

# GENDER GAP IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND SPORT SCIENCE DEGREE IN SPAIN



Prat, Maria<sup>1</sup>; Serra, Pedrona<sup>2</sup>; Soler, Susanna<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; <sup>2</sup>Institut Nacional d'Educació Física de Catalunya – Barcelona (INEFC Barcelona)  
Grup d'Investigació Social i Educativa de l'Actividad Física i l'Esport (GISEAFE)



6th World Conference on Women and Sport 12th – 15th of June 2014 Helsinki (Finland)

## INTRODUCTION

In the context of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and according to Spanish law, all new degrees must include equality issues as part of their curriculum. Physical Activity and Sport is an area where gender stereotypes are highly present (Puig & Soler, 2004). To change this situation, gender issue should be included in the curricula. According to this situation, the aim of this project is to analyse whether gender perspective is included in Physical Activity and Sport Science (PA&SS) curricula degrees in Spain.

## METHOD

The method was content analysis of university course handbooks. A handbook is the official university programme for each subject. The handbook is a public document, and it is a legal requirement to post it on the website of each university. It has the same structure for all universities: competences, objectives, contents and references. This means that some aspects can be addressed within the subject but not reflected in the handbook. Moreover, the fact that it refers to gender does not necessarily imply that the issue is addressed in reality.

The universities in the sample were selected for their long involvement in delivering PA&SS degrees, and for the availability of curricular documentation on their websites (table1).

The handbooks analysis was through a deductive and inductive process (table 2). From the deductive process we look for several key words: gender, women, equity, equality, diversity, social change or coeducation. We also create five categories to analyse the language used by professors and by institutions (unlike English, the Spanish language is constructed upon gendered words) (table 3).

From an inductive process we define the Coherence variable to classify handbooks:

COHERENCE	GENDER APPEARS
Embedded	Across all sections of the handbook in a coherent way.
Partial	In some sections of the handbook, such as in the competences or objectives or/and reading or content or/and reference list. In these handbooks, gender was not addressed in a coherent way.
None	Gender does not appear at all.

## PRELIMINAR RESULTS

Table 4: Gender presence in each university degree in PA&SS

UNIVERSITY	N. of Handbooks	Gender Presence (n)		
		Embedded	Partial	None
U. Autónoma de Madrid	51	2	3	46
U. de Alcalá Henares	32	0	1	31
U. de A Coruña	44	3	7	34
U. de Barcelona/INEFC Barcelona	52	1	0	51
U. de Castilla la Mancha	44	0	3	41
U. de Extremadura	26	2	0	24
U. de Granada	36	2	0	34
U. de las Palmas de Gran Canaria	42	1	4	37
U. de León	73	1	7	65
U. de Lleida/INEFC Lleida	42	0	3	39
U. de Murcia	39	0	4	35
U. de Sevilla	50	0	0	50
U. de Vigo	41	0	1	40
U. de Zaragoza	44	1	2	41
U. del País Vasco	37	0	0	37
U. Politécnica de Madrid	112	0	3	109
Total	765	13	38	714

Table 5: Types of subject according to gender presence

Types of Subject	Embedded		Partial	
	n	%	n	%
Compulsory	10	76,9	26	68,4
Optional	3	23,1	12	31,6

Figure 1: Gender presence global

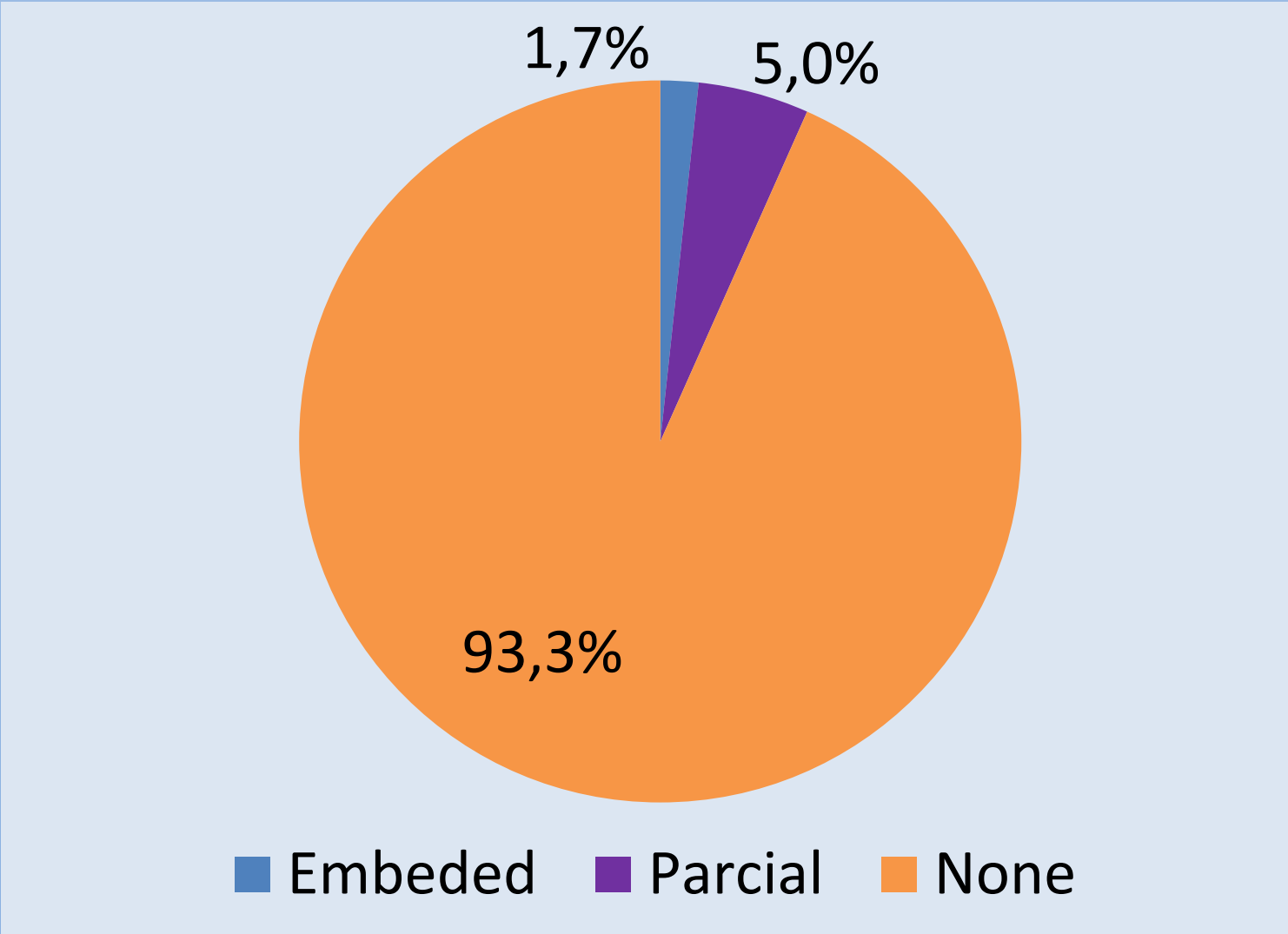


Table 1: Sample

SAMPLE	
Universities (N=37)	16
Handbooks	765
Academic year	2012/2013

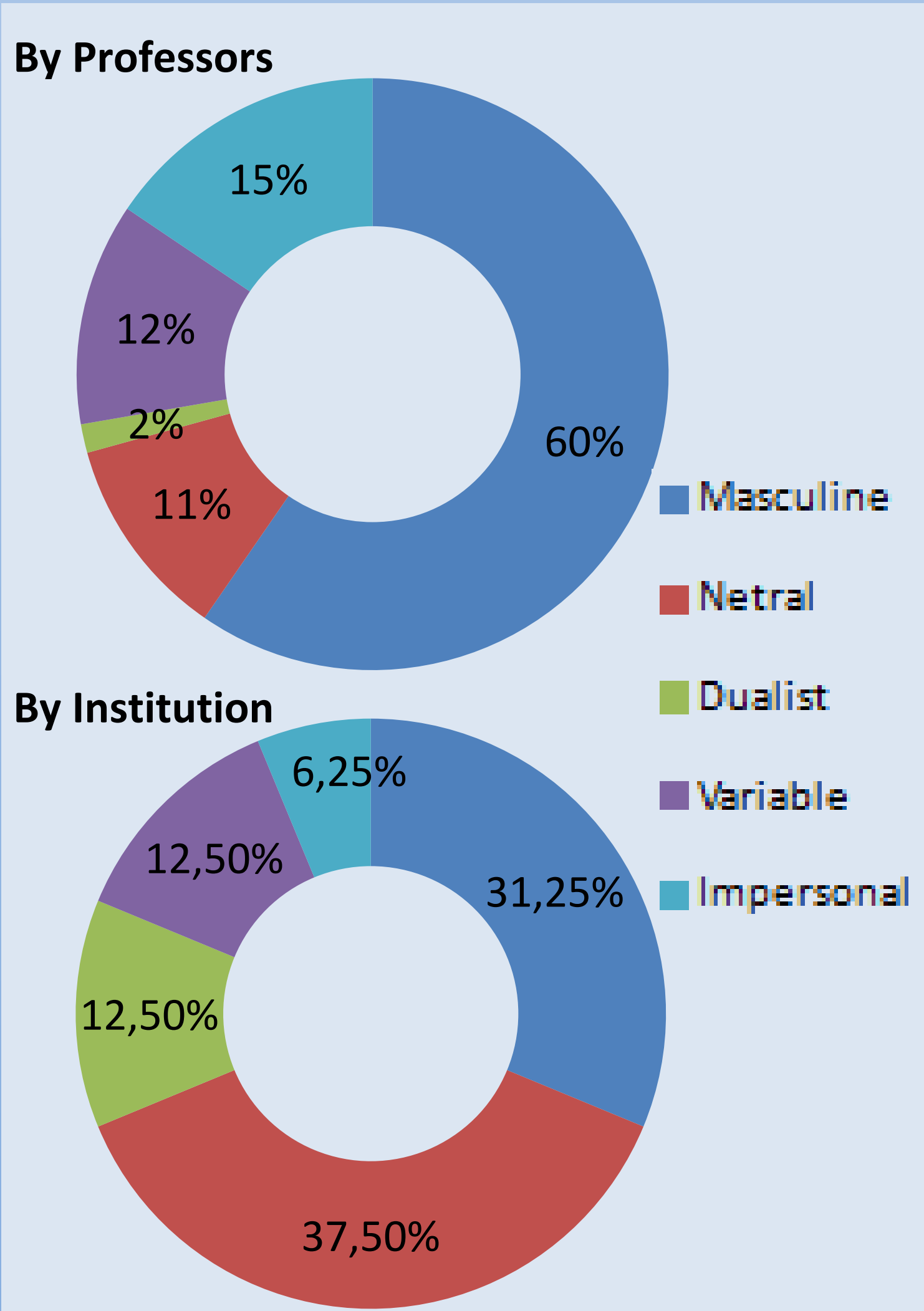
Table 2: Theoretical model

DIMENSIONS	VARIABLES
1. Structural	1.1. Institution profile
	1.2. Course profile
2. Curricular	2.1. Presence
	2.2. Approach
	2.3. Coherence
3. Language	3.1. Language of professors
	3.2. Language of institution

Table 3: Language categories

LANGUAGE	EXAMPLE
Masculine	“los niños”
Neutral	“el alumnado”
Dualistic	“los niños y las niñas”
Variable	No homogeneous
Impersonal	Without words referred to people

Figure 2: Language



## CONCLUSIONS

We can conclude that despite the legal provisions, PA&SS Spanish degrees only include gender issues in very few courses, usually optional ones, in order to be “politically correct”, but they do not integrate them as a real issue in the university curriculum. Therefore, gender perspective is not introduced in a cross-cutting manner nor in a specific approach with subjects whose title refers to gender.

Despite government guidelines promoting the use of neutral language in public documents, our research found that this was used inconsistently by universities and individual professors. Whilst the universities’ institutional documents were more likely to draw on neutral language, individual professors, left to construct their own subject handbooks, were more likely to use masculine forms of language.

These results shows that it is necessary to provide tools to transform the gender policies into real practice and rise awareness among lecturers and heads of university degrees.