# 'Gendered resistances and emotions to neo-liberalism in a post-1992 University in England'

## Abstract

**Purpose**: In this paper we explore the gendered ways in which academic staff resistance and compliance is configured in a post-1992 University in England, including the emotions implicated in the navigation of neo-liberalisation and research intensification of their academic institution and its associated disciplinarian mechanisms.

**Design**: We draw on data from an interview study of a diverse sample of 32 academics of different gender, discipline, and academic grade.

**Methodology**: Analysis informed by a feminist post-structuralist framework of power and discourse explored different forms of academic resistance and compliance; how the embodied academic subject was (re)negotiated within gendered discourses of neo-liberal research excellence and managerialism; and the gendered emotions generated in processes of resistance and compliance.

**Findings**: Institutional change and expectations to engage with research performativity generated fear, anxiety and anger. Female staff appeared to actively resist the masculinized research subject performing all hours work and individualism in the context of private and institutional gendered relations and labor. Male staff though actively resisted the feminization of higher education and the neo-liberal instrumentalization of caring and therapeutic cultures and ideologically resisted the surveillance mechanisms of higher education including the REF.

**Originality**: Our work contributes to scholarship problematizing the assumed neutrality of resistance and compliance and highlighting women's symbolic struggle to (dis)identify with a masculine professional norm. In terms of theorising academic resistance to neo-liberalism and identity construction, further attention should be given to the mobilization of symbolic capital and emotions of academics positioned differently due to their gender and intersecting differences.

**Keywords:** Gendered resistance, emotions, neo-liberalism, post-1992 university, feminist post-structuralist framework

**Introduction**

**The neo-liberalisation and research audit cultures of UK higher education: Gender implications**

Whereas the rise of the neoliberal audit culture in academia and its clash with the traditional values of academic freedom and knowledge is a global phenomenon (Adalberto and Rubén, 2021; Danling and Yongyan, 2022; Strathern, 2000), in the UK it has become further exacerbated by sustained state intervention in higher education governance. Government initiatives such as the replacement of equity-based with competition-based university funding now distributed through the nation-wide Research Excellence Framework (REF), and the introduction of tuition fees, have generated a quasi-market environment maintained by a punishing regime of academic performance management (Bristow *et al.,* 2017). This is underpinned by extensive use of league tables and journal rankings that exert considerable pressure on academic agendas and identities (Butler and Spoelstra, 2014).

The UK Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), now Research Excellence Framework (REF) was established in 1986 and has gone through much development and change since that time with RAE exercises conducted in 1992, 1996, 2001, 2008, 2014, and most recently a REF exercise in 2021. In the last REF every member of staff on an Academic/Research contract was submitted with at least one output. The selection of outputs for REF submission has always been decided by internal REF review panels. The REF is a national system of evaluation of university research which is conducted through a process of peer review with specialist panels evaluating the research work of all universities in the UK. The UK was an early adopter of this type of national system, though a number of countries with historical ties to the UK have also introduced such audits though with some significant differences in terms of content, process and outcome, including Hong Kong, New Zealand and Australia. The result of each successive RAE/REF determines the amount of research funding that is distributed to UK universities via the Higher Education Funding Councils (for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). It has been argued that there has been a successive concentration of funds to the elite universities in the UK (Lukas, 2014; Banal-Estañol, 2023).

The disciplinary technology of the REF, further reinforces inequalities in the academy and whilst some women clearly benefit from having their research recognised and judged 'excellent', historically far fewer women were entered in the RAE than men (Leathwood and Read, 2013). Despite Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) higher education policies and gender accreditation schemes women continue to do most of the maintenance work and emotional labour, including equality work, both in old and new Universities in the UK (Doherty and Manfredi, 2006) and pay higher costs of the research performativity and audit culture (Bleijenbergh *et al.,* 2012; Harley, 2002). In higher education in the UK and beyond, it is often women who are engaging in doing the caring of students, while men are more supported with research and publishing (Bozalek and Boughey, 2012; Guarino and Borden, 2017). Women are usually caught up in 'academic housework' (Heijstra *et al.,* 2017), and the neo-liberal ethos appears to be favouring neither women/academic mothers/carers, nor female dominated disciplines (Steinþórsdóttir et al., 2018). Unfortunately women remain at the lower echelons of the academic profession with the Professoriate being predominantly White male**.** Only 28% of Professors were women in 2020-21 in UK Universities (HESA, 2023). Gender inequalities in research careers persist across European countries with less women receiving research funding, authoring scientific papers, holding doctorates and occupying senior

research positions (European Commission, 2019). This paper focuses on gendered resistances to neoliberalism and new managerialism, and the gendered emotions and academic identities emerging from research intensification in a post 1992 university in England with a vocational/practitioner legacy. Interrogating gendered challenges in resisting and complying with neoliberalism is essential in extending understanding of intersectional inequalities in HE and their contingency and conditionality upon white heteropatriarchal regimes of institutions and disciplinarian cultures (Author, 2025).

It is also generally acknowledged that women did not fare particularly well in the old University culture, which they often experienced as unwelcoming. For example, Thomas and Davies' (2002) qualitative study of 53 women academics in three universities reinforced the view that the traditional culture associated with some old universities was still deeply masculine and that it often resembled an exclusive men's club. By comparison, the new university included in their study employed a larger proportion of women as academics than was found in the old universities and they did not feel marginalised in their daily work. It has been found that post- 1992 Universities are more likely that the research prestigious Universities to recognise research and teaching equally (Parker, 2002). However, with funding stagnation for years, the increase of teaching contracts across the UK HE sector in both old and new universities (Tierney, 2016) and limited research resources in post-1992 universities, the investigation of research intensification, research and teaching careers/identities and their gendering across different institutions and UK countries merits attention. We acknowledge here that the Scottish HE sector is funded differently and the pressures might be different. However, this paper focuses on one institution in England and a more detailed discussion of funding issues across the four UK countries is beyond the scope of this paper.

The pre-1992 universities are generally referred to as "old" universities and the post-1992 universities as "new" universities. The 1992 Further and Higher Education Act allowed polytechnics and some institutions of HE (previously controlled by local education authorities) to be incorporated as universities. This increased the number of UK universities from 46 to 112 (Morley, 2002). Whilst many post-1992 universities have developed impressive research records, it may be true to say that many regard themselves as 'teaching intensive' institutions and, as a consequence, derive the majority of their income from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) (Cartwright, 2005, p.337). Boliver's (2015) cluster analysis of publicly available data on the research activity, teaching quality, economic resources, academic selectivity, and socioeconomic student mix of UK universities demonstrated that the former binary divide persists with old (pre-1992) universities characterised by higher levels of research activity, greater wealth, more academically successful and socioeconomically advantaged student intakes, but similar levels of teaching quality, compared to new (post-1992) institutions. Among the old universities, Oxford and Cambridge emerge as an elite tier, whereas the remaining 22 Russell Group universities appear to be undifferentiated from the majority of other old universities. A division among the new universities is also evident, with around a quarter of new universities forming a distinctive lower tier (Boliver, 2015, p.1). The hierarchical relation between old and new universities in England and Scotland has also been confirmed by Raffe and Croxford's research (2013), which showed an increasing association between old universities and private secondary schools in England.

Many of the old Universities are members of the Russell group, consisting of 24 prestigious institutions (Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Exeter, King's College, Leeds, Liverpool, London School of Economics, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton, University College London,

Warwick and York).. The decision to become a Russell group university is voluntary and there are old research intensive institutions such as the universities of St. Andrews's in Scotland and Lancaster and Bath in England which are not Russell group universities.

Scholarship across the disciplines of HE policy, organisations, management, and feminist studies has been concerned with critical investigations of neo-liberal governmentalities; resistance and compliance to new managerialism and performativity cultures; and more recently the therapeutic cultures of higher education (Bartram, 2014; 2018; Foster, 2016). Although the UK is replete with investigations of academic subjectivities, there is paucity of research in post-1992 universities in the UK, interrogating the impact of neo-liberalism and research audit cultures for academic identities and practices of resistances. Practices of resistance and compliance to neoliberalism are always gendered, racialized, classed and intertwined with academic power. However, few studies have focused on the different experiences, roles and practices of various academics to neoliberalism and/or tend to view it as a gender neutral enterprise (Brorsen Smidt *et al.,* 2020; Haeruddin *et al.,* 2020). Hence this paper aims to fill this gap by specifically focusing on the gendered (re)negotiations of the academic self and gendered resistances to neoliberalism and managerialism in a post-1992 university in England, UK, at a time of research intensification and restructuring.
In what follows, we critically review the scholarship of academic resistance to neo-liberalisation, its different forms and manifestations across organizational and national contexts and individuals. We draw on resistance literature that examines the identity-resistance relationship with a broad, multifaceted view of resistance, rather than simply the opposite of power (Fleming and Spicer, 2007). Further, we also believe that neoliberal practices and discourses should and could be resisted in a multiplicity of ways.


**Gender, Resistance, and Compliance in the neo-liberal university**

Little evidence of organized or collective resistance against neo-liberalism in HE exists, but a plethora of studies focus on individual resistance. Mahony and Weiner's research (2017) with heads of departments and senior professors has shown that senior managers and academic staff are able to negotiate neoliberal pressures depending on their own career positioning and experiences. Interestingly, Mahony and Weiner (2017) also concluded that Education Departments-which attract predominantly female staff and students- are more vulnerable in terms of neoliberal changes due to their low status. Anderson (2008) takes a broader view of political action and argues that our understanding of resistance should be expanded to include everyday routine and informal acts of resistance to the exercise of power within university settings. She records individual forms of resistance against managerialism in Australian universities, such as 'forgetting' or not completing certain tasks, as well as more overt forms of resistance, such as teaching students about changes to higher education. Embedded within a Foucauldian paradigm of power and discourse, Anderson's work (2008) does not address though the gendered forms and implications of academic resistance.

Resistance has predominantly been investigated as a neutral enterprise with little if any attention to how gender and its intersectionality with other differences/inequalities might be implicated in the success and penalties of projects of academic resistance. Straub and Boncor's (2020) intersectional analysis of female foreign academics' experiences across various countries, demonstrated gendered resistances though 'self-induced estrangement'; a process of distancing from the mainstream hegemonic practices in various ways. Gender and

foreignness were mobilised in complex ways by academic staff and institutions to constitute both belonging and non-belonging.

Of relevance here is Leathwood's and Read's feminist post-structuralist research (2009; 2013) with British academics that highlighted the higher costs of compliance and resistance for women within the gendered structures, cultures and processes of the academy. Acker and Armenti (2004) note that women academics in two Canadian studies coped with and resisted neo-liberalised and managerial pressures for research performativity and gendered constructions of work, though the main response was to work harder and sleep less. Pressures to perform as the 'good girls' of the academy (Author, 2018) and the desire to succeed in the gendered academy means that resistance carries particular penalties for women and other minoritised academics (Author 2012; 2023).

Few systematic efforts have been made to account for the different roles, experiences and practices of academics in different stages of their careers, one exception being Butler and Spoelstra's (2014) research on the Professoriate. Some research has addressed important questions about who is able to resist and in what way, with levels of seniority, gender, etc. Professor Sayer's critique of the REF 2014 in terms of the inequity of the system and the costs for one's career (Sayer, 2013), is an example of resistance from a privileged position (a senior male academic with 30 years of experience at prestigious institutions), although one could argue that the success may only be at the level of challenging the discourse and the meanings of the quality assurance processes rather than being able to effect substantive policy change (Lukas, 2014).

Overwhelmingly, research has shown that academics ideologically resist managerialism but intentionally comply or appear to comply to survive academia (Alvesson and Spicer, 2016). Teelken (2012), through 48 interviews in 10 universities in the Netherlands, the UK and Sweden, found that for the most part academics either respond to requirements at a superficial level, or decide to play by the rules of the neo-liberal academy. Similarly, Clarke *et al.'s* (2012) research with British business school academics demonstrated their sense of disappointment with academia and only a minority were actively resisting. Ylijoki and Ursin (2013) explored how Finnish academics make sense of the changes in higher education and find narratives of mostly ideological resistance within their 42 interviews. However, none of the studies discussed so far in this section approach resistance as a gendered phenomenon. Archer's research (2008) though with junior British academics highlights discourses of self-protection, rather than resistance that allow them to negotiate the pressures of neo-liberalised academy and notions of inauthenticity. She argues that young academics' inauthenticity and precarity was exacerbated by their gender, race/ethnicity, class and fixed-term contracts. Gabriel (2008) refers to another form of academic resistance: exiting an organization which has been adopted by many academics. However, it appears that exiting can be more easily afforded as a resistance strategy by those no longer invested in the system (Kalfa *et al.,* 2018). Shahjahan (2012) interrogates various modes of decolonizing resistance, including cultural, subversive and oppositional, and calls for a transformational approach to resistance that centres multiple ways of knowing, writing, and being that allow for experimentation and imagination of a future of human connection and interdependence.

In the following sections we discuss the feminist post-structuralist paradigm employed in the analysis presented in this paper and we also provide information about the study methods, the research setting and researchers' positionality.

**Theoretical framework**

The analysis presented in this paper, informed by Foucauldian approaches to subjectivities, power and resistance (Foucault 1982). We incorporate feminist poststructuralist approach which addresses gender, patriarchal structures, and androcentric biases to expose social mechanisms, power relations, and discourses that contribute to the marginalization and oppression of women (Arslanian-Engoren, 2002; Aston, 2016; Weedon, 1997). We use discourses in the Foucauldian sense, as *'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak',* a concept that delineates what is possible to say, know or do (Foucault, 1972; 1979). We treat gender as a system of power relations (Connell, 2002).

In examining the resistance-identity dynamics in this context, we draw on the view of identity as fluid, multiple, contingent and contextual, and always embedded within the wider context of power/resistance relations (Thomas, 2009). From this perspective, identity construction is both an instrument and a product of power/resistance, and is conceptualised as the combination of a) identity regulation – a pervasive but *'precarious and often contested'* modality of normative control (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002, p. 621); and b) active identity work – a reflexive process through which individuals form, reproduce, contest and transform their subjectivities. We approach resistance as complex, multifaceted with potential to be disruptive, but also transformative (Thomas and Hardy, 2011), creative and productive (Bristow *et al.,* 2017). Drawing on Ahmed's work on the sociality and political nature of emotions we treat emotions not as simply things that happen to people but in motion and circulated from both the inside out and the outside in and infiltrated with power (Ahmed, 2015). Our analysis is embedded within a framework that treats emotions as discourses implicated in the generation and (re)-configuration of identities (Tsouroufli, 2012, 2015)

The analysis presented in this paper was guided by three questions:
1.  How might different forms of academic resistance and compliance be configured in a post-1992 University at a time of aggressive neo-liberalism and organisational change aiming to create and sustain a more entrepreneurial culture?
2.  How is the gendered academic subject negotiated and positioned within gendered discourses of neo-liberal research excellence and managerialism?
3.  What gendered emotions are generated in processes of resistance and compliance?

**Methods: An interview study at a post-1992 university in England, UK**

A convenience sample was chosen which consisted of all those who responded to second author's email from the university where she worked during her doctoral studies. 14 responses were from the Faculty of Education, 10 were from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and eight were from the Faculty of Health. Saturation of data was confirmed when no new issues could be identified by the doctoral researcher and supervisors (Hennink and Kaiser, 2022). Semi-structured interviews were chosen to allow for in-depth information and flexibility in the research process and a safe space to discuss professional and personal challenges in relation to research and reflect on identify shifts and changes (Mashuri, 2022).

The reason that more colleagues responded from the Faculty of Education was because of the doctoral researcher's connections as she was employed in that particular Faculty at the time of the research.  The diverse sample of participants in terms of gender consisted of 32

members of staff at different career grades and from different disciplines. All participants had worked in the institution for at least eight years and there were therefore able to discuss changes over time. Out of the 32 semi-structured interviews with participants only 10 were conducted with male academics and one with an ethnic minority member of staff, but this reflects the balance of men and women and the ethnic/racial context of the Faculties involved in the research. For confidentiality and ethical reasons we are not able to provide further detail on the demographics here and the in interview extracts. Due to the lack of ethnic diversity in our sample we were not able to explore the potentially racialized nature of resistance and resistance capital and focused only on gendering of resistance and emotions in this paper. Our analysis has shown how resistance intersects with gender (Author, in press). We have also provided some evidence of the intersections of gender and resistance with professional role (manager).

We acknowledge that the research was conducted only in one post-1992 University which although part of the UK HE sector, it has its particular culture shaped by its geographical location and legacy in vocational education. We also acknowledge that Faculties of Health, Education and Arts and Sciences often attract academics from vocational/practitioner backgrounds and industries with different funding models and may have different cultures in terms of discipline, gender, ethnicity and class (Author, 2023; Wakeling, 2007).

The interview study was granted ethical approval from the University of Wolverhampton. All recorded semi-structured interviews and transcripts are kept in a password-protected folder on a computer. All files will be kept for approximately four years after the completion of the research study in order to write papers for publication. At the end of this period, all data will be deleted. Interviews were conducted face to face by the second author and did not exceed one hour. They were initially coded under broad, descriptive codes. Guided by the research questions outlined in the previous section and through discussions with the supervisory team and reading of relevant literature on feminist post-structuralist perspectives and academic resistance, different forms of gendered resistance and emotions were generated.

**The research setting**

The research setting was originally a teacher training college, later classified as a post 1992 University. One of the most significant changes since the institution gained university status in 2005 is related to its positioning within the domain of research. The university's strategic plan (2013-2020) accepted the challenges associated with seeking to establish a significant research profile, particularly as the organisation did not have a significant research culture.

The only Faculty that had significant research culture at the time of the research was the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, with all staff understanding that there was an expectation to produce research outputs for the Research Excellence Framework. Academic staff were usually recruited with a PhD and research publications. Unlike the Faculties of Education and Health, there was a high number of younger academics in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. In all Faculties women were predominantly responsible for leading programmes or in middle management roles. The representation of women in middle management and 'maintenance' roles and of men in research reflect the patriarchal regime of the institution and wider gender patterns in higher education perpetuated, if not exacerbated by neo-liberal logic (Bozalek and Boughey, 2012; Einarsdottir, U. D. ,. Christiansen, T.H. and Kristjansdottir E.S. 2018).

**Researchers' positionality**

The authors of this article brought different skills and experiences to the doctoral work and had different educational, academic and social trajectories. Although in different roles, authors were employed by Departments/Faculties of Education at the time of the research and were very familiar with the challenges that practitioners faced in their attempts to develop their research profile and to manage research and teaching expectations. The first author, a migrant academic completed her doctorate in gender studies in a Russell group University and following graduation embarked on an academic career. However, having been brought up abroad and left her country after completing a Liberal Arts Undergraduate Degree at a time when neo-liberalism and new managerialism had not corroded or even permeated the traditional ethos of universities in her country of origin, she found herself always in a clash with new managerial culture of higher education in the UK and experienced damaging disruptions of her academic identity. The second author's journey involved making a challenging transition from a teacher/educator identity to a scholarly and academic identity. However, this identity shift allowed her to empathise with the participants, particularly in relation to professionals from the Faculties of Health and Education being forced to become researchers. Although being an 'insider researcher' could raise questions of undue influence from the researcher's perspective, as argued by Dwyer and Buckle (2009)  the benefits were huge in terms of securing access and building rapport fast with researcher participants as well as

> *'richness in the interpretation of the data in light of deep knowledge of the social, political, and historical context*' as argued by Ross (2017, p. 237).

Interestingly, the second author's identity project entailed resistances to engaging with gender in the conceptualisation of her doctoral project and analysis of data, which perhaps reflects the widespread anxieties, 'fear' and difficulties of most professional doctorate students in theorising empirical work and critically reflecting on some difficult issues.

The third author had a similar educational, social, and professional trajectory with the second author. Although his area of expertise is widening participation he was keen like the first author/supervisor to see a more critical engagement with gender issues and feminist post-structuralist analysis.  Originating from a working class English background, the third author had negotiated higher education as a "non-traditional" student and, over a period of over twenty years had witnessed the changing nature and growing managerialism of HE, eventually as an academic. The authors agreed and welcomed the opportunity to use this space/publication for presenting their feminist post-structuralist analysis of academic resistance and compliance.  The second author retired soon after her graduation and consented to the supervisor leading the analysis presented in this paper.

**Findings**

    i.       **Resisting the entrepreneurial subject**

At the time this research was taking place, senior management's plans to transform the university into a more research intensive institution in preparation for the REF led academic staff feeling increasingly pressurized to engage in research and publish in first class journals. Such pressures were professionally and emotionally very challenging for the majority of staff, who came from a vocational background and their main role had been teaching and training health care or educational staff. They were shocked and anxious that they had become *'the sandwich generation'* and caught up into two very different worlds as the following quotations illustrate.

*They talk about the 'sandwich generation', I think the post-1992 universities are the equivalent of the millennials who are cutting a sandwich. We are the sandwich generation; we are now caught between two competing demands. We are expected to excel in teaching and student support and now at the same time we are expected to research in the way the Russell group universities research.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

There was a general climate of non-engagement with research either due to lack of time, increased workloads and/or lack of knowledge and confidence to do the particular type of research expected for REF. Workload allocation models have been introduced in the UK HE sector in an attempt to ensure fair allocations of tasks. However, the workload models remain contentious, they vary across institutions and sometimes even within institutions and they can operate as both instruments of control as well as resistance (Boncori et al, 2020). As discussed later in this paper it was more challenging for female than male staff to protect their research time from encroachment of other responsibilities.

Many female members of staff drew on subjugated discourses of the 'good teacher professional' and the vocational ethos of their profession in an attempt to counteract the corrosive and dangerous operation of neo-liberal governmentalities and academic subjectivities for staff mental health and well-being and higher education more generally. Holding on to the non-dominant discourses of the pedagogical and vocational identities has been strategized in other changing academic and national contexts where aggressive neo-liberalism in combination with gendered organizational structures and cultures were perceived to be damaging the academic legitimacy and future of women in academic medicine (Author, 2016).

*I just lack confidence. I just feel pressurised and although I can see the benefit of research, I can see that people quite enjoy it... All of a sudden, you're told you have to do research and we were not given very much support with that and help with that. I've done low-key research, certainly not research that they want for the REF. I think the future of this university is that you are going to need a PhD to be a lecturer... My personal view is that getting a PhD does not necessarily mean you're good at teaching. But then there are people without a PhD is who are doing really well and offering research informed teaching because they're interested in early years and they're reading around the early years. They're up to date with early years and that's probably more important to me.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

*We have to operate at that level to get 3, 4, 5-star publications for the REF return, ... but I think people are ill equipped for it because certainly in a health care setting and the Faculty of Health, the majority of people weren't historically academics. They were clinicians and they came in because they believed in the vocational ethos of their profession to help people. Now there is a pressure to publish and can you be both? ... We have a high level of sickness*

*here and 40% of that is due to mental health which is far higher. I think that's the pressure to do both.* (Female, Faculty of Health)

Male staff across all the faculties that participated in this research described neo-liberalism and its associated disciplinary mechanisms, such as the REF and managerialism as dangerous for both staff and students. They also drew on subjugated discourses of good teaching and research that actually make a difference to people's lives to juxtapose the commodification and instrumentalization of knowledge and higher education and the transformation of academics into entrepreneurial, disembodied and controlled subjects.

*I see the REF as entrepreneurial because it positions us in a league table against other universities but again, I think this is where neoliberalism is destructive because we have to publish for publications sake but the publications don't necessarily need to be life changing in terms of the people they are targeting, they don't need to make a difference to patients' lives, they just need to get out there in good journals and have peer reviews at a good standard by people in that professional ball.* (Male, Faculty of Health)

*You're almost like a filter or a prison, where the regulation wouldn't take place unless the discourse wasn't guiding you. Part of that in that respect is this whole notion that, we talk about doing research, actually the way we do research often has no relationship to actually seriously thinking about the world and producing new knowledge. Often it is a mechanistic 'technologised' process by which we fulfil certain functions and produce certain outputs almost as if they were automatic.* (Male, Faculty of Arts and Sciences)

Not only male academics were displeased with the 'Big Brother' universities which are on a mission to control, to qualify, to classify and to punish but some also felt a sense of ethical and professional responsibility to use their privilege and act as public intellectuals (Said, 1994) to ideologically challenge the assumed orthodoxy of neo-liberalism.

*I think neoliberalism and the marketisation and commodification of education are the main developments of my time here, certainly within the last 5 or 6 years. I think they are dangerous and those dangers include dangers for staff and for the student consumer and I think academics in the privileged position we hold, we have responsibility to look out for those and make sure that as far as is possible we hold true to values of education that precede and transcend monetary or target driven values... so we are increasingly focusing, often, on quantitative evidencing of why we exist and the shift I think has moved away from teaching in some ways.* (Male, Faculty of Arts and Sciences)

### ii.      Resisting the masculinized research subject and gendered emotions

Some women across the three Faculties were interested to become research active but objected to sacrificing their personal time or family life in order to respond to the challenges of doing research. Although they were not resisting research per se, they were openly and actively resisting the masculinized research subject performing all hours work. All hours' commitment to research could be afforded only by men who benefited greatly by the gendered divisions of labor at work and in the family, even in academic families as the following quotes illustrate:

*I work at night, I work on weekend so I'm doing research all the time basically. I might find that I get up in the night and do three pages of work then. My son luckily is either a good sleeper or he sleeps with his mum, if he wakes in the middle of the night he wants his mum. He has told me that he finds that my torso is not as soft as his mum's and he doesn't like my spiky beard.* (Male, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences)

*I am absolutely clear on the remit around research. I absolutely know that each and every one of us have to take responsibility to be research active. I do find it difficult to get my research because if I don't carve the time out in my diary during the day then I have no chance when I get home of an evening. I drive 45 minutes to my home, pick my daughter up and then its bedtime stories etc. and by the time I have made my tea its 9pm and I don't want to start researching at that time, my brain isn't switched on enough at that time.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

*I think that there's this situation where the majority of females take on the responsibilities at home whether that be children or the house itself. I know for me, my husband is also an academic and I don't have the free time to research that he does. I take on greater responsibilities, taking the kids to gymnastics, sorting out what's for tea, doing the shopping, than he does* (Female, Faculty of Education).

The various new managerial practices employed at the post-1992 university, including the close monitoring of academics' performance, guiding them into self-monitoring through stressing the importance of research impact and league tables (Terama *et al.,* 2016) and the negative implications of not doing REF research, led mainly female staff feeling that their position was being threatened. Although our analysis showed no evidence of the generation of a space of collective resistance and action, emotions of stress, anxiety, and fear generated strong individual resistance from female staff, challenging stereotypical constructions of women as passive. Gendered emotions were not simply women's feelings (Ogbonna and Harris, 2004), but configurations inseparable from the gendered structures and power relations of the neo-liberal organisation, and gendered discourses constitutive of assertive professional femininities as the following extracts illustrate:

*I have tried to speak up in certain ways but either A - you're not listened to or B – you are swimming against the tide, I think that your job would be threatened. I think the message is you either go with the system or you're out the door.* (Female, Faculty of Education).

*I have been told that actually you put your job in jeopardy if you don't do research. I don't feel I have a voice and I know that there was a colleague when their manager raised something at one of the senior meetings was told that that person doesn't have a voice so it doesn't count. I would say I'm quite disillusioned.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

*If the university did try to go down a disciplinary path or would try to go down to firing me for not fulfilling that aspect of my role* (research) *then I would have to go to the union and I would have a good case to fight.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

Sadly, female staff open acts of resistance did not appear to be carrying much symbolic capital in the organization and were disregarded.  Male staff resistances appeared to be less overtly challenging senior management. Some men discussed how they sometimes responded or engaged superficially to senior management's unrealistic demands, while covertly resisting by not working beyond their contracted hours in order to do REF research.

### iii. Gendered compliances and emotions

For some female members of staff engagement with research was welcomed and seen as producing opportunities and pleasures including the possibility to influence policy and practice in higher education as the following extract illustrates:

*However, on a positive note, I feel like, specifically in our faculty, there is a stronger emphasis on research now, and it is an exciting opportunity for me and also for my colleagues to get involved in research. I feel like it might help us to make a positive change through critical evaluation of what is happening around us; we might be able to impact on government policies and government initiatives to make universities a more creative place where there is less emphasis on managerialism and the government's agenda.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

This shifting identity of the post-1992 university and its emphasis on building research capacity were very welcomed by all female staff who held managerial roles at the time of the research.

*The university mission is to increase the research capacity. We are going to grow our own talents.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

Performing entrepreneurial management subjectivities is not only a way of aligning with the new ethos and mission of the university but also a survival strategy for women managers. Researchers (Alvesson, 1998; Collinson and Hearn, 2004) have challenged the idea of feminisation of management and suggested that surviving within contemporary organisations where masculine practices and discourses are dominant, requires no contestation of the masculine culture and its privileged masculinities such as entrepreneurialism and careerism (Collinson and Collinson, 1997). While the organisational rhetoric emphasises equality, organisational practices continue to inform the conduct and expectations from women and men in different ways (Priola, 2004; Einarsdottir, U. D. , Christiansen, T.H. and Kristjansdottir E.S. 2018).

### iv. Gendered compliances and resistances against the feminine caring subject

Discourses of mental health and the consumer-student emerged as productive of academics-service providers, who in addition to excelling in research were expected to engage in substantial caring and administrative work.  In the neo-liberal context of producing such multifaceted, self-improving subjects, emotions become another disciplinarian technology for regulating academic trajectories and gender subjectivities and reproducing, if not exacerbating gender inequalities. Women were expected by management and students and sometimes even forced to do the maintenance and caring work in the institution. However, such gendered divisions of labor were usually not attributed to the systemic gender inequalities of higher education and seen as compatible with innate female qualities even by women themselves.

*I think the female staff, time and time again, are either given pastoral roles or they are approached by students, as they are seen as being nurturing and caring...Male academics have a way of putting things into compartments, or their body language, or language is such that they send out the signal 'do not approach me, do not cross that barrier'.* (Female, Faculty of Education)

*I think it is partly how we are as women. I think a lot of us do take that sort of nurturing role, we are emotionally sensitive to our children and I don't know whether men can just detach*

*themselves a little bit easier and see themselves still as the bread winner.* (Female, Faculty of Health)

The feminization of emotionality and essentialization of gender was instrumentalised by the neo-liberal institution not only to sustain its therapeutic and service culture on female labor but also to maintain its gender order by discrediting and penalising women for taking caring roles within the institution and in the home (Swan, 2008; Wright, 2008). Such feminised roles, although particularly demanding and damaging for women's research careers and sometimes their well-being, carried less prestige and symbolic capital and are usually seen as tasks with low promotability (Babcoke et *al.*, 2017). However, female staff felt unable to resist being responsibilised (O' Malley 2019; 279) for the mental health and well-being of students.

O'Malley, (2009, p.276) explains responsibilisation as:

... 'the process whereby subjects are rendered individually responsible for a task which previously would have been the duty of another – usually a state agency – or would not have been recognized as a responsibility at all. The process is strongly associated with neoliberal political discourses, where it takes on the implication that the subject being responsibilized has avoided this duty or the responsibility has been taken away from them in the welfare-state era and managed by an expert or government agency'.

The following excerpts offer examples of the gendered responsibilization process and the mental and professional implications it carries.

*I never agreed to be a counsellor but I was forced to act as one without training. I do think that is a time bomb. I think I'm fairly resilient but some days after I've dealt with certain things, I do think God I need a drink. The horrific things that have happened to some of our students, who do I talk to, who am I supposed to go and talk to?* (Female, Faculty of Arts and Sciences)

*I think fellas are better at carving out their research time. So if they have a day off it's pretty much set in stone, whereas we will sort of say well there is a meeting that day so I'll have to go and do it. I think it's the same everywhere, having seen the way other places work there is definitely a gender divide. I went to a programme leaders meeting a few days ago and it was just like the 'handmaid's tale', the programme leaders were all female.* (Female, Faculty of Arts and Sciences)

Male staff on the other hand, actively resisted the feminization of the sector with its new therapeutic-service ethos, by protecting their research time, declining meeting invitations and setting boundaries in their relationships and engaging in emotional distancing with students. However, these acts of resistance and its emotionality was not penalized, rather it was seen as inherent to the performance and glorification of privileged academic/research masculinities.

*I've worked with men who flatly refuse to do anything they were asked to even if it was perfectly normal and within their job and they would throw a tantrum and say if you're going to make me do that then I'm going to look for another job and that would be in the staff meeting. They would be really rude and arrogant and then the discourse about that person would be yes but he's marvelous at his research, he's so focused on his research, he sets a real example. Whereas if I were to say no I don't want to do that then I'd be being awkward or difficult or maybe I'm a bit lazy, maybe I'm letting my family responsibilities take away from my workplace role.* (Female, Faculty of Arts and Sciences)

We argue, that although gendered caring and carelessness acquire a different moral status and are intensified under neo-liberalism, they are not determined by its values and ethos (Lunch, 2010) but instead are rooted in ontological dualisms of mind and soul or emotions and positivist binaries of fact and value that have informed scientific thinking and the very nature of education and academia.

**Further discussion**

In undertaking the analysis discussed above there are three key areas to highlight. First, different forms of academic resistance were configured in a post-1992 University at a time of aggressive neo-liberalism and organisational change aiming to create and sustain a more entrepreneurial culture. The various forms of resistance (individual, active, ideological, radical) (Hollander and Einwohner, 2004; Scott, 1990) evidenced in this paper show the possibility of alternatives ways of academic being to neo-liberal subjectivities (Shahjahan, 2014), even if the resistance was sometimes at the level of challenging the discourse of managerialism and REF only. Alternative ways of being and academic conduct involved more ethical and less instrumentalised ways of doing teaching and research shaped by the vocational cultures of the participants and the institution's old teaching identity. In some instances, they also involved resistance to the encroachment of academic work on personal life (Author, 2011) and individual and intellectual liberties.

Second, neo-liberal discourses of research excellence and managerialism were negotiated and resisted differently by women and men within the heteropatriarchal regime of HE and gender inequalities in the home. Although largely neutralised under neo-liberal logic, research performativity was experienced as ferociously taxing and challenging for women, and hence intentionally and actively resisted as an all hours masculinised practice; embraced as an opportunity to change the neo-liberal university; or embraced discursively only and safely from a managerial perspective. Although challenging for men too, because of the absence of a research trajectory in the post-1992 university, REF research was resisted mainly ideologically, through performances of rationality and intellectualism, whereas therapeutic cultures were resisted actively in an attempt to distance masculinity from feminization practices. At the same time men drew on the symbolic capital of masculinity to safeguard their privileged position in the institution and alleviate the demands of the neo-liberal project.

Tthe gendering of resistance and the resistance of gender unfolded in this paper, highlight the persistent patriarchal structures and cultures and their entanglement with the success of the neo-liberal project in higher education, permeating all aspects of academic lives and selves. Our analysis brought to the fore how gendered resistance is configured within entrenched institutional and societal gender inequalities, including gender divisions of labour and symbolic domination.

Third, not only different types of resistance and emotions were performed and deemed legitimate for female and male staff within the historically patriarchal university and neo-liberal in its making, but also the same emotions (e.g. caring, sensitivity, anger) seemed to oscillate from celebratory (or at least tolerated) to problematic and redundant (Leathwood and Hey, 2009), due to the masculine symbolic order of the institution (Fotaki, 2013). In light with Ahmed's work on emotions (2015) and Author's (2025) persistent micro and meso gender inequalities, as well as the gendered practices of research intensification, and more widely neo-liberalization, generated emotions from outside in and inside out, infiltrated with power and implicated in the production of gendered subjectivities, resistances and compliances and sometimes gender transgressions. The post-structuralist and intersectional analysis of gender,

emotions, power and resistance presented in this paper brought to the fore multiple and complex identity positions and gender performances.

**Conclusions**

The analysis presented in this paper brought to the fore gendered configurations of resistance and compliance and the generations of embodied and affective gender identities in the process of aggressive neo-liberalisation of a 'new' university in England, UK. Female and male staff resistance and compliance strategies to neo-liberalism discussed in this paper demonstrate intentionality and agency and both reproduced and challenged gender norms. Our work contributes to scholarship problematizing the assumed neutrality of resistance and compliance and highlighting women's symbolic struggle to (dis)identify with a masculine professional norm (De Coster and Zanoni, 2019) and a neoliberal disembodied HE context. These are important insights for gender equality research and HE EDI policy and practice which continue to emphasize parity, representation and training that does not address the complex intersections of gender subjectivites, emotions, power, and resistance (Zembylas et al., 2014; Author, 2025)

In terms of theorising academic resistance to neo-liberalism and identity construction, further attention should be given to the mobilization and symbolic capital of academics positioned differently due to their gender and intersecting differences and inequalities (gender, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship, motherhood/caring responsibilities, sexual orientation, able-bodiness). Moreover future research on gendered resistance should interrogate the socio-cultural and wider political contexts within which organisations operate and subjectivities are generated as they might offer different possibilities and capabilities for neo-liberal projects and gender transgressions.

**References**

Adalberto, A. Jr. and Rubén O. M. (2021), Editors' Introduction Neoliberalism in Higher Education: Practices, Policies, and Issue, *Social Justice,* Vol. 48 No. 2, pp. 1-7.

Acker, S. and Armenti, C. (2004), 'Sleepless in academia', *Gender and Education,* Vol.16 No. 1, pp. 3-24.

Ahmed, S. (2015). *The cultural politics of emotion* (2nd ed.). Routledge

Archer, L. (2008), 'The neoliberal subjects? Young/er academics' constructions of professional identity', *Journal of Education Policy.* Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 265–85.

Aston, M. (2016), 'Teaching Feminist Poststructuralism: Founding Scholars Still Relevant Today', *Creative Education.* Vol. 7 No.15, DOI: 10.4236/ce.2016.715220

Alvesson, M. and Spicer, A. (2016), '(Un) conditional surrender? Why do professionals willingly comply with managerialism', *Journal of Organizational Change Management* Vol. 29 No. 1, pp: 29–45.

Anderson, G. (2008), 'Mapping academic resistance in the managerialist university'. *Organization,* Vol. 15 No. 5, pp. 51-270.

Arslanian-Engoren, C. (2002), 'Feminist poststructuralism: A methodological paradigm for examining clinical decision-making', *Journal of Advanced Nursing,* Vol. 37 No.6, pp. 512–517. https://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365- 2648.2002.02134.

Babcock, L., Recalde, M.P. L. Vesterlund, L. Weingart, L. (2017), Gender Differences in Accepting and Receiving Requests for Tasks with Low Promotability. *American Economic Review*, Vol. 107 No.3, pp. 714-747.

Banal-Estañol, A., Jofre-Bonet, M. , Iori, G., Maynou, L., Tumminello, M., Vassallo, P. (2023), Performance-based research funding: Evidence from the largest natural experiment worldwide, *Research Policy,* Vol.52, No 6, 104780.

Bartram, B. (2018), 'University students and emotional bargaining: A comparative study of staff perspectives in Northern Europe', *Research in Post-Compulsory Education.* Vol. 23 No. 2, pp. 266-283.

Bartram, B. (2014), 'Emotion as a student resource', *British Journal of Educational Studies, Vol.* 63 No. 1, pp. 67-84.

Bleijenbergh, I.L., van Engen M.L. and Vinkenburg, C.J. (2012), Othering women: fluid images of the ideal academic, *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 22-35.

Boliver, V. (2015), Are there distinctive clusters of higher and lower status universities in the UK? *Oxford Review of Education,* Vol. 41, No. 5 608–627. https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2015.1082905

Boncori, I., Bizjak, D. and Sicca, L.M. (2020,. Workload Allocation Models in Academia: A Panopticon of Neoliberal Control or Tools for Resistance? *Journal for Critical Organisation Inquiry,* Vol.18, No.1 pp.51-69.

Bozalek, V., and Boughey. C. (2012), "Misframing Higher Education in South Africa" S*ocial Policy and Administration,* Vol. 46 No 6, pp. 688–703.

Bristow, A., Robinson, S. and Ratle, O. (2017), 'Being an Early-Career CMS Academic in the Context of Insecurity and 'Excellence': The Dialectics of Resistance and Compliance, *Organization Studies,* Vol. 38 No. 9, pp 1185– 1207.

Brorsen Smidt, T., Bondestam, F., Pétursdóttir, G. M., Einarsdóttir, Þ. (2020), Expanding gendered sites of resistance in the neoliberal academy, *European Journal of Higher Education,* Vol. 10 No.2, pp.115-129.

Butler, N., and Spoelstra, S. (2014), 'The regime of excellence and the erosion of ethos in Critical Management Studies', *British Journal of Management.* Vol. *25, pp.* 538–550

Cartwright , M.J. (2005), Some observations on the factors that influence strategies for educational improvement in post–1992 universities, *Research in PostCompulsory Education*, 10:3, 337-350, DOI: 10.1080/13596740500200209

Clarke, C., Knights, D, and Jarvis, C. (2012), 'A labour of love? Academics in business schools'. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, Vo.28 No. 1, pp. 5–15.

Clegg, S. (2008), 'Academic identities under threat?' *British Educational Research Journal, Vol.* 34 No. 3, pp. 329–45.

Collinson, D. L. and Collinson, M., (1997), 'Delayering managers, time space surveillance and its gendered effects', *Organization, Vol.* 4 No. 3, pp. 373-405.

Collinson, D. L. and Hearn, J., (2004), 'Men and Masculinities in Work, Organisations and Management. In *Handbook of Studies on Men and Masculinities,* Kimmel, M. S., Hearn, J. and Connell, R. W. (Ed), SAGE Publications Inc., London, pp.289-310.

Connell, R.W. (2002), *Gender.* Polity Press, Cambridge

Danling, L. and Yongyan, L. (2022), Preparing for RAE 2020 in Hong Kong: academics' research, writing and publishing trajectories in a neoliberal governance landscape, *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 47 No.7, pp.1410-1422.

De Coster, M. and Zanoni, P. (2019), Governing through accountability: Gendered moral selves and the (im) possibilities of resistance in the neoliberal university, *Gender, Work & Organization,* 26(4), 411-429.

Doherty, L. and Manfredi, S. (2006), 'Women's progression to senior positions in English universities', *Employee Relations,* Vol. 28 No. 6, pp. 553-572.

Dwyer, S. C. and Buckle, J. L. (2009), 'The space between: on being an insider-outsider in qualitative research', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods,* Vo.8 No.1, pp.54-63.

Einarsdottir, U. D. , Christiansen, T.H. and Kristjansdottir E.S. (2018), It's a Man Who Runs the Show": How Women Middle-Managers Experience Their Professional Position, Opportunities, and Barriers, *Sage Open*, Vol. 8, No. 1 . https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8060-0676,

European Commission. (2019), She figures 2018. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/she-figures2018_en

Fleming, P. and Spicer, A. (2007), *Contesting the corporation: Struggle, power and resistance in organizations,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

Foster, R. (2016), **'**Therapeutic culture, authenticity and neo-liberalism'. *History of Human Sciences.* Vol. 2 No.1, https://doi-org.ezproxy.brunel.ac.uk/10.1177/095269511561738

Fotaki, M. (2013), No woman is like a man (in academia): The masculine symbolic order and the unwanted female body, *Organization Studies*, Vol. 34, pp. 1251–1275. https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840613483658.

Foucault, M. 1982. 'The Subject and Power'. *Critical Inquiry.* 8(4): 777-795.

Foucault, M. 1979. *Discipline and Punish*: *The Birth of the Prison*. New York, USA: Vintae Books.

Foucault, M. 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse of Language*. New York, USA: Pantheon.

Gabriel, Y. 2008. 'Spectacles of resistance and resistance of spectacles'. *Management Communication Quarterly.* 21(3): 310–26.

Guarino, C.M. and Borden, V.H. 2017. Faculty service loads and gender: Are women taking care of the academic family? *Research in Higher Education*, 58(6): 672-694.

Harley, S. (2002), 'The Impact of Research Selectivity on Academic Work and Identity in UK Universities', *Studies in Higher Education,* Vol. 27 No 2, pp.187-205.

Heath, M. and Burdon, P.D. (2013), 'Academic Resistance to the neo-liberal University', *Legal Education Review,* Vol. 23 No. 2, Art. 7

Heijstra, Thamar M., Þorgerður Einarsdóttir, Gyða Margrét Pétursdóttir, and Finnborg S.Steinþórsdóttir. (2017), "Testing the Concept of Academic Housework in a European Setting: Part of Academic Career Making or Gendered Barrier to the Top?" *European Educational Research Journal*, Vol. 16 No.2-3, pp. 200–214

HESA, (2023), *Higher Education Staff Statistics UK 2020-21*.

https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/01-02-2022/sb261-higher-education-staff-statistics#Contract%20Levels

Haeruddin MIM, Pick D, Thein HH. (2020), Resistance and compliance in women's academic identity work in the Global South *Higher Educ Q.* Vol 74, pp.257–272. https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.1220.

Hennink, M. and Kaiser, B.N. (2022), Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests, *Social Science and Medicine,* 292, 114523.

Hollander, J., and Einwohner, R. (2004), 'Conceptualizing resistance', *Sociological Forum,* Vol. 19, pp. 533–554.

Kalfa, S., Wilkinson, A. and Gollan, P. J. (2018), 'The Academic game: Compliance and Resistance in Universities', *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol.32 No.2, pp. 274–291.

Leathwood, C. and Hey, V.  (2009), 'Gendered discourses and emotional sub-texts: Theorising emotion in UK higher education', *Teaching in Higher Education,* Vol.12 No.4, pp. 429-440.

Leathwood, C., and B. Read. (2009), Gender and the changing face of higher education: A feminised future? SRHE and Open University Press, Buckingham.

Leathwood, C. and Read, B. (2013), 'Research policy and academic performativity: compliance, contestation and complicity', *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 38, No. 8, pp. 162-1174, DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2013.833025.

Lucas, L. (2014), 'Academic Resistance in the UK: challenging quality assurance processes in higher education', *Policy and Society,* Vol. 33, No. 3, pp. 215-224.

Lynch, K. (2010), 'Carelessness: A hidden doxa of higher education'. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education,* Vol. 9, No.1, pp. 54–67 doi: 10.1177/1474022209350104

Mahony, P., & Weiner, G. (2017), Neo-liberalism and the state of higher education in the UK. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, Vol. 43, No. 4, 560–572

Mashuri, S. (2022),_Semi-structured_Interview_A_Methodological_Reflection_on_the_Development_of_a_Qualitative_Research_Instrument_in_Educational_Studies , https://www.researchgate.net/publication/358893176

Morley, L. (2002), "Lifelong yearning: feminist pedagogy in the learning society". In *Gender, Teaching and Research in Higher Education: Challenges for the 21st Century*, Howie, G. and Tauchert, A., (Ed.), Aldershot, Ashgate, UK, pp.86-98.

Ogbonna, E. and Harris, L.C. (2004), 'Work Intensification and Emotional Labour among UK University Lecturers: An Exploratory Study', *Organizational Studies.* Vol. 25 No. 7, pp. 1185-120.

O'Malley, P. (2009), 'Responsibilization'. In *Sage Dictionary of Policing,* Wakefield, A. and Fleming, J. (Ed.), Sage, London, pp. 276–277.

Parker, J. (2002), Comparing Research and Teaching in University Promotion Criteria, *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 62 No 2, pp. 237-251.

Priola, C. (2004), 'Gender and feminine identities – women as managers in a UK academic institution', *Women in Management Review,* Vol.19, No.8, DOI: 10.1108/09649420410575414 9

Raffe, D., & Croxford, L. (2013), How stable is the stratification of higher education in England and Scotland? *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, Vol. 36, No. 2, 313–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2013.820127

Ross, L. (2017), 'An Account From the Inside: Examining the Emotional Impact of Qualitative Research Through the Lens of "Insider" Research', *Qualitative Psychology*, Vol. 4 No. 3, pp. 326–337.

Said, E. W. (1994), *Representations of the intellectual*, Pantheon Books, New York, USA.

Sanders-McDonald, E. and Davies, C. (2018), 'Resisting neoliberal policies in UK higher education: Exploring the impact of critical pedagogies on non-traditional students in a post-1992 university, *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice,* Vol. 13 No. 3, pp. 217– 228.

Sayer, D. (2013), The Kafkan world of the British 'research excellence framework'. Web Blog Post, coastsofbohemia.

Scott, J. (1990), *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.

Shahjahan, R. (2014), 'From 'no' to 'yes': postcolonial perspectives on resistance to neoliberal higher education', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education,* Vol. 35, No. 2, pp. 219-232.

Steinþórsdóttir, Finnborg.S., Brorsen Smidt, T., Pétursdóttir, G. M. Einarsdóttir, P. and Le Feuvre, N. (2018), "New Managerialism in the Academy: Gender Bias and Precarity" *Gender, Work & Organization,* doi:10.1111/gwao.12286.

Strathern, M. (2000), 'The Tyranny of Transparency'. *British Educational Research Journal.* Vol. 26 No. 3, pp. 309-321.

Straub, A. and Boncori, I. (2020), Foreign women in academia: Double-strangers between productivity, marginalization and resistance, *Gender, Work and Organisation*, Vol. 27, pp. 1004-1019.

Spicer, A., Alvesson, M., & Kärreman, D. (2009), 'Critical performativity: The unfinished business of critical management studies', *Human Relations,* Vol 62, pp. 537–560.

Swan, E. (2008), ' 'You Make Me Feel like a Woman': Therapeutic Cultures and the Contagion of Femininity'', *Gender, Work and Organisation*, Vol. 15 No. 1, pp. 88-107.

Teelken, C. (2012), 'Compliance or pragmatism: how do academics deal with managerialism in higher education? A comparative study in three countries', *Studies in Higher Education,* Vol. 37, No. 3, pp. 271–90.

Terama Terama, E., Smallman, M., Lock, S.J., Johnson, C., Austwick, M.Z. (2016), 'Beyond Academia – Interrogating Research Impact in the Research Excellence Framework, *PLOS ONE 12(2)*: e0172817. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0172817

Thomas, R. (2009), 'Critical management studies on identity: Mapping the terrain'. In *The Oxford handbook of critical management studies,* Alvesson, M., Bridgman, T. and Willmott, H. (Ed.): Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, pp.166–18.

Thomas, R. and Davies, A. (2002), 'Gender and New Public Management: Reconstituting Academic Subjectivities', *Gender, Work and Organisation,* Vol. 9 No. 4, pp. 372-397.

Thomas, R. and Davies, A. (2005), 'Theorizing the Micro-politics of Resistance: new public management and Managerial Identities in the UK Public Services', *Organization Studies,* Vol.26, pp. 683-706.

Tierney, AM. (2016), 'More than just a Teaching Fellow'. The impact of REF and implications of TEF on life sciences teaching-focused academics in UK HEIs. PhD Thesis, Durham University.

Author, 2025

Author, (2023),

Author, (2018),

Author, (2016),

Author, (2015)

Author, (2012),

Author, (2011),

Van den Brink, M. and Benschop, Y. (2012), 'Gender practices in the construction of academic excellence: Sheep with five legs', *Organisation,* Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 507-524.

Ylijoki, OH. and Ursin, J. (2013), 'The construction of academic identity in the changes of Finnish higher education', *Studies in Higher Education,* Vol. 38, No. 8, pp. 1135–49.

Wakeling, P. (2007), White faces, black faces: is British sociology a white discipline? *Sociology*, Vol. 41, No. 5, pp. 945 - 960.

Weedon, C. (1997), *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory* (2nd ed.), Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.

Williams, J. (2000), *Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflicts and What to Do About It,* Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

Wright, K. (2008), 'Theorising therapeutic cultures: past influences, future directions', *Journal of Sociology, The Australian Sociological Association,* Vol. 44 No. 4, pp. 321-336

Zembylas, M., Bozalek, V. and Shefer, T. (2014), Tronto's notion of privileged irresponsibility and the reconceptualisation of care: implications for critical pedagogies of emotion in higher education, *Gender and Education*, 26:3, 200-214, DOI: 10.1080/09540253.2014.901718.