



New Wine in Old Wineskins

New career boundaries for women
in old networks in academia

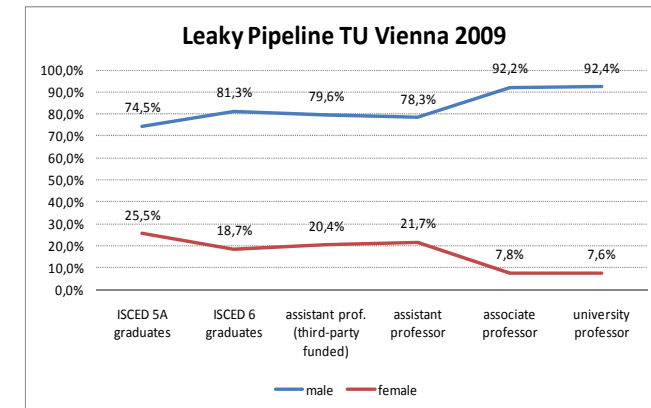
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- **Academic profession as a „role model“ for the boundaryless career** (Baruch & Hall 2004)

- **Gendered nature of academic careers:**

- „Leaking Pipeline“: steady attrition of females along the career path
- Science values: rationality, objectivity, non-affectivity (Laws 1975)
- „Prototypical scientist“: masculine sex-typed, high mobility and full dedication to job (Döge 2006; Belcher 2000; Fawcett and Pringle 2000; Forster 2000)
- Exclusion from male networks (Crampton and Mishra 1999; Thanacoody, Bartram et al. 2006)



How do women present their professional careers in academia?

1. Narrative-biographical interview (Schütze 1983, Rosenthal 1995, Fischer- Rosenthal/Rosenthal 1997, Hermanns 1992, Dausien 1996)

- „**Life story**“ of female scientists including major events and decisions
- Biographical **analysis on the gestalt** of the narratives

Sampling grounded on

-> **maximum variation**: (Patton 1992):
15 female students and researchers
with highly differing CVs

-> **critical sampling**: particular focus on
informative cases

2. Semi-structured interview

- **Explicit questions** deducted from literature on impact factors on female careers
- Qualitative **content analysis** (Mayring 2008)

Results: Story Telling Patterns

“I am different”



“My Story is Quite Usual”



Story pattern	„I am different“	„My story is quite usual“
Structure of the narration	Comprehensive reflections and narrations, focus on emotional aspects and career obstacles	Focus on merit, milestones, neutral and linear career presentation, little affectivity
Minority status	Well aware of „difference“ and minority status, experience isolation	Ignore gender, wish to be perceived as scientists, not women scientists
Coping strategies	Address conflicts, resist, stay true to oneself	Assimilation, trivialization
Organizational commitment	High loyalty, opt-out due to conflicts	opt-out because of better options elsewhere

1. Sponsored Careers

- **Informal selection process:**
„discovery“ by (male) supervisor through exceptional performance
- Extensive **support after** excellent **performance** has been proved



„Sponsor“ (analogy to sports):

- Junior is selected based on performance
- Sponsor increases own scientific output with junior's performance, in return provides substantial support
- In best cases, supportive ties of a sponsor turn into lifelong encouragement in form of mentoring

*“[...] and my supervisor at that time, um, **was over time more and more supportive**. So he-, - first not at all and then as he saw that the graduation went well, um, after the first publication then it became clear and then he, - then **he really supported me**.” [S. Linger, p.14, 472-475]*

2. Disrupted Careers

- Start like sponsored careers
- **Professional conflict** with sponsor arises
- **Withdrawal of all resources** and options force opt-out

3. Faded Careers

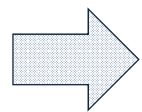
- **No support** throughout career
- Try, but cannot establish themselves in research community
- See themselves as outsiders

*[...] My mistakes would - would have most probably not occurred in this very way **if I had had substantial support** [...] and that, - that I – have the feeling I work on the field, but I do not get the best out of it, because **access to information is denied**. [S. Baurer, p. 37 1231-1254]*

*“Well, and **I have been trying since**, um, well I always wanted to write a dissertation, that was on my mind somehow. [...] But it’s not as simple as I imagine, because I- I mean, basically I have a topic, sort of a header, yes, but it is an interdisciplinary topic, well it is basically about [topic], yes, the superordinate term. Ahm, **and I have absolutely no support**.” [S. Borenich, p.4-5, 133-140]*



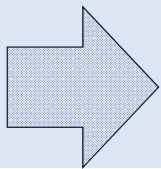
- No extensive establishment of personal contacts within and outside the organization, high moral judgements against networking (exception: sponsor)
- High dependence on existence and continuous support of a sponsor



boundary of the crucial „knowing whom“ competence in academia

„New wine in old wineskins“?

- Regardless of individual mindsets, institutional practices and cliques lead to dependencies on career sponsors for women
- Gender as a boundary
- Women as minority members face more and different challenges to gain access to powerful advocacy



Gender and minority boundaries need consideration in the boundaryless career concept



Thank you for your attention!

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