

# **A Comparative Systematic Review of Indirect Forms of Gender Discrimination from Romania and Denmark among Higher Education Employees**

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**Abstract:** Background: Romania, a country with only 3 women rectors out of 54 public state universities, is at the opposite pole of gender equality to Denmark, which reached a 30% threshold of females in higher management positions, in academia. Nevertheless, despite the cultural differences, this paper identifies similar indirect discrimination issues between the two countries.

Methods: Extending a previous systematic review focused on Romania, the study employs similar research methods to draw a comparison between Denmark and Romania. More precisely, four databases (Research Gate, ProQuest, JSTOR, and EBSCO) were searched for academic papers referring to indirect forms of discrimination that occurred at some point in the Danish Higher Education. Only papers that fit one of the four previously identified categories were selected for this review. The four main themes were: recruitment & selection, evaluation, promotion, and collaboration with students, colleagues, and supervisors.

Results: A total of 11,056 articles were identified in the first step of the search, however, only 24 checked all the selection criteria and were included in this systematic review. The focus was not to look for any types of issues that existed in the past in Danish Higher Education, but to identify if current issues still happening in Romania, occurred at some point in Denmark too. This reasoning helps us not only draw a comparison between the two countries but also to identify the period in time when a leading country dealt with similar indirect forms of discrimination.

Discussions: Stereotypes affect women's careers even in a country where gender equality is embraced by the vast majority of the population. In Danish Academia, more women than men were employed in temporary positions or part-time contracts, and the glass ceiling and glass escalator effect are still encountered, but at a lower rate. Furthermore, in a similar manner to the Romanian culture, the segregation was attributed to individual preferences, instead of recognizing systemic discrimination occurring in the workplace. These types of beliefs and attitudes affect women in all aspects of recruitment, evaluation, promotion, and collaboration inside the department.