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Doctoral School of Sociology and Communication Science

Gender equality in academic governance:

Organizational approaches and collective attitudes

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

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CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Setting the scene

International data shows that women's access to health services, education, and job opportunities has been progressively rising as a result of legal actions, institutional initiatives, and social programs aimed at the promotion of gender equality. Their growth rate among decision-making positions, however, has not undergone a similar increase (World Economic Forum, 2020). Scholarly research states that these outcomes are linked to the structural inequality of our society (Ridgeway and Diekema, 1992), rooted in expectations and internalized cultural attitudes towards gender and social roles that foster the development of male-congruent perceptions of leadership (Crites, Dickson, & Lorenz, 2015; Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Particularly, in the academic organizational setting of higher education, Chelf agreed that "leadership is an abstraction of human thought and behavior, understood and expressed subjectively, but influenced by context and social norms" (Chelf, 2018, p. 1). Thus, sociocultural-based perceptions have a strong influence on power-relations dynamics, promotion opportunities, and individual ambitions, which, in turn, limit women's access to roles with decision-making power regardless of their skills, level of education, and professional experience (Eagly, 1987; Eagly & Carli, 2003).

Supporting statistical data show that in Latin America and the Caribbean region (LAC), female enrollment in higher education has increased since the early 1990s leading to significant growth of adult women's participation in the labor force, from twenty percent to sixty-five percent, between 1960 and 2019 (Marchionni, Gluzmann, Serrano, & Bustelo, 2019). Likewise, women's representation in middle management also rose in the last few decades, but for the highest level of decision-making, the results are notably different. As of 2021, female representation on boards accounted for almost thirteen (12.7) percent in Latin America (Credit Suisse Research Institute, 2021).

The Colombian government takes pride in enacting multiple legal and institutional regulations,

as well as in establishing a variety of social programs to promote equity, involvement, and participation. Despite this, when compared to the average rankings of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for Latin America, Colombia remains one of the most unequal countries in terms of opportunities for professional development.

Clear examples of this issue can be seen in the contrast between the high representation of women in undergraduate programs (World Bank, 2011) and their drastically reduced presence at master's and doctorate academic levels (Carrasco, 2004). The contrast is also visible between women's growing presence in the labor market as opposed to their persistent underrepresentation in high decision-making positions. Thus, in-depth analyses are still needed in the region, particularly at the organizational level.

It is important to specify that in the Colombian context, national regulations list high decision-making levels as those positions fulfilling functions of general management, institutional policies, and programs' design, and plan implementation and supervision processes (Decrees 770, 785, 2005, Article 4). Thus, these functions correspond to the first and second levels of the organizational hierarchy, which, within the organizational context of universities, constitute the board of directors, the academic council, and all administrative seats with directive responsibilities including the vice rectorates, deans, office, and division directors and the general secretary. At this point, it is important to reiterate that women remain highly unrepresented in these essential levels, as can be seen in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Women's boards share at universities regulated by the gender quota

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	$\bar{x}$
Official reports	44.7%	56%	-	35%	38%	34%	36%	37%	41%	36%
Empirical data	13.4%	-	21.2%	-	20.7%	27.2%	31%	28.2%	24.5%	19.6%
Difference	31.3%	-	-	-	17.3%	6.8%	5.0%	8.8%	16.5%	16.1%

Sources: The Administrative Department Office vs universities' statistical and management reports.

Comparative analyses of empirical data – including surveys and interviews – and of official reports show that not only is women's presence extremely scarce at the universities' boards, but their representation rates are also being inaccurately reported in the government's official statistics. Table 1 illustrates this persistent data mismatch over a time frame of ten years, where

official reports declare a continuous compliance with the thirty percent of female representation required by the national gender quota in decision-making positions, when in fact, women's share at universities' governance bodies rarely reach the minimum required (Solano Cahuana, in press).

Thus, empirical findings in the organizational setting of public universities reinforce the findings from international scholarly research and the results showed in statistical reports published by international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for Latin America, to compare regional outcomes over extended periods of time.

As solution to this female underrepresentation, scholars have argued that including a critical mass of women in decision-making (thirty-three percent or higher) can foster gender equality at the organizational level (Parsons & Priola, 2013; Peterson 2015; Vinkenburg, 2017). The motion aims at reducing the effects of tokenism, where a sole woman might be inclined to adhere to standard norms of the established system to avoid visibility linked to her gender rather than her competence (Van den Brink, 2010). Accordingly, governments and organizations have been adopting gender-equality affirmative actions, such as gender board quotas, whose impact has been widely studied in political and business contexts but significantly less in academic settings.

1.2 The research context: Gender equality in Colombia

Colombia ranks twenty-two out of 149 countries included in the annual analyses of the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum, 2020). The country is also situated among the top-ten gender-equal countries in the American continent, and at the same level with Western Europe in terms of educational attainment, health and survival, and economic participation despite being a developing nation.

However, Colombia's most persistent issues in terms of gender equality are in the categories of women's political empowerment and economic participation and opportunity. In fact, these two categories continue to be shared concerns among all countries examined in the Gender Gap Report, with an international average even below the Colombian score (see Figure 2 in the following page for a comparison of the country's gender gap performance versus the world's average performance).

Figure 1. Colombia's profile in the Global Gender Gap Index
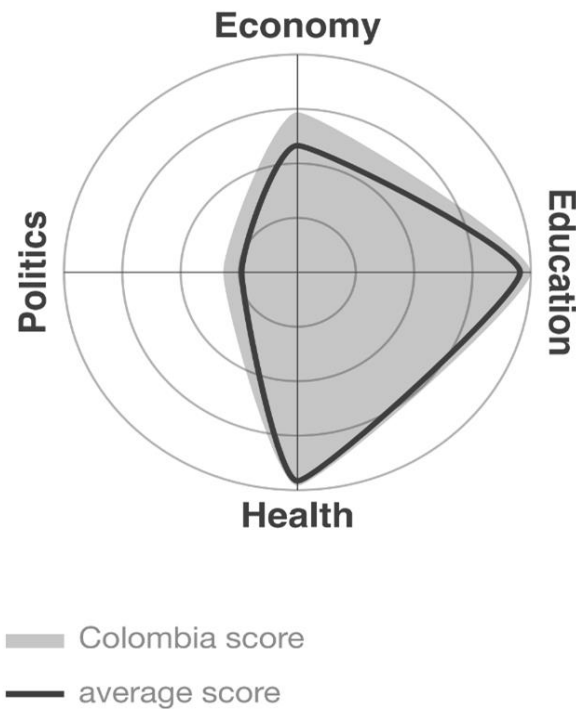
Source: Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum, 2020, p. 127)

In response, Colombia has implemented different programs and regulations to promote equality not only in terms of gender but also regarding age, origin, ethnicity, disability, class, etc., and to improve living standards and labor market outcomes. These measures have gradually led to an increased female presence in the workforce. But a closer look at women's work situation reveals their disadvantaged position at the top of the corporate hierarchy, where they remain underrepresented (Moreno-Gómez, Lafuente, & Vaillant, 2017). Similarly, the gaps between women and men on economic participation and political empowerment remain wide (World Economic Forum, 2020) after almost a century of slow but progressive gains for gender equal opportunities. This historical evolution of political accomplishments is further discussed below.

1.2.1 *Women's access to higher education and the labor-force*

Amid the liberal political atmosphere experienced during the 1930s and 1940s, ordinance 227 of 1933 granted women's access to high-school degrees, which opened the door to the possibility of also obtaining a college-level education (Piñeres de la Ossa, 2002). The first step towards that vision was the creation of boarding schools (in Spanish: Escuelas Normales) where middle-class women could become teachers (Parra, 2008). A few years later, in 1935,

the first woman was admitted as student at a Colombian university. The hosting institution was the Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Himelda Ramirez, 2004) and the incident fostered polemic social reactions based on the perception that giving women's access to higher education would make them lose sight of their domestic responsibilities, hence affecting the stability of the family structure (Parra, 2008).

Thus, despite these legal reforms, women's academic and professional accomplishments remained limited as they continued to be valued mostly from their roles as mothers and wives. This state of affairs can be seen in Ordinance 3645 of 1947, prescribing the content for the syllabi of women's secondary educational programs, which focused on the development of "female specific" skills, listed as crafting, cookery, nursing primary care, home finances, sewing, and family-moral subjects, among others" (Biblioteca Central-Universidad Pedagógica Nacional, n.d.; Parra-Báez, 2011). Thus, women's access to higher education and the job market was at the core of a polemic transition.

Eventually, women's opportunities and occupational scope expanded to other positions aside from teaching supported by gender equality initiatives rooted in the reformed Colombian Constitution of 1991. This new National Constitution ordained equal rights and opportunities and called on the authorities to "guarantee the adequate and effective participation of women in decision-making ranks of national and territorial entities of public administration" (as translated verbatim from the: Constitución política de Colombia, 1991, art. 40). Consequently, the Constitutional Court enacted different regulations to promote equity, involvement, participation, and services. These regulations included gender-based policies for non-discrimination of salaries and job opportunities, parental leave, the prevention and assistance of gender-based violence, the "from Zero to Forever" strategy (in Spanish: Programa de Cero a Siempre) providing free early childhood care, the *Equipares* program giving tax incentives to companies that hire more women and that have good gender equality practices. And finally, the creation of the national presidential office to manage gender-related issues (in Spanish: Consejería presidencial para la equidad de la mujer) and a gender quota law (OECD, 2017). As a result, female participation increased both in tertiary education and in the labor-market (World Bank, 2011).

Still, the socio-cultural role distribution for men and women continues to impose almost exclusively on women all care, parenthood and housekeeping duties, which leads to imbalanced responsibilities within the household (OECD, 2017). More often than not, these

circumstances force women to take part in informal jobs or self-employment resulting in lower incomes and negative perceptions of women as less committed and less reliable in the work environment. Not to mention the perception of lower competency linked to the amount of time spent outside the workforce during maternal leaves, which in Colombia are significantly longer than paternal leaves. This pattern can foster occupational segregation and employer discrimination, restricting women's possibilities for professional advance particularly to decision-making positions as indicated in the last report of the United Nations (UN, 2012).

Thus, the impact of our national gender equal initiatives seems to be limited, as the country remains one of the most unequal in terms of income distribution and access to public services, compared to other OECD countries and much of Latin America (OECD, 2016), as well as in terms of political representation overall (World Economic Forum, 2020). The situation is aggravated by the constant restructuration of policies and entities that takes place every four years when a new president is elected. This periodic restructuration generates multiple obstacles for the effective implementation and progressive evaluation of programs and policies (Gómez Cano, Sánches Castillo, & Díaz, 2015), both at the national political level and at the organizational level. In the case of universities, this periodic restructuration can be seen after the election of new rectors every three or four years since most directive positions are of free appointment and removal from the board of directors and the rector.

1.2.2   *Women's access to directive positions in Colombian universities*

In recent years, women accounted for about forty-three per cent of Colombia's labor force (Gómez Cano, Sánches Castillo, & Díaz, 2015). However, they remain underrepresented at the top of the corporate hierarchy with a female representation of only twelve per cent among all top executives and board members, four per cent among top companies' CEOs (International Labor Organization, 2015), and 4.6 percent female rectors among all accredited universities in Colombia. Two in the private sector and two in public universities (SNIES, 2020; Solano Cahuana, 2021)

Vania Barraza Toledo and other scholars attribute these outcomes to social and cultural frameworks leading to gender-based wage discrimination, occupational segregation, and asymmetric power relations within Colombian companies and institutions (García-Retamero, & Lopez-Zafra, 2006; Barraza Toledo, 2010). This implies that in order to get into senior level positions, women would have to aim for a limited or a null participation in the traditional roles of motherhood and housekeeping. Likewise, in a historical analysis about women's struggle to

overcome culturally established social roles, to participate in the workforce and to gain access to management positions in the public sector of Colombia, Jenniffer Gonzalez-Gómez claimed that despite the implementation of gender-equality initiatives, the percentage of female representation in the economic and political spheres remains quite unbalanced (Gonzalez-Gómez, 2014). This situation can be seen, for example, in the gender distribution at the ministerial level or in the hierarchical distribution of Colombian Public universities which are also regulated by the gender quota but remain under the required thirty per cent after more than two decades of the law enactment (Solano Cahuana, in press).

About the topic, the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin American and the Caribbean (in Spanish, Instituto Internacional para la Education Superior en America Latina y el Caribe) reported that public universities leadership is still male-dominated with a female representation as university rectors of just eighteen percent (UNESCO-IESALC, 2020). In Colombia, by 2020 only four women were designated as university rector, two of them in public universities. When asked about influential factors behind this underrepresentation, one of these female rectors claimed that due to the stigma surrounding women's leadership skills, it is harder for women to attain directive roles, thus, she proposed good academic preparation as the prime path to guarantee women's access to decision-making seats. Another female rector pointed out the passive resistance of some directive boards to promote women as a stronger influential factor in the underrepresentation rates (Guía Académica, 2019).

Empirical research on the professional trajectory of female and male rector's candidates for Colombian public universities has challenged the first statement by displaying how higher academic preparation and/or professional experience has little influence on women's opportunities to attain the role of university rector (Solano Cahuana, 2021). However, the assessment of passive resistance within directive boards is in itself a more complex task due to methodological challenges in researching elites. For instance, elite university actors can be difficult to access, they may be reluctant to go on record and may not always be willing to reveal the kind of information researchers need (Sgier et al., 2017), especially in cases where the university is performing poorly. To overcome these limitations, this study concentrates on cases that have achieved gender parity. It is assumed that in these exceptional cases, elite university actors would be more willing to discuss the performance and approaches of their organizations. Not to mention, the benefits linked to selecting successful cases to help inform future practices in other organizational settings.

At this point it is important to explain that in Colombia, higher education is carried out in two levels identified as undergraduate and postgraduate education. The former comprises technical, technological and professional trainings, while postgraduate levels incorporate specializations, masters, and doctorate degrees (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2009). In 2020, the national information system of the Ministry of Education reported the existence of eighty-seven universities in Colombia, thirty-three of them are categorized as public entities and fifty-four are categorized as private entities (Observatorio de la Universidad Colombiana, 2021). According to the list published in 2021 for Latin American University Ranking, sixteen of these Colombian universities were ranked among the best 200 universities in Latin America, and six of them were represented by public universities (UniRank, 2021).

As the gender quota does not apply to private university, this study is focused exclusively on public universities that have reached gender parity. The hierarchical distribution of these public organizations starts with the Board of Directors (BoD), the rector, and the academic council representing the top governance bodies of the organization, followed by directive bodies that constitute the next managerial level of the organization. These administrative positions belonging to the directive level are of free appointment and removal and include vice rectors, deans, division and office directors, and the general secretary, among others (Régimen Orgánico Especial de la Universidad Nacional de Colombia, 1993).

The designation of directive bodies is quite unique among Colombian universities due to the institutional autonomy given by Law 30 of 1992, which allows them to design and implement their own designation requirements and protocols. Yet, public universities share mainstream components. For instance, proceedings for designations at the board of directors have two mechanisms: some positions are designated by national entities such as the Ministry of Education or regional governments.

Other positions involve more participative processes where specific communities of practice (e.g., students, faculty members, alumni, etc.) elect their board representatives through direct suffrage rather than appointing a person by direct scouting. Only the designation of the rector's position requires the participation of both academic and administrative communities and the process generally involve multiple stages where candidates' profiles, experience and government proposals are carefully assessed (See Table 2 in the following page for a comprehensive description of every stage).

Table 2. Mainstream stages for rector's designation in Colombian public universities

Stage	Description
1	- Call for application including specific requirements (e.g., educational level, administrative experience, etc.) - Registration of candidates, - Assessment of candidate's curriculums with supporting documentation to define compliance with the requirements.
2	- Presentation of candidates' profiles and their government proposals to the academic community (through online news reports or live discussion forums) - Opinion polls where students, teachers, administrative staff, and alumni members vote to short-list (3 to 5) applicants, - Presentation of short-listed candidates to the Board of Directors.
3	- Board of Directors designates as rector the short-listed candidate that obtains more than half of the votes of the board members (absolute majority).

Source: Solano Cahuana, 2021, p. 30.

As shown in Table 2, after the extended academic and administrative community have shortlisted their preferred candidates through opinion polls, the board of directors conduct a final internal election to designate the new university rector. Thus, the final decision to choose a rector and to designate other directive bodies of free appointment and removal still remains under the control of a small group of individuals in representation of different internal and external organizational bodies. About this, David Zuluaga Goyeneche and Bibiana Moncayo Orjuela (2014) pointed out the generalized tendency to assign high-responsibility roles to men, based on "a patriarchal pattern that socially links masculine values to management" (Zuluaga Goyeneche, & Moncayo Orjuela, 2014, p. 93). Similar findings were reported by the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of the United Nations in 2002. Unfortunately, the scarcity of statistical data and inaccurate national reports in Colombia, restrict academic reasoning on that matter.

Overall, statistical information denotes that women's access to directive positions in Colombian universities is still quite limited (Solano Cahuana, 2021; Solano Cahuana, in press). In fact, after a methodical examination of empirical data collected directly from annual management reports and meeting minutes from all public universities in the country - available online for public access at the universities' websites – it was found that, in the past few years, only three out of thirty-three public universities have successfully reached gender balanced distributions of fifty or near fifty percent at their board of directors (Ley 581, 2000). Unfortunately, in one of the three selected cases, available reports were missing a substantial amount of data from both the academic council and the board of directors. Not to mention the reluctance of their administrative staff at the directive level to grant interviews and the fact that its statistical reports did not include categorizations based on gender. Thus, it had to be excluded from further analysis, leaving us with two cases that were assessed in-depth using different types of data and methods to obtain a more accurate notion of these unique outcomes and the organizational practices that may have caused them.

In sum, the present study is particularly oriented towards the analysis of the senior-level underrepresentation of Colombian women in higher education management from two perspectives: 1) the structural barriers limiting women's access to decision-making roles at the organizational level, or in this case, the assumed lack of those barriers and 2) the individual (personal) and collective (social) perceptions towards the issue of gender inequality in general and their attitudes towards organizational practices in particular.

1.3 Focus of the dissertation

This research responds to scholarly suggestions for comparative research on affirmative actions for gender equality in academic governance (Voorspoels, 2018b) to determine commonalities and differences in terms of attitudes and practices between cases. Additionally, the study aims at contributing to the formal evidence for higher education institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean region (LAC) on individual, organizational, and social influences over women's representation in academic decision-making bodies, with a particular focus on affirmative actions, non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, and collective perceptions within public universities.

The specific organizational setting of universities was selected because these organizations like many other "public service settings appear to be under-represented or are not analyzed fully in relation to the impact of context on the exercise of leadership" (Middlehurst, et al., 2009, p.

314). considering the structural complexity of universities, which combines a wide range of functions, services, funding sources, and regulatory regimes, they constitute a valuable sphere for comparative analyses. Colombian public universities of the national order were specifically chosen because they are listed as part of the autonomous entities reporting to the National Public Administrative Department in terms of their compliance to Law 581, also known as the Quota Law (Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública, 2020). The research design involves comparative case studies, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to study the performance of selected universities in terms organizational practices and collective attitudes towards gender (in)equality issues. Selected cases stand out for and share the characteristics of equal gender distributions at the highest echelon of their organizational hierarchy, the board of directors. However, they differ in terms of their approaches to gender specific organizational policies, which is expected to constitute comparative value.

Primary qualitative data (interviews) were collected to elicit in-depth opinions, from members of governance bodies and administrative staff belonging to the directive level, about the organizational status of gender equality and about the value and effectiveness of equality policies or strategies. On that account, the list of interviewees is comprised by members of the universities' governance boards and by critical actors in administrative positions at the directive level. Quantitative data (surveys) are also included to provide evidence on shared attitudes among the extended academic community towards different organizational approaches to foster gender equality. Finally, secondary statistical data is added to document organizational interventions and practices and their link to current female representation in decision-making bodies among selected cases.

1.4 Research objectives

It is of general knowledge that our understanding of the concept of leadership reflects the historical influence of social norms, tradition, and practices (Chelf, 2018). Therefore, it is not a surprise that those influences can also be observed within organizational settings, in particular regarding the way sociocultural perceptions of gender roles and leadership attributes can prompt different outcomes for job classifications and promotion systems, which tend to restrict female access to decision-making positions. To address this issue, many countries have decided to adopt affirmative actions, such as gender quotas (a topic that would be further explained in chapter two). Colombia also followed this more coercive international trend, by enacting a constitutional mandate for equal opportunities that includes several programs and policies to

'guarantee the equal participation of women in all decision-making ranks of public administration' (Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991). Yet, the impact of these initiatives is limited, and the country remains one of the most unequal in Latin America (OECD, 2016), except for a few exceptional cases at the organizational level.

As in-depth analyses of hundreds of organizations in the country would be an almost impossible task due to access limitations and fragmented data, but rigorous comparative studies of selected cases could provide valuable insights into collective attitudes and organizational practices towards equality and diversity. Ergo, due to the sparse amount of information reported in the scholarly literature about levels of support and organizational practices for gender equality in academia, this study is specifically oriented towards the analysis of women's representation in universities' decision-making bodies. For that purpose, the gender distribution within governing boards of public universities and among the administrative staff belonging to the directive level was carefully examined from those public universities with the highest female representation in governance bodies. Then, standing institutional gender-equality policies and/or non-compulsory initiatives and actions, their foci, implementation, and evaluation mechanisms were inspected. The purpose was to determine whether and to what extent a specific organizational approach influenced the current performance of the universities. The last research objective concentrates on determining the potential of variable degrees of support or resistance, from the universities' extended academic and administrative community and their respective members with decision-making power, to foster or restrict favorable outcomes for the various organizational practices and initiatives implemented.

1.5 Structure of the study

The structure of this research is organized as follows: first, an initial introduction to the issue of gender inequality is addressed in regard to the international sphere. Then, in subsection two, a general description of the historical evolution of women's access to higher education, the labor force, and positions of decision-making in academic settings, is provided for the specific context of Colombia, in order to set the scene for the focus of this study. This research focus is further developed in subsection three, which includes a basic general description of the topic and the methodology employed for the elicitation and the analysis of data; meanwhile subsection four outlines the research objectives of the study.

Chapter two presents the conceptual overview of the gender-role ideology and key terminology

regarding areas, processes and approaches to the issue of gender inequality as well as the different analogies used to explain women's restricted career advancement. The chapter also includes a subsection spelling out the purpose of a gender quota and describing in detail the design, enforcement and monitoring process of the Colombian gender quota which was taken a frame of reference for the selection of successful cases.

Chapter three condenses the literature review of previous scholarly research addressing multiple barriers behind women's underrepresentation in decision-making roles. These barriers are divided according to distinctions of person-centered, organization-centered, and social-centered perspectives. Then, empirical findings related to those barriers are listed in chapter four in order to measure their plausibility in different contexts. On that same line, a literary review of the effectiveness of affirmative action for gender equality in the specific setting of universities is also carried out.

Chapter five includes a revision of potential theories that could help explain (at least partially) the phenomenon observed in this study and the specific theoretical framework proposed as the most suitable option for the evaluation of the data. Chapter six comprises a detailed display of the study's core research questions followed by chapter seven, which elaborates on the methodology used for the collection and analysis of data, demographic characteristics of the participants, and the justification and adequacy of the study design selected.

Finally, chapter eight presents the results and chapter nine includes the summary of findings and concluding remarks in terms of theoretical implications and recommendations for further research. The analysis of data is elaborated first in a descriptive format addressing each individual case. Then, the discussion is supplemented with a thematic cross-case examination combining different core categories to determine similarity or difference patterns across organizational approaches and collective attitudes. In the end, key findings are summarized, conclusions are proposed alongside their link and implications for sociological theory and suggestions for further research are presented.

CHAPTER 2.

CONCEPTUAL OVERVIEW

Historically, the accepted notion of gender in western culture was based on the doctrine of separate spheres, whose underlying assumption was that men and women had different natures and consequently played different roles in society, with men immersed in public affairs and women focused on domestic pursuits (Korabik, 1999; Hunter College, 1983). The UN Women Training Centre's glossary also states how "gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities" (UN Women Training Centre Elearning Campus, n.d).

At present, within sociology, psychology and organizational studies, gender is viewed as a social and cultural construction, independent from biological sex, that is learned through socialization and therefore susceptible to contextual influences. Consequently, it plays a role on individual and structural levels that should be considered during the assessment of implications for "any planned action, including legislation, policy or programs, in all areas and at all levels… to ensure that both women's and men's concerns, needs and experiences are taken fully into account in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all activities" (UNDP & UN Women, 2016, p. 6). The process is better known as gender mainstreaming or gender integration and it "seeks to reduce the gaps in development opportunities between women and men and work towards equality between them" (UNDP & UN Women, 2016, p. 6).

By gender equality, this study is referring to "equal opportunities, rights and responsibilities for women and men. This does not mean that women and men are the same but that their opportunities, rights and responsibilities do not depend on whether they are born, or they identify themselves as female or male. It implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration" (UNDP & UN Women, 2016, p. 6). Another related concept is Gender balance which refers to "the participation of an approximately equal number of women and men within an activity or organization. Examples include the representation in committees, decision-making structures or staffing levels

between women and men" (UNDP & UN Women, 2016, p. 6).

As a result of this shift of mentality, the composition of the workforce and the gender-role ideology in which men should be breadwinners and women should be homemakers (Eagly, 1987) have been changing alongside industrial and technological development. Likewise, gender mainstreaming approaches such as gender-specific or gender-targeted interventions are becoming more common at national and organizational levels to tackle specific areas where women are unrepresented or disadvantaged, including the adoption of **Sex-**disaggregated data, where information for women and men are collected and tabulated separately in order to measure their differences on various social and economic dimensions or more coercive affirmative actions, such as gender quotas (UNDP & UN Women, 2016) aimed at the inclusion of a critical mass of women in decision-making.

However, internalized andro-centered (focused on the male figure) normative beliefs continue to influence not only the type of jobs available to women (Korabik, 1999), but also shared perceptions of leadership attributes, which remain linked to the masculine figure (Powell, 1993). And consequently, it plays a crucial role within promotion processes, particularly those based on direct designations, where an established figure of authority chooses someone to hold a directive post within the organization. Even meritocracies could be gender-biased if the requirements and selection mechanisms are not carefully formulated to counteract exclusion and discrimination.

2.1 Gender Quotas

To tackle the persistent gender disparity and to guarantee female political representation and access to decision-making roles, many countries have passed laws obliging publicly held companies to reserve between thirty and forty percent of their board seats to women. (OECD, 2017; Utzeri, 2018; Solano Cahuana, in press). The initiative responds to scholars' suggestion of including a critical mass of women in decision-making to reduce the effects of tokenism (Parsons & Priola, 2013; Peterson 2015; Van den Brink, 2010; Vinkenburg, 2017).

Historically, these "electoral gender quotas trace back to the 1930s in India and Pakistan. But it was in the 1990s that significant candidate quotas started to be implemented worldwide, first, in Argentina and then spreading all over Latin America (as cited in Solano Cahuana, in press). In Colombia, the quota law (Ley 581, 2000) was enacted in the year 2000 and sixteen public

universities are listed as quota-regulated autonomous entities (Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública, 2021).

2.1.1 The Colombian gender quota: design, enforcement and monitoring

Concretely, the Colombian quota law edicts women's legal provision of a participation of thirty per cent in decision-making positions within all public organs and branches (Ley 581, 2000; Solano Cahuana, 2021; Solano Cahuana, in press). The regulation applies to the maximum level of decision-making (MDL) and to other decision-making levels as well (ODL) (Ley 581, 2000. Articles 2, 3). In the organizational context of Colombian universities, these levels refer to directive and academic boards' members and to free appointment and removal positions, such as vice rectors, deans, office and division heads.

More specific guidelines indicate that "in cases where the appointment process requires short-lists, as it is mostly the case for faculty deans, at least one woman must be included in the group appointed. For the designation through extended list systems, the name of women and men must be included in equal proportion. Finally, for hiring and promotions made through public contests, the equal participation of men and women is also mandatory, both for applicants and for evaluating authorities. But the rules listed do not apply to careers where the appointment is based exclusively on merit nor to positions designated through popular elections (translated from Ley 581, 2000. Articles 5, 6, 7). The last exception applies to all representative members of directive bodies" (Solano Cahuana, in press).

Besides, the regulation also dictates the enforcement of female promotion plans, such as non-sexist educational content and practices; outreach information about gender equality, women's rights, protection schemes, and specialized leadership training for women (Ley 581, 2000. Articles 10, 1). "Non-compliance is held accountable for misconduct penalized with a suspension of up to 30 days, and with dismissal when the issue persists overtime" (Ley 581, 2000. Article 4, paragraph 1).

Last but not least, institutional performances are assessed on an annual basis by the High Judiciary Council, the Congress' Administrative office, and the Public Administrative Department and reported by the latter through official publications listing job distributions and female participation rates in every branch and organ of public administration (Ley 581, 2000. Article 12). Since the Colombian gender quota Law does not specify a deadline for its own enforcement validity period, "the regulation is expected to remain in place indefinitely and to

be complied to after every change of an organization's government cabinet. Besides, the objective of the National Development Plan is to reach gender parity in all public directive positions by the year 2022" (Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública, 2020).

Nonetheless, empirical evidence show that the quota has only been minimally complied to and that official reports do not reflect the actual gender distribution within organizational hierarchies (Solano Cahuana, in press). Therefore, it is assumed that exceptionally gender-balanced cases, could be the result of supplementary strategies or other independent influences and not exclusively the product of a gender quota's enactment.

To properly assess the quota's effectiveness, it is crucial to examine its *size,* which should be at least thirty per cent; and whether or not it has *placement mandates* and strong *enforcement mechanisms* to prescribe consequences for those institutions that do not abide by the quota (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009). In the organizational setting of universities, placement mandates are not relevant since their directive seats are not distributed according to candidates' rank on voting lists. For the remaining two factors, the Colombian gender quota incorporates an adequate size but rather weak sanctions for non-compliance, as previously described. Thus, identified minimal levels of compliance reinforce the argument that "opting for non-binding 'soft' quotas for women's board representation, lead to lower levels of success" (Kowalewska, 2019, p. 14)

2.2 Explanatory analogies for women scarcity in decision-making bodies

To explain the female underrepresentation in decision-making bodies, different analogies have been proposed overtime. The first analogy was "the concrete wall" used to describe explicit rules and clear-cut norms restricting women's legal and political equality. This idea rested on the aforementioned historical division of labor between men and women. Then, in 1986, the wall metaphor was replaced by "the Glass Ceiling" metaphor, which referred to less obvious barriers labeling women as less qualified, less committed, and lacking leadership traits and motivation (Eagly & Carli, 2007a). But recently, a new analogy came into place to combine the wall and the glass ceiling metaphors. This new analogy is known as "the Labyrinth" (Eagly & Carli, 2007b).

The Labyrinth conveys the idea of a complex journey filled with both subtle (e.g., prejudice and discrimination) and evident (e.g., wage gaps, work-continuity interruptions, and family-care responsibilities) barriers in the multiple paths leading to the top (Eagly & Carli, 2007b).

Therefore, according to this new analogy, women are not simply denied leadership opportunities at the culmination of a long career as initially explained by the "glass ceiling". Instead, their passage to reach higher positions is filled with obstacles at various points along the way.

Then, to analyze gender equality at the organizational level, particularly in terms of promotion and opportunity, it is necessary to consider multiple influential variables (Gaete-Quezada, 2018) which are carefully reviewed in the following section as stated by applicable recent and historical scholarly literature.

CHAPTER 3.

LITERATURE REVIEW ON GENDERED BARRIERS TO PROFESSIONAL PROMOTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACHES

The issue of gender inequality has been widely studied in terms of internalized perceptions of leadership and social roles contributing to the emergence of stereotypes, prejudice, and discriminatory practices, which not only limit people's opportunities, but also influence their individual motivations and choices. To elaborate on this topic, this segment reviews the scholarship on women's barriers for professional promotion. The purpose is to examine the different variables or factors that influence and often restrict women. The review will be divided into the three major categories of person-centered, of organizational-centered in relation to the link between gender and management, and of social-centered perspectives.

Some scholars subdivide these options into four rather than three categories, including *structural barriers, institutional mindsets*, *individual mindsets,* and *lifestyle choices* (Andrews, 2016). However, the core descriptions for every category remains the same. For instance, structural barriers refer to limited access to informal networks, while institutional mindset refers to gender-bias and stereotypes such as role incongruity and individual mindsets and lifestyle choices compile the topics of intrinsic motivation, work-life balance, and family choices such as breadwinner/caregiver priorities, which are also addressed in this study under the subsection of person-centered perspectives.

The central premise stated in this research agrees with Shawn Andrews assertion that "the reasons for the gap between men and women are multifactorial, deep-seated, and have existed for generations whose problematic beliefs and perceptions are held by both men and women, which make the problem difficult to address" (Andrews, 2016, p. 36).

3.1 The person-centered perspective

To explore the status of women in decision-making levels or positions of authority, this part of the review has an individual lens framed within the person-centered perspective, which theorizes on the underlying dynamics of gender inequality through the social role theory (Carli and Eagly, 1999), where personal barriers such as work-life balance, deficient skills, lack of

motivation and occupational segregation are of core interest.

The person-centered perspective identifies the equity problem as "rooted in women's and men's differences in career-relevant characteristics and basic personality orientations" (Acker, 2000, p. 625). The main influential factor presented in relation to women's lack of thriving to demanding positions is their difficulty to set a ***work-life balance,*** which refers to "the state of equilibrium where a person equally prioritizes the demands of one's career and the demands of one's personal life" (Sanfilippo, 2022). Thus, it is the stabilizing management of a work life alongside home responsibilities. Indeed, women's employment continuity is usually affected by interruptions linked to family duties that position them as the primary caregiver for children and other family members during their peak years in the workforce (Eagly & Carli, 2007a). Thus, it is assumed that women lean more towards raising a family than towards professional commitment playing according to collective ideals (Pace and Sciotto, 2022) and are, consequently, viewed as inappropriate and unreliable for high responsibility roles (England, 2005).

Francesco Pace and Giulia Sciotto argue that "work–life balance occurs when the time spent on the job role does not limit the time dedicated to personal life… which is an important antecedent of job and life satisfaction" (Pace and Sciotto, 2022, p. 1). Thus, the issue of time distribution or the issue of priorities setting is linked on the one hand to gender-based role divisions as part of a collective culture where women always take care of domestic and family duties. But, on the other hand, it is deeply connected to the organizational culture since it plays a direct role in the valorization of professional career and personal life duties. The complexity of influential factors may explain why "despite the enactment of several pieces of legislation on equal opportunities… the socially and historically established hierarchical difference between men and women remains… in so many countries around the world, including the United Kingdom, Norway, the Netherlands, India, Japan, and South Africa" (Pace and Sciotto, 2022, p. 2).

Lack of relevant knowledge and skills required to advance to higher leadership positions is also assumed as one of the main issues (Catalyst, 1996; Davies-Netzley, 1998; Griffith et al., 1997). The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE, 2017) acknowledges that low qualifications put people at a higher risk of precarious employment and that women in general are more likely to work in these types of jobs than men. Yet, in terms of qualifications, the pipeline for women leaders has expanded significantly over the last 50 years. Yet, internal and

external cultural biases consistently *overrate* men and *underrate* women. In fact, men and women usually reassure these over and underrating values to themselves. Women tend to evaluate themselves lower than reality, while men will evaluate themselves higher. What makes it worse is that not just men assume women are incompetent; women may feel that way about other women as well (Forbes, 2011). On the topic, Linda Decker highlights that "women are well educated, talented and just as hardworking as their male counterparts. Also, women do not necessarily face significant barriers to enter the workplace, but they do face multiple obstacles when it comes to advancement". So, it's not a pipeline problem but a pathway problem (Decker, n.d.).

Another personal barrier proposed in the scholarly literature, particularly after the implementation of gender quota regulations worldwide, is gender-based ***occupational segregation.*** This barrier refers to "the unequal distribution of female and male workers across and within job types. Segregation can be horizontal, with women and men concentrating in different sectors, industries, and business sizes; or vertical, with gender disparities in positions with different statuses, managerial responsibilities, or potential for promotion" (World Bank, 2019). Marina Zhavoronka and her colleagues elaborated on the topic by stating that occupational segregation is the result of both societal biases and policy choices. Today, women's progress in the workforce is undeniable but before 1970, only twenty percent of women worked outside the home and before 1978, employers could still legally pay them less than men and terminate their contracts on the grounds of pregnancy or marriage. Thus, women's careers were often short-lived, intermittent, or viewed as secondary to that of their husbands.

In this fashion, systems and policy choices reflect stereotypes, bias, and perceptions of gender, which are strengthened and perpetuated by norms embedded in education and workplace recruitment. Legislation enacted over the 20th century in the United States moved the needle, but it cannot alone change behavior. For instance, The Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibited employers from paying different wages on the basis of sex. Later, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 prohibited discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions and affirmative action enforcement initially led to an increase in workplace integration and narrowed wage gaps. However, weak enforcement capacity and the lack of political will, have led to progress stagnation (Zhavoronka, Khattar, & Brady, 2022)

Other scholars suggest that the problem of both horizontal and vertical segregation is actually

rooted on women self-exclusion from specific careers and particularly from leadership roles in order to avoid high responsibility positions (Bajdo & Dickson, 2001). The rationale proposed for this type of statements include women's insecurity linked to internalized identity of gender-roles, lack of motivation and lower ambitions. The latter is also assumed to be influenced by culturally based perceptions of what careers are appropriate for each gender (Yates and Hughes, 2017). This could explain why in many countries, occupations related to the functions of caring (e.g., nursing, early childhood education, or social services) are predominantly female while occupations with higher decision-making opportunities (e.g., business or the military) are predominantly male. Yet, recent analyses and findings challenge these postulations, as it is explained in the following chapter addressing empirical evidence.

As for the ***lack of motivation*** to compete for positions of high responsibility, which is also proposed as a personal barrier, Jenni Corinne defines motivation as an innate quality of all people, which is considered as "the main cause of human behavior" (Corinne, 2017, p. 76). But it is important to explain that there are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. The former refers to the inherent satisfaction of doing an activity for the fun or challenge entailed in it; while the latter refers to the expectation of reward in the form of pay, benefits or other resources (Folbre, 2012). In that sense, women would be lacking both the aspiration for more challenging roles and for better professional and financial benefits as a result of their socialization to fulfill supportive roles rather than leadership roles. On the contrary, men are more likely to run for leadership roles, because they are socialized to do so (Yates & Hughes, 2017).

Then, as it is usually men, who are more motivated to become leaders, which is in alignment with their gender role (as cited in Li, et al., 2013); the pattern replicated over time everywhere and leaders came to be perceived as having more "masculine" characteristics. Empirical findings also suggest that women's propensity to care for others helps account for many of the disadvantages they experience economically and particularly, in the workplace. Thus, arguing that women simply prefer jobs with lower pay and less responsibility, either because they derive intrinsic satisfaction from these jobs or because they prioritize the needs of their own family members, as previously discussed in the work-life balance barrier.

Nancy Folbre (2012) maintains that indeed, women manifest a higher level of concern for the well-being of others, a behavioral pattern sometimes called 'prosocial' motivation. But the decision to focus less on their family and household responsibilities is not simple for women.

Mainly, because they may not be able to care less unless they can persuade men to care more. Another alternative would involve earning enough to be able to forward those household functions to a third party. However, the gender pay gap is another issue of gender inequality widely known and constantly monitored by international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development -OECD.

Then, "cultural and institutional change must promote more gender-egalitarian distribution of responsibilities for care" (Folbre, 2012, p. 610). In this sense, public policies and organizational approaches to gender equality can play a central role too. For example, Chan & Drasgow believe that individual motivation to lead is a dynamic construct that can be increased and improved with the accumulation of leadership experience and training (Chan & Drasgow, 2001). Therefore, on the one hand, it could be suggested that a work environment offering leadership opportunities to obtain relevant experiences could help women enhance their motivation to become leaders (Zhang et al., 2009). But on the other hand, this option would be even more favorable if supplemented by a work-life balance support system at the organization that could foster women's feasibility to take part in high responsibility and time-demanding roles.

Finally, it must be noted that from the cultural point of view, there is a generalized perception that a businessperson is more suitable for leadership roles than a social worker. In fact, these arguments can also be credited to the influence of the gender-role ideology on people's mentality about congruent social roles, individual behaviors, and about their own place in society and the opportunities available to them. In other words, these representations affect not only people's perceptions of the characteristics of a good leader as being incongruent with the female gender, but also women's perception of their own ability to lead (Yates & Hughes, 2017). Thus, the limitations that women encounter are also based on stereotypes and biases about men and women's roles and about men and women's behavior, which have a strong influence on how we see others and particularly on how we see ourselves within the structural distribution of the society in general and within the hierarchical order of the organization, in particular.

3.2 The organization-centered perspective

The notion of *the organization-centered perspective* suggests that gender-differentiated professional promotions are the result of an unequal structural placement of power and

opportunity (Kanter, 1977; Acker 1990; Griffith et al., 1997), in which policies, promotion and reward systems ensure privileged status and greater opportunities for men while women concentrate in low responsibility jobs at the bottom of the organizational hierarchy. Ellen Fagenson concurs that "because women have a lower ascribed status outside the organization, their very presence in the organization will be similarly devalued. Thus, they will receive little of the organizational rewards that might encourage them to have high power aspirations" (Fagenson, 1990, p. 270)

To face this issue, liberal and radical approaches have been developed to address gender (in)equality at the organizational level. The liberal approach is based on a philosophy of 'sameness' that promotes awareness trainings, family reconciliation policies, neutral job profiles, recruitment, promotion and evaluation systems based on meritocracy. These types of interventions might, in some cases, address inequality as an all-inclusive issue, which could limit women's gain by diluting gender issues with other inequality determinants (e.g., race, age, ethnicity, social class, among others). Meanwhile, the radical approach entails a political dimension that promotes positive discrimination such as gender quotas or reserved seats in decision-making bodies (Jewson & Mason, 1986), which in many cases could bring about negative perceptions and resentment towards special treatment strategies (Hearn & Pringle, 2006).

To analyze different organizational interventions handling gender inequality in the work setting from either a liberal or a radical point of view, Robin Ely and Debra Meyerson (2000) suggested four frames generally used to tackle the issue:

The first type of organizational intervention involves ***fixing the women*** by correcting their individual deficiencies through additional training, mentoring, and networking programs. These types of interventions can lead to the creation of role models but without causing any impact to the organization's structure and policies (Fletcher & Ely, 2003). Another strategy to fix women involves the reduction of feminine qualities (e.g., indecisiveness, dependence, supportiveness, cooperativeness, expressiveness, etc.) to help them blend with the organizational culture and gain acceptance among colleagues and superiors (Catalyst, 1996; Griffith et al., 1997; Davies Netzley, 1998) because these so called 'feminine' or 'communal' attributes do not 'fit' with expectations of leadership traits, which usually include male ascribed 'agentic' characteristics of independence, self-confidence, competitiveness, dominance, and rationality (Eagly, 1987; Koenig et al., 2011; Crites et al., 2015). These gender-biased

perceptions might also have an adverse effect whenever women break normative gendered expectations.

Hence, a woman who is a leader is already gender-role incongruent due to their historically and socially imposed subordinate role; but breaking her gender's behavioral expectations, for example by assuming a stereotypically masculine leadership style, can lead to further negative evaluations (Wittner, 2001). An example of this predicament is shown in a cross-cultural comparison of gender and leader roles conducted in Spain and Germany (García-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2009), where people attributed women access to higher position within the organizational hierarchy to external causes such as luck, rather than to internal causal attributions, such as ability, thus confirming the remark that generalized perceptions of congruity between leadership and gender roles, made women more vulnerable to prejudice and limited their professional promotion (Wood & Eagly, 2002).

As opposed to the first one, the second type of intervention, known as *valuing the feminine,* recognizes and accepts gender-based behavioral differences, and raises awareness on how different masculine (competitive, direct, authoritarian) and feminine (inclusive, caring, nurturing) management styles would be equally beneficial for the company. This viewpoint concurs with the prototypical *Gender-Divided Corporation (*Baxter, 2010) that categorizes women not as deficient or subordinate, but simply as different in biological, cultural, and linguistic terms. Measures created within this frame generally involve the implementation of diversity trainings, which may also have a counterproductive effect by unintentionally reinforcing gender stereotypes (Calás & Smircich, 2009).

The third course of action aims at *creating equal opportunities* by implementing work-family balance policies, such as on-side childcare, flexible working arrangements, parental leave and employee assistance programs, among others. These policies may also go alongside recruitment and promotion preferential treatment for underrepresented groups and formal impartial evaluation systems. Yet, despite their more coercive emphasis, these initiatives also seem to have minimal impact on the organizational culture since they leave informal practices and deep beliefs untouched, which is the weak spot identified in the first type of intervention as well (Hanappi-Egger, 2011).

In alignment with the appreciation of differences proposed by the second strategy, this last example of organizational measures works towards *revising the organizational culture* by identifying, updating, and progressively changing socially influenced gender beliefs. This

revision includes any unconscious bias manifested in discourses of masculinity, false neutrality, and oppressive organizational practices. Within this frame, the main limitations include people's resistance to change (particularly those that would feel negatively affected by any change in the existing state of affairs) and the difficulty to sustain the initiatives overtime (Meyerson and Kolb, 2000), particularly in organizations with recurrent chronological changes of government and administrative bodies. In sum, "we view organizations as cultures, with patterns of meaning, values, and behavior" (as cited in Meyerson & Martin, 1987, p. 623).

Recent research on academic and business settings displays a proclivity for radically oriented interventions that involve the creation of equal opportunities through direct scouting and gender specific calls, also known as preferential treatment, as part of their recruitment processes (Voorspoels, 2018a), or the implementation of work-life reconciliation policies (Utzeri, 2018). However, as previously stated, these types of interventions have the potential to and often are counterproductive for women who benefit from them. In turn, many women all around the world opt for rejecting the benefits offered. On that account, it would be interesting to examine whether the pattern diverges among cases that have successfully achieved a gender-equal distribution of directive roles, for instance, whether their community is more supportive of radical interventions or whether there are any alternative options being implemented as well.

3.3 The integrative perspective

In the last few decades, gender stereotypes have been gradually decreasing and people are more aware of the issue of gender inequality and of the consequences of gender-based stereotypes and prejudice in most Western countries. Yet, stereotypical perceptions of men and women as having or missing leadership-congruent traits are still widespread (Killen, López-Zafra, & Eagly, 2006). This collective conception leads to the persistence of unconscious or *implicit bias* and refer to situations where a person consciously rejects stereotypes but subconsciously makes evaluations based on them. This type of bias is often expressed through in-group favoritism (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004; Banaji & Greenwald, 2013), such as the *homosocial reproduction* phenomenon (Byrne, 1971), which posits people's preference for working with and therefore promoting those socially similar to themselves. For instance, men tend to sponsor other men (Baron & Pfeffer, 1994), which not only constraints women's promotion within the occupational structure to decision-making positions, but also limits their access to networking opportunities and influences their segregation into female-dominated sectors with lower labor

market value (Mencken & Winfield, 2000).

Considering the central role of the social environment in the formation of people's stereotypical perceptions. The integrative perspective incorporates it to the assessment of organizational approaches and change, in particular regarding the connection between gender-biased perceptions and the evidence of greater promotion opportunities for male candidates while female candidates continue to be considered unsuitable for demanding jobs (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Eagly, 2007; Eagly & Carli, 2007; López-Zafra, Garcia-Retamero, & Eagly, 2009). From a policy dimension, the most well-known process linked to this perspective is ***gender mainstreaming***, which according to the definition provided by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations, is the process of assessing the implications for women, men and people with diverse gender identities of any planned action—including legislation, policies or programs— in order to make their concerns and experiences an integral dimension of political, economic and societal spheres (OHCHR, 2022).

Hence, gender mainstreaming not only analyses how gender inequality is perpetuated by the historical preferences of established regimes, but it also aims at the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, activities and tools —e.g., gender disaggregated statistics, gender budgeting and/or gender impact assessment methods— to attack such type of inequality (Daly, 2005). To put it in another way, gender mainstreaming was designed to replace previous approaches focused on differential policy outcomes, with an integrated horizontal policy strategy to harmonize existing instruments, regulatory actions, informational programs and institutional objectives and structures (Mcnut, 2010). Some of the instruments suggested to change institutional gendered biases and organizational discrimination include gender-sensitive training to encourage institutional change and organizational learning; alongside the critical engagement of the organization's participants through consultations related to the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs; and the use of accountability mechanisms to oblige departments and agencies to apply the suggested gender equality approach.

To put it briefly, "the goal is to institutionalize equality by embedding gender-sensitive practices and norms in the structures, processes, and environment of public policy" (Daly, 2005, p. 435). Thus, "policy is no longer focused on women but rather on *gendered structures* which constitutes a transformative perspective because instead of advancing the status of

women, it promotes the destabilization of existing inequitable structures and processes" (Mcnutt, 2010, p. 3, 4). This subject of **_gendered organizations_** is further developed in the following subsection.

3.3.1 Collective perceptions and Gender Organization Systems (GOS)

The notion of *Gender Organization Systems* is an important form of the integrative perspective because it takes account of all the categories: the organization-centered perspective, the person-centered perspective and the social influence by suggesting that "women's behavior and limited corporate progression in organizations can be linked to their gender, the organizational context (culture, history, ideology, policies, etc.), and/or the larger social system in which they function… since they are located in societies with particular cultural values, histories, practices, ideologies, expectations and stereotypes regarding appropriate roles and behaviors for men and women that affect the internal structures and processes of organizations" (as cited in Fagenson, 1990, p. 271).

Correspondingly, this approach advocates for a proper analysis of female underrepresentation at the organizational level that considers individual experiences and perceptions, environmental factors, structural policies and practices altogether. For instance, rather than creating programs to fix women's "deficiencies" in order to help them fit the corporative mold or blend with the organizational culture (Catalyst, 1996; Griffith et al., 1997; Davies Netzley, 1998); a comprehensive assessment should be conducted regarding individual perceptions and behaviors, as well as regarding the corporation's culture, its history, its ideology, its structure and its policies; not to mention the influential role of societal ideologies, expectations and stereotypes in relation to gender (Fagenson, 1990). Since "all of these factors, in turn, affect one another" (Fagenson, 1990, p. 272).

This holistic perspective coincides with Joan Acker's interpretation of organizational gender inequality as a compound of individual, environmental, and structural factors (Acker, 2006a). Acker's theory of gendered organization is therefore taken as framework of reference in the present study and is further explained in chapter five.

CHAPTER 4.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Preliminary explanations of women's disadvantage in the workplace, such as those listed in the literature review, were based on functionalist theories that emphasized on roles socially attributed to each gender, where "women's biological role in reproduction provided the logical reasoning to justify their position at home caring for children and husbands, while men were more amenable to industrial era employment" (as cited in Scarborough and Risman, 2018, p. 341). But these functionalist notions started to be disputed in the 1960s, when feminist scholars proposed the analysis of sex differences as a multilayered inequality system that arranges labor and social structures according to gender-differentiated roles and behaviors, and consequently, it conveys gender-differentiated advantages (Ferree, 1990).

Based on this multilayered doctrine, different theories have emerged within both ontological and social philosophical dimensions to explain the mechanisms involved in producing gender inequality either in relation to the construction of the individual identity and its link to socialization, to the way individuals "do gender" during interactions (West and Zimmerman, 1987), or to the way that organizational structures can and often place women in disadvantaged roles. This last group of organizational theories is also known as macro-level theories. All of these theoretical frameworks of gender inequality are further explained below, following the same distribution of categories previously presented in the literature review:

4.1 Individual-level theories

As it was stated before, individual-level theories address the formation and internalization of gendered selves – the way people identify with masculine or feminine characteristics (Scarborough and Risman, 2018). Of particular importance here, is the relationship with the parents which usually varies depending on the child's gender, hence, fostering the development of contrasting nurturant versus agentic personalities (Chodorow, 1978). Another influential factor is the culture where a person is raised, which also determines behavioral norms and practices. The problem is that in most cultures, these norms are androcentric. Thus, they reinforce men's privilege and dominance over women (Bem, 1993).

During the formation of the individual identity, people adopt a gender schema that guides their behavior, their perceptions of the self and their perceptions of the world from a "gender-appropriate" lens that impacts their ways of talking, sitting, and dressing, as well as their self-evaluations. Studies show that people tend to under- or overrate their performance based on gendered ideas of natural skills. A good example of this, is the widespread misconception of women being bad at math that often leads women to perceive themselves as less competent in that area and to self-select out of professional fields such as science, technology, engineering, and math – STEM – (Correll, 2001). This pattern of self-exclusion becomes especially daunting since "masculine-typed jobs, such as those involving decisiveness and leadership, are the most financially and socially rewarding" (as cited in Scarborough and Risman, 2018, p. 342). Thus, the variation between men and women are continually shaped by our gender-differentiated individual experiences, which exert influence on the emergence of gendered selves.

The *gender framing theory* (Ridgeway, 2011) could be linked to this individual level considering its view of framing as intrinsic to the formation of attitudes and opinions (Chong and Druckman, 2007) that help people interpret their reality and influence their subsequent decision-making processes. Nonetheless, framing research has produced multiple mixed results and its multiplicity of methodologies and conceptual issues call into question its suitability to inform the present research. Another theoretical approach addressing the impact of the social and cultural context on the conception of deprivations for women and on the consequent formation of individual attitudes towards gender equality is the *liberal feminist approach,* which supports the enactment of equal opportunity legislative reforms as the prime remedy. Unfortunately, its premises offer no explanation for structural causes. In fact, "Liberal feminism is often criticized for its failure to deal with the deep-rootedness of gender inequality and the interconnectedness between its different forms" (Walby, 1990, p, 5). Therefore, collective ideologies and their social manifestations in interaction must also be addressed in the multidimensional analysis of gender inequality.

4.2 Interactional-level theories

It becomes clear that there are different ways in which people show their identification with a sex, for example through their clothing and their hairstyle but particularly, through their behavior. With this in mind, a second group of theories focuses on the way gender shapes interpersonal interaction. For instance, they aim at explaining how people "do gender" in ways that agree or disagree with their gender's expected behavioral patterns (West and Zimmerman,

1987). These choices, as previously mentioned in the literature, are often subconscious, but they continue to condition gender-based stereotypes and cognitive bias, and consequently, they continue to sustain inequality structures as stated by the *expectation states theory* in the 1970s (Berger, Conner, and Fisek, 1974).

The systematic disadvantage of women can be significantly prominent in the workplace, where career opportunities granted by those in power – generally men – may be susceptible to the aforementioned cognitive bias that privileges men (Reskin and Bielby 2005; Stainback and TomaskovicDevey 2009), not to mention women's limited access to resources and social capital often justified under a stereotypical assumption of women's voluntary self-exclusion. Yet, empirical evidence has demonstrated that even after controlling for social capital elements such as education and professional experience, status inequalities can persist as an outcome of these gender-based stereotypes and cognitive bias. Therefore, all cultural assumptions, gender-based expectations, material relations and status differences between men and women must be tackled in order to eliminate cognitive bias (as cited in Scarborough and Risman, 2018).

4.3 Macro and Organizational Theories

As stated, approaches with individual and interactional lenses theorize about notions of gender and social roles, the historical division of labor and their manifestations in interaction patterns, with a core interest in cognitive processes. However, the influence of the workplace dynamics was being neglected for a long time in academic research (Calás, Smircich, and Holvino, 2014). From an ontological dimension, research interest in organizational gender equality focuses on both the equal representation of men and women in governance boards and in other administrative positions with decision-making power due to their affiliation to the directive level (Decrees 770, 785, 2005, Article 4), as well as in the overt incorporation of gender affairs in written procedures and directives. Hence, positive discrimination policies could be seen as a reflection of an underlying organizational culture that diverges from neutral systems and practices.

Along this lines, one last group of theories emerged. This new set of approaches to gender and particularly to women in management (WIM), examines how institutional and organizational structures can foster gender inequality as well. For example, through the enactment of leave structures with different lengths of time for men and women. This is the case in Colombia, where paternal leave comprises two paid weeks as opposed to maternal leave, which extends

over a period of three months (Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública, 2022). This variation obliges women to assume, almost exclusively, all household and childcare duties, and may lead to a predilection for male candidates during recruitment processes.

Kanter (1977) was one of the first scholars to assess these gender relations in the workplace. She was also among the first ones to reject the statement that women's lack of career success was the result of their own scarcity of drive or of their incongruent personality traits. Instead, she attributed women's restricted professional advancement to undermining organizational structures that limited their access to positions of power, leading to the underrepresentation issue that persist to this day.

4.3.1 *Acker's theory of gendered organizations*

Joan Acker (1992) also attributed women's limited advancement to structural barriers that stem from a differentiation between production and reproduction, where business and industry (production) are seen as the source of wealth, while child/elder care and education (reproduction) are devalued as wealth consuming and categorized as secondary or peripheral. Consequently, the concept of the ideal worker imply availability to work long hours, to be on-call, to relocate, and to prioritize work before any other obligation. Being unable to fulfill these expectations due to their socially imposed domestic duties and caretaking responsibilities, this ideal puts women at a disadvantage.

That production and reproduction division constitutes the gendered substructure of society's institutions, which is ingrained in organizational practices, images, ideologies, relationship patterns, and distributions of power. Then, workplace structures are not gender neutral and must aim at mitigating the negative effects of cognitive bias towards women by formally establishing regulated application, hiring and promotion processes, with clearly defined qualifications requirements and evaluation systems – particularly to access management roles (Ridgeway and Correll, 2000).

Following the comprehensive perspective of the Gender Organization System approach previously mentioned in the literature review, Acker's theory offers a comprehensive assessment of individual identity, of gendered organizational culture and of the influential role of gendered ideologies, expectations and stereotypes (Fagenson, 1990) through five interrelated processes that produce gendered structures within the organizational setting (see Table 3 in the following page).

Table 3. Gendering processes within the organizational setting

1) Gendered division of work	Men are usually placed at the highest positions of organizational power.
2) Gendered symbols and images	Representations in language, symbols and images can reinforce ideologies linking leadership to male characteristics.
3) Men/women's interactions	Patterns of dominance and submission in conversation. E.g.: in interruptions and turn-taking (West and Zimmerman, 1975, 1987).
4) Individual identity	Level of consciousness of gender-appropriate work, language, appearance, etc.
5) Gender implications in the creation and conceptualization of social structures	Written rules, contracts, directives, indicators and systems, whose argumentation and interpretation reveal the underlying organizational logic.

Source: Table created by the author from Acker's reference (1990, p. 146-147).

The first process presented in Table 3 refers to gender-differentiated structures (positions and functions) that place men in higher roles with more responsibilities and decision-making power than those assigned to women. The second process discusses the pervasive role of gendered images and symbols in the justification and legitimacy of the leader portrayed with male-attributed characteristics of aggressiveness, competitiveness, and independence; but rarely with female-attributed characteristics of supportiveness, kindness, or care. Frequent examples of this gendered images can be easily found in the military, business, academia and politics. The third process listed in table 3 addresses group interactions within the organization, where people "do gender" through communication, by enacting patterns of dominance and subordination (West and Zimmerman, 1975, 1987). In fourth place is the individual gender identity, in which a person categorize him/herself as a representative of a gender and choose "appropriate" behaviors according to socially internalized roles perceptions and expectations for that particular gender.

Last but not least important is the process referring to overt decisions, directives, and procedures that represent the organizational culture. Among gendered organizations, these written sets of guidelines and systems may lead to the control, segregation and exclusion of specific groups, for example, through practices or regulations that protect or prioritize men (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Acker's gendering processes
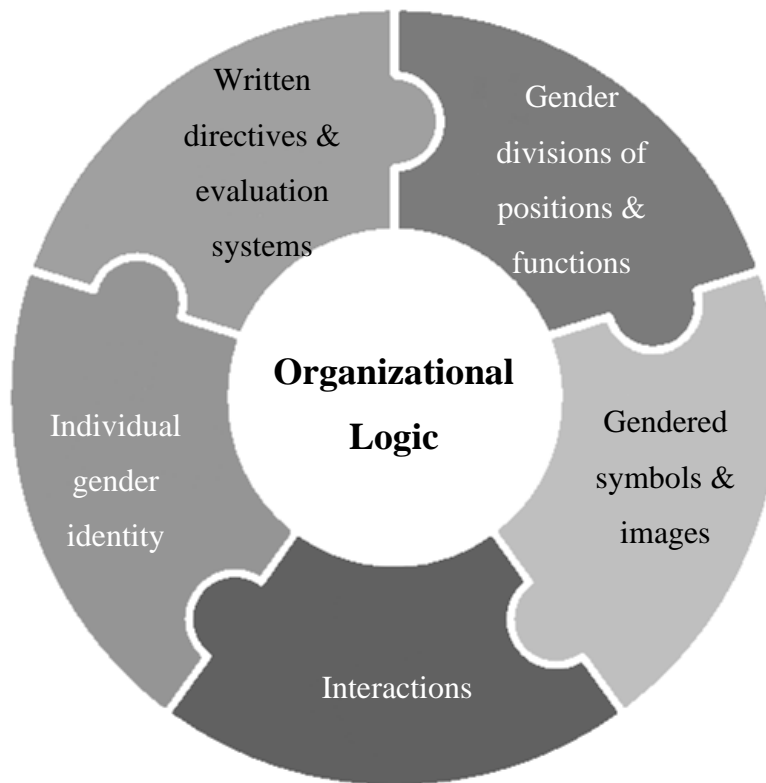
Source: Author's schema based on Joan Acker's five gendering processes (1990)

This part of the proposed focus of analysis provides a strong theoretical basis for the present study. However, the five gendering processes leave aside important variables for the assessment of gendered organizations, such as the institutional development over time (its continuity versus its changes) as well as the influential role of exogenous and endogenous factors in the success or failure of gender equality initiatives – e.g., the historical context, the mass mobilization caused by feminist activists, the direct influence of collective support or resistance to changes within the organization's members, and the position of critical actors. Therefore, it is necessary to keep inquiring for more overarching or at least supplementing approaches to the issue.

4.3.2. *New institutionalism*

As part of the Macro-organizational theories, the neo institutionalism also assumes that people's actions can determine the flow of events in a larger social system, but not from the utilitarian vision of institutions as the sum of individual decision-making based solely on available information and on estimations about potential consequences (Mackay, et al., 2010). The new institutionalism emerged as a reaction to this vision by endorsing other logics of meaning and symbolic action that consider the importance of the social context alongside the motives of individual actors.

Within this framework, institutional outcomes are seen as rooted on the distribution of preferences (interests), the distribution of resources, and the constraints imposed by the rules of the game (constitutions), which are all developed and transmitted through socialization. In this sense, the new institutionalism agrees with Joan Acker's approach to organizational theory where preferences and meanings develop through the conjunction of education, indoctrination, and experience. Thus, making it difficult for institutions to remain neutral provided that their members are driven by individual preferences and exogenous expectations (Schmidt, 2010).

Fiona Mackay and her colleagues highlighted the extent to which "New Institutionalism has fostered our understanding about the various ways in which actors bring about or resist change in institutions; and the way institutions shape the nature of actors' behavior through the construction of rules, norms and policies" (Mackay, et al., 2010, p. 573). But they also argue that a gendered analysis of the effect of those norms, rules and practices on political outcomes is essential to establish a dialogue across approaches and to provide new insights to the core questions of inequality.

In order to fully understand how New Institutionalism could contribute to feminist research, it is necessary to describe its main approaches, whose diverse perspectives have enabled its application to a wide range of political phenomena. Unfortunately, the same diversity is also the reason behind its compartmentalization and fragmentation. The first approach of the New Institutionalism is **rational choice**, which focuses on the micro-level notion of individuals as rationalist actors who behave as strategic maximizers. Thus, it argues that "institutions endure when they provide more benefits to relevant actors... Yet, these dynamics do not necessarily result in the most efficient outcomes and in many cases, they may lead to the formation of structures of coercion, power and domination" (as cited in Mackay, et al., 2010 p. 574).

On the contrary, **historical institutionalism** is interested in the meso-level by adopting a contextual and temporally sensitive approach that views institutions as the outcome of unpredictable events, political struggles, and rules, norms and practices embedded in society. In this view, individuals are conceived of as both rule-followers constrained by institutions and as strategic self-interested actors (Steinmo, 2008). The third approach is known as **organizational** or **sociological institutionalism.** It focuses on both micro- and macro-level interactions between actors and institutions where institutions are seen as a reflection of 'the way the world works, and actors are seen as social beings who act according to a 'logic of appropriate' behavior. Thus, institutions power to constraint human agency is recognized, but they are also viewed as products of human agency, constructed through processes of negotiation, conflict and contestation (as cited in Mackay, et al., 2010, p. 575).

Similar to sociological institutionalism, **discursive** or **constructivist institutionalism** engages with micro- and macro-level analyses with an emphasis on the potential of discourse –during its interactive communicative processes – to influence actor interests, preferences and behavior. Then, the institutional contexts "in which and through which ideas are communicated via discourse" are of central interest as well (Schmidt, 2010, p. 4).

One of the issues with the new institutionalism is that it lacks frameworks or explanations for why institutional change occurs, hence, being more 'concerned with institutional continuity rather than with institutional change' (as cited in Thomson, 2017, p. 3). Furthermore, considering that the concept of gender is fundamental to social science research – being embedded in interpersonal relations, in different types of institutions and institutional levels, and being part of the symbolic realm of meaning-making – The most acute disadvantage of new institutionalism is its oversight to the relationship between gender dynamics and institutional processes, for example, by leaving out the analysis of gender candidate quotas, gender mainstreaming policies, or equality plans and initiatives. Consequently, it misses the opportunity fully to discern the nature and interplay of formal and informal institutions and the differential effect they have on the men and women operating within these environments as well as the products – the norms, rules, policies and laws – these institutions produce (Mackay, et al., 2010; Acker, 1992).

4.3.2.1. Feminist Institutionalism

In response, a new form of institutionalism emerged in the mid-2000s to move the research

agenda towards this interplay between gender (individual agency) and the impact of institutional mechanisms (structure) on power inequalities. Under this **feminist institutionalism**, institutions are seen as gendered when they prescribe 'acceptable' forms of behavior, rules and values for men and women; when they produce policies and legislation that help re/produce social and political gender expectations; or when they constrain the expression and articulation of marginalized perspectives. The approach draws from sociological and constructivist institutionalism for their focus on meaning, values and norms as a reflection of socially imposed behavior and logics; but especially from historical institutionalism and its concern with the dynamic nature of institutions and their development (as cited in Thomson, 2017, p. 2). These continuity versus changes dynamics must be tracked down to determine the gendered outcomes they produce and to assess whether implemented changes to foster power redistribution are naturalized and institutionalized, or resisted and discarded (as cited in Mackay, et al., 2010, p. 582).

The approach claims that any institutional reform effort must involve changes to the asymmetric structuring of opportunities, gender relations and norms, in order to achieve broader institutional change. Thus, it acknowledges women's persistent disadvantage and underrepresentation and advocates for the inclusion of gender into institutional-level analyses of power distribution and barriers fostering cognitive biases, preventing women from taking up leadership roles and stalling the creation of gender-equal operations and programs.

With this in mind, it could be argued that Feminist Institutionalism has the potential to provide greater understandings of gender, power relations, and institutional change. For example, regarding the link between constructions of masculine and feminine acceptable behaviors to be displayed within institutions (Acker, 1992), such as the dominating masculine ideal; or by examining how gendered power dynamics frame decision-making and access to hierarchies within institutions (Mackay et al., 2010). Therefore, feminist institutionalism could also present the most encompassing theoretical and methodological tools to help us understand the institutional conditions under which change processes and initiatives succeed or fail. Such as the influential role of social actors – divided here as 'reformers' seeking transformation, and 'institutional enforcers' who uphold the status quo (Mackay 2014) – when they choose to challenge or to comply with an institution's gendered logic and power relations. Rigorous inquiries must tackle both (visible) laws, standards and protocols, but also the informal (hidden) institutional practices.

Regarding the influential role of social actors, one could highlight the work led by external and internal feminist activists to disrupt the status quo and to enhance some organizational initiatives; but lasting changes to gender power relations have better chances to succeed when supported by those with more power and a stronger voice within the institution (Holmes, 2020). In that regard, feminist institutional theory can work in unison with the notion of **critical actors** (Childs and Krook, 2006, 2009), which has usually been used "to explain progressive gender legislation, but it can also forward an understanding of why some gendered changes are resisted and obstructed" (Thomson, 2017, p. 11). (Holmes, 2020).

Building on the importance of a 'critical mass' of women to enact positive change within the gendered structure of institutions (Dahlerup, 1988, 2006), the concept of 'critical actors' advocates for key influential representation – able initiate reforms or play a central role in mobilizing others – rather than large representation. The key lies in the way these key "actors interact with a broader critical mass within their institution, and how this mass supports them" (As cited in Thomson, 2017, p. 5). This interplay of key critical actors supplemented with a critical mass of supporters can help explain the ways in which institutions can be sites of resistance and obstruction to gender-positive movements and to gendered legislation (as cited in Thomson, 2017, p. 1-2), which so heavily impact decision-making and women's access to hierarchies within institutions.

An understanding of key critical actors requires a feminist institutional research that considers the contextually dependent historical narrative mapping the 'composition of the legislature', the specific policy-making process in the institution, and the position of legislators towards the policy (Childs and Krook, 2009: 144).

As described, there are multiple theories of gender inequality that address the interrelated individual-, interactional-, and macro-level categories representing cultural ideologies (e.g., stereotypes and expectations) and material bureaucratic processes (e.g., mobility structures and limited access to resources) that disadvantage women. But feminist institutionalism, in particular, in combination with the literature on critical actors could provide the most encompassing focus to theorize the gendered nature of organizations and to assess variable outcomes (support vs resistance, success vs failure) of attempted institutional gendered change.

Nonetheless, it is still a work in progress that intends to supplement other approaches rather than to propose a fully structured and independent theoretical framework. Therefore, to

properly explain the multifaceted issue of gender inequality, this research aims at contributing to the literature on influential factors of institutional gendered change by merging the analytical bases proposed by feminist institutionalism alongside a more stablished macro-level organizational theory of gender inequality: The **theory of gendered organizations** proposed by Joan Acker (1990).

In Figure 3, the strategic association of these two theoretical approaches is visually represented. It must be noted that the process of 'doing gender' in conversation from the theory of gendered organization and its institutionalist discursive/constructivist equivalent were omitted as sources of data, because they required ethnographic evidence on interactive communication and mass mobilization that was unattainable during the Covid-19 pandemic mobility restrictions and its consequent organizational shifts towards remote working (see Figure 3 in the following page).

Figure 3. Integrated elements of mixed theoretical approaches
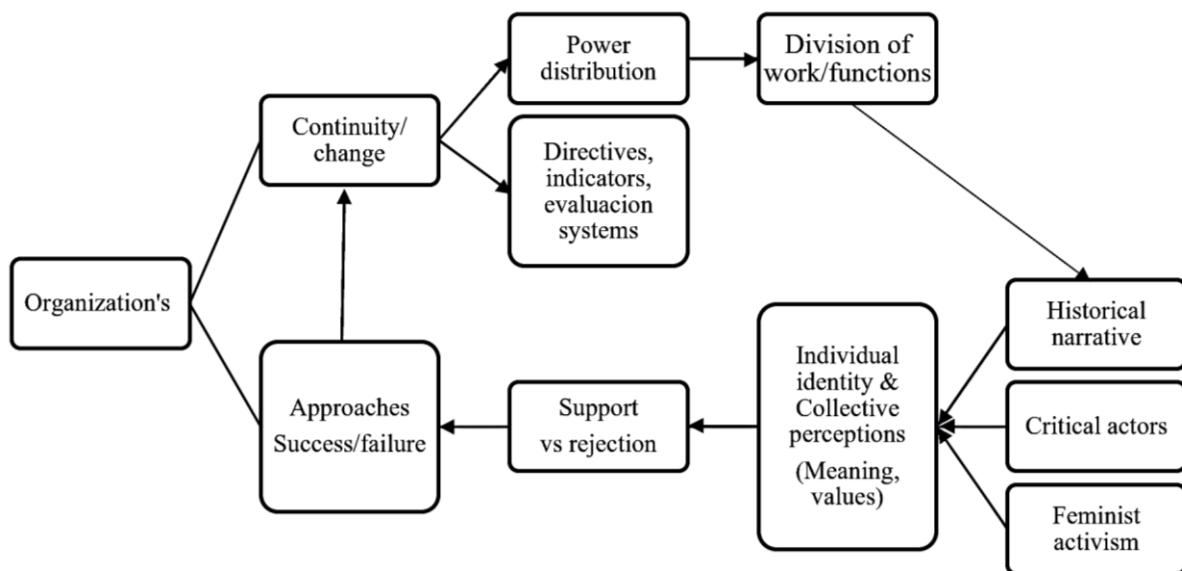
Source: Author's schema combining categories from Acker's gendered processes and Feminist Institutionalism.

Based on the combination of key elements of analysis proposed by Acker's gendered processes and the Feminist Institutionalism (See Figure 3) this study assesses, first, the dynamic relation of institutional continuity or institutional change manifested in the division of work of Colombian public universities that have successfully reached a gender-balanced distribution at their governance boards and administrative positions with directive responsibilities, over a timeframe of ten years. Therefore, it reviews the organization's historical narrative that plays

a role in the formation and recreation of collective ideologies. This initial assessment also considers written directives in terms of application requirements and evaluation proceedings set for administrative positions at the directive level alongside their respective formal definitions of functions.

Then, internal inclusion policies and non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions are analyzed to determine whether and to what extend these measures have influenced the positive outcomes identified. After that, supportive and resistant attitudes towards gender equality in general and towards gender equality organizational approaches are reviewed among the academic community to determine people's individual perceptions and collective ideologies on the subject. Lastly, the perceptions of critical actors were elicited through interviews rather than surveys, so that more in-depth explanations could be obtained, since they play an important decision-making role that can heavily influence the outcomes. These critical actors are represented by member of the administrative hierarchical level, particularly those with directive functions. The main premise of this study is that understanding organizational gendered substructures (practices, norms, and values) will allow for the formulation of recommendations for the design or adjustment of measures aiming at more sustainable effects (Acker, 2006a).

CHAPTER 5.

PREVIOUS EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

5.1 Personal, social and organizational barriers

In this section of the study, previous research findings are carefully reviewed and presented in two major categories addressing, first the personal, social and organizational barriers proposed by Ricardo Gaete-Quezada (2018) as influential factors behind women's underrepresentation at the top of the organizational hierarchy. The purpose is to inquire into the validity of those obstacles listed in the literature review from an empirical point of view.

Then, scholarly referents assessing the success or failure of affirmative actions are also examined in the literature. The review is particularly oriented towards references related to gender quotas in the organizational setting of universities. The goal of this delimitation is the identification of implemented approaches that could provide a general comparative guideline for academic research.

5.1.1 Work-life balance

As previously explained, employers expect women, on average, to be less productive or to be less constant and less reliable than men due to their multiple roles of child-rearing and domestic duties, in addition to their paid work. This expectation leads to the assignment of women to lower-responsibility positions (Strober, 1990) and to the postulation of work-life balance as the main influential factor behind women's underrepresentation in decision-making roles. Thus, barriers to professional promotion are attributed to women's responsibilities' overload and availability conflicts, which restrict their work continuity, their participation in professional trainings and/or their relocation (Tharenou, 1990).

Yet, there is evidence that the distribution of domestic work, marriage and children do not always prevent women's advancement into upper-management levels. Research have shown that women who purposefully pursue high-responsibility roles not only accumulate more experience than men accumulate in order to establish professional credibility (Bierema, 1996), but also exceed performance expectations (Tharenou, 1999). In Australia, for example, top

managerial levels and workplace authority did not differ between single women, married women without children, and mothers with little husband help (Wright, Baxter, & Birkelund, 1995). The main significance of this finding is that it shows women's awareness of the existence of male-dominated organizational cultures, and it illuminates their deliberate compensation strategies (Bierema, 1996).

5.1.2 Lack of relevant knowledge and skills

In terms of qualifications, the professional pipeline for women has expanded significantly over the last fifty years. In 2012, for example, women attending universities in the United States of America earned more academic degrees than men earned (Hill et al., 2016). Similarly, in Colombia, women account for sixty percent of the country's educational attainment at the tertiary level and circa sixty-four (63.7) percent of all adult women participate actively in the workforce (World Economic Forum, 2020).

Moreover, at the organizational level, managerial efforts such as the inclusion of mentoring, networking, and training opportunities for women have been implemented to prevent the leaky pipeline problem in male-dominated fields and to reduce gender bias and social isolation (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006). Therefore, there is unquestionable evidence of the growing number of women with strong academic backgrounds and professional experience. Still, after controlling for formal education, work experience, and performance, women continue to receive fewer promotions than men and the organizational setting of universities is not the exception in many Colombian universities (Solano Cahuana, 2021). Hence, women are less likely to advance to top-level positions (Hill, et al., 2016) despite their accumulation of human capital.

5.1.3 Occupational segregation

Even though, in Europe, there is evidence of a persistent "horizontal gender segregation in their higher education systems, as men and women tend to consistently engage in different specializations that can be connected with their traditional societal gender roles" (Macarie & Moldovan, 2015, p. 168). International data and empirical studies also show a growing female preference for traditionally male-dominated occupations, such as business or engineering (World Economic Forum, 2020; Solano Cahuana, 2021), which challenges the historical predilection of women for female-dominated occupations. Berry (1983) pointed out how those initial preferences were related to the more balanced work-family time distribution offered by

female-dominated occupations, despite their lower status and pay. Thus, many women are changing those ingrained cultural patterns by choosing more and more traditionally male-dominated occupations and by running for leadership roles. Thus, as shown in this review, lack of skills, motivations and work-life balance do not offer clear-cut justifications for the limited professional promotion of women (Griffith et al., 1997). Therefore, other factors must be assessed, such as the impact of socially influenced perceptions of gender roles and their respective congruent positions within the organizational hierarchy (Killen, López-Zafra, & Eagly, 2006; Eagly, 1987) or the impact of a gendered organizational culture (Marshall, 1993; Acker, 2006a).

5.2 The effectiveness of affirmative action for gender equality in universities

As for the unending controversy regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of affirmative actions, such as the gender quotas; scholarly assessments are being implemented all over the world. For instance, in Asia, the academic gender quota initiated almost twenty years ago by the Korean government, to achieve a twenty percent proportion of female full-time tenure-track faculty members in national and public universities, positively influenced the percentage of women in the ranks of Assistant, Associate, and Full professors. This quota did not include any punishment for failing to reach the target, but the incentives and ministerial directions were virtually coercive to individual universities due to their dependence on government funding" (Park, 2020, p. 3). All regulated universities were required to submit a report including their plan to achieve the quota within the following three years.

This finding supports the hypothesis that achieving certain percentage of women in the entry-level, can improve their overall representation at all levels of the academic hierarchy (McNeely & Vlaicu, 2010; Wallon et al., 2015). However, in the Korean case, this **cascade effect** did not apply to the highest leadership and administrative positions such as Dean, Provost, and President. Thus, their gender quota was only marginally significant in the areas where women are most severely underrepresented. Hence, women faculty still struggle to break through the glass ceiling without the universities' indigenous efforts to stablish mandatory requirements and monitoring efforts to dismantle the structural inequalities embedded in academia (e.g., Morley, 2013; Semela et al., 2017; Thomas & Davies, 2002, Park, 2020).

Verge and Lombardo (2021) also explain how policy failure is usually associated to deficient policy characteristics rather than to the political context surrounding the policy process. Thus,

an actor-centric approach examining the absence of support or contestation also needs to be factored in the empirical evaluation of policy failure. The authors argue that resistance, from actors seeking to maintain the unequal status quo, is a crucial meta factor explaining policy failure. This resistance could range from directly contravening the reform and denying the need for a reform (Lombardo and Mergaert, 2013; Verge et al., 2018) to not engaging in its debate and manifesting a passive inertia and lack of commitment with the policy purpose, such as lax or limited institutional oversight, which will hamper its legitimacy (Lombardo and Mergaert, 2013; May and Jochim, 2013; Waylen, 2014).

Following this line of thought, in Europe, Jolien Voorspoels (2018a, 2018b) evaluated practices, impact and attitudes toward gender-quotas inside a Belgian university. The study found 1) evidence of persistent gender stereotypes in contradiction to denial of gender inequality in contemporary society, 2) resistance towards gender quotas among most members of the academic community, and 3) a 7.5 increased percentage of women in decision-making bodies which slightly surpass the 33% required by their institutional quota decree but remains far from gender parity.

Likewise, in Colombia, my previous comparative analysis of the government's gender quota's records and institutional reports of quota regulated universities identified divergent results in the rate of female representation (Solano Cahuana, in press). This finding raises questions about the quota's potential to foster gender equality at the organizational level after two decades of its enactment. Scholars argue that to ensure a quota's effectiveness, the use of enforcement mechanisms, transparency measures, and sanctions for non-compliance are key (Nielsen, 2016; Sojo et al., 2016; Wallon et al., 2015). Yet, in the study, having an adequate quota size, defined enforcement mechanisms, and supplementary gender equality corporate strategies such as sex-disaggregated reports, explicit gender policies and/or institutional monitoring committees, were not enough to ensure favorable results. In fact, the highest board share for women was found in universities that only comply with the publication of sex-disaggregated reports, followed by universities that do not implement any of the supplementary strategies (Solano Cahuana, in press).

Hence, there are some less coercive actions that can heavily influence the quota effectiveness. Teresa Sacchet refers to these actions in her research about gender quota in Latin America, where she concurs that increasing the number of women in positions of decision-making may improve the attention to gender issues, but women's activism and alliances have also been

critical to provide incentives for collective action and to foster the politicization of gender issues (Sacchet, 2008). Therefore, an analysis of the impact of gender quotas must also include these categories of influential factors.

My previous study on quota compliance among colombian public universities also supports Verge and Lombardo's recommendation for further empirical revisions of the influential role of supportive versus opposing attitudes towards different gender equality organizational approaches. The suggestion aligns with the belief that an actor-centric analysis could help identify issues and power relations between different groups of actors and enlighten analyses of resistance to policy change (Verge & Lombardo, 2021).

CHAPTER 6.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Affirmative actions, such as gender quotas promoting positive discrimination often triggers debate about neutrality and meritocracy versus equality and ethic, which could impede their implementation. This outcome is especially feasible when there is skepticism or lack of commitment among critical actors with decision-making power. Therefore, insights from the organizational community in general and from administrative staff can provide valuable evidence of the organizational dynamics, (latent) resistance or, as it is expected in this study, supportive perceptions towards non-compulsory approaches to gender equality and towards equality policies, particularly gender quotas. To begin, it is necessary to build an overall picture of the current gender equality status in sampled settings.

Hence, the first research question explores the dynamic relation of institutional continuity or institutional change manifested in the division of work of selected cases over a timeframe of ten years. The objective is to determine **whether the gender-balanced distribution identified during the year 2020 within their governance boards extends to all administrative seats with directive functions of the organizational hierarchy and also persisted after several periodic changes of government**.

An examination of women's representation in the upper levels of the organizational hierarchy can also help establish what specific units and divisions are female-dominated. Especially since recruitment, promotion, and appointments to decision-making positions have different systems. For instance, governing board representations (e.g., students, teachers, alumni community representatives, etc.), require participation in open call contests while administrative roles with directive functions are mostly of direct appointment and removal from the rector, vice rectors, and/or the board of directors. External authority delegates of governing boards are also directly appointed by the president of the country, the ministry of education, and the regional governor respectively.

Likewise, an observation of the gender distribution within governing boards and among other administrative bodies with directive functions could also provide valuable evidence about individual beliefs and biased judgements related to gender appropriate roles. For instance,

specific positions to which women are recurrently appointed to by figures of authority, or gendered identity and ideologies manifested in personal motivations and confidence when applying to high-responsibility roles as board representatives.

Afterwards, written directives and indicators, particularly of the application requirements set for administrative positions at the directive level, are examined alongside their respective definitions of functions to determine **whether and to what extent their conceptualization and argumentation include gender implications that reveal an underlying gendered logic.**

Following the same line of documentary revision, an analysis of organizational approaches to gender equality, such as internal inclusion policies and non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, is conducted to identify specific organizational initiatives and their manifested or potential impact. Thus, it aims at **establishing how gender equality policies and strategies are being implemented, monitored and evaluated** under the assumption that they all play an important role in the prevention of gender stratifications at the organizational hierarchy.

Moving to the next analytical element of the theoretical framework, the study takes a closer look at attitudes of support or resistance towards gender equality in general and towards gender equality organizational approaches in particular. Since every social setting has specific values and ideologies, internalized stereotypes and biases that often reproduce within the organizational culture; it is necessary to identify individual perceptions and collective ideologies (Marshall, 1993).

Therefore, elicited data include attitudes and perceptions of the extended organizations' community's and of critical actors with decision-making power that can heavily influence the outcomes. In sum, the last questions assess **collective attitudes towards gender inequality in general and towards the different organizational approaches to the issue,** to determine whether the university's female representation is linked to high levels of collective support for gender equality initiatives and policies.

The objective is to identify gender-bias perceptions among the extended academic and administrative community and among members of administrative (directive-level) and governance bodies, to determine whether they acknowledge or deny gender-based discrimination and inequality founded in stereotypes in contemporary society and particularly in academic leadership. The question also aims at establishing whether gender equality affirmative actions are favored over less coercive actions or vice versa, and whether supportive

or resistant tendencies towards specific approaches can influence the organizational gender equality outcomes. To better represent the different variables under consideration and their link to specific questions and sources of data, see Table 4 below.

Table 4. Scheme of research questions

Research Question	Variables	Sources of data
Has the gender-balanced board distribution identified in 2020 also apply to previous years and extend to all administrative seats of the directive level?	Women's share at governance boards and among all administrative seats at the directive level	Internal statistical reports between 2010 and 2020
Does the wording of organizational standards, indicators and systems incorporate explicit gendered implications?	Application requirements and description of functions to administrative seats at the directive level	Documentary review
How are gender equality policies and strategies being implemented, monitored and evaluated?	Description of organizational approaches implemented to address gender inequality	Documentary review Semi-structured interviews
What are people's attitudes towards gender (in)equality and to what extent do they support or resist organizational approaches?	Collective attitudes towards gender inequality and towards different organizational approaches to the issue	Surveys Semi-structured interviews

CHAPTER 7.

METHODOLOGY

In the specific context of academia, Bird (2011) pointed out that as in many other types of organizations, universities are also gendered because their structural autonomy and variety of norms and services across units lead to ambiguities and incongruities that reproduce (gender) inequalities. When we understand the university as gendered, it is implied that the thoughts and actions of university actors also contribute to giving form and meaning to the university's equality practices (Voorspoels, 2018b). That being the case, any rigorous inquiry on the subject of gendered organizations must tackle both (visible) laws, standards and protocols, as well as the informal (hidden) practices emanating from individual and collective attitudes towards gender equality.

This dissertation aims at following those guidelines by addressing women's representation in universities' highest hierarchical levels not only in terms of their gender distribution overtime, but also by examining all implemented organizational equality practices and the supportive or opposing attitudes manifested by university actors from different levels of the organizational hierarchy. By focusing on cases with gender-balanced governance and administrative bodies, the research anticipates the manifestation of fully or at least partially divergent organizational logics and processes from those framed within gendered practices.

To ensure sample variety, purposive sampling was implemented for the strategic selection of cases and participants. Potential cases were initially chosen from official reports published annually by the Public Administrative Department (in Spanish: Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública) about the performance of all organizations regulated by the gender quota in Colombia (Ley 581, 2000).

However, after a closer comparative examination of management reports and meeting minutes from all public universities in the country – available online for public access at the universities' websites – the government's official list was deemed inaccurate. In the first place, because not all public universities are regulated by the gender quota, but also because for regulated universities, it is not compulsory to specify what positions are categorized as maximum decision level or as positions of other decision levels. Therefore, from these reports

it is not possible to determine whether women's current organizational positions truly have directive functions and decision-making power.

To address this issue, the selection of cases was based on data from the organizations' internal statements and reports, where only universities with fifty percent or higher female representation at their highest governance board, at the moment of the data collection, could be included. In the organizational setting of universities, the highest governance board is the board of directors.

As it was explained in the introduction chapter, only three out of thirty-three public universities had successfully reached fifty or near fifty percent gender distribution at their board of directors by 2020. Nonetheless in one of the three selected cases, statistical reports did not include sex-disaggregated data and a substantial amount of information regarding their academic council and their board of directors' distribution was missing from all annual reports older than five years.

In addition to that, a very small number of the third case's administrative staff at the directive level was willing to grant interviews. Consequently, Case U3 had to be excluded from further analysis. The remaining two cases were assessed in-depth using different types of data and methods to obtain a more accurate notion of their unique outcomes and the organizational practices that may have caused them.

7.1 Case study design

As previously stated, the purpose of this study was to generate and in-depth, multifaceted understanding of women's scarcity in academic governance. Scholarly literature has identified multiple influential factors behind this gender inequality issue (Acker 1990; Banaji & Greenwald, 2013; Catalyst, 1996; Davies-Netzley, 1998; Eagly & Carli, 2007a; England 2005; García-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2009; Griffith et al., 1997; Kanter, 1977; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004; Yates and Hughes, 2017), and how despite the implementation of different formal and informal measures the problem persists to this day in virtually all settings (academia, the military, politics, business, etc.).

There are, however, a few divergent cases that have managed to accomplish a balanced gender distribution at their highest hierarchical levels. Hence, it is only reasonable to take a closer look at their approaches to understand what they did, how they did it and what factors may have

influenced their outcomes to be able to replicate them.

To help with the comparison of organizational factors leading to these positive outcomes, a **multiple case study** design was proposed. The rationale for this choice involves the prospect of cross-level assessments of the micro-macro link of social behavior (Alexander et al., 1987). For instance, the influence of individual, group and organizational behavior in the outcomes, because "sometimes, we can get a better understanding of the whole by focusing on a key part" (Gerring, 2007, p. 1).

Another advantage of the multiple case study design includes its strong emphasis on contextual analysis and its focus on various facets of a phenomenon through the combination of methods and sources for data collection. Moreover, "in the examination of the impact of a policy, case studies are increasingly recognized as having an important role… since they are able to illuminate the effects of implementations on everyday activities" (as cited in Bryman, 1989, p. 144). Thus, the case study design was selected as the most adequate option to "provide an understanding of areas of organizational functioning that are not well documented" (Bryman, 1989, p. 144), as well as to assess previous studies' findings and the theoretical implications of identified outcomes.

7.2 Organizational characteristics of selected cases

Two universities were selected as extreme case studies due to their unique gender distribution at the highest governance board between 2019 and 2020 when the present study began. Their performance not only outscored the average female representation found among most public universities in Colombia; but they had already reached or surpassed parity despite having different approaches to gender equality in terms of policies (see Table 5). These outcomes raise further questions about the actual impact of affirmative actions.

Table 5. Selected cases based on highest female representation rates by 2020

Board of Directors		
Case	U1	U2
% Women's share	55	50
Gender Policy	Yes	No

Source: Author's compilation based on universities' internal report of board members

Yet, it must be noted that the generalized twenty and thirty percent female representation rates found at the governance boards of most public universities is usually and easily attained through the appointment of female delegates of national and regional authorities, such as the country's president, the Minister of Education and the Regional governor (Solano Cahuana, in press). Since the standard board of directors at any public university in Colombia is composed by 10 members, with three of them being delegates representing external authorities, the percentages presented in official reports are not adequate indicators of the gender quota's impact in internal processes and organizational practices.

It is also important to reiterate that on the contrary to universities with very specific discipline orientations – such as the case of many Hungarian Universities. Colombian universities usually include a wide arrange of academic faculties, such as humanities, basic sciences, law, engineering, political and administrative sciences, among others. Figure 4 illustrates how cases U1 and U2 both have faculties of law, engineering, architecture, administrative and economic sciences, social sciences, political sciences, and health sciences, whose presence is quite standard in most colombian universities.

However, since U1 is significantly larger that U2 not only in terms of infrastructure but also regarding its number of students, faculty and administrative staff, it is not surprising that it also includes a wider array of faculties, such as arts, humanities, basic sciences, mining and agricultural sciences (see figure 4). It is also visible that none of the two selected cases is specifically oriented towards professional fields historically considered as female-careers.

Figure 4. Faculty distribution of selected cases.
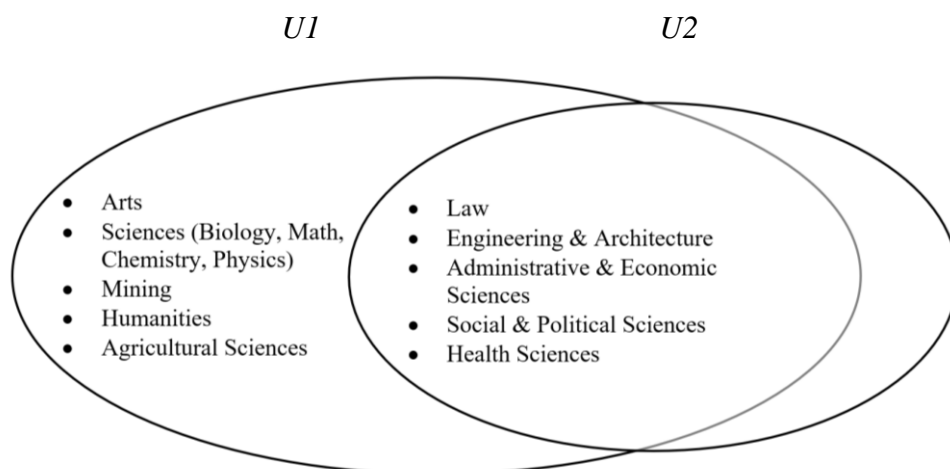
Source: Author's own diagram.

To tackle the query regarding the actual female presence in decision-making bodies, the gender distribution of all administrative seats with directive functions must also be reviewed alongside women's share on governance boards. All entities of the organizational directive level were clearly specified by the Colombian legislation and the Ministry of Education, as follows: 1) governance boards comprise the board of directors, the academic council and the unipersonal figure of the rector, who is also a member of the previous two boards (Ley 30, 1992); 2) the administrative distribution include six different levels with directive seats placed at the top (Decree 1210, 1993; Decree 1279, 2002).

It is important to mention that academic staff members can fulfill administrative roles as well, particularly those members who already part of the full time staff, also known as tenured employees . In fact, to reach some of the positions in the directive level (e.g., faculty dean), some universities require that suitable candidates must be in the category of associate professor – as it is the case in U1. Hence, in addition to a person's academic background and a given amount of professional and administrative experience in related areas; it is also important be part of the institutional tenure-tracking trajectory in order to move up to the directive level of the organizational hierarchy (See table 6).

Table 6. Organizational hierarchy of academic and administrative positions.

Academic	Administrative
Full Professor (titular)	Directive
Associate Professor	Consultant
Senior Assistant Professor	Executive
Assistant Professor	Professional
Instructor-Lecturer	Technical
	Assistance

Source: Colombian Ministry of Education (Decree 1279, 2002)

After reviewing the gender distribution of all governance boards and administrative seats with directive functions, it was found that in Case U1, its initially highlighted gender-balanced board of directors does not extend to its academic council nor to other directive bodies. Still, it remained as one of the case studies under observation because it is the only university - listed as quota-regulated - with an internal gender policy. Hence, it is a case with high comparative value.

In the visual representations of Figures 5 and 6, the board of directors (BOD), the academic Council (AC) and the rector of each university are highlighted in black color. The former represents the highest echelon of the hierarchy and is responsible for all institutional planning policies, regulations, internal control, disciplinary systems, and the designation of the rector, among other functions. Next in line are the academic council and the rector who is usually in charge of the offices of social projection, accreditation, disciplinary control, information technologies (IT), legal, planning, and the general secretary among others. These offices appear in the figures, in white color.

The middle hierarchical level is represented by the vice rectors and extension directors, highlighted here in grey color. Finally, the remaining list offices are clustered under their corresponding jurisdiction. It must be noted that sections under administrative (and financial) vice rector are denominated as divisions instead of offices (see figure 5 below representing the organization structure of U1 and figure 6 in the following page explaining the structure of U2). Interview participants' positions within the organizational hierarchy have been marked in their respective figures with a circular grey symbol next to the specific name.

Figure 5. Organizational structure of case U1.
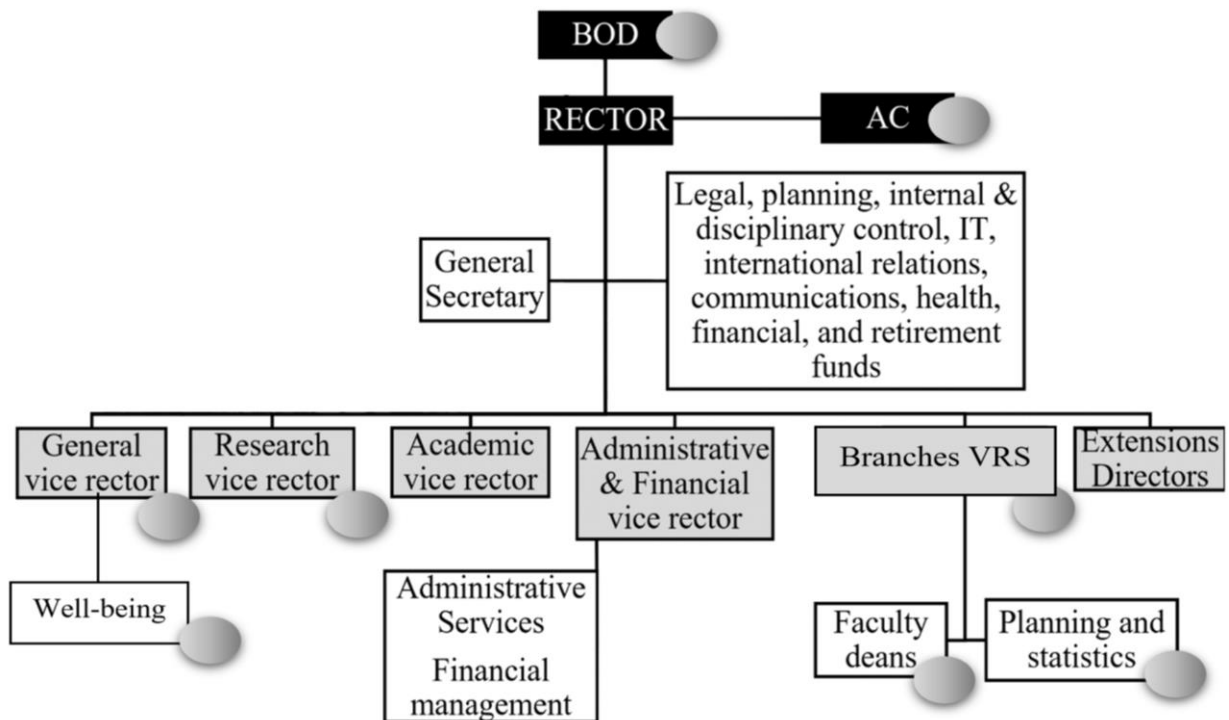
Source: University' online diagrams for directive organizational structure (condensed graphic).

Figure 6. Organizational structure of case U2.

As show in figures 5 and 6, the organizational structures of case U1 and case U2 are exactly the same at the top layer of the hierarchy, which includes the board of directors, the academic council and the rector. However, since U1 is significantly larger than U2, its organizational structure incorporates a more extensive number of vice rectors in order to manage its different branches and extensions around the country, its research production and other general departments.

Additionally, U1's distribution of offices and divisions can be slightly different from those in U2. For instance, in U2 the planning office is directly under the rector's jurisdiction as opposed to their placement under the jurisdiction of the vice rectors in case U1. In parallel, the well-being office belongs to human resources (HR) in U2 but to the general vice- rector in U1.

Furthermore, in U1, all faculties are under the jurisdiction of their respective branch campus' vice rectors. In U2, faculty deans and the research office belong to the academic vice rector's working team. Another difference can be seen in the office of interinstitutional relations, which in case U2, remains under the jurisdiction of the administrative vice rector as opposed to its direct link to the rector's office in U1.

Finally, the size of the Board of directors is almost exactly the same in both cases with an average total number of ten members that include the university's rector, a delegate of the Minister of Education or the Minister him/herself, a delegate of the country's president, and a delegate of the regional governor, alongside representatives of the students, of the teachers, of the graduates, of the Academic Council, of the productive sector and of previous university rectors. In case U1 the list also includes a representative of the National Council of Higher Education.

Within the academic council, however, there is greater variation. For instance, U1 has eight vice rectors and over twenty faculty deans, as opposed to the total of two vice rectors and five faculty deans in U2, which leads to a system of deans' representatives in U1. In addition to that, the academic council of U1 include teacher's representatives from different branch campuses and the director of university well-being, which is not the case in U2. Consequently, the academic council in U1 is larger than in U2.

Yet, in terms of functions, the general statutes of both cases stipulate similar obligations, such as the definition of their respective university's policies and programs; the issuance and modification of organizational statutes and regulations related to administrative, academic, financial, planning, hiring, and well-being spheres; the designation, suspension and removal of deans; the regulation of staff's benefits and of merit-based contests to obtain tenure; and the establishment of professional improvement training plans for faculty members, among others.

7.2.1. Application requirements and functions of administrative positions at the directive level.

On a more specific level, targeted interview participants were categorized as critical actors (Childs and Krook, 2006, 2009), due to their crucial role as sources of influence and decision-making in organizational outcomes. Their selection is rooted in the theoretically based assumption that these actors' skepticism or lack of commitment can obstruct the implementation of equality policies and strategies. In some cases, they could also foster resistance among their subordinates. On the contrary, supportive attitudes from these key individuals can initiate organizational reforms and play a central role in mobilizing others as well.

To understand the potential of these key positions to bring about change or to perpetuate the status quo, it is necessary to stipulate their specific functions and the set of requirements

stablished to reach those seats. The conceptualization of these functions could also have gender implications that might reveal an underlying gendered logic. Generally, administrative positions at the directive level are of free appointment and removal, but some require the participation of specific communities of practice within the organization to set candidates' short-lists, as it is the case in U1 for the designation of faculty deans. Overall, administrative positions from the directive level are in charge of the design, coordination, supervision and/or evaluation of policies, strategies, plans, programs and processes aimed at the academic development or the administrative direction of the university. Specific requirements and functions of every position from the directive level are summarized in the cross-case analysis' section.

7.3 Data collection

As it is typical in case study research, this investigation uses different approaches to data collection that combine qualitative and quantitative characteristics. The selection of cases and research subjects included purposive sampling (Merriam, 1988; Patton, 2002), also known as criterion-based sampling (Goertz & Lecompte, 1984), by choosing information-rich cases that match the stablished criteria of outstanding gender equality outcomes at the organizational level.

Surveys and Interviews data elicitation took place online over the course of three months between December 2020 and February 2021. But secondary data was gradually collected for over two years starting in August 2019. The documentary review took longer because it required the examination of a vast number of records in order to compile relevant information. The initial goal was to include historical records from before the gender quota enactment in the year 2000 to compare organizational outcomes and the regulation's impact. Nonetheless, due to the limited availability of written records, the timeframe for the comparative analysis of selected cases was set between 2010 and 2020. For that period of time, both cases' public records were still available in their respective websites, which ensure complete and accurate data.

Furthermore, during this decade-long timeframe both cases would have gone through three or four changes of rectors and consequently through changes in their internal government structure, which allows for the assessment of gendered selections of directive staff members and collective – potentially gendered – preferences for boards representatives.

As it was previously mentioned, secondary data involved the documentary analysis of organizational reports, statistics, meeting minutes from the boards of directors and the academic council, alongside written evidence of gender equality policies and any organizational program related to the dissemination of inequality issues and/or the promotion of gender equality initiatives and diversity strategies. The information was available in each university's official website.

Meanwhile, primary data at the individual level included semi-structured interviews with female and male administrative staff belonging to the directive level. This group was selected because their perceptions as critical actors (Childs and Krook, 2006, 2009), their ample professional experience at the university, and their first-hand knowledge of the university's practices and approaches alongside their decision-making power can provide valuable organizational insights. The goal was to obtain authoritative opinions and professional assessments of the organizations' standpoints and performances in terms of gender equality (Dorussen, Lenz, & Blavoukos, 2005), as well as evidence of attitudinal variation at different levels of the organizational hierarchy.

It is important to point out that one of the sections in the interviews' questionnaire inquired about individual professional trajectories. These specific questions examined participants' individual processes followed to reach high responsibility roles and their hurdles (if any) to move up the organizational ladder. Particular attention is given to their personal perceptions in terms of opportunities, gender-based social bias, and discrimination within the organization. The purpose of this section was to determine potential variations in the professional path towards higher responsibility roles among male and female interviewees, which could provide tacit evidence of organizational gendered practices over time.

All interviews took place online through different digital platforms according to participants' preferences. These platforms included Skype, Google meet, and zoom, which helped overcome limitations related to face-to-face interviews. They also provided more flexible and convenient conditions for participants' time availability (Deakin & Wakefield, 2013; Iacono, Symonds, & Brown, 2016), particularly amid COVID-19 travel and social-interactions restrictions worldwide.

Access to potential participants was achieved through institutional emails available to the public at each university's website and through snowball sampling after the first few interviews

were recorded. This strategy was particularly useful to facilitate the contact with potential participants that were initially unresponsive to emails. Afterwards, informed consents were digitally signed by the participants and interviews were arranged. Hence, the recruitment process was independent from institutional gatekeepers. Every interview took between thirty and sixty minutes depending on the participants willingness to elaborate on his/her comments and all conversations were audio-recorded – some were also recorded on video - and transcribed verbatim.

Alongside interviews, survey data were also collected online from the extended academic and administrative communities of selected cases in order to examine their collective perceptions about gender (in)equality and about their respective organization's approaches to the issue. Access to survey participants was also achieved through institutional emails available at the universities' online public contact lists and at the official national database of public servants (Función Publica, 2021).

Respondents' sampling took into consideration participants' current position within the organization. For instance, instructors and lecturers were not included in the survey sample because they had not entered the university's tenure-tracking system yet and therefore, their level of organizational involvement and their experience at the university is narrower.

Overall, the recruitment process for survey data was also independent from institutional gatekeepers. Spanish and English versions of all recruitment emails submitted to potential participants can be found in Appendix A. The questionnaire was designed to be completed in approximately five minutes and mainly consisted of 5-point Likert scales questions, except for demographic-related items and a question inquiring about any additional approach or program that the respondent may be aware of.

All responses were compiled using Google forms and analyzed through descriptive statistics to calculate the most prominent perceptions about the organization's current status in terms of gender (in)equality and about implemented and potential organizational approaches.

As noted, this study comprises two different sources of data and a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches in order to obtain an in-depth understanding of the issue and to cross-check the findings from different levels of the organizational reality and across cases (Bryman, 1989). Selected cases have been labelled as university one (U1) and university two (U2) for anonymity purposes.

7.3.1. *Participants*

The final count of survey participants included 242 academic and administrative staff members, whose specific positions within the organization are not mentioned due to confidentiality restrictions. Instead, participants could classify themselves among three general categories which include administrative staff, academic staff, or academic/administrative staff. The last combination is possible because academic positions with administrative responsibilities are customary within universities, according to the classification provided by the Colombian ministry of Education (Decree 1279, 2002).

It must be noted that participants, who answered 'prefer not to say' in their selection of gender, were not included in most statistical analyses because the gendered analytical focus of this dissertation could be better addressed in a sex-disaggregated format. Moreover, the number of respondents that selected the "prefer not to say" category account for less than one percent of the total sample. Thus, their number was too small to cause any significant difference in the outcomes.

Subsequently, interviews were conducted with members of governance boards and with heads of different administrative offices and divisions with directive functions to pursue a more in-depth analysis of the issue. Several interviewees with administrative seats also hold a role as invited members to the academic board and/or the board of directors. In those cases, they are usually allowed to attend the board's meetings but do not have a vote in the decision-making process. Still, they could provide some insights about opinions manifested during board meetings.

The positions of authority of every person participating in the interviews are crucial to the research focus of this dissertation because of the high impact their individual perceptions may have in the creation and approval of the organization's gender equality approaches and their explanatory power regarding the university's current performance.

A detailed description of every interview participant's position within the organizational hierarchy and their main demographic characteristics (e.g., gender, age, civil status, etc.), can be found in table 7 in the following page. It must be noted that the first eleven participants belong to case U1, and the last four participants represent different directive level positions from case U2.

Table 7. Demographic characteristics of participants.

Case	Sex	Position	Experience (years)	Age Range	Civil Status	kids
U1	M	Research Director (P3)	15	51+	Divorced	None
	M	Planning & Stats Director (P4)	15	51+	Married	2
	M	Extension Director (P11) Inv.AC	24	41-50	Married	3
	M	Secretary OAG (P13)	7	41-50	Single	None
	M	Extension Director (P12) Inv.AC	31	51+	Married	2
	F	Well-being director (P6) AC	34	51+	Single	None
	F	Integral Services Director (P7)	23	41-50	Married	1
	F	Branch Vice Rector (P8) AC	23	51+	Widow	1
	F	Branch Office/Div. Director (P9)	30	51+	Single	2
	F	Branch Labs. Director (P14)	25	51+	Consensual union	2
	F	Division Director (P15)	10	51+	Married	None
U2	M	Academic Council (P1)	21	51+	Single	None
	M	Academic Council (P2)	22	51+	Married	1
	M	Division Director (P10)	16	51+	Married	2
	F	Academic Council / Dean (P5)	21	41-50	Married	2

Source: Author's compilation based on elicited data.

Particular attention was given to the subjects' years of professional experience at their respective universities, to their age, to their civil status and to the number of children they have (if any), in order to examine variations between male and female participants. The reasoning behind the selection was also based on the gendered structures of organizations (Acker, 1990), where hidden structural barriers might delay women's progress up the organizational hierarchy. The targeted population in both cases, is located in similar hierarchical levels, thus, participants directive positions have high comparative value.

7.4. Data analysis

Regarding the general structure followed for the analysis of data, it must be stated that findings are initially described individually on a case-by-case basis. Then, further assessments take place from a cross-case perspective to identify emerging patterns and themes that could indicate commonalities and/or differences, and to determine their potential influence in the performance

of the organization in terms of gender equality rates. In the end, the theoretical implications of those findings are summarized, and conclusions are presented (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. General structure of data analysis
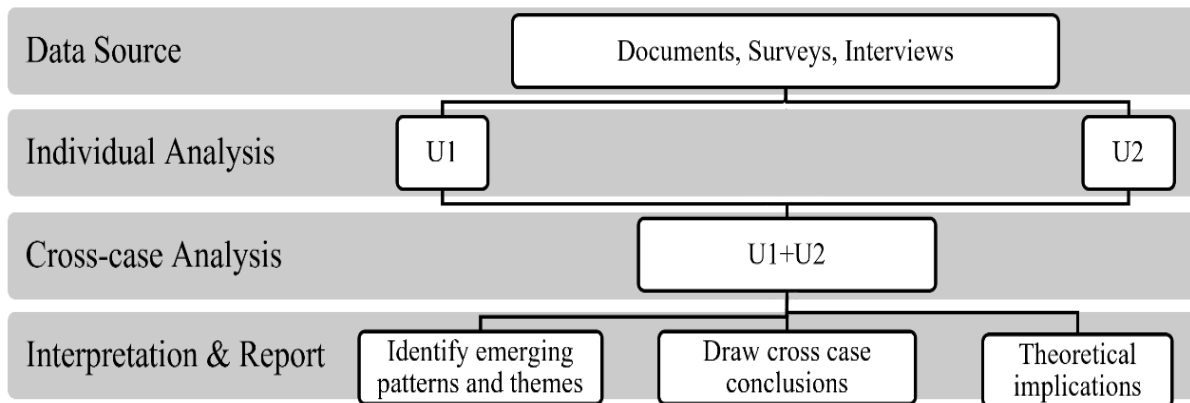
Source: Author's own diagram.

To answer the first three research questions inquiring about the boards' gender-balanced distribution actually extending to all administrative seats with directive functions, about an underlying gendered logic within organizational directives and indicators, and about the existence and implementation of gender equality policies and strategies; the analysis of data started with a documentary review. The review applies content analysis in the assessment of multiple reports, statistics, and policies to identify consistent patterns and relationships (Given, 2008) between gender distributions, organizational directives in terms of functions, responsibilities and requirements, and specific approaches towards gender equality.

Afterwards, survey data incorporate descriptive statistics assisted by cross-tabulations to address the last question about collective attitudes towards gender inequality in general and about the positive or negative impact of different levels of support towards equality approaches in female representation at the highest echelons of the organizational hierarchy.

Likewise, elicited semi-structured interviews address the fourth research question following a qualitative approach to identify what, how and why selected cases have reached gender parity (Yin, 2012), with a special focus on the perspective of staff members from the directive levels. To analyze interviews' data, a variety of descriptive and explanatory categories have been defined (Spencer, Ritchie, & O'Connor, 2003). A more detailed explanation of these categories is provided in the following subsections.

7.4.1 Documentary review

As stated, the first step of the documentary review focused on the gender distribution within governance boards and administrative positions with directive functions, which were assessed over a timeframe of ten years, based on available statistical reports in order to have symmetrical data and comparative accuracy. Provided that directive staff generally change every three or four years in public universities, as their service duration is influenced by that of elected rectors, a Time series examination over ten years would cover at least three different governmental periods.

After that, the specific functions of these directive roles and the specific requirements to attain those positions are also examined. The idea is to evaluate any potential variation in the levels of responsibility attributed to every position as well as any potential variation in terms of decision-making power.

In the final step of the documentary review, gender equality organizational policies and/or non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions were also examined. The analysis aimed at identifying what do those policies and/or initiatives contained, how were they implemented, and how were they assessed and reported in each of the cases studied. Later, the perceived relevance of these institutional practices is further assessed using primary data elicited through surveys and interviews with staff members belonging to different layers of the organizational hierarchy.

7.4.2 Survey

Survey data analysis was initially based on 244 responses. As a first step, respondents' demographic characteristics were examined using descriptive statistics. Overall, results show that in U2, ninety-three out of 229 administrative staff and full-time academic members responded to the survey, which accounts for a response rate of forty-one percent of the total population listed in the university's institutional reports.

On the other hand, the system implemented in U1 to request people's participation was different from the one implemented in U2 due to the university's multitudinous full-time staff, with a total population of administrative staff and full-time academic members of over 5000 members. Thus, for this sample, not everyone's contact information was available online, still over 1500 people from the reported population were reached by email and 151 people responded. Thus, the response average in U1 was lower than the one registered in U2.

7.4.2.1 Survey participants' demographic characteristics

Overall, almost half of the respondents (forty-seven percent) identified as female while fifty-two percent identified themselves in the male category and less than one percent of the total preferred not to mention his/her gender (see Table 8). So, the number of survey respondents in each case, was fairly balanced in terms of gender.

Table 8. Respondents by gender

Category	U1		U2		$\bar{x}$
	N	%	N	%	%
Man	78	51.6	49	52.6	52.1
Woman	71	47	44	47.3	47.1
Prefer not to say	2	1.3	-	-	0.8
Total	151		93		100

Source: Author's compilation based on elicited data.

In terms of age, groups with more than 51 years old accounted for exactly half of the responses (fifty percent) in both observed cases, followed by the groups of participants between the 41- and 50-years old range, which represented an average of over thirty-four percent of the responses – this group is more numerous in U2 than in U1. The lowest participation in both cases came from staff members younger than 30 years old with an average of only three percent of the responses (see Table 9).

Table 9. Respondents by age ranges

Category	U1		U2		$\bar{x}$
	N	%	N	%	%
Less than 30 years old	7	4.6	1	1	3.3
Between 31-40 years old	23	15.2	7	7.5	12.3
Between 41-50 years old	44	29.1	40	43	34.4
More than 51 years old	77	50.9	45	48.3	50
Total	151		93		100

Source: Author's compilation based on elicited data.

Furthermore, in term of staff categories, members of the academic staff group were the most participative in the survey reaching seventy-two percent of the responses, followed by those belonging only to the administrative category. Meanwhile, the number of respondents who categorized themselves as executing both administrative and academic functions comprised less than nine percent of all the responses. The ratio of respondents from that group was exactly the same in both cases observed (see Table 10).

Table 10. Respondents by staff category

		U1		U2	$\bar{x}$
Category	N	%	N	%	%
Administrative	25	16.5	23	24.7	19.7
Academic	113	74.8	62	66.7	71.7
Both	13	8.6	8	8.6	8.6
Total	151		93		100

Source: Author's compilation based on elicited data.

When it comes to the highest academic level reached by the respondents at the moment of filling out the survey, the largest contribution came from to those with graduate education comprising both master and doctorate degrees. The number of responses within this category account for seventy-nine percent of all the responses. On the contrary, participants with bachelor's degrees as their highest academic level account for less than ten percent of all the responses, followed closely by those marking specializations as their highest level of education (see Table 11).

Table 11. Respondents by degree of education

		U1		U2	$\bar{x}$
Category	N	%	N	%	%
Bachelor	18	11.9	6	6.4	9.8
Specialization	10	6.6	17	18.2	11.1
Master	41	27.1	58	62.3	40.6
Doctorate	82	54.3	12	12.9	38.5
Total	151		93		100

Source: Author's compilation based on elicited data.

Finally, with respect to the different faculties the respondents belong to, participation rates were more evenly divided among different departments. In descendant order, the top three faculties that combined provided over sixty percent of the responses were the faculty of engineering and architecture, the faculty of social sciences and humanities, and the faculty of administrative and economic sciences. Every one of these three faculties accounted for an average of twenty percent of the responses collected during the data elicitation process, particularly among the respondents from case U2.

Being next in line, the faculty of health sciences supplied over sixteen percent of the responses – particularly among the respondents from U1 – and fourteen percent of the responses were provided by the faculty of sciences. The lowest number of responses came from the faculty of law with less than three percent of the total and from those respondents who categorize themselves as administrative staff members not related to any faculty. Consequently, it is assumed that the latter group of participants belong to different administrative offices and divisions of the university (see Table 12 in the following page).

At this point, it is necessary to emphasize that U2 does not have a faculty of sciences – as it was shown in Figure 4 during the description of selected cases' organizational characteristics – but they do have a program of basic sciences that does not belong to any specific faculty yet. Thus, survey participants belonging to this program often registered it as an independent option. The program was added here to the category of sciences after closely reviewing its specific subjects and establishing their affinity to programs listed at the faculty of Sciences in case U1.

Likewise, the faculty of humanities stands alone in U1, and it does not exist in U2, but due to U1's respondents' recurrent answers mixing humanities with the faculty of social and political sciences, it is assumed that these staff members fulfill roles in both faculties. Hence, to avoid any miscalculations, the distribution of U1's participants among these two faculties were clustered into one single unit listed as Social/political Sciences and Humanities (see table 12 in the following page).

None of answers provided by the survey participants specifically reported being staff members of the faculties of arts, the faculty of mining, or the faculty of agricultural sciences. Consequently, these three faculties were not included in the descriptive table presented in the following page.

Table 12. Respondents by faculty

Category	U1 N	U1 %	U2 N	U2 %	x̄ %
Administrative Staff	10	6.6	5	5.3	6.1
Admin. & Econ. Sciences	25	16.5	20	21.5	18.4
Health Sciences	29	19.2	12	12.9	16.8
Engineering & Architect.	33	21.8	21	22.5	22.1
Social/politic. Sc. & Humanities	25	16.5	23	24.7	19.8
Sciences	28	18.5	6	6.4	13.9
Law	1	0.6	6	6.4	2.9
Total	151		93		100

Source: Author's compilation based on elicited data.

In summary, older academic staff members, both male and female, from the faculties of engineering, architecture, economy, social, and administrative sciences were more willing to participate in the survey than their younger counterparts in other faculties. The age of the participants in the dominant group might also explain why the majority of the responses came from those with graduate level degrees of education. For the category of gender, participation was particularly balanced, therefore, it cannot be stated any higher disposition between men or women to take part in the online survey.

7.4.2.2 Collective attitudes' categories of analysis

After examining the demographic characteristics of the sampled population. Their perceptions of gender inequality in general and their attitudes towards organizational equality approaches within their universities were also assessed. To clearly illustrate observed similarities and variations, the average distribution of elicited responses is presented in different categories of analysis for every case.

For instance, the analysis of collective attitude towards organizational approaches inspects respondents' indications of how important or how irrelevant they considered specific equality polices (e.g., maternity leave, equal opportunity, affirmative actions, etc.), as well as less coercive strategies (e.g., awareness campaigns and educational actions, gender equality committees, leadership training, among others) on a 5-point Likert scale. A detailed list of the

different policies and non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions proposed in the surveys can be found in Table 13 below and in Appendix D at the end of the dissertation. Table 13 also includes the codes assigned to every policy and strategy.

Table 13. Gender equality polices and non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions

Policies	Non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions
Institutional anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policies for recruitment and promotion (ADP)	Educational actions (conferences, seminars, etc.) on inclusion, equal opportunities, and non-discriminatory practices (EA)
An obligation to have 30% of directive boards made up by members of another gender (Q)	Appointing faculty representatives to be responsible for equal opportunities programs (FR)
Flexible work-arrangements (FW)	Networking opportunities (N)
Maternity paternity leave (MPL)	Leadership and management training programs (LMP)
	Recognition of people and units promoting diversity and equality (R)
	Sponsorship for career advancement (S)
	Advertising campaigns promoting inclusion and diversity (AC)

Source: Author's compilation.

Simultaneously, to evaluate collective perceptions about gender inequality issues in general and particularly within the context of higher education institutions, modern sexism subscales were established based on Jolien Voorspoel' sexism scale (2018b; see also Dierckx, et al., 2017). In other words, the scale aims at determining subconscious gender stereotypes and denials of inequality/discrimination patterns listed into two main categories.

Stipulated categories were assessed through different statements about men and women's social roles, their attributed characteristics for appropriate behavior, their differentiated social roles, and their current conditions as member of the society. For instance, whether men and women are treated the same way in social settings, whether discriminatory patterns are (no longer) an issue in Colombia, and individual opinions about who is better suited to succeed in a position of leadership – men or women, among others. See table 14 below for a list of the proposed statements with their respective assigned acronyms.

The level of agreement or disagreement manifested by participants for every single statement would help determine whether and to what extend gender stereotypes and biases are still present in people's mentality. The last statement (number six) aims at double-checking people's denial of gender stereotypes with a reverse coding that assesses participants' supportive or resistance attitudes towards organizational efforts in terms of gender equality (see table 14).

Table 14. Manifestations of modern sexism (MS)

	Statement	Category
1	Women should be cherished/protected by men (PW)	Gender stereotypes (MS_GS)
2	Men are less likely to fall apart in emergencies than women are (MSE)	
3	Men are more suited to leadership than women (ML)	
4	Discrimination of women is no longer a problem in this country (ND)	Gender stereotypes denial (MS_D)
5	Society treats men and women the same way (M=W)	
6	Better measures should be taken to achieve (gender) equality in the workplace (BM)	Denial (Reverse coding)

Source: Voorspoels (2018b)

Since observed cases were selected for the gender equal distribution at their highest governance board. Primary data from online surveys was evaluated according to the following assumptions:

1. Sexist perceptions' ratio will be low among surveyed participants from both universities.

2. Support for non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions will be high among both communities but only participants from U1 – which has a gender-specific equality policy – will be highly supportive of gender quotas.

3. Female participants will be more supportive of gender quotas than male participants will be.

7.4.3 Interviews

The selection of interview participants started with a purposive sampling system (Merriam, 1988; Patton, 2002), but eventually shifted towards a snowball sampling model when direct requests for collaboration failed to be effective. All respondents were categorized as critical actors due to their positions as members of the universities' directive staff and/or governance boards. Therefore, they either directly participate in decision-making processes, or contribute with the coordination and assessment of the organization's programs, offer advice and support for the creation and development of different initiatives and have first-hand knowledge about organizational processes, policies and initiatives.

Interviews were conducted in Spanish and lasted between thirty and sixty minutes, depending on participants' willingness to engage in extended discussions. Spanish, being the mother tongue of all participants, was selected as the language of communication to avoid misunderstandings and any potential limitations with English language proficiency.

Data was collected between January and February 2021 and all conversations were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Some of the recordings also include video, even after giving participants the opportunity to turn off their cameras, because they wanted to simulate a face-to-face interaction with the interviewer. In any case, the data analysis only focuses on the content of spoken interaction without considering any physical behavior manifested by the participants during the meeting.

The sample comprises a total of fifteen members of governance boards and different administrative bodies from the directive level (eight men and seven women) of the two selected universities. The majority of the interviewees came from case U1. In general, the directive level in U1 is three times larger than the directive level in U2, with over ninety directive positions. Therefore, having more interviewees from U1 is rather favorable for a more accurate assessment of shared tendencies and attitudes.

Furthermore, seventy-five percent of the whole set of participants reported being over 50 years old while the remaining twenty-five percent reported ages between 41 and 50 years old. Male participants reported an average of seventeen years of professional experience at the university, and female participants reported an average of twenty-four years of experience and as previously mentioned, all interviewees hold administrative seats at the directive level and in some cases, they also have membership in governance boards.

In terms of marital status, the majority of male participants reported being married and to have between two and three children, two of them stated to be divorced at the moment of the data collection, one of them has a child, and the remaining two male respondents claimed to be single and childless.

In the case of female participants, four of them reported being married (or living in a consensual union), one of the married female participants doesn't have any children, the others do. Another participant is a single mother of two children, one remains single without children and the last one is a widow with one child.

Initial observations from the participants' demographic characteristics and particularly from the identified choice of more than half of the women interviewed to remain childless or to have just one child, raised questions about a potential individual awareness of the limitations that motherhood can pose for professional advance. This speculation is closely reviewed and fully explained in the following sections when these women's perceptions towards personal, social and organizational barriers are further discussed.

The structure used for the analysis of this set of data, follows the scaffolding guidelines of the qualitative analytic hierarchy proposed by Spenser, Ritchie, & O'Connor (2003). Within this analytical scheme, the interpretation of meaning moves along different stages of data management to sort and synthesize the data in order to facilitate descriptive and explanatory accounts.

During the data management phase, interviews were transcribed verbatim using a simplified version from the discourse transcription conventions of the Santa Barbara Corpus (Du Bois, 2003), which is presented in Table 15. Overall, only basic transcription conventions were included to keep track of long pauses, lengthening sounds, or truncated word as they could indicate doubt, emphasis, and self-restrain. Additionally, comments from the researcher were also specified in the transcription to indicate any descriptive notes.

Table 15. Discourse transcription conventions

Meaning	Notation
1. Truncated/cut-off word	wor–
2. Long pause, and omission of irrelevant information	…
3. Lengthening	=
4. Researcher's comment	(( ))

Source : Simplified transcription conventions (Du Bois, 2003).

Afterwards, coding categories were stablished to extract and analyze the information collected (see Table 16 in the following page). During this stage of the analysis, the NVivo software was used to label and sort out the data. Subsequently, in the descriptive accounts phase, identified analogous themes were translated into English and clustered into four main dimensions to help summarize and synthesize their association with the last two proposed research questions (see table 16 in the following page).

Finally, in the explanatory accounts phase, patterns of associations within the data were identified to determine similarities and differences among participants' experiences and perspectives depending on the characteristics of the organization they belong to and depending on individual gender identities. The final goal is "to build an explanation based on the way in which different meanings and understandings come together to influence the outcome" (as cited in Spenser, Ritchie, & O'Connor, 2003, p. 216). Lastly, the link to theoretical referents and their implications for successful development of policies and of less coercive practices is addressed.

Table 16. Interviews' coding categories

Questions	Topic	Dimensions	Coding categories
How are gender equality policies and strategies implemented, monitored and evaluated?	Organizational practices	Actions and strategies	Equality Policies (EP) Description non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions (EIA) Description Evaluation and Report
What are the collective attitudes towards the status of gender (in)equality in academia and towards different organizational approaches to the issue?	Collective and Individual Attitudes		(EP/IS) Supportive (EP/IS) Resistance
		Personal barriers (*Individual Focus*)	Work-life balance Skills-motivation Occupational segregation
		Social barriers	Gender stereotype references Implicit bias (work performance) Accept/deny patriarchal order, discrimination, or gender-based inequality
		Organizational (*gendered*) barriers	Direct scouting Merit-based/gendered promotion and recruitment No difficulties over promotion

Source: Author's compilation based on emergent patterns and scholarly referents

CHAPTER 8.

RESULTS

Following the general structure previously proposed for the analysis of data, an initial case-by-case description is conducted, starting with the revision of documentary evidence to determine the gender distribution of governance boards and administrative bodies at the directive level, and followed by the revision of any organizational equality approach being implemented in the two selected case studies.

8.1 Case U1 - Documentary Evidence

At this stage of the analysis, governance boards 'gender distributions were examined alongside the gender distribution of all other administrative bodies at the directive level over a ten-year period. The purpose of this timeframe was determined due to limitations related to the availability of data, still, it is extensive enough to observe potential variations after several changes of government.

Spaces marked with a dash (-) indicate that during that year, the respective office or division had not been created yet. Likewise, spaces marked with an 'X' show missing data from that respective year, which are not included in the corresponding annual calculation of female representation. Any blank space in the table indicates that, during that year, the position was filled by a male member if the directive staff.

8.1.1. Time series analysis of Gender distribution

Within the academic council and the board of directors, members' service period ranges between three and four years, depending on their role as elected representatives or delegate members, which means that a decade long examination should allow for the observation of at least three different institutional government terms. Specific years where a new rector is elected have been indicated in Table 17 in **bold** font. Table 17 also indicates how female representation in the board of directors of U1 has been progressively growing until successfully reaching parity in 2020. In its academic council, however, women's share has stagnated in an overall average of seventeen percent (17.6%) during the same period of time. The election of a female rector in 2018 fostered an overall increase in female representation among members of both

governing boards but not beyond the average values seen in previous years, particularly at the academic council.

Table 17. U1 Time series analysis of women's share at governance boards.

		2010	2011	**2012**	2013	2014	**2015**	2016	2017	**2018**	2019	2020
Board of Directors	Del. President											
	Del. MEN	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Vice Min.				F	F	F	F	F			
	Higher Ed.											
	Del. Governor											
	A.C. Rep.											F
	Prod.sect. Rep.											
	Teachers' Rep.					F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Students' Rep.				F		F			F	F	F
	Graduates Rep.											
	ExRectors'Rep											
	Rector									F	F	F
Annual Average (%)		10	10	10	30	30	40	30	30	44	44	55
Academic Council (Including the rector)	General VR	F	F									
	Academic VR	F										
	Res/Exten. VR					F	F	F	F			
	Branch 1 VR & Deans											
	Vice Rector			F								
	Arts							F	F			
	Sciences											
	Agricultur. Sc.	F	F	F								
	Economic Sc.											
	Humanities							F	F	F	F	F
	Politic./Soc.Sc.											
	Nursing	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Engineering									F	F	F
	Health											
	Veterinary				F	F						
	Odontology	F	F									
	Branch 2 VR & Deans											
	Vice Rector	F					F					
	Architecture											
	Sciences											
	Agricultur. Sc.											
	Hum./Econ Sc.											
	Mining									F	F	F
	Branch 3 VR & Deans											
	Vice Rector											
	Management	F	F	F								
	Exact/ Natural Sciences											
	Engin./Archit.							F	F			
	Branch 4 VR & Deans											
	Vice Rector											
	Agricultur. Sc.				F	F						
	Engin./Manag.						F	F	F			
	Branch 5 (no deans)											
	Vice Rector	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		F	F
	Students' Repr.					F	F	F			F	F
	Students' Repr.					F	F					
	Teachers' Repr					F	F	F				
	Teachers' Repr											
Annual Average (%)		20.6	14.7	11.8	8.8	20.6	20.6	23.5	18.1	14.7	20.5	20.5

Source: BoD's and AC's meeting minutes of the general secretary.

These outcomes support previous research regarding the marginal influence of gender quotas on women's representation at the highest positions of universities. It is important to reiterate that almost every seat at the directive level is of free appointment and removal from the rector. Therefore, an overrepresentation of women in administrative positions with supportive functions rather than positions with leadership and assessment functions could still indicate gendered distributions. Thus, it is not only about how many women are present in the directive level of the hierarchy, but also about the specific positions they are being appointed to after every change of institutional government.

With this in mind, a thorough observation of positions permanently held by women highlights their presence as delegates of the minister of education at the board of directors. Next in line are teachers' and students' representatives, and the delegate of the vice-minister of higher education. On the other hand, women's presence in the academic council is more restricted, even though the number of members in this board is three times larger. The only position permanently occupied by a woman in the academic council is the dean of the nursing faculty. Apart from it, the role of students' representatives and the dean's position at the faculty of humanities have also been filled by women in the last few years.

Moving down the organizational hierarchy, Table 18 shows women's share in all administrative positions at the directive level. It is important to indicate that since all vice rectors and faculty deans have already been listed in Table 17, they are not being reported again in this data assemblage, but they are added to the total in order to provide an accurate calculation of women's share in these directive roles.

Collected data shows a twenty-eight percent average (27.8%) female representation in administrative positions at U1's directive level, over the past ten years. Their most recent rector's election took place in 2018, where a female rector was designated for a three-year governance period. The two preceding terms the rector's position was held by the same male figure, who was reelected in 2015. In this cluster, specific positions permanently filled by women include all divisions under the administrative and financial vice rector, such as administrative services, budget, treasury and accounting.

Next in line are the office that manages the affairs of academic and administrative staff, the office of international relations and the general secretary (see Table 18). Only the gender distribution of the office of academic information was omitted from the analysis due to a

substantial amount of missing data.

Table 18. U1 Time series analysis of women's share at directive-administrative seats.

		2010	2011	**2012**	2013	2014	**2015**	2016	2017	**2018**	2019	2020
Directors (National level only)	Financial &Admin	F	F									
	Extension 1							F	F	F	F	F
	Extension 2											
	Extension 3				F							
	Extension 4	-	-	-	-					F	F	F
	Planning & Stats											
	Legal Affairs			F		F	F					
	Internal control											
	Disciplinary Control						F	F	F	F	F	-
	International Relations			F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Health Office						F	F	F	F	-	-
	Communicative											
	Retirement Funds						F	F	F	F	F	-
	Digital Strategy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-		
	Acad. & Admin. Staff	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	
	Well-being Office							F	F	F	F	F
	Undergrad. Programs									F	F	F
	Graduate Programs	F	F	X	X	X	X					
	Academic Innovation							F	F	F		
	Admissions Office	X	X	X	X							
	Research and Labs	-	-	-	-	-	F	F	F	F	F	
	Extens. & Intelect property	-	-	-	-	-						
	Libraries	F	F	F	F	F	F					
	Editorial	X	X									
	Budget Division	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Admin. Services Division	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Treasury Division	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Accounting Division	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
General Secretary				F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Female Representation (%)		26.3	22.8	22.8	21	22.4	31	34	34	34	32.2	25.4

Source: Author's compilation based on universities' internal report of directory members.

8.1.2. Procedure and minimum requirements to be granted a tenured post

Considering that the first step to climb the organizational hierarchy towards the university's directive level is to be granted an academic position indefinitely. The documentary review also included published resolutions available from different faculties during their most recent calls for application.

Concretely, suitable candidates must fulfill several specific requirements, which have been stablished in internal regulations from the academic council and the boards of directors (both agreements are cited at the beginning of the resolution, but specific numbers are omitted for anonymity purposes).

The process begins with the verification of available places and the launch of an official call for application by the respective faculty's dean. The call for application must include the dean's

resolution with the number of positions available in every department, the specific professional area and hiring modality (e.g., lecturers, associate professor, full-time professor, etc.), and the list of minimum requirements, which include:

- A bachelor's degree and graduate education in a field related to the available professional area. When applying to a lecturer's position, a research master's degree can be accepted; but for most positions, doctoral degrees are specifically required.
- Teaching experience of 128 hours, and
- Professional experience or research experience in the specific area of at least one year in full-time mode with its respective work certifications and supportive evidence of research production.

After the registration period is completed, minimum requirements are reviewed by the faculty's secretary and the list of eligible candidates is published. Non-selected applicants have two days to submit their complaints via email to the faculty dean, who must address those complaints during the following five working days. Once all complaints are handled, an updated list of eligible candidates is published.

The following step is the revision of the candidates' curricula, which is conducted by an evaluation panel designated by the respective faculty council. The panel assesses candidates' compliance with the following list of criteria:

- Teaching experience at the university level
- Professional experience in the specific area
- Research experience in the specific area
- (B2-Competent user) English Language proficiency (30 points)
- Field related research production (articles, books, book chapters, patents etc.)

It must be indicated that the numbers of points assigned to teaching, professional and research experience and to research production vary according to the functions of the respective position. However, the distribution of points for each category could range from 100 to 150. The total number of points is fixed to a scale of 300 points.

Afterwards, candidates must present and pass a skill test, with written and oral components. The written component entails a workplan proposal whose structure, coherence, innovative quality, and feasibility is evaluated according to its link to the university's mission and

functions in terms of teaching, research and extension. The oral component comprises an online oral presentation of the proposal and an interview that measures candidates' communicative, pedagogical, and interpersonal relations' abilities. Finally, the list of winners is published. The information is officially released, with the advice of the media office, through internal massive means of communication, in particular de website of the respective faculty.

In general terms, no explicit gendered references were identified in the texts. Yet, specific requirements for doctoral academic backgrounds and prolific research production might be restrictive for women juggling with full-time jobs and household responsibilities. Therefore, further information about individual perceptions and approaches taken to manage the issue must be addressed in the interview section.

8.1.3 Organizational approaches

Case U1 has an institutional policy, which was designed by the university's general vice rector, along with the well-being office and the gender affairs observatory in 2012 to address gender equality issues and to foster equal opportunities for men and women. The specific policy's name and internal agreement's number is not included here to comply with anonymity conditions, but it is important to indicate that the policy is founded on national legal parameters to foster equal opportunities to participate in public administration's decision-making (Constitución política de Colombia, 1991; Ley 581, 2000; Ley 823, 2003), to spread awareness on gender inequality issues and to set up mechanisms for the prevention, handling and sanction of violence and discrimination towards women (Ley 1257, 2008).

Moreover, following the lead of the well-being office, the policy incorporates all administrative units of the university including offices and divisions. For instance, the well-being committee is in charge of regulating all programs, strategies and activities proposed, the human resources' division is responsible for the equal gender distribution of academic and administrative staff, and the academic council and curricular committtes are responsible for the inclusion of the gender approach in academic courses and academic research. Its core goals – translated verbatim – include:

1. The implementation of formative processes within the gender approach with the academic community,
2. The insertion of the gender perspective and the differential rights focus in all academic programs,

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3. The endorsement and consolidation of research production linked to higher education and gender equality, and

4. The implementation of communicative strategies and initiatives to raise awareness and to transform people's gendered perceptions and organizational practices.

With this in mind, three strategies were stablished at the institutional level:

- Institutional strategies and institutional measures for a socioeconomic redistribution that supports the most vulnerable population in order to facilitate their permanence in the university.

- Institutical strategies and measures to acknowledge cultural diversity and to promote the active participation with equal opportunities for all its members in the university life.

- Prevention, identification and monitoring of gender-based violence to raise awareness and provide support for victims.

Every one of these strategies is divided in a variety of actions, but for the research focus of this dissertation only the most relevant sections will be further described. For instance, within the strategy of **socioeconomic redistribution** some of the actions proposed to foster equality, include:

1. Fostering women and minority groups' access and permanence at the university.
2. Fostering women and minority groups' access to graduate education.
3. Fostering gender equality in the directive bodies of the university, with representation and active participation in the university life.
4. Fostering actions to prevent gender segregation in academic training, research, extension and professional practices.
5. Identifying and following up on vulnerable students to guarantee their permanence at the university.
6. Offering access and promotion equal opportunities to female public servants of the university
7. Facilitating the access to well-being programs targeting pregnant women, women's heads of their households, disabled women, and women geographically displaced by the violent conflict in the country.

8. Promoting flexible working hours and flexible study schedules for people with children or people in charge of caring for other relatives, who properly submit evidence of their circumstances.

Next, within the strategy of **diversity acknowledgement and recognition**, the list of proposed actions comprises:

1. Enhancing women' and men' equal recognition in all internal university regulations.
2. Developing and consolidating an institutional plan that includes gender equality measures.
3. Promoting the use of inclusive and non-sexist language inside the university
4. Discouraging the use of stereotypical references and meanings,
5. Elaborating sex-disaggregated statistical reports, and
6. Promoting programs to support community members responsible of caring roles at home
7. Encouraging gender studies' research.
8. Developing lectures and intersectional curricular plans within the gender perspective.
9. Fostering gender equal enrolments to all academic programs.

Finally, the strategy addressing **gender-based violence** is currently the most developed since it has awareness campaigns and protocols already in place to prevent and attend to reported cases of violence among members of the university. Yet, since this section is not part of the research focus of this study, the specific institutional actions proposed will not be further described.

In terms of implementation, the directive office for administrative and academic staff is in charge of ensuring equal promotion and equal participation in all work-related activities and in the university life. Also, the academic council, the academic vice rector, and all branches' academic directions must promote the inclusion of the gender approach in their curricula and in their research projects, but no specific guidelines are included in the policy for execution processes.

The coordination and direction of the policy was assigned to "the well-being direction, who must regulate all policies, programs, activities and strategies related to gender equality and equal opportunities at all levels of the organizational hierarchy – transcribed verbatim from U1's gender equality policy's responsibilities. But the assessment of measures and initiatives

implemented within the frame of this gender policy was assigned to the gender affairs observatory based on the information systems currently in place at the university. However, in the published version of the policy, the observatory was categorized as an advising entity whose functions and procedures are determined by the well-being direction as well.

In the documentary review, no specific evaluation guidelines had been defined. Consequently, to elicit updated information on the topic, the director of the well-being office has been interviewed as part of the primary set of data of the present study.

8.2   Case U1 - Surveys: Attitudes towards sexism and equality approaches.

8.2.1   *Modern Sexism: Denial of discrimination and gender stereotypes.*

Once again, the survey inquiries about participants' perceptions of modern sexism through a denial of discrimination and gender stereotypes. These perceptions are measured according to their level of agreement to three different statements on discrimination (presented below). The initial assumption that *sexist perceptions would be low among all surveyed communities,* based on the outstanding gender distribution identified in 2020 was examined here.

Statement 1: *Society treats men and women the same way. (M=W)*

Statement 2: *Better measures should be taken to achieve equality in the workplace. (BM)*

Statement 3: *Discrimination is no longer a problem in this country. (ND)*

Table 19. Denial of discrimination – U1 (%)

Categories	Agreement		Disagreement		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
M=W	0.12	0.07	0.77	0.86	0.12	0.07
BM (reversal)	0.81	0.90	0.09	0.04	0.10	0.06
ND	0.08	0.04	0.83	0.92	0.09	0.04

Source: Author's survey data compilation

Table 19 illustrates how most male and female respondents disagree with the statements that men and women are treated equally (77 percent of the male respondents and 86 percent of

the female respondents) and that discrimination against women was no longer a problem in Colombia (83 percent of the male respondents and 92 percent of the female respondents). The high levels of agreement among men and women with the reversal code suggesting the need for better gender equality measures also reflects a high level of awareness about discrimination being an issue. Only a small percentage of the respondents denied the persistence of discrimination by agreeing with the statements that society treats men and women the same way (12 percent of the male respondents and 7 percent of the female respondents) and that discrimination is no longer a problem (8 percent of the male respondents and 4 percent of the female respondents). The percentage of respondents that remained undecided about their opinions was also very small, particularly among women.

Thus, the first assumption that sexist perceptions would be low among all respondents is only partially supported in terms of attitudes towards discrimination. The interpretation is considered as partial because participants' opinions are more divided when addressing the subject of gender stereotypes (See Table 20 in the following page). To analyze gender stereotypes the survey formulates the following statements:

Statement 1: *Women should be protected by men. (PW)*

Statement 2: *Men are less likely to fall apart in emergencies than women are. (MSE)*

Statement 3: *Men are more suited to leadership than women are. (ML)*

Table 20. Perceptions of gender stereotypes – U1 (%)

Categories	Agreement		Disagreement		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
PW	0.54	0.37	0.18	0.37	0.28	0.27
MSE	0.14	0.06	0.41	0.72	0.45	0.23
ML	0.03	0.03	0.76	0.92	0.22	0.06
$\bar{x}$	0.24	0.15	0.45	0.67	0.32	0.18

Source: Author's survey data compilation

Table 20 displays how most male and female respondents disagree with the statement that men are more suitable leaders than women are (ML). The percentage of disagreement was almost total among women (ninety-two percent of their responses). Yet, for the statement of men being less likely to fall apart in emergencies (MSE), only forty-one percent of the male respondents disagreed while forty-five percent remained undecided or neutral, as opposed to seventy-two percent of the female respondents who marked open disagreement. Following a similar trend, on the idea that women should be protected by men (PW), more than half of the male respondents agreed (fifty-four percent) and twenty-eight percent remained neutral. Meanwhile, female responses were more evenly distributed among those who agree, disagree or remain neutral.

Overall, the ratio of men that disagree with the statements was two times higher than the ratio of men who agreed. For women, the total disagreement was three times higher than the number of women who agreed with the statements. Nonetheless, when the total of male respondents that remained undecided is combined with those who agree with the statements, they account for more than half of the whole male group taking part in the study.

Hence, sexist perceptions in terms of gender stereotypes are not as low as they were initially expected to be in this group of participants. In other words, the empirical evidence collected in this case does not fully support the proposed assumption that sexist perceptions would be low among all respondents.

8.2.2 Attitude towards non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, policies and gender quotas

Regarding the collective attitudes towards different organizational approaches to gender equality, it was initially assumed that the level of ***support for non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions would be high among all surveyed groups but only universities with internal policies would be supportive of policies,*** considering that the lack of equality policies might be the result of an open rejection for more coercive measures and a collective preference for alternatives approaches. Thus, in U1 with its gender specific equality policy, the rate of support was expected to be high for both, policies and non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions. Participants' responses corroborate the assumption since male and female respondents manifested high levels of support for non-compulsory gender equality initiatives and actions

towards. On average, seventy percent of the male respondents and eighty-one percent of the female respondents agreed with the options provided, which included: advertising campaigns promoting an inclusive and diverse image of leadership, the appointment of faculty representatives responsible for equal opportunities, the formal recognition of people and units promoting diversity and equality, the implementation of leadership and management training programs, networking opportunities, career advancement sponsorship, and educational actions on inclusion and non-discriminatory practices (See Table 21).

Table 21. Attributed importance to non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions – U1 (%)

Categories	Support		Rejection		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Advertising Campaigns	0.69	0.85	0.13	0.04	0.18	0.11
Faculty Representatives	0.62	0.75	0.17	0.03	0.22	0.23
Formal Recognition	0.62	0.82	0.17	0.07	0.22	0.11
Leadership and Management Training	0.67	0.77	0.09	0.04	0.24	0.18
Networking Opportunities	0.76	0.80	0.06	0.06	0.18	0.14
Career Advancement Sponsorship	0.78	0.87	0.04	0.03	0.18	0.10
Educational Actions	0.78	0.85	0.05	0.03	0.17	0.13
$\bar{x}$	0.70	0.81	0.10	0.04	0.20	0.14

Source: Author's survey data compilation

The number of respondents manifesting being against non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions is slightly higher among the male group, with ten percent of their respondents in the rejection category as opposed to 4 percent of the female respondents.

Regarding the level of support attributed to equality policies, the assumption that all respondents from U1 would be supportive of equality policies, due to its internal gender policies, seems to be correct. The categories with the highest support rate were that of flexible work-arrangements and the implementation of institutional anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policies. In these categories the percentage of supportive women was between six and sixteen percent higher than the percentage of supporting men. This was also the case for the support manifested for maternity and paternity leave regulations (See Table 22 in the following page).

Table 22. Attributed importance to equality policies – U1 (%)

Categories	Support		Rejection		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Antidiscrimination Policies	0.77	0.93	0.05	0.00	0.18	0.07
Gender Quota	0.46	0.59	0.26	0.08	0.28	0.32
Flexible Work-arrangements	0.88	0.94	0.03	0.06	0.09	0.00
Maternity-Paternity Leave	0.59	0.70	0.08	0.11	0.33	0.18
$\bar{x}$	0.68	0.79	0.10	0.06	0.22	0.14

Source: Author's survey data compilation

The least supported of all policies was the gender quota as it is also shown in Table 22. Among the responses, more than half of the male respondents disagreed with the enactment of gender quotas or remained undecided on the topic as opposed to the support manifested by sixty percent of the female respondents. However, a difference of thirteen percent between the level of support manifested by female and male respondents is not striking, Therefore, the assumption that *women participants would be more supportive of gender quotas than male participants* is not completely accurate either.

8.3 Case U1 - Interviews: Attitudes towards influential factors and organizational approaches to gender inequality in academia.

The final stage of the data collection involved online semi-structured interviews with different members of the directive bodies, categorized here as critical actor with influence and decision-making power, as well as first-hand knowledge of the university's programs and evaluation systems. But before moving forward it is important to reiterate that since case U1 is significantly larger in terms of staff number, the sample of interviewees from this university is numerous.

Thus, the main objective of the interviews was to connect with critical actors from the directive level of the organizational hierarchy, who could provide valuable insights about the university's approach to gender (in)equality and share their own perceptions about the need and value of those approaches. Their responses are presented below according to the specific coding categories previously described in the methodology section. These responses also

include some insights from their individual professional trajectories and their attitudes towards different groups of gendered barriers and towards different organizational approaches (which they describe in their own words). Questions about their individual experiences were included since they could also play role in the individual attitude towards the (gender) equality and toward specific approaches to the issue.

8.3.1 Individual professional trajectories: From tenure to the directive level

After some general questions related to demographic information, such as age, gender, civil status, among others; the interviewer asked about the process followed at each university to recruit, hire, and promote staff members to the directive level. The purpose was to assess whether the scholarly statement about women not facing barriers to enter the workplace, but to advance up the organizational hierarchy (Decker, n.d.) stands true to the work setting of higher education organizations.

The interviewer also inquired about participants' individual trajectories to obtain tenure and to get higher-responsibility roles afterwards. Participants reported that every few years the university publishes **open calls with specific requirements to be granted tenure** track positions, as can be seen in the following interviews' extracts:

> "*I started working as a research assistant in the year 1996... from there I remained linked to the university through different projects and contracts... in 1999 I started a master's degree and in 2005 I had the opportunity to study a PhD abroad… In 2008 the university posted a call for applications to become a full-time professor and I applied, and I got in*" (P11_Male)

> "*I finished my PhD in 2013, eh= but before that year I remained linked to the university with different projects and consultancy jobs, I was teaching some courses too. And then, in 2014 when the university's call for applications was published, I applied and got the position of full-time teacher*" (P13_Male)

As it was the case for these two interviewees, most male candidates briefly mentioned their academic trajectory to obtain doctorates as an essential part of the process while working as consultants and participating in different projects on a contractual basis. Those references to call for applications for full-time positions are also interesting, since it was usually male respondents who mentioned them.

Within the female group, the trajectory seems to include an additional step where they contested to become adjunct professors and remained in those roles for several years before being promoted to full-time positions. An adjunct position not only limits a person's possibilities to conduct research and make publications – which is a key requirement to advance to directive roles – but it also involves some financial disadvantages as it is a part-time and contractually based position.

> *"One has to advance step by step… I started working with the university through contracts as an occasional lecturer… in the year 1996, two years later a call for applications was posted for the position of adjunct professor… which I fulfilled for about ten years and well, I kept trying to climb the ladder. So, I got involved in research, which helped me advance to a part-time position…it's not easy to get promoted... because of the limited vacant positions, but also because there must be political willingness from the administrative staff with decision-making power* ((to promote women))… *eventually I became a full-time professor…"* (P14_Female)

> "*I joined the faculty through a call for applications to become an adjunct faculty member em= the position required to have a PhD em= I won the contest and worked as an adjunct professor for three years and in 2014, I was promoted to the category of full-time professor… and= that is when I could get invested in research because as an adjunct and without a doctorate degree you are not allowed to do research...*" (P16_Female)

It is also important to note that only female participants seem to be aware of the barrier represented by the lack of support from those with decision-making power to promote women to full-time positions. Yet, differences in participants individual trajectories to get tenured appear to be determined by a personal choice to either directly apply to full-time positions or to join the university's workforce with an adjunct position.

The tendency to apply for a lower level in the academic hierarchy seems to agree with the statement of women lacking motivation to compete for positions of high responsibility, which was mentioned in the literature (Corinne, 2017). Thus, they would be voluntarily placing themselves in more restricted roles with fewer professional and financial benefits that also lead to a longer trajectory in the labyrinth of professional advancement. The finding also seems to reinforce the statement that men are more likely to run for leadership roles (Yates & Hughes,

2017). But one must consider the specific requirements to apply for one position or the other, since there are multiple exogenous factors limiting women's professional advancement too. For instance, their social roles in the private sphere might delay the attainment of doctorates or limit their time availability to conduct research, as it was also stated in the literature review.

The interview continued with specific questions about respondents' personal **trajectories to directive roles**. Both male and female respondents agreed on the importance of building up a strong professional profile in terms of academic preparation, research and professional experience, but the men interviewed described the process as easy and straightforward where a figure of authority directly appointed them to a directive position. Women respondents, on the other hand, pointed out to their assignment to coordination roles before being promoted to the directive level.

> "*Well, the promotion process to directive roles is not very complicated, in my case for example, when the new rector was elected eh= I was invited to join the new directive team thanks to my professional experience and my good teaching and research performance at the university… so I guess that the governance bodies saw me as having a suitable profile*" (P10_Male)

> "*I started as a program coordinator; I led two different programs before being promoted to the role of division director*" (P7_Female).

It is not clear from the answers provided, whether male respondents followed a similar trajectory to that of the female respondents to reach their current directive position and simply did not give more detailed descriptions, or indeed, the differences identified in the data are the result of biased perceptions from appointing bodies towards female candidates, which might help explain their placement in coordinating roles as a way to test their performance before promoting them to higher responsibility positions. Actually, the notion is not too bold, as Sevil Sümer and his colleagues had previously stated that "women are likely to be the majority in limited academic citizenship… referring to positions with lower salaries and associated benefits, poorer promotion prospects and less voice in institutional decision-making processes" (Sümer, O'Connor, & Le Feuvre, 2020, p. 21).

Additionally, having an extended research experience, as previously stated in the documentary review, is also a core requirement to strengthen a person's professional profile, to increase the number of points received during the evaluations and consequently, to increase their chances

for promotions. When interrogated about facing obstacles over their individual professional paths it was generally the female candidates who made references to facing rejections for research. Only one of the male interviewees claimed to have also experienced difficulties related to his research being rejected for publications. He attributes those difficulties to his research focus on gender (in)equality issues and discrimination, which could be seen as a manifestation of subtle bias (see theoretical frame) about the relevance or importance of those topics.

> "*When it comes to the review of articles, the apparent sex of the author matters… just like the place from where you write matters, I have experienced it myself, especially here in Colombia*" (P8_Female).

> "*They see my work as something that does not belong in mainstream sociological research… I take it as an obstacle in my career, because it is precisely that, it is about legitimacy, recognition and about being heard*" (P13_Male)

Other factors identified by the female interviewees as gender-differentiated obstacles included issues of work-life balance that demanded supplementary efforts and sacrifices in the private sphere to be able to advance professionally. According to scholarly research, this is a dimension that often impacts negatively not only how women are perceived in terms of suitability for more demanding positions involving relocation or a higher investment of time, but also their own willingness to apply for those positions. Yet, the category of self-exclusion does not apply to the individual experience of many of the women interviewed in this study. In fact, they deliberately pursued higher responsibility positions, even at the expense of their role as mothers in other to succeed professionally.

> "*I had to manage the time to take care of my kids, to take care of my house, to buy groceries, to take the kids to school, and well, most of my male coworkers did not have to do any of these activities*" (P14_Female)

> "*I have to admit that I dedicated myself too much to my work, and that I probably did not spend enough time with my kids when they were children… I neglected a bit my children in the process, but had I done things differently, I would not be where I am today*" (P14_Female)

Other female participants openly manifested their lack of interest in administrative roles due to

the limitations imposed by these positions to conduct research and to teach, thus supporting previous scholarly findings (Yates & Hughes, 2017).

> "*I had always avoided these academic-administrative positions because they are too time-consuming and I… let's say, I like teaching and I am an active researcher, and eh= both areas would have been affected*" (P8_Female)

On this topic, the male opinion generally praises women's ambitions, laborious efforts and outstanding performance in administrative roles, but they also hold women accountable for their own limitations and justify their scarcity in decision-making positions as a result individual choices and professional conformism (also linked to lack of ambition).

> "*I think that this should be a matter of conviction, from women… they can manage any administrative role, and they should aim higher… I wouldn't know what the reason is, if women lack leadership skills, or there are other circumstances that also affect them… or because they lack a bit of motivation to take over the role… Now, it is not about deciding fifty-fifty like a rule*" (P12_Male)

Other respondents attributed women's disadvantage to the effect of the society on people's mentality towards appropriate roles and social expectations for men and women. These traditional division of social roles induces stereotypical perceptions of appropriate behaviors and functions (implicit bias), which – as expressed in the literature – is a **social barrier** linked to the persistence of a patriarchal order fostering gender discrimination and inequality.

According to the female respondents, these perceptions permeate into the organizational level; but except for a couple of interviewees, most of the male respondents acknowledged the existence of discrimination in the Colombian society, but claim that this does not apply to the organizational setting of academia, particularly within their respective universities:

> "*The academy is patriarchal, it has a logic of hegemonic power… if you see, in the education setting, there is a pyramid, in the base are the pre-school's teachers, all of them are women… when you arrive to the university, female teachers are already a minority*" (P15_Female)

> "*There is still a lot of resistance, in general, from the society but not so much from the academic community… the academic community, I believe, is increasingly more*

convinced that it is beneficial to stabilize and balance these gender equality themes"
(P3_Male)

Moreover, sometimes gender-based stereotypes spread to people's perceptions of intrinsic abilities and deficiencies, and consequently to differentiated perceptions of gender appropriate functions leading to dissimilar appointments for male and female staff members to administrative roles. As it was found in these references highlighting female communicative skills in contrast with their assumed disadvantage in terms of mathematical reasoning and their frequent presence in female "appropriate" positions.

"*We know that women have a strong advantage in communication, eh= both written and verbal… they read better… and men have some advantage in quantitative analysis*"
(P4_Male)

"*A member of the directive staff, arriving from the main campus, said that to manage the new university branch, women should be hired because they knew how tidy up houses… I could see… in his language, a stereotypical classification of women's tasks versus men's tasks*" (P9_Female)

Thus, such references highlight how stereotypical perceptions perdure in the male mentality about women's innate abilities and traditionally acceptable social roles, which could help with the interpretation of the recurrent appointment of women – usually by a male figure of authority – to administrative areas with coordinating functions and to offices managing communication and community relations as it was found in the university's time series analysis of gender distribution.

Finally, within the dimension of **organizational barriers**, most of the female participants but only a couple of the male participants manifested being aware of women's underrepresentation in administrative positions of the directive level, as it is shown in the following interviews' excerpts:

"*Office directors of well-being are usually men; only the smallest university branches are being led by women… there are always more men than women… I do believe that there is a gap and some kind of hegemony that must be closed*" (P6_Female)

"*In the academic council there should be more women but there are very few, I mean*

they never even attain half of the board seats, because like I tell you, for these positions there has always been a whole male chauvinist tradition that does not allow women much access to that level" (P4_Male)

Predominantly, the designation to positions in the directive level was described as a *direct scouting* process, where participants were approached by the rector or a vice rector and invited to either become part of their administrative team or to submit their curriculum for consideration. These declarations accurately met the indications enacted by the national congress (Ley 909, 2004) to regulate public employment, administrative careers, and public management, as well as the guidelines of every university's statute.

As a final note, it is necessary to indicate that multiple references were made (by both male and female interviewees) to the merit-based promotion and recruitment systems of the selected universities. Most comments simply stated the fact that the only way to join a tenure-tracking career at their respective university is by following a competitive recruitment process that involves a written test, an interview, and psychological assessments, among others evaluation processes (see the documentary review section for a detailed description of this process). In other cases, a more critical attitude was manifested towards the limitations of this meritocratic model.

"*We had recruited a new teacher and I said that in my opinion it should be a woman but obviously, if you put that in a public call for application you would be accused of positive discrimination… then I was told no, you cannot put in a call for application that you would only accept women*" (P11_Male)

8.3.2   *Non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, policies and gender quotas*

This dimension aims at providing responses to the third question regarding organizational practices currently being implemented to promote gender equality inside the universities, paying particular attention to the difference between formal policies and non-compulsory equality actions and initiatives. Even though, specific approaches were previously described in the documentary review, interview data aims at eliciting updated information to the records found in organizational documents, alongside the identification of individual attitudes from members of the directive level towards those approaches.

Case U1 is a leader among Colombian public universities on the subject of policies focused

specifically on gender, their policy addresses the issue of inequality from different perspectives (equal access to services, social awareness, equal opportunity and gender-related violence), but so far, their efforts are mostly oriented towards gender violence related issues. Thus, participants reported mainly about different non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions that are currently being implemented at the university, such as the logistical support provided by the university to organized feminist groups of students to raise awareness on the issue of gender inequality from multiple angles. Some of those strategies were implemented for a short period of time and were later dismissed without further explanation, such as the gender equality training for staff members.

> "*We have been working on assertive communication campaigns within the gender perspective... we also have events on the subject, yesterday for example we organized multiple conferences about the International Day of Women in science… students' activist groups also organize multiple activities in relation to gender issues, so we support them with resources, space, and logistics… that way we collaborate in the process of spreading social awareness*" (P6_Female)

> "*We organized discussion panels with invited external experts to socialize the topic with teachers, students, and administrative staff, also until 2019, we had a gender equality training process for all members of the gender committees of the university*" (P7_Female)

From all the strategies discussed, the most interesting one was the experimental gender parity admission of students, which was being tested at one of the university's branches at the moment of the data collection with the goal of becoming a policy applied to all university's branches if positive outcomes are reported at the end of the trial period. Interviewees declared that the initiative had to overcome multiple legal obstacles and internal opposition at the organizational level before being implemented. The gender parity admission initiative could also constitute a first step towards promotion processes with positive discrimination (a system that should be already in place considering that the university is listed as a quota regulated organization), but the assessment process of this experiment was still delayed at the moment of the data collection due to obstacles and organizational changes that had been taking place since 2019, in response to the Covid-19 crisis.

> "*We are conducting a pilot experience in one of our branches, with a gender parity*

admission system" (P4_Male)

"*So, we decided to do a gender parity admission, which means that we would admit the first forty male highest exam scores and the first forty highest scores among women applicants in every one of our programs*" (P8_Female)

Finally, in terms of the mechanisms used for the **evaluation and report** of these policies and strategies, interviewed members of the directive level acknowledged the absence of formally established monitoring mechanisms as well as the absence of plans to address that drawback in the coming years. Until now, the organizational assessment in terms of gender equality is based solely on statistical reports of gender distributions within administrative offices, divisions and within governance boards. One of the respondents even mentioned that when the performance of the university's offices and divisions in terms of equality practices is negative, the information is not published which raise doubts about the accuracy of the information currently available to the public.

"*We are not really examining the impact of the policy yet because that is a long-term assessment… what we measure are quantitative indicators of goals achievements, the percentage of participation and the management of resources*" (P6_Female)

"*Well, there were some reports from the gender affairs observatory that were not published… because the results were bad for the university… eh= and there are many research projects and reports that I started at the observatory… but that are now buried into storage*" (P13_Male)

8.3.2.1   Supportive and opposing attitudes

When asked about their opinions towards the relevance and potential benefits of formal **equality policies and affirmative actions** (in particular gender quotas) at the organizational level of their respective universities, all of the women participants strongly agreed that these types of affirmative actions are not only positive but necessary to foster equal opportunities. On the contrary, only two of the male interviewees expressed a supportive opinion towards equality policies.

"*Yes, we definitely need to build public policy at the institutional level because if they are not tied to the institutional government plan, if they do not have resources, if they do not have people in charge of the processes, everything will be reduced to good*

intentions, and we would have start over and over again… then, good opportunities would be lost, and resources would be wasted" (P6_Female)

"Policies can be too bureaucratic, but in a public institution like this, where administrations change more or less every three years and where there are so many people working for short terms. I believe that it is necessary to set a strong base about what should be done, and the policy is fundamental for that… otherwise everything would depend on the good will of the person in charge, but a policy would become transversal and structured" (P7_Female)

For non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, supporting opinions were more unified between men and female interviewees. Both groups of respondents manifested awareness of the less-coercive organizational approaches currently in place to inform about the issue and to foster equal opportunities. However, very few personal opinions about their relevance or effectivity were provided and in cases where personal perceptions were actually expressed, the central idea was that strategies are a great complement to policies. Their complementary value is linked to their potential to raise awareness about the issue among the extended academic and administrative communities of the university and to contribute as follow-up dynamics on the implementation of policies.

"I believe that the students' feminist groups are very valuable, because their participation has been key to raise awareness and to question the university on the issue of gender equality… I believe that the university should promote more of these informal dynamics from the community, while at the same time fulfilling its responsibilities from directive positions… I think these two could be complementary" (P13_Male)

"I believe both options ((non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, and equality policies)) *are necessary"* (P7_Female)

Since all female interviewees openly supported formal organizational practices including gender equality policies and affirmative actions, it is not surprising that most of the resistance, rejection and critical attitudes came from male participants. In some cases, these participants fully rejected and openly criticized affirmative actions and formal policies as suitable approach to the gender equality issue. In other occasions, male participants simply acknowledged their neglect to participate actively in the process.

"More than any law, it is all about the conviction of the academic community that things should be like that, and everyone at the individual level should find a way to deal with it" (P3_Male)

"Now, it is not about deciding fifty-fifty like a rule… In my office I have not developed any equality initiative or training program for the division staff… to be honest I did not consider it necessary" (P12_Male)

It is noteworthy to reiterate that none of the interviewees manifested any rejections towards the implementation of non-compulsory initiatives and actions fostering gender equality at the organizational level. Overall, both male and female participants believed these actions were very effective as a complementary tool to the enactment of equality policies.

In a nutshell, female representation at the board of directors in U1 has been progressively growing during the last decade but their share at the academic council and their presence among administrative positions at the directive level does not follow the same trend. In fact, women's share in these last two domains does not even reach the thirty percent required by the national gender quota as minimal rate of representation. Those outcomes could not be directly attributed to explicit exclusion mechanism in the promotion system or the list of specific requirements to attain a position at the directive level. Actually, none of the references or requirements found in the documentary review were identified as openly excluding women or restricting their promotion, but some of them might indirectly affect their recruitment and promotion opportunities due to the group's limitations to focus exclusively on graduate education and/or on research production.

In terms of organizational approaches, the university has a gender equality policy already in place. The policy is aligned with national legal parameters to foster equal opportunities, but so far, it has mostly focused on the implementation of strategies addressing gender-balanced violence with zero influence on the professional promotion of women to administrative positions at the directive level. Into the bargain, collective perceptions elicited during the surveys indicate that most respondents consider that women still face discrimination in Colombia and except by a small percentage of the male group, most respondents showed high levels of support for non-compulsory initiatives and actions to promote gender equality. Similarly, the rate of support was high for every equality policy listed, with the sole exception of gender quotas.

Finally, interviews with male and female members of the directive level revealed that the trajectory to attain tenure is longer for women, which appear to be the result of individual choices to join the organization at a lower hierarchical level than men usually do, but it can also be the outcome of unintended limitations posed by some of the requirements to apply for tenure tracking positions, due to exogenous factors. The potential existence of hidden biases among decision-making authorities – usually represented in this university by male figures - cannot be fully dismissed, since women continue to be placed in coordinating roles that seem to align with stereotypical attributions of female skills.

8.4   Case U2 - Documentary evidence

This university is also placed in Bogotá, which is the capital district of Colombia but contrary to case U1, it does not have any presence in other regions of the country. Besides, case U2 is smaller in terms of number of faculties, number of permanent staff members and number of students. It is also worth noticing that case U2 was initially founded as one out of 4 female colleges aiming at forwarding the inclusion of women to the country's workforce within very specific areas. For instance, the national regulation clearly indicated that the academic focus of those female colleges had to address careers related to basic sciences, social studies, philology and arts (Ley 48 of 1945). However, since then, the university has modified and expanded its academic offer to include health sciences, political and economic sciences, engineering, architecture and law programs, among others.

Case U2 transitioned into the status of university less than two decades ago and it has also forsaken its categorization as female-only institution. During the elicitation of data, every member of its administrative and full-time academic staff was invited to participate in the survey – as opposed to case U1 where contact information was not always available. The response rate obtained from staff members at U2 was over forty percent from different faculties and administrative areas, and almost half of the answers came from female respondents which constitutes a representative sample.

8.4.1   Time series analysis of gender distributions.

In this university, women's share within governance boards has been remarkably and persistently high over the last decade, with an average of forty-seven (47.3) percent at the board of directors and an average of forty-nine (48.7) percent at the academic council (see Table 23). Note that specific years where a new rector is elected have been indicated in Table 23 in **bold**

font.

It seems that right before the designation of a new rector in 2016, female representation at the academic council was only slightly above the minimum required by the gender quota to reduce the effect of tokenism and to foster gender equality at the organizational level (Parson & Priola, 2013; Peterson, 2015; Vinkenburg, 2017). But the numbers have gradually increased ever since reaching a notorious female share of eighty-two percent by the year 2019. Unfortunately, during the pandemic, women's share at both governance boards, decreased.

Table 23. U2 Time series analysis of women's share at governance boards.

		2010	2011	**2012**	2013	2014	2015	**2016**	2017	2018	2019	**2020**
Board of Directors	Del.COL Presid	F	F	F								
	Del. MEN				F		F	F	F	F	F	F
	Governor (Del)				F	F	F		F		F	
	AC Rep. Prod. sector Rep				F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Teachers' Repr	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Students' Repr.	F	F	F			F	F				
	Graduates Repr.	F	F	F	F			F	F	F	F	F
	Ex-Rectors'Rep											
	Rector								F	F	F	F
Annual Average (%)		40	40	40	50	30	50	50	60	50	60	50
Academic Council	Rector								F	F	F	F
	Academic VR	F	F	F	F	F	F	F		F	F	
	Admin. VR	F	F	F	F	F					F	
	Deans											
	Health	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Social Sc.	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Law					F	F	F	F	F	F	
	Engin. & Archit.											
	Admin & Econ.										F	
	Prog. Dirs' Rep/										F	F
	Teachers Rep.	F	F	F	F			F	F			
	Students Rep.									F	F	F
Annual Average (%)		45.5	45.5	45.5	45.5	45.5	36.4	45.5	45.0	54.5	81.8	45

Source: Annual statistical reports of the planning office.

During the observation of the specific distribution of women representatives within each governance board, a constant female presence was identified in the role of representatives of

the academic council, as representatives of the teachers, and as delegates of the ministry of education at the board of directors. Within the academic council, there was more variety among the positions recurrently filled by women, but they were generally appointed as deans of the faculties of health and social sciences (sometimes as deans of the law faculty as well), as academic vice rectors, and as representatives of the teachers. In the last three years, the positions of representative of the program directors and representative of the students have also been filled by women (see Table 23).

Subsequently, a closer observation to women's share in all administrative positions at the directive level shows near parity and some years above parity with values ranging from forty-two to over sixty-three percent of female representation (see Table 24). The rector, in this case, is elected for a four-year period and the most recent election took place in 2020, where once again a female rector was designated for the role.

Table 24. U2 Time series analysis of women's share at directive-administrative seats.

		2010	2011	**2012**	2013	2014	2015	**2016**	2017	2018	2019	**2020**
Vice Rector Directors	Academic	F	F	F	F	F	F	F		F	F	
	Administrative	F	F	F	F	F					F	
	Research Office	-		F						F	F	
	HR Division	F	F	F	F	F	F	F		F	F	
	Financial Division							F	F			F
	Admin. Services Div.	F	F		F	F	F	F	F	F		
	Media Division	-		F		-	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Eval./Accreditation	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Legal Affairs											
	Internal Control			F								
	Social Projection											
	Planning & Developm.									F	F	F
	Interinstit. Relations	-		F	F							F
Deans	Health	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Social Sciences	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Law					F	F	F	F	F	F	
	Engineering & Archit.											
	Admin. & Econ.										F	
General Secretary		F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
Annual Average (%)		42.1	42.1	57.9	47.4	47.4	47.4	52.6	42.1	57.9	63.2	42.1

Source: Author's compilation based on universities' internal report of directory members

Among the divisions and offices identified as female-dominated due to the reiterative presence of women in directive roles, we can find both vice rectors but particularly the academic vice

rector. Next in line is the director of the human resources division, the director of the evaluation and accreditation office, and the deans of the faculties of social sciences and health sciences, and for a few years also the director of the law program and finally the role of general secretary. All of these positions were recurrently led by women during the years evaluated.

These division directors fulfill administrative functions of direction, planning, coordination, supervision and report of organizational plans, programs and projects aimed at strengthening the university's efficiency and the quality of its services according to legal parameters and internal statuses. Meanwhile, office directors have a profile oriented towards counseling and support functions alongside active participation in implementation processes. Detailed comparatives descriptions are provided in the cross-case analysis section. Finally, it is important to reiterate that in this university every seat at the directive level is of free appointment and removal, even the positions of faculty deans.

8.4.2. *Procedure and minimum requirements to be granted a tenured post*

Similar to case U1, in U2 a person needs to compete in a call for applications based on specifications provided by the academic council and the board of directors, to be granted an academic position indefinitely. In case U2, however, the resolution for the call is issued directly by the rector and not by the faculty dean, as it was done in the previous case. The call is posted first in a national media of communication and then in the university's website. The list of requirements include:

- Bachelor's and master's degree in related area, a doctoral degree is preferred.
- Four years of teaching experience at the university level
- Four years of professional experience
- Four years of research experience either as main researcher or as a coresearcher
- Research production in the respective area
- Two years of administrative experience
- Certified B1 level of English proficiency

After the registration period is completed, candidates' documentation related to minimum requirements is reviewed and the initial list of accepted applicants is published. Non-selected candidates have three working days to submit their complaints, which would be responded no later than 5 working days later. Then, the revision of the candidates' curricula is conducted according to the following score system:

- Academic degrees (up to 30 points non-cumulative)
- Qualified academic, social projection, research and administrative experience (5 points each)
- Professional experience (10 points)
- Foreign Language Proficiency (5 points)
- IT skills (3 points)
- Other skills (based on the specific position) (2 points)
- Academic production (supervision of theses, articles, books, book chapters, conference presentations (up to 6 points)
- Academic distinctions (up to 5 points)

The examination and assessment of these steps corresponds to the faculty council that must forward an official report of eligible candidates and their assigned scores (at least 70 percent of the total) to the human resources division. Later, the division of human resources would issue invitations to selected candidates to participate in a qualifying test. This stage also comprises a period of time for the submission and revision of complaints.

In the end, candidates must present the qualifying test which entails two components: a psychological-technical evaluation and an interview. The final list of eligible candidates is defined following a third round of complaints' revision. The analysis of the curriculum corresponds to fifty percent of the total score, while the qualifying test and the interview holds values of twenty-five percent each.

In U2, explicit gendered references were not identified either, but the organization seems to be less restrictive in terms of graduate education requirements. It also offers a wider array of options to collect the required points for academic production. With this in mind, it would be interesting to examine whether there is any variation in the number of female tenured teacher in the two selected cases. This comparison is presented in the cross-case analysis section.

8.4.3. Organizational approaches

In opposition to the previous university, case U2 does not have an institutional equality policy designed specifically to address gender issues. Even its reported gender research topics (collected from the university library's repository) addressed social trajectories of female professionals and public policy analysis where gender was generally analyzed in conjunction with other factors of social inequality such as race or class.

Additionally, evidence of interinstitutional gender-related cooperation and agreements with external organizations were also identified. Nonetheless, the focus of interest in those agreements was on the intersection between gender, peace and freedom within the national post-conflict frame rather than on the enhancement of gender-equal professional promotion. Still, these initiatives led to the enactment of internal inclusion regulations in 2010 and 2013 to reserve some places in every academic program for students from specific target communities, such as the afro descendants, people of indigenous origins, people belonging to gypsy communities, people displaced by the armed conflict, and people from remote villages with limited access to higher education institutions. In 2013 this special admission regime was modified to add women heads of household and teenagers who were also victims of the historically armed conflict of the country. The most recent beneficiaries of the special admission system were high schoolers from the Colombian islands of San Andres and Providencia.

Within this framework, the office of university well-being recently published an inclusion institutional policy whose goal is not only formalize regulations for the access to education of vulnerable communities and minorities, but also to promote an organizational culture and educational system that value and respect social, economic, political, cultural, linguistic, and physical differences. Hence, it fosters a transversal, interdisciplinary, and integral approach to equality and inclusion without specific guidelines for gender-related issues.

This inclusion policy of the university's well-being office is evaluated by an institutional well-being committee, in cooperation with the office of internal control and the office of self-evaluation and accreditation. The outcomes of the policy are measured through the implementation of annuals plans specially designed for students, teachers and administrative communities.

Besides, some conferences were implemented to discuss the university's inclusion policies and the issue of gender-based violence. Those conferences were directed towards administrative, academic staff and students' communities. But the most gender-specific initiative was organized by the office of social projection to create an online women's museum, where events are organized in order to highlight women's fight for equality, and their essential role in the historical development of the country. In these events, the university honor women's academic, social, scientific, and cultural accomplishments within core themes of civil rights, knowledge, and representation.

8.5   Case U2 - Surveys: Attitudes towards sexism and equality approaches.

8.5.1   *Modern Sexism: Denial of discrimination and gender stereotypes.*

Once again, based on the assumption that sexist perceptions would be low among all surveyed participants, the survey started by inquiring about participants perceptions of discrimination, based on their level of (dis)agreement with statements about society giving equal treatment to men and women (M=W), about discrimination not being a problem in Colombia anymore (ND) and about the need for implementing better measures (BM) to achieve (gender) equality in the workplace. Participants' shared perceptions towards the three categories provided, are presented in Table 25 below.

Table 25. Denial of discrimination - U2 (%)

Categories	Agreement		Disagreement		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
M=W	0.18	0.09	0.69	0.84	0.12	0.07
BM (reversal)	0.78	0.80	0.14	0.14	0.08	0.07
ND	0.02	0.02	0.82	0.89	0.16	0.09
$\bar{x}$	0.33	0.30	0.55	0.62	0.12	0.08

Source: Author's survey data compilation

In this case, almost seventy percent of the male respondents and an even higher percentage of women (84 percent) disagreed with the statement that men and women are treated equally. Also, similar to the responses collected in case U1, the reversal code suggesting the current need for better gender equality measures also reflects a high level of awareness about the persistence of discrimination with agreement rates of seventy-eight and eighty percent, for each respective group. Overall, only a very small percentage (twelve percent of the male respondents and eight percent of the female respondents) remained undecided about their opinions.

Later on, during the analysis of participants' perceptions of gender stereotypes, the focus was on the statements that women should be protected by men (PW), that men are more suited to leadership roles (ML) and that they are also less likely to fall apart in emergencies than women are (MSE). Here, participants' opinions are also more divided (as it was the case

in U1), except by the disagreement manifested towards the statement of men being more suitable for leadership roles. In that specific statement, eighty-six percent of the female respondents and sixty-five percent of the male respondents disagreed with the idea of men being better leaders.

But their opinions regarding women's higher tendency to fall apart during emerging were split between disagreement and undecided positions. Lastly, it is important to note that half of the male respondents concur with the idea that women need to be protected by men, while thirty percent remained undecided to the topic. Among the group of women, only twenty-seven percent of them disagreed with the statement about women needing male protection, the remaining total is divided almost equally between supporters and undecided respondents (see Table 26).

Table 26. Perceptions of gender stereotypes – U2 (%)

Categories	Agreement		Disagreement		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
PW	0.51	0.34	0.20	0.27	0.29	0.39
MSE	0.08	0.07	0.47	0.55	0.45	0.39
ML	0.06	0.05	0.65	0.86	0.29	0.09
$\bar{x}$	0.22	0.15	0.44	0.56	0.34	0.29

Source: Author's survey data compilation

Overall, the assumption that sexist perceptions would be low among all respondents is also just partially supported in case U2 because the number of people that disagreed with the statements is only high in relation to the perception of men being better suit to leadership roles; to the claim of men being less likely to fall apart in emergency situations only half of the respondents (regardless of their gender) disagreed, and an even smaller number of male participants disagreed with the idea of women needing protection.

Therefore, sexist perceptions in terms of gender stereotypes were, yet again, not as low as they were initially expected to be in the assumption proposed.

8.5.2. Attitudes towards non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, policies and gender quotas

Following the assumption that *support for non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions would be high among all surveyed participants but only universities with internal (gender-specific) policies would be supportive of more coercive measures,* it was anticipated that a high level of support for less coercive approaches would be manifested in case U2, alongside a strong rejection for equality policies, particularly those with more coercive implementation mechanisms such as the gender quotas. Participants' responses partially corroborated the first part of the assumption by manifesting high levels of support for the implementation of every single non-compulsory initiative and action suggested (See Table 27).

Table 27. Attributed importance to non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions – U2 (%)

Categories	Support		Rejection		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Advertising Campaigns	0.84	0.77	0.04	0.07	0.12	0.16
Faculty Representatives	0.82	0.80	0.06	0.05	0.12	0.16
Formal Recognition	0.78	0.82	0.04	0.02	0.18	0.16
Leadership and Management Training	0.82	0.86	0.04	0.05	0.14	0.09
Networking Opportunities	0.90	0.89	0.00	0.05	0.10	0.07
Career Advancement Sponsorship	0.94	0.86	0.00	0.09	0.06	0.05
Educational Actions	0.88	0.86	0.02	0.02	0.10	0.11
x̄	0.85	0.84	0.03	0.05	0.12	0.11

Source: Author's survey data compilation

On average, eighty-four percent of all the female respondents and eighty-five percent of all the male respondents supported every single initiative proposed, such as advertising campaigns, faculty representatives leading equal opportunities initiatives, the recognition of people and units promoting diversity and equality, the implementation of leadership and management training programs, networking and sponsorship opportunities, and educational actions.

But the assumption that only universities with internal gender policies would be supportive of equality policies, was proven wrong since U2 participants were also highly supportive of the

implementation of institutional equality policies, of flexible work-arrangements, and of regulations for maternity and paternity leave (See Table 28 in the following page).

Table 28. Attributed importance to equality policies – U2 (%)

Categories	Support		Rejection		Undecided	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Antidiscrimination Policies	0.94	0.82	0.04	0.07	0.02	0.11
Gender Quota	0.59	0.68	0.20	0.07	0.20	0.25
Flexible Work-arrangements	0.90	0.95	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.05
Maternity-Paternity Leave	0.76	0.70	0.12	0.07	0.12	0.23
x̄	0.80	0.79	0.09	0.05	0.11	0.16

Source: Author's survey data compilation

Here, the gender quota was also the least favorite policy in comparison to the other options provided, but it still received circa sixty percent of support among male respondents and circa seventy percent among the female group. Hence, surpassing the averages identified in case U1. This finding in particular dismiss the assumption that only universities with internal policies would be supportive of policies, but regarding the assumption that women would be more supportive of gender quotas than male participants, findings from U2 show an even smaller difference (9 percent) between male and female respondents compared to the difference identified in case U1 (see Table 28).

8.6. Case U2 - Interviews: Attitudes towards influential factors and organizational approaches to gender inequality in academia.

When asked about their professional trajectories to reach a position as members of the directive staff, interview participants from U2 reported some analogous institutional processes to the ones described by participants from U1. For instance, calls for applications to be granted tenured positions are also the standard procedure in U2. Nonetheless, the two observed cases also display salient differences that are described in the following subsections.

8.6.1 Individual professional trajectories: From tenure to the directive level

In U2, tenure is required to represent the teachers' community at governance boards, but on the contrary to case U1, it is not a requirement to be appointed to administrative positions at the directive level. Therefore, it was initially assumed that most interview participants from U2 might not have tenure, but that postulation was mistaken. Hence, for comparative purposes, the interview proceeded to inquire about the path followed by participants from U2 to be granted tenure. Excerpts from their responses are presented below:

"To hire full-time professors, a call for applications must be posted… eventually, candidates selected by the faculty council and by the academic vice rector must attend an interview... the best interviewee joins the university's staff for a trial period of one year and a half and afterwards he or she becomes a permanent full-time professor" (P1_Male)

"To get tenure, a suitable candidate must have a committed career experience and evident work capacity, since administrative staff… must work longer shifts and sometimes, even weekends… I believe all these factors are considered alongside a candidate's performance over time at the university. I started at the university working as a lecturer… I was working like this for about three years, then I became an adjunct professor… I stayed in that role for about sixteen years, finally, in 2019… a call for application was posted to become permanent full-time professor" (P5_Female).

Thus, the process followed in U2 to get tenure is elaborate and multifactorial, where a person must fulfill the requirements to be able to compete for the role and where the person is also aware of the position's demands in terms of extended time availability. But for positions at the directive level, the process does not always follow the same path. For instance, to become a community's representative at a governance board, candidates must also apply to calls for applications and compete for the role, but other positions follow a direct scouting system to be appointment by specific figures of authority. About this **trajectory to directive roles**, participants reported:

"To become a representative at the academic council, one must apply to the call for application posted by the faculty secretary, usually only tenured professors with at least five years in the position can apply... Then, compliance with the minimum requirements is assessed… then, all full-time teachers, adjunct teachers and lecturers vote for their preferred candidates, the one with the highest number of votes wins the position"

(P2_Male).

"In the university the dean is a position of free appointment and removal by the rector… in my case, the previous dean was promoted to the role of academic vice rector and she asked me if I was interested in taking over her vacant position as dean… then, she recommended me for the role to the university's rector, who accepted the suggestion and that is why I am the dean now" (P5_Female)

However, when interrogated about any obstacles faced over their individual professional paths, only one of the three male participants showed awareness of potential difficulties to professional advance but acknowledged being unaffected by them. The other male respondents simply denied facing any obstacles along the way, participant number ten claimed that growth opportunities have arrived in due course. This outcome is similar to the one identified in the previous case.

"Normally, to be promoted from adjunct to full-time teacher is not easy in a university of the public order… You have to fulfill a series of conditions that are not always easy to attain. Eh… Nowadays, the requirements to become a full-time professor are even more demanding. For example, the proficiency in a foreign language must be higher now than when I applied, and one must have a master's degree, even a doctorate is preferred. When, I applied I had not even finished my master's studies yet" (P2_Male)

"No, no, honestly I have not had any drawback during my professional path… thanks to God, things ((referring to professional growth opportunities)) *have arrived in due course"* (P10_Male)

Also similar to case U1, is the response of the female interviewee in case U2, who acknowledged barriers faced by women along the way as they advance in their professional trajectories. Her response referred to the lack of recognition and benefits linked to the research production of lecturers, and the lack of support they receive to participate in academic conferences. Therefore, she believes these restrictions make it harder to strengthen a person's profile to reach directive roles. To obtain those benefits, it is mandatory to join the tenure-track system, whose call for applications could take years before the next one is posted. Thus, it can significantly delay to professional growth within the organization.

"The problem was that as lecturer and even as an adjunct professor, we do not receive

any recognition or benefits for our research production… Another difficulty was that back then, part-time professors did not receive any support to participate in academic events, thus, it was difficult the dissemination of scientific findings and products. All these made my professional advance rather difficult" (P5_Female).

In the interview excerpt it is also stated how this female respondent remained for a long time in the lower hierarchical position of adjunct professor before being able to move up the ladder, while none of the male responded provided detailed descriptions on the topic. This was also the tendency in the previous case observed. Yet, contrary to U1, in case U2 none of the interviewees made references to barriers linked to *work-life balance* nor to a *segregated division of occupations* according traditionally female-or male-dominated fields. However, when it came to the arguments of *skills-motivation deficit,* the female respondent manifested an initial disinterest in pursuing high responsibility positions (see the interview excerpt below), yet when the opportunity arrived, she did not miss it.

"My goal wasn't to reach an administrative position, it simply happened" (P5_Female)

Analogous answers were also identified among all the interviewees when asked about their perceptions in relation to **social barriers** limiting women's professional promotion. Only one of the male participants mentioned how specific careers used to be considered as incongruent with the female gender, such as construction or engineering, but that it had never been the case at U2.

"In the professional field of construction, when I was a student, I had teachers that were convinced that construction and engineering were male exclusive fields. It turns out they were wrong... In this university, we have had excellent female professionals who have stood up in those fields. As a teacher, I have also noticed that my most outstanding students are usually women" (P2_Male)

Overall, most participants declared an absence of discrimination against women or manifestations of gender stereotypes inside the university. Instead, they point out to the university's strong female tradition among administrative bodies arising from its origins as a national female college, a tendency within the directive level that prevails to the present day.

"Let me tell you something interesting about our university… it was founded in 1945 as one of the four national female colleges of the country… So, it has had a very strong

female tradition... where the administrative bodies have usually been composed by women, it has been a matriarchy... Eh in this moment, the university has a female rector, actually out of 33 public universities in the country, eh just two of them have female rectors, we also have more female deans than male deans and the patterns continues with program directors, coordinators, and that has been something like permanent" (P2_Male)

"In that "female-college" context, the administrative roles were filled by women too and that pattern remained over time, until the year 2002 or 2001, when we had a male rector for the first time... Overall I think that 80 percent of the decision-making roles are currently filled by women, our vice rectors, office directors, and division directors are mostly women" (P5_Female)

These elicited interviews' answers consolidate and help explain the findings from the documentary review about women's representation not being and issue at U2. However, this historical female direction of the university raises questions about potential manifestations of discrimination and the potential exclusion of men from decision-making roles. Even though the university has always maintained a fair representation from each gender at the top of its hierarchy, statistical evidence show that men's share at governance boards and at administrative positions of the directive level has been gradually reducing in the last decade. Therefore, female and male participants' perceptions about the matter are of core interest here. Their responses are listed below:

"I think the university has always been inclusive, respectful of the differences and open... I have never witnessed any kind of discrimination in the institutional processes" (P10_Male)

"To be honest, I have never heard complaints from students nor from teachers about mistreatment or discrimination... we would have to ask the gentlemen, whether they feel somehow, that they are underrepresented in directive roles" (P5_Female)

Based on these responses, it seems that the university is perceived positively in terms of its approach to equal opportunity. But considering the social setting where the university is placed, surrounded by the deeply rooted machismo typical within the Hispanic culture, it is difficult not to wonder about the possibility of male members of the directive level having negative opinions about women's suitability to perform in directive roles or at least feeling

uncomfortable being led by women. Only one of the male participants made a comment on this area, regarding negative opinions shared by some fellow male colleagues, who do not feel comfortable being led by a female figure of authority. However, he does not feel negatively affected by the high representation of women in decision-making, in fact, he praised women's professional performance and administrative skills (see interview excepts below). No comments were received about this topic from the other two male interviewees. Thus, it is not possible to determine any collective perception about it:

> *"We have already fifty or even higher female representation in decision making positions and administrative roles… I, personally, have never felt bad about this situation. I value this, because it is a necessary thing, but… I have colleagues that complain about having a female boss… thus, gender equality workshops and courses must continue among all university groups in order to understand and accept this evolution… We always praise women's management skills... they can multitask"* (P2_Male)

Finally, within the dimension of **organizational barriers,** interview participants in U2 also talked positively about the direct scouting system applied to the direct designation of staff members to the directive level. They consider that the system is not arbitrary but merit-based, since the person in charge of the designation is expected to consider the candidates professional experience and academic background, among other to make his/her choice – even though no written evidence was found about the specific steps followed for the selection of directive staff members. Therefore, neither the female nor the male participants perceive the promotion mechanism of the university as gendered.

> *"The characteristics considered for the position, I think, include records of goal attainments, the commitment… Also, the availability for extended working schedules that are usually linked to administrative roles, with longer hours and weekend work which is very different from a teaching role with fixed schedules. I think all these factors are taken into consideration alongside your performance and professional trajectory at the university"* (P5_Female)

> *"All roles are obtained through professional merit… the person's trajectory is always considered, even for positions of free appointment and removal, the curriculum of the candidates is carefully assessed"* (P10_Male)

8.6.2 Non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, policies, and gender quotas

On the subject of policies, for example, participants from case U2 confirmed that the university does not have an equality policy focused, specifically on gender. Still, it addresses inequality using a variety of programs and initiatives that resemble those proposed in U1's gender policy, such as special admission programs, the provision of financial support to vulnerable groups, or the implementation of protocols to attend cases of gender-based violence, among others. The different initiatives are described by the interviewees as follows:

> *"The university, within its daily work, promotes the implementation of inclusion activities, the recognition of the differences. It also promotes the inclusion of lectures addressing the topic of inequality and the publication of academic research about gender issues"* (P1_Male)

> *"We have equality and diversity policies* ((although these are not specific to gender, they include the issue of gender inequality as one of their categories)); *we have the protocols to prevent and take care of cases of gender-based violence. We have the well-being committee and the university's regulations, and the teacher's statute also refers to this equality and diversity matter"* (P5_Female)

One key factor in the university approach to inequality is their high support to feminist groups for the design and implementation of awareness campaigns and other non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions. The reference to *non-compulsory* approaches, does not refer to a lack of structure but simply to the lack of a legally binding frame:

> *"We also have feminist groups at the university, and we have recently created the woman's museum which is a regional movement all over Latin America. This woman's museum initiative had a strong impact in the university. It was created in the middle of the pandemic and since then, it has organized multiple activities not only about feminist foci but also linked to social work projects, where a lot of male students also participate actively"* (P2_Male)

> *"One of the activities organized by these feminist groups was the digital presentation of the university's axonometry showing images with striking written messages about women's rights… the presentation became popular in social media"* (P2_Male)

Some of the respondents specified how the matter of gender inequality is usually addressed as part of a wider set of interrelated inequality factors, and not as a unique problem requiring coercive measures, such as quotas:

"*Within the university's inclusion approach, we also address gender issues through academic lectures and academic publications about the topic*" (P1_Male)

"*We have inclusion institutional programs, but they are extended towards equality and diversity in general, there isn't really a gender specific policy, like a gender quota or so... We focus on informal strategies usually fostered by the social work program... The well-being office also supports a phone service for victims of gender-based violence which is part of the university's social projection policies that made the woman's museum possible... and= the student permanency program benefits women, young victims of the armed conflict and people who live in distant regions with difficult transportation access*" (P5_Female)

To evaluate and report on the outcomes of these initiatives, it is usually the well-being office that keeps track of the processes. But the planning office also collects statistical data on a regular basis to measure the accomplishment of organizational goals:

"*The statistics office manages regular reports by faculties, alongside the planning office. They collect data, results and make projections... Every semester, we must submit reports of our progress related to the institutional development plan, or the action and improvement plan. One of the topics addressed in these plans is social projection... there we assess our accomplishments*" (P1_Male)

"*All program participants are also traced by the well-being office and the programs themselves to assess their progress... I would think that there are reports and official assessments of those processes, but I don't think they are available for the general public... it is probably internal paperwork to include in our improvement plans*" (P5_Female).

8.6.2.1. Supportive and opposing attitudes

The female participant in case U2 also supports the implementation of non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions and acknowledges the need for more coercive measures such as gender quotas considering how norm-oriented universities usually are. But only one of the male

interviewees talked about the value of non-compulsory initiatives and actions to spread awareness and to foster gender equality at the university. This male participant also manifested his support for gender quotas, which in his opinion should be already increased to fifty percent. It is essential to mention that in his particular case, this level of awareness is linked to his proximity to the university's feminist groups.

> *"Gender equality workshops and courses must continue among all university groups in order to understand and accept this evolution… In my personal case, my 22 years old daughter is part of a feminist group. So, I have learned a lot from her… I wish the gender quota was already increased from 30 to 50 percent everywhere, but who would take the initiative?"* (P2_Male)

> *"A gender specific policy would be a good idea too… Especially considering how norm-oriented a university usually is… but not just on paper, it should be developed from multiple fronts... and I would think that a gender quota would be good even though we don't really have a women's representation problem"* (P5_Female)

Summing up, in case U2 women's share within both governance boards and in all administrative positions at the directive level has been remarkably high over the last decade, with representation rates reaching parity and above. The particular functions assigned to them are not limited to advising and coordinating roles, but they also involve positions with decision-making power such as, rector and vice rectors. In this university, requirements to apply for tenure tracking positions seems to be less restrictive in terms of graduate education. The university also offers a wider array of options that could be accepted as evidence of academic production. This particular procedure can help reduce negative unintended limitations for female potential candidates.

Case U2 does not have an equality policy focused specifically on gender but its well-being office published an inclusion institutional policy which fosters a transversal, interdisciplinary, and integral approach to equality and inclusion. Thus, it is not surprising that most respondents acknowledged the disadvantages faced by women and rejected the statement claiming that men were most suitable for leadership positions. But at least half of the respondents in each category agreed that men are less likely to fall apart in emergency situations. Therefore, sexist perceptions in terms of gender stereotypes were, yet again, not as low as they were initially expected to be.

It is also important to mention that survey respondents supported every single non-compulsory initiative proposed and most equality policies as well, even the quota received between sixty and seventy of support among the male and the female group. Thus, challenging the assumption that only universities with internal gender policies would be supportive of equality policies.

Elicited interviews also indicates high levels of awareness about barriers that women face in their professional advancement, and high support rates for more coercive measures such as gender quotas from the female participant and from one of the male interviewees with direct ties to the university's feminist groups. The remaining two male participants generally refrained from sharing opinions related specifically to gender equality issue. Instead, they focused on the descriptions of other organizational initiatives aimed at social projection and equal opportunity practices where gender is clustered with other inequality factors. Thus, no manifestation of open resistance was identified, but the limited number of interviews elicited in U2 compels to the acknowledgment of potential inaccuracies.

8.7   Cross-case analysis

Aiming at the identification of emerging patterns and themes that could indicate commonalities and/or differences between observed cases, a cross-case analysis was also implemented. This integration of findings would help explain the difference identified in the gender distributions of each case as well as the identification of strategies to improve the performance of the least successful case under observation in this study.

8.7.1   Procedure and requirements to be granted a tenured post

As shown in the results sections, procedures and requirements to enter the tenure track system in U1 and U2 have some analogous characteristics. For instance, they both require graduate level academic backgrounds, teaching experience at the university level, professional experience and evidence of research production. Despite that, they differ in some explicit conditions and protocols. For example, in case U2 the resolution for the call is issued directly by the rector and not by the faculty dean, as it is done in U1. Also, in case U2 a doctoral degree requirement is marked as a preferred option but not as a mandatory requirement. Thus, in U2 a master's degree is also acceptable to apply, which would increase the pool of suitable candidates.

Other differences include a wider array of options to accumulate points for research production

in U2, which also count the supervision of students' theses and the active participation in academic conferences. Not to mention the foreign language requirement being less demanding in case U2 with a threshold set at an intermediate B1 level of proficiency as opposed to the high intermediate B2 level of proficiency demanded at case U1. On the other hand, U2 have two extra requirements that are missing in U1's list: administrative experience and information technology (IT) skills.

Taking these differences into consideration. It is presupposed that a bigger pool of female tenured professors might be situated in U2 as a result of more attainable requirements, which could, at least partially, explain the university's high representation of women in administrative positions at the directive level. To assess this hypothesis the gender distribution of all permanent full-time faculty members was also examined between the years 2010 and 2020 (see Table 29).

Table 29. Women teachers' share of tenured posts

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	x̄
U1	29.0	29.0	29.0	29.0	29.0	29.0	29.3	29.9	29.8	30.0	29.0	29.3
U2	68.7	70.1	65.7	68.6	68.3	57.8	56.8	55.7	54.1	52.2	53.6	61.1

Source: Annual statistical reports of the planning office.

Statistical evidence presented in Table 29 indicates that indeed, women's share of tenured posts in case U2 is significantly higher than their representation in case U1, where women have kept an average share of twenty-nine percent over a full decade. Meanwhile, U2 has more than half of its tenured staff being permanently represented by women, thus, its pool of female eligible candidates for directive roles is also larger.

8.7.2 *Functions and requirements of administrative seats at the directive level*

Being placed at the top of the hierarchy, the decision-making power of governance boards is indisputable. However, to better understand the highly influential role of administrative staff members at the directive level, either to bring about change or to perpetuate the status quo, it is necessary to describe their specific functions and requirements established to reach those seats (See Table 30 below and Table 31 in the following pages, for detailed descriptions). Besides, the conceptualization of these functions could also have gender implications that might reveal an underlying gendered logic.

Table 30. Functions of administrative positions at the directive level

Role	U1	Both	U2
Rector	**To legally represent** the university before national and international organizations. **To lead, coordinate and supervise** the economic, academic, scientific, technological, and cultural management of the university. **To issue** regulations and administrative acts to ensure the compliance with national higher education policies. To appoint and remove directive level authorities		
Vice Rector	**To advise** the rector in the formulation and development of plans, projects, policies and strategies for the academic development or the administrative direction of the university. **To lead, coordinate, and supervise** the operation of academic, administrative, or research dependencies. **To design, coordinate, and assess** policies, plans, and programs aimed at strengthening the university's development, efficiency and the quality of it services.		
Division Director	**To assist** higher academic and administrative units with **the formulation, implementation, and coordination** of internal processes, regulations, policies, agreements, action plans, programs, and projects for the university's adequate operation, communications and production.		**To assess and coordinate** processes of students' enrollment, staff's recruitment/hiring.
Office Director	**To support** the rector, vice rectors and division directors, in the coordination and assessment of administrative processes, policies, action plans programs, and internal control and auditing processes. **To prepare reports,** publications, communications, cultural projects, among others.		
Faculty Dean	**To designate** academic programs' coordinators.	**To assist and support** the rector and the academic vice rector in managing procedures related to academic quality control. **To coordinate the academic development,** (curricular design, self-evaluation and self-regulation processes).	**To support** the formulation of policies and development plans based on curricular programs.
General Secretary	**To coordinate** opinion polls and the recruitment and promotion of students and staff.	**To coordinate, update and preserve records,** administrative acts, and correspondence for/from the board of directors and the academic council. **To attend to** customers' claims and complaints.	**To assist** the rector with the **management and dissemination** of quality systems.

Source: Author's compilation based on each university's manual of responsibilities.

As shown in Table 30, in both universities, the **rector** is the maximum figure of authority, who legally represents the university academically and administratively. Together with the **vice rectors**, these top positions are responsible for leading the organizational management, as well as the supervision and assessment of implemented policies, plans and programs. Moreover, the rector participates in both governance boards and the vice rectors are all part of the academic council with voting rights.

Next in line are the **division and office directors**, who offer technical support to facilitate and assist core administrative processes, such as the development, implementation and assessment of policies, plans, and programs, whose performance and progress are regularly presented through official reports.

In regard to academic processes, **faculty deans** constitute the assisting branch to the rector and the academic vice rector – or to the respective branch vice rector in case U1. Deans also have a supportive role, but contrary to divisions and office directors, deans lead the organization and management of different administrative processes related to academic quality control and academic development, such as academic self-evaluations and self-regulation, the formulation of academic-related policies and the curricular design of new academic programs. In addition to that, deans are actively involved in the designation of directors/coordinators of academic programs.

Last but not least important are the functions of the **general secretary**, who assists the rector in the formulation of policies and action plans related to the management and dissemination of administrative acts, records and correspondence, customer service, claims and complaints and quality systems according to national legal regulations, and to the institutional development plan. The general secretary also coordinates administrative recruitment, hiring, and promotion processes, the maintenance and updating of institutional records, and the dissemination of institutional changes.

When it comes to specific prerequisites to attain these administrative positions at the directive level. Table 31, in the following page, denotes how both cases share the basic requirement of having a university degree as well as a graduate level degree in an area related to the functions required for the position. Nonetheless, in U1 a person does not need graduate level education in legal and political sciences to attain the general secretary position, which constitutes a core requirement in U2.

Another shared category is the requirement for teaching experience at the university level to carry out roles with academic responsibilities, such as the roles of rector, vice rector, faculty dean, and the general secretary role. Finally, the requirement for administrative experience ranging between one and three years to carry out the direction of divisions and offices is also similar among the two observed cases (see Table 31 below for a detailed description of every position's application requirement).

Table 31. Requirements to attain administrative positions at the directive level

Role	U1	Both	U2
Rector	At least two years of **administrative experience** and evidence of **academic leadership** for at least eight years	A **university degree** and a **graduate degree**. At least five years of **teaching experience** at the university level	Experience as university rector, vice rector or dean
Vice Rector	At least eight years of **professional experience in finances or management.** To be an **associate professor**.		
Division Director	A **university degree** and a **graduate degree** in an area related to the required functions for the position. Three years of **professional experience** in the specific field		
Office Director	A **university degree** plus a **graduate degree** an area related to the required functions for the position. Between twelve and thirty-six months of related **professional experience.**		For the research office: education and experience with scientific production.
Faculty Dean	To be **associate professor** To **be short-listed** by students and teachers through opinion polls	A **university degree** and a **graduate degree** in related field. Between five and six years of **university teaching experience** and **administrative professional experience.**	
General Secretary	to be an **associate professor**	A **university degree** Between three and years of **university teaching experience** and **administrative professional experience.**	A **graduate degree** in legal and political sciences

Source: Author's compilation based on documentary review.

One of the differences identified is U1's demands for Colombian citizenship to attain a directive position, a requirement that is not included in U2. Moreover, U1 stipulates mandatory administrative experience in finances or management to execute the vice rector's role and demands candidates to be in the category of associate professor. In other words, tenure is an imposition in case U1 even to fulfill a secretarial role, which is not the case in U2's list of requirements to be considered a suitable candidate for a directive position. This information was also disclosed by in several directive members in U2 during the interviews.

According to U1's board of directors (Agreement 123, 2013) and its academic council (Agreement 074, 2013), to reach the level of associate professor, a person needs at least four years of working experience at the university, and the completion of a doctorate level degree or the attainment of eighteen points in academic production (publications). For the role of Faculty dean, U1 also differ from U2 by involving the extended academic community in the candidates short-listing process.

Into the bargain, U2 requires previous administrative experience as university rector, as university vice rector or as faculty dean to execute the roles of university rector and vice rector, as well as a background in research and evidence of academic production to be able to lead the research office. Also, in case U2, all potential candidates to directive positions can replace the graduate degree requirement with three additional years of academic or administrative experience.

On balance, no evidence of gendered preferences was identified in the description of functions for different directive positions. However, an overrepresentation of women in positions with supportive roles rather than positions with leading and assessment functions could still indicate gendered distributions. Joan Acker clearly indicated how these staff categories can "facilitate and assist administrative core processes but they are not steppingstones to the top" (Acker, 2009, p. 9). Recent scholarly research also indicates that administrative and accountancy related positions are generally listed as traditionally feminized trades, where women can hold management positions (Holmes, 2020, thus the high female representation in those divisions of case U1 cannot be presented here as evidence of an organizational transitions towards less gendered division of functions (Acker, 1990).

In relation to specific requirements to achieve administrative positions at the directive level, the components between both observed cases in terms of academic preparation and professional/administrative experience are quite accessible. Yet, case U1's requirement of belonging to the associate professor's category might limit some people's professional promotion since doctoral degrees and the accumulation of a prolific research production usual involve an elevated commitment of time that might not be attainable for some groups. Particularly women.

Another assumption for the cross-comparison of cases was that selected cases would share similar approaches to the issue of gender (in)equality and that they would have similar systems

for professional promotions, despite the absence of a gender specific policy in U2. This assumption was based on the fact that both cases stand out for their balanced gender distribution at their boards of directors. The results of the analysis are compared and summarized in the following subsection.

8.7.3 *Organizational approaches*

Case U1 and case U2 share some general characteristics. For instance, they are universities of the national order and are, therefore, listed among the institutions reporting their quota compliance to the National Public Administrative Department (Departamento Administrativo de la Función Pública). They also are analogous in terms of organizational approaches to the issue of gender (in)equality, except by a couple of initiatives that are unique to each case, such as the experiment for gender parity student admission in U1 or the women's museum in U2. The museum aims at highlighting women's presence in different social settings, their fight for equality, and their essential role in the historical development of the country

Specific initiatives shared by the two universities include the curricular integration of academic lectures, conferences, discussion panels and research within the gender perspective, the integration of sex disaggregated data in all statistical reports, the financial support and enrolment benefits provided to vulnerable populations, the support provided to internal organized groups of feminist students to implement awareness events, programs and educational campaigns, and the cooperative work with external women's associations and local governments linked to gender-related projects that collaborate with informal awareness initiatives, among others.

Figure 8 displays each case's unique approaches to gender equality on each side of the diagram, while shared approaches are placed at the center of the graphic. It is clear how both cases share the same liberal approach towards the issue of gender inequality by promoting awareness trainings, family reconciliation policies, neutral job profiles, recruitment, promotion, and evaluation systems based on meritocracy.

However, on the contrary to case U1, in case U2, equality strategies are not rooted on a specific gender-based regulation. Instead, they are implemented within an integral and also less coercive approach to equality, which seems to produce very positive outcomes despite having an all-inclusive perspective that dilutes gender equality issues with other inequality determinants (e.g., race, age, ethnicity, social class, etc.,) under a global notion of zero

discrimination (See Figure 8 for a graphic representation of shared and exclusive approaches to gender equality issues).

Figure 8. Organizational approaches to gender equality in selected cases.

U1   U2

Gender equality policy

Gender parity admission (experiment)

Gender research, gender-based violence attention, gender differentiates stats, cooperation with external entities, special admission and awareness programs/campaigns/ conferences, free appointment of directive positions, students' feminist groups, academic approach (courses) to gender issues

Integral approach to equality

Women's Museum initiative

Source: Author's own diagram.

It is also important to reiterate that case U1's gender policy does not foster women's representation and participation in the directive bodies of the university. Even though there is a reference to the professional promotion of women in the policy, no actions have been taken towards the consolidation of that proposal. Therefore, none of the interventions currently in place at case U1 and Case U2 have a political dimension promoting positive discrimination. In fact, no established initiative addresses the issue of women's underrepresentation (or men's underrepresentation in case U2) at the directive level or the university's hierarchy; but they do attempt to create equal opportunities, to recognize differences, to enhance collective awareness and to control the manifestation of stereotypes and bias in discourse.

According to the literature, the main limitation to the successful implementation of any

equality-seeking actions is people's resistance to change (Meyerson and Kolb, 2000). Thus, an analysis of collective attitudes among the general administrative and academic community was indispensable.

8.7.4 *Gender distribution within directive bodies*

By the year 2020, both cases exhibited equal representations of women and men at their respective boards of directors, but a time series analysis of their gender distribution illustrated that this balance has not been continuous over the past decade (or over the past three changes of government).

Only case U2 has maintained a gender balance during the observed time frame not only at the board of directors but also in the academic council and in all other administrative seats at the directive level. Meanwhile, U1's gender distribution over time has barely reached the minimum of thirty percent required by the gender quota at the board of directors, the academic council and among administrative seats at the directive level (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Women's average share in directive bodies over 10 years (%).
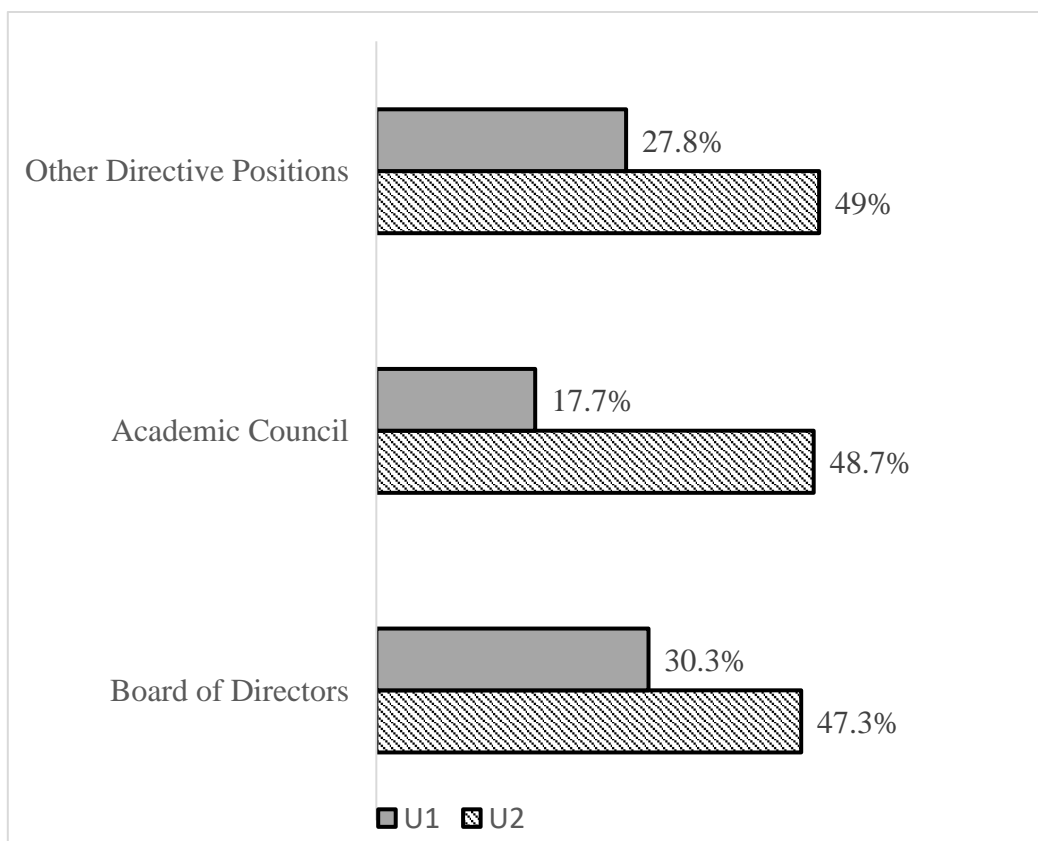
Source: Author's own chart based on elicited statistical data.

Since the minimum of thirty percent in female representation suggested by scholarly research (Parsons & Priola, 2013; Peterson 2015; Vinkenburg, 2017) can be easily reached with female delegates of external entities such as the president of the country, the regional government, and the ministry of education; the distribution identified indicates that only case U2 includes internal female representatives in addition to their external delegates. A closer examination to those additional positions highlights the recurrent presence of elected female representatives of the teachers and of the students not only at the board of directors but also at the academic council. Hence, manifesting the collective support for women in positions of authority and decision-making.

Female representation in other administrative positions with directive functions and responsibilities was also assessed to further examine the statement presented in previous scholarly studies about male predominant presence in academic leadership (Voorspoels, 2018b). It was initially assumed that since the selected cases represented successful examples of gender equal distributions at governance boards, the same results would spread down to other directive seats of their organizational hierarchy. However, elicited data show that similar to the findings at governance boards, over the last decade, only case U2 stands out with an equal gender distribution that extends to administrative positions at the directive level (see Figure 9 in the previous page).

Moreover, zooming it to the top five female-dominated seats among directive bodies, it was notable that directive positions permanently (one hundred percent of the time) or frequently occupied by women (at least eight out of eleven years) are usually linked to office and division directions and the position of general secretary. All of these positions entail supportive functions rather than positions with leading functions. This is particular true to case U1, which might indicate an underlying gendered ideology emanating from critical actors in charge of the free appointment and removal of those directive staff members (see figure 10 in the following page).

In case U2, office and division directors and the position of general secretary are also among the top five female-dominated positions, but women's share is also high among positions with academic or administrative management, supervision and assessment functions, such as the positions of academic vice rector and the positions of faculty deans in the fields of health and social sciences (see figure 10 in the following page).

Figure 10. Female-dominated administrative positions at the directive level
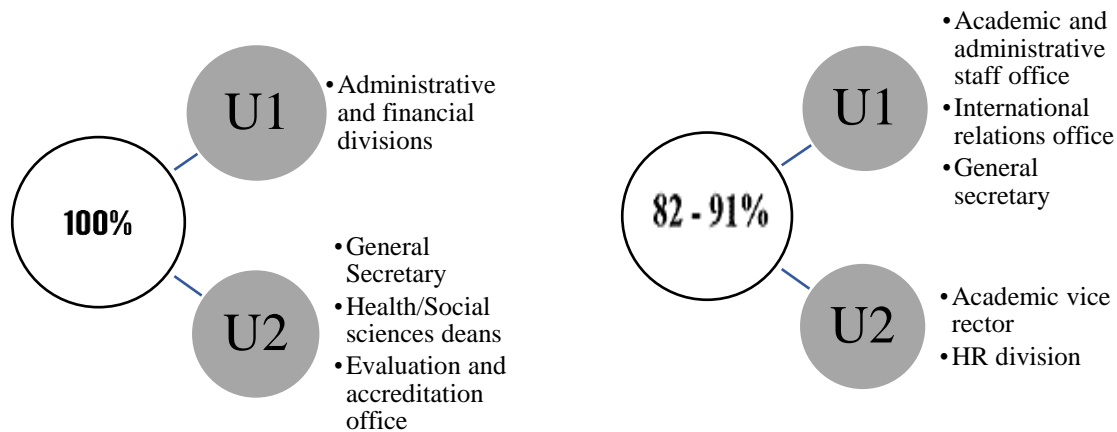
Source: Author's own chart based on elicited statistical data.

At this point, it is important to reiterate that in both cases observed, internal regulations specifically categorize all directive level-jobs as positions of free appointment and removal. The designation process for these positions is based on a merit-system that evaluates academic profiles, professional and/or administrative experience, but the selection is generally performed through a **direct scouting** process where the appointing authority (after a previous review of their professional credentials) invites potential candidates to submit their curriculums for considerations or to directly join the administrative team with directive functions.

In sum, previous scholarly findings are partially supported since male presence is only dominant in U1's distribution of directive positions. Yet, the observed tendency to place women in specific offices opens the door to speculations about gendered ideologies of appropriate positions and functions. For instance, most female-dominated positions account for functions traditionally linked to female social roles as caretakers and to assumed female-attributed characteristics of interpersonal and communication skills.

8.7.5 *Perceptions of gender inequality*

Semi-structured interviews and surveys were conducted to determine collective perceptions and to estimate the level of resistance, or the level of support manifested by members of the administrative and academic community towards organizational change in terms of gender equality. Survey data on opinions related to gender inequality in contemporary society, show how most of the respondents acknowledged the persistence of discriminatory practices (ND) and unequal treatment towards women (M=W) in Colombia. The reversal statement about the

need for better measures to foster equal opportunities in the workplace also reinforces the finding of a collective awareness about the issue (see Figure 11). Hence, the persistence of gender stereotypes and collective denial of gender inequality found in the literature was not evident among the university extended academic and administrative communities examined in this study.

Figure 11. Sex-disaggregated perceptions of discrimination and gender stereotypes.
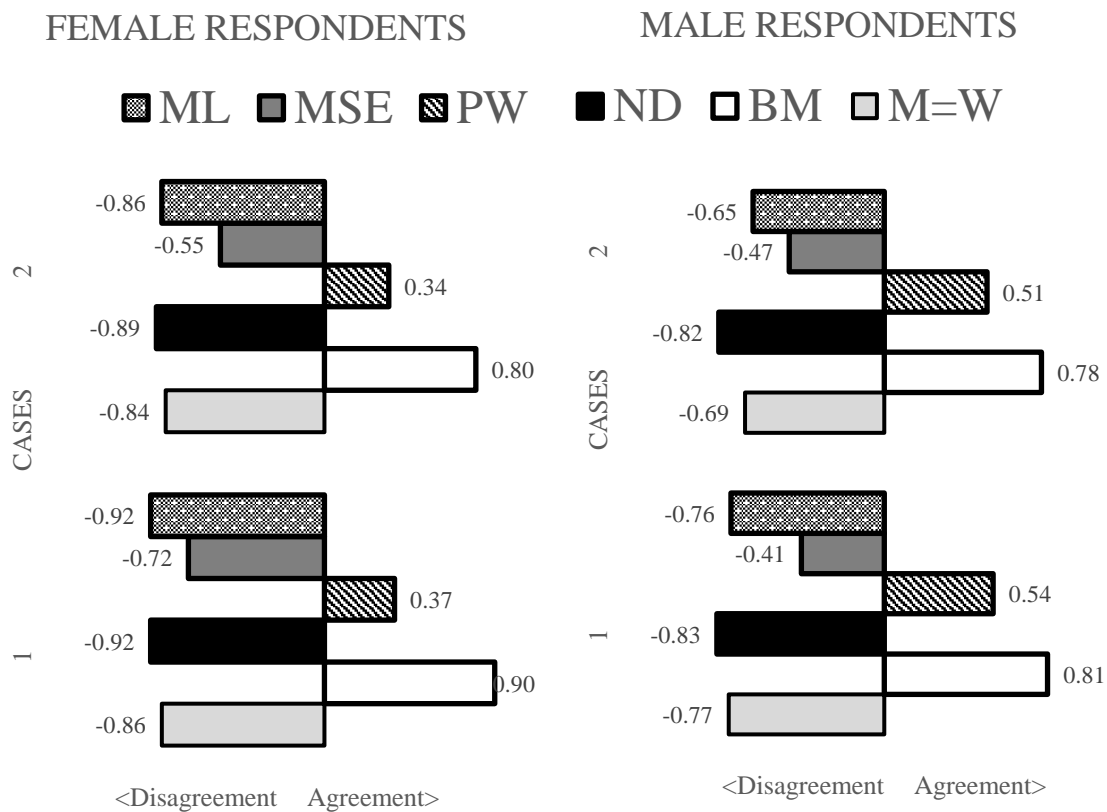
Source: Author's own charts based on elicited survey data.

On the other hand, the proposed assumption that sexist perceptions would be low among both observed cases, is only partially supported since participants' opinions were divided on the subject of gender stereotypes, particularly among groups of male respondents (see Figure 11 above). About half of the male respondents in both cases agreed with the statement that women must be protected by men (PW). Also, opinions were quite divided between disagreement and neutral positions on the suggestion of men being emotionally more stable under emergencies than women are. This division was identified even among female respondents from U2; the only exception being the group of female respondents from case U1, who massively manifested disagreement with the statement. Finally, to the statement of men being better suited for

leadership roles (ML), a high number of participants rejected the idea, particularly women. It was also interesting that the percentage of disagreement was slightly higher among men and female respondents for case U1.

During semi-structured interviews with members of directive bodies, opinion differences were even more evident between women and men in U1. For instance, only female participants made references to work-life balance and occupational segregation as constraining factors for professional advance, which based on their individual experiences demanded a lot of sacrifice and strong determination to break social expectations, to join male-dominated fields, or to commit as active researchers to continue their professional growth and increase their chances for promotions. Their comments generally compared their own trajectory as being harder to accomplish when compared to the trajectory of their male counterparts.

None of the interviewees in case U2 made references to individual barriers identified in scholarly literature (e.g., work-life balance, skills deficit, among others), nor to individual perceptions of gendered organizational ideologies that may have restricted their professional promotion on the basis of their gender.

It is also important to mention that just a few female respondents acknowledged their lack of interest in administrative roles. They attributed their refrain to these positions' time-constraints to conduct research or to carry out their teaching practice. But most of the women interviewed declared to have deliberately pursued those directive positions with high responsibility and time demands, thus challenging the statements proposed by previous studies literature and reiterated by several male participants in this study about women's unwillingness to pursue directive roles.

Another theme mostly addressed by male participants in U1 included stereotypical references to women's skills and social roles and several manifestations of implicit bias in relation to gender appropriate jobs based on physical characteristics and socially conditioned limitations for men and women. The category of acceptance and denial of patriarchal order and/or discriminatory practices was listed under the dimension of organizational barriers, however, many of the participants commented on this subject as a social concern. Thus, it is discussed here as a transversal theme.

Following that line of argumentation, discrimination and patriarchal order were strongly and openly acknowledged by all female participants from case U1 with particular remarks to the

organizational structure of their universities. Among the male sample, opinions were more divided, including some denials of gender-based discrimination build on the conviction that their universities are inclusive, open, and respectful of differences – which was also the shared perception among all interviewees from U2. These participants assure that there are no discriminatory practices and that all recruitment and promotion processes are totally impartial. Moreover, U2 respondents see the lack of equality policies as a positive practice in benefit of merit-based recruitment.

On the other hand, some of the male participants agree with women's statements of the patriarchal order, which they (the male interviewees) see as a reflection of the general male chauvinist tradition of the country. The rest of the male group also recognized patterns of discrimination and a propensity towards the patriarchal order in the Colombian society, but not at the organizational level of academic institutions. This comprehensive analysis provide evidence in terms of individual perceptions that somehow reflect organizational logic, since all participants belong to the decision-making bodies of their respective universities.

8.7.6. *Attitudes towards organizational approaches*

As it was initially assumed, surveyed academic and administrative staff from both cases were highly supportive of organizational actions aiming at gender equality. This applies to institutional policies, such as anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policies (ADP), the possibility to obtain flexible work-arrangements (FW), and regulations for maternity and paternity leave (MPL) as well as to non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions. Only the proposal of implementing a gender quota (Q) received less support but was not completely rejected either, particularly among female respondents.

In fact, sixty-eight percent of all surveyed women and fifty-nine percent of all surveyed men considered the enactment of a gender quota as important or very important in order to address the gender (in)equality issue (see figure 12 in the following page). Among interviewed members of the directive level, opinions were quite divergent to those from the surveys since most female interviewees agreed with the enactment of a gender quota at the organizational level to increase women's share (or men's share in U2) at boards and directive seats, but the support level is extremely low among male interviewees. A sex-disaggregated summary of support rates for different equality policies is presented in figure 12.

Figure 12. Sex-disaggregated support rates for equality policies

FEMALE RESPONDENTS   MALE RESPONDENTS

▨ MPL   ■ FW   ☐ Q   ▨ ADP
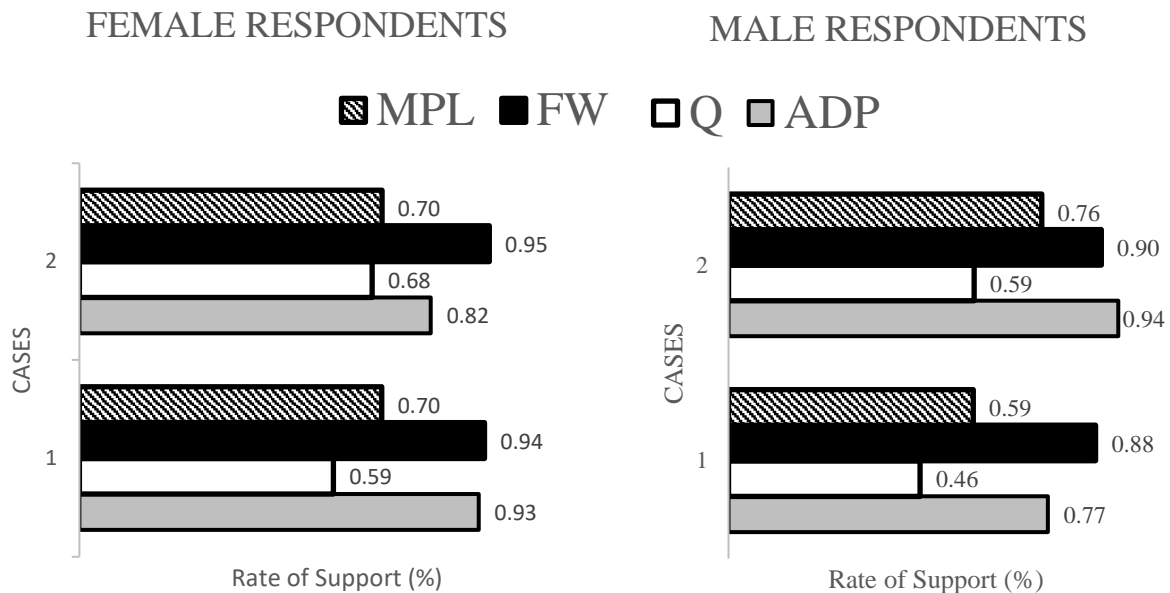
Source: Author's own charts based on elicited survey data.

Overall, just one woman and one man among the two groups interviewed at each university specifically stated the need for gender quotas. The rest of the male group rejected the need or the relevance of gender equality policies in particular affirmative actions like gender quotas. In one of the interviews, one of the male participants openly acknowledged to have neglected the promotion of gender initiatives because he did not consider it useful nor necessary. This manifested indifference, as it was described in the theoretical framework (Holmes, 2020; Thomson, 2017), can also contribute to patterns of resistance to change and towards the limited enactment of equality initiatives in particular.

Regarding non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, attitudes among the group of interviewed representatives of the directive level resemble the pattern of high support identified in the surveys. The top three supported strategies by surveyed men and women from both cases were the implementation of educational actions (EA) and the opportunities for sponsorship (S) and networking (N). The percentage of supportive men was even higher in case U2. It is also notable how women and men from case U2 were more supportive of management and leadership training programs (LMT), of the public recognition of individual and offices promoting gender equality (R) and of the designation of faculty representatives to address gender related issues (FR), than their counterparts in U1 were (see Figure 13). These outcomes in U1 may be linked to respondents manifested perception of non-compulsory equality

initiatives and actions as a useful complement to policies due to their potential to raise awareness and social recognition on the issue, but not as stand-alone solutions.

Figure 13. Sex-disaggregated support rates for non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions

FEMALE RESPONDENTS   **MALE RESPONDENTS**

Source: Author's own charts based on elicited survey data.

8.8   Discussion

Findings from the documentary review display how the balanced gender distribution identified at U1's boards of directors during the year 2020 does not match its performance in preceding years nor does it spread to other boards and administrative positions at the directive level. Thus, the university does not truly comply with the quota regulation, even though it is a pioneer in the enactment of an internal equality policy focused exclusively on gender. In fact, only case U2 has maintained a gender balance representation over the years across the whole directive level. Despite that, we continued to analyze case U1 due to its comparative value.

Regarding the description of functions for every directive position, no evidence of explicit gendered ideologies was identified in their wording either. However, the overrepresentation of women in assisting roles (e.g., general secretary, division directors, office directors, etc.,) may

be an indicator of gendered bias among critical actors, who are responsible for those designations. Indeed, a closer observation of top female-dominated seats in both cases denotes that directive positions permanently (one hundred percent of the time) or frequently occupied by women (at least eight out of eleven years) are usually linked to assisting roles. This is particular true to case U1. In U2, women's share is also high among positions with academic management, supervision and assessment functions.

Recent scholarly research also indicates that administrative and accountancy related positions are listed as traditionally feminized trades, where women can hold management positions (Holmes, 2020). Thus, women's permanent presence in U1's administrative and accountancy divisions is also reinforcing their segregation into gender "appropriate" positions within the organizational hierarchy. In other words, a pattern of gender segregation among the specific positions assigned to women was consistently manifested, since over the last ten years, most women-held positions that account for functions traditionally linked to female social roles as caretakers, to assumed female-attributed characteristics of interpersonal and communication skills and overall, to roles with supportive functions that do not necessarily lead to positions of higher responsibility.

Therefore, to the first question inquiring about the gender distribution within governance boards and administrative positions at the directive level, the results of this study offer mixed outcomes with a high female share at U2, which appear to challenge previous findings stating a predominant male presence in academic leadership (Voorspoels, 2018b). Nonetheless, the unbalanced gender distribution identified in case U1, and the specific list of positions usually filled by women in both cases highlight persistent gendered patterns at the organizational level that coincide with the statements proposed by the main theoretical frame of gendered organizations proposed in this dissertation (Acker, 1990).

The lack of explicit exclusion mechanism or requirements – among both cases – openly restricting women's professional promotion, answers to the second research question on explicit gendered implications in the wording of organizational standards, indicators and systems which may lead to the organization's continuity in its old ways or to fostering organizational change. No evidence of gendered wordings was identified but less restrictive requirements to obtain tenure at case U2 may be fostering a larger representation of women in the pipeline to directive roles. For example, by including doctoral degrees as a preference to apply for tenure but not as a mandatory requirement, or by offering a wider array of options as

evidence of academic production which reduces negative unintended limitations for female potential candidates. Indeed, statistical evidence calculated in this study denotes how women's share of tenured posts in U2 has been about two times larger than their representation in U1 over the last decade. These outcomes align with the labyrinth analogy, since case U2 offer alternatives to reduce some barriers to women's professional promotion at the beginning of their trajectories.

So far, it is clear that U1 does not abide by the country's quota regulation, but what about the content of its gender policy, which has been in place for a few years already. How is the policy implemented, monitored and evaluated? This constitutes, alongside all alternative approaches implemented in observed cases, the third research question proposed in this study. It turns out the policy centers on non-compulsory actions addressing inclusion and equality within a broad sense that manages a variety of issues affecting different social groups, which is also the approach taken by U2, despite not having an internal policy focused specifically on gender. In other words, different initiatives and programs are implemented within an integral and less formal approach to equality.

It was clear how the gender equality approaches of both universities were set up within the liberal approach without a political dimension promoting positive discrimination. Yet, no specific system is currently in place to assess the impact of these initiatives, nor to measure the mechanisms and effectiveness (Schwindt-Bayer, 2009) of U1's gender policy which leads to non-compliance predilections. Still, this is not the only factor to be considered to assess a complex issue, such as that of gender (in)equality.

Following this line of argumentation and having dismissed the gender quota and non-compulsory initiatives and actions as the influential factors behind the performance of the two observed cases, the last question inquiries about people's attitude towards the issue of gender inequality and towards the implementation of equality policies and other types of organizational approaches. Since potential variations in their degree of support or resistance could help explain the diverging outcomes.

Overall, the extended academic and administrative communities of both universities manifested being aware of the persistence of gender inequality and discriminatory practices in Colombia, and highly support non-compulsory initiatives and most policies listed. Gender quotas received lower support rates from male respondents when compared to the other

strategies listed. Yet, despite being the least favorite option, the gender quota was not truly dismissed by more than half of the male groups and particularly by female groups in both cases.

Then, since the evidence found in the surveys discards gender biased collective perceptions and lack of support among the extended communities of both cases, it is imperative to move up the organizational hierarchy to evaluate whether each organization's performance is linked to the attitudes and perceptions of those at the top of the hierarchy, with decision-making functions and consequently, with the power to influence others and to foster the success or the failure of equality approaches. Elicited interviews revealed that overall, the professional trajectory of female interviewees seemed to be framed by more limitations than those faced by male interviewees. Most of the male group attributes those limitations to endogenous factors such as personal choice; while women refer to exogenous circumstances such as the lack of vacant positions, or the lack of support from those in charge of the appointments.

Collected evidence also indicates that all administrative positions at the directive are of free appointment and removal from specific figures of authority. In case U1, those figures are usually represented by men as opposed to the state of affairs in U2, which has been historically led by women. Still, the male group of both cases denied the persistence of a patriarchal order at the organizational level of their own university. They were convinced that all recruitment and promotion processes were impartial, and merit based.

Additionally, in both cases, high support rates for more coercive measures such as gender quotas were expressed by female respondents. Among the male group of both universities, only one interviewee in each case was in favor of affirmative actions, the rest either refrained from sharing an opinion or considered that less coercive options were a better approach. Once again, no manifestation of open resistance was identified, but in case U1, some male interviewees acknowledged having unintentionally neglected to abide by the gender policy guidelines and others claimed to be unaware of the policy's existence. It must be noted that the limited number of interviews elicited in U2 compels to the acknowledgment of potential inaccuracies.

Among interviews' data, all interviewed representatives of the directive bodies stated a positive opinion in support of non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions, but the enactment of equality policies was mostly supported by women and at the mention of gender quotas even the female support decreased.

It seems identified outcomes – inducing the reproduction of gender (in)equality during

professional promotions to the directive level – are a combination of the historical background of the universities, the unintended effects of specific requirements to join the university workforce on a permanent basis as full-time members, potentially biased perceptions of critical actors at the directive level towards female aspirants and toward gender equality initiatives inside the university, and the direct appointment and removal process for the designation of directive roles, which could be leading to homosocial reproduction with positive results in case U2 but negative ones in case U1. The findings align with the statements proposed by the feminism institutionalism and the gendered processes listed by Joan Acker (1990), which would be further developed in the following subsection.

In sum, the current gender distribution inside governance boards of selected cases do not necessarily reflect a structural change at the organizational level since equal representations do not always extend to other directive boards and unipersonal directive positions. The recurrent designation of women in directive positions that seem to reflect traditional patterns of social roles and stereotypically female attributed characteristics also raises doubts about lingering gendered ideologies.

The results also dismissed the statement found in the literature about women's self-exclusion from high responsibility roles, in fact, most of the female interviewees described a deliberately pursuit of directive roles even at the expense of their household responsibilities. Still, their professional trajectories appear to be more entangled than the trajectories described by the male participants.

Finally, perceptions provided by members of the directive bodies towards the relevance and importance of equality policies and non-compulsory equality initiatives and actions give indications of individually divergent ideologies of gender equality issues and of the role of the university to address the matter. This outcome might have a strong influence on the level of support provided by the directive level towards more structured gender equality initiatives in the future, if there is any. On a positive note, collective awareness manifested by the extended academic and administrative community about gender-based discrimination and the widespread support for gender-equality practices at the organizational level reflect a promising ideological change when compared to other recent scholarly findings.

CHAPTER 9.

CONCLUSIONS

In a geographical area where women remain underrepresented at the top of the corporate hierarchy with a female representation of only twelve per cent among all top executives and board members and four per cent among top companies' CEOs (International Labor Organization, 2015), it was interesting to find Colombia among the top-ten gender-equal countries in the American continent. Moreover, Colombia is placed at the same level of some countries in Western Europe in some of the categories evaluated at the Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum, 2020). But a closer assessment of organizations shows divergent results. For instance, within higher education institutions only 4.6 percent of all accredited universities in Colombia have a female rector, that accounts for a total of four universities, two of them in the public sector. These numbers are particularly interesting when one considers that all public universities of the national order are regulated by the national gender quota enacted in the year 2000.

Since the impact of the quota has been proven rather limited (OECD, 2016), except for a few exceptional cases at the organizational level like the ones selected in this study. It was necessary to proceed first with a statistical analysis of women's share at directive boards of all public universities in Colombia (Solano Cahuana, in press). The assessment confirmed the generalized lack of impact of the national gender quota on the gender distributions of public universities of the national order, which makes you wonder why the two case studies selected were different. For instance, I wondered whether their outstanding performance was the result of the collective support for the gender quota among staff members or the outcome of less coercive complementary initiatives and actions.

Hence, the research aimed at the implementation of a rigorous comparative study of successful cases in order to fill up the gap of information reported in the scholarly literature about organizational practices for gender equality in academia. Therefore, it assessed the gender distribution of specific organizations to determine whether their current performance matches their outcomes in preceding years and to what extend does it spread from governing boards to other administrative positions at the directive level. The content and the wording of organizational standards, indicators, systems, equality policies and alternative approaches were

also reviewed to identify any explicit gendered implication; and collective perceptions towards the issue of gender inequality and towards organizational equality approaches were compared to identify any potential variation in their degree of support or resistance that could explain the diverging outcomes between the two cases.

The methodology implemented answers to recommendations from scholarly literature for comprehensive analyses of female representation at the organizational level that consider individual experiences and perceptions, environmental factors (e.g., organizational history and societal ideologies, expectations and stereotypes in relation to gender), structural policies and non-compulsory practices altogether.

Likewise, continuity versus changes dynamics had to be tracked down to assess the institutionalization of or resistance towards implemented changes to foster power redistribution (as cited in Mackay, et al., 2010). The main premise of the study was that understanding organizational gendered substructures (practices, norms, and values) would assist in the formulation of recommendations for the design or adjustment of measures aiming at gender equality (Acker, 2006a) in other Colombian universities.

9.1 Theoretical implications

Based on the dimensions proposed in Acker's gendering organizational processes (Acker, 1990), it was evident that *gender-differentiated divisions of work and functions* persist even inside organizations with a great female share among governance boards and directive roles. Those divisions are usually justified on each organization's historical narrative leading to the formation of individual identities and collective perceptions about gender appropriate positions and about the relevance of equality policies and strategies.

For example, in case U2, when asked about the notorious female representation in positions of power within the organizational hierarchy, many of the interviewees attributed the outcomes to U2's historical origin as a female-college that has always been led by women. Thus, U2's findings support Ackers' theory of gendered organizations. However, it that case, the university is gendered in benefit of the female group, who is usually placed at the highest positions of organizational power.

Initially, the recurrent placement of women in positions that seems to reflect traditional female roles with functions linked to stereotypically female characteristics was tentatively connected

to gendered written directives, requirements, recruitment and promotions systems. But the diligent documentary review conducted in this study displayed no evidence of explicit gendered indicators or procedures. Thus, women's share at governance boards and directive bodies at observed cases seems to be the combined result of unintended consequences of a restricting tenure seeking system and the gendered ideologies of critical actors who are responsible for the appointment of all directive positions.

As a matter of fact, individual beliefs, opinions, and experiences about your own and about other people's role in society can foster the support for the enactment of equality efforts, which would have a strong impact when emerging from critical actors (Childs and Krook, 2006, 2009) with decision making power as members of the directive level. This support could manifest directly into the creation and implementation of policies and strategies, into the assistance provided to feminist activism inside the organization, or into the influential effect critical actors may have on the extended academic and administrative community to accept or reject organizational change.

But in other cases, these individual ideologies can also lead to subtle or open rejections for affirmative actions or to negligent attitudes towards any gender-related policy. The risk in this particular case, it that the lack of action and indifferent attitudes from critical actors could also influence the continuity of inequality at the organizational level by passively maintaining the status quo.

In consequence, even though recruitment and promotion systems in both observed cases are supposedly neutral and merit-based, the high rate of female presence at the top of the hierarchy in U2 and of male presence in U1 opens up questions about the possible manifestation of homosocial reproduction patterns due to the great level of subjectivity in the direct scouting practice currently implemented.

The present dissertation adds to the developing literature on resistance to gendered change in institutions, arguing that the historical background and evolution of the organization and the concept of critical actors can help explain why some institutions are more receptive to gendered change than others and consequently more successful in the implementation of different equality strategies without enforcing coercive approaches to increase women's representation. At this point, it is undeniable that when women do not constitute a critical mass within the institution - particularly in positions with decision-making power - and do not count on the

support of critical actors, they cannot foster gender equality at the organizational level.

The methodology implemented in this research combined different methods, such as the triangulation of resources, the incorporation of complementary theories and multidimensional analyses of cases to enhance the study's validity. Regarding reliability, the study is consistent in its individual and cross-case comparisons drawing from original sources initially assumed as ontologically similar in terms of context and outcomes. The inclusion of qualitative and quantitative features also contributes to the study's reliability with the assessment of the organizations' statistical gender distributions over time and the individual alongside collective perceptions contributing to or restricting the success of gender equality approaches.

Lastly, the unique outcomes of these selected cases constituted invaluable sources of analysis for successful gender equality organizational approaches. But their relatable characteristics as organizations regulated by a gender quota and their processes and mechanisms for professional promotion that resemble those of many other public universities in Colombia, also enhance inferences (generalizability) about the current status and potential outcomes of other quota-regulated organizations in the country.

Then, should it be assumed that the solution for U1 and many other public universities in Colombia is to ease on the requirements to join the university permanently? Not necessarily, but they may start by making sure that during the next appointment of personnel to the directive level, the distribution is more balanced between men and women, who comply with the required academic preparation and professional experience. Since it has been demonstrated that women's scarcity at the top of the hierarchy is not truly a matter of inadequacy among female staff members, nor is it a matter of collective rejection of female leaders. Survey data collected here showed how women's presence in governance boards of the two observed cases usually accounts for elected representatives of the teachers' and students' communities.

Likewise, the extended public opinion of both universities observed strongly supports the implementation of internal gender equality policies. Thus, the imbalance become deeper among positions directly appointed by specific figures of authority, which means that currently, the main barrier to women's promotion into the directive level of the university lies in the individual choice of critical actors, whose biased perceptions of suitable candidates to directive positions might be influencing the outcomes of the university in terms of gender equality.

Then, what can U1 do to improve its performance in terms of women's representation at the

directive level? Unquestionably, the university cannot change its historical background, but it can adjust its gender policy's enforcement mechanisms and strengthen its evaluations processes. A revision of restricting requirements to become permanent members of the organization could also be favorable, and the inclusion of a gender quota does not constitute a wild recommendation considering the previously described promotion barrier. Based on previous scholarly findings, by increasing the number of women at governance boards and administrative roles at the directive level, their presence in those positions could be perceived as normal, and they would have more power to foster equality initiatives at the organizational level not to mention the possibility to sponsor other women.

9.2   Limitations and recommendations for further research

In this dissertation, one of the main limitations faced included the difficulties to reach and interview administrative staff members at the directive level. This drawback was the result of a lack of previous professional ties to selected organizations and of the confinement measures implemented worldwide in 2020 when data collection took place. Thus, a higher number of interviewees would be beneficial to further compare the findings in future research.

Another obstacle faced during the elicitation of data was the availability of documentary evidence from selected cases, which restricted the historical assessment of organizational performances up to a decade. The initial objective was to compare the impact of the gender quota in women's representation among decision-making positions pre- and post- quota enactment which would account for a time-frame of twenty years.

Other instances of resistance to change still must be assessed to fully understand the gendered nature of institutions. Hence, further research might continue to explore the links between critical actors and their deliberate actions to restrict gendered change. As well as the evolution of feminist movements in Colombia and their influence in organizational changes towards gender equality.

Gendered patterns in organizational interactions should also be evaluated in subsequent research since this dimension of Acker's gendered processes was missing in the present study due to the Coronavirus pandemic's mobility constraints. Ideally, this type of research would include a longitudinal ethnographic analysis with focus groups that could foster the interaction between members of academic and administrative communities.

Qualitative studies involving discourse analysis of different awareness campaigns can also provide valuable information about organizational culture and their impact on collective attitudes. Finally, the inclusion of different survey moments in the coming years would be a valuable contribution to evaluate attitudinal changes over time, either as a result of specific organizational approaches implemented or due to the social variations that accompany every generational change.

CHAPTER 10.   REFERENCES

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CHAPTER 11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A – Recruitment emails

11.1.1. Survey - Spanish Version

Estimado colega,

Cordial saludo, espero que se encuentre muy bien a pesar de los múltiples cambios e inconvenientes que estamos afrontando. Mi nombre es Iris Solano, soy una estudiante Colombiana cursando estudios doctorales en Hungría gracias a la beca Stipendium Hungaricum ofrecida por el gobierno Húngaro a través del Icetex.

Le escribo para solicitar su colaboración en esta encuesta elaborada con el respaldo del proyecto EFOP 363 "*From Talent to Young Researcher*" de la Unión Europea y de la Universidad Corvinus de Budapest para mi disertación sobre igualdad de oportunidades en la academia.

Mi foco de interés son las universidades públicas colombianas con buen desempeño en materia de igualdad de género a nivel académico y/o administrativo. El objetivo es examinar cómo la comunidad percibe las políticas y programas de igualdad y comparar distintas prácticas organizacionales. Los datos obtenidos serán confidenciales y anónimos y su participación es completamente voluntaria.

Rellenar el cuestionario requiere unos 5 minutos al cual puede acceder a través del siguiente vínculo:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfOJOcsEYmZAfDE2NB341gEKNtFtaXQN0D4yo3eZAMKVwsFQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Mil gracias de antemano por su atención y colaboración.

Sinceramente,

Iris Solano Cahuana
Ph.D (C) Sociología
Corvinus University of Budapest

11.1.2. Survey - English Translation

Dear colleague,

I trust this message finds you well despite all the changes and inconvenients we are facing worldwide. My name is Iris Solano, I am a colombian student pursuing a doctoral degree in Hungary thanks to the Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship offered by the Hungarian government through the Icetex.

I am contacting you today to request your support with a survey supported by the EFOP 363 "*From Talent to Young Researcher*" project of the European Union and Corvinus University of Budapest, for the completion of my dissertation on the topic of equal opportunity in academia.

My research focus is on colombian public universities with a good performance in terms of academic and/or administrative gender equality rates. The study aims at examining the academic community's perception towards different policies and equality programs and to compare organizational practices. All collected data will de confidential and anonymous and yor participations is completely voluntary.

Filling out the questionnaire requires approximately 5 minutes, which you can access through the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdfOJOcsEYmZAfDE2NB341gEKNtFtaXQN0D4yo3eZAMKVwsFQ/viewform?usp=sf_link

Thanks in advance for your attention and collaboration,

Sincerely,

Iris Solano Cahuana
Ph.D (C) Sociology
Corvinus University of Budapest

11.1.3. Interview - Spanish Version

Estimado Dr. _____,

Cordial saludo. Mi nombre es Iris Solano, soy una candidata doctoral colombiana cursando estudios en Hungría gracias a la beca Stipendium Hungaricum ofrecida por el gobierno húngaro a través del Icetex.

Gracias a la información disponible al público en la pagina web de la Universidad (o por recomendación de _____), he podido contactarlo con el propósito de solicitar su colaboración en una corta entrevista (vía Skype) para la elaboración de mi disertación sobre igualdad de oportunidades en la academia. El estudio es respaldado por el proyecto EFOP 363 "*From Talent to Young Researcher*" de la Unión Europea y de la Universidad Corvinus de Budapest.

Mi foco de interés son las universidades públicas colombianas con buen desempeño en materia de igualdad de género a nivel académico y/o administrativo. El objetivo es identificar prácticas organizacionales exitosas y la Universidad _____ es pionera a nivel de políticas, programas e iniciativas académicas y de investigación en este tema. Los datos obtenidos serán confidenciales y anónimos y su participación es voluntaria.

Si desea información adicional por favor no dude en contactarme. Mil gracias de antemano por su atención y consideración. Quedo atenta a su respuesta.

Sinceramente,

Iris Solano Cahuana
PhD (C) Sociología
Corvinus University of Budapest

P.D.: Adjunto puede encontrar mi hoja de vida como evidencia de mis credenciales
   profesionales y el formato de consentimiento informado con información adicional
   sobre el estudio.

11.1.4. Interview – English Translation

Dear Dr. _____,

Receive a friendly greeting. My name is Iris Solano, I am a colombian student pursuing a doctoral degree in Hungary thanks to the Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship offered by the Hungarian government through the Icetex.

Thanks to the information available at the university's official website (or: Thanks to the recommendation of Dr. _____), I was able to contact you in order to kindly request your support with a short online interview (via Skype, Google Meet or Zoom). The study, which aims at informing my doctoral dissertation on equal opportunities in academia, is supported by the EFOP 363 "*From Talent to Young Researcher*" project of the European Union and Corvinus University of Budapest.

My research focus is on colombian public universities with a good performance in terms of academic and/or administrative gender equality rates. The study aims at identifying and comparing successful organizational practices and the university _____ highlights in terms of policies, programs and initiatives. All collected data will de confidential and anonymous and yor participations is completely voluntary.

In case of requiring additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thanks in advance for your attention and consideration, I am looking forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Iris Solano Cahuana
PhD (C) Sociology
Corvinus University of Budapest

P.S.: Please find attached my CV as evidence of my professional credentials and the informed consent form with additional information about the study.

11.2. Appendix B – Consent Form

11.2.1. Spanish Version

CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Por medio de la presente, acepto participar en el proyecto de investigación sobre las políticas de igualdad de oportunidades en la academia; dirigido por Iris Laudith Solano Cahuana.

1. Propósito del proyecto:

Este estudio analiza el impacto de las políticas y programas de igualdad de oportunidades en la academia. El objetivo es determinar niveles de efectividad y examinar como la comunidad académica percibe dichas iniciativas. La entrevista considera su experiencia y percepción sobre dichas políticas y tomará aproximadamente 30 minutos. Códigos aleatorios serán asignados a sus respuestas con el fin de garantizar la anonimidad de su participación en este estudio.

2. Descripción de riesgos:

Ya que sus respuestas serán grabadas en audio para ser analizados posteriormente, es normal sentirse un poco incómodo al momento de la recolección de datos. Por lo tanto, podrá retirarse y cancelar su participación en el estudio en cualquier momento. En cualquier circunstancia, le garantizamos mantener total privacidad y anonimidad durante y después de la recolección de datos.

3. Descripción de beneficios:

El propósito es que los resultados de este estudio sirvan como material de referencia para el diseño o mejora de iniciativas y políticas institucionales de igualdad y diversidad.

4. Confidencialidad de los archivos:

Los archivos NO incluirán su nombre, dirección, numero de cedula ni cualquier otro tipo de información personal. Al término de la recolección de datos, los archivos serán guardados digitalmente como documentos confidenciales a los que solo tendrá acceso el equipo de investigación.

5. Asistencia disponible e información de contacto:

Si tiene preguntas relacionadas con la presente investigación o con sus derechos y funciones como participante por favor no dude en contactar a la investigadora principal del proyecto, Iris Solano, ya sea a través de celular al +57 (315) 625-9543 (WhatsApp) o al +36 (20) 398-0091 (en Hungría). También puede escribir al e-mail: cahuana.solano@stud.uni-corvinus.hu o contactar directamente a las supervisoras de esta investigación: Dr. Beata Nagy: beata.nagy@uni-corvinus.hu y Dr. Henriett Primecz: henriett.primecz@uni-corvinus.hu.

6. Declaración de participación voluntaria:

Su participación será voluntaria. Así que podrá retirarse del proyecto en cualquier momento SIN que esto implique ningún tipo de penalización. Tampoco se conservarán archivos relacionados con su participación en caso de no completar el estudio.

7. Autorización: Uso de grabaciones digitales en audio

☐ La grabación puede ser usada en publicaciones científicas.
☐ La grabación puede ser usada en presentaciones profesionales y académicas.

Firmas

1. Participante:
2. Investigador Principal:

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in the research project about equal opportunity policies in academia to be conducted by Iris Laudith Solano Cahuana as principal investigator.

1. **Purpose of the project:**

This study analyzes the impact of equal opportunities policies and programs in academia. The objective is to determine their effectivity rates and to examine the academic community's perceptions about those initiatives. The interview examines your experience with and perceptions of the university's equality policies and will take approximately 30 minutes. No identifiable information will be collected, and random numbers will be assigned to responses.

2. **Description of risks:**

Taking into consideration that your answers will be audio recorded for further analysis, it is normal to feel a little uncomfortable during the data collection. Therefore, you are allowed to resign your participation in the study at any moment. In any case, we guarantee the privacy and anonymity during and after the collection of data.

3. **Description of benefits:**

We expect that the findings of this study could be used as a source of reference for the design or the improvement of institutional initiatives and equality policies.

4. **Confidentiality of records:**

Records will NOT include your name, address, national identification number or any other personal information. After completing the data elicitation process, confidential records will be kept on computer files that will be available only to members of the research team.

5. **Available assistance and contact information:**

Should you have any questions about the research or about your rights and activities as a participant, please do not hesitate to contact the project's principal investigator, Iris Solano by phone at +57 (315) 625-9543 (WhatsApp), in Hungary +36 (20) 398-0091, or by e-mail at cahuana.solano@stud.uni-corvinus.hu. You may also contact the faculty advisors of this research project: Dr. Beata Nagy at beata.nagy@uni-corvinus.hu, and Dr. Henriett Primecz at henriett.primecz@uni-corvinus.hu.

6. **Statement of voluntary participation:**

If you choose to join our research project, your participation will be voluntary. Therefore, you can ask to withdraw from the research at any time, WITHOUT any negative implications or penalty, and we will keep no records of your participation.

1. **Authorization: Use of digital audio-records**

☐ The recording may be used in scientific publications.
☐ The recording may be used in professional and academic presentations.

Signatures
1. Participant:
2. Principal Investigator:

11.3. Appendix C – Interview Protocol

11.3.1. Spanish Version

GUIA PARA ENTREVISTA SEMIESTRUCTURADA

I. ANTECEDENTES DEL PARTICIPANTE
Sección A: Información demográfica

1. **Género**	2. **Edad**	3. **Estado Civil**	4. **¿Tiene Hijos?**
( ) Femenino	( ) Menor de 30	( ) Soltero (a)	
( ) Masculino	( ) 31-40	( ) Casado (a)	( )Si ( )No
	( ) 41-50	( ) Divorciado (a)	¿Cuántos? _____
	( ) 51- o mayor	( ) Otro _____	

Sección B: Experiencia como miembro del personal administrativo[1]

5. ¿Cuántos años ha trabajado en la universidad?
6. ¿Hace cuánto es miembro del personal administrativo de la Universidad?
7. ¿Cómo fue su trayectoria para ocupar su cargo actual?
8. ¿Tuvo dificultades para alcanzar esta posición que hayan hecho el proceso más lento o difícil? ¿Qué tipo de obstáculos? ¿Cómo los superó?

II. IGUALDAD DE GÉNERO Y DIVERSIDAD DENTRO DE LA UNIVERSIDAD

1. **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: Políticas de igualdad y diversidad**

   - ¿Existen políticas o comités en la universidad que traten asuntos específicos de igualdad y diversidad? ¿Cuales? ¿Tienen cuotas por género para cargos directivos?
   - ¿Cómo se implementan, evalúan y reportan sus resultados?
   - ¿Qué medidas se toman en caso de incumplimiento con las políticas?
   - ¿Es parte de las políticas la inclusión de trabajo cooperativo con movimientos sociales dentro y/o fuera de la universidad?

2. **INICIATIVAS VOLUNTARIAS: Estrategias informales de igualdad y diversidad**

(Patrocinios, acciones/campañas educativas, programas de entrenamientos en liderazgo y gerencia, iniciativas para establecer redes de contacto profesional, etc.)

   - ¿Existen estrategias informales para la promoción y respaldo de la igualdad y diversidad en la universidad? ¿Cuales?
   - ¿Cómo se implementan, evalúan y reportan sus resultados? ¿cómo miden el impacto?

III. OPINIONES

- En general ¿Cómo describiría esta universidad en cuánto a igualdad de género?
- ¿Cuáles de estas políticas/programas considera más relevantes o que tienen mayor efectividad: ¿los comités y políticas formales o las acciones educativas, programas e iniciativas informales?
- ¿Por qué son más efectivas/relevantes?
- ¿Ha participado en el desarrollo de alguna(s) de estas políticas?
- ¿Cree que se pueda alcanzar una representación equitativa de género en cargos directivos sin la aplicación de cuotas u otras políticas?

- <u>Sólo para mujeres participantes:</u> Si tuviera la oportunidad ¿participaría en/apoyaría dichas políticas?

11.3.2. English Translation

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

I. PARTICIPANT BACKGROUND
Section A: Demographic information

9. **Gender**	10. **Age**	11. **Marital Status**	12. **Have you got children?**
( ) Female	( ) Under 30		
( ) Male	( ) 31-40	( ) Single	( )Yes ( )No
	( ) 41-50	( ) Married	How many?
	( ) 51- Over	( ) Divorced	_____
		( ) another _____	

Section B: Experience as administrative staff[1]

13. How many years have you worked at the university?
14. How long have you been a member of the directive staff?
15. How was your trajectory to become a _____ (current position)?
16. Did you encountered any obstacles to obtain this position? What kind of obstacles? how did you overcome them?

II. GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE UNIVERSITY

3. Affirmative action: Equality and diversity policies

- Are there any specific equality and diversity policies or committees at the university? Which ones? Do you have gender quotas assigned to directive positions?
- How are these policies implemented? How is their progress/impact tracked and reported?
- What are the repercussions in case of non-compliance?
- Do they involve cooperative work with social movements inside or outside the university?

4. Voluntary initiatives: Informal equality and diversity strategies
(*Sponsoring, educational actions/campaigns, leadership training, networking initiatives, etc.*)

- Are there any informal equality and diversity strategies in the university? Which ones?
- How are they implemented? How is their progress/impact tracked and reported?

III.   OPINIONS

- In general, how would you describe this university in terms of gender equality?

- Which ones of these policies/programs do you consider more relevant or more effective: formal committees and policies or informal actions, programs and initiatives?
- Why are they more effective or relevant?
- Have you been involved in their development?
- Do you think that female representation in decision-making positions can be reached without a quota or formal equality policies?

- <u>For female interviewees only:</u> If given the chance, would you take part in/support these policies?

11.4. Appendix D – Survey Questionnaire

11.4.1. Spanish Version

<div align="center">

IGUALDAD DE OPORTUNIDADES EN LA ACADEMIA

</div>

Apreciado colega,

Gracias de antemano por su colaboración. La encuesta solo reúne opiniones, así que ninguna respuesta será considerada correcta o incorrecta.
Tiempo estimado para completar el cuestionario: 5 minutos.
Si tiene alguna pregunta puede comunicarse con Iris Solano al email:
cahuana.solano@stud.uni-corvinus.hu

Consentimiento informado: Por favor señale su aprobación en las opciones correspondientes.

☐   He sido informado sobre el propósito y la naturaleza de esta encuesta.

☐   Entiendo que la información proporcionada será anónima y confidencial, y que puedo retirarme en cualquier momento sin incurrir en ningún tipo de penalidad.

☐   Autorizo el uso de mis respuestas para fines de investigación académica.

Diversidad e igualdad de Oportunidades
Por favor indique su nivel del acuerdo o desacuerdo con los siguientes enunciados

	Totalmente desacuerdo	En desacuerdo	Neutral	De acuerdo	Totalmente de acuerdo
Se deberían hacer más esfuerzos para promover la igualdad de oportunidades en la universidad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Al contratar personal, se debe dar prioridad a las minorías si cumplen con los requisitos.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
La sociedad trata de la misma manera a hombres y mujeres.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deberían implementarse mejores medidas para alcanzar igualdad (de genero) en el trabajo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Las mujeres deberían ser protegidas por los hombres.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
En situaciones de emergencia, los hombres son emocionalmente más estables.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Los hombres son más adecuados para roles de liderazgo que las	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

mujeres.

La discriminación contra las mujeres ya no es un problema en Colombia.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Según su opinión, indique el nivel de importancia de las siguientes iniciativas y servicios.

	Sin importancia	De poca importancia	Importancia moderada	Importante	Muy importante
Políticas antidiscriminación y de igualdad de oportunidades para la contratación y promoción profesional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Campañas publicitarias promoviendo una imagen de liderazgo incluyente y diversa.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Representantes por facultad responsables de los asuntos de igualdad de oportunidades.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cuota obligatoria del 30% para mujeres en los consejos directivos.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reconocimiento a personas e instancias que promuevan la igualdad y diversidad.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexibilidad laboral: Horario de trabajo flexible, medio tiempo y trabajo en línea opcional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Licencia de maternidad/paternidad	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Programas de entrenamiento en liderazgo y gerencia.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Oportunidades para establecer redes de contacto profesional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Patrocinios para el avance profesional.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Acciones educativas (conferencias, seminarios, y/o	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

talleres) sobre inclusión,
igualdad de oportunidades…

Según su conocimiento, indique las iniciativas que se han propuesto o implementado en su universidad

☐ Políticas antidiscriminación y de igualdad de oportunidades para la contratación y promoción profesional.

☐ Campañas publicitarias promoviendo una imagen de liderazgo incluyente y diversa.

☐ Representantes por facultad responsables de los asuntos de igualdad de oportunidades.

☐ Cuota obligatoria del 30% para mujeres en los consejos directivos.

☐ Reconocimiento a personas e instancias que promuevan la igualdad y diversidad.

☐ Flexibilidad laboral: Horario de trabajo flexible, medio tiempo y trabajo en línea opcional.

☐ Licencia de maternidad/paternidad

☐ Programas de entrenamiento en liderazgo y gerencia.

☐ Oportunidades para establecer redes de contacto profesional.

☐ Patrocinios para el avance profesional.

☐ Acciones educativas (conferencias, seminarios, y/o talleres) sobre inclusión, igualdad de oportunidades…

¿Conoce alguna otra iniciativa o servicio ofrecido por su universidad? ¿Cuál? (escriba su respuesta)

Información demográfica

La información presentada será de carácter anónimo. Las respuestas serán analizadas de forma global a nivel institucional.
Género

☐ Mujer
☐ Hombre
☐ Prefiero no decirlo

Rango de edad

☐ Menos de 30 años
☐ 31- 40 años
☐ 41- 50 años

☐   Mayor de 51 años

Ultimo grado académico alcanzado

☐   Pregrado/ Licenciatura

☐   Especialización

☐   Maestría

☐   Doctorado

Universidad a la que pertenece (Escoge de una lista)

¿A qué facultad a la que pertenece? _____

¿A qué categoría de personal pertenece?

☐   Personal administrativo

☐   Personal académico

☐   Ambos

☐   Otro

Si seleccionó "otro" en la pregunta anterior, por favor escriba la nueva categoría.

_____

11.4.2. English Translation

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICIES IN ACADEMIA

Dear Colleague,

We appreciate your cooperation. This is a personal opinion survey, therefore, there are no right or wrong answers.
Completing the questionnaire will take about 5 minutes.
Should you have any question please contact Iris Solano at cahuana.solano@stud.uni-corvinus.hu

Informed consent: Mark the options you agree with.

☐ I have been informed about the purpose and nature of this survey.

☐ I understand that the information collected will be anonymous and confidential and that I can withdraw my participation at any time without incurring in any penalty.

☐ I grant permission to use data provided here for academic research objectives.

Equal opportunities and diversity
Please indicate to what extend you agree or disagree with these statements.

	Totally disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Totally agree
We should make extra efforts to promote equal opportunities at the university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In recruiting new staff, it is good to prioritize minority groups if candidates are equally competent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Society treats men and women the same way	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Better measures should be taken to achieve (gender) equality in the workplace	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Women should be protected by men	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Men are less likely to fall apart in emergencies than women are	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Men are more suited to leadership than women are	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Not important	Low importance	Neutral	Important	Very important
Discrimination of women is no longer a problem in this country	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Below you will find a number of university initiatives and services. Please indicate to what extend do you think they are important.

	Not important	Low importance	Neutral	Important	Very important
Institutional anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policies for recruitment and promotion.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advertising campaigns promoting and inclusive and diverse image of leadership.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Appointing faculty representatives to be responsible for equal opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
An obligation to have 30% of the directive boards made up of members of another gender.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Official recognition of people and university units promoting diversity and equality.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Flexible work arrangements: flexible hours, optional part-time, and home office.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Maternity/paternity leave	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leadership and management training programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Networking opportunities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sponsorship for career advancement.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Educational actions (conferences, seminars, and workshops) on inclusion, equal opportunities, non-discrimination.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please indicate which ones of the following initiatives and services are proposed or provided at your university.

☐   Institutional anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policies for recruitment and promotion.

☐   Advertising campaigns promoting and inclusive and diverse image of leadership.

☐   Appointing faculty representatives to be responsible for equal opportunities

☐   An obligation to have 30% of the directive boards made up of members of another gender

☐   Official recognition of people and university units promoting diversity and equality.

☐   Flexible work arrangements: flexible hours, optional part-time, and home office.

☐   Maternity/paternity leave

☐   Leadership and management training programs.

☐   Networking opportunities.

☐   Sponsorship for career advancement.

☐   Educational actions (conferences, seminars, and workshops) on inclusion, equal opportunities and non-discrimination.

Is there any other service or equality initiative at your university? Please write them down.

Personal background
This is the last section of the survey. We would like to emphasize that all answers will be processed in an anonymous way and will not be shared with other parties. In this section answers are not obligatory but complete responses are essential to draw the right conclusions.

Are you?
☐   Female
☐   Male
☐   Prefer not to say

To what age category do you belong?
☐   Less than 30 years old
☐   Between 31-40 years old
☐   Between 41-50 years old
☐   More than 51 years old

___

What is your highest degree of education?

	Bachelor
	Especialization
	Master
	Doctorate Degree

At which university do you work? (Choose from the list)

At which faculty do you work? _____.

To which staff category do you belong?

	Administrative staff
	Academic staff
	Both
	Other

If you chose "other" in the previous question, please write down the new category.

_____