

Interdisciplinarity and academics' sense of belonging

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The formation of academic identities has traditionally been strongly tied to disciplinary academic formation processes, reinforcing what Becher (1989) has referred to as guild-like and strongly discipline based behaviour. Studies suggest that so far, disciplines have retained their dominance as a source of academic identity. However, academic identities are increasingly influenced by structures and values transcending disciplinary cultures (Leišytė & Dee, 2012), including, for example, institutional processes (Trowler, 1998). Some strands of literature argue that the protected spaces of academia (Leišytė, 2016) and, consequently, traditional forms of academic identity are challenged and transformed by managerialism and academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Further, the rise of inter- and transdisciplinarity in research and higher education has led to assumptions of the emergence of new, multiple or hybrid identities (Darbellay, 2015; Jacobs, 2010; Leišytė, 2016).

This contribution aims to investigate how an interdisciplinary research orientation affects academics' affiliation and commitment to their disciplines and institutions across different types of disciplines across selected European higher education systems. Specifically, we ask the following research questions:

- 1) How does an interdisciplinary research orientation influence the perception of institutional and disciplinary affiliation of academics?
- 2) How does this compare across disciplines and higher education systems?

In order to answer our research questions, we will conduct a comparative analysis of data from different European higher education systems in the APIKS International Database, focusing on academics' research orientation (mono- versus interdisciplinary; question D2) and the importance of their affiliation (discipline, department, institution; question B3) across different types of disciplines (question A2). Our analysis will be informed by literature on local and cosmopolitan identities (Gouldner, 1957) – locals referring to academic staff that is loyal to their institutions, while cosmopolitans adhere to ideals of the academic profession and have a strong disciplinary sense of belonging. Further, we will draw on the typology of organisational identity formation (Leisyte, 2016) and Biglan (1973) and Kolb (1981) to distinguish four main types of scientific disciplines, namely hard pure/abstract reflective, soft pure/concrete reflective, hard applied/abstract active and soft applied/concrete active sciences.

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