOURCES GAP~

Verborgen verschillen in werktaken, hulpbronnen en onderhandelingsvoorwaarden tussen **vrouwelijke** en mannelijke wetenschappers in Nederland

Gendered differences in work tasks, resources and bargaining conditions between **women** and male scientists in the Netherlands

#Q1: What % of their **time** do academics spend on research and teaching?

- Women spend a smaller percentage of their time on **research** compared to men (30% vs. 34%)
- Women spend a larger percentage of their time on **teaching** than men do (47% vs 44%)

70 hours on yearly basis

52 hours on yearly basis

Van Veelen, & Derks (2019)

~GAP 4: THE RESOURCES GAP~

Verborgen verschillen in werktaken, hulpbronnen en onderhandelingsvoorwaarden tussen **vrouwelijke** en mannelijke wetenschappers in Nederland

Gendered differences in work tasks, resources and bargaining conditions between **women** and male scientists in the Netherlands

#Q2: Do academics perceive to receive sufficient resources to support their work?

- Women reported to have less access to **research resources** compared to men (e.g., research budget, equipment, facilities)
- Women reported to have less access to **assistance** in their work compared to men (e.g., student-assistants, lab managers, secretaries)

Van Veelen, & Derks (2019)

EXPLAINING GENDER GAPS

~NEGOTIATION~

gender gaps in...

leadership

rewards

resources...

"Women don't ask?"

WOMEN DON'T ASK: NEGOTIATION AND GENDER DIVIDE

LEAN IN: WOMEN, POWER AND THE WILL TO LEAD

SHERYL SANDBERG

NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN

LEEN BAREL & DAAN LACKEY

EXPLAINING GENDER GAPS

~NEGOTIATION~

#Q3: Are crucial moments in the careers of academics a reason to **negotiate** about improvement of employment conditions?



Research grant



Job change

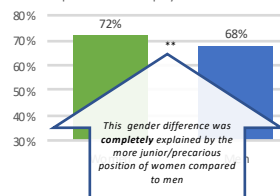


Performance interview

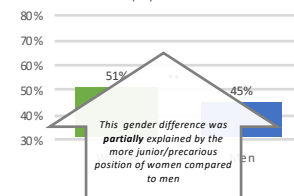
REFUTING THE "WOMEN DON'T ASK" EXPLANATION

~NEGOTIATION~

#Q3.1: Did you **negotiate** about improvement of employment conditions?



#Q3.2: Who took the **initiative** to negotiate about employment conditions?



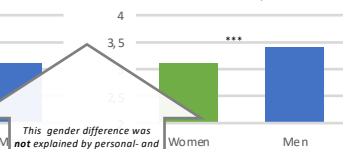
WOMEN DO ASK, BUT THEY JUST DON'T GET?

~NEGOTIATION~

#Q3.3: To what extent was there room to negotiate?

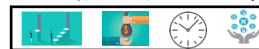


#Q3.4: How satisfied were you with the outcomes of the process?



INTERIM CONCLUSION (I)

Gender gaps in academia are small to sizable but most of all **structural**: they manifest in leadership, rewards, and resources for research.



- Gender bias in **funding**: women's chances of grant acquisition from NWO (VENI) are smaller than men's (Van der Lee & Ellemers, 2015)



- Gender bias in **teaching**: Women receive lower teacher evaluations (Mengel, Sauermann, & Zolitz, 2018) and more special favour requests from students than men do (El-Alayli, Hansen-Brown, Ceynar, 2018)



- Gender bias in **task allocation**: Women get less less promotable tasks (e.g., administration, support) while men get more promotable tasks (e.g., business dinner, presentation) (Babcock, Ricalde & Vesterlund, 2018)



- Gender bias in **expectations of brilliance**: Underrepresentation of women is higher in academic disciplines where researchers hold a strong belief that innate brilliance/raw talent is need to succeed (Leslie, Cimpian, Meyer & Feiland, 2015)

INTERIM CONCLUSION (II)

Gender gaps in academia cannot be explained by women's lower self-promotion or negotiation initiatives

Women do ask, but they don't get:

- Field research: Female employees do ask for promotions and pay raises equally often as males;
- But when women ask they receive promotions and pay raises only in 15% of cases against 20% in the case of men



Sometimes it even 'hurts' to ask:

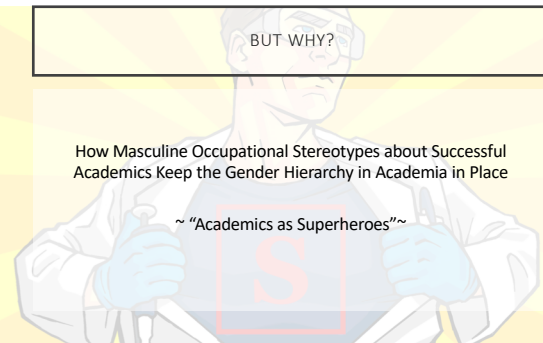
- Experimental research: Evaluators penalized a female candidate more strongly for initiating negotiation than a male candidate (less likely to be hired)
- Women who initiated negotiation were evaluated as less 'nice' and more 'demanding' than men



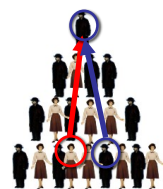
BUT WHY?

How Masculine Occupational Stereotypes about Successful Academics Keep the Gender Hierarchy in Academia in Place

~ "Academics as Superheroes" ~



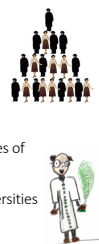
A FOURTH GAP?



Peters, Ryan et al., 2012; Peters, Ryan, & Haslam, 2014

~ GAP 4: LACK OF FIT ~

- A 'belongingness' gap
- What is our image of 'the successful academic'?
- Do women and men fit that image equally well?
- If not, how does this 'lack of fit' affect work and career experiences of (young) women and men in academia?
- Online questionnaire among 4295 Dutch academics from all universities (=response rate 35%)



WHICH CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBE 'THE SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC' IN YOUR FIELD?

Agency = masculine



- being performance oriented
- focusing on own scientific output
- wanting to be the best
- being a good networker
- assertiveness
- self-confidence

Communality = feminine



- good collaborator
- helpful
- loyal
- nice colleague
- devoted to teaching
- contributing to a good working atmosphere

SOCIAL ROLE THEORY (EAGLY, 1987)

We expect women to be communal:

Caring, warm, helpful,
understanding



We expect men to be agentic:

Self-confident, competitive,
performance-oriented



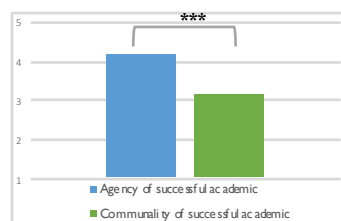
For women academics this results in:

- Prove it again!
- Backlash: agentic women less liked
- Motherhood penalty

Gender roles: socially shared, traditional expectations of characteristics that are typically masculine and typically feminine

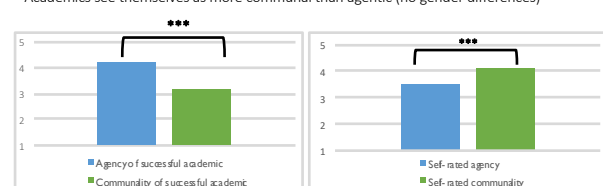
WHAT IS OUR IMAGE OF 'THE SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC'?

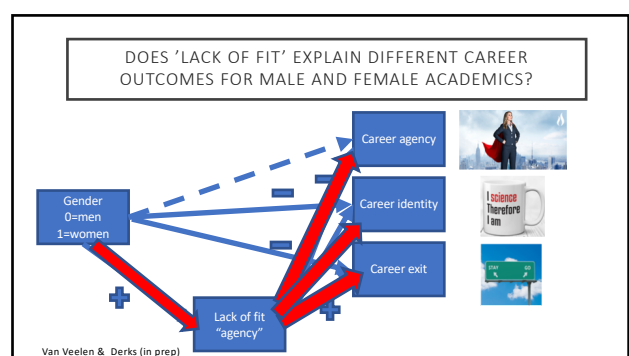
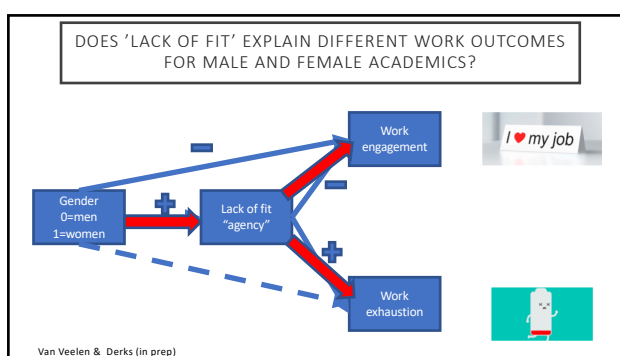
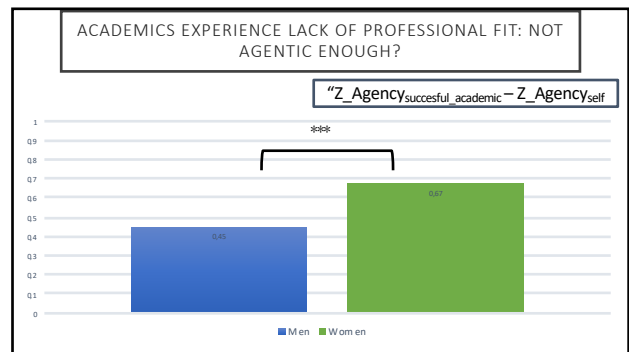
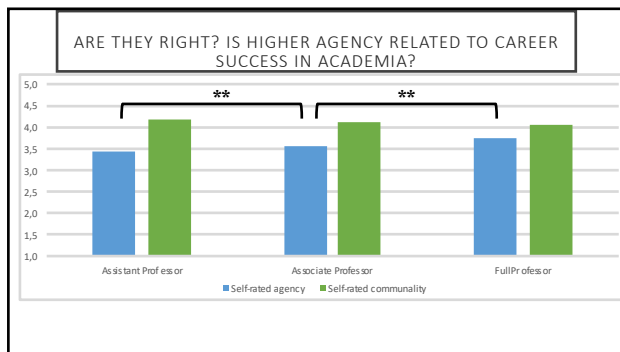
- Respondents think that being agentic is more important to career success in academia, than communality is.
- On average, women perceive agency as more important to success than men do



HOW DO ACADEMICS SEE THEMSELVES AS PROFESSIONALS?

Academics see themselves as more communal than agentic (no gender differences)





CONCLUSION

1. Highly agentic professional stereotypes trigger (implicit) bias in the evaluation of women's competence (*prove it again!*) (e.g., LERU, 2018).
2. Agentic professional stereotypes work as a self-fulfilling prophecy, so that women *themselves* tend to expect that they will not fit and opt out (e.g., Peters, Ryan et al., 2012).
3. It is less effective for women to be agentic: often perceived as pushy, bossy, bitchy (Rudman et al., 2012).
4. May come with social costs for solidarity among women: being 'not being like other women' can be a strategy to get ahead (Derks, Van Laar & Ellemers, 2016)
5. But note: lack of fit negatively affects men as well!



SO WHAT?

- Gender gaps in academia not due to women's lower ambition, talent, or negotiation tactics, but because occupational stereotypes form obstacles to their careers (Leslie, et al., 2015; Shepard, 2017; Faniiko, Derks, et al., 2017)
- A narrow path to walk: only agentic individuals (m/f) see a strong future in academia. Are we able to detect academic talent when we see it? (Bleijenberg et al., 2013)
- Homogeneity limits innovation (Galinsky et al., 2015)
 - Homogeneity = groupthink
 - Diversity = benefit from unique knowledge, expertise questions
- Gender diversity leads to better science (Nielsen et al., 2017)



SOLUTIONS?

- Avoid a 'fixing women' approach to resolve gender gaps
 - Perpetuates the stereotype that 'women need help/can't do it/need to change'
 - Does not change the narrowly-defined agentic culture
- Raise awareness of gender bias that is triggered by our highly masculine definition of academic excellence; control for its effects
- Redefine existing frameworks for the recognition and reward of academics (value a more diverse set of qualities in academics)
- Focus on 'team science' rather than individual excellence
- People base stereotypes of successful academics on the examples they see: Increase number of women professors



THANK YOU

