

# Living beyond the average

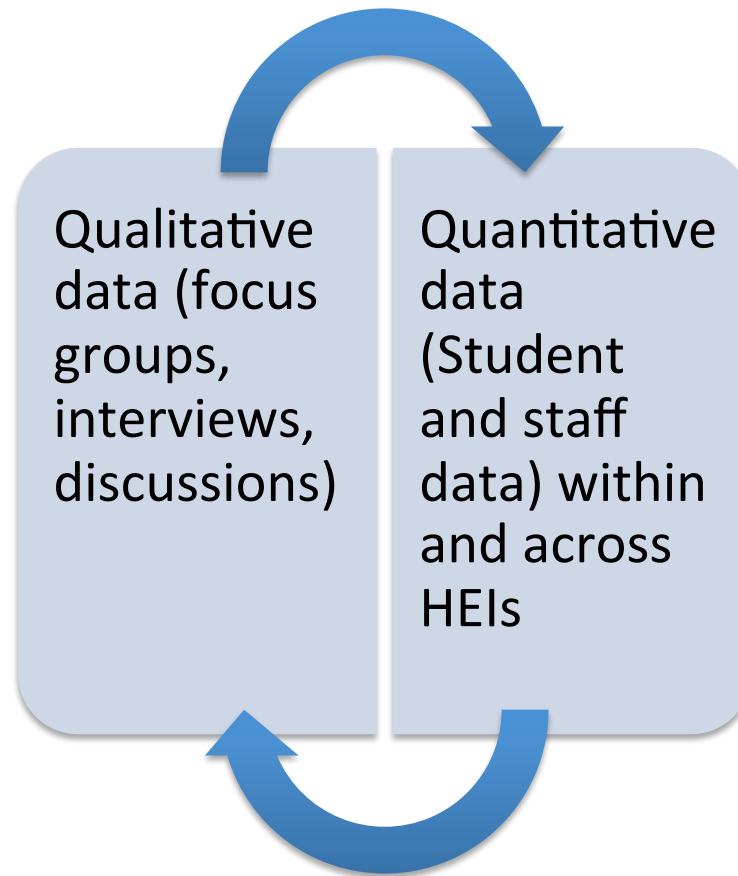
*Gender Summit,*

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# ESRC project

WARWICK



# Quantitative analysis



- Student data by discipline/department (Averages of the past 3 years where available)
- Staff data by department, academic rank, gender (Averages of the past 3 years where available)
- 3 universities

## **Challenges**

- Short term data availability
- Difficulty in comparing student/ staff data across HEIs (subjects, academic ranks)
- Recruitment and selection data – limited
- Small departments –caution about proportions/trends

# Looking closer



- Heterogeneity within career stage, discipline and institution – not fitting a model
- Emphasis on exploring closer interactions between those variables
- Disciplines and/or departments matter
- *Caution with small data*
- Need to look at personal experiences

# Importance of mixed methods

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- Evidence based tool to conduct qualitative research and enable discussions within and beyond the departments (not just the Athena SWAN coordinators) - *we asked questions*
- Thus engaging departments to reflect on the data and relate to their PERSONAL experiences and suggest solutions
- Perceptions about existing measures and suggestions for new
- Focus groups/interviews with academics/diversity groups

# How discipline affects measures for gender equality?

- Different focus on transition points (before UG, after postdoc, before professorship)
- Nature of work (lab, fieldwork) + funding – not relevant for all departments
- Differences in ‘traditional’ career paths and the role of the postdoc (flexible, mobility)
- Gendered disciplines (assumptions/norms about subject areas and gender, socialisation within disciplines)
- Departmental cultures (norms, assumptions, leadership)

# Gender equality initiatives

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- A plethora of initiatives undertaken in the past 10- 20 years but still no conclusive evidence about what works/what does not work and under which conditions
- Box-ticking exercise
- Attention to detail
- One size fits all?

# What we have done up to now at HEIs?



Aim to:	Initiatives	Benefits
Develop women's skills and raise awareness about the academic system ( <b>fix the women</b> )	Mentoring, Training (leadership)	Helps women to succeed Create role models
Identify and acknowledge and value differences between men/women ( <b>value the feminine</b> )	Diversity training, gender balanced committees	Positive externalities to enhancing further diversity e.g race
Change policies to enhance access of women ( <b>create equal opportunities</b> )	Affirmative action, family friendly policies	Recruitment and progression of women is enhanced



# Mentoring

The logo for Warwick University, featuring a stylized crown above the word "WARWICK" in a purple, serif font.

- Diversity of images: mentors
- But who are the mentors?
- How are they trained/evaluated/rewarded?
- Who is mentoring them?
- Taking a step back..

*Why do we need mentors?*

# Fixing the system



- Gender balanced committees
  - Workload?
  - Recognition
  - Involvement of junior levels?
- Review images/language/processes
  - Open day
  - Outreach
  - Family friendly

# Conclusions



- Mixed methods: quantitative data + qualitative
- Multiple interactions
- Better understanding of personal experiences in academia and how initiatives
  - Unintended consequences
  - Contribute to culture change
- Importance of challenging practices/critical stance (Ely and Meyerson, 2002)