

**Lived Experiences of Women Academician in Higher Education
Institutions of Azad Jammu and Kashmir**



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**A Dissertation in the Partial Fulfilment of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Sociology**

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Department of Sociology

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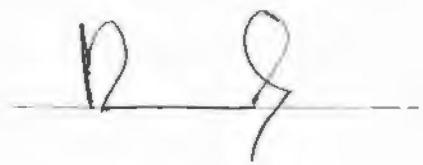
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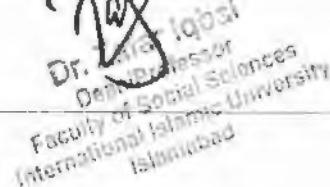
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**SUBJECT: Incorporation of the Recommendations of Foreign and Internal Evaluators in
PhD Dissertation of Mr. Kh. Farooq Abdullah Titled “Lived Experiences of
Women Academician in Higher Education Institutions of Azad Jammu and
Kashmir”**

Dear Sir,

The undersigned pertaining registration number 32-FSS/PHDSOC/F16, Department of Sociology, International Islamic University, Islamabad has completed his PhD dissertation titled “Lived Experiences of Women Academician in Higher Education Institutions of Azad Jammu and Kashmir” under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Hazir Ullah, Director School of Sociology, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. It is hereby stated that, in compliance with the recommendations of foreign and internal evaluators, the undersigned has incorporated all the recommendations in the above-mentioned PhD thesis.



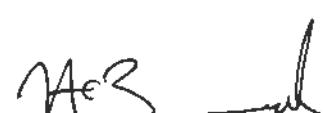
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FORWARDING SHEET

This thesis entitled, "LIVED EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN ACADEMICIAN IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF AZAD JAMMU AND KASHMIR" submitted by Kh. Farooq Abdullah (32-FSS/PHDSOC/F16) in partial fulfillment of the requirement of PhD degree in Sociology has been completed under my supervision. I am satisfied with the quality and originality of the research work. I allow Mr. Kh. Farooq Abdullah to submit the dissertation to concerned authorities for further process as per rules and regulations.

Date: 30/5/2023

Supervisor:

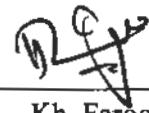

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STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I, Kh. Farooq Abdullah bearing Reg. No. 32-FSS/PHDSOC/F16, student of PhD Sociology, Department of Sociology, International Islamic University Islamabad hereby declare that the thesis entitled, "Lived Experiences of Women Academicians in Higher Education Institutions of Azad Jammu and Kashmir" submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirement of PhD degree is my original work, and has not been submitted for any other degree in national or international institution. Moreover, all the sources that I have been indicated, acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Date: 30/5/2023

Signature:



Kh. Farooq Abdullah

DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis to my father who gave me strength, provided me with
good and sound educational background.

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The successful completion of this research was impossible without meaningful contributions from very important people who inspired, supported, and encouraged me through and through. First and foremost, I would, therefore, like to express my indebtedness to Allah Almighty who gave me wonderful people and grace sufficient to endure the whole process.

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Thanks to my family and friends for always believing in me, and supporting and comforting me no matter what!

Kh. Farooq Abdullah

ABSTRACT

Women academicians' lived experiences received due attention of researchers in developed countries for the last few decades. However, research on women academicians' experiences has not been focus of the researchers in developing countries. Moreover, women academicians in higher education of Pakistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) are rarely searched. This study, thus, reveals the lived experiences of women academicians in co-education higher education institutions (HEIs) of AJK. I used qualitative research design and employed interpretive research method. A sample size of 28 women academicians was selected from four co-education public sector universities of AJK through purposive sampling technique. Using an interview guide, the life stories of the respondents were recorded during in-depth qualitative interviews. The collected data was analyzed in-line with qualitative data analysis technique of thematic analysis. The data were interpreted with the insights of public patriarchy of Walby (1990), Smith's (1990) masculine hegemony/ruling text, and Connell's (1995) hegemonic masculinity. The findings of my study revealed that women academicians enjoy considerable support from family and teachers for their academic careers. Women academicians do not experience smooth working relations with men colleagues and administrative/supportive staff. They face exclusion from the power mainstreams. However, women academicians have steady interaction with junior and senior colleagues and students for academic and non-academic tasks. Likewise, they have satisfactory class control and good command on the subject. Moreover, women academicians face various types of harassment. Besides, women academicians experience work-family imbalances that vividly affect their academic performance. In addition, women academicians have equal opportunities; however, they less likely hunt these opportunities as compared to men. It is argued that women academicians' experiences in higher education structure represents public patriarchy where men control, design, and restructure public discourse while women are apartheid. Similarly, men academicians design and implement policies and make decision by organizing a set of texts to seek control, and mediate through ruling relations perpetuating masculine hegemony by creating power and gender imbalances in higher education. This study added to the existing knowledge and debate on lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs.

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List of Acronyms

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HE	Higher Education
HoD	Head of Department
VC	Vice Chancellor
IR SIP	International Research Support Initiative Program
HEC	Higher Education Commission
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
ToT	Training of Teachers
USA	United States of America
UK	United Kingdom
EU	European Union
NOC	No Objection Certificate
GO	Government Organization
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
TA/DA	Travelling Allowance/ Daily Allowance
QEC	Quality Enhancement Cell
ORIC	Office of Research, Innovation, and Commercialization
CMS	Campus Management System
MS	Master of Science
U1-U4	University 1 to University 4
P1-P28	Participant 1 to 28
MUST	Mirpur University of Science and Technology
UAJK	University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir
UoKAJK	University of Kotli, Azad Jammu and Kashmir
WUBAJK	Women University Bagh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir
DAI	Degree Awarding Institution
MoEAJK	Ministry of Education Azad Jammu and Kashmir

Chapter One

Introduction

This study examined lived experiences of women academicians in higher education institutions (HEIs) of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). Like many developing countries, the state of AJK is patriarchal (Batool, Sajid, & Shaheen, 2013). Men greatly influence public and private domains (Qasim, Mehboob, Akram, & Masrour, 2015; Sultana, 2010). Formal and informal policies and rules for the private and public domains are designed, approved, and executed by men (Afzal, Butt, Akbar, & Roshi, 2013). Similarly, women's visibility in the public domain, including education, is disproportional by men (Ahmed, 2009). He in the similar study asserted that men dominated women in securing academic jobs and positions in HEIs. According to Mumtaz (2007), total number of women academicians employed in higher education is less than men (Qasim et al., 2015). It is important to mention here that this phenomenon is not restricted to AJK but is also prevalent in many parts of the global north and global south (Acker & Armenti, 2004; Blackmore, 2006; Morley, 2006). The issue as researched by the review of literature has been debated and searched in the global north. This, however, is new phenomenon of discussion in global south including Pakistan. In Pakistan, the problem has not received due academic attention, particularly in the state of AJK. This study, thus, aims to examine the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK.

1.1 The Study Background

The experiences of women academicians in higher education have been subject of debate in developed and developing countries (Acker, 2006). It is important to highlight the issue in global and local contexts. A substantial body of research on women academicians'

experiences has been carried out during the last few decades (Coleman, 2000; Morley, 2006; Murshid & Critelli, 2020). These studies have concluded that HEIs are male-dominated public sphere (Acker, 1990; Afzal et al., 2013). The key findings of these studies suggest immense gender inequalities in higher education institutions across societies. For example, women experience gendered culture in higher education that adversely impacts their promotion (Morley, 2004). Bagilhole and White (2011) argued that gendered culture in HEIs restricts women from reaching the top and prestigious positions in academia. Similarly, Tobolowsky and Allen (2016) asserted that dominant male culture in HEIs discriminates against women in the allocations of tasks and departmental assignments. Chanana (2001) argued that women academicians are burdened by clerical work, teaching loads and research. Consequently, their performance in education and research work is badly affected. By the same token, women academicians' excessive engagement in non-academic assignments negatively impacts their journey toward senior academic positions in higher education (Walkington, 2017). Some of these studies show that women were not able to give due attention to research activities, conferences, seminars, and workshops (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Alkhaled & Berglund, 2018). Thus, they are not getting the desired time for writing and publishing research papers. According to Hera (2020), engagement of women academicians in non-academic assignments and activities badly affect the position of women in higher education. The situation in Pakistan and Asia has no exception.

1.2 Women Academicians' Experiences in Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan and AJK (The Study Context)

Pakistan is a developing country with deep-rooted patriarchal structure of society (Batool et al., 2013; Majid, 2020; Mumtaz, 2007). The socio-cultural context of society is

predominantly masculine (Ahmed & Hyder, 2008; Shah, 2001; Shaikh, Sahito, & Dehraj, 2019). The general standards and norms of the society consider home appropriate for women and public sphere for the men (Batool et al., 2013; Majid, 2020). Like other public domains, this is also reflected in the higher education. Here, women faced many challenges and problems while working in such male-dominated environment. It has also impacted the women's employment in higher education. As highlighted by Bhati and Ali (2021) that the number of women academicians is less as compared to their counterparts. They further explain that women academicians already in higher education are discriminated in promotion and career progression. As discussed earlier and reiterated here that this study was conducted in four co-education public sector universities of AJK. According to the statistical yearbook of AJK (2020), total number of faculty in these universities is 967, in which 634 (66%) are men, and 333 (34%) are women. These statistics showed that the proportion of men is almost double to the women in each university. It is, thus, evident from data that women academicians have less access to academic careers/jobs than men. Despite vivid and wider gap, some progress has been noticed in policies and practices. The conversion of university grant commission (UGC) to the higher education commission (HEC) in 2000 to 2002, suggested structural changes to promote equal working environment for men and women in HEIs (Afzal et al., 2013; Jabbar & Imran, 2013). In the light of these structural changes, although women were provided opportunities to seek career as an academician; however, patriarchal structure of society still dominate and influence HEIs.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Women's experiences in higher education are key area of research in the sociology of education and gender studies (Acker, 2006; Morley, 2006). Many studies on women academicians in higher education have been conducted in different socio-economic contexts across societies (Acker, 2006; Acker & Armenti, 2004; Blackmore, 2006; Coleman, 2005). However, majority of these studies are limited to the developed countries (Afzal et al., 2013; Najeeb, Morales, & Lopez-Acevedo, 2020; Qasim et al., 2015; Shah, 2010; Sultana, 2010). It is also pertinent to mention here that the cultural and educational environment of the developed countries differs from the socio-cultural and academic environment of Pakistan in general and AJK in particular. I am cognizant of the fact that many studies on women academicians in higher education have been conducted in Pakistan (Ashraf, 2001; Batool et al., 2013; Najeeb et al., 2020; Rana & Khaki, 2015; Majid, 2020; Malik & Courtney, 2011). However, these studies did not focus on women academicians' lived experiences from the feminist standpoint. Drawing on feminist research cannons, this study, thus, attempts to examine women academicians' lived experiences in AJK from the feminist standpoint approach. This study is guided by the following key research questions.

1.4 Research Questions

1. How do women academicians experience their work environment?
2. What opportunities and challenges do women academicians see for themselves while pursuing career in university?
3. How do women academicians explain their interaction with university administration and supporting staff?

4. How do women academicians cope with academic expectations (teaching and research) in contemporary HEIs?
5. How do women academicians construct their identity as university teachers?
6. How do women academicians strategize their familial responsibilities while meeting the demands of the workplace?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

To seek answers to the aforementioned research questions, the following objectives were developed:

1. To study women academicians' working experiences with their men colleagues;
2. To explore women academicians' working experiences with the university administration and supporting staff;
3. To examine women academicians' experiences with their students in and outside the classroom settings;
4. To unpack women academicians' strategies for coping with the demand of contemporary academic culture and familial responsibilities;
5. To examine women academicians' engagement /participation in co-curricular activities.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study, as mentioned in the start of this chapter, is aimed to examine the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK. Based on the study findings, I believe, this research has practical and theoretical significance in the domain of sociology of education and gender studies. Theoretically, this study contributes to the understanding of women academicians' lived experiences by bridging gap in literature in HEIs of AJK.

Similarly, this research also adds on novelty to the existing scholarships in the domain of sociology of education and gender studies in the context of AJK. Last but not the least, this research adds to the feminist scholarships that are ignored in the context of higher education in AJK. It further provides an insight into the women's academic experiences from the feminist perspective, i.e. public and private patriarchy and standpoint theory (masculine hegemony/ruling text). Practically, findings of this study are helpful for the forthcoming researchers, students, and other stakeholders to utilize this knowledge to improve women's workplace in higher education. These findings also help the educational administrators, legislators, and policymakers to revisit the existing patriarchal structure of HEIs in specific context of Pakistan and AJK.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

I have organized this research study into five chapters.

Chapter One outlined the study background, study context, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, and significance of the study. The forthcoming chapters are outlined as follows.

Chapter Two presents empirical and theoretical literature. I have divided this chapter into three parts. Part one skimmed the empirical studies. Part two consisted of theoretical review, whereas part three is comprised of the theoretical framework. In the empirical review, I skimmed published literature such as articles, books, chapters, and theses on women academicians' lived experiences in higher education in different contexts. A substantial body of research has been conducted on lived experiences of women academicians across the globe (Acker, 2006; Acker & Armenti, 2004; Ahmcd, & Hyder, 2008; Aiston & Jung, 2015; Banerjee & Polite, 2011; Morley, 2006, 2013, 2014).

In the second part of this chapter, a detailed account of the theoretical review has been discussed and cited. The part starts with the gender explanation of girls and boys in education from the philosophical work of Geddes and Thompson, Rogers, and Edward Clarke. Similarly, the work of Piaget, Bandura and Acker, Acker and Armenti have been discussed and linked with the existing issue of women's lived experiences in higher education. Beside, concept of public patriarchy given by Walby (1990) is also discussed. The feminist standpoint theory: Smith's (1990) ruling text/masculine hegemony, intersectionality of Collins (2000), hegemonic masculinity of Connell (1995), and performativity and doing gender of Butler (2002) have also been elaborated and linked with women's experiences in higher education. This detailed theoretical discussion enabled me to write a sound theoretical framework for informed analysis of the data. Part three of this chapter consist of key concepts borrowed from the theoretical review. These concepts have been engaged for the informed analysis of filled data. Key concepts that guided my study are public patriarchy of Sylvia Walby and women's standpoint theory/ ruling text and masculine hegemony of Dorothy Smith and hegemonic masculinity of Connell.

Chapter Three explains methodological steps and techniques adopted for this study. I conducted this study by employing a qualitative methodology. The chapter also presents information on the universe of the study, sampling technique and sample size, tool of data collection, data analysis technique and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four presents the respondents' views on the issue of women's lived experiences in HEIs of AJK. This chapter unpacked a deeper understanding of the issue on women's lived experiences. The findings in this chapter have been explained, discussed, and interpreted with the help of empirical and theoretical scholarships on the issue in hand.

Chapter Five sums up the study. It gives a brief account of the argument, implications of the study, similarities and differences between the previous researches. It also outlines the study conclusion and recommendations for further research on the lived experiences of women academicians in higher education of AJK.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents empirical and theoretical scholarships on the issue of women academicians' lived experiences in higher education institutions. My empirical analysis is based on previously published research articles, books, book chapters, review articles, conference papers, and research reports on the topic in hand. My theoretical review skims through the biological, social learning, cognitive development, social constructionism, and feminist theories on the subject of lived experiences of women academicians in higher education institutions. Similarly, theoretical framework is based on the concepts of Walby (1990), Connell (1995), and Smith (1990, 2003) provided in the theoretical framework.

2.2 Empirical Review

This section provides summaries and crux of empirical studies carried out on the topic I have attempted and skimmed of research studies and literature in diverse sociocultural contexts across the societies.

The second wave of feminism highlighted the women marginalization in different public and private domains including higher education. Higher education has been patriarchal public sphere since long. Due to gender reversal change, women were able to enter and work with men in higher education. However, lived experiences of women academicians received less attention of researchers and scholars. For the last few decades, experiences of women academicians have been focus of researchers in developed countries while it remained an ignored area in developing countries. Moreover, research in developed countries paved way for the researchers in developing countries to probe into the women's

lived experiences in higher education. As women academicians' problems in HEIs were debated, discussed and materialized to provide equal space to men and women in developing world. Thus, policies were revisited and decisions were made to provide equal space to women in higher education. Consequently, women academicians started working with men in HEIs.

2.2.1 Lived Experiences of Women Academicians in Higher Education of Developed Countries

The recent decades witnessed a gender reversal change in higher education. Several studies have been conducted on lived experiences of women in developed world (Agbenyega, 2007; Agezo, 2010; Aguirre, 2000; Ahmmmed, Sharma, & Depeler, 2012). These studies show that women experience various problems during job at workplace in HEIs. Morley argued that women academics are marginalized at workplace (2011b). It is pertinent to mention here that insignificant treatment of women academicians in higher education is not limited to developing countries but also prevails in developed world. I deem it important to provide a brief account of women academicians' lived experiences in HEIs of developed and developing countries. In the United States of America (USA) and Canada, women are facing gender biasness in a number of universities (Probert, 2005). Similarly, situation of United Kingdom (UK) has also been reported in terms of gender inequalities in HEIs (Brackett, Palomera, Mojsa-Kaja, Reyces, & Salovey, 2010). Further, women academicians are also facing different problems in higher education of Australia and New Zealand (Bryson, 2004). Likewise, workplace of women in higher education has also been alarming in terms of lived experiences in Spain, France, Germany, Netherland, Sweden,

Denmark, and Norway. It is pertinent here to mention that women academicians also face different work-relation problems in Japan, South Korea, and Hong Kong.

In Australia, a plethora of literature has been conducted on women academicians' lived experiences in HEIs (Bell, McLaughlin, & Sequeira, 2002; Connell, Ashenden, Kessler, & Dowsett, 2020; Yousaf & Schmiede, 2016). These studies show that women have considerable participation in academic positions. Despite some progress, they are still disproportioned to men. It is evident from Australian Government's statistics (2018) that women academicians in higher education hold 47 percent of senior faculty positions and 34 percent into senior level of academic positions as compared to 64 percent of men while 54 percent women worked in lower academic positions. The above statistics clearly shows that women academicians are disproportioned to men in overall higher academic positions. Blackmore and Sachs (2012) revealed women academicians' problems of permanent induction is also a crucial issue in higher education. For example, they mentioned that women academics possess non-tenured positions in comparison to tenured men. Similarly, Goodwin and Huppertz (2010) also revealed that women are discriminated in terms of resources and power distribution. This unequal distribution affected women's research productivity and teaching (Blackmore & Sachs, 2012; Fotaki, 2013; Robinson, Bansel, Denson, Ovenden, & Davies, 2014). Bentley (2012) and Baker (2010a) highlighted that women publish less than men due to several reasons. Apart from this, women's engagement in domestic chores also affects women's research capability. As argued by Fredericks, Mills, and White (2014) that along with unequal distribution of resources, child caring and rearing also intervene women's responsibilities in the university.

Similar picture of women academicians in higher education has been painted in the context of Canada. It is pertinent to mention that Canada has witnessed gender reversal change in higher education for the last few decades (Acker, 2014). Like other scholars Mählck (2016) also mentioned that women have easy access to higher positions. In 2018-2019, women faculty has significantly been increased in higher education of Canada (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2019). In Canadian universities, women comprised 41 percent of full-time academic staff (Guarino & Borden, 2017). Despite having favorable environment for women academicians in higher education, patriarchal structure still influenced women's career development (Shin & Jung, 2014; Sims & Falkenberg, 2013). This patriarchal structure greatly influences women promotion in higher education. It is well depicted by Becker, Hubbard, and Murphy (2010) and Bowden and Doughney (2012), who revealed that less number of women academicians reach tenured positions as compared to men. Similarly, Mang (2019) observed similar findings in his study on women's roles in academia. He went on to say that few women rose to the ranks of professors, Deans, and Vice Chancellors (VCs). Several other studies also examined the women academicians' experiences of working relations, promotion, networking in research and pay gap (Acker, 2014; Baker, 2016; Brabazon & Schulz, 2020; Macfarlane, 2013). Thus, in a nut shell, it is stated that despite women academicians' increasing number in higher education, they are unable to achieve promotions swiftly than men. It denotes that women academicians have equal opportunities to men in academia. However, patriarchal structure of society prevailed in higher education of Canada still curtail women's progress at lower academic positions.

As far as United States of America's (USA) higher education is concerned, women

occupy higher academic positions (Guarino & Borden, 2017; Martinez, O'Brien, & Hebl, 2017). Toffoletti and Starr (2016) found that women hold good portion of higher positions. They mentioned that the ratio of women on senior position of professor is 4.6 percent. This reveals that women in the USA have easy access to higher positions but when it comes to top positions, women are disproportioned. Several problems have been identified in the way of women to reach higher positions (Dunn, Gerlach, & Hyle, 2014; Kelly & McCann, 2014; Morris & Laipple, 2015). For example, women face problems such as domestic burden and unequal distribution of academic and non-academic tasks that adversely affect women's promotions towards higher academic positions. Fox, Fonseca, and Bao (2011) mentioned that women are less involved in research grants, which is key element to promotion. However, few women got promotion and reach to top positions (Britton, 2017). Along with unequal tasks distribution, structural barriers also impact their promotion particularly in rural institutions. Zippel (2020) mentioned that cases put by women academicians are not getting prompt responses from administration. For example, evaluation process of women is delayed as compared to men. Overall, the women position in higher education is satisfactory in majority of US universities. Drawing on the above empirical evidences, I assert that in few universities located in remote and rural areas, women are being suffered in reaching top position.

The picture of women, in higher education of New Zealand is not much different from Australia. Research studies show that women have a considerable representation in higher education on different positions (Baker, 2010a; Mariskind, 2014; Neale & Özkanlı, 2010; Stringer, Smith, Spronken-Smith, & Wilson, 2018). The concurring conclusion of these cited studies indicate that women academicians hold refutable positions in higher

education. Despite of having considerable representation, women still face issues in higher education structure, and rarely reach to the positions of deans and VCs (Ricketts & Pringle, 2014). They further revealed that few women occupy the senior academic positions of deans, VCs, and presidents in higher education. It means that workplace environment is encouraging to women academicians in New Zealand while they have good working relations with men colleagues in accomplishing the academic and nonacademic goals (Baker, 2010b; Harris, Ravenswood, & Myers, 2013; Mariskind, 2014). Nevertheless, women academicians overall hold lower academic positions in higher education. A number of factors are responsible for women' lower positions such as low research productivity and publications. As depicted by White, Riordan, Ozkanli, and Neale (2010) that research productivity of male members is good as compared to women counterparts. Resultantly, women academicians suffer in research that in turn impact their promotion in higher education.

Studies have been conducted in the France to examine the lived experiences of women academicians in higher education (Gaghan & Bozeman, 2016; Jöns, 2011; Le Feuvre, Bataille, Kradolfer, del Rio Carral, & Sautier, 2018). These studies revealed that women academicians experience conducive environment in education but still this is not benefitting them in their promotion as it does with male faculty. It is noted that women having teaching workload are also involved in other tasks of conducting seminars and conferences (Wallace & Wallin, 2015). Along with teaching and other task engagements, family responsibilities also impact their performance (Pezzoni, Sterzi, & Lissoni, 2012). Similarly, workplace harassment is also impacting women academicians' academic profile (Le Feuvre, 2015). Many scholars argued that women academicians are hesitant to

approach administration for their promotions due to the fear of harassment (Lynch & Ivanceva, 2015; Sabatier, 2010). Having all these problems, women are not able to continue and conduct research projects. Thus, it is concluded that the environment in higher education favors male faculty as compared to female.

In the context of Germany, experiences of women academicians in higher education have been researched and debated by many researchers and scholars (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Jöns, 2011; Krücken, Blümel, & Kloke, 2013). These studies depict that a large number of women academicians are working in academia. However, Kloke (2013) asserted that very few women are working at senior positions of dean, head of the department (HoD), VCs etc. Moreover, Aiston and Jung (2015) asserted that women are over occupied with academic tasks which in turn impact their performance and, hence promotions. In the similar fashion, Riegraf, Aulenbacher, Kirsch-Auwärter, and Müller (2010) noted that women academicians' research productivity is badly affected due to workload (Ivanceva, Lynch, & Keating, 2019). They further went to the extent and argued that women along with their professional duties also work as mothers and wives in homes. Thus, domestic responsibilities adversely impact their research productivity. Drawing on these empirical findings, it is asserted that the German higher education is not favoring women academicians in terms of research and promotions.

The higher education system of Hong Kong turned in the favor of women academician for the last few decades (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Jung, 2012; Ruan, 2021). Nevertheless, a considerable body of literature revealed that in most of the institutions, women are still working at lower and less prestigious positions (Adachi, Tai, & Dawson, 2018; Bilecen & Van Mol, 2017; Morley, 2014). They also revealed that despite women

academicians' increased participation, they are underrepresented on senior academic and power positions. They further unpacked that women's promotion is very slow as compared to their counterparts. A number of factors behind their slow progression are identified by many scholars (Kelly & Slaughter, 2012; Shin & Jung, 2014). They particularly found that the working environment is favorable for women academicians. However, they publish less and do not hunt research grants. Thus, it is stated here that although women participation has increased in higher education of Hon Kong but when it comes to prestigious position, male outnumber women. Research shows that work burden and family responsibilities also affect women academicians' research productivity that are considered necessary for promotion to the higher positions (Aiston & Fo, 2021; Ginns, Kitay, & Prosser, 2010).

Studies portray similar situation of women's contribution in higher education in the Ireland (Courtois & O'Keefe, 2015; Jöns, 2011; O'Connor, Carvalho, Vabø, & Cardoso, 2015). The findings discussed by Barnard (2017) in her study on women development in academia revealed women's excessive involvement on senior academic positions in the higher education. She further noted that women academicians not only work with men colleagues but also supervise them. Ivancheva et al. (2019) unpacked that despite excessive involvement of women academicians, evidences show that men lead women in higher education. They further mentioned that those women who reach to higher positions confront a number of challenges and issues. Similarly, a number of factors identified by different researchers are responsible in their way to promotion (Coate & Howson, 2016; O'Connor, 2019). As O'Connor (2020) argued that women due to their engagement in activities other than research remain ineligible for higher position. She further mentioned

that fewer senior women academicians are engaged in research grants. Thus, they gain top positions but the ratio for women academician is significantly low in comparison to men. It is worth mentioning that low research productivity of women academicians affects their academic career.

Italian higher education although has a considerable number of women academicians in senior faculty positions (Vecchione, Alessandri, & Marsicano, 2014; Wolszczak-Derlacz & Parteka, 2011). However, studies revealed that higher education of Italy is still male dominated (Abramo, D'Angelo, & Murgia, 2013; Breen, Luijckx, Müller, & Pollak, 2010; Vecchione et al., 2014). These studies show that women academicians on non-tenured positions are discriminated in many ways. Like other scholars, Barone (2011) also revealed that low number of women academicians reach top academic and administrative positions in higher education as compared to their counterpart. Kwiek (2018a) reported that despite having good working relations between men and women in higher education, women academicians still face issues of research productivity and promotions. These issues and challenges confronted by women academicians as mentioned by Marini and Meschitti (2018), adversely affect research and teaching capabilities of female academicians. Similar findings are given by many researchers. For example, Kwiek (2016) also noted that women academicians placed on non-tenured positions face problems of promotion. Gaiaschi and Musumeci (2020) found that men academicians on the other hand consistently publish and get smooth promotion. Marini and Meschitti (2018) noted that women academicians' academic career is mainly influenced by very few opportunities of promotions. Along with these, family problems and issues also affect their research

(Roberto, Rey, Maglio, & Agliata, 2020). Resultantly, women academicians are unable to get swift promotions as compared to men.

In Japan, women academicians have phenomenal participation and contribution in higher education for last few decades (Kataoka, Ozawa, Tomotake, Tanioka, & King, 2014; Shimahara & Sakai, 2018; Teichler, Arimoto, & Cummings, 2013). However, due to long standing of men in academia, women still experience discrimination at certain levels in academia (Aiston & Jung, 2015; Assmann, 2014). Huang (2013) revealed that women confront problems in promotions despite meeting the requirements. He further stated that men get promotions swiftly than women. Similarly, McVeigh (2015) contended that one of the reasons of less promotion of women academicians is their low number in academic positions. However, few women got promotions and reached to the power positions. Kim (2017) asserted that women face problems of research groups which also impact their research productivity and restrain them to get the instant promotions. By the same token, Morley (2014) affirmed that women academicians are also coupled with family responsibilities. She even went to claim that women academicians are burdened by family responsibilities and, thus, have less time for research. Shimahara and Sakai (2018) also pointed out that women academicians' slow progress is due to family responsibilities.

In Mexico, a considerable number of research shed light on the lived experiences of women academicians in higher education (Padilla-Gonzalez, Metcalfe, Galaz-Fontes, Fisher, & Snee, 2011; Piña-Watson, Lorenzo-Blanco, Domhecker, Martinez, & Nagoshi, 2016; Roosa et al., 2012). These studies revealed that women academicians' proportion grew remarkably; however, due to male dominancy their ratio in top positions is less than men. Similar assertions are given by Garza and Garza (2010). They revealed that women

academicians' working relations with men are not satisfactory which in turn affect their performance. They further affirmed with the assertion that women at lower positions are discriminated by men admin staff in different personal and academic goals. Furthermore, Morley (2010) found discrimination against women at early stage of their careers by male administrative staff at a few Mexican colleges. He went on to say that women academics progressed in their careers, they became more accustomed to academic culture. Similar research is conducted by Creighton and Park (2010). They agreed with findings of the Messerschmidt (2012) and added that unlike past, women are now working as admin staff in many of the universities of Mexico. It is pertinent to mention here that women are also locating their position in administrative setup that is helpful for the women academicians' smooth working conditions in higher education. Similar findings have been given by Pittman (2010) and Reimers (2015). They also found women academicians' working relations with men admin staff resilient for the pursuance of academic and non-academic goals (Creighton & Park, 2010; Garza & Garza, 2010).

The higher education of Netherland vividly progressed for the last few decades (Sam, 2015; Gupta, 2002; Waaijer, 2015). A havoc of literature revealed women academicians' enormous growth in the higher education (Timmers, Willemsen, & Tijdens, 2010; Van Arensbergen, Van der Weijden, & Van den Besselaar, 2012; Van den Brink, Benschop, & Jansen, 2010). The findings of the cited studies confirmed women's engagement in top positions of academia and administration. For example, women reached to the power positions of deans, HoDs and the VCs. However, due to late entry, majority of them possess lower academic positions. Despite women's speedy participation in academia, they are disproportioned to men so far (Teelken & Deem, 2013). Similarly,

Fotaki (2013) noted that most of the women are located on non-tenured positions. He further stated that in-spite of meeting the required criteria of research publication, they get late promotions as compared to men. By the same token, Grunow, Begall, and Buchler (2018) along with some other scholars also found women academicians' issues in promotion in academia. In line with Webster's (2014) argument, they compared women with men and added that women have some additional roles of family to carry out along with academia. Likewise, Teelken and Deem (2013) analyzed women academicians' slow promotion is also because of their low research productivity. They further linked low research productivity with additional family roles accomplished by women with academic tasks (Van den Brink, 2010; Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012a, 2012b).

In Russian higher education, masculine hegemony operate despite women academicians' excessive participation in higher education (Alekseevna & Andreevich, 2021; Altbach, 2015; Castaño, Fontanil, & García-Izquierdo, 2019). These studies identified various problems experienced by women academicians in academic tasks and their promotions to higher academic positions. However, number of women faculty in top ranks is significantly lower than male faculty (Froumin, Kouzminov, & Semyonov, 2014; Heyneman, 2010). Similar claim has been made by Iarskaia-Smirnova (2011). He highlighted the women academicians' position and added that majority of women academicians possess lower academic positions in higher education (Pocztková & Kříbíková, 2017). Similarly, Kwiek (2018b) focused women academicians' less research productivity as a major obstacle in promotions. She argued that like other developed nations, women publish less than men. She further contended that despite women' low research productivity, they are competing men enormously. Similar argument is given by

Pislyakov (2017). She complained that their research productivity is not given weightage as compared to men. By the same token, they are apartheid by men in publishing research groups. It is also supported by the assertions of Turbine and Riach (2012). They revealed that women academicians are not provided equal opportunities in research publications. Unlike women, men have their research networks and, thus, they have more exposure to research publications than women (Teodorescu, 2000). Similar findings are identified by Terama, Kōu, and Samir (2014), about promotion issues in higher education. Drawing on the above findings, it is noted that women academicians in the Russian higher education faces issues of promotions and research productivity due to different factors.

In the context of South Korea, Palmer and Cho (2012) argued that women participation has enormously been increased in higher education. They further documented the women academicians' lived experiences in higher education. The findings of different studies depicted working conditions of women academicians in South Korean universities (Won Kim, Zhang, Chung, Kim, & Choi, 2020). Similarly, Cho (2009) studied women academicians' research productivity. She stated that women like other parts of the world publish less than men. Jung (2003) further explained that women academicians' low research productivity badly affects their career that are key to promotion in higher education. The similar findings given by Kim (2005) also found women academicians' low participation in research publications and attracting research grants. Similarly, Palmer and Cho (2012) unveiled women's low publication rate and research grants as compared to men. Park and Liao (2000) also revealed similar assertions that women academicians' career is adversely affected when they do not meet the required criteria of research publications. A number of factors other than research and workload burden have been

identified (Shin, 2009; Yang, 2017). They concluded in their findings that women academicians have double responsibilities of family that adversely impact their promotion.

A considerable body of literature has been conducted on lived experiences of women academicians' in Spanish higher education (Enders & Musselin, 2008; García-Holgado, Diaz, & García-Peñalvo, 2019; Goldenberg & Cross, 2011). The findings of these studies highlight the situation of women academicians working with men in different universities. Altbach (2000) asserted exceptional participation of women academicians' in higher education. He mentioned that women have reached to the senior academic and power positions such as Deans, HoDs and VCs in higher education of the Spain. However, Bain and Cummings (2000) disclosed that a large number of women academicians are working on lower academic positions in higher education. Similarly, Cabero and Epifanio (2021) asserted that majority of the women academicians are working on lower academic positions in higher education due to a member of factors, i.e. low research productivity and high teaching loads. Teichler (2005) also mentioned that women academicians have less research productivity as compared to men and this impede them to promote to higher academic positions. Mora (2001) further stated that research productivity is important for the promotions and findings place in senior academic and power positions. Thus, less research productivity badly affects the women's performance. Medina and Luna (2000) argued that women academicians' research productivity is affected by some other factors. These include their engagement in co-curricular activities and familial roles (Jöns, 2011). Based on above results, it is concluded that women academicians' slow growth to senior academic positions is due to their low research productivity coupled with familial roles.

In context of Switzerland, women academicians' significant participation has been observed in higher education (Le-Feuvre et al., 2018; Murgia & Poggio, 2018; Todd, Madill, Shaw, & Bown, 2008). The findings of these studies revealed that women's participation and contribution has significantly been increased in higher education particularly after 1990s. Barnard (2017) argued that despite women's increased participation, a large number of women academicians are working on lower echelons in higher education. She further argued that women's proportion on power position is comparatively lower than men. It is revealed by Barrett and Barrett (2011) that women academicians have less successful career than their counterparts. They identified different factors behind women's low participation. Jäger (2010) described research productivity as one of the major factor. Similarly, Dubois-Shaik and Fusulier (2017) found women academicians' familial engagements a major factor of their slow career progression. They also claimed that women academicians have more responsibilities than men, thus, they progress slowly in higher education. These results are consistent with Murgia and Poggio's findings (2018). They suggested that delayed rise of women academics is due to many responsibilities they carry out along with academic loads in comparison to men.

For the last few decades, women academicians' participation in higher education of United Kingdom (UK) has been increased significantly (Bolden et al., 2012). A large number of studies were carried out on women academicians' lived experiences in higher education since feminist scholarships uncovered the women problems in higher education structure (Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007; Misra, Lundquist, Holmes, & Agiomavritis, 2011; Moreau & Leathwood, 2006; Read & Kehm, 2016). These studies found that gender parity increased significantly and women reached to the senior academic and power

positions (Bagilhole & Goode, 2001). Many of the universities have women professors, deans and VCs in the UK (Bhopal & Jackson, 2013). According to Bhopal (2020), ratio of women academicians on senior positions is 26 percent (Bryson, 2004). It is revealed that few women hold senior academic positions in UK as 21.7 percent women academicians occupy headships in HEIs (Cotterill & Letherby, 2005). The above studies indicated women academicians' enormous growth and considerable participation in higher education (Deem, 2003; Dolmage, 2017). Despite considerable contribution, a large number of women academicians are still working on lower academic positions in higher education. An insight into the women academicians' lived experiences is provided by different researchers including Ginther and Kahn (2004). They unanimously revealed that women academicians have professional working environment for the academic activities and they work with men to ascertain the academic and non-academic goals. Similarly, Knights and Richards (2003) uncovered women academicians' working relations with men administrative staff. Morley (2013) further added that women academicians have sound working relations with admin staff. Thus, it is concluded that women academicians have considerable contribution in UK's higher education; however, they still face many challenges to grow in academia.

In Austria, a large number of studies have been conducted on the women academicians' lived experiences in higher education (Böheim, Hofer, & Zulehner, 2007; Costa Dias, Joyce, & Parodi, 2020; Husu & Cheveigné, 2010). These studies cover different aspects of women academicians in academic structure. For instance, Leuze and Strauß (2016) highlighted that women academicians' working relations with men colleagues and students are smooth. Lynch and Ivancheva (2015) also added that women

academicians' smooth working relations are encouraging for academic development. Similarly, O'Connor (2019) further argued that overall Austrian higher education offers a smooth working environment for female teachers. This is in-line with Wroblewski (2019) and Booth (2006) who mentioned that women academicians experience similar environment as that of men. This means that women academician are working in conducive and favorable environment that is equally supportive to both men and women.

In China, women academicians rose significantly to senior academic positions for the last few decades. A considerable research has been conducted on women academicians' lived experiences in higher education of China (Bashir, Jianqiao, Zhao, Ghazanfar, & Khan, 2011; Milkman, Akinola, & Chugh, 2015; Shaffer, Joplin, Bell, Lau, & Oguz, 2000). These studies show that, despite patriarchal structure, women academicians in China progressed swiftly and located their space in academia. Cheng (2009) mentioned in her study that considerable number of women academicians are on senior academic positions in universities of China. Chi and Li (2008) argued that although women exclusively rose to the power position; however, majority of them are working on lower academic positions. It means that women academicians are less than men in higher education in general and on academic power positions in particular. Despite some progress, women academicians are still discriminated in higher education of China when it comes to allocation of courses or teaching tasks (Hannum, Kong, & Zhang, 2009; Luke, 2001). For example, women academicians are not allocated equal teaching loads as compared to men (Milkman et al., 2015). Turner (2002) also added that women academicians are discriminated in allocation of teaching loads in Chinese higher education. Similar arguments are given by Yang (2018), who like other scholars argued that extra teaching loads affect academic

performance of female academicians (Bashir et al., 2011; Shaffer et al., 2000). This overburden make them unable to focus on research publications. Similar assertions given by Zhao and Jones (2017) also substantiate the argument that women academicians suffer in promotions due to research publications and teaching loads they are assigned.

For the last few decades, education system of Norway swiftly changed in favor of women academicians. A considerable body of literature has been conducted on women academicians' experiences working with men in different universities (Abramo, Aksnes, & D'Angelo, 2020; Aksnes, Rørstad, Piro, & Sivertsen, 2011; Gulbrandsen & Smeby, 2005; Olsen, Kyvik, & Hovdhaugen, 2005; Rørstad & Aksnes, 2015). These researches magnify women academicians' contribution and participation in higher education. It is worth mentioning that women experience good working conditions with men colleagues in Norwegian higher education. Smeby (2000) and Thun (2020) revealed that few women academicians have reached to the higher academic power positions. Similarly, Kessler, Spector, and Gavin (2014) argued that women also have good working relations with administrative and supportive staff at workplace. The positive changes in Norwegian higher education has provided gender neutral environment which resulted into the swift promotions of women academicians (Rørstad & Aksnes, 2015; Santiago, Carvalho, & Vabø, 2012).

A plethora of research has been conducted on the lived experiences of women academicians in higher education of Denmark (Frølich et al., 2018; Kalpazidou Schmidt & Faber, 2016; Stromquist et al., 2007). These studies revealed women academicians' roles and participation in higher education careers. Diezmann and Grieshaber (2019) studied lived experiences of women academicians and spotlighted issues of promotions. Similarly,

Eggins (2016) asserted that majority of women academicians are working on non-tenured positions burden with workloads. Kalpazidou Schmidt and Faber (2016) mentioned that women academicians' promotions are mainly dependent on research productivity while, due to workload, they get less time for their research work. This results into their less publications and, thus, lag behind their counterparts. Essed (2004) also explained that research publications have great influence on the academic career. Likewise, Maassen (2008) further added that women academicians' slow promotions are due to their less research publications. Similar assertions have been given by different research scholars in Danish higher education (Mazón, 2003; Mischau, 2001; Nielsen, 2017; Stromquist et al., 2007). They consider women academicians' career is badly affected due to lack of research publications. Frølich et al. (2018) identified that some additional roles [family issues] consume most of their time while they find less time for research. Based on the above findings, it is asserted that women academicians' career is greatly influenced by low research productivity and family roles which in turn affect their performance.

Sweden is characterized as one of the countries like Norway and Denmark that has achieved the gender parity vividly (Angervall & Beach, 2018; Askling, 2001). Similarly, Swedish higher education structure has improved significantly for the last few decades. A large number of studies have been conducted on problems of women academicians in higher education (Cama, Jorge, & Peña, 2016; Huisman, De Weert, & Bartelse, 2002; Silander, Haake, & Lindberg, 2013; Viefers, Christie, & Ferdos, 2006). These studies indicated that gender parity has been achieved and workplace for women academicians has improved. Like other scholars, Askling (2001) also revealed that women academicians are now working on senior academic and power positions of deans, VCs and presidents.

However, Berg (2001) found that majority of women academicians still work on lower academic positions in higher education. Danell and Hjerm (2013) argued that women's progress in Swedish higher education has vital signs for all those who are either at early stage of career or aspired to seek career in higher education. Similar findings are given by many scholars (Huisman et al., 2002; Lindberg, Riis, & Silander, 2011). Peterson (2011) also unpacked women academicians' smooth working experiences with men. Besides, Cama et al. (2016) observed good working relations of women academicians with male faculty. They further stated that women have smooth working relations with men colleagues for academic and non-academic tasks. Huisman et al. (2002) studied women academicians' satisfactory working relations with men admin staff of the universities in Sweden. They also found that women working in academia have equal opportunities to research publications and research grants. However, it is noted by many researchers that women academicians less likely avail these opportunities as compared to men (Teelken & Deem, 2013; Viefers et al., 2006).

2.2.2 Lived Experiences of Women in Higher Education of Developing Countries

The situation of Afghanistan is alarming in terms of women academicians' workplace insecurity in higher education due to prevailed uncertain circumstances for the last few decades (Noori & Orfan, 2021; Payne, Burridge, & Rahmani, 2019). Since long, women were restrained from getting education and work in public and private spheres (Afzali, 2017). Thus, women academicians' number did not increase; however, a very low number of women was able to enter in higher education for the last two decades (Morley & Crossouard, 2015). It is noted that sociocultural environment of Afghanistan is a major factor that restrained women into their homes (Morley, 2013). They were not able to

participate in public spheres outside homes as men do have (Hayward & Karim, 2019). Due to these constraints, women were not allowed to get education and seek career in public spheres including higher education (Noori & Orfan, 2021). Therefore, fewer women entered in higher education career because higher education is a gendered place. As low number of women academicians in academia signifies that they are highly discriminated by the men colleagues (Payne, Burridge, & Rahmani, 2021; Roof, 2015). This shows that patriarchy is strongly embedded in Afghan society in general and higher education in particular. Shakib (2014) revealed that men occupy all the power positions and women are absent on senior academic and power positions. Similarly, Sokhanwar (2019) argued that women academicians are supposed to follow the instructions given by the men colleagues. He further stated that women have to regard their cultural values within the universities. Similar findings are given by Hayward and Karim (2019). They unpacked that women academicians experience workload deadlines coupled with sociocultural pressures. Thus, women academicians in Afghan higher education are one of the marginalized section of the society.

The higher education of Algeria significantly developed for last two decades (Abbou & Jones, 2019; Ahmaid, 2021). Policies were revised to provide equal opportunities to men and women in higher education structure. Until 2000, Algerian HE remained men dominated space where women were mainly absent from higher education terrains (Benghabrit-Remaoun, 2007). Presently, women academicians compete to men in getting education and locating their position in academia (Alaoui, 2016). Several research studies are conducted on women's lived experiences in higher education of Algeria (Abbou & Jones, 2019; Ahmaid, 2021; Benghabrit-Remaoun, 2007). These studies primarily

highlighted the challenges and opportunities of women academicians. Lalami (2017) revealed workplace challenging to women academicians that vividly impacted them in terms of getting promotions and hence their performance is affected. She further argued that men served long and occupied the major senior academic and power positions of HoDs, Deans, and VCs. Similarly, Narriman Guémar (2019) like other many scholars described that men still dominate, oppress and exploit women in academia. Likewise, Benghabrit-Remaoun (2007) found that women are disproportioned to men on senior academic and power positions. Salhi (2010) also explained that men oppress women academicians through power and authority. It is pertinent to mention that women academicians work on lower academic positions under the supervision of men colleagues. Similar findings are given by Benghabrit-Remaoun (2007) and Tiliouine (2014). They found discriminations in role allocation by men colleagues that adversely affect the performance of women. Based on the above findings, it is argued that women academicians face different challenges at workplace in Algerian higher education.

Several studies have been conducted in Bangladesh to examine the lived experience of women in higher education (Ahad & Gunter, 2017; Hossain & Kusakabe, 2005; Rahman & Alam, 2011; Towni et al., 2021). These studies revealed that women academicians face challenges of promotion and managerial interference at workplace. A study conducted by Ahmed (2008) asserted that women academicians less likely get promotions as compared to men. He further stated that promotion procedures are eased for men while women are not even bothered. Similarly, research of Ali and Akhter (2009) pointed out that women are discriminated in promotions by the senior men academics on senior academic and power positions. It is worth mentioning that majority of men are at senior academic

positions. It is also important to state that although number of women academicians increased; however, they are still working on lower academic positions in most of the universities (Asadullah, 2006; Hossain, 2013). Despite meeting the required criteria of promotion, women academicians are not given priority in promotions as compared to men (Hossain & Kusakabe, 2005). The promotion is also linked with interference of administrative/managerial staff as most of the admin staff is male and they discriminate women in different ways (Hossain, 2013; Hossain & Kusakabe, 2005; Kapsos, 2008). They also stated that managerial staff also create hurdles to women academicians' official work. Similar findings are also given by many other scholars (Mahbub, 2022; Morley & Crossouard, 2016; Rahman & Alam, 2011). They also found managerial staff reluctant towards women academicians' official work. They further emphasized that sociocultural environment is also a major factor for women academicians' oppression in higher education. It is pertinent to mention that women academicians' career is negatively affected by their slow promotion (Tasnim, 2006). Moreover, promotion is also affected by the discriminations perpetuated by managerial staff (Hossain, 2013; Hossain & Kusakabe, 2005). It is, thus, concluded that women academicians in higher education of Bangladesh face numerous problems including absence of women at top academic positions.

The situation of higher education in Bhutan is important to note down because of the women's marginalization in higher education structure. Research shows that women experience challenging workplace due to gendered culture of higher education (Maxwell et al., 2015; Tom Maxwell, Reid, Gyamtso, & Dorji, 2008). Dema (2017) revealed that the proportion of women although increased significantly but still majority of women academicians are working on lower positions in higher education. It is noted that women

compete men in getting career in academic jobs (Dema, 2015). Nonetheless, men colleagues in academic power positions discriminate women academicians in higher education of Bhutan (Dema, 2017). As Tshering (2015) argued that women academicians are discriminated in allocation of teaching loads and assignments. Women academics are not allocated less credit hours as compared to males, according to Rajput (2013). It indicates that males in the positions of authority prefer men and discriminate women against academic loads. Similarly, women academics are discriminated against by males in academic assignments, according to Gyeltshen and Dorji (2020). Men are more involved than women, according to their findings. Maxwell and Chophel (2020) make similar findings, claiming that elite academics in higher education do not respect women academicians similarly to males.

Several empirical studies in Brazil documented the experiences of women academicians in higher education (Arabsheibani, Galrão Carneiro, & Henley, 2003; Bailey, Loveman, & Muniz, 2013; Francis & Tannuri-Pianto, 2012; Staniscuaski et al., 2021). They asserted that women face several issues from men colleagues at workplace. They further unveiled that the increased girls' education although improved gender parity to some extent but women academicians still experience discrimination at certain levels of career seeking in higher education structure. Although women's participation has increased enormously in higher education (Archanjo, 2017). However, proportion of women academicians' on faculty positions in general and power positions in particular is far less than men (Eggins, 2016). It is revealed that most of them work on lower academic positions coupled with different issues. For example, women academicians face problems in promotions that is why women are rarely found on academic power positions. It means

though the women's proportion increased but they are mainly absent on senior academic and power positions. Likewise, Francis and Tannuri-Pianto (2012) revealed women' low position in academic power positions. They further said that women academicians' absence from power positions is due to men's control on academic structure since long. Many other studies register women's lived experiences in Brazilian universities (McCowan, 2007; Molleda & Ferguson, 2004; Sidanius & Vcniegas, 2013). The key findings of their studies found that women are not provided research opportunities by men colleagues and, thus, their career is badly affected by the low research productivity. It is hypothesized that lower the research productivity slower will be the promotions (Yahmed, 2018). On the basis of above findings, it is concluded that career of women academicians is negatively impacted by the patriarchal higher education and hence they rarely reach to the senior academic and power positions.

Similar situation is found in Columbian higher education. Women academicians experience discriminations at different levels of career progression in universities (Shauman, 2006; Toutkoushian, Bellas, & Moore, 2007). It is important to mention that different barriers are created by men to women academicians' career in higher education. The findings of the study conducted by Croom and Patton (2011) revealed that women academicians occupy most of the lower positions while men sustained senior academic and power positions. There are many studies that revealed experiences of women academics in higher education (Ginther & Hayes, 2003; Shauman, 2006). Findings of these studies are in-line with what Croom and Patton (2011) argued that women academician's career is highly impacted by the imbalance between academic goals and family responsibilities. They also revealed that women academicians have double responsibilities of academia and

family and most of the time is consumed in family chores and less time is left over for the career development. It is further added by Leahey (2007) that women academicians have to take care of children and home and, thus, they find less time for the academic career. Consequently, their performance is negatively impacted by the increased engagement in family roles. The similar findings are given by the Park (2011) and Perna (2005). They also identified women academicians' challenges in meeting academic demands and family duties.

A widespread disparity of women experiences have been witnessed in the Philippines higher education by the researchers (Al-Mahdy, Al-Harthi, & Salah El-Din, 2016; Altbach et al., 2019; Joshi, Neely, Emrich, Griffiths, & George, 2015). The findings of aforementioned studies revealed that women are not provided equal opportunities for research productivity. Similarly, like other countries, women publish less than men in academic career. Tijdens, Van Klaveren, and ITUC (2012) further revealed that progress of any academician is directly linked with research productivity in the academia. It is important to mention here that the research productivity is strongly correlated with promotions in higher education. As noted by Szromek and Wolniak (2020) that men with excellent research productivity get early promotions. Similarly, Rai and Critzer (2000) further stated that men with strong research background are working on senior academic and power positions. Similar findings are reported by Moss (2002). She asserted that women academicians get late promotions than men. She also identified that one of the factors of late promotion is low research productivity. It is noted by Morley (2018) and Kumar (2001) that women academicians' performance is highly affected by the low research productivity. They hypothesized that higher the research productivity higher will

be the promotions (Eggins, 2016; Joshi et al., 2015). It is concluded that women academicians face numerous problems in career development in Philippines.

The experiences of women academicians in Ghanaian higher education are well researched by many studies (Atuahene & Owusu-Ansah, 2013; Liani, Nyamongo, & Tolhurst, 2020; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015; Molla & Cuthbert, 2014). They revealed that universities are considered ideal and liberal places with equitable policies for both men and women. However, it is not the case in the Ghanaian universities. Adusah-Karikari (2008) like other scholars unveiled higher education as a gendered space for women academicians in the Ghana. Similarly, Atuahene (2014) explored higher education a challenging workplace for women academicians. She further stated that men occupying higher positions produced several inequalities. Thus, it is noted that higher education is challenging for women academicians in many ways. As Maphalala and Mpofu (2017) disclosed that proportion of women academicians is far less than men in higher education. They also stated that women academicians merely reached to power positions because majority of them are working on lower academic positions. It is pertinent to mention here that structure of Ghanaian society in general and higher education in particular is still patriarchal that restrain women to grow like men (Morley & Lugg, 2009; Prah, 2002). Morley (2010) noted that women are not given equal opportunities to men academicians in higher education, i.e. their low representation in academic positions. Similar research findings are given by Morley (2011a) in another study. She stated that gendered culture restrained women academicians to reach the senior academic positions in higher education. In the light of above findings, it is concluded that the structure of higher education is gendered in Ghana.

Research in higher education of India continues to reveal that women are not advancing at the similar pace to men (Beaman, Duflo, Pande, & Topalova, 2012; Budhwar, Saini, & Bhatnagar, 2005; Khare, Mishra, & Parveen, 2012; Madheswaran & Singhari, 2016; Ravi, Gupta, & Nagaraj, 2019; Thelwall, Bailey, Makita, Sud, & Madalli, 2019). These studies highlighted that higher education of India has failed to provide equitable policies and potential resources to women academicians to overcome barriers by confronting patriarchy and advancing their careers in academia. Batra and Reio (2016) revealed that women academicians' participation in higher education although increased enormously for the last few decades. However, Chanana (2006) asserted that few women progressed to the senior academic and power positions while majority of them work on lower academic positions. Cooke (2010) further stated that women academicians are normally kept at lower positions by senior men. It is important to mention that masculine hegemony still prevails in Indian higher education. Women academics have biased working conditions, according to Gupta and Sharma (2002) men discriminate women in many ways. Haq (2013) highlighted discrimination in provision of opportunities: women are not given equal opportunity to conduct and publish research despite their research potential. It is vital to note that due to their low research output, women academics fall behind male counterparts in academic ladder. In comparison to women, Kaul (2006) found men with good research profiles reached to the senior academic and power positions. Singh (2011) asserted that 'higher the research productivity, higher will be promotions and lower the research productivity lower will be academic performance. Gupta and Sharma (2002) noted another important aspect that performance of women academicians is primarily affected by the gendered higher education culture. Based on the above findings, it is

asserted that Indian higher education is patriarchal and women are discriminated in manifolds.

A large number of literature has been conducted on women's participation in Indonesian higher education for the last few decades (Adams, Meyers, & Sekaja, 2020; Adriany, Yulindrasari, & Safrina, 2021; Arquisola, Zutshi, Rentschler, & Billsberry, 2019; Fiantis et al., 2022). These studies spotlighted that proportion of women academicians although increased in academia; however, majority of them work on lower academic positions in higher education. Hunga and Mahatma (2020) found that few women academicians occupy senior academic and power positions and majority of them are working on lower echelons in HE. Maheshwari and Nayak (2020) described concerns of women academicians that despite potential and ascertaining required criteria, they are deprived of their rights to reach senior academic and power positions. It is pertinent to note that Indonesian higher education is still men dominant public sphere where women are unprivileged and disadvantageous as compared to men. In this context, several scholarships identified problems faced by women academicians in higher education structure (Sunaryo, Rahardian, Risgiyantia, & Usman, 2021; Udin, Handayani, Yuniawan, & Rahardja, 2019). As Khumaidah (2018) found that women publish less than men. He also stated that research publications are linked with the promotions. Muflichah (2020) further identified reason of women academicians' less publication is their engagement in family roles. Like Adams et al. (2020), Murniati (2012) also highlighted several factors of women academicians' slow promotions. He revealed that women academicians have double responsibilities of academia and family. They mainly suffer in meeting the publication benchmark for the

promotions. Based on the above findings, it is concluded that women academicians' slow promotion is because of their low research productivity coupled with the family roles.

A few decades back, an identical gender reversal change has been witnessed in the Iranian higher education. Research shows that girl's participation in education increased significantly and women grew to the faculty positions in higher education (Nazemi, Mortazavi, & Borjalilou, 2012; Panahi & Abedini, 2020; Reza-Rashti & Ahmed, 2013; Rezai-Rashti & Moghadam, 2011; Shakiba, Ghaderzadeh, & Moghadam, 2021). These studies revealed that women academicians reached to the senior academic and power positions while majority of them work on lower academic positions. Janadleh and Pouya (2019) noted women academicians' low research productivity as compared to men. They further pointed out women academicians' slow pace of promotion and correlated it with their low research productivity. By the same token, Mohajeri and Mousavi (2017) found different factors of women academicians' slow promotions. For example, women are burdened with family roles along with academic career. They argued that women have to take care of family, domestic chores and, thus, most of their time is spent in meeting these goals. Similar assertions are given by Rezai-Rashti (2015) who noted that women academicians' low research productivity and promotions are due to their engagement in family responsibilities. Based on the above findings, it is concluded, owing to family roles, women academicians' academic performance is badly affected.

In case of Kenya, several studies have been conducted on women academicians' workplace challenges in higher education (Malelu, Ngare, & Okemwa, 2017; Ndege, Migosi, & Onsongo, 2011; Ngware, Onsoinu, Muthaka, & Manda, 2006). These studies showed that women's number has been increased in faculty positions for last few decades.

However, most of them work on lower academic positions while men possess senior academic and power positions. Moreover, Chege and Sifuna (2006) also argued that men occupy power positions in higher education. By the same token, Kamau (2011) and Odhiambo (2011) revealed that women academicians rarely occupy senior power positions in higher education. They also argued that men are preferred on different academic and power positions in Kenyan higher education due to their high research profiles. They further asserted that women academicians lag behind men in research productivity and promotions. Onsongo (2003) also substantiated the argument that women academicians experience low promotions due to low research productivity. He further argued that women academicians' performance is negatively impacted by their low research productivity. Onsongo (2006) added like other researchers that sociocultural context of higher education is also a major factor behind women's low participation and performance in public domains in general and academia in particular. It is further noted by Malelu et al. (2017) that the workplace environment of higher education is another major factor for women's lower status in academia. It is concluded that women academicians in Kenyan HE are mainly on lower academic positions due to their low research productivity and cultural environment.

Like other developing countries, Malaysian higher education has been male dominant. A large number of literature shows that gender inequalities created by patriarchal structure of society posed threats to the women's careers in public spheres including higher education (Alavi, Isa, & Palpanadan, 2020; Haron, Mustafa, & Alias, 2010; Ramli, Lim, & Cheak, 2016; Sidek, Dora, Kudus, & Hassan, 2012). These scholarships unveiled that women had limited opportunities to work in private and public spheres including higher education. However, Ismail and Rasdi (2007) asserted that due to revised education

policies, girl's education increased significantly for the last few decades that further fueled the women's participation in higher education. It is also argued by Ismail and Rasdi (2008) that despite their significant participation, women academicians are in minority to men in HE. Similarly, they are unable to find equal space to men in senior academic positions. Similar findings are reported by Zakaria and Asmawi (2015). They asserted that majority of women are struggling at lower positions in academic career. Lunn (2007) in her study on women academicians' challenges and opportunities identified different factors that hampered the women's progress in higher education. She revealed that women academicians were primarily restrained by the sociocultural values of the society. Ismail, Rasdi, and Wahat (2005) stated that due to women's late entry in higher education, they faced problems of promotions and research productivity. Similar assertions are given by Ismail and Noor (2016). They also endorsed that women academicians in Malaysian higher education are deficient in research and publications as compared to their counterparts. Based on the above results, it is concluded that women academicians face discrimination in higher education.

Several research studies have highlighted the women's challenges in academia in different universities of Mauritius (Belli, Khan, & Psacharopoulos, 1999; Tandrayen-Ragoobur & Pydayya, 2016; Thanacoody, Bartram, Barker, & Jacobs, 2006). They asserted that women academicians face different issues in higher education structure. It is mainly influenced by the cultural values that restricted women's participation previously. After policy revision, Abebe (2013) affirmed that girl's education improved for the last three decades. It gave rise to women's contribution and status in higher education. Baguant (2019) and Li Kam Wah (2017) studied women's position in Mauritian higher education

structure. They stated that policies are formulated to ban on gender discriminations in universities. It really boomed women's participation in academia. However, Mohadeb (2003) found that majority of women academicians are working on lower academic positions. It is noted that men are dominant on senior academic and power positions and women are merely found on top positions. Wilkins and Neri (2019) highlighted the factors of women's low participation including sociocultural environment of society that restricted women to participate in and contribute to the higher education. It is pertinent to mention that men's long standing in higher education further created barriers to women's career seeking in academia. Similar argument is given by Nishaat (2017) and Ramtohul (2016). They also pointed out that women's low participation is due to gendered culture of higher education. Based on the above results, it is claimed that gendered culture is responsible for the women's slow progress in Mauritian higher education

Similar situation is found in higher education of Nigeria. Many studies conducted on women's working conditions magnify their contribution and participation in higher education (Odejide, Akanji, & Odekunle, 2006; Ogunode & Musa, 2020; Sakiru, Ismail, Samah, & Busayo, 2017). These scholarships revealed that gender reversal change has given boom to the girl's education that further fueled the women's participation in academia. Despite women's considerable proportion in academia, they are absent in top academic positions. Alade (2012) found several factors of work-family conflict coupled with low research productivity and promotions (Odejide et al., 2006). They also identified another aspect of women's absence in decision making of top positions. It is pertinent to mention here that main reason of women academicians' powerlessness is university unions headed by men that widened gender inequalities. Nigerian universities, like other

developing countries, are men dominated spaces and thus women are marginalized in manifolds (Ormotoso, 2020; Sakiru et al., 2017). Ilo (2010) and Nwadigwe (2007) unanimously identified different forms of women's marginalization in higher education. They stated that women are discriminated by men in research productivity. They also argued, although many women have better research skills than men; however, their capabilities are undermined. Odetunde (2004) hypothesized research productivity with promotions. She stated that higher the research productivity, higher will be chances of promotion in the academic ladder. Ogbogu (2011) further added that women's low research productivity and promotions are due to their family roles while men are devoid of it.

In Egypt, many research scholarships have been conducted on women academicians' issues in higher education (Dajani, Zaki, Mohamed, & Saad, 2016; El Badawy & Magdy, 2015; Hamza, 2006). They revealed that women studied and entered in higher education recently while men have a long standing in academia. In spite of considerable participation, they are disproportional to men in faculty positions. Majority of them work in lower academic positions while senior academic and power positions are occupied by men. Like other many scholars, Abdel Ghafar (2021) analyzed gender biases in higher education. He asserted that gendered culture embedded in social fabric is further magnified through experiences of women academics in academia. He also identified that men decision makers are possessing top positions while women are rarely located on these positions. Alas and Mousa (2016) pointed out different factors that affected the women's low participation as compared to men. They also added that women's low research productivity and family engagement are major factors behind women's slow career progression. Similar assertions are given by Badr (2012) and Holmes (2008). They

unveiled that women academicians remain underrepresented on higher positions due to their less interest in research productivity. Loveluck (2012) asserted that men are efficient in producing research and get promotions swiftly while Mostafa (2003) added that women are burdened with familial responsibilities. Based on the above findings, it is argued that women academicians in higher education of Egypt lag behind men in career progression.

Morley (2011a) explained gender division of labor and women's invisibility in academic positions is derived from discourses of conjugal structure of family and patriarchal make up of society. She stated that higher education is also gendered space. Bosch and Barit (2020) revealed that academic career of women is restrained by family, marriage, housework, and childcare (Arnolds, Lillah, & Stofle, 2013). Furthermore, gendered power relations affected women's routine experiences after entering higher education (Joubert, Van Wyk, & Rothmann, 2011; Musheemeza, 2016). Therefore, women are exposed to harassment, violence, and exclusion, stereotypes related to qualification and intellect. Badat (2008) viewed that women are hesitant to enter in higher education due to stigma of sexual harassment. It is evident that harassment is imbedded in higher education structure as Teferra and Altbachl (2004) affirmed that women in higher education experience different nature of harassment and social stigmas. For example, male violence, sexual comments, body touching and grabbing, gesture, calling names and other sex-based experiences. Despite these issues, women have considerable participation in academia for the last few decades. However, Riordan and Louw-Potgieter (2011) found that majority of women academicians work on lower academic positions. Ramnund-Mansingh (2020) and Musheemeza (2016) studied the working relations between men and women faculty. They asserted that working relations between men and women are not smooth for their academic

goals. They further stated that women academicians face problems in accomplishing the academic tasks while working with men.

In Tanzania, many studies have been conducted on women academicians' workplace issues (Lihamba, Mwaipopo, & Shule, 2006; Morley et al., 2010; Nyoni, He, & Yusuph, 2017). These studies revealed that proportion of women in higher education has increased for the last three decades. However, ratio of women academicians is significantly lower than men. These studies also revealed challenges to women academicians in higher education. Mgaiwa and Kapinga (2021) argued that women's disproportion is due to prolonged colonial impact that gendered the workplace in higher education. Similarly, Fussy (2017) indicated that women academicians have fewer chances to grow up in academic ladder and reach to the senior academic and power positions as compared to men. Likewise, Mark (2015) noted women's issues in research publication. He further stated that women publish less than men. Similar argument is given by Mgaiwa and Kapinga (2021). They stated that some women having good potential of research are undermined by men while they are neither mentored nor included in research groups. Thus, they find less opportunities of promotions as men do have (Mgaiwa, 2021; Mosha, 2018). Based on the above assertions, it is argued that women academicians in Tanzanian higher education experience exclusion in research and promotions due to gendered culture.

In the context of Turkey, research shows that women academicians' number immensely increased in higher education for last few decades (Healy, Özbilgin, & Aliefendioğlu, 2005; O'Connor et al., 2020; Sağlamer et al., 2018; Yıldırım, Yıldırım, & Çoltu, 2019). They revealed that top positions are occupied by majority of men and few women were able to occupy senior academic and power positions. Akpinar-Sposito (2013)

stated that despite women's increased participation, proportion of women is lower than men. Küskü (2003) further explained that majority of women are working on lower academic positions. Similar findings are given by White and Özkanlı (2010). They witnessed that higher positions are dominated by men and women are rarely found on such positions in most of the universities. This shows that academia is still a gendered place in Turkey. However, Machado-Taylor and Özkanlı (2013) asserted that women academicians' contribution is indicative of their struggle to reach the top academic positions. Özkanlı and White (2009) further noted that women academicians face issues of promotion when it comes to research publications. They argued that research is one of the important indicator for promotions and women are deficient in research publications as compared to men. Similar assertions are given by Cave and Kilic (2010). They also agreed upon the argument of Toker (2011) that women academicians' slow promotion is due to their less interest in research publications. By the same token, Aycan (2004) argued that men have strong networks for publications while women lack such networks and research groups. She further stated, as long as women revisit and strengthen their research networks they may publish better than men. The above findings indicated that women academicians face issues of proportion, research publications and promotions in higher education of Turkey.

Pakistani society is male dominated where general standards and norms in social life consider homes for women and public spheres for men (Sabika Khalid & Tadesse, 2021; Zahid, Hooley, & Neary, 2020). Men dominate women in employment in public and private domains including higher education (Batool, Sajid, & Shaheen, 2013; Salik & Zhiyong, 2014). Since gender reversal change, girls' education increased significantly that

further paved ways for women to seek career in higher education. Although women academicians' proportion increased; however, there has been a vivid gender gap due to masculine hegemony in academia (Batool et al., 2013; Malik, Danish, & Munir, 2012; Shaukat, Siddiquah, & Pell, 2014; Zahid et al., 2020). These studies show that women academicians are now competing men to reach senior academic and power positions. Similarly, majority of them are recruited on junior academic positions in almost all the universities. Shaukat and Pell (2016) mentioned in their study that senior academic and power positions are preoccupied by men and women are rarely found on these positions of deans, VCs and presidents. Malik and Courtney (2011) further added that women are absent from senior academic positions except women universities of Pakistan. Noor, Khanl, and Naseem (2015) stated that workplace in universities is hostile to women academicians. They maintained that women rarely have smooth working relations with men senior colleague. Waqar, Hanif, and Loh (2021) also unveiled that most of the admin staff in universities is men that create barriers to women's work. Waqar et al. (2021) asserted that women have to look after family, children and maintain social life. It is, thus, concluded that women in academic career face numerous issues of management to ascertain the familial tasks and academic goals. Similar findings are given by Salman Khalid, Irshad, and Mahmood (2012). They also disclosed women academicians' problems in teaching loads, improvement in qualification and harassment issues they encounter during the academic career. Ali and Rasheed (2021) further said, although women have equal opportunities in academia but patriarchal structure prefer men despite women's potential. This as mentioned by Bhatti and Ali (2020) adversely affect women academicians' performance in higher education. They also asserted that sociocultural

values of society reinforce women to ascertain their family roles. It is noted that women fulfilling certain criteria of promotions but less likely preferred for promotion like men. Similarly, Ali and Rasheed (2021) said that women are not given space on senior positions by men. Ali, Jumani, and Ejaz (2015) found structural factors such as mentoring, networking, selection and promotion practices and gender equity barriers to the career advancement of women in higher education.

Higher education in Sri Lanka is mainly public sector dominated (Yousaf & Schmiede, 2017). The academicians resisted to promote quality education only in public institutions (Liyanage, 2014). A considerable studies have been conducted on women, gender and education (De Alwis & Bombuwela, 2013; Gunawardena et al., 2004; Liyanage, 2014; Yousaf & Schmiede, 2017). These studies highlighted women's working experiences in higher education of Sri Lanka. The proportion of women in higher education has been increased for the last few decades. As stated by Gunawardena (2003) that women are swiftly occupying senior academic and power positions. He further revealed that in 2011 almost 50 percent Lecturers/probationary Lecturers in public sector universities of Sri Lanka were women and professor were proportioned 1:4 to women and men. Moreover, women representation in academic workforce increased to 43.6 percent and interestingly 21.4 percent VCs are women (Gunawardena, Rasanayagam, Leitan, Bulumulle, & Abeysekera-Van Dort, 2006). Bulumulle (2005) indicated staff classification based on gender; however, marginal in distribution by and large. Thus, for last three years women increased 2 percent on associate professors and professors increased from 24.4 percent to 27 percent on non-tenured positions. It is important to know that male academicians also increased almost by same percentage but imbalance on tenured positions has been

maintained. Moreover, Liyanage and Liyanage (2020) studied higher education workplace. He found that it is challenging for those women having family. Similarly, Park (2020) also stated that women academicians have dual responsibilities of academic tasks and family. It is concluded that familial roles negatively affect the women academicians' performance in higher education.

The above empirical studies from developed and developing countries have highlighted the problems of women academicians. These studies show that women academicians in developing countries do not experience higher education careers similarly as in developed countries. In developing countries, women academicians' ways of negotiating academic career, reaching academic and power positions, and contributing in policy formulation and decision making are the key factors showing academia as male centric. Looking at scarcity of literature in higher education of Pakistan in general and AJK in particular, I came to understand that women academicians' lived experiences did not receive academic attention by the researchers and scholars. Exploring relevant literature on the issue, I found many studies on different gender issues in the context of Pakistan and AJK; however, lived experiences of women academicians in higher education of AJK has been ignored by the researchers and academicians. Thus, I attempted to conduct this study to examine the lived experiences of women academicians in co-education HEIs of AJK. My main objective was to know the working relations and interaction between men and women. Similarly, I focused the social stigmas (harassment) of women working with men in patriarchal HE structure. By the same token, I curiously wanted to spot on the women academicians' academic expectations, challenges, and family responsibilities. Lack of literature on the issue coupled with my experiences as academician in higher education

attracted me to explore and document the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK.

2.3 Theoretical Review

Several theoretical frameworks are used to explain various elements of gender development across the world. These initiatives drew attention to women's vulnerability in both public and private spaces. I concentrated on a number of theoretical issues that were pertinent to my research. Biological theories, social learning and cognitive development theories, social constructionism, and feminist epistemologies are examples of these theories.

The advocates of biological theories have given several explanations of differences among men and women (Andreano & Cahill, 2009; Clarke, 1873). Women were discouraged to attain higher education on many grounds including brain size argument. Women were also discouraged from seeking higher education with the assertion that it will damage their reproductive health. They further argued that women are less intelligent than men due to small brain size (Maccoby, 1999). Similarly, they also argued that men are better in reasoning than women. It is evident from the work of Ceci, Williams, and Barnett (2009) and Wood and Eagly (2012) that men possess more reasoning skills than women. Therefore, men perform better than women in education (Clarke, 1873). Scientists provided more explanations of brain types, i.e. men's brain is S while women's brain is E type. They further characterized S type brain with reasoning and E type with tenderness, eloquence, and toys related stuff (Andreano & Cahill, 2009). Based on above assertions, it is asserted that women have low intelligence level and reasoning capacities than men. Similar findings are reported by Clarke (1873). He argued that brain of a woman is not so

advanced to perform the tasks like men. Likewise, Halpern (1997) postulated that men possess higher cognitive reasoning skills than women. Moreover, few advocates of biological theories undermined the women's capacities based on bodily difference (Diamond & Butterworth, 2008). They asserted that physiological make-up of men and women has profound effect on learning behavior. Similarly, Lent, Brown, and Hackett (2002) revealed that men are bodily strong having capacity to think, learn and perform better than women. Stepping into the shoes of Lent et al. (2002), Henslin (1997) also characterized men as proactive, energetic, strong, and sensible while women inactive, passive and shy. Based on the above arguments, it is concluded that performance of men and women is linked with their physical make-up as men are stronger than women in intellect and, thus, outperform women. Moreover, I cited Clarke (1873) while I found different research evidences where females work efficiently than men in public and private domains including education. Similar claim is made by Maccoby (1999). She argued that women now work and excel men in the public spheres including higher education. Thus, argument of Clarke has less significance in the contemporary feminist scholarships. On the above assertions, I build argument here that, in the contemporary world, women work with the men in public and private spheres. Similar trend is followed in most of the developing countries. Moreover, I argue that the academic performance is deeply rooted in cultural and institutional norms rather in biology. The empirical literature cited in this study also substantiated that women perform in higher education irrespective of gender. Thus, it is apparent that sex differences lost validity due to recent gender reversal change. Forthcoming theories shed light on the debate of female and male performance from other perspectives.

The social constructionist theorists viewed gender as product of social construction of society (Acker, 1992; Acker & Armenti, 2004; Morley, 2013; Martin & Ruble, 2004; Thompson, 2003). They argued that there is no unique character of gender development either masculine or feminine rather gender is constructed socially varying from culture to culture and societies (Acker, 2006; Cole, 2017). It is theorized that gender is socially constructed while masculinity and femininity can be changed over time (Acker, 1987). Thus, masculinity and femininity are interchangeably blended and highly influenced by the sociocultural setting of the society (Armenti, 2004; Bindu & Thomas, 2006). Thus, I assert that differences in academia between men and women are direct influenced by the masculinity because contemporary higher education is devoid of masculinity and femininity. It is argued that women are working with men. I conclude that the widening gap in performance of men and women in higher education is basically indebted in the patriarchal higher education structure. It is also important to mention here that these differences are social construction of the society (Acker, 1994; Morley, 2011; Acker & Armenti, 2004; Howard & Hollander, 1997). An insight of feminism is provided in the subsequent discussions.

Feminism is advocacy against the social inequalities of women (Francis, 2006; Lips, 2016). This school mainly opposes the patriarchal nature of society (Marecek, Crawford, & Popp, 2004). Primarily, feminism is derived from the women's voices raised against the oppression and marginalization in the society (Wallien & Cohen-Kettenis, 2008). The first wave of feminism started in 1840s in the USA and demanded basic rights of women in the society (Acker, 1987). Moreover, second wave of feminism focused the right to education for all women. As Blickenstaff (2005) stated that the basic motive behind

the second wave of feminism was the education act 1944 that further instigated women to get united and demand fair trial of education for all. Consequently, struggle and efforts of feminists paved ways for girl's education.

Here I discussed feminism that emerged since 1960 against the masculine hegemony (Marilley, 1996; Whelehan, 1995). Feminists highlighted gendered culture in education and realized that patriarchy may continue to exist in future (Thompson, 2003). Moreover, all the feminists agreed on a single point agenda to stand against the patriarchy (Rose, 1993). Feminists argued that masculinity is owing to the male dominated gendered cultural norms and values (Marilley, 1996). In the pursuance, I affirm that women's subordination in higher education was primarily due to the patriarchal culture. In this regard, theories of patriarchy given by Walby (1990) and Hartmann (1976) are relevant to my study. Walby (1990) theorized patriarchy to differentiate between private and public patriarchy. She asserted that patriarchy prevents women from taking part in public discourse. She also argued that patriarchal relations of production exist in social institutions including higher education. She further argued that social institutions are biased towards men where women are separated from power, wealth, and influence. Thus, patriarch (men) dominate, oppress, and exploit women from participation in public discourses. Similarly, Hartmann (1976) explained that men control women in public and private spheres through techniques of hierarchical organization. In this way, men alienate women to maintain their control over power and resources. Thus, a direct personal system of control is mediated by society-wide institutions including education (1976: 138). Based on the above arguments, I assert that women's exclusion from active participation in public spheres including higher education is due to patriarchal structure of the society. Concept of intersectionality given

by Collins (2000) is a systematic epistemology to examine the oppression of men over women caused by mediated factors of inequality, power, gender, and culture. She argued that men dominate women in institutional structure in many ways. In addition, she asserted that women are oppressed by institutional rules and regulations to comply with the cultural ways of dominant group's specialized thought including higher education. The hegemonic masculinity of Connell (1995) is also important here. She said that masculinity occupies the hegemonic positions in a given pattern of gender relations that further create power and gender imbalances (p. 76). Building on the concepts, I conclude that inequalities are produced by the oppressive institutional culture operated by men. The above theoretical concepts allow me to situate the women academicians' position in higher education.

Further commencing with argument of Butler (2002). She argued that all bodies are gendered from the beginning of their social existence which means that there is no "natural body" that pre-exists its cultural inscription. She also asserted that gender is not something one is, it is something one does, an act, or more precisely, a sequence of acts, a "doing" rather than a "being". Similarly, in the idea of performativity, Butler (2009) stated that "gender proves to be performance—that is, constituting the identity, it is purported to be. She then quoted the claim that "there is no 'being' behind doing, acting, becoming; 'the doer' is merely a fiction imposed on the doing—the doing itself is everything" (1887:29). Drawing on Butler's work, I assert that gender identity is culturally engraved, and constituted and performed in expression.

The standpoint theories have great significance in locating women's position in patriarchal society in general and higher education in particular. Most striking standpoint epistemology of Smith (1979) revealed women's lived experiences in the higher education

institution setting. In this regard, Smith's standpoint theory is an important contribution for women in academia. Smith's version of women's standpoint starts from the experience of people. It is a method of inquiry that explores reality of everyday lived experiences of women academicians. She observed that woman academician take multiple roles at the same time extending from research, teaching loads, and nurturing the children. She also stated that two subjectivities home and university could not be blended. She further asserted that sociologists participate in the relations of ruling through ruling text as teachers and researchers in higher education (1990). Through these texts, a person is able to trace the existing social relations (relations of ruling). The women academics' subjective experiences that, in some way or another, connect her to the ruling text were the focus of the standpoint. As a result, via their various interests and experiences in academia, women and men establish their unique worlds. I propose, based on Smith's typologies that women's experiences are shaped by the ruling text written by males, which influences their ruling practices and, as a result, develop relations of ruling in higher education. Similarly, Smith argued that society is determined by privileged men and exclude women. The structure and expectations institutionalized in society are historically creation of men perpetuating masculine hegemony (1990a). In this study, I also propose that the standpoint theory is a useful typology for examining women academicians' experiences in higher education. As a result, the notion of Smith is crucial in this study.

Social learning theories have focused on gender development. In this regard, Bandura's (1961) work inspired me to develop a social learning viewpoint. He claimed that social conduct is learnt via observation and imitation of others' actions. Reinforcement and incentives, on the other hand, have a direct impact on behavior and learning. Children,

according to Bandura, copy the people around them in order to become like them. He also underlined the importance of modelling in learning behaviors from parents, instructors, and friends, which have an impact on role-playing and job exploration. Gender development is taught and copied in the offered culture and society from role models who fuel women's desires in higher education careers, according to the aforementioned arguments.

The cognitive development theories also play a key role in the gender development. In this context, cognitive development of Piaget (1972) is discussed. Piaget emphasized that children learn from interactions with others. Similarly, they are inculcated gender roles to identify their gender identities in each successive stage of life. He stated that children are coached masculine and feminine gender roles and they learn accordingly. Based on the above argument, I assert that due to impact of socialization, girls and boys try to find their gender roles in public and private domains.

In summing up the theoretical approaches on gender and education, claim of biological theorists is not valid as sex is no more cause of gender differences in the modern society. According to social constructionism, there is no unique character of gender development either masculine or feminine rather gender is constructed socially varying from culture to culture and societies. Moreover, women are now equally participating in the public domains across societies. Similarly, concepts of feminists revealed women's marginalization in society and higher education. It is noted that gender equity is still issue in higher education of many developing countries. Inequalities exist because of patriarchy despite having modern outlook of society. I took patriarchy as a key concept to shed light on the women experiences in higher education. Similarly, I argue that Walby's patriarchy and Smiths' standpoint typologies of ruling text and masculine hegemony are major focus

of the study in this research. Besides, hegemonic masculinity of Connell (1995) is also important to understand the hegemonic positions of men in higher education. Moreover, Butlers' concept of doing gender and performativity are also important in explaining gendered higher education. In addition, Collins' intersectionality also guide the study as society is gendered and inequalities are produced on the basis of gender, ethnicity and institutional culture in higher education.

In the same fashion, social learning and cognitive development theories are also important in this study. To connect on, I argue that women due to socialization and role seeking are now working in public domains of developing countries. Moreover, the situation is now changed and women avail opportunities to work with men and even excel the men in higher education (Acker, 1987; Marilley, 1996; Rampton, 2015).

The empirical literature in general and theoretical and philosophical review in particular enabled me to develop theoretical framework for my study. From the above comprehensive theoretical review, I engaged feminist epistemologies particularly patriarchy, women's standpoint theory (masculine hegemony/ruling text), and hegemonic masculinity of Connell for my theoretical review. The following discussion will unveil that how these concepts provide theoretical foundation to my study.

2.3.1 Theoretical Framework

This part of the study consists of few key concepts derived from the theoretical review presented in part two of this chapter. These fertile concepts, I deem, helped in the informed analysis of women academicians' lived experiences in the HEIs of AJK.

Drawing on the theoretical review, the argument of biological theorists about the sex differences is no more valid. The social learning theory derived from the work of

Bandura (1976) is relevant to examine that how women academicians learn from socialization and role models by observing and imitating others [parents, teacher and friends]. The cognitive development of Piaget (1972) is also valid to relate the cognitive development of women academicians in academia. Moreover, Walby's (1990) concept of public patriarchy has been engaged to explain men's dominance and women's subordination in the field of higher education. This concept is highly applicable to examine the influence of patriarchy in higher education of AJK. Similarly, Dorothy Smith's concept of masculine hegemony and ruling text are also central to this study. Being part of academia, she felt the need of such epistemology to interpret experiences of women academicians from feminist standpoint in higher education (Smith, 1990a, 1990b). Those experiences are organized and institutionalized and could be read in and as text. Through these texts, a person is able to trace the existing social relations (relations of ruling). Women and men create realities through their experience. As sociologists participate in relations of ruling text as teachers, researchers, writers, and commentators. Smith argues that ruling text of sociology organizes sociological practice and marginalize women (Smith, 1990a). These concepts will help to explain feminist standpoint in the context of higher education of AJK. In addition, hegemonic masculinity of Connell is also engaged to explore how power and gender imbalances marginalize women in higher education. Drawing on the above assertions, I assert that patriarchy, ruling text, masculine hegemony, and hegemonic masculinity are the key concepts to examine the lived experiences of women academicians in higher education institutions of AJK.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented a comprehensive literature review. This chapter explains the methodological procedures and steps adopted in this study. Epistemologically speaking, this study is informed by the interpretive research paradigm. Interpretivism is based on the assumption that social reality is not singular or objective, rather shaped by the human experiences and social contexts, and is therefore best studied within its socio-historic context by reconciling the subjective interpretations of its various participants (Neuman, 2015). It is pertinent to mention that I do believe in the feminist approach to women's lived experiences in higher education. By employing interpretive feminist ontology, I became able to have a deeper understanding of this complex issue of lived experiences of women academicians from their point of view. This chapter begins with a brief account of the reasons for using a qualitative research approach, study universe, sample size, research method, research analysis, and ethical consideration.

3.2 Location of the Study

This study was conducted in the state of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The state of AJK is located in the north of Islamabad, the capital city of Pakistan. It is administrated by Pakistan as a nominally self-governing entity (Sumantra, 2009; Bird, Richard, Vailancourt, & Francois, 2008). It covers an area of 13297 km² and has a total population of 4.045 million according to the 2017 census. It consisted of three divisions and ten districts (Planning & Development, 2021). The literacy rate of AJK, according to census 2017, is 76.60 (Planning & Development, 2021). There are 5974 school, 174 colleges and five

public sector universities including four co-education and one women university (Planning & Development, 2020). The women ratio in AJK is 101.2 (Planning & Development, 2020). The education structure of AJK is similar to that of Pakistan in primary, secondary, higher secondary, and university programs. Similarly, AJK follows the educational policies of Pakistan including higher education policies. It is pertinent to mention that all the universities of AJK come under the purview of HEC of Pakistan. Thus, HEC policies regarding higher education are equally applicable in HEIs of AJK.

This study was an attempt to examine women's lived experiences in HEIs of AJK. As explained earlier and reiterated here that there are five public sector universities including a woman university in AJK. These universities are; University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UAJK), Mirpur University of Science and Technology (MUST), University of Poonch Rawlakot (UPR), University of Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir (UoKAJK), and Women University of AJK, Bagh (WUAJKB). Among these universities, four coeducation universities were selected for the study. The reason for choosing these co-education universities was a) women are working with men b) these universities have representation from each corner of AJK c) majority of women are working on junior academic positons d) women are rarely found in higher academic positions.

Table 3.1

Frequency Distribution of Number of Students, Teachers and Student-teacher Ratio in each University

S. No.	University Name	Students			Teachers			Student Teacher Ratio
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	
1	UAJK	4,180	4,333	8,513	162	82	244	38.89
2	MUST	4,429	3,217	7,646	236	124	360	21.24
3	UPR	2,354	2,786	5,140	129	75	204	25.20
4	UoK	2,235	2,265	4,500	107	52	159	28.30

Source: Statistical yearbook of AJK, 2020

The above table shows number of enrolled students, faculty and students teacher ratio in four public sector universities of AJK. Table 3.1 depicts that 8513 students are enrolled in UAJK in which 4180 are male while 4333 are female. Here, ratio of female students is higher than males. Among 244 faculty members, 162 are male and 82 female teachers. Moreover, teacher student ratio is calculated as 38.89. In MUST, total number of students is 7646, among which 4429 are male and 3217 are female students. Unlike UAJK, ratio of males is slightly higher than female students. Among these four coeducation universities, MUST contains highest number of faculty members 360, i.e. 236 men and 124 women. However, student teacher ratio is 21.24. In UPR, there are 5140 students, 2354 and 2786 male and female students respectively. Like UAJK, number of girls is higher than boys. Among 204 teachers, 129 are men and 75 are women whereas student teacher ratio is 25.20. In UoK, there are 4500 students, in which 2235 are boys while 2265 are girls. Total Number of faculty is 159 in which 107 are men while 52 are women. Here, percentage of girls is again higher than boys. Likewise, student teacher ratio is 28.30. It is asserted that faculty is disproportional in each university. Similarly, a vivid gender gap has been witnessed in jobs/faculty appointments in HEIs of AJK. Moreover, gender gap in girl's education is narrowed significantly; as number of girls is higher than boys in three universities except one engineering university.

3.3 Deciding Research Approach

Selecting an appropriate and relevant research approach is not an easy task. The researcher looks at the research pbilosphy, research questions, and objectives while selecting the research approach (Kothari, 2004). He explains that no research method is good unless it does not address the research questions and objectives. It is important to mention that this

study aims to unearth the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK. Keeping in light the objectives of this study, I employed a qualitative research approach similar to that used by sociologists in conducting qualitative research. Qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the ways people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013: 11). Thus, qualitative research approach helped me to get a deeper understanding of lived experiences of women academicians. It is worth mentioning that the decision of selecting a qualitative approach was taken in line with the Kothari's (2004) philosophy of selecting a research approach for conducting study.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

I employed purposive sampling technique for selecting study respondents. The qualitative researchers use purposive sampling technique to recruit participants to get in-depth and detailed information about the phenomenon under investigation (Neuman, 2015). Therefore, to conduct this study in four coeducation public sector universities, I found purposive sampling most relevant and appropriate technique to unearth the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK.

As mentioned earlier and reiterated here again that this study is purely qualitative. The sample size was not fixed in advance. I interviewed the respondents and got saturation point when I completed 28 interviews. Thus, the sample size of the study was 28. This sample comprised female faculty members including Lecturers, Assistant professors, Associate professors, and a Professor. The following table shows details of the participants interviewed:

Table 3. 2*Demographic Information of Women Academicians*

Sr. No.	University	Age	Qualification	Experience	Children	Faculty	Designation
1	U-1, R-1	31	MS	7	2	Arts	Lecturer
2	U-1, R-2	33	PhD	8	3	Arts	AP
3	U-1, R-3	37	MS	9	2	Science	Lecturer
4	U-1, R-4	44	MS	11	4	Science	Lecturer
5	U-1, R-5	36	PhD	6	3	Arts	AP
6	U-1, R-6	42	PhD	10	5	Science	AP
7	U-2, R-7	49	PhD	24	2	Arts	Prof.
8	U-2, R-8	47	PhD	21	4	Science	Assoc. Prof
9	U-2, R-9	45	PhD	17	5	Arts	AP
10	U-2, R-10	46	PhD	18	3	Arts	AP
11	U-2, R-11	43	PhD	12	4	Arts	AP
12	U-2, R-12	41	PhD	14	5	Science	AP
13	U-2, R-13	34	MS	7	4	Arts	Lecturer
14	U-2, R-14	31	MS	6	2	Arts	Lecturer
15	U-2, R-15	36	MS	9	3	MS	Lecturer
16	U-2, R-16	32	MS	8	3	Arts	Lecturer
17	U-3, R-17	33	MS	7	3	Arts	Lecturer
18	U-3, R-18	31	MS	6	2	MS	Lecturer
19	U-3, R-19	38	PhD	12	4	Science	AP
20	U-3, R-20	39	MS	15	5	MS	Lecturer
21	U-3, R-21	40	MS	14	6	Arts	Lecturer
22	U-3, R-22	36	PhD	9	2	MS	AP
23	U-4, R-23	41	PhD	15	4	Science	AP
24	U-4, R-24	39	PhD	11	5	Arts	AP
25	U-4, R-25	34	MS	8	2	MS	Lecturer
26	U-4, R-26	36	MS	10	3	Arts	Lecturer
27	U-4, R-27	32	MS	6	2	Science	Lecturer
28	U-4, R-28	37	MS	9	4	MS	Lecturer

The above table 3.2 shows that respondents were selected from four universities named as U1-U4. It is noted that 18 participants were interviewed from three universities named as U1, U3 and U4 while 10 participants were interviewed from U2. The reason of interviewing more respondents from U2 was opted due to availability of experienced women academicians on academic power positions. However, I did not find associate and professor from other three universities. Age of the participants ranged from 31 to 49 years. As 15 (54%) respondents were found in age group 31-37 years, 9 (32%) were found in 38-

44 years and 4 (14%) were found in 45-51 years of age. Among the 28 participants, 15 had MS/MPhil degree and 13 had PhD degrees. The experience of women academicians ranged from 6 to 24 years. As 20 (71%) participants had experience of 6 to 12 years, 6 (21%) participants had experience of 13-19 years and only 2 (7%) respondents had more than 20 years of experience in academia. The participants were taken from different faculties; 14 (50%) respondents were interviewed from faculty of Arts, 8 (29%) from faculty of Sciences and 6 (21%) from faculty of Management sciences. Number of children also vary in each category, 8 (29%) respondents had 1-2 children, 14 (50%) had 3-4 children and 6 (21%) had 5-6 children. The designation of participants is found as 15 (54%) were Lecturers, 11 (39%) Assistant professors, 1 (7%) Associate Professor and Professor each.

3.5 Method of Data Collection

Access to respondents is a significant aspect in the context of AJK. Being a male, it was challenging to study women academicians' lived experiences in the male-dominated HEIs of AJK. However, being part of the academic community, I interviewed my study's respondents in a professional way. I submitted a written official request for data collection to the registrar's office in each university. After getting approval from registrar, I started collecting data from faculty members. During the data collection, I introduced myself as a doctoral student and kept my academic identity anonymous. However, whenever I faced any problem from respondents, I also introduced myself as a faculty member. It helped me in creating a comfort zone with interviewees. I assumed to collect data from one professor and one associate professor, two assistant professors, and 2 lecturers. It is pertinent to mention that I did not find any female professor and associate professor in three universities except U2. Therefore, I focused on assistant professors and lecturers in these (U1, U3 &

U4) universities. Nonetheless, I found one professor and one associate professor in only one university (U2).

The location for conducting the interview was decided with the consent of faculty members. I contacted women academicians to include their choice of interview place (Seidman, 2006: 23). Even before starting the formal interview, I had a brief meeting with every faculty member in her office to create a comfort zone. The majority of interviewees 26 out of 28 preferred to be interviewed in their respective offices. Only two respondents were interviewed at their homes. The time for each interview was approximately 90 minutes or longer. I had to interview in February and March 2020. I collected data from one university (U1) in February 2020. However, universities were closed due to COVID-19 lockdowns. As universities resumed on-campus activities after first wave of the pandemics, I collected data from two universities (U3 & U4) in September and October 2020. Similarly, I collected data from the fourth university (U2) in February 2021. It took me one year to collect data owing to the pandemics. I did not face any problems in appointments rather I was welcomed by the respondents and no postponement was made during the whole data collection process. I visited every university-located faculty member and interviewed them in their offices. I was permitted by every faculty member to record the interview. Each faculty member responded in a professional way.

3.6 Tool of Data Collection

The interview guide was used to collect data. The interview guide consisted of open ended questions. An interview guide is one of the key tool in the process of collecting data in qualitative research. The interview guide provides a valuable link between the research problem, research questions, past relevant literature, and the sought-after data that can fill

the gap identified by the researcher (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013: 368). After studying considerable literature published across the world, I was able to develop an interview guide. I employed it with probes and prompts to know about the individual experiences and opinions of women academicians. Robson (2002) also has a similar position, stating that probing during the interview provides a deeper understanding of the lived experiences. Keeping in view the importance of lived experiences, I used interview guide to take deeper insights into lived experiences of women academicians as used by sociologists across the globe. The interview guide is comprised of two sections. The first section contains the demographic information of the respondents. The second portion is composed of 13 blanket questions with probes and prompts. These questions focused on different thematic areas of women's lived experiences as given in the interview guide (see Annex-1). The narratives and findings of the women academicians were presented in thematic interpretations of data.

3.7 Validity of the Tool

Pretesting was done to ensure the validity of the tool of data collection (interview guide). A pilot study was conducted to identify potential problem areas and deficiencies in the research instrument and protocols before implementation during the full study (Gibbs, 2007:11). I conducted a few pilot interviews similarly as used by qualitative researchers. I discussed purpose of the study and asked their consent while they [participants] agreed to share their experiences. Finally, I interviewed women academicians in their offices. I noted down their suggestions regarding modification/improvement of tool. For instance, one of the respondents asked to merge the questions about working relations with junior and senior men colleagues. Similarly, I incorporated other responses including probes and prompts. This exercise gave me confidence to talk with women academicians to probe into

their lived experiences. In the light of feedback and suggestions, the interview guide for final data collection was refined under the guidance of my supervisor.

3.8 Data Transcription

It is mentioned earlier in this chapter and reiterated here that I proposed to transcribe the interviews. Most qualitative researchers transcribe their interview recordings, observations, and field notes to produce a neat typed copy (Gibbs, 2007: 10). I had some previous experiences of poor voice quality, conversion issues of digital voices, and so on. I was also aware of the amount of time consumed during the interviews. Thus, learning from my previous experiences and pilot interviews, I was able to use a sophisticated digital device (cell phone) to tape the interviews. It helped me in the creation of better transcription. Furthermore, based on the experiences, I gave more time to transcriptions due to its tediousness. It was a time taking activity to listen line by line and transcribe it into text. I also transcribed notes taken during the interviews. I expected that the transcription of each interview on average 60-90 minutes will spread over 20-25 pages of A-4 size. However, some of the interviews were longer and I ended up transcription of the interviews over 60 pages and approximately 31000 words.

3.9 Thematic Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process that involves breaking data into meaningful parts to examine narratives. The ultimate goal of qualitative data analysis is to make sense of the data (Merriam, 2009: 203). The qualitative researchers use thematic analysis to identify and report patterns in the data. Thematic analysis is the process of recovering the theme or themes that are embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work (Van-Manen, 1990: 78). I have gone through a rigorous procedure of thematic

analysis by following all the necessary steps. I repeatedly listened to data, while transcribing, and read line by line to get familiarity with every aspect of the data. I identified themes and sub-themes after developing concepts. After an arduous procedure, I was able to code the data. Coding involves identifying and recording one or more passages of text or other data items (Gibbs, 2007: 39). Several similar passages were identified and linked with the theme via code. The employed codes were analyzed by reading and rereading to omit the overlapping of codes. Reviewing the boarder theme, I engrossed specific and important themes. By the same token, I described and titled each theme to make it clear for the readers. The identified themes were supported by both data and literature. Every theme reflects relevant data taken from the field that is discussed, debated, and interpreted in the light of the empirical and theoretical review.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

As a qualitative researcher, I followed social research ethical protocols in the best possible manners. Ethics in research means to create trustworthy (valid) outcomes' (Briggs and Coleman 2007: 114). Neuman argued that the role of researcher as primary data collection instrument necessitates the identification of personal values, assumptions, and biases at the outset of the study (2015: 133). To ensure the ethical considerations, I accessed the targeted population formally and officially and I was granted permission from each university. I adopted a formal method to interview each woman academician. Similarly, I also took informed consent from each respondent. I included the consent of the interviewee on the first page of the interview guide containing the research objectives and purpose. I also explained to many women academicians verbally when asked about the purpose of the study. I was able to develop rapport with women academicians unknown to me. The similar profession helped to knit the state of confidentiality sooner. I maintained confidentiality

throughout the study. It was difficult to hide the name of the universities because there are only five public sector universities in AJK. As everyone knows about the co-education universities. However, I succeeded to hide the names of the interviewees and universities by assigning pseudonyms to respondents [P1 to P28] and universities U1-U4 respectively. Therefore, I was able to build rapport with interviewees and successfully conducted this study.

Chapter Four

Women Academicians' Lived Experiences in Higher Education

Institutions

Introduction

Chapter three presented methodological choices, steps and procedures adopted in this research. This chapter presents the lived experiences of women academicians in the HEIs of AJK. As discussed in chapter two (see review of the literature on page, 12, 18, 22, 31, 44, 56), women academicians' experiences in higher education have received serious academic attention especially for the last two decades (Bosetti, Kawalilak, & Patterson, 2008; Li & Beckett, 2006; Luke, 2001; Biklen, Marshall, & Pollard, 2008; Snyder, 2008). Many studies have unfolded the diverse marginality of women in higher education (Bagilhole, 1993; Peterson, 2016; Sultana, 2010; Xu, 2008). Despite discriminatory policies and practices, women academicians have been competing men. These studies have highlighted the opportunities and challenges faced by women academicians in HEIs in different socio-cultural contexts. Moreover, several studies have highlighted the challenges women academicians face in balancing their work place (Allen, Epps, Guillory, Suh, & Bonous-Hammarth, 2000). As outlined in statement of the problem in this research, women academicians' experiences in higher education of Pakistan and AJK have not received due academic attention. Research on lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK is an under researched area. Keeping in view the importance of the issue, this chapter focused on the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK. This chapter presents the experiences and opinions of the women academicians. The data analysis revealed that women academicians expressed a mixed bag of opinion and perspectives

about their workplace experiences. Their opinions and concerns can best be explained and understood by placing them within feminists' scholarships. The respondents (women academicians) have been discussed, explained and presented by engaging in the light of theoretical framework and theoretical review. Key concepts such as patriarchy Walby (1990), masculine hegemony Smith (1990b), ruling text Smith (1990a) and hegemonic masculinity of Connell (1995) have been engaged throughout the chapter.

Their experiences, after careful, and exhaustive analysis, are summed up and presented under the following themes.

- 4.1 Women's inspiration to be academicians in higher education
- 4.2 Women academicians' experiences of working relationships with their male colleagues
- 4.3 Women academicians' working experiences with administrative and supporting staff
- 4.4 Masculine and gendered culture and women's identity as a teacher
- 4.5 Women academicians' interaction with students in the workplace
- 4.6 Women academicians: academic expectations and familial responsibilities
- 4.7 Women academicians: key opportunities in the context of AJK

4.1 Women's Inspiration to be Academicians in Higher Education

Recent years have witnessed some visibility of women academicians in the HEI of AJK. Despite some progress, women academicians are still less in number. There are fewer women academicians than men in the HEIs of AJK. One of the key concerns of this study was to unpack what motivated women to make a career in HEIs. The influence of family members was cited as an important factor of motivation. The strands are spread around

family-father, mother, brother, and husband. Thus, family is a major force for women to have a career in higher education (Engin & McKeown, 2017; Riordan & Louw-Potgieter, 2011). The findings of this study suggest that women academicians enjoyed support of their families for education and career employment in HEIs. Many of the study respondents revealed that they were supported and inspired by their family members to get higher education and seek careers in HEIs. They experienced support from their fathers, mothers, brothers and husbands. Some respondents told that they had family members in academia. A considerable number 12 out of 28 respondents told that they were inspired by their parents, particularly fathers. One respondent argued:

I have always wished to become an educationist. My parents socialized me in that direction. Many of my family members are in higher education. They always encouraged me to become part of academia. Their encouragement kept me consistent and focused. Immediately after my Master of Science (MS), I got a scholarship for Ph.D in the United Kingdom (UK). This was a dream came true. This enabled me to earn Ph.D and later join the university as faculty.

Another participant viewed her journey to the higher education as:

Since my childhood, I was ambitious to be a teacher. My father is an educationist. Nevertheless, I never thought of being an academician in HE. During my education, I got good grades in higher education. As long as I got motivated for career in HE and shared my wish with my father. My father not only agreed but also motivated me to struggle for making career in academia. Alhamdulillah! After my MS degree, I got a permanent position in higher education as a Lecturer.

A woman academician shared her career aspiration and journey to higher education in the following words:

I belonged to rural area. In my area, education is not considered necessary for women. I wanted to get education. However, I did not have enough resources to get education. Despite lack of resources, my parents motivated me to get education. I continued private education up to the master level. I was focused on making a career in the Department of education and academia was not my priority at the early stage. During my education, I was able to chalk out a career path in higher education.

A couple of respondents emphasized the role and support of brothers in seeking higher education careers. One of them argued: "My younger brother always supported me for seeking career in HEI." Another woman shared similar views.

These responses show that family plays a vital role in encouraging and motivating women to education and career in HEIs. These findings resonated with findings of Cullaty (2011) who linked women academicians' careers with family influence and asserted that family played a significant role in motivating women to get higher education and pursue a career. This shows that family influenced women to bring opportunity and support for their education and career as well. A similar conclusion was drawn by West (2012). She found that family members particularly fathers and brothers, play a decisive role in the education and career of their daughters. However, besides family support, Agezo (2010) argued that some other factors are also involved in motivation of women to find career in academia. The crux of the argument is that the support and inspiration from family members, especially parents, motivate and encourage women to get education and make careers in

higher education. The assertions are substantiated by the argument of Bandura's (1976) work of social learning theory that children learn through observation and imitation.

Social and economic changes in contemporary society have provided women with more employment opportunities, including the field of higher education (Kweisiga, 2002). Studies have spotlighted that women academicians with academic spouses have more support than those whom husbands are not in academia (Nartgun, Tunc & Ergun, 2020; Luke, 2000). Similarly, women academicians with supportive husbands have more career progress than those who receive little or no support from their husbands (Özkanlı & Korkmaz, 2000). The study findings also suggest that women academicians in AJK who received their husbands' support are satisfied and progressing in their careers. However, many of the study respondents affirmed that the lack of support from their spouses demotivated them in career progression. As expressed by one of the women in the following way:

My husband is an academician. After marriage, I found it difficult to carry out academic and family responsibilities. Nevertheless, my husband motivated me to continue. He always supported me and shared my educational, research, and domestic chores. He also helped me in research work when I am busy completing household tasks. He always supported me to progress in my career. I took it seriously with the support of my husband.

It is argued, in the context of this study, that women academicians face several challenges in higher education in the absence of their male members' support. The study findings are in line with the conclusion given by Nguyen (2013) in her study. She contended that women's successful academic career is subjected to their husband's support

and involvement. Stone and O'shea (2013) asserted in the same fashion that wives may not successfully balance work and life without their husband's support. On the other hand, Aguirre (2000) asserted that only few women get support of their husbands in career progression. He further argued that husbands, despite similar career paths, do not even support to their spouses in West. These findings suggest that support from husbands motivate women to progress in their academic careers.

Autonomy is one of the key factors that describe women's progress in society (Haerens, Aelterman, Vansteenkiste, Soenens, & Van Petegem, 2015). The study findings reveal autonomy as a core factor of women academician's progress in society. Several study respondents mentioned that "women's autonomy is primarily induced by parents." An almost identical response was given by another respondent who stated that "I was an average student in education. My parents supported me to get education. It was their motivation and my ambition that I got higher education and made my career in HE. This has given me considerable autonomy." Another respondent remarked that "when I was growing, I wanted to be independent in life. It became possible by the support of my parents." A tiny portion of the respondents, 3 out of 28, revealed that they joined academia to seek autonomous status in society. Among them, one woman stated her experience: "I had no motivation and inspiration for higher education. However, I always wished to seek an independent career. I found higher education better place for women." A similar response was given by other two respondents.

These responses suggested that autonomy is an important factor for women to progress in society. Similar findings come from Dee, Henkin, and Chen (2000). They conclude that women became autonomous and independent after getting the support of

their parents. These findings bolster Cullaty's (2011) argument that parental consent has a strong influence on women's autonomy. Agbenyega (2007) claims of women's autonomy is different to that of Cullaty's (2011). She differentiated that without parents' influence women may seek autonomous career. To sum up, here, it is argued that women's autonomous position is loomed by their parents' support. Claim of Piaget's (1972) theory of cognitive development is relevant that children identify their gender roles in each successive stage of life to get adjusted.

It is pertinent to mention that some respondents, approximately 15 percent, identified different barriers in the struggle for a career in higher education. A senior professor reflected: "It was difficult to leave the village for higher education in our conservative and traditional society. I was taunted and disliked by my relatives for seeking a career outside my home or hometown." A woman academician belonging to a rural area narrated her story of seeking academic career: "I was the first woman to get education in my family. It is difficult to continue when four out of five members discourage education. My mother was against my education. Only my father supported me in getting education and career." Previous studies (see Shah & Sobehart, 2008) also show that women are discouraged by women, not men. An extract from the interviews is shared to explain the lived experiences of women:

I wanted to be an independent woman. It was not an easy task for me, especially in a family where girls' education is dejected and making a career in the public domain was highly discouraged. However, I kept struggling while faced numerous difficulties in achieving this goal. During my educational career, I found myself helpless many times due to cultural barriers and financial issues. My father was the

one who supported me throughout my journey of education. Finally, a consistent struggle for years enabled me to join academia as a Lecturer.

Apart from family, teachers have a central role in motivating women to seek careers in higher education (Kim, 2007). Almost 90 percent of my study respondents told that they were also inspired by their teachers. They gradually got motivated for career in higher education. As commented by a respondent: "During my studies, I was encouraged by teachers to seek career in academia." Many participants viewed academic career in the same fashion. A similar response was given by another respondent: "I was not inclined to be an academician. I was influenced by one of my teachers." Following is an excerpt from the interview that affirms argument here.

Though I had ambition to seek career path in public spheres. However, I was not interested to be academic woman. My parents raised me to get an education but I was not supposed to be a teacher. During my education, I was cheered by some of the teachers for my research skills. I was motivated by these ideal academicians who used to ask me, you know and, can prove it to become an academician. I appeared in exams without any intention and finally serving as a faculty member (excerpt from the interview).

These responses show that women are also inspired by teachers to seek careers in higher education. The study findings resonate with the assertions of Kim and Park (2012). They stated that women are mentored and inspired by teachers during their education. A similar conclusion is drawn by Gasser and Shaffer (2014) that teachers have a great role in women's career aspirations in higher education. On the contrary, Ben-David (2017) argued that motivation of teacher does not lead career paths in many cases. Based on these

findings, it is argued that in addition to the family, teachers play an important role in inspiring women to have careers in higher education. The findings of my study also present and rectify the Piaget's (1972) claim that children learn from interactions with others.

4.2 Women Academicians' Experiences of Working Relationships with their Male Colleagues

The working relationships between men and women in HEIs have been researched and debated across developed and developing countries (Aiston & Jung, 2015; West, 2012). Aiston and Jung (2015) studied the working experiences of women academicians with their male colleagues. They asserted that women academicians face discrimination in allocation of academic loads and other important assignments. Similarly, Odhiambo (2011) rightly referred to the men dominated and masculine structure of higher education as a major reason for women's marginalization in HEIs. By the same token, Allan (2012) claimed that women academicians' working experiences with their men colleagues reflect the gendered culture that benefits men only. This study reveals women's lived experiences of working relationships (additional tasks, teaching loads, clerical work, committee appointments, and supervision) as one of the key factors of women's subordination in higher education of AJK.

When it comes to additional task allocation in universities, men and women perform many common academic and administrative tasks. These include academic tasks of developing the scheme of studies, conducting examinations, and liaison with other institutions. Further, women are engaged in organizing and conducting seminars, conferences, and other university events. However, Parker (2015) noted that majority of these tasks are allocated by men head of Departments (HoDs). Likewise, Kreckel (2017)

highlighted that aforementioned tasks are assigned to women academicians along with credit hours. A great majority 24 out of 28 respondents, 86 percent, academicians identified uneven allocation of additional tasks. They revealed that tasks were mainly allocated and supervised by their male colleagues. The interviews also unveiled that women are discriminated against by their male HoDs in the allocation of academic and administrative tasks. They further stated that HoDs dictate these tasks without participants' consent. As disclosed by an academician: "My HoD allots tasks at his own. He does not seek my consent. I am either informed by office assistant via phone call or circular about any assignment." An interesting aspect of discrimination in role allocation is also described by many woman academicians. They expressed that HoDs often appoint men to lead tasks, activities, and supervise women. Similarly, women's contribution is neither appreciated nor taken seriously. One of the respondents asserted: "I noticed men HoDs prefer men's suggestions and input from women colleagues is not prioritized. Once I tried to communicate but I was ignored." The study respondents further argued that women academicians were deprived of the opportunities to lead, conduct or organize seminars, conferences, and other events. Thus, women academicians of equal potential to men are ignored and sidelined in many of the activities that are important for their career development. As commented by an academician: "I am never assigned a leading role to conduct seminar and conference. I am always supposed to assist men colleagues." Similarly, academic events are always chaired by men colleagues. A senior respondent told: "Since my career in academia, I have observed that men chair conferences and seminars." These were very common opinions held by my study respondents. In the same fashion, committees are supervised by men while women are merely the auxiliaries. The

majority of women academicians are simply placed as members of committees and supposed to assist their men colleagues in completing the assigned tasks. It is narrated by one of the respondents: "I am a member of exam committee. This committee is supervised by men and women are merely members like me." Similar responses were expressed by many of the respondents. A woman academician confirmed her position: "Being member of many committees, I am always asked to assist the committee chair in completing the assigned tasks." A middle career respondent argued:

I am assigned additional tasks to support men colleagues in organizing seminars or other events. I always got a supportive role in assisting men in competing the tasks. This is discriminatory as credit is taken by men colleagues, and women are merely the audience to participate. I also found that most of these events are irrelevant and merely a wastage of time. To complete these assignments, I find less time to focus teaching loads and research.

These responses show and represent a situation called public patriarchy (Walyby, 1990). As men still dominate, oppress and exploit women in developing public discourse in higher education.

It is pertinent to mention here that majority of the senior women academicians (Assistant, Associate Professors, and Professor) worked with their men colleagues on the competitive grounds. They revealed that they worked with men colleagues as supporters in meetings, seminars, committees, and other academic goals; however, they also carried out central roles and responsibilities. None of them report any exclusion and discrimination from men. A senior professor revealed: "I work with men colleagues on different official tasks. I did not find men biased to me." The old women academicians also supervise

meetings, exams committees, and seminars. Similarly, they have been taking proactive roles as well. Another senior woman academician remarked: "I supervised almost all the men colleagues in different committees." Furthermore, they headed the committees, departments, and supervised seminars and other events. As positioned by an associate professor: "I always take active roles in different academic and nonacademic tasks." All the senior respondents had similar views. It is pertinent to note down that they are senior-most academicians in these universities. They have worked on various senior academic and power positions. Nevertheless, the number of women academicians in the higher ranks are few.

These responses showed that junior women academicians are discriminated by men HoDs. These findings are similar to the conclusions of many studies carried out in different socio-cultural contexts. Harold (2013) reported that women's performance is adversely affected by the unfair distribution of workloads in higher education. Similarly, James (2012) concluded that women are assigned additional tasks of clerical nature that consume their maximum energy and time. This shows that common tasks are not equally assigned along the axes of gender. Michael (2011) also found that women are burdened with tasks. On the other hand, senior women academicians have smooth working relations with men colleagues. Unlike junior women academicians, they (senior) did not face any discrimination from HoDs and men colleagues. It is further studied by Bhatti (2020). He told that women academicians in West do not face any discrimination from their counterparts. As a result, they are performing to their best. To sum up, it is argued that junior women academicians are given more academic and nonacademic tasks than men which in turn affects their performance and working relationship. Above findings attest the

claims of Walby (1990) that higher education is gendered and men (patriarch) prevent women from participating in public discourses by dominating, opposing, and influencing the higher education structure. Similarly, relations of ruling are product of ruling text that exclude and discriminate women in higher education (Smith, 1990a, 1990b). In the same fashion, such pattern of gender relations further create power and gender imbalances in higher education (Connell, 1995).

Teaching loads are characterized with women academicians in higher education (Bagilhole & White, 2011). According to Aiston and Jung (2015), teaching loads against each academic position are specified by higher education regulatory authority (Mamiseishvili & Rosser, 2010). However, Barrett and Barrett (2011) in their study on workloads in HEIs identified uneven distribution of teaching loads assigned to women academicians as compared to men. Brock (2010) highlighted that women academicians are also engaged in nonacademic trivial work (Guarino & Borden, 2017). The study participants also told that they experience uneven teaching loads. They also argued that rules of course allocation are violated by HoDs while assigning subjects to men and women. It is reflected by one of the participants: "I often teach more subjects than men colleagues despite a defined criteria." Uneven course allocation is further identified by many of my research respondents. A great majority, 90 percent, of the respondents told that they are allotted unequal teaching loads by HoDs. They are discriminated in the allocation of subjects and allocated courses without their choice and consent. One of the respondents argued: "Since I joined the Department, my choice was never considered in allocation of courses. I am supposed to teach any subject allotted to me. This is the case with almost all women academics I know in this university [she referred to her university].

Similar responses were added by other respondents. The study participants also expressed their concerns about timeslot allocation in timetable. They told that they are not involved in designing the timetable and deciding the timeslots for classes. Moreover, timeslots and days are also determined by HoDs in consultation with other men colleagues. One of the early career academics expressed her concern: "I have never been involved in the timetable and timeslot allocation." Another respondent asserted: "I am never consulted in the allocation of subjects and timeslots in the teaching timetable. I often receive courses allocation in a circular."

The above findings show that women academicians are discriminated by men HoDs and senior colleagues in manifolds. Similar findings were revealed in other research studies, i.e. Crown and Paul (2001) identified the issues of teaching loads and argued that women are neither consented about subjects nor interests and timetables. It refers that women academicians are allocated credit hours more than men without consent and interest. Likewise, additional course load which is paid extra but not involved consent of the faculty. The findings of Magnum and Dice (2012) also put forward the issue of women academicians' uneven distribution of credit hours. However, Breda (2015) stated that women academicians are equally engaged in credit hours in the universities of Sweden. Based on the above results, it is claimed that junior women academicians are assigned more teaching load than men without consent and interest in higher education. These findings represent the public patriarchy in higher education of AJK where men HoDs and colleagues suppress women to exclude them from active participation. Similarly, relations of ruling also work to exclude women from important decisions in higher education of AJK while they are alienated from power mainstreams.

The analysis of field data reveals that clerical work has a significant influence on women academicians' teaching performance. Almost 89 percent participants described that women academicians are assigned clerical work along with the teaching loads in higher education. This badly affects their teachings performance. Respondents uncovered a different nature of clerical work assigned to them. These include dealing scholarship schemes of students, campus management system (CMS) and focal persons to various administrative departments, i.e. financial aid offices, office of research innovation and commercialization (ORIC), advance studies research board (ASRB), and quality enhancement cell (QEC). Many participants argued that HoDs assign these clerical assignments to women academicians without their consent. They allocate these tasks to women despite availability of supportive/clerical staff in the Department. They also argued that their prime time, whole-day, is spent in managing these tasks. One respondent stated: "I teach my official required credit hours. I am overburdened by clerical work. After classes, I used to deal with the issues of students in scholarships awards." A similar response came from another interviewee: "Many time, even during the class time, I receive call from HoD or other administrative officials to attend a meeting or respond the tasks. Thus, maximum time is consumed in correspondence." Similarly, women academicians spend a considerable time of their daily working hours on CMS resolving issues of teachers and students. It is noteworthy that there is no financial benefit to completing this clerical /technical work. One of the study participants argued: "I am CMS coordinator in the Department. It is a hectic task to address CMS issues of students and teachers along with workload and other tasks."

On the other hand, senior women academicians had a different point of views regarding non-teaching assignments and tasks. They were not burdened with clerical work and do purely academic tasks. One professor expressed her position: "I am not having any clerical or irrelevant assignment. I shoulder my teaching loads and carry out my research work and student's supervision."

These responses show that women on the senior positions do not experience discrimination as compared to women academics in junior ranks. The findings of this study are similar to that found by Small (2011). She argued that women academics in higher education are assigned more clerical tasks than their counterparts. Similarly, John and Tol (2012) argued that women academicians have too much clerical work on their plats. It is, thus, asserted that women academicians' workload is greatly influenced by clerical work. Mora (2001) also revealed similar findings that women academicians are assigned clerical work by their HoDs without consent and expertise. However, Ryan (2012) argued that equal workload policy is experienced by women academicians in European Union (EU) countries. Similar policies are reinforced in the Canada and USA (Chanana, 2022; Clarke, 2003). In a nutshell, it is concluded that junior women academicians are discriminated in clerical work along with their workload. This finding shows a tacit example of public patriarchy in higher education of AJK. Here, men HoDs prevent women from active participation and engage them in tasks other than their workload. At the same time, men's relations of ruling vividly influence women's careers and they face exclusion in higher education of AJK.

In developing world, lack of professionalism is characterized with workplace in public and private spheres. Similar situation is found in HEIs of the developing countries.

Several studies showed that working relationships between men and women academicians are rarely based on the professional competencies (Chananna, 2000; Acker, 2004; Morley, 2006). My study participants, 86 percent, revealed lack of professionalism at the workplace in HEIs of AJK. They argued that merit for working relations is either to be male or nearness to HoD or men higher authorities. As opined by one respondent: "I see lack of professionalism among academic men." A senior woman academician expressing her views: "I have observed men colleagues' especially heads' favoritism and kindness towards men faculty." Similar views were expressed by another respondent: "I see men take advantage of maleness to further exploit their women colleagues." Almost all the respondents, except some senior women academicians, agreed that men use personal contacts to connect with HoDs and take benefits. Moreover, men utilize their social capital and political references to influence their immediate supervisors/ in-charge in getting closer to the authorities. As commented by one respondent: "I found men having strong political references for getting favors and benefits from authorities." However, a few respondents argued that HoDs try to seek closeness with man faculty members based on political references. Another participant witnessed: "I observed men colleagues clubbing together on the basis of ethnicity and blood ties." These responses show that women academicians think that they are apartheid by their men colleagues at workplace. A junior woman academician asserted:

Men colleagues lack professional behavior. They try to establish their relationships with their senior colleagues through personal contacts and references rather than their performance. I also found that working relations are established with people of similar family and ethnic background. It scared me to work in a gendered

workplace where competencies are not considered and valued in professional working relationships.

A few, 14 percent, of the senior academicians reported different experiences of working relations with their men academicians. They had good working relationships with their male colleagues and HoDs. They did not experience non-professional attitude from their men colleagues. Similarly, they rejected the claim of junior women academicians that working relationships are biased and based on nepotism and ethnic background.

Based on respondents' views, it is asserted that working relationships are not professional rather than nearness to HoDs/higher authorities, family, and ethnic background. The findings align with Coty's (2012) assertions that men academicians lack professionalism in higher education. However, senior women academicians claimed that working relations are based on the professional line. Davis (2003) also told that working relations between men and women academicians are professional in universities of Norway and Denmark. The crux of the argument is that this unprofessionalism of male faculty tends to women's exclusion in academia. The above findings show the influence of relations of ruling in the patriarchal higher education structure of AJK (Smith, 1990a). It also magnifies that patriarchy operates to suppress women in higher education of AJK.

Like other public spheres, power positions also exist in higher education (Marginson, 2011). It is revealed that men faculty members hold power positions and enjoy statuses in HEIs (Bear, Cushenberry, London, & Sherman, 2017; Huang and Kisgen, 2013). Similarly, Huang and Kisgen argued that majority of top-ranked academic positions are dominated by men. Moreover, Steinert, Naismith, and Mann (2012) asserted that women academicians are also discriminated against the committee headships. Similar findings are

reported by Steve (2013), who argued that women academicians are isolated in power positions, including headships in committees. The study respondents, 89 percent, said that they are excluded from different power positions including headships in committees. These positions enable men academicians to earn economic benefits, demonstrate hegemonic masculinity, and enjoy privileged status. The study participants unanimously stated that "academic power positions are held by their men colleagues." They further added that "top-ranked positions empower men colleagues to influence decision-making processes." One of the respondents argued: "All men HoDs enjoy unbridled power to make and implement decision." Another woman commented: "I see only men HoDs on power and privileged positions." The majority of participants revealed that men formulate rules and regulations, and make decisions. As highlighted by a senior faculty member: "I often found men engaged in decision making rather than women." Similarly, men are supported by senior men through power relations. Most of participants agreed that power is strongly associated with status and privileges. One respondent expressed her concern: "I examined the rigidity of power indebted in positions even a coordinator of similar status and rank try to realize his status."

The respondents also revealed that women academicians are discriminated against in different committee appointments. These committees include: discipline committee, examination committee, campus management committee, scholarship committee, admission committee and guardian committee etc. Primarily, women are discriminated against in headships. They are rarely appointed heads of inter-and-intra university committees rather than members in each committee. They further stated that committee headships are preoccupied with men, and women are excluded from headship despite their

potential and skills to deal with. As reflected by a respondent: "I am member of different committees. I did not see any woman head of the committee." They further shed light on women's positions as men do not even bother to consider the opinion of women while men's point of view is earnestly taken up in committee decisions. A woman academician added that "men have listened to and their inputs are incorporated while our suggestions are not even bothered." Another respondent told "men HoDs even give more value and attention to the views and opinions of junior men colleagues while women colleagues are never listened." One major reason for men's interest in these headship is financial benefits. Many of my study participants argued that "men take monetary benefits of committee headships."

Moreover, 11 percent senior women academicians had different experiences. They have been member and heads of committees many times. They were given monetary benefits as head of the committees.

Based on the above findings, it is argued that power positions are possessed by men, and women academicians are sidelined in higher education. Similar conclusions were given by Pittman (2012), who supports the argument that women academicians are excluded from power positions in higher education. It indicates that the patriarchal structure of higher education does not provide an equal level playing field to women. Likewise, Manuh (2002) unveiled masculinity by reporting that women are less likely to be preferred in the power position in higher education. On the other hand, Toker (2011) argued that women academicians are provided all the benefits on power positions in universities of EU countries. To sum up, it is asserted that junior women academicians are not provided equal opportunities in committees and other power positions in higher education. The study

findings represent masculinity of Connell (1995) that power and gender imbalances exist in higher education structure of AJK.

Research has a key role in developing an academic careers (McMahon, 2009). Kyvik (2013) revealed that research is an important indicator for promotion in academia. Similarly, Marshall (2009) identified that women academicians publish less and, thus, face late promotions issues. Likewise, students' supervision has a profound impact on the women academicians' research productivity. According to Kholis (2012), women academicians are discriminated against in the allocation of research supervision in HEIs. Moreover, women academicians also experience obstacles in improving qualifications during their careers (Kulmala, 2016; Longman, & Madsen, 2014).

The above findings reveal that majority of respondents, 89 percent, complained about less number of publications. They identified different factors responsible for their less engagement in research. They argued that HoDs keep them busy in clerical work and additional tasks, as discussed earlier in this chapter. In this way, women academicians find less time for research publications. One of the respondents argued: "Most of my time is consumed in completing teaching loads and clerical work. I rarely have time for research." The majority of the respondents had similar views regarding the research work. The participants further told that they do not have research groups to publish their research articles as men do have. However, men do not include them in their research groups. Likewise, women are not provided mentoring services on campus. Although a few senior women academicians are present but they do not guide and mentor junior women colleagues. As narrated by one of the participants: "I wonder how women academicians avoid to frame research group and publish as men do. I observed, they are not serious rather

see opportunity to include their names in the articles against the share." Another respondent stated: "I often tried to seek guidance from a senior academician but I was refused due to time constraints." All the junior women academicians had a similar view regarding research productivity. Contrarily, some senior women academicians, 11 percent, were satisfied with their research productivity. They published with men colleagues in research groups of other universities. They were also mentored by men, they admitted. This communicate a tacit and explicit message that women academicians associate their progress with the cooperation of men colleagues. However, large proportion of junior women academicians face explicit exclusion from men colleagues.

When it comes to research supervision, 89 percent of women academicians dominantly in junior ranks reported discrimination by HoDs and men colleagues. The study participants stated that they were rarely consulted in the allocation of research supervision rather reinforced by HoDs and senior men colleagues. One participant said: "I am never asked for the consent of research supervision and I often receive a list of students from HoD office and supervise accordingly." It is pertinent to mention here that men HoDs and senior colleagues select students for supervision at their choice. However, the remaining students are referred to women colleagues for supervision without knowing their choice and domain. One of the middle career respondent affirmed her claim: "I see HoDs decide the allocation of research supervision. I am always allocated research students outside my area of specialization." Another respondent stated: "Normally, students are distributed among men colleagues by HoDs, toppers are always supervised by them. Rest of the students whom they do not want to supervise are referred to women." It is stated that students are also not given choice to select their supervisors.

The above findings suggest that women academicians are discriminated against the provision of research opportunities in manifolds, i.e. deprived of time for independent research, research partnership, and students' theses supervision. These findings conform the claim of Acker's study. Acker (2006) concluded that women academicians' research activities are highly influenced by men in the patriarchal structure of higher education. She further argued that supervision is allotted to women academicians without their consent and choice. This keeps women academicians less productive in research. Similarly, Morley (2012) pointed out the unequal distribution of research supervision among men and women academicians. On the other hand, Dustmann (2004) claimed that women and men publish research in groups. Similarly, Gandhi (2021) argued that, in most of the European universities, women academicians are given choice and their consent is regarded in research supervision. Drawing on the above assertions, it is argued that men dominated HEIs discriminate women academicians in research productivity. The above responses painted the claims of Connell's hegemonic masculinity (1995) that serves as an analytical instrument to identify practices among men that perpetuate gender inequality, involving men's domination over women in higher education of AJK. Similarly, men try to intimidate women in research because it is an important indicator of performance towards promotions. My findings also substantiated the claims of Walby's (1990) patriarchy and Smith's (1990) relations of ruling in higher education of AJK.

The study findings revealed that women, unlike men, do not enjoy equal opportunities to improve their academic careers. Almost 89 percent of respondents felt that they are not given equal opportunities to continue and complete their education and enhance qualifications and credentials. On the other hand, 11 percent of respondents

(senior women academicians) told that they enjoy equal and favorable working environment. It is important to mention here that the majority of participants join academia as Lecturers or teaching & research associates/assistants and then improve their qualification during the career. The respondents (junior women academicians) identified several factors in improvement of their qualifications. In most universities of AJK, PhD programme is not initiated and women often take admissions in universities located in nearby cities. This issue is faced by majority of 72 percent respondents. They regularly travel to attend their Ph.D coursework along with their teaching loads in their respective universities. One of the study participants said: "I am enrolled in Ph.D in another city. I travel regularly to meet my deadlines. It is really a hectic routine." Another respondent told: "It is difficult to travel every week for classes and research." Various interrelated concerns were shared by the respondents. They experience several complications generally from men colleagues and particularly from HoDs. After getting admission, they are not provided No Objection Certificates (NOCs) and study leave. Similarly, they are not supported by HoDs in similar manners as they support men. Another respondent expressed her concern: "I took admission in Ph.D and applied for NOC. I was not provided NOC in due timeline. HoD resisted in approving study leave due to lack of teaching staff." Many of the participants faced similar issues in approval of NOC and study leave. Data shows that only two respondents joined academia after getting Ph.D degrees. The rest of 26 respondents were either improving or thinking of improving their qualifications when data for this study was collected. It is also revealed that no more than two faculty members can apply for the study leave at the same time in the same department. This hurdle further restrained women academicians from availing study leave as per their desires. Similarly,

in the study context, it becomes difficult for women to complete their PhD due to familial issues and job requirements. One of the respondents stated: "It is difficult to improve qualification along with family issues and job. It took me 7 years to complete the degree." It is important to mention here that senior women academicians did not face any problem in improving their education during the career.

It is, thus, argued that junior women academicians face different problems in the improvement of their qualification in higher education. The issues identified by the study respondents are similar to those mentioned by David and Simon (2011) in their study. They argued that women academicians are not provided equal opportunities to get and complete their education as compared to men. The point to be noted here is that women academicians are not offered equal chances to get or complete education during their career. Likewise, Tidal (2001) revealed that women academicians face problems, created by HoDs and admin staff, to improve their qualifications. However, Thun (2020) argued that women academicians in most of the EU universities do not face issues in getting their qualification. Similar findings are given by Stephen and Teena (2000). They compared data from different universities of Sweden, Denmark, and UK and revealed that women academicians have equal access to education. To sum up, it is argued that junior women academicians face many issues in the improvement of their qualification in gendered culture of higher education. It means that higher education of AJK is characterized as patriarchal where men oppose, and separate women from accomplishing their education. Their basic right of leave, NOC, and education is exploited only to keep them under the masculine influence. Besides, patriarchy, relations of ruling is also an important typology featured in male

dominated policies that also restrict women to grow in higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990; Smith, 1990).

4.3 Women Academicians' Working Experiences with Administrative and Supporting Staff

Administrative staff plays a significant role in regulating academic activities in HEIs the world over (Perlmann & Margo, 2001). Interaction between women academicians and administrative staff for official assignments and tasks are key element for the smooth functioning of academic institutions (Papatsiba, 2006). Unlike other public spheres, women academicians frequently interact with men administrative staff to achieve academic objectives (Pande, 2015). It is noted that majority of administrative staff is men, and women are rarely found in administrative jobs in universities. The respondents revealed that 91 percent of women academicians frequently interact with administrative staff. Findings show that interaction usually takes place in a formal setting with principal officers in boards, syndicate, senate, and other inter and intra departmental meetings. Thus, the respondents argued that interaction is formally regulated under rules. Similarly, women also interact with supporting admin staff for official tasks. One participant reflected that "I often interact with the administrative and supportive staff to peruse my file work." However, two women academicians, 9 percent, described that they interact with the administrative staff once in a blue moon. They also claimed that in case of any query in office work, they contact them formally. The participants further complained about the demands of office items in daily routine. They stated that men's request is processed quickly than women academicians. It means that office-related items are properly provided to men while women are deprived. Despite reminders, it is not processed unless woman

academicians visit the concerned offices. It is worth mentioning that these barriers are created by lower admin staff on behalf of the officers. Women academicians shared many cases when they went to the principal officers, their issues were immediately resolved. As reflected by a woman academician: "I was not provided required office items. I went to lower admin staff and it was revealed that one of the officers does not sign demand." Similar responses were shared by other respondents. Moreover, many of my study respondents stated that administrative staff creates barriers to official work intentionally. They delay files as routine matter. Interestingly, they process files of men academicians quickly than women. Another aspect of delay in study leave and NOC is reported by the participants. It is pertinent to mention that the study leave and NOC cases are dealt in admin office. In this context, the majority of participants, 89 percent, showed their concerns over the delay in sanctioning leave and issuing NOC. It is well explained by a respondent that "men officers deliberately delay women's work. My leave is always processed with unnecessary delay." Similarly, a woman academic recounted: "I applied for NOC of passport and it was issued after one month while it takes few minutes to issue any letter." A common excerpt shows the overall situation.

I often interact with admin staff in meetings. It is mainly formal to achieve some common tasks. I also visit their offices when they delay my personal file. I found most of the administrative staff readily resolve the issues except a few who intentionally delay file work while make lame excuses. I also interact with lower admin staff in case of any delay in official tasks. I observed admin staff delay study leave and issuance of NOC.

The senior women academicians had different experiences with administrative staff. They did not face delayed tactics from admin staff as compared to junior women academicians, in official work. Their work is done immediately by the admin staff as majority of admin officers have already worked with them. Thus, they process their work on priority basis without any further delay.

The above findings enabled me to argue that interaction is undeniable between women academicians and administrative staff in HEIs of AJK. This interaction usually takes-place in a formal way to achieve academic and non-academic goals. My study findings conform the assertions of Annvi and Paul (2001). They stated that women academicians steadily interact with men administrative staff to pursue academic activities. Furthermore, Jennifer (2003) also revealed that women are not treated equally by admin staff in academic and personal tasks. Though, it is argued that interaction occurs between men administrative staff and women academicians for working relations in higher education; however, women are greatly discriminated on many grounds, mentioned in findings, as compared to men. At the same time, Peter (2000) pointed out that administrative staff do not support women academicians. On the contrary, Thomas (2015) asserted that administrative staff in universities of UK facilitates women academicians to accomplish their academic tasks smoothly. Similarly, Tsikata (2007) agreed that women academicians in Swedish HEIs are well coordinated by men admin staff. Thus, these factors can be adduced to explain that unlike senior women academicians, junior women academicians do not enjoy support of administrative staff in achieving their academic goals. The above findings show that higher education of AJK is patriarchal where men challenge women's position as faculty member (Walby, 1990). Similarly, women academicians are deprived of their active participation

through relations of ruling in higher education (Smith, 1990). At the same time, masculinity is reinforced while women are excluded from power relations in gendered higher education (Connell, 1995).

The supporting staff is supposed to cooperate with women academicians in the provision and facilitation of required office items (Wolontis & Hoff, 2018). However, Woodall (2012) argued that men's supportive staff discriminate women academicians in office work. Similarly, Murphy (2010) also unpacked women's disadvantageous position due to male supportive team in higher education. The interviews revealed lack of cooperation and delay in office work by supportive staff recruited in departments. My study respondents described manifold discriminations against supportive team. It is argued by 89 percent of the participants that supportive staff were not cooperating with women academicians in the department. They identified supportive staff's leniency towards men faculty. They further unveiled the fact that supportive staff do not take the work of women academicians seriously. A woman academician showed her concern: "Whenever I ask clerical staff to complete any official task, they do not take it seriously. On the contrary, I observed, men's tasks are readily completed by them." Similar responses are reported by majority of the study participants. These responses are stacit example of discrimination by supportive staff. Moreover, supportive staff neglect women academicians in providing office items of stationery and furniture. It is reflected by a participant: "I demanded stationery items and they refused instantly. When I visited office of a male colleague, he was provided similar items but I was refused." Another respondent viewed that "my office furniture was delayed for six months without any justification." It is important to mention here that the supportive staff is also supposed to cooperate with the faculty to provide food

items. However, majority of them reported negligence of supportive staff in the provision of food items. One of the respondents remarked: "I call my peon (male) to bring food items from nearby canteen but he is often late and makes lame excuses while canteen is almost one yard away from my office." These responses show that, besides men faculty and admin staff, men supportive staff also demonstrate hegemonic masculinity and do not surrender to women's authority (Connell, 1995). Similarly, supportive staff vividly exhibit their patriarchal characteristics to suppress women (Walby, 1990). In addition, treatment from men supportive staff is clear description of how ruling text influences the relations of ruling in patriarchal higher education of AJK (Smith, 1990).

The majority of 67 percent respondents demonstrated that supportive staff use different delaying tactics in accomplishing women academicians' tasks. It is stated earlier that they were not provided office items well in time. Similarly, their admin-related issues are not processed in due time. For example, financial bills of women academicians are delayed as compared to men. Besides, they also complained of delay in the issuance of NOCs, study leave, and provision of office items and furniture. One participant stated: "I was provided stationery items after two months despite available stock." Similarly, women's bill of travelling and daily allowances (TA/DA) were not processed. Another respondent expressed that "my TA/DA bill was not processed for six months while bills of men colleagues are readily processed." Similar responses are reported by many academicians. The reaction of supportive staff can be noted here for their trivial biases towards women academicians. The point to be noted here is that the clearance of these financial bills needs regular follow up and visits to the concern sections, which women academicians normally avoid. Most of the study participants shared that their concerning file work is neither

processed nor completed in due time as compared to men. A deliberate delay in providing necessary office items and work is either associated with budget or delay in approvals from the competent authorities. Additionally, women academicians share office items of printer, scanner, and papers mutually. As intimated by a respondent: "I borrow office items from my colleagues [women], we often exchange." Furthermore, a few women academicians also buy some office items at their own. Like many others, it is also complained by another participant that "I know, I will not be provided office items in time, thus, I often buy at my own." The participants viewed that supportive staff is always backed by the HoDs for such tiniest partialities. Therefore, supportive staff often use different technical reasons to delay the approvals of study leave due to lack of staff, university rules and probation period. Likewise, respondents unveiled that supportive staff do not guide properly in the leave procedure. A few women academicians shared offices even with men colleagues. Despite knowing the genuine issues of women academicians, appropriate space was not provided to them. Similar discrimination is reported by another respondent: "Men were provided space equipped with all the necessary office items while women are deprived."

Asymmetrically, 33 percent of women academicians, including senior women academicians, had different lived experiences with their supportive staff. They argued that their official work and files, including bills, were processed readily by the admin staff. They also shared that after induction, they were not provided appropriate space and furniture for long. However, after bringing into notice of relevant authorities, they were provided separate offices equipped with furniture. Likewise, their study leave was sanctioned as per university rules, and issues of NOCs were addressed adequately. Thus, the supportive staff cooperate with senior women academicians during their career. This

may be due to their self-interest and getting favors from them. These responses show implicit explanation of public patriarchy and relations of ruling in higher education of AJK.

Based on the above responses, it is asserted that men supportive staff has been non-cooperative with junior women academicians. Similar findings are illustrated by Paul (2014). She argued that men supportive staff create different barriers to women academicians in the provision of office items. This means that men supporting staff unnecessarily delays women's official work. The findings of Kevin (2012) affirmed the argument that women academicians' office work is often hindered by men's supportive staff. However, Waaijer (2015) argued that women academicians are well facilitated by the supportive staff in Germany and France. Similar assertions are given by Robert (2004). He added that women academicians are provided with all the facilities by their supportive staff in UK. To sum up, I assert that the supportive staff shows non-cooperation towards junior women academicians than men. The findings are a clear description of public patriarchy of Walby (1990). As supportive staff do not surrender to women's authority due to relations of ruling they contain with men colleagues and blatantly try to influence women academicians (Smith, 1990). This shows that higher education of AJK is patriarchal.

4.4 Masculine and Gendered Culture and Women's Identity

Women across societies face numerous problems as a teacher in the public domains. Working women in developing countries; however, face more problems when compared to working women in developed societies. In most of the developing countries, Harper (2006) highlighted that culture in public spheres, including higher education, is highly gendered. Similar findings are given by Kim (2002). She asserted that patriarchal structure always posed threats to the women academicians' identity. For example, harassment has

been a fixture in the workplace since women came out to work with men (Tyrer & Ahmad, 2006). Research revealed different forms of harassment in public and private spheres (Timmerman, 2000; Tilbury, 2004; Swan, 2016). Several other studies painted various types of harassment experienced by women academicians in HEIs (Taj, 2016; Tarimo & Swai, 2020). It includes harassment on personal, physical, psychological, and ethnic levels.

Personal harassment includes behaviors that intimidate, demean and create a hostile environment (Singh, Vinnicombe & James, 2006). The majority, 89 percent, of my study participants revealed that they experienced personal harassment at their workplace. They identified various factors of the phenomenon of personal harassment. They described that HoDs and senior colleagues usually wanted women aeademicians to be submissive. It is noteworthy to share that senior men colleagues normally challenge the women's existence in higher education. Thus, to remain loyal to HoDs and higher authorities, they keep an eye on women's attendance, class punctuality, timetable, and course contents, and report accordingly. In case of failure to comply, they (HoDs and men colleagues) turn personal for some nominal reasons, i.e. refusal from the class exchange, favoring students, and other non-compliance. In this regard, several lived experiences were shared by women academicians. As one participant disclosed that "once I refused to teach extra credit hour, HoD turned personal and discriminated me on different grounds." A similar response was received from another respondent: "I see men clubbing with HoD to monitor women's work. Once I was late, despite intimation, my explanation was called." Such acts are indicative of men's intention to suppress women. It is further unveiled by another participant: "I have observed that men do not miss any chance to criticize women. I see men criticize course contents despite knowing that these were developed by men. I have

observed men intentionally harass women academicians when they do not favor them." Many respondents also complained about men's attitude towards their teaching and research potential. They believed that men can teach and do research better than women. One of the respondents asserted: "I never get any complaint regarding teaching. I publish in international journals but men publishing even in low category journals often criticize my articles." Majority of the participants expressed similar concerns. Senior women academicians did not report any personal harassment either by male HoDs or colleagues. They admitted that personal harassment exists at lower positions in higher education. However, they refused any traces of harassment during their career.

The above findings illustrated that women experience personal harassment by HoDs and senior men colleagues in non-compliance to the least academic tasks. These findings buttress with what Edward (2011) found. He argued that women academicians face personal harassment from senior men colleagues. This means that women academicians reported harassment by HoDs and senior men colleagues. On the other hand, Probert (2005) argued that women academicians in HEIs of USA less likely face personal harassment by men colleagues. This shows that women academicians experience personal harassment for non-conformity to the tiniest academic tasks. These responses show that men use personal harassment as a tool to oppress and alienate women from active participation in higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990). Similarly, men take advantage of masculinity (patriarchal structure) to influence women through relations of ruling to further vandalize their position in higher education of AJK (Smith, 1990).

Denial (2002), like other researchers, argued that personal harassment might reflect the intent of physical harassment (Rowold, 2011). A clear majority, 86 percent, of

respondents revealed that the intention behind personal harassment might be to seek physical proximity with women academicians. They described that HoDs and senior men colleagues often magnify trivial issues of less importance against women's performance in the department. In this way men use their power positions and relations to harass women academicians. Out of 28, three women academicians (11%) experienced such a situation once in their career. As reflected by one respondent: "I was offered by a senior colleague to have relationship. I refused to work with him, in return, he discriminated me even against the junior men colleagues." Two other women had similar experiences of harassment from senior men. This means that senior men colleagues on academic and power positions try to exploit their women colleagues; however, most of these cases remain unreported due to sociocultural make-up of the society. Moreover, majority of the participants observed, junior women academicians in lower academic positions are often prey to physical harassment against power and monetary benefits. Two respondents, 8 percent, shared their experiences of harassment by a senior men colleagues. One of them shared her experience: "He asked me to visit his office for the sake of research purposes. He sat next to me on the same table and during work he tried to touch me. Later he offered relationship in exchange of benefits that I refused." A similar situation was offered by HoD to another respondent. Some common responses about men academicians' exploitative behavior are shared by all the respondent. They stated that men often comment on women's dresses and fashion. A few of the participants (14%) also disclosed that men abuse women academicians in their absence whom either they have rifts with or they do not like. One of the common excerpts explains the situation:

Humm! She expressed displeasure, I observed that some senior men colleagues in power positions try to have relationships with their women colleagues. Once, I was engaged in some official tasks within the office of a senior colleague. I felt that he wanted to be frank, and tried to create a comfort zone. Physical touch is unavoidable while working on the same table. Many times he wanted to have intentional touch. Unfortunately, it is often followed by the word “Sorry” which does not compensate, in my opinion. I realized the situation and refused to work rather worked from my office. Later on, I faced different explanations, even for minute issues.

The situation is gauged from sigh ‘Humm’, an indicative of sentiments about the accounts of women academicians’ exploitation that represent explicit example of physical harassment in academia.

The senior women academicians, 11 percent, did not report any experience of physical harassment throughout their careers. A senior professor stated: “In my twenty five years of career, I never came across any such experience of physical harassment by men senior colleagues.” Other senior respondents endorsed the statement of their colleague. It shows that senior women academicians might be unaware about harassment during their youth. However, a reversible change is observed in overall culture of the academia for the last few decades.

These responses suggest that some senior men academicians, dominantly in power positions, try to harass women physically. Similar findings are given by George (2010). He asserted that women are harassed by HoDs and senior men colleagues. It is noted that men try to harass women physically in exchange of power and material ends. Harold’s (2012) study supports the argument that women academicians are harassed by senior men

colleagues. However, Prah (2002) argued that women academicians rarely experience physical assault or harassment in higher education of developed countries. These findings suggest that physical harassment is one of the key contributing factors to the low performance of women academicians in higher education. These responses are implicit and explicit description of patriarchy. Men on power positions intimidate, oppress, and exploit women academicians for the trivial gains in higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990).

Some research studies revealed that senior men academicians in power positions harass women academicians psychologically to seek their ends (Rauh, 2019; Robinson, 2006). The majority, 89 percent, of respondents asserted that they are subjected to psychological harassment by their senior men colleagues including HoDs. They also expressed that they were assigned different clerical assignments with the intention to belittle them and keep them in subordination. They further complained about their exclusion from mainstream power positions and leading roles. One of the respondents remarked: "I refused to work with senior colleague (man) for meeting his demands. Later on, I faced exclusion in manifolds". Similar views were expressed by many respondents. The respondents identified different interrelated factors that push women to psychologically challenging situations, i.e. teaching loads, clerical work, and research productivity. Similarly, gravity of dejection is further gauged from the extent that they are even supervised by junior men colleagues due to non-compliance with senior men in power positions. Although these are nominal tasks; however, intentional infliction leads to stress, anxiety, tension, and even depression in severe cases. Such acts affect the social and psychological wellbeing of women academicians. Hence, their academic performance is affected. One of the participants shared her concern: "I am supervised by junior colleagues.

This treatment is done with me on account of refusal to support a senior colleague in his violation of rules in the academic decision.” The following response from one middle career respondent explains the overall situation:

I refused to work with a senior colleague (man). As a consequence, I am excluded from different committees and decision making bodies. I am also supervised by a junior colleague. My research productivity and teaching potential are dented. I am monitored and afflicted in person. I face problems in getting leave. It has affected my psychological well-being and, hence, academic performance.

It is noted that rest of 11 percent senior women academicians experienced psychological harassment once in their academic career. This means that women academicians are exposed to psychological harassment but few become victim in higher education.

Drawing on the above findings, junior women academicians experience psychological harassment by senior men aacademicians during their careers. The results conform to the argument of George (2010). He argued that women are harassed psychologically by men in multiple role allocations in higher education. The point is that women's psychological well-being is suffered due to men's intimidation in non-compliance to nominal task allocation. Similar findings are unpacked by Cooley (2010). She asserted that women suffer from psychosocial issues of fear, tension, and stress propagated by men in academia. It can be summed that women academicians' potential is subjected to psychological harassment in multiple ways. The above findings paint the public patriarchy in higher education. Men suppress, subjugate, and influence women to belittle them through psychological harassment of fear, stress, anxiety, and tension. Consequently,

women's well-being and performance is affected in higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990).

Ethnic harassment is a series of incidents to intimidate, offend, and harm an individual or a group on the basis of ethnic group, race, and color (Priola, 2007). This type of harassment has been used to exclude women from normal workplace conversation and activities. Ethnic harassment is characterized with higher education of AJK. The study findings revealed that 89 percent of women academicians experienced ethnic harassment. They also stated that men identify women of similar ethnic group and try to seek nearness for working relations. Similarly, they further told that women of similar ethnicity/race are given undue favors. For example, women from similar ethnic group are given less workload and other tasks as compared to women from other ethnic groups. It is pertinent to mention here that senior men academicians worship ethnic love and care in higher education of AJK. Thus, women academicians from other ethnicities are discriminated against their race. The following excerpt explains the situation:

I see senior men colleagues and HoDs are often attracted towards women of similar ethnicities. I personally observed senior men colleagues discriminate against others in allocating of teaching loads and other tasks. If you have ethnicity other than men colleagues, you suffer to find a place in the academic structure. I suffered from ethnic discrimination of senior men colleagues.

In contrast, senior women academicians did not face ethnic harassment during their academic careers. However, they admitted presence of ethnic harassment in the academic structure but refused any lived experience.

The above findings revealed that junior women academicians experience ethnic harassment in higher education of AJK. Similar results were unpacked by Shane (2016). According to him, men on power positions prefer women from similar ethnicities and discriminate women colleagues from other ethnic groups. However, Prah (2002) argued that women academicians are less likely discriminated on the basis of race or ethnicity in European countries. Drawing on above results, it is concluded that men academicians favor women academicians of similar ethnicity, which in turn discriminate against other women colleagues. The above findings are prime example of relations of ruling. The men academicians under the strong influence of patriarchy develop, manage with and construct the objectified processes through which they control the women academicians in higher education of AJK (Smith, 1990; Walby, 1990).

Interaction in higher education work-place is unavoidable (Johns, 2013). Horton (2005) argued that interaction occurs between men and women academicians to achieve academic and non-academic goals. It is rightly put by Dong and Chang (2017) that interaction usually occurs between men and women academicians in meetings, events, training workshops, and conferences (Hassan, 2007; Jayaweera, 1997). Therefore, male-female interaction in co-education institutions of higher education cannot be avoided (Hassan, 2007; Monem & Muhammad, 2010). The interviews also showed that interaction between men and women academicians frequently occurs in higher education of AJK. All the respondents told that they interact with their senior men colleagues. However, most of them believed that interaction/exchange is formal and goal-oriented which includes the division of teaching loads, clerical/additional tasks, arranging events, seminars, conferences, and workshops. Thus, it is argued that women academicians regularly interact with their men colleagues in

higher education. One of the respondents told: "I interact with men colleagues regularly to work on different academic goals." It is important to mention here that women academicians have interaction with senior men colleagues as they supervise and assign the activities. Many respondents reported that in case of students' problems, they often consult senior men colleagues to resolve immediately. A faculty member recounted that "whenever I came across students' issues. I consult senior colleagues to resolve it, but I feel neglected when my suggestions are devalued." Similar response is revealed by many women faculty members. This shows that the biased nature of interaction takes place in higher education. It is important to mention here that senior men colleagues are often inclined to interact with women academicians of similar ethnicity. Thus, they try to seek nearness to work and benefit women colleagues of similar ethnicity. It has been unveiled by many respondents of the study. As one participant argued: "Interaction in work-place is biased and based on the ethnic group." Another woman added: "I observed a senior colleague [man] lenient towards the woman colleague of similar ethnicity." Similar views are shared by majority of the respondents. Moreover, senior men colleagues have biased nature of interaction with women academicians of similar ethnicity and give them undue favors and benefits.

Drawing on the above responses, it is argued that frequent interaction takes place between men and women academicians in higher education. The above findings conform to what Cullaty (2011) asserted that women academicians have regular interaction with senior men colleagues in connection to different academic assignments and work. This means that frequent interaction takes place between women and men colleagues for academic gains. Similar findings are given by West (2012). He argued that interaction among men and women academicians in co-education institutions is unavoidable. Thus, I

argue that interaction smoothens the academic goals among men and women academicians. However, some men academicians are biased towards their ethnicity. It shows that higher education is patriarchal where women are also discriminated even in the interaction process (Walby, 1990).

The interviews revealed that there is formal interaction between women academicians and junior men colleagues. Most of the women academicians have a similar view that interaction mainly takes place in office-related tasks. However, when junior men are supervised by woman academicians, almost 70 percent reported that a few junior men colleagues do not respond to mutual tasks properly. For instance, in case tasks are assigned to develop scheme of studies junior men respond late and often delay the tasks. As given by a woman academician that "junior men colleagues do not respond to the tasks they are entitled in group work." Another participant asserted: "I called an explanation of a junior male colleague for non-compliance in academic tasks. I was told by senior men colleagues to withdraw his explanation." These responses showed that senior men pamper junior men colleagues. The majority of respondents revealed that junior men colleagues also take guidance from their senior women academicians. As reported by one respondent: "I properly guide junior colleagues in research whenever they seek guidance." Few others participants had similar opinions about junior men colleagues.

In the light of the above findings, it is asserted that women academicians interact with junior colleagues persistently. Moreover, a few junior men colleagues do not respond to the tasks properly. The above findings align with what Cullaty (2011) asserted that interaction occurs between junior and senior women colleagues to satisfy the academic goals. This means that interaction usually takes place between men and women

academicians. However, West (2012) argued in his study that junior men colleagues being non-responsive often challenge the authority of women senior colleagues. The crux of the findings is that the power and position of women academicians are challenged by men colleagues in patriarchal higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990; Smith, 1990).

Co-curricular activities are important part of academic development the world over (Corley & Gaughan, 2005). The study findings revealed that co-curricular activities are a major source of interaction for students-teachers with the external world. This study findings do not show excessive engagement of women academicians in co-curricular activities. Almost 70 percent of women academicians were engaged with students in co-curricular activities of seminars, training workshops and university events. However, they described that despite their capabilities to perform better than men, they are rarely engaged in active roles rather than involved in trivial roles. It is worth mentioning that men colleagues are given leading roles while women are kept in supportive roles to men. As remarked by one respondent: "I am always asked to assist even junior men colleagues in seminars." It is a common opinion held by majority of the respondents about discrimination. The rest 19 percent of respondents stated that their presence in co-curricular activities is not encouraging as compared to men. They are often given associative roles to assist men in the organization of events. As remarked by one respondent: "I see how women are engaged in co-curricular activities is quite depressing. I was many time told by HoD to assist men in organizing events and workshops. However, I had never been given leading role in such activities."

The senior women academicians, 11 percent, have also been part of co-curricular activities during their careers. They were involved in almost all the active roles in

organizing and conducting seminars, conferences, and university events as compared to junior women academicians. The reason behind such involvement, they reported, was lack of faculty. Thus, they were equally provided the opportunities to take roles with men in co-curricular activities.

The above findings revealed that though women academicians were engaged in co-curricular activities. However, they were not given active roles like men. Similar findings are presented by Kanne (2000). She revealed that women academicians' engagement in co-curricular activities is less significant than men. Mary (2011) also noted women's active participation is discouraging in co-curricular activities. It means women academicians are not involved actively by men in co-curricular activities. Lydia (2001) reported that women academics are not engaged in co-curricular activities as compared to men. On the other hand, Robert (2005) stated that women in USA are fully engaged in co-curricular activities. The crux of the discussion is that the women academicians are partially involved in co-curricular activities. This is explicit demonstration of public patriarchy where men academicians dominate and suppress women academicians in getting leading roles in co-curricular activities (Walby, 1990). To contain their hegemony, women academicians are kept in subordination to have assistive roles (Smith, 1990).

In higher education, teachers usually guide and lead the study and recreational tours of the students (Coleman, 2000). In my study, almost 90 percent of the respondents were engaged in co-curricular activities of study and recreational tours within and outside the city. However, women academicians are still engaged in assistive roles while men lead the tours. One of the respondents argued: "I was involved in students' study tours many times. I took students to visit other universities for exposure but tour guide has always been men"

Many other participants had similar experiences about the men's leading roles. A very few participants, 10 percent, never accompanied students either in study leave or recreation trips. Moreover, the senior women academicians also led and guided study and recreational tours of students. Study respondents further complained that men have greater engagement with community groups, associations, and NGOs. They keep students engaged in different activities while women academicians have fewer connections with these stakeholders. Despite this, they also engage students to participate in seminars and other events in and outside the campus. A few women academicians could not focus on co-curricular activities owing to academic and family responsibilities. When it comes to sports/games, students are normally involved by the men academicians in sports activities of inter-and-intra university competitions. A very few women academicians told that they engage students in various sports competitions and games. One respondent voiced: "I engaged students in sports/games of annual intra-and-inter universities competitions." The majority of study participants guided students to participate in speech, drawing, and art competitions within and outside the university. One respondent intimated: "I guide and involve students to participate in speech, drawing, and art competitions." Similar responses were shared by many other academicians.

The above responses indicated that although women academicians are engaged with students in co-curricular activities but they are not given leading roles like men. Similar findings were unpacked by Rahol (2002). He argued that women academicians manage students' trips and organize some other healthier activities for them. Moreover, Mary (2011) also asserted that women academicians engage students in co-curricular activities. However, Ogweng (2016) found that potential of women academicians is not

utilized in co-curricular activities in universities of Ghana. Similarly, Renn (2015) added that women academicians are not given leading roles in these activities like men. Based on the findings, I argue that women academicians guide students' tours and engage them in supports; and experience discrimination in leading roles. It is an overt explanation of public patriarchy; men dominate and prevent women to participate in public discourses in higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990).

4.5 Women Academicians' Interaction with Students in the Workplace

Teacher-student interaction is important for active learning in education (Newman & Zimmerman, 2000). This interaction frequently engages both teachers and students in the hearty learning environment (Nash & Romero, 2012). Further, it makes classroom setting conducive for learning and teaching (Nanyama, 2012). Thus, interaction between teacher and student is a key element of learning within and outside the classroom (Messbarger, 2002). The interviews revealed that all the women academicians have sound interaction with their students for effective classroom learning objectives. The study respondents (69%) argued that steady interaction develops a comfort zone for smooth teaching and learning activities within the classroom. Similarly, teachers get familiar with students, know their comfort level, and differentiate their interests. A few respondents (31%) argued that they restrained interaction with students up to classroom and academic activities. When inquired about students' interest in interaction, respondents agreed that students take an interest in discussions and syllabus related issues. It is pertinent to mention that girls are more likely to interact for learning as compared to boys while few boys do interact for the sake of learning objectives. As told by a respondent: "I observed girls interact with teachers for learning. They follow up for their academic activities like quizzes and assignments."

Similar response was given by many other respondents. Besides, it is also noted that girls actively participate in healthy academic discussions more than boys. Additionally, girls take keen interest in studies, and boys usually create disturbance in class. Another participant expressed that "girls are more interactive than boys in learning and discussions." From the women's narratives, it is evident that girls are more comfortable with women academicians for their academic work. I deem it important to mention here that gender issue in classroom is a very complex phenomenon in public universities. The findings of my study are similar to that of Ullah and Khan (2018). They argued that girls participate more than boys in postgraduate classroom of public sector universities. They further stated that this interaction is healthier for classroom learning.

All the study participants had satisfactory class control when teaching in the classroom. They had good command of the subject as well. They further argued that girls are interactive and contribute to discussions and abide rules. However, boys are often irregular, disturbing, and never on the dot. Despite warnings, a few boys participate seriously in discussions during class. One middle career academician expressed her experience of dealing with class: "I often find boys non-serious in class; however, due to good command on subject, I control boys efficiently." The subject command has a significant role in effective learning in academia. Teachers influence students by disseminating knowledge through effective teaching methods. All the respondents argued that they had good subject command. They regularly prepare subjects to avoid any inconvenience during lectures. A senior woman academician expressed her experience about students' engagement: "I engage students in discussions during and after the lecture

and it has always been fruitful for students' subject understanding". Many respondents affirmed similar statements.

Teacher-student interaction also takes place outside the classroom (Marshall, 2009). However, in many societies' contexts, culture influences women to restrain their interaction with students outside the classroom (Longman & Madsen, 2014). Morley (2011) revealed that interaction between students and teachers is basically goal oriented. She further analyzed that frequency and duration of interaction vary between teachers and students depending upon the gendered culture of academia. The study findings unveiled that women academicians, 89 percent, discourage interaction with students outside the classroom unless they are engaged in some practical nature of academic activities and research work. The respondents described that they usually restrain interaction outside the classroom. It is pertinent to mention here that research students and class representatives often seek guidance as per their need. However, it is not possible to lock up interaction outside the classroom. One respondent narrated: "I do not interact with students outside the classroom until it carries important academic tasks." Some of the women academicians, due to their calculated time, have spared working hours with research students on specified days. One respondent said: "I am always burdened due to academic tasks. I had little time for students outside the classroom. Thus, I specified time slots for them." Many women academicians also avoid interaction with students in cafés, corridors, and other places within the campus. Another respondent remarked: "My interaction is limited to greeting compliments when coming across in café and other places." A few participants (19%) have food and tea with students in cafeteria and events/parties. A respondent said: "I participate in students' events. I also take tea and have lunch with them." Many participants shared

interesting experiences of students' interaction. They described that boys particularly interact to seek some academic benefits while using references. However, it does not magnify the overall situation because most students interact to fulfil their inspirations. As reflected by a respondent: "I see one student (boy) interact with me repeatedly and once he asked for grace marks in a subject that I refused, I also found students use references to contact teacher for marks and even passing marks." It is also revealed that students wanted to interact with teachers of similar ethnicity. Similarly, teachers are also attracted towards students of their ethnic group. As unveiled by a woman academician: "I witnessed students and teachers both are attracted towards similar ethnicity." The senior women academicians reported that they have regular interaction with students outside the classroom. Students consult them for guidance in studies and research. Similarly, they engage students in different academic and non-academic activities on campus. Likewise, they also discouraged interaction with students based on ethnic group.

The study findings revealed that women academicians interact with students, within and outside the classroom, irrespective of their gender, to achieve academic goals. Moreover, women academicians have good class control and subject command. These findings are in-line with those of Rabovsky and Lee (2018). They affirmed that women academicians consistently interact with students for learning purposes. Similarly, Xu (2008) unpacked women's effective class control due to good subject command, while Simon (2001) uncovered that women academicians could not avoid interaction outside the classroom. This means that women academicians have regular interaction with students within and outside the classroom for different academic activities. Similar findings are unveiled by Walter (2003) that women academicians possess good class control and subject

command in teaching. Based on the findings, it is argued that academic space is not gendered but gender of teachers and students informally put some limitations on their interaction.

4.6 Women Academicians: Academic Expectations and Familial Responsibilities

A diverse range of academic expectations are associated with women career seekers in higher education (Kulmala, 2016). It includes teaching loads, qualifications, research publication/ research supervision and, above all family responsibilities (Kholis, 2012). However, meeting academic expectations and familial responsibilities have several complications for women academicians in the male-dominated higher education culture (Hardill & Watson, 2004). The study findings revealed that women academicians are struggling to meet the academic expectations and familial responsibilities in higher education. They identified numerous factors responsible for their slow growth in academia. These include teaching loads, clerical work, and additional tasks, credit hours, timeslots, timetable, and subject selection. Besides, a considerable energy is exerted to conduct exams, organize seminars, and conferences. In this way, they (women) have less time for student' supervision, their own qualification, and research. It is pertinent to mention that women academicians are burdened with academic and non-academic workload. Most of their time is consumed to accomplish these responsibilities. One respondent shared that "I work entire day to accomplish academic and non-academic goals without break and food." Due to such burden, women find less time for child-rearing and meeting other familial duties. Besides, they have to work according to the sociocultural values of the society. A middle career respondent stated: "I have to balance my career and family as per the cultural values of the society. Though, it is difficult but I try my best to ascertain academic and

familial roles." Another participant stated: "My family face neglect due to my academic burden. I spent greater portion of time in accomplishing academic and non-academic tasks." The majority of women academicians had similar responses regarding family responsibilities. Thus, they unanimously claimed that it is difficult for women to meet family responsibilities with their academic careers at the same time. A common excerpt endorses the above findings:

I carry out academic pursuits along with clerical work. I have to supervise students and conduct and publish research. I have to improve my qualification and deal with students' issues. Besides, I have to rear children, keep home, and look after my family. I have to take care of my husband and in-laws. I have to join social gatherings of family and relatives. I have to visit the family members and relatives. I have to join the marriages and burials as well. Sometimes, I take academic work home and complete it when I find spare time. It is difficult to balance work-family. It, thus, certainly affects my academic career and health.

The above responses show a heavy burden, emotional labor, and health concerns by women academicians. Unlike junior women academicians, senior women academicians viewed academic expectations and family differently. They also carried out academic and non-academic tasks. However, they denied any discrimination from the immediate male head. They were given choice in the selection of subjects and timeslots. Moreover, they were involved in conducting seminars and administrative duties. Even so, they were not discriminated against their roles and responsibilities. Work-family balance has also been achieved by senior women academicians. It is pertinent to mention that most of them were

supported by family members in meeting familial responsibilities in the joint family system.

The study findings revealed that women academicians feel burdened with academic, and non-academic duties. Thus, they find less time for familial responsibilities at home, and hence their families suffer the most. These findings affirm the assertions of Tom and Eshly (2000) that women spend maximum energy to complete their academic goals while their families suffer. Similarly, Deans (2001) revealed that women academicians' families suffer due to academic burden. Moreover, Rock and Edwin (2012) argued that women academicians find less time for child-rearing and homemaking. The point is that women are burdened with academic tasks, and their families suffer. Similar findings by Dale (2012) confirmed work-family imbalances in women academicians' careers. On the other hand, Martin (2005) unveiled that most of the successful women academicians are devoid of family responsibilities. Similar assertions are given by Robert (2005). She added that women academicians in academic power positions are less interested in family. To sum up, it can be asserted that women academicians are too burdened to combine academic expectations with familial responsibilities. Here, I found explicit interpretation of feminist standpoint theory of Smith. Women in academia experience dual responsibilities of academic career and family at the same time. Besides, patriarchy operates in higher education that influences and separates women from power mainstreams while relations of ruling further construct, enact, and reshape the structure of higher education in AJK (Smith, 1990; Walby, 1990).

Research plays a pivotal role in the academic development of academicians in higher education (Haarr & Morash, 2013). Similarly, research is main indicator in

academic performance including promotions (Gray, 2000). The study participants identified different barriers in research publications and supervision during their academic careers. Majority of the respondents, 89 percent, revealed that research supervision is biased in higher education. Women academicians are not given an appropriate share in the allocation of research supervision by men colleagues. They described that HoDs and senior men colleagues allocate research supervision to women academicians without their consent and outside the domain. Similarly, men supervise intelligent students while rest of them, whom they do not want to supervise, are referred to women academicians. One respondent expressed her concern: "I am allocated students for supervision outside my area of specialization." Another academician stated: "My consent is never taken and considered in research supervision." Many academicians had similar responses regarding discrimination in research supervision. Besides supervision, women academicians are not given fair play to conduct and publish research as men do. They identified many barriers in research publications. For example, women do not have active research groups to publish research. Similarly, men have their research groups and mentoring services while women do not have groups. A respondent affirmed: "I believe that the only reason of women's less publication is lack of research groups." Moreover, women academicians lack mentoring services as senior women do not guide them to become independent researchers. Another participant expressed: "I kept seeking guidance from senior men colleagues but I was not mentored." Many women academicians have similar experiences of discrimination in research. Another concern was expressed by the majority of participants that they have less time for research due to academic loads and family responsibilities. In this way, women's research skills remain suppressed. Thus, they cannot produce quality research publications.

The above responses are implicit example of public patriarchy where men keep women at subordinate position. It is also an explicit explanation of ruling relations. A few senior academicians (9%) reported that they were neither discriminated against in the supervision of students nor research publications by senior men colleagues rather they were supported by men colleagues in research publications. An associate professor said: "I publish in men's research groups with men and never felt to be a pole apart." Similarly, senior women were mentored by men in meeting academic goals during their careers.

These findings suggest that junior women academician feel discriminated against in research supervision and publications. This study results attest claims of many studies (Toddler & Young, 2001). They stated that women, due to academic tasks have less time to do independent research and supervise students. It illustrates women's vulnerable position in research publications and supervision of students. Similarly, Luke (2005) also stated that women are not provided equal chances for research and supervision as compared to men. However, Lamote (2010) asserted that academicians in universities can equally grow in higher education. Likewise, Morley (2011) argued that women academicians publish with men and even outperform men in research in developed countries. It is argued that junior women academicians are discriminated against in research supervision and publication in higher education. These responses show that patriarchy operates in higher education of AJK. Men still discriminate women academicians in research supervision and publications. Men's influence in higher education is characterized with ruling text that exclude women from active participation and further reflect the masculine hegemony in higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990; Smith, 1990).

It is revealed that very few respondents joined HEIs after competing PhD degree. They were able to find the opportunities to complete their doctorate from an advanced country. They completed their education on different HEC funded scholarship programmes. However, majority of the respondents (85%) in junior academic positions (Lecturers and Assistant professor), dominantly non-PhDs reported that it became difficult to complete their studies (PhD) due to numerous personal/family and institutional problems. Primarily, they face issues in the award of study leave and NOCs by the employer. They argued that despite securing admission to the university they were either refused or delayed in provision of study leave and NOCs. Besides, they did face problems of travelling and boarding. These issues were dominantly reported by all the women academicians. The following extract from data explains the phenomena:

Taking admission in PhD program is easy in national universities but managing the degree is an uphill task. I faced several problems in travel, study, and stay. Sometimes I travel in the morning to attend classes and get back home at night to meet social and academic responsibilities. It involves and demands much time, energy and finances. There is no special provision and allowance or relaxation from the supervisors.

However, senior women academicians denied any barrier created by men colleagues or HoDs. They were provided study leave, NOCs and research support during their academic career. These responses show the ruling text has been used as institutional barrier by men to subjugate women academicians in higher education (Smith, 1990). The findings clearly represent the public patriarchy where discourses are controlled by men.

These responses revealed different barriers experienced by women academicians in improving qualifications during their careers. The findings of this study reinforce issues raised by Maya (2001). She identified issues faced by women academicians in male hegemonic culture in HEIs. She referred institutional culture as one of hurdle in improving qualifications. In the same fashion, Lara (2000) also expounded that women take more time in getting degrees when compared to men. On the contrary, Jama (2005) argued that women academicians are now supported by the institutional culture to grow equally in academic ladder. Based on the findings, I assert that the patriarchal structure of higher education in AJK does not provide fair play to women academicians in improving their qualification.

There is a diverse range of family responsibilities carried out by women in society (Girginer & Ertuğ, 2017). Similarly, the academic career of women is not devoid of it. Like other public domains, women academicians are also burdened with family responsibilities-making home, child-rearing, family care, and social life (Dobbins & Kwiek, 2017). The study findings revealed that 89 percent of women academicians were burdened with family responsibilities. In patriarchal higher education structure, they stated, women academicians' major focus is academic and non-academic goals. Therefore, they cannot focus on academic careers and family at the same time. Moreover, a few women academicians have been successful with the support of their families. It is due to support of their joint family system. Unlike women academicians, men academicians are successful because they are devoid of family duties. They have good time to build academic careers and profiles. On the other hand, women academicians perform familial and career responsibilities in-line with cultural norms. The majority of my study respondents, 89

percent, showed their concern that when they meet academic tasks, they cannot perform domestic duties. They also told that academic tasks consume most of their energies. They further stated that dealing with familial duties affect their career performance badly. Therefore, due to time constraints, many women complained about their participation in the social functions and gatherings in and outside the family. One Lecturer intimated: "I rarely join social events of family and often miss important functions of marriages and funerals." Similarly, women find less time for home keeping. One of the assistant professors remarked: "Accomplishing academic tasks is exhaustive. It takes most of the time. I spare less time with family." A few participants, including senior women academicians, lived in the joint family system previously, reported that they had support from family members in managing the home, and thus, they focused on their academic careers. Another respondent expressed: "I complete academic tasks and spare a few hours for the family but I am backed by family members. I am relaxed, however, children always complained." A small number of women academicians (8 respondents) including senior women academicians hired maids and servants for their help in domestic chores and child care. The burden of home and office leave women academicians with no or little time to go out with their children for recreation. One participant expressed: "I find less time for children while they always complained about time and recreation." Some respondents, although very few numbers, shared that their husbands take care of home and children in their absence. This is very encouraging in the sociocultural context of AJK. A senior professor shared: "My husband is an academician and always supported me in improving my qualification or taking care of children and home." Similar experiences were shared by

other women. These responses demonstrate that women still experience exclusion due to public patriarchy.

These responses unpack a mixed bag of findings regarding work-home balance. These findings are somehow similar to the assertion made by Hassan (2007). She argued that women, in addition to academic tasks, also manage family responsibilities. Judah (2000) also explored women's position in higher education by stating that women academicians have less time for family responsibilities. This shows that women academicians face problems in balancing work and family at the same time. Similar results are revealed by David (2001). He stated that women academicians find less time for family and home due to academic duties. However, Probert (2005) stated that work-family balance has not been issue in EU countries anymore. Based on the findings, I assert that junior women academicians have multiple roles of family duties along with their academic career. Therefore, they are unable to balance work-family due to these additional duties of family. It is further concluded that women's standpoint reminds me Smiths' assertions of women academicians' exclusion in higher education of AJK. This exclusion is due to patriarchal structure of society that is further reflected in higher education of AJK (Walby, 1990; Smith, 1990).

4.7 Women Academician: Key Opportunities in the Context of AJK

Gender disparities exist in every sphere of life, including higher education (Chen & Morley, 2006). Women's participation and struggle for equal right to education was raised by second-wave of feminism (Blackmore & Blackwell, 2006). This struggle worked in favor of women, especially in the global north in getting access to right to education. Thus, women graduated and competed with men in higher education. However, women in the

global south, particularly in the developing countries, still face discriminations in higher education. A similar situation is prevalent in Pakistan and AJK. Although women academicians were provided equal opportunities; however, they still found academic workplace more challenging than men (Ali & Kramar, 2015). This study revealed interesting results regarding opportunities to women academicians in higher education. Here, I am interpreting lived experiences of opportunities to women academicians.

Professional development is a process of identifying new goals and learning new skills (Shah, 2001). Shahid and Farooq (2020) argued that women academicians learn from men and women ideals, mentors, colleagues, and develop professional aptitude by stepping into their shoes (Song, 2016). The study interviews revealed that all the women academicians, 28 respondents, developed professional expertise within the provided academic environment. They argued that most of the aspirations come from men and women ideals (academicians) in academia. They also described that professional aptitude develops through academic environment provided in the universities. The professional development is further refined through active participation in seminars, conferences, training workshops, and symposiums. In this way, respondents develop and modify their skills and expertise learned from their senior academicians and other professionals from different fields. One respondent remarked that "it takes time to learn and develop professional aptitude and expertise but it becomes easier when you are around teachers who engage in different activities." The majority of my study respondents were junior women academicians. They agreed that academia is full of opportunities for professional development. Another respondent stated: "I think academia is a diversified field for professional development." The above responses show that women and men academicians

have equal opportunities to develop the professional skills in academia. However, it depends upon the capacity of women that how to hunt the opportunities like men. Moreover, it is important to state here that although women academicians have equal opportunities to men in higher education; but they experience exclusion (see earlier discussion in themes) due to patriarchal nature of higher education.

The study findings enabled me to argue that women academicians have opportunities to learn and develop professional aptitudes from ideals, teachers, and experts. Similar results of Raiyan (2002) supported the argument that women academicians seek professional expertise, mastery, and skills in higher education. Likewise, Betu and Jurgan (2003) revealed women academicians' professional development also depends upon academic environment provided to them. It indicated that women have opportunities for professional development by learning skills, enhancing competencies, and taking exposures. In the same way, Eli (2017) also stated women's professional development is based on learning skills and aptitudes in higher education. On the other hand, Rostami (2021) identified that women academicians still lack professional expertise in Ghanaian universities. To sum up the argument, I argue that higher education is full of opportunities for the professional development of women academicians.

Research has potential for-reaching implications in the formation of higher education careers (Bagilhole & White, 2011). Bal (2004) asserted that academic career is mainly research-oriented closely linked with promotions and power positions. Similarly, research is a key indicator of academic performance (Batool & Sajid, 2013). Study respondents also affirmed that research is an important part of the academic career. All of my study respondents revealed that research publications are one of the key indicators to

rise in the academic ladder. It is noteworthy that academicians with excellent research backgrounds are preferred on senior academic positions. All the participants argued that there are equal opportunities for women and men academicians to conduct and publish research work in higher education. These research publication opportunities are available to everyone at national and international level. At the national level, HEC offers its journals for faculty research and development. Likewise, thousands of journals are available on different international research databases. Thus, it is noted that women academicians have equal opportunities to publish research. Similarly, they may also publish in research groups comprised of faculty members and researchers from different universities. A senior respondent argued:

I see different research opportunities for women at national and international level.

One can avail various research opportunities to have sponsored foreign exposure. I also enjoyed a few research opportunities to study and present papers on various international forums. It is simply to apply and grab the opportunity. I do not sense any discrimination on the basis of gender in research publications.

Drawing on the above findings, it is argued that women academicians have equal opportunities to conduct and publish research at national and international level. The above conclusions are in-line with the assertions of Atley (2008) who revealed that despite equal chances of publishing, women publish less than men. This shows that women have equal opportunities to conduct and publish research worldwide. These findings are equally supported by the claims of Godg (2017). She argued that women academicians may attempt to perform and publish research equal to men. On the contrary, Jean (2018) asserted that

women publish less than men globally. To sum up, I state, that women academicians have equal opportunities to publish research at the national and international level.

Research grants are also an essential part of the academic career (Ahmed, 2009). Securing research grants is a matter of prestige for academicians that further boosts their profile (Ali, 2012). Academicians attracting research grants from different funding agencies are appreciated (Arib, 2020). My study findings revealed that women academicians are non-responsive to calls for research grants. It is worth mentioning that all the respondents acknowledged unlimited research grant opportunities for men and women. However, it is women academicians' capacity to get involved and pursue research grant calls. It is noted that there are several research grant opportunities available on the national and international level. HEC offers several research grant programmes for the faculty members. Similarly, many other research organizations also offer indigenous research grant opportunities for academicians regardless of their gender. Therefore, it is argued that women academicians have equal opportunities to attract research grants. Furthermore, unlimited research grants are offered on the international level. Almost 89 percent of respondents stated that women academicians from AJK are still far behind men in attracting research grants. A very few pursue any call for proposals. Probing into the reasons of not struggling for research grants, most of the respondents told that they have equal opportunities for research grants, but still they are burdened with teaching loads and family responsibilities. Hence, they find less time to hunt calls for research grants. Overall, majority of women were optimistic about research grants, but they are engaged in multiple roles. One respondent said: "I wished to respond the research grants but due to busy schedule it is not easy tasks to hunt properly." Many other participants had similar

responses. It is pertinent to mention here that the senior women academicians have properly hunted and pursued research grants for a long. Likewise, they regularly follow research grant calls of HEC. A senior professor stated: "I respond to research calls. I have won a considerable grant even from national and international donors. I have been principal investigator for many of these projects and worked with men." It shows that the senior academicians enjoy good working environment for the research grants.

The crux of discussion here is that women academicians have equal chances to competing for research grants. However, they have less time to hunt these research grant calls. Similar findings are given by Abram (2007). He emphasized that women academicians can apply for research grants on the same scale as men. Alloy (2016) also supports that women have equal opportunities to secure research grants. However, Singh (2017) argued that women academicians are less interested to hunt research grant calls as compared to men. Based on the above findings, I assert that despite having equal opportunities to pursue research grant calls, majority of women academicians are not interested to hunt research grant calls as compared to men in higher education of AJK.

The qualification (education) of faculty has significant impact on the career of academicians across the globe (Sultana, 2010; Susanti, 2011). For the last few decades, gender reversal change paved the ways for women's active participation in academia (Tamim, 2013). Moreover, women were provided opportunities to improve their qualifications as men do (Priola, 2007). The interviews revealed that women academicians have equal opportunities to improve their qualifications at national and international level. Almost all the participants agreed that women could get complete education at their own. In this context, women possess the right to study leave with economic benefits. It is

pertinent to highlight that there are numerous scholarship opportunities to improve education at the national and international level. HEC offers diverse range of scholarship programmes for faculty development. HEC also offers some international scholarship programmes. Similarly, provincial and federal governments also allocate funds for the students' scholarships on quota basis. In addition, there are some highly competitive and prestigious scholarship programs at international level. A senior professor stated that "I was able to secure scholarship of HEC and complete studies from the USA." Two other women academicians also completed their education on HEC's programmes. Another senior woman academician took advantage of scholarships and completed her education from a foreign university. She shared: "I got HEC's scholarship and completed my PhD from UK. I see women need a little effort to secure international scholarship." Moreover, women academicians have equal opportunities of improving their qualifications from universities. A common excerpt substantiates the claim of women academicians.

I applied against the advertisement for the HEC scholarship. I got selected after completing the procedure of testing and interviewing. I completed my education in the USA. I availed five years study leave opportunity. I met many women academicians in the USA who were studying on HEC's scholarships. I think there are many other scholarship opportunities for women to take advantage and complete their education. Presently many competitive scholarships prefer women to get benefitted and complete their education from foreign universities.

It is argued that women academicians have various opportunities to improve their qualification. These findings are in-line with the assertions of John (2002). He argued that women have equal opportunities to enhance and improve their qualification in HE. Similar

results are given by Divine (2004). She asserted that women academicians have numerous opportunities to improve their qualification. It is noted that women have equal opportunities to avail scholarships and upgrade their qualification. Voxel's (2007) findings are also aligned with my study findings that women have equal opportunities to improve and boost their education. Based on the findings, I argue that women can improve their qualifications by grabbing various scholarships nationally and internationally.

For the last few decades, earning opportunities for women have improved significantly (Puwar & Raghuram, 2020). Ray (2020) argued that in the past, women were denied equal economic benefits. He stated that women now work and earn a reasonable income in every sphere of life, including academia. Since gender reversal change in the 1990s, Rahman and Siddiqui (2020) confirmed that revised higher education policy introduced equal pay scales and economic benefits for men and women academicians (Agarwal & Rajkumar, 2020). My study findings also revealed that women academicians have equal pay scales and wages opportunities in higher education. As men and women recruited in similar pay scales take equal pay, perks, and privileges except power positions. Similarly, women have equal opportunities of earning from research grants. At the same time, women may also get economic benefits from consultancies. As one of the respondents stated that "it is easy to seek part-time consultancies. I work with two organizations for the last three years." Freelancing is also an important platform for earning. Moreover, women might earn as trainers/resource persons for academic and non-academic institutions. Likewise, women have opportunities to teach part-time in different educational institutions. It is explained by other women that "women have equal chances of working as freelancers and trainers to earn money." It is evident from the narratives of senior women academicians

that women have equal opportunities to men. As they availed opportunities of conducting training workshops and refresher certifications similar to men. A senior professor explained: "I attended refresher Training of Teachers (ToT) of HEC many times. I was the only woman from my university among the several men from AJK." The senior academicians got opportunities of leading training workshops in different fields as trainers/resource persons.

It is established on the basis of above responses that women academicians have equal opportunities for financial benefits, wages and pay scales in academia. These findings are in-line with the assertions of Clayed (2003), who argued that women and men academics have equal pay scale and wages. Similarly, Denome (2001) found that women academicians have similar earning opportunities as men have in the same status. Eshly (2005) also asserted that despite men's dominance in the public domain, women academicians enjoy equal economic spurs. To sum up, it can be argued that women academicians have equal opportunities of earning.

The modern world is characterized as rational organization with bureaucratic set up where power and privileges are part and parcel of every institution (Ashraf, 2001). A similar power structures exists in higher education (Azimi & Balakarzai, 2020). They further stated that power and privileges are exercised according to the delegated authority vested in persons. Presently, women and men have equal opportunities to reach academic power positions and enjoy perks and privileges in higher education. All the study respondents revealed that women and men academicians have equal opportunities to rise in academic power positions. Despite equal opportunities, 85 percent of respondents argued that a small number of women academicians fulfil the required criteria to reach academic

power positions. However, majority of participants work in lower academic positions for a long and rarely rise on the academic ladder as compared to men. Certain factors restrain them to reaching top academic positions, i.e. lack of experience or qualification, and research publications. In one or another way, it is noted that women lack the required criteria to reach power positions. As expressed by a respondent: "I found women having great potential but deficient in research and qualification." Another participant stated: "I see women are not considered good in administration despite having good academic record." Some junior participants were appointed as coordinator during their career. However, they were unable to exercise power and authority and enjoy status and privileges as compared to men in the same position. The responses represent that relations of ruling are maintained by men academics through ruling text and, thus, public patriarchy works. The power relation is magnified in the following excerpt:

I have been a coordinator, and I see men have strong hold to exercise power when they are in positions of authority. I was supervised by a male Dean and I was told not to take any decision without his consent. He used to execute the things, and I was just a mediator in the mid. I observed that it is a puppet position where women are not given authority to work like men.

Moreover, a few senior women aacademicians, who have been in power positions experience academia differently. They claimed that women aacademicians having strong academic and research profile can compete men to reach positions of authority. They also asserted that it is not about adopting masculine traits rather securing a place as a feminine character to rise on the academic ladder. A senior professor stated:

I have been Dean of my faculty and supervised many departments. Before this, I remained head of many departments. Based on performance, I was promoted to Dean, and I completed my tenure successfully. During my tenure, I took several bold decisions to run the faculty. I was never interrupted by the higher authorities rather supported in making decisions and taking initiatives. I also enjoyed perks and privileges equal to men. I ever found senior men humble in suggesting solutions to the issues we faced. I think women have equal opportunities to men in order to rise in the academic ladder; however, women need to struggle to achieve cross the barriers.

These responses show that men and women academicians have equal opportunities to enjoy power, status, and privileges in higher education of AJK. However, due to patriarchal structure of higher education, men often reach power positions and enjoy status and privileges while women are discriminated. These findings are similar to those found by earlier studies. For example, Boje (2012) asserted that women academicians have equal opportunities to reach power positions. Similarly, Esther (2000) also stated that women can enjoy status and privileges in academia. It shows that women academicians may reach to power positions and enjoy perks and privileges in academia. The findings of Jame (2012) also support my study findings that women academicians equally grow in higher education. Based on the verdict, I assert that women academicians can equitably progress to the power position in the higher education of AJK.

In academia, international exposure has overwhelming influence on the academic careers of men and women across the globe (Biswas, Ananna, & Bhowmik, 2020). Numerous foreign opportunities are available to academicians in Pakistan. HEC offers

different scholarships, including research programs for PhD scholars and academicians irrespective of their gender. Besides, thousands of international scholarships are available for women at the international level. The study findings disclosed that women academicians have various opportunities of foreign exposure offered at national and international level. These include scholarships, research support programs, fellowships, seminars, and conference paper presentations. HEC supports women and men academicians equally in scholarship awards. Similarly, a research support fund is also available for PhD scholars for the six months foreign exposure. Thus, all the respondents revealed that they have equal opportunities for seminars and conferences. Different scholarship programs are offered by the provincial and federal governments. These programs are helpful for women academicians to hunt the appropriate opportunities to get their degrees sponsored by the respective governments. Moreover, a few institutions (research organizations and universities) also offer foreign exposure opportunities for the academicians. It is pertinent to mention that the senior women academicians had great foreign exposure. Among four women, three had enjoyed foreign exposure in getting PhD degrees. They visited different universities abroad while presenting papers in conferences and attending seminars. One of the respondents enjoyed HEC's research support as IRSIP research scholar. One associate professor intimated: "I secured a scholarship in the USA and I completed my Ph.D degree from there. I also visited many universities with their collaboration on behalf of my university, I also presented a few papers in international conferences in different countries." Another senior respondent said: "I availed IRSIP opportunity and spent some extra time there. I also visited different countries to present research work."

The study findings revealed that women academicians have equal opportunities to visit foreign universities for education and exposure. Similar results are reported by Kumar (2016) that women academicians may avail opportunities for foreign exposure as per their desires. Study findings of Jean (2016) also support the findings that women are also awarded foreign visit awards. It is noted that women have equal opportunities for foreign exposure. Likewise, Tegaro (2018) also revealed that women are provided equal opportunities in foreign visits. Drawing on responses, I argue that women academicians have equal access to national and international academic opportunities in higher education of AJK.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from lived experiences of women academicians in higher education institutions of AJK. The results show that women are motivated by their parents, teachers, and brothers for getting higher education and seeking career in higher education. Regarding working relations with men colleagues, it is revealed that junior women academicians do not have smooth working relations with men colleagues in contrast to senior women academicians who have had smooth working relations with men colleagues throughout their careers. Similarly, working relations between women academicians and administrative and supportive staff were also focused. The findings revealed that administrative staff often created barriers to office work of junior women academicians in daily routine matters; however, senior women academicians had not received such treatment from admin staff. Similarly, the supportive staff is also found non-cooperative with junior women academicians. Here, I assert, based on the findings that women academicians are discriminated against by administrative and supportive staff. The

study findings also found women academicians' smooth interaction with colleagues and students within and outside the classroom. Moreover, women academicians face different forms of harassment. It is noted that majority of women face personal and physical, psychological, and ethnic harassment. Women academicians further unveiled that they are less likely engaged in active roles as compared to men. The findings of the chapter suggested that women academicians face different issues in meeting academic and familial responsibilities during their academic careers. The last result of the chapter unveiled that there are equal opportunities in academia. However, men have benefited more than women. In summary, this study findings unpacked some ground breaking findings of women academicians' marginalization in higher education. The conclusion provided an insight into the lived experiences of women academicians in higher education institutions of AJK. These results can play a decisive role in revisiting the women's issues in higher education.

Chapter Five

Summary, Implications, Conclusion, and Recommendations

The previous chapters (1, 2, 3, and 4) discussed the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs of AJK. Each chapter outlined a detailed discussion of subject aligned with the existing empirical and theoretical literature on women academicians' experiences in the sociology of education and gender studies. This chapter sums up the study with an engaged discussion. I have divided this chapter into four parts. Part one consists of major themes derived from the data presented in chapter four. Part two presents similarities and differences between present study findings and previous studies. Part three include implications of the study whereas part four summarizes the study with recommendations.

Part-wise discussion is added subsequently in the study:

5.1 Summary of the Argument

Many research studies revealed that women academicians do not experience discrimination in the same fashion as new academics do in HEIs (Allana, Asad, & Sherli, 2010; Bhatti & Ali, 2020; Kabeer, 2005). These studies also show that junior women academicians face various forms of discriminations in higher education (Gandhi & Sen, 2021; Hargreaves, 2000). The findings of my research attest some of these studies and add some new insights to the existing understandings and debate on the topic.

The study findings revealed that women academicians enjoyed family support for their education and career in HEIs of AJK. They were supported by parents, brothers, and husbands. Theme 4.1 discussed in chapter 4 shows that despite socio-cultural pressures, family plays a pivotal role in inspiring women for education and career. This study further

unveiled that in addition to the family, teachers also played a key role in inspiring women for their academic careers. The support and inspiration from family and teachers encourage women to get education and make careers in higher education.

One of the key finding of this study is that men and women academicians perform many common academic tasks in HEIs of AJK (see theme 4.2 for details of experiences). However, junior women academicians are discriminated against by the men HoDs in many ways, i.e. assigning undue teaching loads, additional tasks, and clerical work. Moreover, despite equal qualifications and potential, they are deprived of the opportunities to organize and lead events as discussed in chapter 4. It is pertinent to mention that HoDs and senior men colleagues discriminate women academicians in allocation of these tasks. Besides, men academicians use personal contacts to get favors based on their social, capital, and political references while women academicians are apartheid in the workplace. Another interesting finding of this study is the exclusion of women academicians from different senior academic and power positions, including headships, and committees. These positions enable men academicians to formulate rules and policies, earn economic benefits, enjoy a privileged status, and influence the decision-making process. The findings further unpacked that women publish less than men due to several factors, i.e. unavailability of research groups and mentoring services. In addition, women academicians are neither consulted for their consent of students' supervision nor research domain. These practices are a vivid markers of public patriarchy (Walby, 1990), hegemonic masculinity of Connell (1995), and ruling text of Smith (1990) in higher education of AJK (see implications of study).

In co-education universities, the administrative and supportive staff is often men, and women are either absent on these positions or seeking careers as explained in chapter 4, theme 4.3. Administrative staff create different barriers to women academicians in the provision of office items, NOCs, undue delay in file work and financial bills, and study leave. Moreover, similar nature of discrimination and non-cooperation towards women academicians by men supportive staff has been recorded. It is, thus, argued that administrative/supportive staff has been lenient towards men faculty and do not surrender to women academicians' authority in HEIs of AJK. These findings substantiated the argument of public patriarchy, ruling text, and hegemonic masculinity in higher education of AJK.

The study findings unpacked social stigmas of harassment towards women academicians in HEIs of AJK (see detail in chapter 4). Men academicians in top positions harass women academicians personally for trivial non-compliances. Similarly, men exploit their authority to physically harass them. Besides, they also harass them psychologically by allocating the superfluous nature of clerical work to belittle them, keep them in subordination and exclude them from power realms. In addition, men discriminate women academicians on the basis of ethnicity. Thus, women academicians from other ethnicities feel alienated. The findings are explicit and implicit demonstration of public patriarchy, masculinity, hegemonic masculinity and ruling text in coeducation HEIs of AJK.

The interaction frequently occurs between women and men (senior/junior colleagues) academicians in higher education. However, this interaction/exchange is formal and goal-oriented in academic and non-academic tasks. In co-curricular activities, women academicians engage students in seminars, training workshops, university events,

study and recreational tours, and sports competitions. There is also steady interaction of women academicians with students in HEIs of AJK (see theme 4.5). This interaction carries classroom learning objectives to know comfort levels and differentiate students' interests. However, a few women academicians discourage interaction with students outside the classroom, i.e. in café, corridors, and other places on campus. Moreover, some of the women academicians, due to time constraints, spared timeslots for research students. It is asserted that interaction is a key element for working relations in HEIs of AJK.

The women academicians have excessive engagement in academic and non-academic tasks as discussed in chapter 4, theme 4.6. Several barriers are created by men HoDs and higher authorities in workload, clerical work, education, research, research supervision, and publications. Due to academic and non-academic burden, women academicians cannot improve their education as compared to men. Similarly, they are unable to produce quality research publications due to lack of research groups and mentoring services. Moreover, multiple academic tasks affect their academic performance. Besides, women academicians are highly burdened with family responsibilities. It is pertinent to mention that focusing on academic tasks, families in general and children, in particular, suffer the most. Unlike men, women academicians' focus is shattered between academic career and family well-being. Further, they have to perform familial and career responsibilities in-line with cultural norms. Thus, family work balance becomes difficult for women academicians in HEIs of AJK. Consequently, their academic performance is affected. These findings confirm the claims of Walby's patriarchy, Smith's ruling text and Connell's hegemonic masculinity in higher education of AJK.

It is noteworthy that men and women academicians have equal opportunities to progress in HEIs of AJK. However, patriarchal structure of HEIs is still not supportive to women academicians to grow and develop professional skills like men. They, men and women, have equal opportunities to conduct and publish research work at national and international level. Nonetheless, they (women) are unable to publish research as men do due to certain factors as discussed in theme 4.7. Similarly, women academicians are often non-responsive to hunt research grants while men academicians solely enjoy research grants. Women academicians have equal opportunities to improve their education/qualification but only a very few of them get benefitted while majority face different socio-cultural constraints. They also have equal pay scales and wages as compared to men in higher education. It is pertinent to mention that despite having equal opportunities, only a few women academicians reach leadership/power positions due to glass ceiling (Loden, 1978). Besides, women academicians have various poor research record caused by structural barriers. It is pertinent to mention that very few women academicians take benefit from these opportunities in comparison to men.

5.2 Similarities and Differences with the Previous Studies

A detailed discussion of the empirical literature on the lived experiences of women academicians in HEIs has been given in chapter 2. This literature succinctly highlighted the lived experiences of women working with men academicians in co-education workplace of higher education. The forthcoming section compares and contrasts the findings of this study with those carried out in other contexts.

The working relations between women and men academicians are gendered at workplace in HEIs of AJK. The findings of many studies conducted in different

sociocultural context in developing countries are similar to my study findings. These studies unanimously revealed the partiality of men towards women academicians in the workplace (Sharma and Jyoti, 2009; Fatima and Sahibzada, 2012; Malik and Björkqvist, 2019). Similarly, Gandhi and Sen (2021) also argued that women academicians experience discriminatory working relations at the workplace. It is further conformed by Tsikata (2007). She stated that women academicians experience unequal distribution of academic work in Ghana. A similar situation is highlighted by Fatima and Sahibzada (2012) in Pakistan. They found that women academicians experience challenging workplace in HEIs. Similar assertions are given by Khalid et al. (2012). They also found challenging workplace in higher education of Pakistan. In contrast, Okpara et al. (2005) found that women academicians, in the higher education of USA, have smooth working relations with men colleagues. Likewise, Aguirre (2000) and Bryson (2004) also substantiated the findings of Okpara et al. (2005) about the smooth working relations between men and women at workplace. Bryson (2004) conducted her study on women academicians in the UK. She stated that women and men academicians enjoy evenhanded working relations in universities. Moreover, Thun (2020) also revealed that women academicians' interaction and working relations go hand in hand to meet the academic tasks in Scandinavian countries.

Workplace has been found hostile for junior women academicians due to discrimination by administrative/supportive staff (men) in HEIs of AJK. This claim is further supported by the studies conducted in different sociocultural contexts of developing countries (Prah, 2002; Ahsan et al., 2009). Agezo (2010) asserted that administrative staff ostensibly create barriers to the provision of office items to women academicians. Abugre

(2018) affirmed that supportive staff often ignore women academicians' commands in Ghanaian Universities. A similar finding is agreed upon by Teferra and Altbachl (2004). They stated that women academicians experience discrimination by the supportive staff in South Africa. Furthermore, research from Asian countries also show discrimination of administrative/supportive staff towards women academicians. Gandhi and Sen (2021) unveiled that, in India, men supportive staff do not take women academicians' instructions. The findings of Mohajeri (2016) affirm the claims of Khasawneh and Ibrahim (2012). They unanimously told that women academicians are mishandled by men admin staff in Iran and Jordon respectively. By the same token, Shah et al. (2020) maintained that admin/supportive staff create hurdles to women academicians' work in HEIs of Pakistan. In comparison to the developed nations, research shows that working environment of women academicians is ideal in higher education. Kurup et al. (2020) studied women's lived experiences in higher education in the USA. They posited that women academicians have good working relations with supportive staff. By the same token, Brackett et al. (2010) unpacked that women academicians in the UK are provided similar services as men *per se*. Moreover, Side and Robbins (2007) added, women academicians are provided adequate services by the admin staff in Canada.

Different types of harassment have been experienced by women academicians in HEIs of AJK, i.e. personal, physical, psychological, and ethnic harassment. A large number of studies highlighted the phenomenon of harassment at the workplace in higher education of developing countries. Namestnik (2022) analyzed physical harassment in Cambodian universities. She further cited personal and psychological harassment faced by women academicians at the workplace. Joseph (2015) examined physical harassment of men in

HEIs of Ghana. Furthermore, Joseph (2015a) presumably contended ethnic/racial harassment in Namibia. Thomas (2015) professed that harassment of women academicians at the workplace is one of the concerns in Indian higher education. She further asserted that women academicians face physical, personal, and psychological harassment at the same time due to patriarchal workplace. A similar claim is made by Rostami (2021) from Iran. She asserted that nine out of ten women face harassment in co-education universities. Yousaf and Schmiede (2016) unpacked harassment towards women academicians in universities of Pakistan. They argued that physical harassment at the workplace is characterized by intimacy to men colleagues. However, in developed countries, the issue of harassment is less important due to unbiased higher education policies. Johnson et al. (2018) stated that women academicians in non-tenured positions experience psychological harassment in universities of USA. Similar findings are given by Morley and Walsh (2002). They also unveiled psychological harassment in the UK. Moreover, Ledwith and Manfredi (2000) also expressed their concern over psychological harassment in the Scandinavian countries. They further stated that majority of women academicians are prey to psychological harassment. It is pertinent to mention that majority of women academicians in the developed countries experience psychological harassment at the workplace.

There is frequent interaction between women and men academicians for different academic tasks in HEIs of AJK. Research suggested that interaction between men and women academicians is important to complete academic and non-academic tasks (Hargreaves, 2000; Sax et al. 2005; Ssesanga and Garrett, 2005). However, the sociocultural environment of many Asian and African countries restrict women and men academicians' working interaction. Prah (2002) argued frequent interaction between men

and women academicians in higher education of Ghana. Similar claims are given by Morley (2011) in Tanzania. She unpacked interaction between men and women faculty for the sake of common academic tasks in universities. By the same token, Clarke (2003) stated that women academicians in Indian higher education have smooth interaction with men colleagues. A similar situation is found in Pakistan. Khokhar (2018) told that the interaction of women with men colleagues in co-education HEIs normally takes place. The nature of interaction in developed countries is similar to that of developing countries. However, Klassen and Chiu (2010) explored advanced level of interaction between men and women academicians for academic tasks. Shapiro and Williams (2012) also added that interaction between men and women academicians is not a big deal in academia. They work together for common tasks so interaction is necessary. It is revealed that women academicians engage students in co-curricular activities in HEIs of AJK. Research in developing countries shows that women academicians' engagement in co-curricular activities vividly influences the student's academic performance (Kariyana et al., 2012; Sami and Irfan 2020). However, Awan and Azeem (2017) argued that most of the women academics are deprived of key roles in co-curricular activities as compared to men. Sam (2015) also asserted that women academicians have less roles in co-curricular activities in most of the African HEIs. In Pakistan, Sami and Irfan (2020) highlighted that the socio-cultural context of society has a profound influence on women academicians' careers. They further added that women academicians are not equally engaged in co-curricular activities as compared to men. Women academicians in developed countries equally engage students in co-curricular activities. In the USA, Muninde (2016) unpacked women academicians' affective role in co-curricular activities. Oon and Subramaniam (2011) also noticed women

academicians' contribution to organizing seminars and conferences in universities of the UK. Jepketer (2017) studied women academics in the Scandinavian countries. He maintained that women academicians involve students in seminars and conferences.

Steady interaction between women academicians and students has been found in and outside the classroom for academic and non-academic pursuits in HEIs of AJK. Research shows similar situation of interaction in developed and developing countries (Hargreaves, 2000; Lamote and Engels, 2010). Davis (2003) unpacked frequent interaction in co-education HEIs in the USA. Similar findings are unveiled by Carrington et al. (2008) in UK and Einarsson and Granström (2002) in France. They unanimously told that interaction between teachers and students is unavoidable in co-education HEIs. Hargreaves (2001) also asserted the interaction of women academicians with students in and outside the classroom in the Scandinavian countries. Moreover, research from developing countries also showed that interaction between women academicians and students is a hallmark of higher education. However, Martin and Marsh (2005) affirmed that the sociocultural environment of societies put certain limitation on the interaction of women teachers with students. In Saudi Arabia, Al-Seghayer (2014) argued that the interaction of women academicians with students outside the classroom is not common. Similarly, Allana et al. (2010) highlighted the limited interaction between women academicians and students outside the classroom in Pakistan. She further stated that women academicians in conformity to their cultural values confine interaction with students outside the classroom.

Women academicians burdened with academic and familial responsibilities are rarely successful academicians like men in HEIs of AJK. However, joint family structure is one of the primary agents for women academicians' success in AJK. Research across

developing countries shows that the sociocultural environment of societies is a prime indicator for women academicians' academic careers (Koyuncu et al., 2006; Ogweng, 2016; Kumar and Chaturvedi, 2017). They also argued that men academicians are successful as compared to women because they [men] are devoid of family responsibilities. Mukangara (2013) unpacked women academicians' work-family imbalance in Tanzania. Likewise, Edwards and Oteng (2019) noted women academicians' low progress due to familial engagements in Ghana. By the same token, Mohajeri and Mousavi (2017) highlighted similar nature of sociocultural environment in Iran and Al-Alawi et al. (2021) in Saudi Arabia. They unanimously stated that women academicians in Muslim countries are bound to their cultural values more than their careers. Gupta and Sharma (2002) conducted their study on women's lived experiences in Indian academia. They told that women academicians' progress in career is down trended due to family issues. Moreover, a study conducted by Bhatti and Ali (2020) in Pakistan stated that women academicians have to take full responsibility of home and children's care. Thus, they are unable to focus on careers like men and lag behind. However, research shows a different situation of women academicians' lived experiences in developed countries. Acker and Armenti (2004) asserted women academicians' work-family issues are less important in Western countries including the USA. Similarly, Okpara et al. (2005) posited that women academicians in the USA grow exceptionally and family has never been a barrier to the academic career. Dustmann (2004) stated that successful women academicians in Germany are either unmarried or separated. A similar picture is painted by many researchers from the West. However, Goldstein et al. (2003) unpacked that women academicians are more career-oriented than family in the West. Similarly, Dcem (2020) ascertained late or no marriage

is one of the reasons for women academicians' successful careers in Western higher education.

Women academicians have equal opportunities as compared to men in HEIs of AJK. However, sociocultural environment of societies in general and the patriarchal structure of academia in particular exclude women academicians from active participation. Research shows that women academicians are discriminated against in the fair provision of educational amenities during their careers in developing countries (Kabeer, 2005; Glewwe and Kremer, 2006; Agbenyega, 2007). Chanana (2022) disclosed that women academicians are not provided equal chances to get education in India. Similar assertions are given by Agezo (2010). He also noted that women academicians in Ghana are not given equal space to complete education during their academic careers. Ahsan et al. (2009) highlighted women academicians' less interest in research publications and research grants in Malaysia. However, Koyuncu et al. (2006) uncovered negligence of women academicians' as a major factor in hunting educational opportunities in Turkey. At the same time, Sommer (2010) from Tanzania also agreed with Morley (2011) about women academicians' laxity in spotting opportunities as compared to men. Ahmed et al. (2012) studied lived experiences of women academicians in Bangladesh. They argued that women academicians are passive in hunting opportunities during their academic careers. Moreover, the findings of Ali and Akhter (2009) are in line with those of Sharma and Jyoti (2009). They told that women academicians have equal opportunities to get education, do research and attract grants; however, women's own negligence keep them on subordinate positions in higher education. In developed countries, women academicians enjoy equal opportunities to get education during their careers. It is noted that women academicians in

developed nations have got potential to compete and excel with men in academic careers. Although women still publish less; however, they are progressing in the academic ladder swiftly. Rønseñ and Sundström (2002) stated that women academicians are also enjoying perks and privileges in Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden. Straus et al. (2006) argued that women academicians in the USA are hunting the research grants even more than men. Similarly, Probert (2005) reported similar progress of women academicians from Australia. Besides, Waaijer (2015) unpacked women academicians in senior power positions in Germany while Ben-David (2017) also reported a similar situation in France.

5.3 Application of Theories

This part of the chapter contains various concepts applied to the data presented in chapter 4. These concepts discussed in chapter 2, are borrowed from theoretical and philosophical constructs of social scientists/researchers in the field of sociology of education and gender studies. It is pertinent to mention that the theoretical framework of this study is based on concepts of feminist scholars Walby's (1990) public patriarchy, Connell's (1995) hegemonic masculinity, and Smith's (1990) masculine hegemony and ruling text. These concepts are engaged to make gender sense of the women academicians' lived experiences. Moreover, social learning theory of Bandura (1977) and the cognitive development theory of Piaget (1971) are also discussed in theme-1.

I assert that the concept of observation and imitation have a pivotal role in the individuals' learning in higher education. It is important to mention that women academicians learn from role models through interactions and develop their gender identity accordingly. Theme-1 in chapter 4 is full of assertions that women academicians learn from their ideals around, i.e. parents and teachers. Blending both concepts of Bandura and

Piaget, I argue that women academicians learn from observation, interactions, and imitation and develop their gender identity accordingly. The findings of my study substantiate the arguments of social learning and cognitive development theories.

In chapter 4, data explains the working relations between men and women academicians in HEIs of AJK. Like contemporary societies, women and men academicians perform many common academic tasks in HEIs of AJK. However, junior women academicians are discriminated against by the men HoDs and senior colleagues in many ways (see theme-2). Here, I argue that patriarchy is a key indicator of women discrimination in higher education of AJK. Public patriarchy most often associated with working world. As public patriarchy is the existence of oppressive factors that function together against women academicians in the contemporary world. Walby argued that men dominate, oppress, and exploit women academicians in higher education. She further argued that women academicians like other public spheres are collectively separated by men from power, wealth, and influence in higher education of AJK (1990). Similarly, Smith argued that men construct, enact, and reshape ruling relations through ruling text constituting masculinity in higher education (1990). Thus, women academicians are discriminated. Additionally, men develop hegemonic masculinity in higher education which in turn create gender and power imbalances (Connell, 1995). My study findings conform the above typologies in the context of higher education of AJK.

Men supportive and administrative staff often discriminate women for trivial goals in higher education of AJK. Here, women academicians are given uneven treatment in the provision of office items, NOCs, undue delay in file work, financial bills, and study leave. The above responses are vivid description of the public patriarchy of Walby (1990), she

stated that men still take part in public discourse to dominate, oppress and exploit women in higher education. This further refers to what Smith (1990) called ruling text that men design and execute policies and make decisions to exclude women in higher education. The concept of hegemonic masculinity by Connell (1995) also work in HEIs of AJK where men control the affairs and subjugate women.

Several issues of harassment towards women academicians in HEIs of AJK are discussed in chapter 4 (Theme 4.3). It is argued that men academicians in top positions exploit their authority to harass women academicians personally for trivial non-compliances. The claim of Smith's masculine hegemony represents that men in power take undue advantage of their positions and women academicians are apartheid for non-compliances (1990). This reflects the claim of Waly that men intimidate, oppress, and exploit women in higher education. Similarly, Connell's (1995) power and gender imbalances are also explicit interpretation of discriminations against women academicians in HEIs of AJK. Interaction is a key indicator for working relations between men and women in higher education. This interaction frequently occurs between women academicians and men (senior/junior) colleagues for academic tasks. However, some women academicians restrict their interactions with men. Many women academicians discourage interaction with students outside the classroom due to socio-cultural values of the society. The impact of the sociocultural environment on interaction in higher education represents Walby's (1989) public patriarch where women restrict their interaction either with men colleagues or students due to cultural values.

The masculine hegemony of Smith and hegemonic masculinity of Connell are applicable in my study because women are being controlled by the senior men and they

further descend ruling relations to men (even juniors) while women are alienated. Women academicians' excessive engagement in academic and non-academic tasks is restricted as discussed in chapter 4, theme 4.4. The man made barriers are men made that restrict women academicians by means of bureaucracy, discourses, and exploit the relations of ruling to contain their hegemony in higher education. While relations of ruling restrict women in producing quality research publications. Women academicians' focus is shattered between academic careers and family. It is, thus, argued that women academicians have to perform familial and career responsibilities in-line with cultural norms (Smith, 1990. It demonstrates the power and gender imbalances exist due to hegemonic masculinity in HEIs of AJK.

In higher education, men and women academicians have equal opportunities to progress. However, the patriarchal structure of HEIs in AJK is still not supportive to women academicians to develop their professional skills on the similar lines as men do (Walby 1990). The concept of hegemonic masculinity of Connell (1995) is embedded in the higher education create gendered culture that further bifurcate men and women in power struggle. In each successive stage of academic career, women academicians experience power and gender imbalances. Similarly, women academicians due to masculine nature of higher education, women are unable to publish research as men do. Besides, women academicians remain non-responsive to research grant calls owing to the men's hegemony. Moreover, relations of ruling restrain women academicians in improving their qualifications. In addition, men having good relations of ruling are supposed to occupy the power positions (Smit, 1990

Table 5.1*Summary of Findings According to Themes*

No	Themes	Findings
1	Women's Inspiration to be Academicians	Women got family support from fathers, brothers, teachers, and husbands
2	Women Academicians' Experiences of Working Relationships with their Male Colleagues	<p>Junior women academicians are discriminated against by men HoDs in teaching loads</p> <p>Junior women academicians are discriminated against by men HoDs in clerical work</p> <p>Junior women academicians are discriminated against by men HoDs in additional tasks</p> <p>Junior women academicians are deprived of organizing the events and leading roles</p> <p>Junior women academicians are deprived of access to power positions including committee headships. They face exclusion in decision-making and policy issues</p>
3	Women Academicians' Working Experiences with Administrative and Supportive Staff	<p>Women academicians experience uneven treatment from administrative staff</p> <p>Women academicians reported similar nature of non-cooperation by men supportive staff.</p> <p>Senior women academicians did not experience discrimination from supportive staff</p>
4	Masculine and Gendered Culture and Women's Identity as a Teacher	<p>Men academicians in top positions harass women academicians personally for any trivial non-compliance. They face personal, physical, psychological and ethnic harassment</p> <p>Men exploit their authority to harass junior women academicians for the tiniest reasons</p> <p>Interaction between women academicians and men is formal and goal-oriented in academia</p> <p>Women academicians engage students in co-curricular activities in and outside the university</p>
5		Women academicians have steady interaction with students for classroom learning

	Women Interaction with Students in the Workplace	Academicians' Academicians' interaction with students outside the classroom Some of the women academicians have spared working hours with research students due to their busy schedule
6	Women Academic Expectations and Familial Responsibilities	<p>Academicians: Women academicians identified different barriers created by HoDs and higher authorities in education</p> <p>Women academicians are not given equal chances to improve education as compared to men</p> <p>Women academicians pointed out numerous personal/family and institutional problems</p> <p>Women academicians are highly burdened with family responsibilities. Focusing the academic tasks, families in general and children, in particular, suffer the most</p> <p>Successful women academicians were only due to their family support. Women academicians have to perform familial and career responsibilities in line with cultural norms.</p>
7	Women Opportunities in the Context of AJK	<p>Academicians: Key Women academicians have equal opportunities to progress in higher education. However, structure of HEIs in AJK is still not supportive to grow and develop professional skills</p> <p>Women academicians have equal opportunities to conduct and publish research work</p> <p>Women academicians are often non-responsive to research grant opportunities.</p> <p>Women academicians also have equal pay scales and wages as compared to men in higher education.</p> <p>Men and women academicians have equal opportunities to rise in the academic power positions</p> <p>Women academicians have various opportunities for foreign exposure</p>

5.4 Conclusion and Implications

I used qualitative research design to explore the lived experiences of women academicians in four co-education HEIs of AJK. This gave me a holistic picture of the trends and deeper insights into the women academicians' lived experiences in HEIs of AJK. The findings of my study revealed that women academicians enjoy considerable family support for their academic careers. Similarly, they were also inspired by the teachers. Women academicians do not experience smooth working relations with men colleagues and administrative/supportive staff due to uneven distribution of academic and non-academic tasks. Thus, owing to patriarchy, women academicians are excluded from the power mainstreams. However, women academicians have steady interaction with junior and senior colleagues (men) for academic and non-academic tasks. Similarly, they have interaction with students' in-and-outside the classroom. By the same token, they have satisfactory class control and good command on the subject. Moreover, women academicians face various types of harassment in academia, i.e. physical, psychological, personal, and ethnic harassment. Despite numerous challenges, women academicians try to maintain their identity as teacher in higher education. Besides academic career, women academicians have familial responsibilities while men are devoid of it and focus their academic profile. Due to heavy academic and family burden, women academicians experience work-family imbalances that vividly affect their academic performance. In addition, women academicians have equal opportunities as men have in higher education. However, they less likely hunt these opportunities as compared to men. The findings of the study show that lived experiences of women academicians are deeply rooted in patriarchal culture of higher education in AJK. Thus, the concepts: patriarchy by Walby (1990),

Smith's (1990) masculine hegemony and ruling text, and Connell's (1995) hegemonic masculinity informed this study. Drawing on these concepts, higher education is dominated by men academics who control, design, and execute policies and make decisions while women academicians are suppressed, exploited, and alienated (Walby, 1990). Similarly, ruling text organize, control, and mediate ruling relations in higher education by perpetuating masculine hegemony (Smith, 1990). Furthermore, men's hegemonic masculinity is highly applicable in creating power and gender imbalances in similar fashion in higher education of AJK (Connell, 1995). Thus, I concur, these concepts are highly relevant in the contemporary HE of AJK.

I believe this research has practical and theoretical significance in the domain of sociology of education and gender studies. Theoretically, this study contributes to the understanding of women academicians' lived experiences by bridging gap in the literature on higher education of AJK. Similarly, this research also adds novelty to the existing scholarships in the domain of sociology of education and gender in the context of AJK. Last but not the least, this research adds to the feminist scholarships that are ignored in higher education of AJK. It further provides an insight into the women's academic experiences from a feminist perspective. Practically, this study is helpful for forthcoming researchers, students, and other stakeholders to utilize the knowledge and to improve women's workplace in higher education. Moreover, educational administrators, legislators, and policymakers may use this research to revisit the patriarchal structure of higher education in the context of AJK. Besides, these findings also help different stakeholders working in various public and private spheres including private organizations/association and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

5.5 Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested on the basis of conclusion.

This is a small scale qualitative study; however, a large scale study can be conducted either using quantitative research or mix method research (MMR) to know the exact magnitude of the problem in the field of sociology of education and gender studies. This research is limited to few public sector universities comprising small sample size. A large scale study may cover other HEIs including colleges, degree awarding institutions (DAIs), and private sector universities to examine and compare women academicians as a category of analysis. Moreover, in this research, unit of analysis is limited to female faculty members while sample size may be extended to other HEIs due to expanded target population. This research may be used by private and public institutions to utilize knowledge in taking an insight into the policy-making and hence revisions. This study strongly recommends fair play to women academicians like men in implementation of policies in higher education. In the light of study findings, Ministry of Education, AJK (MoEAJK) in collaboration with HEC may also formulate a committee that can address concerns of the junior women academicians to improve workplace in higher education of AJK.

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**Lived Experiences of Women Academicians in Higher Education
Institutions of Azad Jammu and Kashmir*****(Interview Guide)***

I am Farooq Abdullah, doing PhD in Sociology from International Islamic University, Islamabad. I am conducting research on “Lived Experiences of Women Academicians in Higher Education Institutions of Azad Jammu and Kashmir.” Please spare few minutes for in-depth interview, I assure that all the information will be kept confidential as per research ethics.

Background

University:	
Faculty:	
Qualification:	
Designation:	
Experience:	
Number of Children:	
Age:	

1. What was your motivation for seeking career in higher education?

2. How do you see the demand of academic culture and your adjustment to it?

3. How do you explain your interaction with your male colleagues?

4. How do you find working relationships with your senior/junior male colleagues and administrative staff?

5. How did you experience your supporting staff treat you similar to your male colleagues in the same position?

6. What kind of social stigmas you faced from your male colleagues at workplace?

7. How do you describe your interaction with the administrative staff of your university?

8. How do you illustrate your interaction with your students within the classroom?

9. How do you explain your experience with your students outside the classroom?

10. How do you balance the academic expectations/demands and family responsibilities?

11. How do you experience your engagement in co-curricular activities?

12. How do you explain the opportunities currently available to women academicians in academia?

