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

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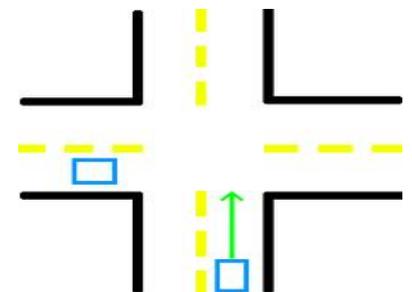
University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland
School of Applied Psychology

Context

International orientation is legally anchored for Swiss Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) since 1995

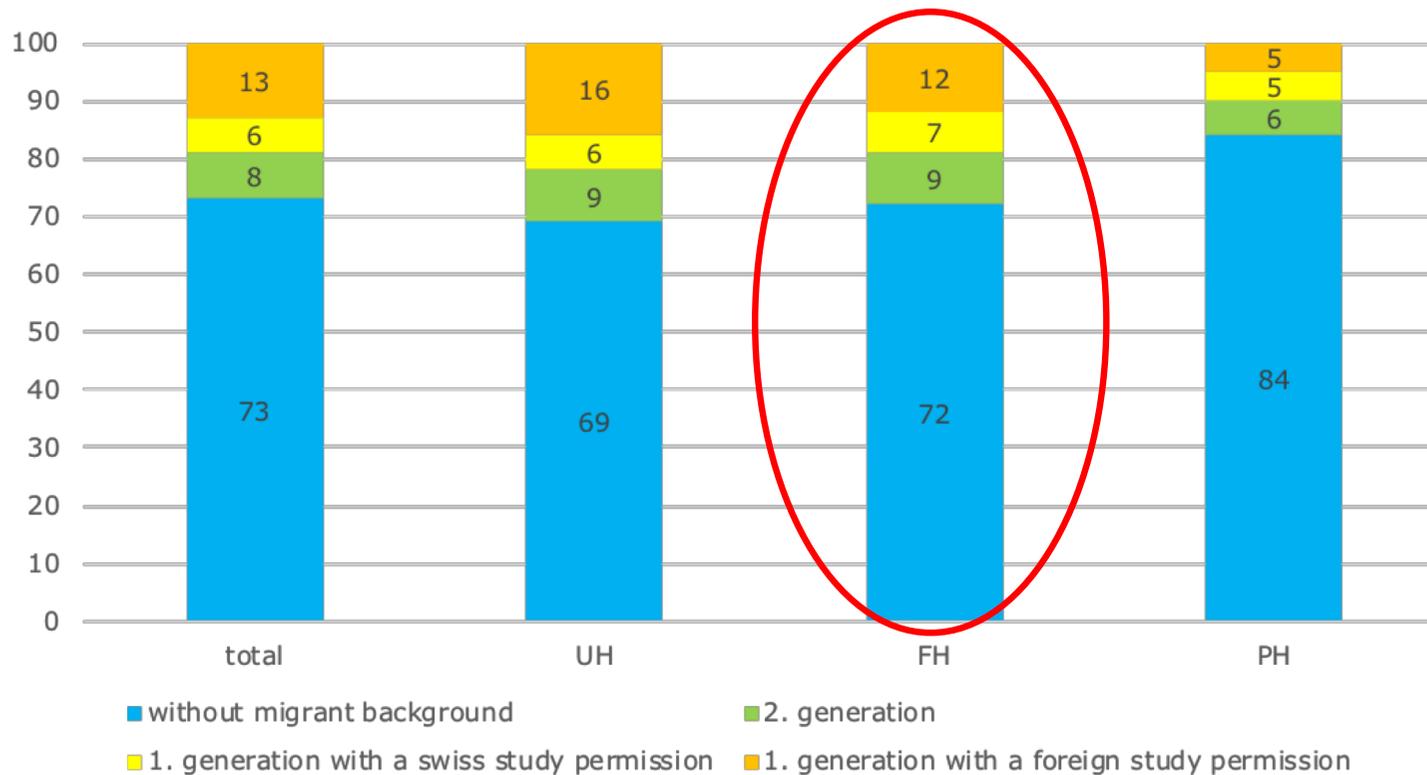
However, strong social selectivity and gender inequalities in students' access and success exist

- 28% (2013) students with a migrant background at UAS compared to 41% share of 18-34 year olds with a migrant background in the permanent resident population of Switzerland (FSO 2015a: 25).
- horizontal and vertical gender segregations, i.e. traditional fields of study and glass ceiling effects
- lack of data on intersectional effects, i.e. intersections between social categories of difference



Context

Students with migrant background at Swiss UAS (2013)



Main countries
(across all
universities)

Germany (25%)
France (16%)
Portugal (16%)
Italy (12%)
Austria (3%)
Others (41%)

Source: SSEE, 2013,
BFS, Neuchâtel, 2014



Theoretical perspectives

- universities (re-)produce gender relations and inequalities, also in processes of internationalization (Aulenbacher/Riegraf 2010)

Institutional perspectives

- formal rules and regulations (e. g. conditions for admission and education, gender equality policies) and
- informal requirements (i.e. **implicit rules and 'diversity cultures'**) generate specific framework conditions for migrant students of different sex (cf. Riegraf et al. 2010; Funder 2014)

Intersectional perspectives

- different structural categories can generate structurally specific differentiations and inequalities (Crenshaw 1994)
- Social differences can be of different importance in different structural and institutional contexts (eg. educational fields) (cf. Lutz 2007)



Research Questions + Aims

Research Questions

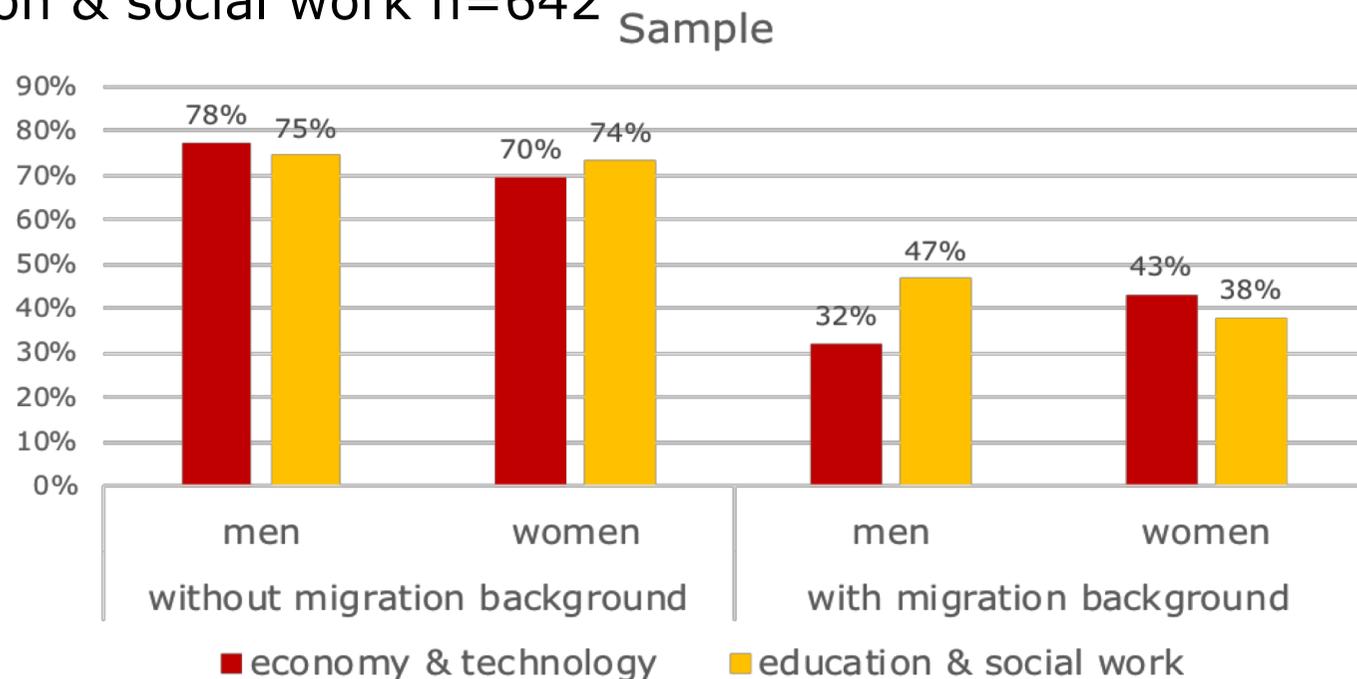
- How do male/female students with migrant background perceive the UAS diversity climate?
- How does perception of UAS climate impact on intentions of students to continue their studies?

AIMs of this presentation

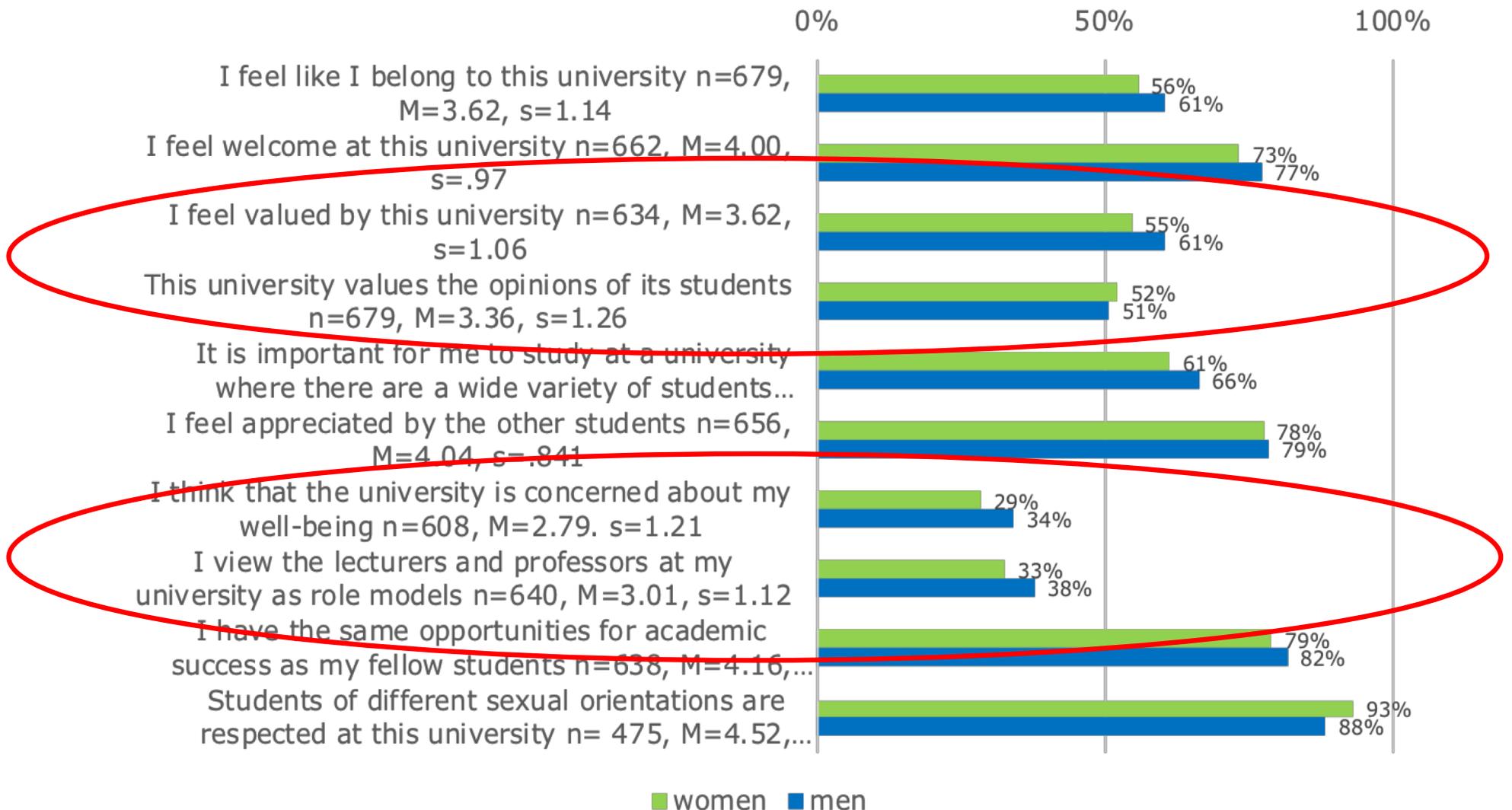
- Illustrate the influence of the perception of the UAS diversity climate on intention of male/female students with migrant background to continue their studies
- Develop ideas for the improvement of the UAS diversity climate for students

Methods

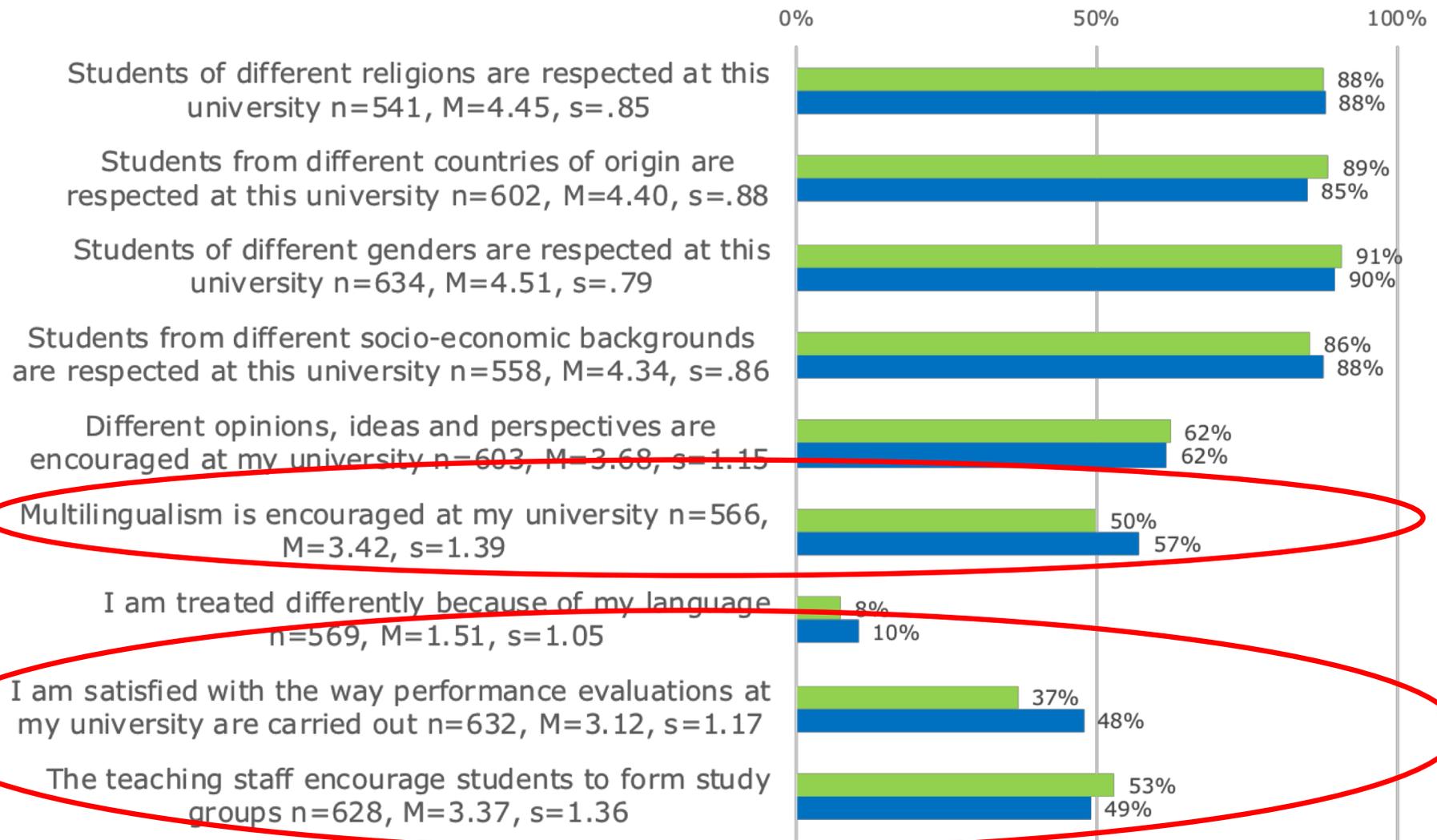
- ❑ Swiss online-survey of BA-students in 2 Universities of Applied Science and 1 University of Education in Switzerland (N=9'608) in 2018.
- ❑ Comparison of students' perspectives in two areas of large BA degree courses with different male/female ratio
- ❑ RETURNS:
 - Economy & technology n=978
 - Education & social work n=642



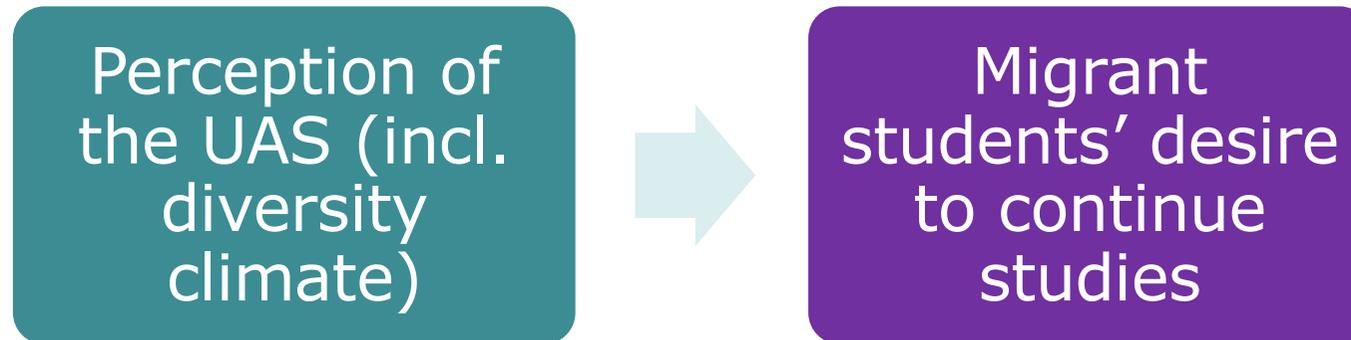
Perception the of UAS from students with migrant background (incl. diversity)I



Perception the of UAS from students with migrant background (incl. diversity) II



Multiple regression analysis shows



- Perception of the UAS has an influence on the desire to continue studies; $F(2,1702) = 93.7, p = .000, n = 1703$
- 9.8 % of the spread in the desire to continue studies is explained by the students' perception of the UAS, which according to Cohen (1992) corresponds to a medium effect ($f = .33$ - almost a strong effect).



Conclusion

- In general, a rather positive perception of the UAS (incl. the diversity climate) by male and female students with a migrant background can be stated in this survey.
- Perception of the UAS (incl. diversity climate) has an influence on the desire to continue studies for male/female students with migrant background.
- However, in this survey, students from a migrant background point out a number of issues, which they perceived as in need of improvement (see next slide).



Implications

In order to improve the perception of the UAS (incl. diversity climate) by students with a migrant background, UAS should:

- express more **value** for students and their opinions
- express more **concern** about the well-being of its students
- **support** lecturers and professors as role models
- **encourage** multilingualism at the university
- **foster** transparency of evaluations for all students
- **foster** the formation of learning groups where students with and without migrant backgrounds work together





Literature I

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Literature II

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Development of entry to UH at licentiate/diploma/bachelor level by gender and educational background

