



University
of Stavanger

The influence of individual and contextual factors on academics' engagement

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A presentation at the SPARK Social Innovation Educational Forum

Agenda



INTRODUCTION



EMPIRICAL RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS



Introduction

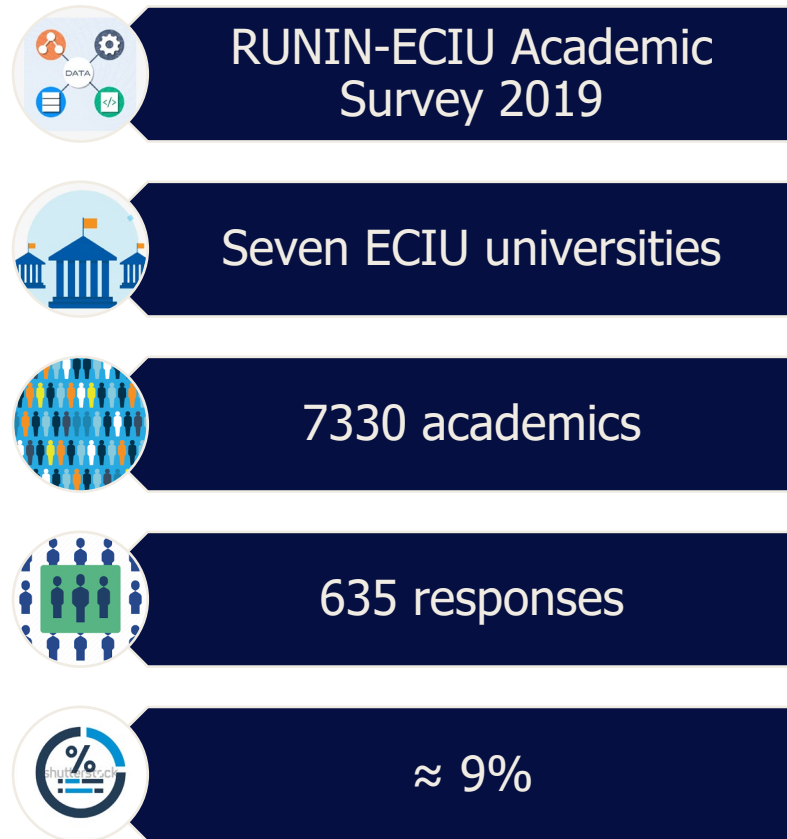
Background


- Knowledge is an important asset in the knowledge-based economy
- Policy priority remains **harnessing university knowledge** for **innovation & economic development** (Howells, 2005; OECD, 2018)
- Academics play a **central role** in the **generation** and **exchange of knowledge** (Landry et al., 2010)

Background

- Universities have **implemented policies** to encourage academics to deepen their external interactions (Benneworth et al., 2017; Gunasekara, 2006)
- However, other **competing work roles** pose a challenge to effective fulfilment of external engagement
- The goal of this research was to understand what **individual** and **contextual** factors drive academics' engagement
- This presentation focus on the effects of **motivations, fairness perceptions,** and the **rootedness** of academics

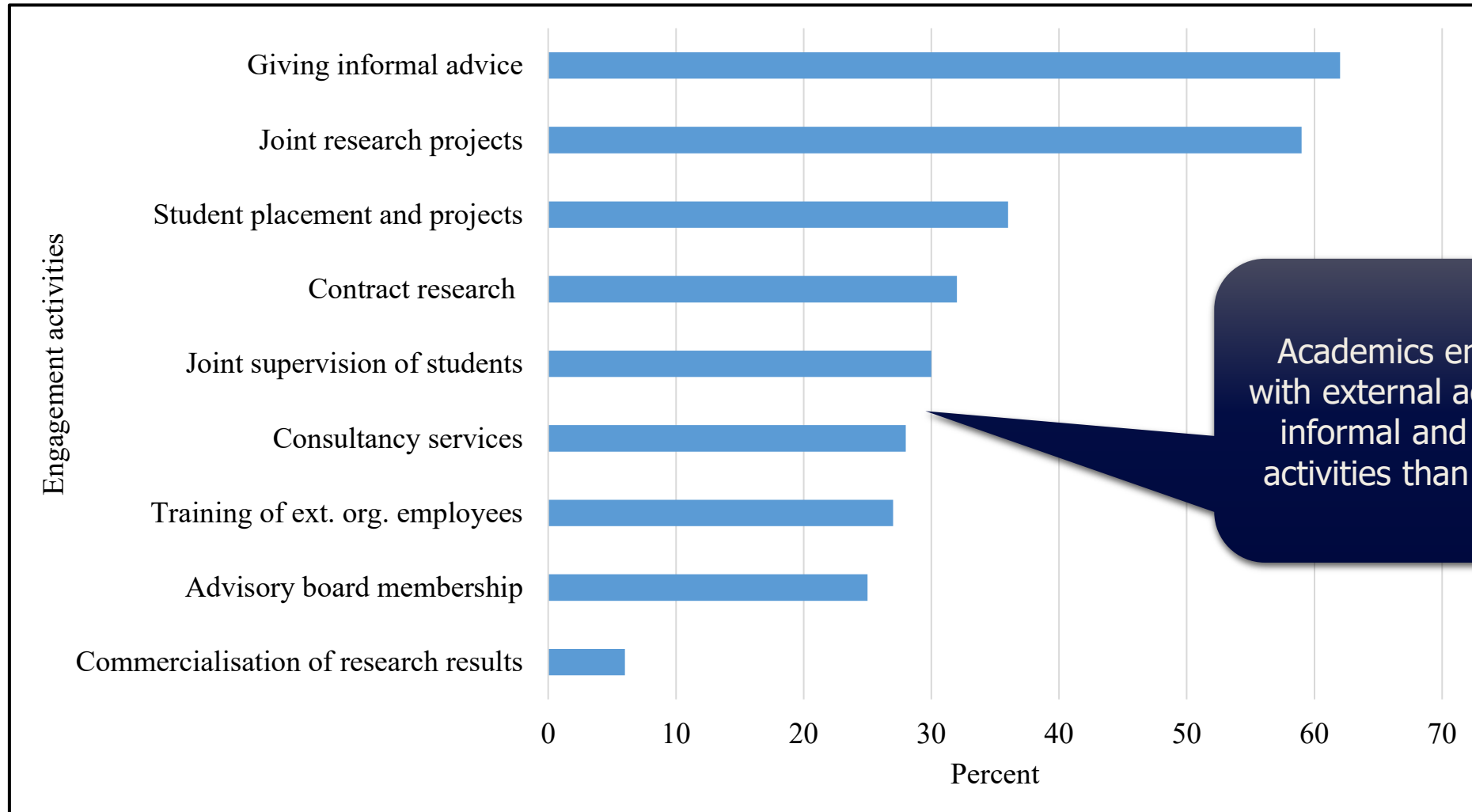
Data





Empirical results: Motivations, fairness perceptions, and engagement

What is the level of engagement in different types of activities?

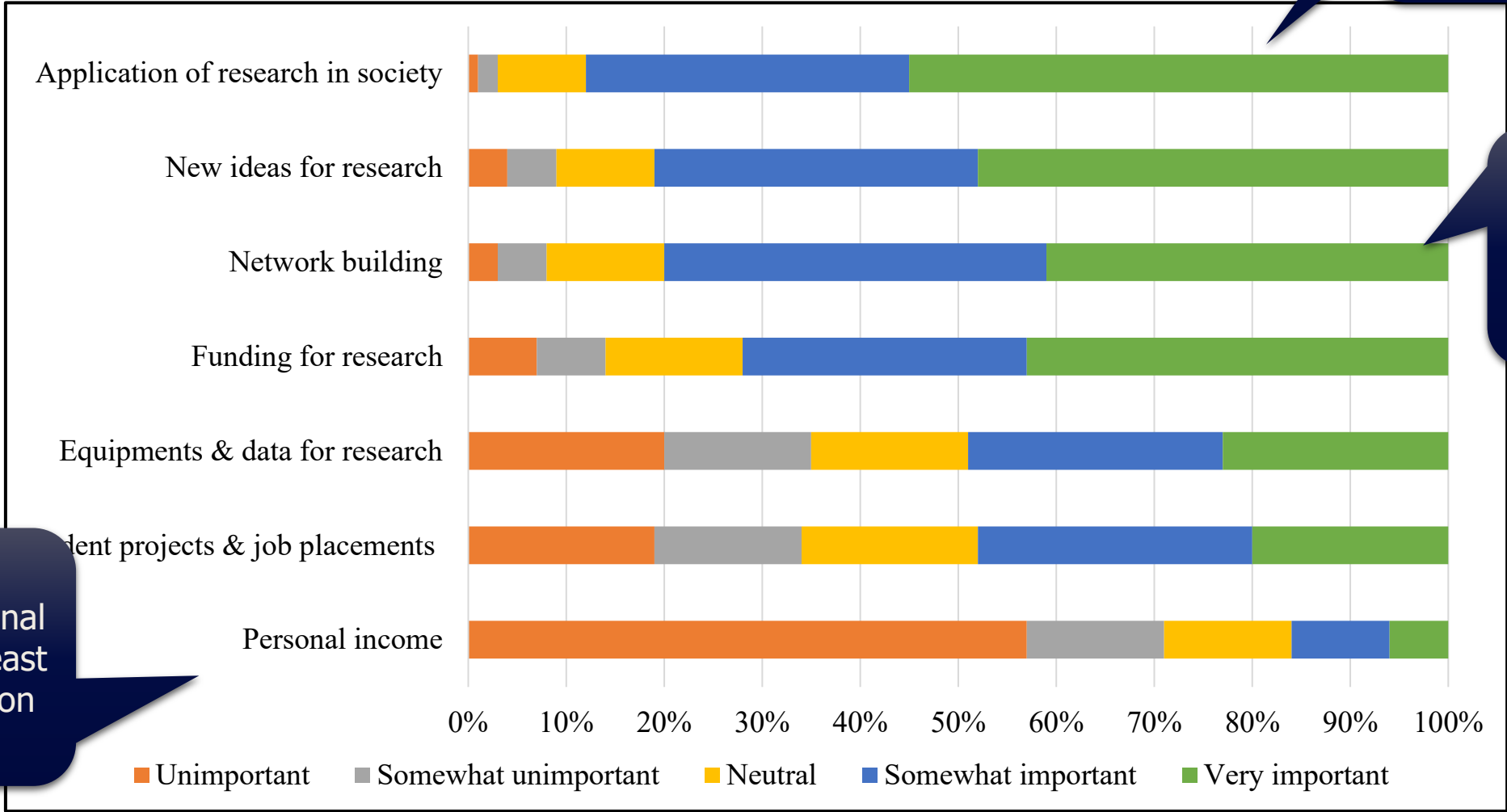


Academics engage more with external actors through informal and less formal activities than formal ones

What is the importance of different motivations for engagement?

Majority of academics considers the societal impact of research as the most important reason for engagement

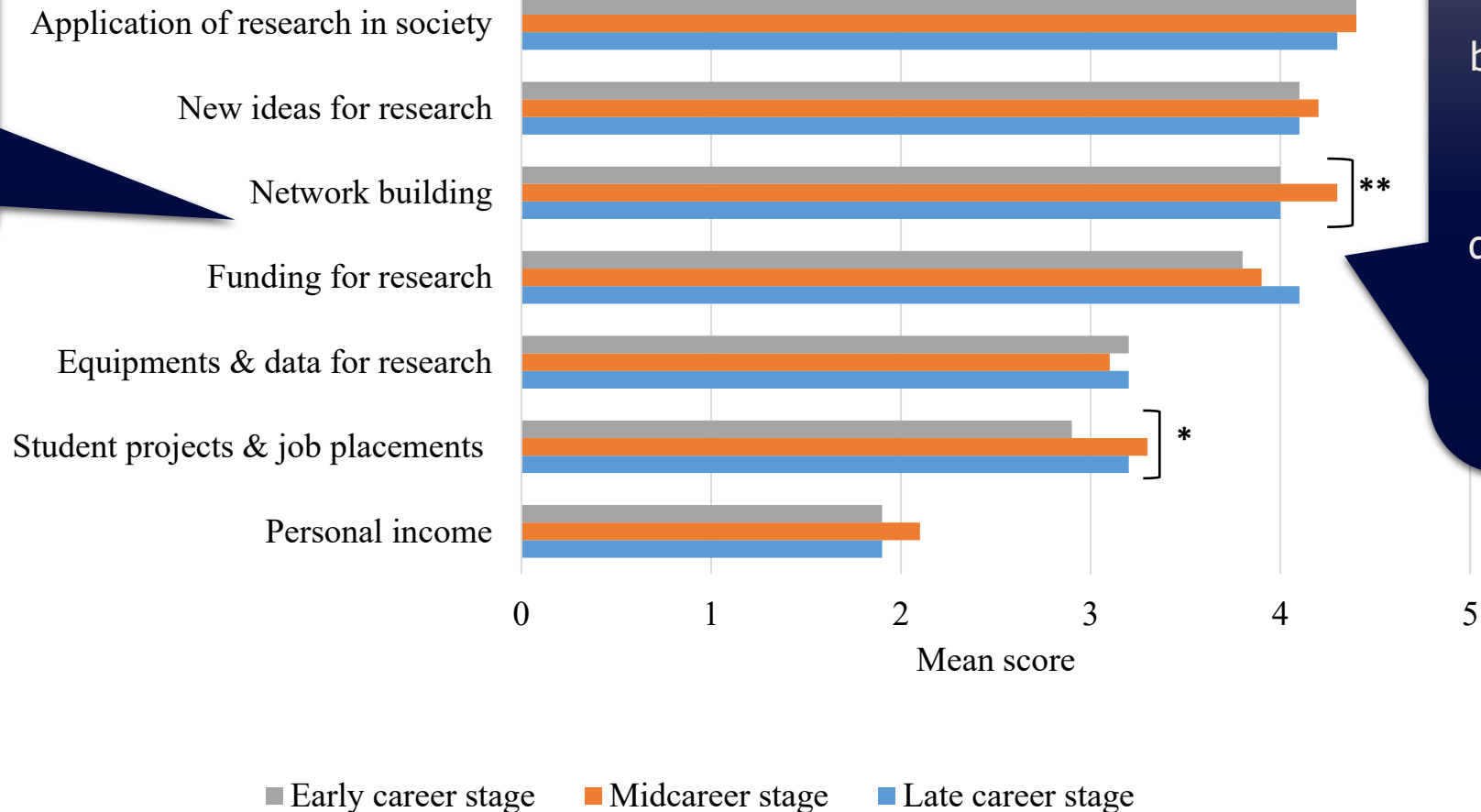
Research advancement motivations are the next most important reasons



Acquiring personal income is the least important reason

Do the importance of motivations vary across career stages?

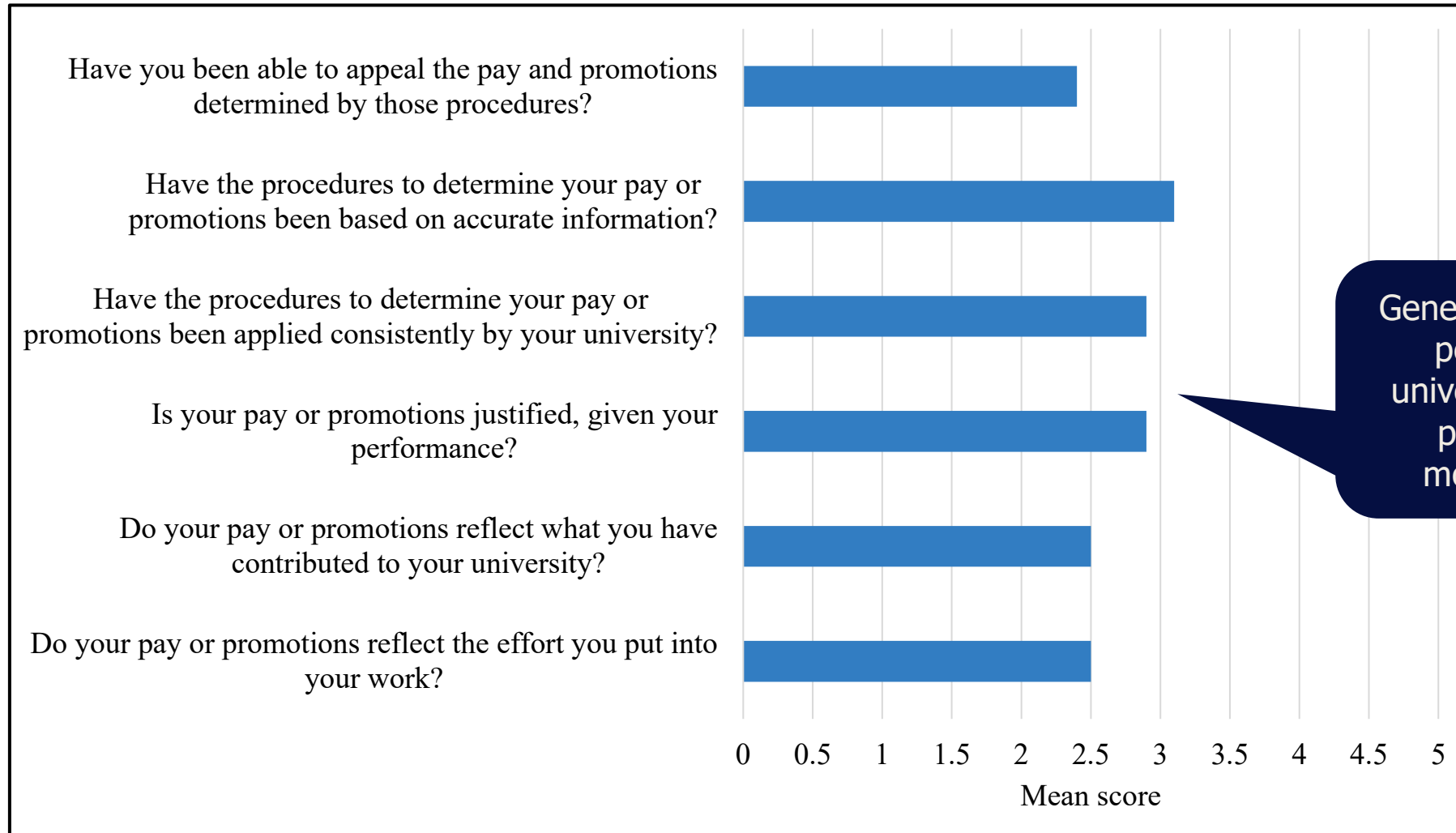
The importance of motivations for engagement remain stable across career stages



Except for network building and securing student projects in which there are significant differences, the other types show non-significant differences

Note: * and ** is significance at the 10% and 5% levels, respectively.

What are academics' perceptions of the fairness of universities' policies?



Generally, academics perceive their universities' reward policies to be moderately fair

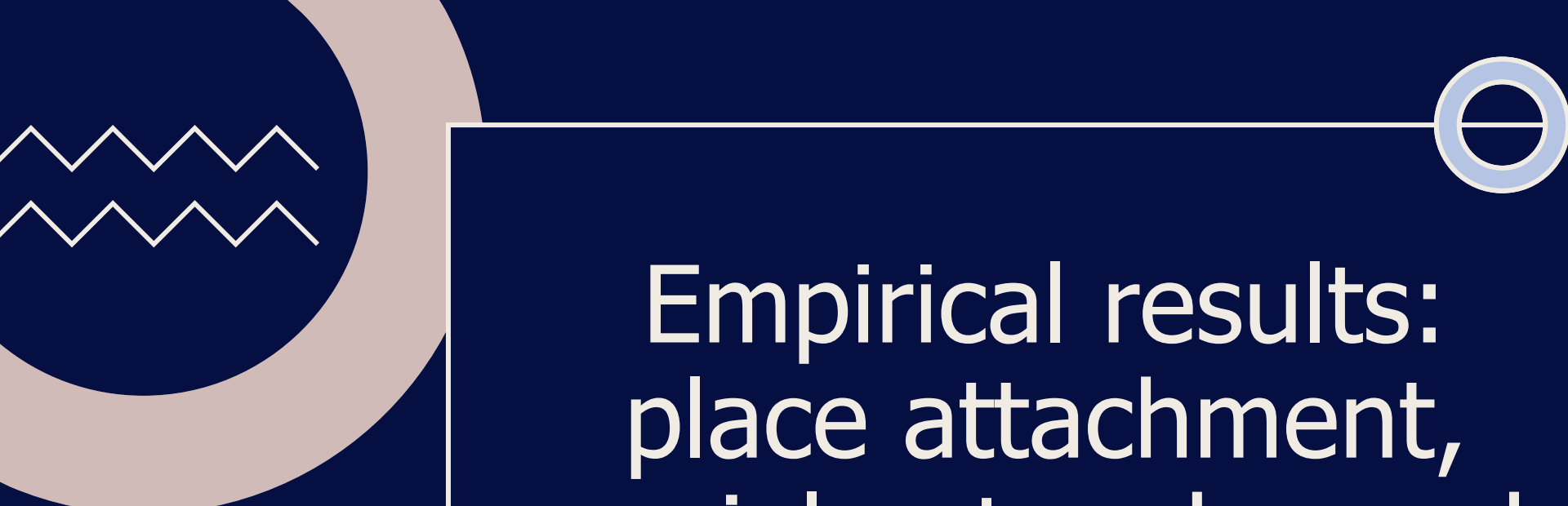
Are motivations and perceptions of fairness related with actual engagement?

	External engagement
	Coefficient (<i>b</i>)
Research advancement motivation	0.135*** (0.025)
Prosocial motivation	0.104*** (0.026)
Pecuniary motivation	0.059*** (0.017)
Distributive fairness	- 0.014 (0.023)
Procedural fairness	- 0.013 (0.026)
Controls	Included
University dummies	Included
<i>Observations</i>	486

All types of motivations are significantly related with engagement in broad variety of activities

The perceptions of fairness of universities' policies are not significantly related with external engagement

Note: *** represents significance at the 1% level. Robust standard errors in parentheses.

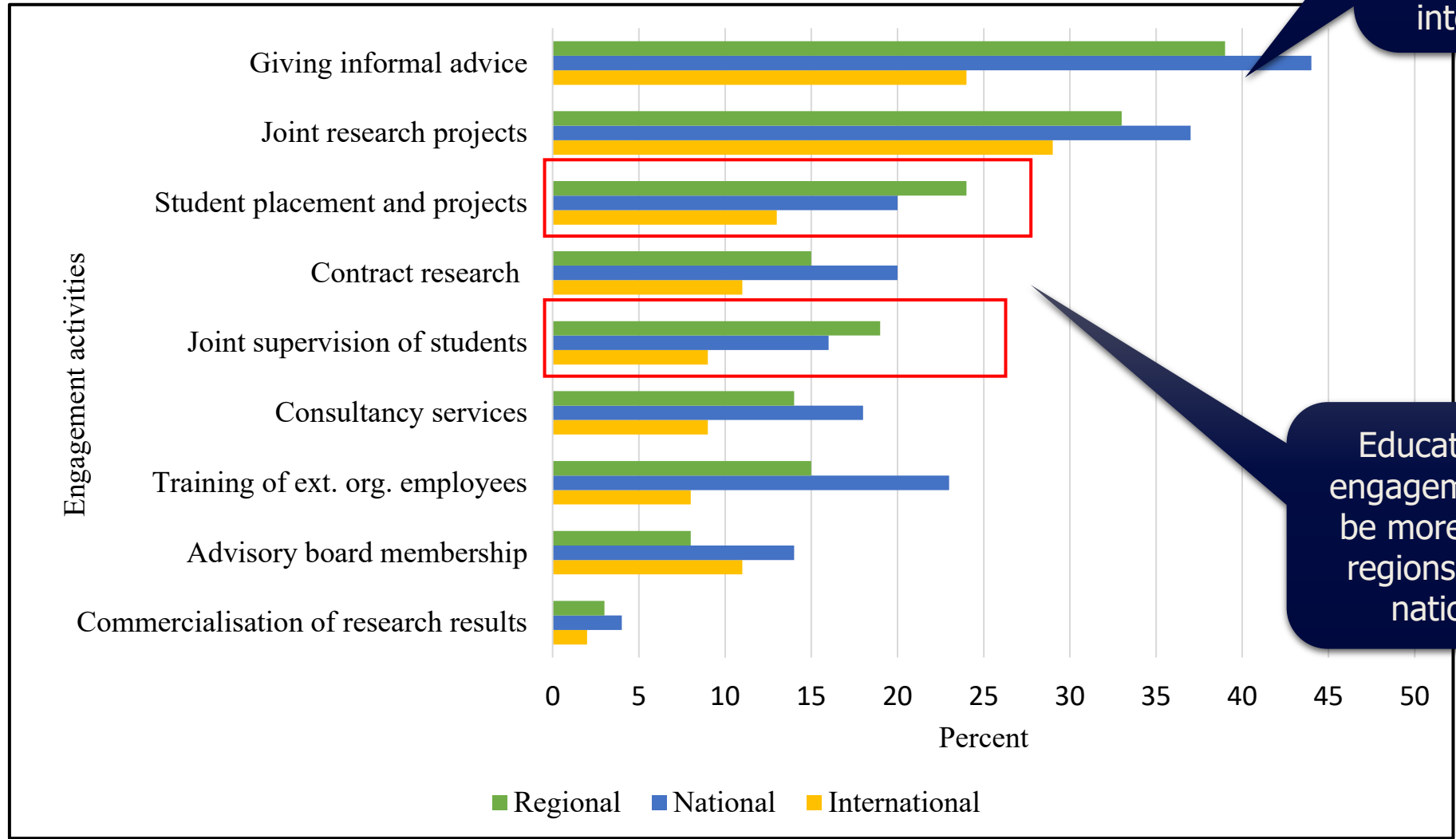


Empirical results:
place attachment,
social networks, and
regional engagement



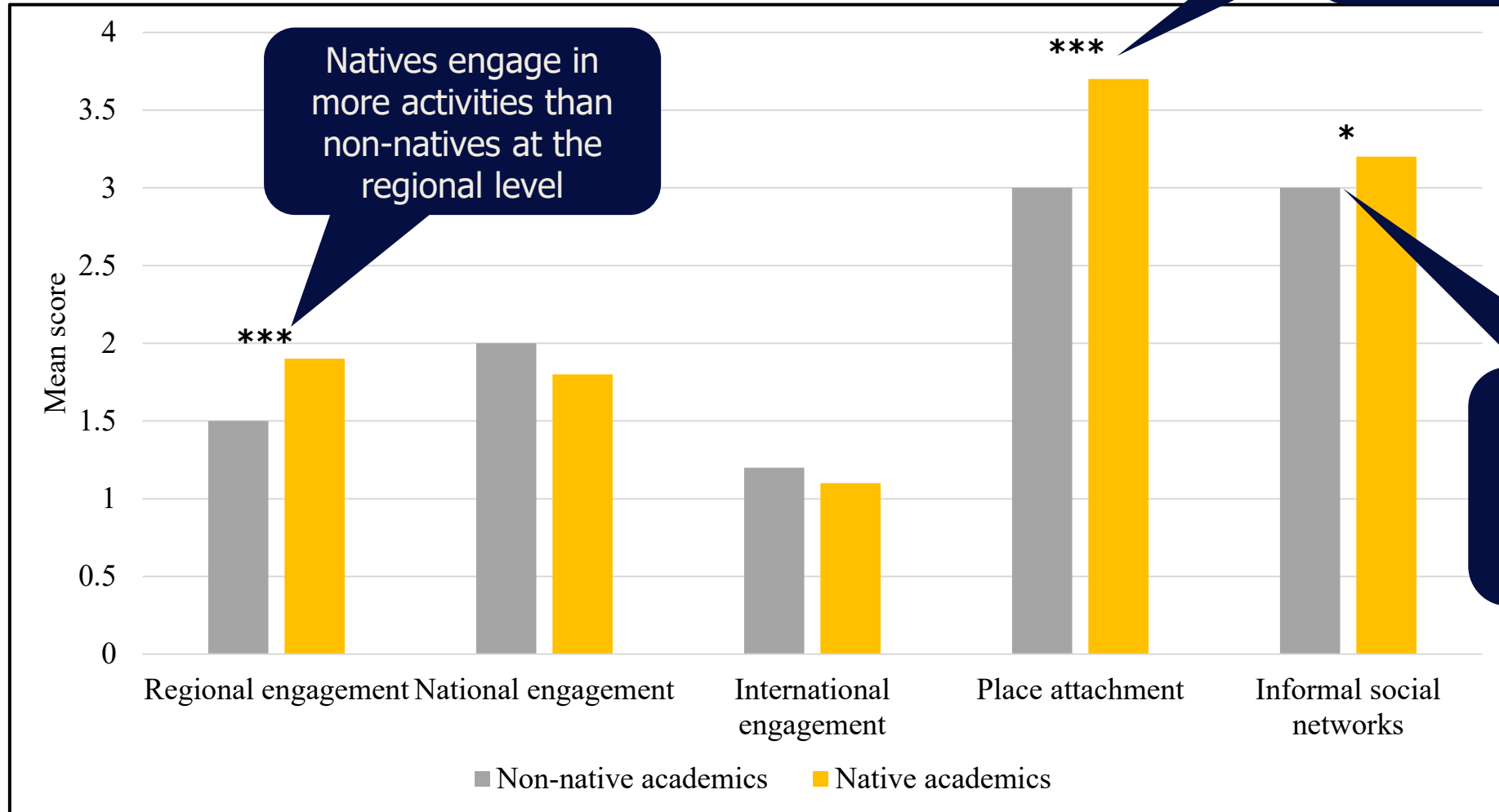
What is the level of engagement activities at different geographical scales?

Generally, academics engage more at the national level, compared to the regional and international levels



Education-related engagement tends to be more localized in regions than at the national level

Do native and non-native academics differ on engagement and regional rootedness dimensions?



Note: * and *** is significance at the 10% and 1% levels, respectively

What is the effect of academics' rootedness on regional engagement?

A sense of attachment to a region is associated with more regional engagement activities

Non-natives' place attachment shows a weaker association with regional engagement compared to their native colleagues

		Regional engagement by place of birth		
		Regional engagement	Non-native academics	Native academics
Place attachment		0.295*** (0.064)	0.256*** (0.088)	0.367*** (0.113)
Informal social networks		0.167*** (0.064)	0.031 (0.089)	0.319*** (0.095)
	Control dummies	Included	Included	Included
	Observations	551	317	234

Informal social networks is correlated with regional engagement

Informal social networks tend to be more relevant for natives' local engagement than non-natives'

Note: *** represents significance at the 1% level. Robust standard errors in parentheses.



Conclusions



Main takeaways

- Most academics consider contributing to the **betterment of society** as the most **important reason** for engagement
- Academics' **motivations** tend to have a **positive influence** on **engagement** in broad activities
- The **perception of the fairness** of universities' policies exerts **no effect** on academics' **engagement**

Main takeaways

- Regional **rootedness matters significantly** in academics' **engagement** with **local partners**
- Academics with **strong attachment** to the region tend to **collaborate more** with local actors
- Academics who maintain **diverse social ties engage more regionally**

What are the implications for policy and practice?

- There is the need for policies that enable **research** and **engagement** activities to **mutually support** each other
- Identify which **motives are important** for specific academics and target them with **appropriate incentives**
- Policy needs to adopt a **dual approach** of investing both in **research** and in **embedding** the university in the region

What are the implications for policy and practice?

- Policy makers need to find **creative strategies** or **initiatives** to **stimulate** academics' **attachment** to regions
- Universities need to provide **networking opportunities** and help non-native academics integrate into host regions

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!



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Distribution of engagement in different activities by discipline

