

Intersectional Perspectives on Gender Equality in Higher Education: A Survey on Swiss Universities of Applied Science

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Abstract : Internationalization of students is part of the agenda of many universities worldwide. Yet, how well do universities achieve to guarantee educational success for male and female students of migrant background? This contribution aims on analyzing the effects of the Swiss university environment on perceived educational outcome of migrant students from a gender sensitive perspective. Social selectivity and gender inequalities strongly influence students' access and success at universities. However, the complex interaction between universities and their disciplinary environments, and educational success of migrant students of both sex remains rarely examined so far. Starting from an intersectional perspective and neo-institutional approaches on higher education organizations, this contribution addresses formal/informal factors in the university environment in its impact on male/female students' perception of well-being, success and dropout motivation. The paper starts from a most recent Swiss online-survey of Bachelor-students in two Universities of Applied Science and a University of Education in Switzerland. It compares students' perspectives in four large BA degree courses with different male/female ratio, i.e. educational science, technical/computer science, economy, and social work (N=9`608). Results highlight the complex interplay of gender, migrant background and further dimensions of social differentiation on students' perception in these different fields of education. Further, they illustrate correlations between students' perception of discriminatory contexts, poor ratings of social integration and study success, as well a higher rate of dropout ideas. The paper lines out, that formal aspects of internationalization are less important for successfully integrating male/female migrant students than informal university conditions, such as a culture of diversity, which has to become integral part of internationalization strategies.

Keywords : gender and migration, higher education, internationalization, success

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