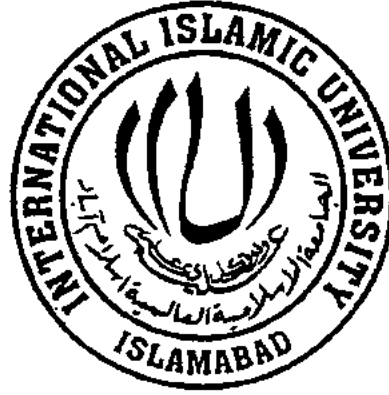


**Women Experiences of Academic Leadership in Higher  
Education in Rawalpindi and Islamabad**



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**Women Experiences of Academic Leadership in Higher Education in  
Rawalpindi and Islamabad**



A dissertation submitted to the International Islamic University,  
Islamabad in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of  
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

By

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PAKISTAN  
2020**

## APPROVAL SHEET

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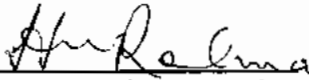
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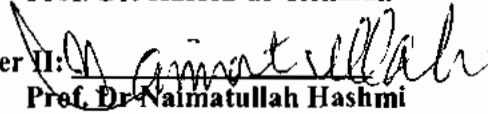
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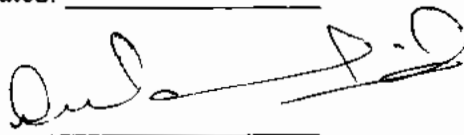
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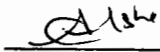
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### **Author's Declaration**

I, Aisha Bhatti, Reg. No. 11-FSS/PHDSOC/F14, hereby state that my PhD thesis titled "Women Experiences of Academic Leadership in Higher Education in Rawalpindi and Islamabad" is my own work and has not been submitted previously by me for taking any degree from International Islamic University, Islamabad or anywhere else in the country/world.

At any time if my statement is found to be incorrect even after my Graduate the university has the right to withdraw my PhD degree.

**Name of Student:** Aisha Bhatti

**Signature:** 

**Date:** Dec 8, 2020

### **Supervisor's Certificate**

It is certified that Ms. Aisha Bhatti, Reg. No:11-FSS/PHDSOC/F14 has completed her thesis titled "Women Experiences of Academic Leadership in Higher Education in Rawalpindi and Islamabad" under my supervision. I am satisfied with the quality and originality of the research work. I allow the researcher to submit the dissertation to the concerned authorities for further process as per IIUI rules and regulations.



**Supervisor**  
**Dr. Rabia Gul**

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## **Dedicated To**

The Loving Memory of My Father (Late), The Enduring  
Love of My Mother and My Amazing Husband

This Humble Effort is a sign of my love to you!



## **Abstract**

This qualitative study explored women experiences of academic leadership in higher education in Pakistan. It was intended to draw connections between existing dominant socio-cultural and institutional discourses, and women's perceptions about their potentials. It was also interested in understanding, how women experiences are being influenced by the dominant discourses present in society about academic leadership. For this purpose, twenty-three in-depth interviews were conducted from women occupying different academic leadership positions in universities located in districts Rawalpindi and Islamabad, Pakistan. An interview schedule was developed to investigate the lived experiences of women academic administrators and Foucauldian discourse analysis was utilized for getting careful insight into the opportunities and impediments experienced by women in their struggle to achieve and maintain leadership positions in higher educational institutes. This study found some unique and interesting findings about women leadership in higher education in Pakistan. First, tolerance, which is usually, associated with females and not an encouraged norm in academic leadership, help women leaders in understanding and managing critical attitudes and situations in organizational settings. Second, women work hard to establish their credibility and getting recognition in the male world. Third, there is no formal leadership training or mentorship structure for learning and managing leadership responsibilities in universities. Fourth, women need strong support systems such as networks, mentors, family and household assistants to confront leadership challenges. Fifth, age and marital status have important implications on women leadership role management. Finally, single women leaders experience greater verbal and non-verbal harassment by their senior as well as junior colleagues and staff.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

ACR	Annual Confidential Report
ASA	Academic Staff Association
ACE	American Council on Education
AEPAM	Academy of Educational Planning and Management Pakistan
BASAR	Board of Advance Studies and Research
BOF	Board of Faculty
CFO	Chief Financial Officers
EIU	The Economist Intelligence Unit
EI	Emotional Intelligence
HE	Higher Education
HEC	Higher Education Commission
HOD	Head of Department
LFP	Labor Force Participation
REF	Research Excellence Framework
TRA	Teaching Research Associate
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
TEP	Teacher Education Project
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VC	Vice Chancellor
WEF	World Economic Forum

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction: Women in Academic Leadership**

Leadership is a complex phenomenon, and leadership norms are discursively produced and reproduced to limit women's participation at senior leadership positions in Pakistani society. By academic leadership in this study, I refer to the individuals having a perceived role in management and administration in addition to the learning and instructional responsibilities in a broader way to develop academic identity and ethics. This study aimed at investigating and exploring the lived experiences of women at academic leadership positions in higher educational institutions in twin cities of Pakistan; Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Globally, women are increasingly participating in academic organization as faculty, researchers and leaders. Over the last two decades, significant efforts have been made in academia to reduce existing gender gaps (World Bank, 2011) and both developed and developing countries have acknowledged the role of women in academia. While, women are successful in obtaining doctoral and post-doctoral degrees, they are still underrepresented or remained absent from top administrative positions in higher educational institutes (DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014; Gallant, 2014; Teague, 2015). There are less than one-third women at senior leadership positions in universities (Cook, 2012; Gallant, 2014). It shows the presence of prejudices against women who are determined to attain and maintain senior leadership positions.

Diversity at top leadership positions is necessary for the success of individuals, departments and the academic sector at large (Kim & Cook, 2012; Sheikh, 2014; Taj, 2016). Many scholars have presented persuasive arguments about the advantages of increased visibility of women at top administrative positions (Diehl, 2014; Jarboe, 2013; Tahir, 2019). It is evident that women participation at senior leadership positions not only benefits women themselves; however, it is also significant for organizations and society as well. Scholarship revealed that women are excluded from executive roles in academia due to the persistent informal segregation, deprivation, and suppression (Nguyen, 2012; Morley & Crossouard, 2016; Taj, 2016). Selection boards are mostly male dominated and influenced by the highly professional and political male networks



(Ehrenberg & Main, 2009; Murniati, 2012). Such male networks often eliminate women and other minority candidates in the selection processes for executive positions. Konrad et al. (2008) suggested that significant proportion of women should be represented at top leadership positions because few women might not be adequate to reap the advantages of prevailing gender differences in leadership in organizations.

Numerous factors contribute toward the persistent underrepresentation of women at senior leadership positions including stereotypical attitudes, lack of women mentors and networks, and difficulty in maintaining work-life balance (Cook & Glass, 2014; Ely et al., 2011; Gallant, 2014; Manzoor, 2015). Moreover, institutional policies and practices are constantly perpetuating gender inequalities that develop the glass ceiling effect, the ivory basement, and velvet ghetto situations confine women in junior leadership and faculty positions (DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014).

Madsen (2008) illustrated that the dual role of women as housekeeper and worker is a major barrier for them in achieving senior leadership positions even in the egalitarian societies of the world. Societies develop pressures on women to keep balance between their dual roles. Conversely, only few women become successful in achieving senior academic leadership positions of Vice Chancellor [VC], Director, Dean and Chairperson in university settings (Lie & Malik, 2014). Moreover, Morley (2013) noted that women are intelligent, skilled and have the abilities to successfully manage and control the critical circumstances in the institutes but their male counterparts often challenge their intelligence and decisions at executive levels. Eagly and Carli (2007) noted that although women are found fit in the authoritative roles, masculine norms tend to influence their professional development and restrict them to exercise executive authority in the institutions. This is a major reason of persistent limited representation of women leaders across occupations (Ballenger, 2010; Barnes, 2017; Morley, 2013).

Scholarship on leadership in Asia also highlighted the problems encountered by women at top administrative positions (Ahmad, 2016; Morley & Crossouard, 2016; Murniati, 2012; Oplatka, 2006; Shaikh, 2014). Women leaders face many socio-cultural pressures while maintaining their professional image as a successful leader. Asian tradition established limitations for working women, where they are required to maintain balance between workplace pressures and social standards of a 'good women'.

They are required to work and act professionally, for instance, women have to maintain distance with their subordinates, and pursue professional and formal attire. Their work often demands late sittings at workplace to complete professional tasks but society don't appreciate their efforts and often tends to be judgmental about the character of women, who stay late at their workplace (Morley & Crossouard, 2016; Oplatka, 2006).

Overlooking women's leadership abilities, (Blackmore, 2014; Bell & Yates, 2014) is resulting in wasting women talent and perpetuating academic gender leadership gap (Evers & Sieverding, 2015; David, 2015). Regardless of the recent attempts made in academia to establish similar opportunities for everyone, "gender bias operates in personal interactions, evaluative processes, and departmental cultures to subtly yet systematically impede women's career advancement" (Carnes et al., 2015, p. 221). The barriers identified in previous researches are perceived to be deeply embedded in the academic system (Fritsch, 2015), and led women to believe that being a full professor is "undesirable", "unrealistic", and "unattractive" (Evers & Sieverding, 2015, p. 168). There might be similar competitive disparities for women in many occupations but academic environment should be understood as having a unique context (Bagilhole & White, 2008; Ecklund et al., 2012).

Given this stance of women leaders in academia, this research explored the opportunities and challenges encountered by women in higher education by using qualitative research approach. It also examined the lived experiences of women leaders in academia and their strategies to achieve and maintain their position at the top. The present study also explored the influences of dominant discourses of power that reinforce hegemonic masculinities and develop obstacles for women in reaching top leadership positions in academia. According to Foucault (1972/2002) the dominant discourses are developed and utilized by individuals in society to make sense of their everyday activities and behavior and their underlying meanings. In academic discourse of leadership, males are authorized to develop and maintain the dominant discourses in administration. Whereas, women have distinct standpoints, that are required to be understood sociologically by examining their everyday experiences and perceptions.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Women constitute a significant proportion of academic organizations in Pakistani society and contributing their roles in numerous fields of education from natural science to the humanities. In recent times, rapid growth of higher educational institutions has given rise to the concepts of feminization and gender equity in academia. It resulted in participation of large numbers of women in the academic organizations; however, they are underrepresented at top leadership positions in higher education; even though, they are earning more doctoral and post-doctoral degrees (DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014; Diehl, 2014; Eagly & Chin, 2010; Kim & Cook, 2012; Lennon et al., 2013). This lower representation of women at executive positions in higher education and their lived experiences as a minority are well documented in the West. These studies reported numerous challenges and constraints experienced by women leaders in developed countries and few studies also documented their strategies to overcome those obstacles (Carli & Eagly, 2016; Hoobler et al., 2014; Jiménez et al., 2017; Madsen, 2008; Turner, 2007; Zulu, 2011). However, few studies have been attempted in Asia and other developing regions of the world, where women also constitute half of the population and increasingly participating in higher educational management (Morley & Crossouard, 2016; Mohajeri & Mousavi, 2017; Murniati, 2012; Oplatka, 2006; Rahman & Islam, 2019).

In Pakistan, most of the research conducted to date on management and leadership, primarily focused on women managers and entrepreneurs (Alam, 2009; Manzoor, 2015; Rehman & Roomi, 2012). Only few studies documented the experiences of women leaders in academia that particularly focused on school and college principal's leadership styles and constraints. These women principals work in distinct organizational structures and cultures, as most of these institutes are gender segregated (Bana & Khaki, 2015; Jehan, 2015; Shah, 2009; Shah & Shah, 2012; Tahir, 2019; Taj, 2016). However, review of literature reveals scarcity of scholarship about the perspectives of women leadership in higher educational institutes in Pakistan, where women's participation in senior administrative roles is increasing day by day (Ahmad, 2016; Qureshi et al., 2011; Shaikh, 2014).

Few studies carried out in Pakistan about women leadership in higher education primarily focused on the challenges but overlooked the opportunities available to them

in career advancement and their distinctive strategies to maintain and improve their leadership positions. This study is intended to bridge this gap in existing scholarship by extending an understanding about women academic leadership in Pakistan and providing a holistic view of their experiences of constant struggle, in socio-cultural context of Pakistan. It also examines strategies of women at senior leadership status in universities and how do they develop and utilize their discourses within the dominant male discourses. The present study is aimed at exploring the opportunities and impediments experienced by women leaders in their journey to reach top administrative positions in higher education in Pakistan. Women require numerous skill and potentials to attain and maintain their standpoints in the male dominated world (Carli & Eagly, 2016; Lam, 2006; Madsen, 2008; Smith, 1987). Therefore, the present study is focused at understanding women's standpoint in academic leadership in higher education.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- i. To investigate the influence of socio-cultural factors on women leaders' career trajectories in higher education.
- ii. To analyze women's personal skills, strategies and resources that they employ to achieve and maintain leadership positions.
- iii. To explore the influence of dominant discourses on women's academic leadership roles.

### **1.3 Research Questions of the Study**

Qualitative researches seek to discover, understand or describe social phenomenon. Qualitative studies are used to best describe "how" something works rather than the quantitative perspective of "how well" something works (Borg, Gall, & Gall, 1993). Qualitative research questions amplify the participants' cultures, relationships, qualities of practice, and beliefs. This study inquired the following questions:

- i. What factors (social, cultural, economic, personal) facilitates and hinders women to attain and maintain senior leadership positions in higher education?
- ii. What strategies and skills do women employ to achieve and maintain leadership positions?

- iii. How women develop their leadership identities within the prevailing leadership discourse in academia?
- iv. How do women leaders in higher education negotiate and exercise power?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

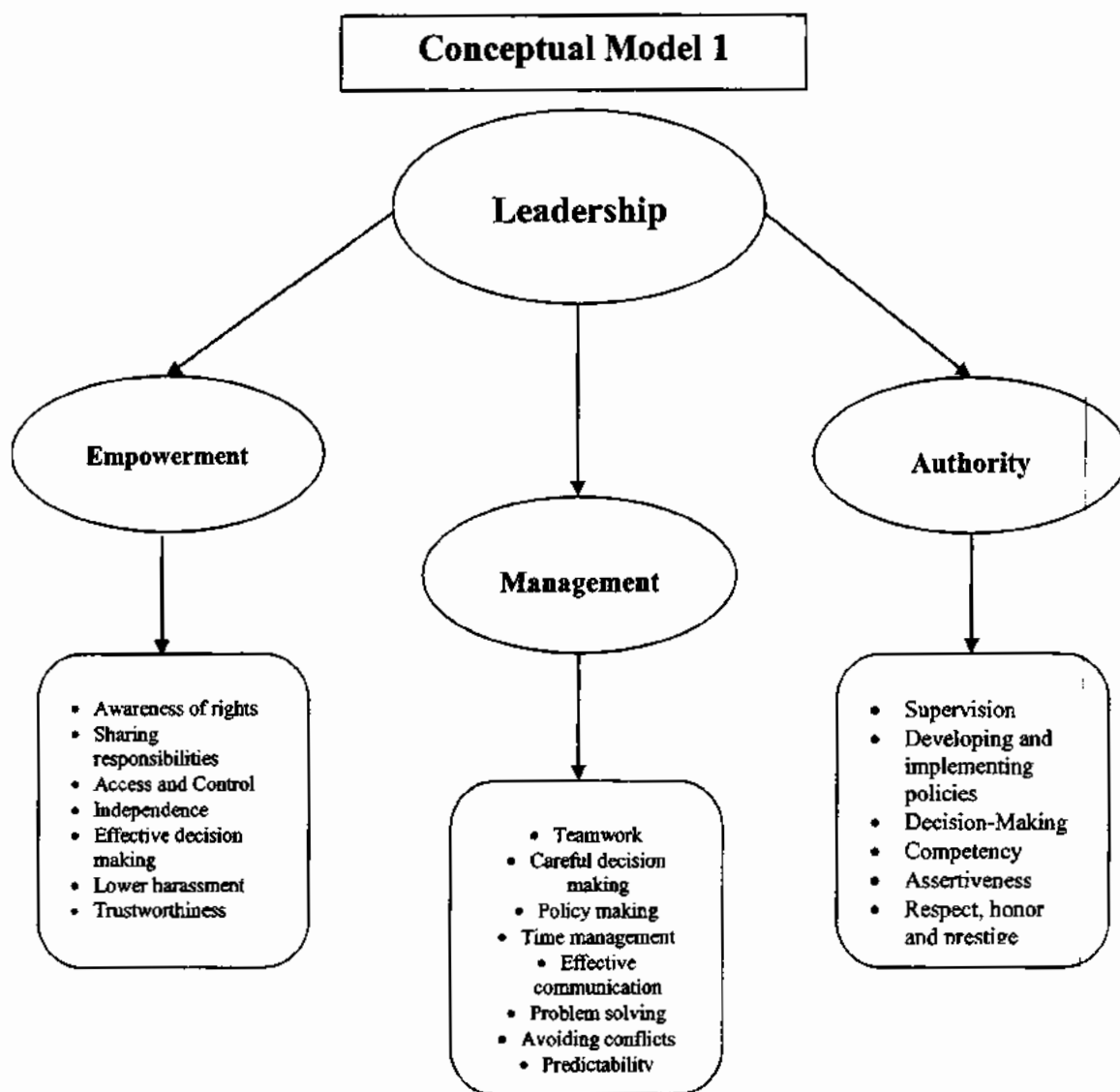
In recent times, women are increasingly participating as leaders in academia. Feminist scholars have contributed to change the traditional gender roles in higher education in many countries. However, women's status in Pakistani society is still very low. Their existence at top leadership positions is not acknowledged due to the existing patriarchal structure and dominant masculine discourses. This study therefore, is an important contribution in understanding the factors facilitating and hampering women leaders in academia. It also examines the extent to which existing scholarship about women leaders' experiences in higher education is applied uniformly in socio-cultural context of Pakistan and how women utilize their existing resources to reach at top leadership positions. It is also beneficial to larger feminist scholarship and to understand the efforts of women in improving their representation and reinforcing their standpoint in senior administrative decision making in the presence of dominant male standpoint.

The present study is a unique contribution in understanding the gender discourse and power relationships in higher education in Pakistan. It may assist social scientists in their investigation of factors influencing women empowerment in academia. This study may broaden the lens to explore the existing potential of women to prove their potential in the male world. It might also be an endeavor in developing strategies and plans for women leaders at organizational and governmental level.

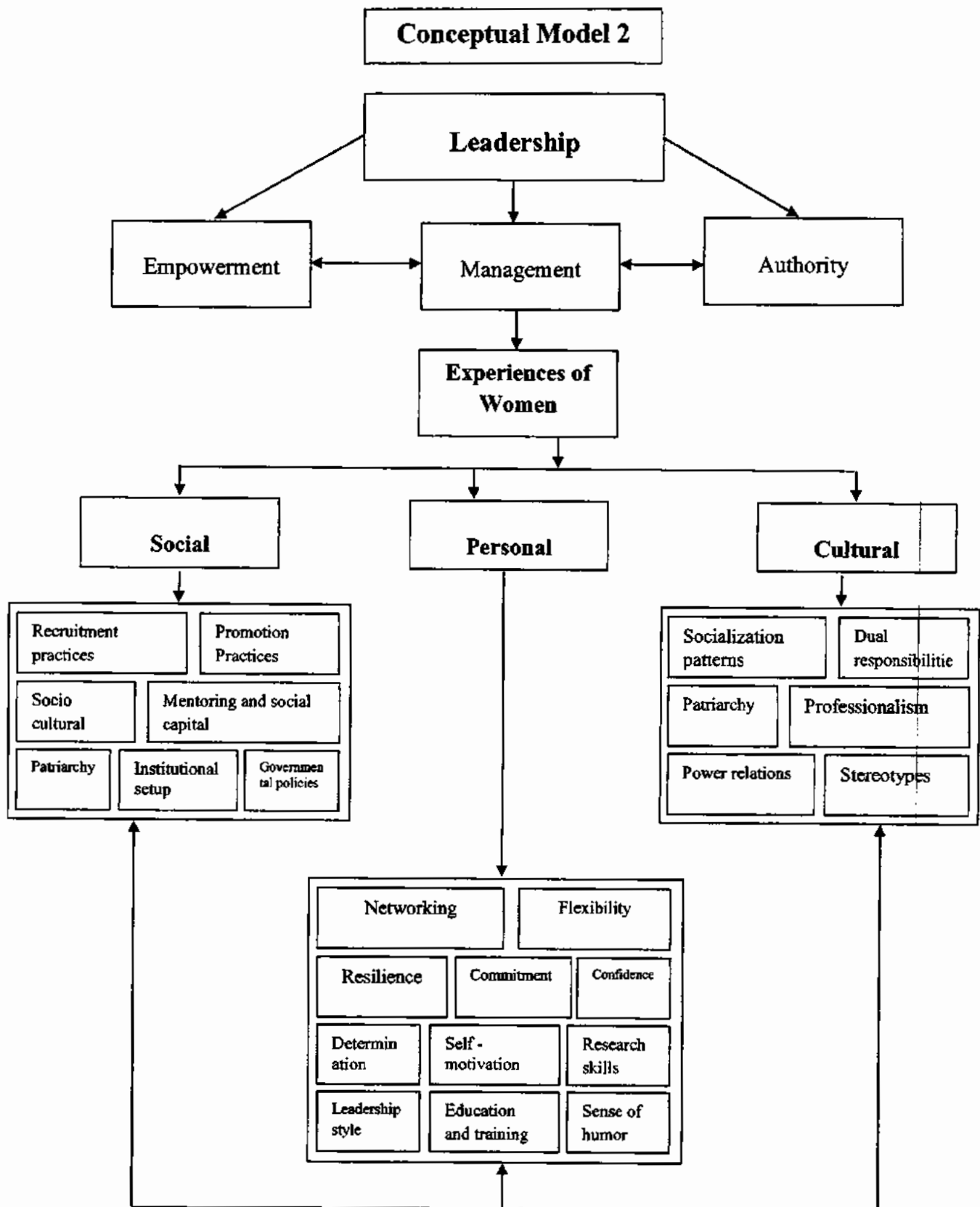
#### **1.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The conceptual framework of this study is explained in two models. The conceptual model 1 illustrates that leadership is a complex phenomenon that could be understood in three dimensions i.e. authority, management and empowerment that are further explained with specific interconnecting attributes. Moreover, the conceptual model 2 explains that women have unique leadership experiences in academia that are largely influenced by numerous social, cultural and personal factors and this study aims at

developing an in-depth insight on these factors to understand women's roles in academic leadership.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model of Leadership**



**Figure 2: Conceptual Model of Women's Leadership Experiences in Academia**

## **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

While this study is carefully planned and I made good efforts to reach its aims but there are some unavoidable limitations that should be considered before generalizing the findings to other contexts.

First, this study has utilized purposive sampling technique and is specifically limited to the population of women in higher education in two cities of Pakistan; Rawalpindi and Islamabad that narrowed its ability to generalize the findings on the entire women university leaders in Pakistan. It is quite possible that female academic leaders in other geographical areas of Pakistan may have unique experiences in obtaining and maintaining their administrative positions due to their diverse socio-cultural context and organizational structures.

Second, there is unavailability of updated statistics and published research about women leadership in higher education in Pakistan. Pakistan Higher Education Commission (HEC) and other reliable statistical organizations such as the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics and other government and private organizations were the major source of statistical and secondary data for this study. These organizations do not collect gender specific data in academia in Pakistan and most the statistical data is collected after long intervals.

Third, I as a researcher could have been biased in my interpretations of the data because I am also a university professor and have my own reflexivity. The potential weakness in this study design was my personal bias as a researcher or tendency to see in the data that what is anticipated (Morris, 2015). While the theoretical framework for this study is related to the postmodern feminism, therefore, it enabled me to guard against self-reflexivity during the entire research process and protected my data from bias inherent in my own experiences as an academician in higher education. I have undertaken several steps to mitigate this limitation including peer review of the interview questions and the subsequent review of the findings by a peer and committee members. Through the questioning of the data, this strategy strengthened the unbiased synthesizing of the data and assisted in locating patterns of bias thus diminishing threats to internal validity of the research design (Morris, 2015).

Finally, there were few women, I wanted to interview but they were unavailable or unwilling to manage some time to sit and share their experiences with me. Although,



I am certain that their insight would have proved valuable in this study. I reached out to a few deans and chairperson but they were reluctant to involve in the study; however, I would have liked to talk with them to get their perspectives.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Women's Academic Leadership in Global and National Context**

There is diversity of scholarship available about higher educational leadership in West as well as in the East that enabled my attention on women's leadership in academia. In this chapter, I have reviewed the previous researches regarding leadership, its types, women's leadership styles and identities, relationships of power in academic context, influence of stereotypes in women leadership, work-life balance etc. The contrasting review of previous research about women academic administrators in developed and developing countries was essential for comprehensive understanding of the power relations in academia across cultures. Scholarship on women leadership in higher education highlighted the role of family, social system, culture, organizational policies and practices, and personal skills and abilities in career development of women in higher educational leadership. In doing so, my review elicited several approaches of study and results. Following is a discussion of many areas garnered by researchers as a result of studying women leadership in academia.

#### **2.1 Women in Academia: An International Perspective**

During World War II, women became instrumental in the war efforts by doing jobs that were vacant due to men serving in the war. When men returned from the war, women were forced back from their jobs. After World War II, the United Nations listed gender "among its forms of discrimination banned by its charter" (Jaquette & Summerfield, 2006, p. 20). By 1960s and 1970s, the Women's Movement increased enrollment of women in post-secondary institutions, increased salaries, and opened more markets and fields that were previously banned for women. The United Nations was instrumental in bringing women's issues to the forefront. In the trade and higher education unions, women had to fight persistently to get their rights. They also joined traded unions to earn better wages. African-American women fought for their own employment disparities as they were often confined to specific jobs with lower pay packages. This employment disparity habitually increased when men were added to the equation (Dickerson, 2006).

In recent times, rapid growth of higher educational institutions has given rise to the concepts of feminization and gender equity in academia. It resulted in participation of large numbers of women in the academic organizations; however, they are invisible at leadership positions in higher education (Cook, 2012; DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014; Eagly & Chin, 2010). Furthermore, in higher education women are consistently underrepresented at the top leadership positions, even though they earn more bachelors, masters and doctorate degrees than men (DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014; Diehl, 2014; Gallant, 2014; Lennon et al., 2013).

In academia, men traditionally hold the higher positions in higher educational faculty. However, the proportion of women in academia has slightly increased. According to Wenniger and Conroy, (2002) the number of full time women faculty has improved from 19% to 24% between 1925 and 2000. Moreover, the figure of tenured faculty was improved from 22% in 1989 to 26% in 1998. The statistics indicated that developed countries i.e. the UK, the USA, and Australia are focusing on improved women's participation in higher education. Jackson (2002) and Kennedy (1995) pointed that women's invisibility at top positions in academia might be the consequence of the inconsistencies between "equal opportunities policies and practices and the patriarchal system on which Higher education institutions are based" (as cited in Jackson, 2002, p. 28).

Women academic administrators have achieved a greater height of status and prestige in higher educational institutions. Therefore, many researchers have concentrated on women in leadership and management in higher education in last two decades. Previous literature mainly focused on men in leadership and ignored voices of women leaders. Klenke, (1996, p. 15) mentioned that "most leadership research prior to the 1980's was carried out by men and dealt almost exclusively with male leaders...because women have been largely absent in the study of leadership, much of our knowledge of leadership has been derived from the description and analysis of male leaders reported by male researchers...leadership has been synonymous with masculinity".

In addition, there is a lack of parity in recruiting women in universities. They face discrimination for being hired as faculty, attaining tenure, and being promoted to full professorship. In a study, Niemeier and Gonzalez (2004) found that in tenured

American colleges and universities faculty, 36 percent are women and only twenty-seven percent of them are full professors. Furthermore, women are limited to power within departments. Within American college and universities, 80 percent of departments are chaired by men (Niemeier & Gonzalez, 2004). Inequity in female professors' promotion is visible at both private and public institutions. Bilen-Green, Froelich and Jacobson (2008) noted that even if an institution has a female president, unless it is a private independent post-secondary institution, women still are less likely to be granted tenure. There is a distinction in female faculty hiring at public and private institutions.

Women role in education is positively highlighted in many developed countries due to the increased demand of specialized labor work force. Studies found that in economically and technologically advanced societies, for instance, China, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea and some Islamic states, the number of women in academia is growing rapidly (Handelman, 2000; Jayaweera, 1997; Sidani, 2005). Other studies also revealed similar findings about women in educational institutions in advanced countries of the World, such as, in Korea 14% women held school leadership positions (Kim & Kim, 2005), in China 13% women are college heads (Su et al., 2000) and in Singapore the majority women are working as school administrators (Morris & Coleman, 1999). Moreover, in developing Muslim countries such as Turkey and Pakistan, women are involved in academic administration (Celikten, 2005; Kirk, 2004). However, in Pakistan, men still hold most powerful positions in academic administration and selection boards are also dominated by them (Kirk, 2004).

The above discussion about women leadership in international context revealed that women are encouraged to participate in academia and they are playing significant role in educational development of the institutions. However, they are invisible at top leadership position due to the dominating masculine ideologies present in these societies. Change is coming in developed as well as in developing countries in regard to women involvement in senior leadership, however slowly.

## **2.2 Women Leadership in South Asian Region**

In recent decades, South Asian higher educational (HE) system is expanded and achieved massive growth. Many countries of the region have developed highly

competitive and demand-led international universities to facilitate students. They aimed at maximizing growth by developing self-interest and aspirations for people (Biesta, 2006). Bhandari and Lefébure (2015) argued that HE institutes in Asia are representing their nation's long term interests by contributing in the process of consistent economic growth and developing international relationships. It also aimed at improving capacities of individuals' belonging to a large middle and lower classes, and ensuring higher incomes and good life style. As in the globalized economy, knowledge is perceived as a type of capital that is utilized to produce advance technologies and better services instead of only production of the goods. It is also associated with individual and social achievements and protects from below standards of living and lower social mobility.

Beside recent academic growth and expansion of the knowledge economy in Asia (Ong, 2006), so far, no university is positioned in international ranking of top one hundred universities. Consequently, quality, rather than equality, dominates policy discourses in this highly aspirational region, with the priority to raise standards and compete more effectively in the global marketplace (Times Higher Education [THE], 2015). One of the main reasons behind this fact is the gender disparity found in HE system. Although women enrollment in HE is improved in the region, they are still underrepresented in HE faculty and administration.

Scholars such as Altbach (2004) and Luke (2002) demonstrated that gender disparity is a complex issue in Asia due to the existing discourses between modernization and customary gender norms. Although, Asian countries are committed to achieve gender equality in HE; however, such commitments are not expected in present male dominating socio-cultural context (Luke, 2000). Morley and Crossouard (2016) also found lack of systematic national-level data gathering across the South Asian region about women's representation in HE leadership.

Many surveys are conducted in Commonwealth Universities to get an overview of women's representation (Lund, 1998; Singh, 2002, 2008; Singh & Garland, 2013). Such surveys indicated a little change in status of women in HE institutions in countries like Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. South Asia is reported as having lower number of women (22.1%) at senior lecturer posts including 34.9% in Sri Lanka and 15% in Pakistan. It is concluded by these survey reports that while women are

increasingly participating in academic institution, men still outnumber women at senior administrative positions.

According to a report given by The Economist Intelligence Unit [EIU], (2014), 0.01% women are presently working at the position of VCs in Bangladesh. Moreover, there is no woman VC in the public sector universities providing coeducation and only one-woman VC in a private university. In another study conducted in Sri Lankan universities, it is found that at the end of 2011, around 50% lecturers were women. However, only one of four professors was a woman (Gunawardena, 2013). India is ranked 114 out of 142 countries in the 2014 Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2014). In a report developed by Government of India (2013), the proportion of women academicians is below 40% in Indian higher educational institutes. Among them, around 25% women were professors, 30% were associate professors and 40% were assistant professors and lecturers. Su et al. (2000, p. 474) indicated that “as China strives to modernize its educational and economic systems in the twenty-first century, it can be expected that more women will assume leadership positions in education, although the process can be slow and gradual because of the strong emphasis on male dominance in the traditional Chinese culture”.

In their study of five South Asian countries about impeding and inspirational factors for women in higher educational leadership, Morley and Crossouard (2016) found that participants identified more distractions rather than attractions in administrative roles in academia. Most of the women hadn't received any formal training for leadership skills development, or effective time and work management for senior leadership positions. Many participants negatively associated their leadership positions with work overload and their ineffectiveness in competitive masculine structures. Their professional advancement was also influenced by the powerful male lobbies and unequal power relationships in academia. The study also found presence of toxic organizational patterns, job-related stress and tensions for women executive that tend to limit their participation in top leadership roles in higher education.

In their study about women in HE leadership, Morley and Crossouard (2016) also reported scarcity of gender based statistics in HE in South Asian region, except Sri Lanka. There are some countries that have taken gender segregated data about HE faculty; however, there is lack of statistics about women senior leadership participation

such as VCs or deans. Improvement in women academicians in HE faculty doesn't brought change in their involvement in senior academic administration in the region. This study did not found any gender-disaggregated data about different categories of employment at institutional level and there was also no evidence of uniform or linear improvements. As if the number of women was increased in one year, it was decreased in the following year. Moreover, gender disparity was evident in different disciplinary fields in HE for instance, there was greater proportion of women in medicine and social science; whereas, they were underrepresented in science and technology.

Morley and Crossouard (2016) found that South Asian women are not trained for leadership positions. Moreover, women are not recognized as effective leaders in the world, and often get discriminated and rejected at top leadership positions (Jarboe, 2013; Manfredi et al., 2014). According to Burkinshaw (2015), many women faculty members hesitate to apply for leadership positions due the prescribed gender norms that develop negative feeling of work overload and lead toward unattractive professional opportunities. However, some women are successfully managing their leadership roles and thriving for senior leadership positions by working hard to integrate in masculine organizational culture. Morley & Crossouard (2016) highlighted that there are numerous consequences of women's underrepresentation at top leadership positions in academia including unequal opportunities of recruitment and promotion, decreased participation in top decision making processes, and reinforcement of the thinking that women are not appropriate for leadership positions. There is a need to promote a leadership environment that is equally appropriate and welcoming for both men and women instead of simply quantifying women holding leadership position in masculine organizational structures.

*Moreover, most of the research on academic leadership is conducted in the West*

and it is believed that women have similar experiences in the developing regions of the world. It also shows considerable imbalances in leadership research in developing countries of the World (Oplatka, 2004, 2006). Currently, many leadership researchers are aimed at understanding distinctive experiences of women about academic leadership in developing countries of the world (Fitzgerald, 2006; Grimes, 2005; Oplatka et al., 2001; Oplatka, 2006). It seems to be the outcome of what Grimes (2005, para.1) mentioned as "the mainstream epistemology about women in educational

leadership roles has been constructed, canonized and theorized from a white hegemonic female perspective". It shows that women experiences in the East are not well documented in a male dominating scholarship about academic leadership.

### **2.3 Women in Academic Leadership in Pakistan**

Pakistan is a Muslim country, where males are privileged and dominating almost all segment of society. Beside this, Pakistan has an agricultural economy and most of the population lives in rural areas, where there is the existence of strong feudal system. Men tend to influence women in many ways in rural communities as she is taken as a male's commodity. Contrary to the rural settings, change is rapidly coming in urban areas, as women status is improving significantly. However patriarchal structure is strong enough and deep rooted in society that resists change in traditional gender norms in both rural and urban communities.

In Pakistan, the proportion of women is 52.3% of the total population and majority of them (71.5%) are aged between 15-35 years. Since independence, women in Pakistan are experiencing multifaceted discriminations. The status of women has now improved with changing norms about women education and employment; however, they have restricted mobility and their participation is limited to the junior positions. Pakistan has Gender Gap Index of 0.55. Women Labor Force Participation [LFP] is 39%, literacy rate is 0.63, political participation is 26 % and political leadership in state is only for five years in past seventy years. Beside above figures, women participation in economic growth in Pakistan is ranked 141<sup>st</sup> out of 142 in Global Gender Gap Report in 2014 that is also alarming. It included 132<sup>nd</sup> position in equal academic opportunities, 119<sup>th</sup> in physical and mental well-being of women and 85<sup>th</sup> in political participation (Manzoor, 2015).

Manzoor (2015) also indicated that women LFP in Pakistan is among the lowest in the world and is less than world average of 52 % (Pakistan's is 26-30%). In South Asia, there are many countries like China that have addressed this issue and achieved 67% LFP. Labor Force Participation (LFP) is understood as the total number of working women in relation to the total number of women having capacity for employment. The lower LFP in Pakistan indicated that women have abilities to contribute in economy but they are restricted to contribute their role due to the existing patriarchal structure.



Wirth (2001) also noted that this lower participation is due to the strong glass ceilings that limits the achievements of women and restrict their mobility toward senior leadership positions. Other major obstacles for these women included the lack of knowledge about leadership opportunities and inadequate trainings. Women are pressurized to get education in limited areas i.e. nursing, teaching; however, other major academic and professional fields are preferred for males in Asian countries.

Raza et al. (2010) reported that women in Pakistan experience many socio-economic constraints due to the rigid patriarchal structure. Consequently, women LFP ratio never become equivalent to men. However, there is a slight increase in women LFP in recent decade. Data showed that LFP of women in Pakistan was reached to the 20% in 2010 from 7% in 1970. It was further increased to 24% in 2012-13 (Sabir, 2015). While there was some development in the extent of women LFP, gender disparity is still deep rooted and influencing women's lives in Pakistan. Traditionally, women participation was restricted to the teaching and nursing; however, women are now visible and competing with men in all fields of life. Firdouse (2006) also found that women are involved in commercialized job market and fighting for their economic rights to get little autonomy and to improve their socio-economic status in a masculine world. Especially, urban women are working parallel to their men counterparts as both husband and wife are doing jobs for better lifestyle.

Globally, educational institutions are expanding in today's competitive world and academic leaders have to be careful in accomplishing their institutional goals by encouraging and collaborating with their team and improving overall performance. Similarly, Pakistani academic systems are also performing pivotal role in expansion of educational economy. This development process is more challenging for institutions in Pakistan due to the lack of professional and trained faculty and supporting staff, lack of resources and infrastructure. Moreover, there are increased political and economic pressures for rapid technological advancements, improved quality of education, dissemination of knowledge and information, developing healthy competitive culture, generating resources and funding mechanisms to survive in globalized and complex educational economy (Asaari, 2012; Mansoor & Akhtar, 2015). Morley and Crossouard (2016) also highlighted similar trends in HE institutions in South Asian countries, for instance, improved performance, competitiveness, rationality and accommodating

value system. Likewise, leadership is associated with affects such as aggression, impropriety, stress and anxiety, in ways that were intensified by highly patriarchal and corporatized HE cultures like Pakistan. Indeed, its difficulties and toxicities meant that leadership was rejected or resisted as an object of desire by many women.

Pakistani higher educational institutions are also rapidly expanding in this competitive academic environment. In 2012, the Higher Education Commission [HEC], Pakistan reported that there were total 138 universities including 75 public and 63 private, with six newly established universities in 2010-2011. Student enrolment in HE was also enhanced from 276,000 students in 2001–2002 to 869,000 in 2009 – 2010, with a further 16% increase in 2011–2012 (Higher Education Commission, Pakistan [HEC], 2012). While HEC indicated that 45% female enrolment in 2010-11, Academy of Educational Planning and Management Pakistan [AEPAM], (2011) reported 33% female enrollment. The low women enrolment rates revealed existing socio-economic and gender inequalities in Pakistan. Agarwal (2013) said that although segregated college and university structures tend to improve women's participation in HE, but there is still limited involvement of women in HE leadership in Pakistan. The Economist Intelligence Unit [EIU] (2014) estimated 0.04% women VCs in Pakistan.

In last few decades, Pakistan is rapidly changing its traditional gender ideologies and now many women are engaged in primary roles in various public and private organizations; however, they are still underrepresented at top administrative roles. Women leaders are offered undue favors by their senior and junior male colleagues and often treated in a different way due to their gender. This gendered behavior is shortly addressed by Hedlin (2017), who mentioned that women principals are labeled as 'women heads'; while, men are labeled only as 'heads' in schools. The researcher found that in the organization, where the study was conducted, women were treated more politely, sympathetically, and in a distinctive manner which might be the manifestation of the stereotypical attitudes present in society. This assumption is also parallel to the findings of Fairhurst and Grant (2010), who claimed that leadership principles are constructed and reconstructed in a social system; therefore, leadership qualities are not individually owned and learned by people for their professional growth and development.

In her study about the impact of indigenous culture on women leadership in Pakistan, Manzoor (2015) argued that women's household commitments lead toward lower visibility of women in leadership roles. Women are responsible for managing their household chores beside child bearing and rearing; therefore, they can't manage their administrative roles effectively. Leadership roles demand more time and energy but women often have to leave office early or avoid late sitting due to their domestic responsibilities. Roomi and Parrott (2008) also reported that in Pakistani society, women have restricted mobility and not allowed to stay late for official work commitments. Moreover, they are also discouraged by their family and friends to involve in administrative activities due to the rigid and discriminative cultural norms.

Bana and Khaki (2015) also described some unique and interesting elements of academic administration in public colleges in Pakistani. The study found that college principals are reliant upon the District Office, even for the minor policy related issues and have to follow the instructions forwarded by the top leadership. They also anticipate blind obedience of their employees without fail. They also mentioned a statement of a senior official in Pakistan that demonstrated such gender disparities. In a training program, in which both the authors were a part, this officer said that his standing order to his juniors was 'do or die but don't say why'. From this statement, one can visualize the extent to which compliance is emphasized in the official bureaucracies in Pakistani educational institutions.

Although there is scarcity of research concerning educational leadership in Pakistan, but some studies have reported that most of the principals try to maintain their leadership status by effectively organizing their routine managerial activities (Bana, 2010; Khaki & Safdar, 2010; Memon et al., 2006). Other studies also maintained similar ideas about school principals, who try to maintain their status quo by performing their leadership responsibilities (Bana et al., 2012; Memon et al., 2006; Simkins et al., 2003). Another study conducted by Shafa (2003) illustrated that in Gilgit-Baltistan, most of the public school principals mostly kept busy in visiting their District offices for attending different meetings and don't find enough time to manage activities within schools.

## **2.4 Women's Under-Representation in Higher Educational Leadership**

As discussed earlier that women are increasingly participating in HE and attained greater respect and prestige, women are still underrepresented at top leadership positions in academia. While, women are now earning more advanced degrees and becoming full professors, their involvement in top academic leadership roles in colleges and universities is very low. Darling-Hammond (2015) found that men are holding most powerful and influential positions of VC, Deans, directors and provost in higher education in United States of America.

This lower participation of women in senior managerial roles is the product of multiple socio-cultural and institutional factors that tend to reinforce masculine leadership ideologies. Lennon et al. (2012) reported that more females in the U.S are attending college and obtaining advanced degrees than men. It shows that there is no scarcity of qualified women and yet, the higher numbers of females are qualified for leadership roles but they are not considered suitable for top administrative positions by the male dominating selection boards (Lennon, 2013, 2014; Teague, 2015). Furthermore, Lennon (2013) argued that in higher education, women who are holding executive leadership positions are pointedly lagging behind men in both status and salary.

Cook's (2012) analysis of the American Council on Education [ACE] report indicated that 15% growth rate is less than the near 50% increase of women in the presidency during the 1990s, indicating the number of women rising to top positions is increasing at a very slow rate. Recent findings suggested that women's progress in leadership has stopped altogether (Baltodan et al., 2012; Lennon, 2013, 2014). The reason for the slow rate of increase remained unknown and the slow growth rate is an indication of a problematic issue of underrepresentation of women in higher education (Cook, 2012). One reported cause of the lack of women in leadership roles is the lack of qualified women applying for these positions (DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014).

Downs et al. (2014) illustrated that academic leadership norms are constructed on dominant masculine standards and a woman's leadership performance and effectiveness is being evaluated on such discriminative perceptions. Women experience a double-bind in balancing agentic leader requirements (be assertive) and communal leader behaviors (be sensitive) (Hannum et al., 2015). Women have to struggle hard to

develop harmony between agentic leadership norms and their personal self-image to fulfill organizational leadership requirements. Similarly, women can get some opportunities to demonstrate their leadership strengths in academia (Vinkenburg et al., 2011; Zenger & Folkman, 2012). Current research in the domain of education also emphasized emotional empathy for academic leadership (Parrish, 2015) that can transform tradition stereotypical attitudes about women leaders.

Johnson (2002) reported about a leadership training project in universities located in United Kingdom [UK] to understand the influence of 'new managerialism' on management and administration. This training was initiated for senior academic leadership i.e. VCs, Deputy VCs, and Head of Departments [HOD]. While, the project was not confined to women leaders, the results of the study have important implications for women participating in HE leadership. The increased demands and workload in 'new managerialism' have put greater responsibilities upon academic administrators for learning new roles, skills and behaviors that require more time at work. Consequently, women experience greater stress in balancing their personal and professional life.

Many studies have provided unique justifications about the invisibility of women at top leadership positions in academia in less developed countries of the world. For instance, cultural scripts discouraging feminine leadership attributes in academia (Blackmore, 1999; Curry, 2000), latent gender disparities (Coleman, 2002), and masculine leadership norms that reduce opportunities for women in academic administration (Limerick & Lingard, 1995). Moreover, women believe themselves to be less confident and competitive; therefore, they don't apply for senior leadership positions in HE. They are also found having lack of aspirations and lack of information and awareness, about new opportunities in their professional life (Coleman, 2002).

## **2.5 Leadership and Management Distinction**

Leadership is a complex phenomenon and various scholars have defined it in distinctive ways. There has been a long debate on the topic since at least 1930s, but no agreement has been made so far about a universal definition of leadership (Northouse, 2018). Therefore, this study found it necessary to review some definitions of leadership in academic context to understand leadership and its characteristics in an effective way.

Deconstructing the term “leadership” requires understanding its definition and how it’s used. The terms ‘leadership’ and ‘management’ are often used interchangeably; however, the term ‘leadership’ has wider scope.

“Power” that is strongly embedded in the leadership discourse, could be defined as “influence potential,” that incorporates many types of power to “maximize effectiveness” (Hersey et al., 2001, p. 204). Power is effectively utilized by leaders to achieve organizational goals. Hershey et al. (2001, p. 213) have pointed and explained different types of power by using distinctive terms such as “coercive,” “connective,” “reward,” “legitimate,” “referent,” “informative,” and “expert” power. The study highlighted that power is disseminated into various stratum to produce and reproduce a hierarchical leadership discourse.

‘Leadership’ and ‘management’ are two interrelated but distinctive terms utilized by different researchers in the study of new managerialism. Therefore, it is necessary to make clear understanding of these two concepts that are often used interchangeably. Many researchers utilize both concepts simultaneously that will become evident in the literature; therefore, it is useful to elucidate the phenomena in this study. In this study, I have described distinction between leadership and management given by Kotter’s (1990) and Zaleznik (1993).

Leadership and management are two interrelated terms and many scholars have described the distinction between the two. Zaleznik (1993, p.6), in his book, “Managers and leaders: Are they different”, pointed that “leaders and managers are basically different types of people” and illustrated “that managers and leaders have different attitudes toward their goals, careers, relations with others and themselves”. Zaleznik found distinctive approaches of development of managers and leaders as discussed below:

“Managers tend to adopt impersonal attitudes towards goals. Their goals arise out of necessities rather than desires and therefore are deeply embedded in the history and culture of the organization, whereas leaders are active rather than re-active, shaping ideas instead of responding to them. They adopt a personal and active attitude towards goals. Leaders and managers also differ in their conceptions of work. Whereas managers tend to view work as an enabling process involving some combination of people and ideas interacting to establish

strategies and make decisions, and act to limit choices, leaders work in the opposite direction, to develop fresh approaches to long-standing problems and to open issues up to new options. Managers prefer to work with people and relate to them according to the role they play in a sequence of events or in a decision making process, while leaders who are concerned with ideas, relate in more intuitive and empathetic ways. The manager pays attention to how things get done and a leader pays attention to what the events and decisions mean to participants". (Zaleznik, 1993)

Kotter's (1993, p.26) distinction between leaders and managers is also aligned with Zaleznik (1993), as he discussed it in his study entitled "What leaders really do", where he mentioned that the terms leadership and management are two unique and corresponding phenomena. Both have their own aspects and qualities that are mandatory for effective and successful administration of activities. There is a need to incorporate both leadership and management skills to balance each other. Management at the one hand is to deal with complex environment and leadership on the other hand is to deal with changing environment and these varied utilities form distinctive qualities of leadership and management. Firstly, management accomplishes the function of coping with complexity by planning and budgeting whilst leadership accomplishes change by first setting a direction. Secondly, management develops the capacity to achieve its plan by organizing and staffing, whereas leadership does so by aligning people. Thirdly, management ensures accomplishment by controlling and problem-solving. Leadership does the same by motivating and inspiring.

The discourse on management and leadership is also present in academic cultures. The debate on the difference between academic management and leadership was emerged about two decades ago. Studies revealed that academic leaders in effective institutions are expected to concentrate greater on learning and instructional skills. However, the leaders in the academy utilize greater time in management and administration instead of teaching and learning that are the central themes of educational institutions. They have to perform multiple roles in the institution, such as sometime they become managers or administrator and sometime they have to become instructional leaders. They also have to keep a balance between distinctive responsibilities. In their study Bolden et al. (2012) illustrated that educational

management has utilitarian orientation and inclined toward an institutional focus to organize academic activities and procedures effectively to attain defined outcomes. While, educational leadership has a normative orientation and perceived in a broader way that is more effective due to its wider scope and influence on academic ethics and identity.

Many researchers have highlighted and explained the qualities of a good leader. According to Karnes and Chauvin (2005), a leader should understand the basic ideology of leadership along with the abilities of effective verbal and non-verbal communication, personality development, administrative decision making, analytical thinking and long term effective planning. The study reported that such qualities could be learned and evaluated by regular trainings and workshops. Madden (2011) explained that most leadership definitions describe the characteristics of leadership in agentic or masculine terms. Agentic characteristics are assertiveness, controlling behaviors, ambition, and aggressiveness. Definitions of leadership began to merge around the 19th century idea of the great man theory and its effect on how society views leadership traits (Heifetz, 1994 as cited in Eddy & Van Der Linden, 2006). Madden further described communal characteristics as opposites to agentic ones. Furthermore, Madden associated communal traits with feminine roles because the traits are described as nurturing, warm, friendly, and sensitive.

Johnson et al. (2008) further asserted that people have varied prospects about men and women in society. Individuals take these behavioral expectations into their work life and their beliefs in how leaders should behave. Therefore, when the person in charge behaves consistently with an expectation of what leadership is, then that person is perceived as an effective leader (Johnson et al., 2008). Studies on leadership definitions and gender stereotyping in higher education, such as Eddy & Van Der Linden (2006), Gallant, (2014) and Madden (2011) maintained that when subordinates characterize leadership according to the masculine norms and a woman leaders exhibit an agentic characteristic; her behavior is considered contrary to her female gendered expectations of being nurturing and caring. This incongruity in the attitudes of people brings difficulties for individuals to recognize women at leadership positions.

There is plenty of scholarship on several elements of academic leadership, but many aspects about successful leaders still need to be investigated because academic



environment is rapidly changing and becoming complicated. According to Altbach & Knight (2007), in past two decades, globalization has augmented the complexities in academia. It demands focus on integrating international prospects and capabilities in students, attractions in learning foreign languages and establishing cross-cultural relationships. Therefore, academic organizations require maintaining consistent benchmark of success. They have a complicated monitoring system to evaluate their program and assessing achievements. For instance, in Pakistani universities, there are many policy directives that include board of directors, syndicate, and Higher Education Commission (HEC) that are continued to keep surveillance and monitor their progress. It also enhanced focus on quality insurance, international networks and increased significance of foreign education for academic leaders. Beside these challenges, an educational administrator has to maintain and improve university ranking, enrollment of students, training of faculty and students etc. that results in less time for their leadership activities and produce educational leadership crisis (Ahmad, 2016).

## **2.6 Leadership Qualities of Women**

There has been an extensive discussion on successful leaders (Watt & Willis, 2008) and the leader's efficiency is understood in compliance to their leadership skills and attributes. There is an extensive debate by researchers about the characteristics of an effective academic leader. In the past, leadership was attributed with the charismatic and innate abilities of individuals; whereas, recent studies indicated leadership as a learned phenomenon. This leadership perspective emphasized the significance of learning qualities and skills for effective leadership. Many studies have identified set of essential leadership qualities for individuals (Buller, 2008; Dunn et al., 2014; Rowe & Guerrero, 2010).

A leader must have excellence and serve as a mentor for the followers. As Buller (2008) stated that a good and successful leader must constitute an effective and supporting team, having clear and strong vision, keen to learn from followers and colleagues, identified by his/her personal capabilities and become a role model. In a study, Khan (2011) reported that good leaders take responsibility of their work and don't blame others in any case. Moreover, they keep motivating and encouraging their teams' performance and assess their weaknesses to improve further.

Efficient leaders directly influence the growth of an academic institution. Further Heifetz et al. (2009) argued that good leaders demonstrate critical approach toward crises management and immediate but effective decision making skills. It is clear that the educational leadership comprised of strong and effective investigative, social and organizational capabilities. In a study conducted in Australia, Scott, Coates and Anderson (2008) found that successful leaders in universities were mainly equipped with latest information and skills beside self-recognition, determination, dedication, capability to understand and influence individuals with diverse attitudes and backgrounds. In addition, the successful leaders in Australian academic institutes were having flexible cognitive abilities as well as efficient analytical and critical thinking skills. Although, such characteristics were evident in all participants of the study, but senior leaders were incorporating such qualities more effectively. They also indicated some other useful skills for leaders in academia i.e. effective communication with challenging and demanding staff, developing plans and policies for the institute, managing strong professional networks and participation in top decision making process. Moreover, effective leaders take and implement decision effectively. The researchers implied that academic leaders also require incorporating effective research and assessment skills, interpersonal skills, observational and instructional skills and planning skills as well.

The findings of the studies conducted in Pakistan also resonate with the previous research about effective academic leadership. In a study about successful leaders in Pakistan, Nisar (2011) interviewed many academic leaders in well-established HE institutes. The study suggested that good leaders are committed to help others, dedicating, having comprehensive knowledge about policies and programs, and strongly motivated to achieve their goals. They are also required to get professional training and experience to get wiser than other. Moreover, they should work harder and cooperate with their team to achieve desired outcomes. In addition, effective academic leaders are expected to be confident, decisive, honest, having strong interpersonal and analytical skills, respecting others, devoted to achieve their goal. However, accommodation, sacrifice and respect are among few qualities that are not present in leaders in the West.

Women must possess or cultivate a specific skill set to be successful leaders. Dunn et al. (2014) asserted that successful leaders possess self-awareness of their behaviors and their effects, are selfless, build networks of support, are task-oriented, focus on fund-raising, face resistance and challenge with persistence, and learn from their mistakes. Being selfless can backfire for female leaders. Dunn et al. (2014) noted that if a female leader allows her subordinates to take all the credit, then she is unable to develop a reputation as an effective leader. As leaders, women often allow their subordinates to receive credit for work they have done.

Women leaders incorporate their power and authority in a different way than men do. Males more often utilize their powers to accomplish work effectively as compared to women, who don't concern with power vested in them in similar way. Women leaders possess and demonstrate unique skills and abilities while doing their academic and administrative duties, and managing conflicts.

Female graduate students, faculty, and administrators experience both covert and overt gendered treatment, such as being assigned to more intensive work on less powerful committees, being prescribed supportive roles instead of leadership roles, and having a lack of support services from the institutions. These events limit women from matriculating to power. Their leadership styles may conflict with the gendered environment that exalts patriarchal ideals. Women must possess or cultivate a specific skill set to be successful leaders (Bilen-Green et al., 2008). Dunn et al. (2014) asserted that successful leaders possess self-awareness of their behaviors and their effects, are selfless, build networks of support, are task-oriented, focus on fund-raising, face resistance and challenge with persistence, and learn from their mistakes. Being selfless can backfire for female leaders. Dunn et al. (2014) noted that if a female leader allows her subordinates to take all the credit, then she is unable to develop a reputation as an effective leader. As leaders, women often allow their subordinates to receive credit for work they have done.

In her study, Dickerson (2006) interviewed seven minority women (three Latina and four African-American); she noted that all stated that they must mainly rely on themselves and their own perseverance, that they repeatedly had to prove they were fit to do their jobs, and that few of them had a coach to groom them. Thus, their resources were limited, and their support systems were non-existent. Therefore, black women can

only rely on themselves for support and are required to continually prove they are worthy of their positions. Women also have their own internal barriers in leadership. Sometimes they often devalue their accomplishments so that their team members or subordinates can be given credit. Women often fail to self-promote for a variety of reasons: selflessness, generosity, insecurity, or modesty. Female leaders who know the value of relationships with their followers give more to those followers and can gain position results.

## **2.7 Leadership Styles of Women**

Many studies confirmed that people associate diverse leadership characteristics with men and women (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Johnson et al., 2008; Singh et al., 2012). According to Ely et al. (2011) leadership is defined in masculine term like decisive, assertive, and strong. This is in contrast to female qualities like friendliness, caring, and communal. Moreover, they found that females are stereotypically defined as passive, lacking ambition, or overemotional. These expectations remain steadfast in their views of how a male or female should behave in leadership roles. Therefore, a likely cause of gender discrimination is the conflict that arises from leadership traits being described as communal, agentic, or non-gendered traits (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Johnson et al., 2008). According to Johnson et al. (2008) communal qualities, such as helpfulness, friendliness, and compassion are being associated with women. Non-gendered traits, such as intelligence or attractiveness were associated equally between men and women. People associate agentic qualities with men, for instance, assertiveness, domination, and aggressiveness.

So far, many researchers have studied the 'full range of leadership' perspectives, which explains the dichotomy of transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership focus on getting rewards by improved performance and emphasize on the exchanges between leaders and their followers. However, transformational leaders identify and realize their team's skills and requirements. They tend to have wise thinking and encourage their followers to keep struggling for achieving collective goals by constant support and cooperation. Smothers et al. (2011) found that the ideal leader focuses on the facilitation of faculty development, which could be conveyed as an aspect of transformational leadership. In fact, transformational

leadership behaviors are effective in academia and relate to job satisfaction as well as publication output (Bolden et al., 2012; Braun et al., 2013; Smothers et al., 2011). Transformational leaders are also more likely to be recommended for tenure compared to autocratic leaders (Hentschel et al., 2015). Still, due to the dynamic change in higher education towards more business-like approaches to leadership (Bolden et al., 2012), transactional leadership, specifically contingent reward, is also important.

In recent times, there is an increased focus of researchers to investigate the distinctive leadership qualities and styles of men and women. Particularly, feminist researchers are interested in understanding unique styles of women in leadership. Perhaps, at this point, it is necessary to define 'leadership style'. Style is directly associated with an individual's relation to people, activities and constraints. It is a distinguishing feature of an individual's personality. It could be democratic or autocratic, centralized or decentralized, sympathetic or isolated, extroverted or introverted, active or passive, engaged or remote.

Many of the claims made for a distinctive female leadership style either derived from anecdotal evidence or are based on samples or contrived laboratory studies (Rhodes, 2003). Rhodes claimed that large scale studies based on self-reports do not find any gender differences which suggested that women leaders demonstrate greater interpersonal skills and more participatory and democratic styles than male leaders' more directive and task oriented approaches. A further concern about female leadership style is that it appears to be viewed as a 'collective' – as if all women have the same leadership styles regardless of their differences. This kind of generalization runs the risk of overlooking other variables that might interact with gender to produce differences in women's experiences of leadership. Such variables include race, ethnicity, age, class, sexual orientation, beliefs, experience and organization power (Blackmore, 2002; Rhode, 2003).

Other researchers also agree and have reported that male leadership is described as directive and autocratic, while female leadership is described as friendly and participatory, thus presenting stereotypical viewpoints of male and female leadership (Eddy & Van Der Linden, 2006; Johnson et al., 2008). These studies lead some researchers to conclude the stereotypical definitions of leadership allow people to view men as having more similar leadership characteristics and this, in turn leads to prejudice

against women as leaders (Wynen et al., 2015). Ely et al. (2011) implied that the incongruity between qualities attributed to women and qualities thought necessary for leadership creates a double standard favoring men where women in leadership positions are thought of as being too aggressive or not aggressive enough, or too assertive or not assertive enough.

Some researchers seek to examine leadership styles that are better for women by re-defining some leadership styles that are typically associated with feminine characteristics. Reynolds (2013) called for a gender-holistic leadership model that propose women as better suited to serve or resonant leadership style due to their unique characteristics rather than the more directive or transactional roles. Reynold's research sought to reduce the gender equality issue through introducing the servant leadership style into organizational leadership as a gender-neutral leadership style.

Female leaders who are seen as effective leaders tend to be more transformative. Transformational leadership yields more positive outcomes. The followers become more empowered to achieve the shared goals, and the managers are also benefited. It is found that managers, who "are tagged as high performers by their supervisors were also rated, in a separate evaluation by their followers as more transformative than transactional . . . Their organizations do better" (McMahon & Archer, 2010, p. 259). Thus, transformative leadership benefits the leader's reputation with his superiors and subordinates, benefits the followers with empowerment and engagement, and benefits the organization with highly inspired employees. Both followers and leaders are changed positively from this relationship. Northouse (2015, p.162) asserted that the participants create "a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality". Thus, the process enhances personal development of leaders and followers. Using transformative leadership is a win-win situation for organizations.

Women in higher education can and do benefit from using transformative leadership. Transformative leadership place the followers' morals, motivations, needs, and values at the center while also drawing upon the leader's ability to attend to followers' needs and growth. Transformative leadership is a process where an individual leader establishes a relationship that improves the motivation level and integrity in both the followers and the leader (Northouse, 2015). In this relationship, the leader must attend to the followers' motives and needs to help the followers reach their

maximum potential. It draws upon characteristics that are generally considered feminine and acceptable for women to possess.

Northouse (2015) affirmed that numerous obstructions that women experience as leaders come from “the incongruity between the female gender role and the leadership role” (p. 408). Historically, women are viewed as followers who cannot and should not lead. The characteristics normally that are associated with leadership are not stereotypically related to women. Thus, when women are placed in leadership roles, they are judged differently and sometimes harshly. This expectation is due to patriarchal societal gender roles.

Eagly and Chin (2010) affirmed that women are expected to both approach leadership as their male counterparts do and provide the friendliness and warmth that women culturally are expected to give. This becomes a challenge and a balancing of femininity and masculinity for women. Women face scrutiny and judgment when they display characteristics that are socially acceptable to men, i.e., being assertive or demanding. Role Congruity Theory asserted that there is prejudice towards women in the workplace due to the women’s characteristic alignment with dominant men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Consequently, transformative leadership can assist female department chairs, deans, vice-presidents and presidents for being accepted as leaders because the represented behaviors are acceptable to societal programming of gender roles. In addition, women can use transformative leadership to allow for more inclusion. Women who choose to lead in higher education can benefit from the transformative leadership style. Research substantiated that because people resist when a woman is assertive, women respond by exhibiting a more participatory and democratic style of leadership (Eagly & Chin, 2010). In addition, transformative leadership yields positive results for female leaders in higher education. Female transformative leaders are producing effective leadership that is reflected in followers’ satisfaction and productivity.

In Pakistani context, Rizvi and Amjad (2008) explored the relation between emotional intelligence [EI] and effective leadership in Pakistan (academia and banking sector) with reference to gender and professional groups and reported significant positive correlation between EI and effective leadership; however, no significant results were found regarding gender and professional groups (teachers versus bankers). This

suggested that EI worked as a core characteristic in effective leadership across men and women in academia and banking industry.

The recent trend in leadership theories promoting transformational or collaborative leadership styles (Chin, 2011). However, the culture in institutions of higher education tends to practice top-down leadership and tolerant of stereotypical role expectations regarding gender and leadership (Chin, 2011). According to Chin (2011), these factors negatively affect women's entry into leadership positions, assessments of their effectiveness, and finally, their success in leadership positions. Singh et al. (2012) conducted a study on workers' perception on good or bad leaders. Women who displayed masculine leadership styles were seen as the worst bosses (Singh et al., 2012). While, women were more likely to view similar leadership abilities in men and women, men significantly ranked men higher in all leadership behaviors, including the perception that their worst bosses were women and the best were men (Pfaff et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2012).

## **2.8 Effectiveness of Leadership Training**

Leadership scholarship also highlighted the significance of leadership trainings of present and forthcoming leaders for effective organizational development and addressing leadership crisis. Leadership studies highlighted the need for regular, pertinent and real world focused, training programs for improving effectiveness of leaders. Scott et al. (2008) argued that such training programs should involve practical learning approach conducted by relevant field experts. Leadership is not systematic and predictable act, rather it is chaotic and intermittent with each leader's history in reality, that is scattered with omissions, confusion and failures ... this task better be learned than taught (Ramsden et al., 2007). It is found that leadership could only be learned by active participation in managing various tasks, taking advice and feedback from co-workers, quick and effective interpretation of the information, and modifying techniques to omit any mistakes. It is advised to enhance learning and management skills for effective academic leadership. Moreover, informal networks, participation in informal discussions, formal and informal mentoring, and learning from practice are also significant for successful management of activities for an academic leader.



Although, diverse training programs have been initiated in the past, but they were not equally effective for both men and women (Moss-Racusin et al., 2014) and some of the trainings programs did more harm than good by inadvertently reinforcing gender and racial stereotypes in leadership (Dover et al., 2018; Williams et al., 2014). Bilimoria et al. (2008) emphasized the necessity of leadership training programs for women's professional growth. They argued that such developmental programs should be carefully designed but unfortunately, there are few examples of successful leadership development programs for women in academia (Braun et al., 2009; Knipfer et al., 2017). Nevertheless, some programs have achieved promising results.

In another study conducted by Hoobler et al. (2014) language and communicational skills are found to be helpful in improving leadership effectiveness of women. The study took a comparative analysis of two groups of leaders in distinct settings. Controlled group was provided with necessary instructions about the activity and the intervention group members were also given similar instructions along with a brief encouragement and appreciation, "This is a safe environment to learn and experience leadership." In the control group, significantly and disproportionately fewer women volunteered as leaders, but the disparity was completely eliminated in the intervention group.

White (2012) advocated for leadership development plans for women, particularly in the areas of professional development in various phases of jobs. However, some institutions have reported that they have tried to employ women in senior faculty positions or academic management and found that many women refused to take senior administrative responsibilities. It led researchers such as Guillén et al. (2015), Murray & Chau (2014), and White (2012) to conclude that while gender-based obstacles remained in place as women sought advancement to highest positions in higher education leadership, many women lack the motivation to lead when actively recruited for executive leadership positions. However, Lennon (2013) research refused the idea that women are invisible at administrative positions because they choose their families or lifestyles over time-consuming or demanding positions. Closely aligned to motivation, Teague (2015) another obstacle women face is their self-doubt. Teague believed that many women see themselves as less qualified for key leadership positions

and often a woman will accept a more subservient role as the better position for themselves.

Recently, an encouraging move has been noticed with regard to teacher education in Pakistan. Bana & Khaki (2015) reported that the Government of Pakistan along with donor funded teacher education projects, such as USAID's Teacher Education Project [USAID TEP], has carried out multi-faceted interventions seeking to improve the quality and delivery of teacher education in Pakistan. This has been done by reviewing the teacher training programs, and by enhancing the capacity of teachers, head teachers, teacher educators, education managers, schools, teacher education institutions and district level education administration through professional development programs and through institutional capacity building. Moreover, the Government of Pakistan has also, in its various documents, such as the Provincial Reform Support Projects (2003), the White Paper on Education (2006), the National Commission of Government Service Reforms (2006) and the National Education Policy (2009) recommended the professional development of institutional heads as educational leaders in Pakistan (Bana & Khaki, 2015).

Warwick and Reimers (1995, p. 99) observed almost two decades ago that majority of academic leaders in Pakistani are "not trained to be leaders, did not see themselves as leaders, and did not act like leaders". It is clear that things are not changed in past two decades in higher educational institutes as most of the leaders are engaged most of the time in doing formal routine work and monitoring their faculty and staff to follow institutional rules and regulations. It is reinforcing traditional bureaucracies instead of improving leadership and promoting organizational growth.

Shahid (2011) found that leaders have a self-doubt about them that resist them to bring change. Therefore, it is suggested to change the academic leader's self-belief about them if we want to change/develop their leadership traits. He also argued that academic leaders should be well aware of their aims and objectives to establish strong and effective leadership. He concluded that in order to bring out a meaningful change, we have to alter the beliefs of the practitioners. If we seek advice from educationists, professors and teachers while devising any policy, syllabus or plan, it could help improve the situation. Workshops must be arranged for teachers.

The above studies highlighted the need for improvement in individual's academic leadership skills, rational thinking, intellectual abilities, interpersonal communicational skills, financial understanding, identification of latent capabilities for effective teaching and administrative outcomes.

## **2. 9 Mentoring and Networking**

Mentoring is important for women in making strong and valuable connections within organizations. Mentoring, whether formal or informal, has specific roles. A formal mentoring relationship involved attempting to match a mentor to a mentee. This type of mentoring is structured. However, informal mentoring is more organic and unstructured. Regardless, both mentor and mentee have clear roles in the relationship. A mentor must be aware of the mentee's aspirations. A mentor must possess connections within the organization to support the mentee's goals. A weekly or monthly scheduled time for the mentee and mentor to meet and discuss goals, strategy, and progress must be maintained. The relationship will evolve if time and commitment are preserved by both mentee and mentor. Zachary (2005) noted that mentors must mediate relationships within the organization, communicate effectively to the mentee and others within the organization, give advice, direction, and feedback for the mentee, and manage any strife for the mentee.

Research has shown the value of mentors for women. The value of the two styles of mentoring (informal and formal) are often debated. Many people feel that mentoring should be informal; therefore, the mentee selects the mentor based on commonalities, shared interests, and so forth. However, some institutions, particularly those in the corporate world or higher education, may benefit from formal mentoring, which assigns a mentor to a mentee. Mentoring can be a factor for female faculty and administrators in higher education. For female faculty, gaining tenure depends not only on one's work, but the support of an often male department. The politics of academia are real. Having a male or female mentor to navigate the political landscape can determine whether a female faculty member, gains tenure, ascends to department chair, or rises to administration. Leadership in higher education is seen in both the power of the administration and the union. In the administrative branch, women have mentioned the value of mentoring in determining the trajectory in their careers. Brown and Ralph

(1996) asserted that because men dominate powerful positions in academia, they have more ingress to promotions and sponsorship. Women do not have this luxury; therefore, mentoring can be a positive experience for women.

Mentors could assist female leaders in developing into transformative leaders that know how to navigate through the male work hierarchy. Mentoring is important for women in making the correct connections within an organization. Mentoring also has its advantages for the mentor. It can help her emotionally and politically. Emotionally, the mentor is giving back and making a difference in other women's careers. More importantly, the female union mentor is fostering loyalty and political support in the future from her mentee. Mentors assist their mentees in rising in an organization through the mentor's influences within that organization (Kaminski & Yakura, 2008). Mentoring must be contextualized to fit the needs of female leaders. Morley (2013) noted that there is a struggle to save the act of mentoring "from neo-liberal constructs of performance and women's missing agency and find new conceptual grammars that move beyond hegemonic and patriarchal indicators of achievement" (p. 125). Therefore, women should remove the male models on mentoring, which would limit how achievement is measured. Such collectives will challenge the patriarchal culture in unions and practices, which have marginalized women and other minorities. Women may also need training to unlearn socially-acceptable gender behaviors that are hindering their mobility in their careers.

Brown's study of female college presidents also provided insight into the value of mentoring. Brown and Ralph (1996) studied ninety-one women college principals and revealed that 56% of them were benefited by primary mentors and 64.4 % functioned as mentors for other women. Because mentors provide guidance and support, having a mentor is a key in advancing the careers of female administrators. Ballenger (2010) found that insufficient mentoring resulted from too few women leaders, who could mentor other women. However, many women had male mentors but they were unable to understand the challenges of women for meeting the demands of both career and family. Women found the structure of higher education to be dominated by male, where majority decision-making and hiring committees were consisted of males that did not welcome or encourage women having family commitments (Ballenger, 2010).

Grine (2014) noted that some women make good use of networking and mentoring opportunities, which they tend to do in their own time. Grine also reported a case of a Muslim female teacher who was active and hardworking but faced problems in the workplace, particularly from her co-workers. Through appropriate coaching, she became self-confident and empowered, which helped her seek new opportunities while furthering in her career. Her case is an example of agency because this woman shows how she was able to progress in her career.

Besides mentoring, effective leaders also need to develop influential formal and informal networks to attain and maintain senior leadership positions. Some studies have found that the social capital gained from networking with influential leaders is even more important for advancement than job performance (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hewlett et al., 2009). Research suggested that, although women and men are equally likely to have mentors, women may benefit less than men from this arrangement, especially in the areas of salary and promotions. More recently, scholars have focused on sponsorship, a form of mentorship in which sponsors share both status and opportunity. For example, sponsors can co-author articles, provide key contacts, share important meeting opportunities, and actively seek out future career opportunities. This influential and specific professional relationship has been shown to be more effective than traditional mentorship (Catalyst, 2004).

Women need to access to networks and sponsors, which are crucial for leadership success (Ely et al., 2011). Women have been cited to be reluctant towards networking because they perceive it as inauthentic, as well as an obligation to engage in stereotypical male or social activities (Ely et al., 2011). Moreover, they may have grounds to be less secure about their networking strategy. In one research, students were questioned on their ratings of two venture capitalists that had outstanding networking skills. The students rated the man as likeable, and the woman as aggressive and self-promoting (Heilman & Parks-Stamm, 2007). One research looked extensively at the networking effectiveness for both men and women amongst over 400 graduates. They found that engaging in networking was more beneficial for men. Men experienced the greatest benefit (in terms of promotions and compensation) by increasing their visibility within the company. This gives evidence that women may need to adopt different strategies to become more visible within an organization (Forret & Dougherty, 2004).

Many researchers have examined women's perception of the cultural and structural barriers to leadership (Ballenger, 2010; Dominici et al., 2009). Themes that emerged from these studies included marginalization of women in informal intellectual leadership networks, obstructed or slower paths to leadership positions, and a lack of recognition and reward within institutions for the work being done by women (Dominici et al., 2009). Organizational policies, practices, and ideologies were listed as cultural barriers. These barriers included insufficient training or mentoring, the good old boy network, and gender inequities (Ballenger, 2010).

Although women scientists are also involved in diverse networks, they have less influential networks such as they are engaged with fewer male instrumental networks (Spurk et al., 2015). In general, women are underutilizing professional networks and as a consequence, they have fewer international research collaborations and rely on less diverse funding sources. They also report being excluded from male elite-networks and feel as the other (Bleijenbergh et al., 2012).

### **2.11 Research and Innovation**

Academic excellence is one of basic factors in choosing a leader in higher educational institutions. In the world of competition, higher educational qualifications and research plays a vital role in women carrier advancement. Mostly university vice-chancellors, deans and directors have the highest qualifications and research publications beside administrative experience. Many chairpersons also have the doctoral degree and good research profile. Therefore, education and training is obligatory for an individual's career development. Many studies reported the significance of higher education for women managers (Ross & Green, 2000; Wells et al., 2011).

Seibert et al. (2001) and Wells et al. (2011) utilized the theory of social capital to explore the role of research and education on women's career trajectories and advancements. Managerial universities value research above all other academic activities and especially value and reward academics who bring external funding to the organization (Acker, 2012). This emphasis impacts disproportionately on women who often have less success in accessing funding (Faltholm & Abrahamsson, 2010). So, has new managerialism benefitted or hindered the careers of academic women? Carvalho et al. (2012) asserted that it is not possible to identify a single impact of new

managerialism on gender dominant notions or on the impact it may have on gender power relations. Rather, there are a myriad of non-convergent directions in the way it influences gender in organizations. However, Parsons and Priola (2013) argued that managerial universities reinforce rather than reduce gender inequalities, while Lynch, Grummell and Devine (2012, p. 200) maintained that senior management positions in managerial universities are gendered as they are assumed to be care-free; “those appointed are assumed to be available to participate in a long-hours work environment that precludes having responsibility for primary care work”.

Within the neo-liberalist cultures that define the 21st century academy in the developed world, research performance is a dominant preoccupation for research-intensive universities and those with research-focused aspirations. Performativity measures such as Australia’s Excellence in Research for Australia, New Zealand’s Performance Based Research Funding exercise, and the UK’s Research Excellence Framework [REF] have placed research quality and productivity at the top of institutional development agendas, prioritizing research as a valued, pre-eminent activity to which personnel must be committed and which drives institutional goals and missions that are squarely focused on building research capacity and developing researchers. Recognition of its value is implicit in universities’ formal leadership and management structures, with prominent designated research leadership roles evident at all levels of the institutional hierarchy, filtering down from senior management to faculty and departmental levels. To research-intensive universities, effective research leadership is likely to be that which yields the optimum results, as measured by research funding capture and academic outputs that promise increased income and advantageous ranking within whichever research performance or accountability measures are at play (Edgar & Geare, 2011; Wilson & Holligan, 2013).

In higher education, it is based on the assumption that as more women complete first degrees, more will continue to post-graduate studies, academic careers and advancement into the professoriate and senior management (Bell & Bryman, 2007; White, 2012). The pipeline effect is partially supported here with women continuing to enter the pipeline at the lowest level and their representation at higher levels continues to improve. However, although many women are entering the system, not all of them are in the pipeline. Ongoing teaching-plus-research roles are required for success and

higher status, yet many of the women are teaching-only casuals. At present, it seems inconceivable that an Australian university would appoint a VC, whose career had been teaching-only, therefore increasing female numbers in teaching-only or non-ongoing positions will not create the requisite pipeline for ultimate success. The male career trajectory is still the typical path into senior management (Bagilhole & White, 2011).

For female faculty members, clandestine forms of gender bias exist prior to tenure as they advance in their careers. Lodico et al. (2010) noted women's gendered roles in the academy by having to teach more courses, doing more students advising, and serving on institutional committees. Their male counterparts may devote their time to research, which is more valued in research institutions.

Though female scientists engage in networking as much as men, they have fewer instrumental networks; for example, their networks include fewer male supporters (Spurk et al., 2015). In general, women are underutilizing professional networks (Ibarra & Hunter, 2007). As a consequence, they have fewer international research collaborations and rely on less diverse funding sources (Aiston & Jung, 2015). They also report being excluded from male elite-networks and feel as the other (Bleijenbergh et al., 2012). Due to this "lacks of social capital, women scientists run the risk of under-citation" (Brouns, 2007, p. 36). However, instrumental networking can be learned (Ibarra & Hunter, 2007).

Modesty is probably one of the most detrimental traits that limit women's ascension to power. Women should promote their accomplishments at work. Budworth and Mann (2010) noted self-promotion in female leaders is tolerated whereas aggression and dominance is not. Self-promotion connotes capability and can be used as commodity toward career advancement. The challenges women face continues throughout their career in academia.

Many researchers highlighted the effects of research publication on women's career advancements (Fox, 2010). It is found that women's research productivity rates are lower than men's and it can negatively affect women's promotions in organizations, where publication outputs are the key indicator for promotion (Leahey, 2006). Other studies indicated that women are lagged behind in modern research intensive academic cultures (Bagilhole & White, 2011; O'Connor, 2015), and women themselves



illustrated that they are underrepresented in commercialized educational and research structures (Lynch et al., 2012; Morley, 2013).

## **2.12 Selection and Promotion Practices in Academia**

Women also have a difficult journey ascending to the top administrative levels of academy. Bilen-Green et al. (2008) asserted that the greater numbers of women in positions is due to the larger number of female applicants not a reduction in gender bias in higher procedures. When women are promoted to a position of authority, they are sometimes viewed as tokens, and their talents are ignored. Once women begin performing administrative roles, they endure gendered experiences.

There is plenty of scholarship that indicated that women are not only discriminated by men but also by their women fellows in leadership roles (Bruckmüller et al., 2014; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ellemers et al., 2012; Hunt-Earle, 2012). Ellemers et al. (2012) noted that majority of persons believe in a just world where gender discrimination is rare, and success is based on merit; therefore, in most instances, they will treat allegations of unequal treatment unfavorably. This in turn results in fewer reports for fear of negative repercussions; thus, inequity is often not noticed, challenged, or addressed.

Yet, in spite of women displaying excellent skills for leadership and in some cases outperform men in their effectiveness; many organizations leaders are afraid of taking the risk of hiring females in the high-level leadership roles (Coder & Spiller, 2013; Eagly, 2007). Additionally, Bosak and Sczesny (2011) discovered that when all else is equal on a resume, men will hire and promote men into leadership more frequently. Women occupying or aspiring executive roles experience numerous obstacles in attaining and maintaining senior leadership positions. It is the outcome of the incongruity between stereotypical gender and executive responsibilities (Chin, 2011; Christman & McClellan, 2012; Eagly & Chin, 2010; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Ely et al., 2011; Haveman & Beresford, 2012; Rudman et al., 2012). Such obstacles are most often understood as the glass ceiling, the ivory basement, and velvet ghetto effects experienced by women in their professional development and obtaining leadership positions (DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014).

Other studies indicated that overlooking women's leadership abilities, (Blackmore, 2014; Bell & Yates, 2014) is resulting in wasting women talent and perpetuating academic gender gap (David, 2015; Evers & Sieverding, 2015). Carnes et al. (2015, p. 221) noted that regardless of the recent attempts made in academia to establish equal opportunities for both men and women, "gender bias operates in personal interactions, evaluative processes, and departmental cultures to subtly yet systematically impede women's career advancement". The barriers identified in the previous researches are perceived to be deeply embedded in the academic system (Fritsch, 2015), and led women to believe that being a full professor is "undesirable", "unrealistic", and "unattractive" (Evers & Sieverding, 2015, p. 168). There might be similar competitive disparities for women in many occupations but academic environment should be understood as having a unique context (Bagilhole & White, 2008; Deem, 2002; Ecklund et al., 2012; Schein, 2007)

Problems appear to begin from the recruitment process (Grove, 2013). Researcher identified a lack of gender equality in the recruitment and selection of candidates and in particular the lack of transparency and accountability in institutional processes (Settles et al., 2006; Van den Brink et al., 2010). Blackmore (2014) found that although, greater numbers of women are applying for the most senior faculty position of full professor, only few of them are shortlisted or finally appointed as full professor. In a study undertaken by White (2003, p. 49) majority of the women informed that they "were being blocked for promotion through both direct and indirect discrimination". Other researchers found that women scientists also experience conscious as well as unconscious biases due to prevalent masculine standards present in recruitment process of academic leaders and increases especially there are men gatekeepers (Heilman, 2012; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012; Van den Brink, 2015; Van den Brink & Benschop, 2014).

Such prejudices are amplified if the recruitment processes are not transparent and selection criteria are not defined. This situation is most commonly found in academic organizations (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2010). Consequently, women get less support from senior administration and experience obstacles in approving grants and other resources (Godfroy-Genin, 2009; Ecklund et al., 2012). Mason (2008) found that women are also rejected by the selection boards in science and technical institutes

for being married, having children or being pregnant. Women in administrative roles are more likely than male colleagues to have interrupted careers and to work part-time. Consequently, women in universities face increasingly precarious career paths due to lack of job security, the impact of managerialism and heavy workloads (Bagilhole & White, 2013; O'Connor, 2014).

In addition to gendered practices found to exist at the initial selection stage, studies have identified similar bias in the evaluation of professorial candidates (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). Promotion to Reader and Professorial level requires endorsement from Peers both within and external to the academic institution. Male candidates are seen to have the advantage of male networks to encourage and support senior level promotion women do not (Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012). Many authors have recognized 'boys club' exists within SET disciplines and this acts against women's progression of their careers to senior levels (Barnard, Powell, Bagilhole & Dainty, 2009). As social networks are considered a form of social capital, they offer advantages to the individual as well as the organization and therefore if women are less able to access the networks they are disadvantaged (Ibarra et al., 2005).

In another research study about women academic leaders, senior executive members "were portraying women academics as not living up to the competencies and commitment needed to be successful as an academic" (Bleijenbergh et al., 2012, p. 23). It shows that selection boards don't perceive women for being prepared for the most demanding role of full professor (Benschop & Brouns, 2003; Smothers et al., 2011; Van den Brink & Benschop, 2012a) or they are chosen for the post only if they demonstrate abilities such as competitiveness, altruism, autonomy, and limitless availability for work (Deem et al., 2007; Fitzgerald, 2014). Consequently, women consider themselves as outsiders who "struggle to prove their fitness to play the game" (Gersick et al., 2000, p. 1040).

It cannot be denied that this bias in recruitment and selection process is extensive in higher education for a number of reasons. Institutional organization, customs, and cultures are regular obstacles to women's progress. Many female faculty members serve their institutions willing, giving of their time and talents only to have their efforts disregarded when leadership succession and other benefits are considered

(Alex-Assensoh, 2012). Women are often found in lower-level managerial roles and having limited authority (Alex-Assensoh, 2012; Gallant, 2014; Madden, 2011).

Additionally, Gallant (2014) pointed out the under-representation of women and their absence in top leadership positions in universities is a global issue. In a study, Gallant's (2014) found that women themselves provided inconsistent definitions of a leader and leadership characteristics, their own workplace interactions, and self-reflections. Furthermore, Gallant found that participants had a gendered view of leaders, attributing aggressive leadership skills with males and the softer, nurturing leadership skills with women. Attributing the hard skills with men and soft skills with women accounts for the gender role stereotyping that hinders women from being considered for and promoted to senior leader positions. Gallant (2014) concluded her research with the recommendation for leadership programs to place emphasis on reviewing gendered notions about leadership characteristics while stimulating awareness toward promoting qualified women into senior leadership roles.

Other literature on the topic of gender and leadership reviews gender and leadership from a performance aspect. Lennon (2013) reported that women outperform men in many sectors, but they are not being promoted to high-level positions. Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2014) found that both men and women were effective in all contexts of leadership. Interestingly an implication of studies on leadership performance indicated that in spite of women exhibiting strong leadership skills and in some cases outperforming men in their effectiveness, many organizational leaders avoid taking risk of employing women at senior leadership positions (Coder & Spiller, 2013; Eagly, 2007).

Maranto and Griffin (2011) used the term chilly climate to describe the exclusion women experience in seeking access to leadership positions in higher education institutions. Women remain undervalued, marginalized and often excluded as they attempt to achieve and advance into leadership roles (Alex- Assensoh, 2012; Madden, 2011; Maranto & Griffin, 2011; White, 2012). White (2012) found that many women leaders describe their workplace environs as demanding and hostile. Many researchers have noted that although women in academia have made some progress with respect to obtaining leadership positions, women still lag behind their male colleagues (Gallant, 2014; Lennon, 2013; Parker, 2015). According to Bagilhole &

White (2011) career development involves a customary career path initiating from lectureship to the positions of assistant professor, associate professor and full professor.

Gender implications in presidential selection are seen in the hiring trends where men are more likely to come from politics, military or business sectors outside higher education (Cook, 2012). According to Cook (2012), more than one in ten of those selected to serve as president came from outside higher education. Search committees may be willing to take more risks with a man, according to Cook (2012). This idea of risk associated with male or female candidates is reported by other researchers arguing that in spite of women displaying excellent skills for leadership and in some cases outperform men in their effectiveness, organizational leaders are afraid of taking the risk of hiring women in the high-level leadership roles (Coder & Spiller, 2013; Eagly, 2007). Cook and Glass (2016) suggested that selection committees may look at women with a different criterion to prove their qualifications. Cook adds that men appear to be hired based on what they may do in the future, whereas women appear to be hired based on what they have done in the past.

The inequity in positions and salaries between men and women continues to be present. In higher education, where equality should be espoused and lived by, gender inequity is prevalent. Curtis (2011) noted that men outrank women in tenured faculty positions, presidential positions, and in Chief Financial Officers (CFO) positions. Rank distinctions were also lower for women. Curtis (2011) asserted that only 28 percent of women were full professors. The inequity is further revealed in salaries. Men earned more than women at public and private institutions. The inequity in pay and position keep the patriarchal power structure firmly in place. Women continue to seek equity in pay and advancement in the workplace.

Moreover et al. (2016) found in their recent study that women continue to be promoted to executive leadership roles that are very risky or at a time when the organization was struggling. The researchers reported that every woman executive they interviewed had been asked on one time or another during their career to take on a high-risk assignment during a time of crisis. Further, they reported that women sought out high-risk positions to prove that they were capable as a leader and gain a reputation as crisis managers or transformational leaders.

Recent research has documented the persistence of barriers and has noted that some higher education institutions appear to be slow to embrace women in leadership positions (Morley, 2013; White, 2012). Cook's (2012) research indicated that women appear to follow a traditional career path toward top academic positions. For example, women become well known as faculty and scholars within higher education. Men who rise to top positions are likely to come from other businesses, politics, or military, or even a non-academic position on campus. Cook suggested there is a sexist strategy at work where men are hired for their potential and women are hired based on their achievements. Another study affirmed that worldwide, women experience biasness in selection as leaders. Moreover, women get less acknowledgment and success at senior leadership positions as compared to their male fellows. That led toward the waste of a larger human resource that is women in organizations (Gipson et al., 2017).

In general, leadership researches in developing countries indicated extreme gender inequalities in academic administration. Afshar (2012) reported that many well educated and experienced Muslim women are lacking self-assurance and self-respect. Kabir (2010) found that Muslim women consider it undesirable to apply for senior administrative positions due to their inner self-doubt that led them to think that they lack abilities and skills necessary to compete for leadership position. Moreover, Ghumman and Ryan (2013) maintained that Muslim women experience disparities in selection boards that are mostly male dominated and perceive women as less confident and less competent. On the contrary, women who become successful in achieving top leadership positions utilize different approach, for instance, networking, mentoring, coaching, and trainings to maintain their positions (Hargreaves & Anderson, 2014).

In South Asian universities, institutional processes and practices are designed and executed in relation to male norms – something that gender-mainstreaming policies attempt to address (Morley, 2010). These norms provide powerful exclusionary messages to women and can seriously deplete their aspirations and opportunities. According to Khan (2011), the tide can be turned if we dethrone our current self-conceited, hollow leaders and replace them with results-based leaders. The motivation of becoming a leader should be the achievement of constructive results, not individual or political benefits. The leadership crisis in Pakistani institutes can be addressed if

competent people (on the basis of positive results/merit) get a chance to be leaders, instead of people with the need for power and prestige.

Recruitment and selection problems are widely reported (Agarwal, 2013; Bal, 2004). Batool and Sajid (2013) conducted a quantitative study of women's representation in HE management in Pakistan and found that structural factors such as lack of mentoring, networking, discriminatory selection and promotion practices, and gender equity are barriers to the career advancement of women. Appointment and promotion processes for leadership positions were critiqued for their political and/ or precarious nature, their lack of transparency and gender biases. Women-only spaces and the preference for sex-segregated education in some contexts (often associated with religious belief systems) means that some single-sex HE institutions are emerging including the Asian University for Women in Bangladesh and the Fatimah Jinnah University in Pakistan. These create some opportunities for women to enter leadership positions. However, these leadership positions are often viewed as less prestigious than those in the co-educational sector (Morley & Crossouard, 2016).

It is clear from the above discussion that academic organizations have developed specific criterion for selection of their faculty and academic managers. However, most of the organizations don't implement these standards equally on everyone. Women leaders often experience obstacles in attaining and maintaining their leadership positions. Organizations have developed strong monopolies that systematically favor men for leadership positions. Therefore, it is imperative for women leaders to understand leadership structures for adjusting themselves in a competitive environment.

### **2.13 Family and Leadership for Women**

Many studies have highlighted the attention toward the family constraints in career path of women in academia. Women need to maintain balance between their family and work responsibilities to achieve their professional goals. Balance is a subjective concept that is identified and understood distinctively by different individuals. Scholarship revealed that maintaining harmonious integrity for an individual is relative, complex and consistent practice (Ashforth, 2000; Keene & Quadagno, 2004). Many studies have highlighted the significance of work-family balance in person's life. Loeffler et al.

(2010) indicated that maintaining work-life balance is critical for both men and women in academia. However, women in educational career experience additional challenges due to their excessive household and child care responsibilities.

While women are fighting for fair salary, benefits, recognition, and power in the workplace, they are also fighting inside themselves. For most working women with families, there is a tension between work and family responsibility. Women struggle to be wives, mothers, and workers. Research reflects that women have difficulty having a family and navigating a career, whether it is in an office, hospital, or research lab (Kimmel et al., 2014). Gender expectations and roles often consider childcare and child rearing responsibility for women. These institutions often lack support services, such as child care and flexible schedules, for working mothers' roles cause tension in women's lives and can derail their career trajectory.

Naschberger and Finstad-Milion (2017) elucidated that women themselves prefer conventional professions and mostly refuse the notion that they were channeled into a particular career. In addition, they reported that occupational decisions were mostly dependent upon the balances between work and family life. Traditional and non-traditional career selection often appeared to be a matter of choice for individuals and less of a female career or male career decision. There is also a question of whether the choices women make are really choices. Haveman and Beresford (2012) argued that choices, such as education, what field to study, working outside the home, full-time work or part-time are often constrained by culture the women comes from. Many women believe they will have to give up a full personal life if they want to attain success in the workforce (Phipps & Prieto, 2016). As long as the culture continues to define careers as all consuming, and as long as women continue to be assigned the gender role with all the responsibility for the nurturing of children, there could be no solution to the dilemma (Phipps & Prieto, 2016).

Similar to women in other professions, those working in educational institutions are struggling to create harmony between their personal and professional lives (Fox, 2010; Nazemi et al., 2012; Probert, 2005). While women scientist experience similar constraints to attain work-family balance as women in arts and humanities; few studies indicated that challenges for women scientist become more complex due to the interaction of multiple factors with it for instance more demanding and competitive



culture, and high level of commitment and dedication (Adamo, 2013). Balancing professional life with family responsibilities is also challenging for women in science and technology, as they experience additional constraints in acquiring research grants and findings for their research work (Goulden et al., 2011). This leads to the argument that marital life is most challenging for women in scientific careers, resulting in many leaving sciences altogether (Goulden et al., 2011). Both motherhood and career demand greater time, devotion and commitment. Particularly, academic mothers during pregnancy face greater work-family balance constraints (Hacifazlioglu, 2010; Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2012). Therefore, married women need to negotiate both family and work with limited resources, support and time.

Additionally, studies indicated that work-life balance is a most serious concern for women in leadership roles. Women leaders in higher education experience numerous constraints. Few studies also explored the personal lives of women leaders and found that these women confront constant resistance or cooperation from their family members e.g. parents, spouse, in-laws and children behind closed doors (Emslie & Hunt, 2009; Weigt & Solomon, 2008). Ozkanli and White (2009, p. 326) studied the causes of invisibility of women at top leadership positions in Turkish and Australian higher education and found that “women in both countries were more likely than men to experience difficulty in being appointed senior managers”. Haile, Emmanuel and Dzathor (2016) reported that the stress of balancing work and family responsibilities is a major cause of the lack of women in senior leadership roles. Furthermore, the lack of flexibility in many organizations in order to accommodate women with family responsibilities is an issue that should be addressed.

There is another obstacle to women’s success in obtaining leadership roles and performing successfully once those roles are attained that is rarely mentioned; the motivation to lead. Guillén et al. (2015) argued that individuals need to be truly motivated to lead in order to persist in their leadership roles despite the challenges they face. Madsen (2008) illustrated that dual roles of the women as a housekeeper and a worker is a great barrier in their employment, even in the egalitarian societies of the World. Societies develop pressure on women to keep balance between their dual roles.

The concept of work-life balance is no longer a western phenomenon anymore. While, most of the studies have been undertaken in the West, researches are now

interested in understanding this phenomenon in Eastern context (Lewis et al., 2007). The scholarship revealed that majority of the work has been concentrated on work-life balance in business organizations in developed countries (Lewis et al., 2007; Lewis & Cooper, 2005; White et al., 2003) and much of the literature has included samples of both men and women (Gurvis & Patterson, 2005). Most of the work conducted is in relation to the resulting psychological outcomes of conflict/stress as a result of imbalance (Bruening & Dixon, 2007; Smith & Gardner, 2007; Zimmerman, 2003), and very few studies examine the solutions and strategies that can mitigate work- family conflict (Shelton, 2006).

Not unlike other women, Muslim women have been traditionally responsible for the caring duties at home, such as bringing up their children and looking after the extended family (Wood et al., 2012). This is still the case in some Muslim families, and often these women are expected to take the back seat in their career once they are married and have children (Ahmed & Sardar, 2012; Gale & Hopkins, 2009). In fact, some Muslim families fear that a working woman may bring shame on them as a public expression of the inability of the husband to provide sufficiently for his family (Gale & Hopkins, 2009). Lovat (2012) argued that women who decide to take paid employment often seek jobs that offer flexibility and less workload and stress and that are mainly part-time with low prospects for leadership and growth. In addition, Muslim women with professional careers are often found in low-tier jobs once they are married and have children (Lovat, 2012).

Literature also showed that women in Asia are unwilling to accept senior leadership status due to many reasons. They have to manage their family roles and responsibilities beside their managerial roles in academia. Most of the women can't get escape from their care responsibilities; consequently, they do not apply for the administrative posts (Ismail & Rasdi, 2006; Lam, 2006). South Asian societies have cultural values that often both prescribe and circumscribe the roles of women in society within family and marriage. They frequently face social barriers, lack independence and have poor socio-economic status in male-dominated societies (Sinha, 2016). Female participation in social life is often limited to household affairs such as taking care of children and husbands, preparing meals, house cleaning and other common household affairs (Avais et al., 2014). According to Peeters et al. (2005) working

women in India face substantial pressures due to the competing demands of work and home. They reported that such pressures stem from workload, care responsibilities for family dependents, time management, and lack of adequate support networks.

Scholarship revealed that balancing personal and professional life is most challenging part of women lives (Ahl, 2007; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Noor, 2004; Rehman & Roomi, 2012; Roomi & Parrott, 2008; Sandberg & Scovell, 2013; Shelton, 2006; Welter, 2004). At home, women have primary responsibility of managing all kind of domestic activities (Ahl, 2007; Carter & Allen, 1997) and at work place; they are academic leaders, researchers and teachers as well and required to handle abundant and multiple tasks. This is distinctive in socio-cultural environment of Pakistan, where life of women revolves around their families' traditions. The successful management of all these responsibilities requires various skills, time and hard work (Clark, 2000; Morris et al., 2006). Rehman and Roomi (2012) also reported that the socio-cultural traditions of women's family responsibilities are even more complex in Pakistani society compared to Western societies where husband and family may not have significant influences on women's career.

Similarly, Shakir and Noorani (2014) conducted a study in Pakistan about working women. They elucidated that women experience negative effects of working due to their extraordinary family and work responsibilities. They are required to work hard and for longer hours at both work and household that resulted in increased stress, unhealthy lifestyle, health issues, psychological disorders, less motivation, as well as eating disorders. Nonetheless, these women have incorporated various strategies to deal with these issues, for instance, family supports, domestic assistance and tactfully organizing household and work commitments (Chinchilla et al., 2006; Gianakos, 2001).

In a study conducted by Fazal et al. (2019), it is found that in Pakistan most women struggle in maintaining a balance among competing roles as working women, wives, daughters and mothers. Women have to fulfill roles more typically ascribed by their society to men as well as the more traditional ones that were typically meant for females. As family breadwinner then a woman would fulfill a role more typically assigned to men in Pakistan. In completing family chores and serving her family she fulfilled a more traditional female role. It often makes it very difficult for working

women to maintain a balanced and healthy lifestyle. Home responsibilities often stood in the way of women who aspired to leadership roles in the workplace.

In Pakistan, females have to face social and familial control and are therefore not allowed to take decisions on their own. Most of the females accept decisions made by others for them. Females have to accept the societal norm of being dependent on males economically (Roomi & Parrott, 2008). Females are given the impression that males are their controllers and owners of their fate and they have to accept their rules as well as decisions. Males prefer to be the bread earners and do not like females to work and have a contribution in family income because it is considered being coward and eating your wife's money.

Mobility problem determines the differential access that males and females have to education as well as other services which are necessary to build a managerial career. Females also face restrictions on their mobility and are not allowed to move freely and travel freely without any male member. In bigger cities of Pakistan, the trend is changing, however staying out for long hours is still considered a social taboo and females who don't stay at home for long hours are culturally unacceptable (Roomi & Parrott, 2008). Females accept the fact that they are to be blamed for everything wrong that happens to their family and they are made to sacrifice their wishes and career for family and husband. This underlying thought affects female leadership and entrepreneurial ventures in Pakistan (Roomi & Parrott, 2008).

Family featured in the literature, as an enabler- especially where social capital, class/ caste privilege, and support intersected with educational and professional opportunities (Rab, 2010). Ghaus and Raja (2013) reported that women managers in HE in Pakistan encounter both familial and organizational barriers. Shah (2001) also suggested that the primary identification of women is with the private, domestic sphere, stereotypically associated with caring/nurturing family roles, and that women leader respondents took up these norms. The societal attitudes to women in HE management from this study were also reported in Khan (2013).

Scant literature is available on the practices and policy arrangements that shape women's work-life balance and how they think and talk about it (Gunter & Stambach, 2003; Nikunen, 2012; Santos, 2015). What is clear from this, however, are the

significant challenges that working women around the world face as they seek to fulfill their job responsibilities and family roles.

## **2. 14 Gender Stereotypes and Labeling in Academic Leadership**

Culture plays a vital role in defining gender roles in a society. Existing scholarship related to the cultural factors in women leadership in academia worldwide have mostly highlighted that stereotypes mostly influence women's leadership roles. Stereotypes and bias affect how we see ourselves, as well as how we see others. For example, there is a self-confidence gap between women and men (Schuh et al., 2014).

Stereotypes and the biases on which they are based present a subtle but powerful obstacle for women. There are many ways to define stereotypes and bias. Stereotype is defined as a cognitive "shortcut" that categorizes people on the basis of characteristics such as gender, race, or age (Northouse, 2015). People are less likely to openly admit to negative stereotypes and biases today than in the past; nevertheless, they remain powerful in this quieter form. A recent meta-analysis of gender and leader stereotypes found "no evidence of decreased stereotyping over time" (Koenig et al., 2011).

Literature about gender difference in leadership elucidates that leader's characteristics and gender stereotype have strong associations. Eagly & Carli (2007) found that society describe leaders as possessing masculine traits such as assertive, strong, competitive, hardworking and dominant. Whereas, women's stereotypical traits are not acknowledged in the administrative setup. Keohane (2007) argued that this attitude is irrational because successful leaders should be able to choose the behavior according to the organizational culture, circumstances, problem and subordinates.

Noting that strong leadership is associated with masculine gender role traits such as assertiveness, confidence, and control, Johnson et al. (2008) stated that people, as individuals have behavioral expectations for how men and women should behave socially. Hoyt and Murphy (2016) contended one of the many explanations being offered for the lack of women in top leadership positions is the stereotypical belief that women do not fit the preconceived notions of a leader. The lack of fit falls between female characteristics, skills, and aspirations and the characteristics and skills thought to be necessary by society for effective leadership (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016).

Historically, women are viewed as followers who cannot and should not lead. The characteristics normally that are associated with leadership are not stereotypically related to women. Thus, when women are placed in leadership roles, they are judged differently and sometimes harshly. Women are expected to possess characteristics, such as kindness, sensitivity, and humility (Stoker et al., 2012). This expectation is due to patriarchal societal gender roles. Eagly and Chin (2010) affirmed that women are expected to both approach leadership as their male counterparts do and provide the friendliness and warmth that women culturally are expected to give. This becomes a challenge and a balancing of femininity and masculinity for women. Women face scrutiny and judgment when they display characteristics that are socially acceptable to men, i.e., being assertive or demanding. Role Congruity Theory asserted that there is prejudice towards women in the workplace due to the women's characteristic alignment with dominant men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Consequently, transformative leadership can assist female department chairs, deans, vice-presidents and presidents in being accepted as leaders because the represented behaviors are acceptable to societal programming of gender roles.

In a meta-analysis of 69 studies on stereotypes and leadership, researchers found that stereotypes about leadership are decidedly masculine (Koenig et al., 2011). This is not surprising: Stereotypically male characteristics - independence, aggression, competitiveness, rationality, dominance, objectivity - all correlate with current expectations of leadership (Crites et al., 2015). Those expectations, in turn, affect women's and men's self-perceptions. A meta-analysis of 95 organizations from different countries found that men in male-dominated organizations rate themselves as significantly more effective as women rate themselves (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014).

Women's leadership style is distinctive from that of men. Usually, both male and female leaders are judged based upon stereotypical societal roles. Eagly and Chin (2010) asserted that the probability of prejudice is apparent when "social perceivers hold a stereotype about a social group that is incongruent with the attributes that they believe are" necessary for successful leadership (p. 217). Stereotypical male leaders apply assertion, aggression, directness, and control in their leadership styles. These attributes are rarely used to describe female leadership. Women who use these styles

are often judged harshly and negatively. Women's potential to lead is viewed less favorably than men because leadership characteristics, such as aggressiveness, control, and detachment, are associated positively with men; women who exhibit these same traits are viewed negatively and not as good leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). This incongruity of roles is probably greater in male-friendly organizations, such as higher education institutions and trade unions. Female leaders are expected to be supportive, nurturing, and motherly. They are expected to put others before themselves and to be modest.

Budworth and Mann (2010) noted that while conforming to modest roles will make women likeable, it will not grant them access to leadership or success in their careers. Taking credit for accomplishments and being assertive are attributes that are not admired in female leaders. These same attributes, however, are expected and respected in men. Similarly, African-American women are stereotyped when they function in ways that are masculine while they are leaders. Eagly and Chin (2010) argued that how other people expect women and minority groups to behave may restrict those groups' leadership. African-American and Caucasian women are placed in difficult roles when they are leaders. Sometimes they are expected to act in two conflicting ways. Eagly and Chin (2010) asserted that on the one hand, women are expected to be firmly take control as leaders, but simultaneously they are expected to be warm and friendly, which are "culturally prescribed" traits for them (p. 218). This contradiction might indicate that women and men should not be judged using similar leadership models. Eagly and Karau (2002) noted that female leaders are often judged less favorably than men. However, if women solely adopt masculine traits, such as aggression or detachment, they face even more scrutiny. Budworth and Mann (2010) argued that research should be conducting on the ways in which males and females become effective leaders and analyze their strategies and perspectives as men and women. Perhaps even a new model should be created based upon those differences.

However, motivation or the lack of it implies an idea that women are able to make choices regarding their career and how far up the ladder they go. Haveman and Beresford (2012) argued that choices, such as education, what field to study, working outside the home, full-time work or part-time are often constrained by culture. Haile,

Emmanuel and Dzathor (2016) believed that cultural and social norms for women inhibit them from acquiring the education that will lead to career progress in society.

In academia, women are restricted by stereotypes and organizational policies and structures. When women are allowed the full status of men, i.e., tenured professor, full professor, department chair, dean, vice-president, or president, they are sometimes viewed differently than their male counterparts. Monroe, Ozyurt, Wrigley and Alexander (2008) asserted that typical administrative positions of authority, influence, power, and status are devalued when those positions are held by women. This gender devaluation turns a position of power into a role of service when it is held by a woman. In their qualitative study of 80 women at the University of California at Irvine, the researchers noted the themes of exclusion from power within their departments and the university, feelings of personal responsibility to adjust to the discrimination, and the struggle to negotiate family responsibilities and work responsibilities (Monroe et al., 2008). Tenure and positionality were not factors in improving the circumstances of women in higher education. Service roles were often delegated to female faculty members while men were selected for positions of rank, research grants, and honors (Monroe et al., 2008).

This delegation usually happens due to a culture of strong prescribed gender roles. Service is associated with women because they are thought to be more comforting, supportive, and nurturing. Hence, women are automatically asked to perform duties, such as note taking and any other clerical duties. Women also have their own internal barriers in leadership. Sometimes they often devalue their accomplishments so that their team members or subordinates can be given credit. Women often fail to self-promote for a variety of reasons: selflessness, generosity, insecurity, or modesty. Female leaders who know the value of relationships with their followers give more to those followers and can gain position results (McMahan & Archer, 2010).

Historically, cultural values describe women as weak and dependent on men. Consequently, mostly women do not try to attain the leadership roles at their workplace. They often perceive themselves as imperfect for such dominant status. Therefore, women avoid accepting the key roles that can develop their career or to learn leadership



traits (Desai et al., 2014). This attitude limits professional opportunities and progress for women academicians in higher education.

Gender, race, and age are often subject to stereotyping, and even seemingly positive stereotypes can be problematic. For example, the stereotype of women as nurturers can backfire when employers and peers expect women to take on care giving responsibilities that are inappropriate or discriminatory in a work setting (Heilman, 2012). We can stereotype others, as well as members of our own group; that is, women can hold stereotypes against women. Once a stereotype has been adopted, it becomes a filter through which we selectively recall and use information. A recent study found that people retain their stereotypical views, even when their personal experience presents evidence contradicting a stereotype (Crites et al., 2015).

Women's preference for male bosses is not completely surprising. When women leaders are expected to behave kindly and cooperatively as women but assertively and competitively as leaders, they are put in a no-win situation, which scholars call "role incongruity." Women whose leadership style runs counter to female stereotypes often experience resistance or backlash. In addition to being overlooked for advancement, fear of backlash can discourage them from actively pursuing opportunities. Typically, men do not experience backlash because ambition is consistent with masculine norms.

Madden (2011) suggested that people link these agentic traits with effective leadership. Women leaders find themselves in roles that lead to negative attitudes toward them. Researchers have found that women are viewed as less effective when performing in the more masculine role of leadership (Lopez & Ensari, 2014). An example of this is when women exhibit autocratic characteristics they are viewed as violating the social role of their female gender. According to Lopez and Ensari (2014), this violation elicits disapproval from their subordinates. This is particularly true if women work in an industry that is male dominated (Lopez & Ensari, 2014).

Women administrators in developed countries confront additional challenges. They have to adopt culturally appropriate styles of leadership along with their conflicting identities (Lam, 2006). Such as, the concept of face, power, and distance are important in Asian societies. Scholarship on women's leadership in Asia also indicates the problems encountered by women at top administrative position (Lam, 2006; Luke,

1997, 2000). It is noted that women leaders face many socio-cultural pressures while maintaining their professional image as a successful leader. Asian cultures represent women as less proficient and less efficient to manage risks in administrative setup (Lam, 2006). These stereotypes also affect achievement-oriented women in these societies (Madsen, 2008). Therefore, mentoring and networking is largely significant for women in their career advancement.

At the Meso-level (institutional), issues raised corresponded to concerns in the global literature including how organizational cultures and institutional practices are patriarchal and discriminate against women (Van den Brink et al., 2010). This refers to their unfriendliness to women and women's needs and extends into concerns in some cases about gender discrimination and gender violence on HE campuses. In Sri Lanka, Gunawardena (2013), Goonesekere (2013) and Wickramasinghe (2007) reported major disquiet about gender-based violence on campus. Women's mobility and well-being were seriously constrained by the existence of physical and symbolic violence against women. Most of the literature cited above is dominantly from western perspective. Although little research has directed its attention towards work-life conflict in cultural settings of Pakistan, they only give the perspective of organizationally employed persons (see for example, (Nadeem & Abbas, 2009; Noor & Maad, 2008).

Despite of the societal and economic merits of non-partial employment of women in organizations and the efforts done by globalization to bring all the businesses to one economic forum, it is generally evident that the enrolment of women in entrepreneurial activities and upper level leadership hierarchy is deteriorated under influence of various social, cultural and ethnic norms. Even though more and more females are part of higher education, there is no guarantee that these females will become part of the main stream because most of them get married at an early age and are not allowed to join professional life and this increases the education and employment gap. It is clear by now that Pakistani females do not lack necessary education and abilities, but the major thing which restricts them are the unseen barriers from society and prevalent gender discrimination in labor market (Manzoor, 2015).

The employment of women in the Pakistani context don't depend entirely on their qualifications, abilities and skills, but instead a range of factors, including social class, caste, religious beliefs and cultural norms, impact their participation in the labor

force (Gazdar, 2003; Khan, 2007). However, this may be misleading as Pakistani society is highly stratified, while it has considerable variation regarding cultural norms across classes, regions and rural and urban areas. Such norms have an impact on women's access to and choices regarding job priorities (Khan, 2007). Studies suggested that there are significantly lesser number of female entrepreneurs in Asia and other less developed countries of the world, the reason being that these societies have male dominant culture. As a consequence of male dominance in these societies, females are disadvantaged and are not allowed to participate in many aspects of life.

Similar results are found in some other studies conducted in Pakistan. In her study, Shah (2009) examined that female principals face the disparities in Pakistani colleges. They were unable to utilize their authority in an effective way due to the existing power relations in the system. There are clear demarcations, for instance, they were unable to visit the male dominated public section without the company of a male. A respondent said that visiting account office for any financial issue is very difficult. They don't give positive response. Women college chairs are highly extorted by the clerks to complete their office tasks.

The socio-cultural norms of women's family roles are even more complex in Pakistani society compared to western societies where husband and family may not have significant influences on women's career. As a result of deep-rooted discriminatory socio-cultural values, women do not enjoy the same status as men (Roomi & Parrott, 2008). Ahl (2007) also asserted that women cannot compete with men because of the disproportionate burden of domestic responsibilities, which may hinder their venture success because it is not their first priority.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Theoretical Foundations of the Study**

The methodology of this study is embedded in the postmodern theoretical paradigm to understand the experiences of women leaders in academia. While, the concepts of ‘post-modernism’ and ‘post-structuralism’ are frequently used to substitute each other, the term ‘postmodernism’ is more encompassing (Schwandt, 2001). There is a need to understand modernism to comprehend postmodernism. Adherents of modernist perspective believe in positivism and consider that there is always a real reality, that doesn’t contain any human interruptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). They focus upon the ability of reason to discover the absolute knowledge. Conversely, postmodernist researchers believe in relativity, fragmentation uncertainty and distinctiveness (Crotty, 1998). It criticizes the objective knowledge and maintains that “no knowable social reality exists beyond the signs of language, image, and discourse” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 39).

This chapter outlines the theoretical underpinnings of this study to understand leadership experiences of women in higher education. In this study, I have incorporated some major theoretical foundations of a postmodern thinker Michael Foucault, and postmodern feminists’ assumptions of Dorothy Smith and Raewyn Connell.

#### **3.1 Postmodern Feminist Approach in Understanding Women in Academic Leadership**

Feminist perspective has long been emphasizing and criticizing the hierarchical structures of society that marginalize women status and promote glass ceiling of women. Feminist scholars, from liberal to radical describe distinctive reasons for gender inequalities for women administrators. In recent times, they are moving toward modern and postmodern approaches to discuss the issues of women leadership in existing patriarchal structure. The present study has incorporated theoretical underpinnings of two famous postmodern feminists; Dorothy Smith and Raewyn Connell.

### **3.1.1 Dorothy Smith's Standpoint and Ruling Class Ideology**

Feminist standpoint theory is developed by many feminist researchers including Dorothy Smith, Nancy Hartsock, Sandra Harding etc. This concept is originated from Hegel's ideology of the association between master and the slave. This idea is also inspired by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels's insights of the proletarian standpoint (Harding, 1991). Feminist standpoint thinkers are interested in exploring the foundations of gender inequalities present in societies.

All standpoint researchers have unique stand point themes to construct their arguments. This study has incorporated two famous ideas of Dorothy Smith; stand point and ruling class ideology to investigate women leadership experiences in higher education. Smith utilizes the idea of standpoint to explain that one's knowledge is directly influenced by where one stands in a social world. She maintains that it does not mean that we cannot look at the world in any way other than from our given standpoint. Rather, she argues that no one can have complete, objective knowledge; no two people have exactly the same standpoint; and we must not take the standpoint from which we speak for granted. Instead, we must recognize it, be reflexive about it, and problematize it. She maintains that our situated, everyday experience should serve as a "point of entry" of investigation (Smith, 2005, p. 10). She emphasizes that male standpoint is constantly advantaged and women's standpoint is devalued. Moreover, the standpoint of the elite class men is more privileged and acknowledged in society.

Smith (1996) also maintains that ruling class ideology exist at all levels, particularly in leadership, management, administration, and specialized institutes. These relationships of ruling are developed through complex scientific, technical, social and cultural discourses. She explains that behind and within the "apparently neutral and impersonal rationality of the ruling apparatus" is concealed a "male subtext." Women are "excluded from the practices of power within textually mediated relationships of ruling" (Smith, 1987, p.4).

Olsen (1994) argues that the Dorothy Smith's standpoint investigation started with including everyday lived experiences of women in society and concludes with the stimulation of thoughts, reservations and queries about traditional research. Smith addresses these issues in conventional research by exploring the investigator's place in the relationship of ruling within the research practices. She also highlights the

significance of inter-subjectivity in research and stressed the problematic characteristic of day to day social life where women's everyday understanding about social world is formed by external material aspects. She suggests that a feminist research must avoid objective realities and incorporate the subjective experiences of women in their research to make it distinctive from traditional research. An investigator must "be able to work very differently than she is able to with established sociological strategies of thinking and inquiry that are not outside the relations of ruling" (Smith, 1992 as cited in Olsen, 1994, p.163).

Adherents of the standpoint ideology maintain that traditional research is ambiguous, incomplete as well as invalid due to the utilization of the traditional research methodologies. It is therefore imperative for feminist researchers to instigate their investigation from women's lived experiences to reach more valid and adequate theoretical and empirical descriptions (Andersen, 1994).

Many other feminist researchers, such as Fitzgerald (2003a, 2003b, 2006), supports Smith's notion and emphasizes it in her study about ethnicity of women. She highlights the need for an "indigenous theory of educational leadership that places indigenous women at the center of the narrative" (p. 14). It is helpful in understanding, how knowledge about educational leadership is produced in society to support ruling class ideology and why there is a need for inclusion of women's standpoint in research and practice to disseminate the subjective realities about women leadership experiences from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Oplatka (2006, p. 605), in a study entitled "Women in educational administration within developing countries: Towards a new international research agenda" also supports this idea and called for "further examination of the career experiences, leadership orientations, and subjective voices" of women maintaining various academic leadership positions within developing countries to advise prospects in leadership research.

### **3.1.2 R.W. Connell's Hegemonic Masculinity Model**

In late twentieth century, postmodern feminists started emphasizing on the relationship of masculinity and leadership in sociology. Various feminist scholars have highlighted the influence of culturally defined norms of hegemonic masculinities on administration

and management. Connell, who is an Australian sociologist gained prominence as an intellectual due to her famous book “masculinities” published in 1993 that has become a classic work on the nature and construction of masculinities. She explains “hegemonic masculinity” as a cultural norm that acknowledge male domination and limit women’s participation in administrative roles (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). Her notion of “hegemonic masculinity” is significant in examining gender inequalities in social setting such as family as well as in public sphere like organizations and institutions.

Rewyn Connell’s notion of hegemonic masculinity was originated and extended upon Gramsci’s idea of hegemony. This theory maintains that each power system has a privileged class that embraces maximum power and control. This group of individuals develops and sustains particular ideas and practices to maintain control on the lower class by dictating limited insights about power that support their legitimacy (Filiault & Drummond, 2007).

While, Gramsci’s idea of hegemony was initially utilized to understand economic inequalities prevalent in societies, Connell (1992) extended this notion to identify power relations between men and women. According to Connell (1995, p. 246) “‘Hegemony’ in the concept of hegemonic masculinity..., is the social superiority acquired in the game of social power which leaks to organization of private life and cultural processes going to beyond of cruel power contradictions... Hegemonic masculinity differs from a view of general ‘man sex role’... In fact, to acquire hegemony generally contains that creating masculinity models which are completely original and artificial like the movies character animated by Humphrey Bogart, John Wayne and Sylvester Stallone”.

Connell informs us about the existence of multiple masculinities in society that are constructed complexly. However, she also highlights the combat of dominance inherited in Gramsci’s hegemony model. Connell’s hegemonic masculinity is not developed with the help of armaments. However, she mentions that, “‘hegemony’ doesn’t mean absolute cultural dominance and removing alternatives. Rather, it means superiority which is acquired within a balance of power, in other words during a game, other patterns and groups are placed at an inferior position instead of being wiped out”

(Connell 1995, p. 247). Gramsci's model of hegemony is utilized by feminist researchers to examine various forms of gender inequalities.

According to Connell (1987), the concept of 'hegemonic masculinity' facilitates in examining existing gender power relations. She stresses that although, multiple masculinities are present in society and different modes of manhood comprise unique relationships practices that tend to suppress women in different ways, but the hegemonic masculinity is dominant in all forms of masculinities. It contains a contextually definite and supreme model of manhood aimed at legitimacy and dominance of man over women, including qualities for instance, physical power, wisdom, toughness and competence.

Hegemonic masculinity model of Connell (1987) is helpful in identification and examination of critical thoughts and behaviors of men that tend to legitimate their domination over women and the control of few men over other men. Donaldson (1993) states that the ideology of hegemonic masculinity is widely utilized in feminist research in past two decades and refined by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) with the central perspective that culture developed 'hegemonic masculinity' and it is both a personal and a collective project.

Connell (1995) also has documented the influences of 'Hegemonic masculinity' in social organizations such as education and commerce. She reports that leadership norms are established to support masculine dominance and women are systematically pushed back from top leadership positions and women who achieve such position experience numerous obstacles to survive in the masculine world. Moreover, limited scholarship is presented on the issues of gender at administrative positions in these organizations. Therefore, there is a need to rebuild hegemonic cultural norms for understanding women unique individual and collective abilities and endeavors in organizational structures.

Morrell et al. (2012) hold the view that socio-structural concept of hegemonic masculinity is useful to explicate male domination by social organizations and social structures. It is also an important intervention to inquire about the impact of social patterns that legitimize man power and when these intrusions are with individual men or groups of men, it highlights the patterns and principles that provoke reflection on behavior.



It also helps to distinguish influence of hegemonic masculine norms at different levels of gender relationships and offer an overarching frame of reference to examine construction and reconstruction of gender disparities. Conversely, as the notion of hegemonic masculinity is variable; therefore, it is difficult to examine stagnancy or change. Many researchers circumvent this issue by proposing short-term studies to examine different aspects of hegemonic masculinity. This allows interventions to effect changes at individual, group and discursive levels or on individual male practices (such as reducing gender-based violence), which may impact on individuals but, unless taken to scale, will not by themselves contribute to change in the gender order (Jewkes et al., 2015).

Cihan (2008) argues that gender relations should be understood as having dynamic nature because masculine and feminine norms are pattern of live that very over time and space. As Connell argues that masculinity is not a singular and static structure; rather, there are multiple kinds of masculinities that are produced and reproduced in result of distinct socialization patterns prevalent in societies. It shows that masculinity is a cultural phenomenon and the hegemonic masculine norms are produced and reproduced by social structures to legitimize power of particular men, who hold maximum power and control over discursive production of powerful hegemonic culture.

Heward (1996) also supports this view about hegemonic masculinity in academia. She states that higher educational institutes develop and encourage principles that support "hegemonic masculinities" and issues of gender disparity are rarely addressed by the policy makers that are predominantly male. Additionally, hegemonic masculine leadership norms systematically favor men, which are evident in less promotions resulted in invisibility of women at top academic and administrative positions in higher education and women are clustered at the bottom of the academic hierarchy in higher education.

Blackmore (2002) notices similar practices of leadership in educational organizations, where women found it difficult to maintain their executive powers for a long duration and they enter and leave rapidly as the outcome of hegemonic cultural patterns present in these institutions. This uncertainty lies in the fact that however, there are strong discourses encouraging women participation in leadership and the fact that

leadership also requires feminine attributes as well, but still the hegemonic masculine culture of leadership is unchanged.

However, things have improved and women have made success in various field of life like education and economy but gender disparities are persistent that prevent hegemonic masculine norms. Males are occupying more powerful positions in academic organizations and getting more economic benefits while managing academic and leadership roles. They frequently oppress women with harassment at work place (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2007; Connell, 1987; Messerschmidt, 1997, 2004, 2012).

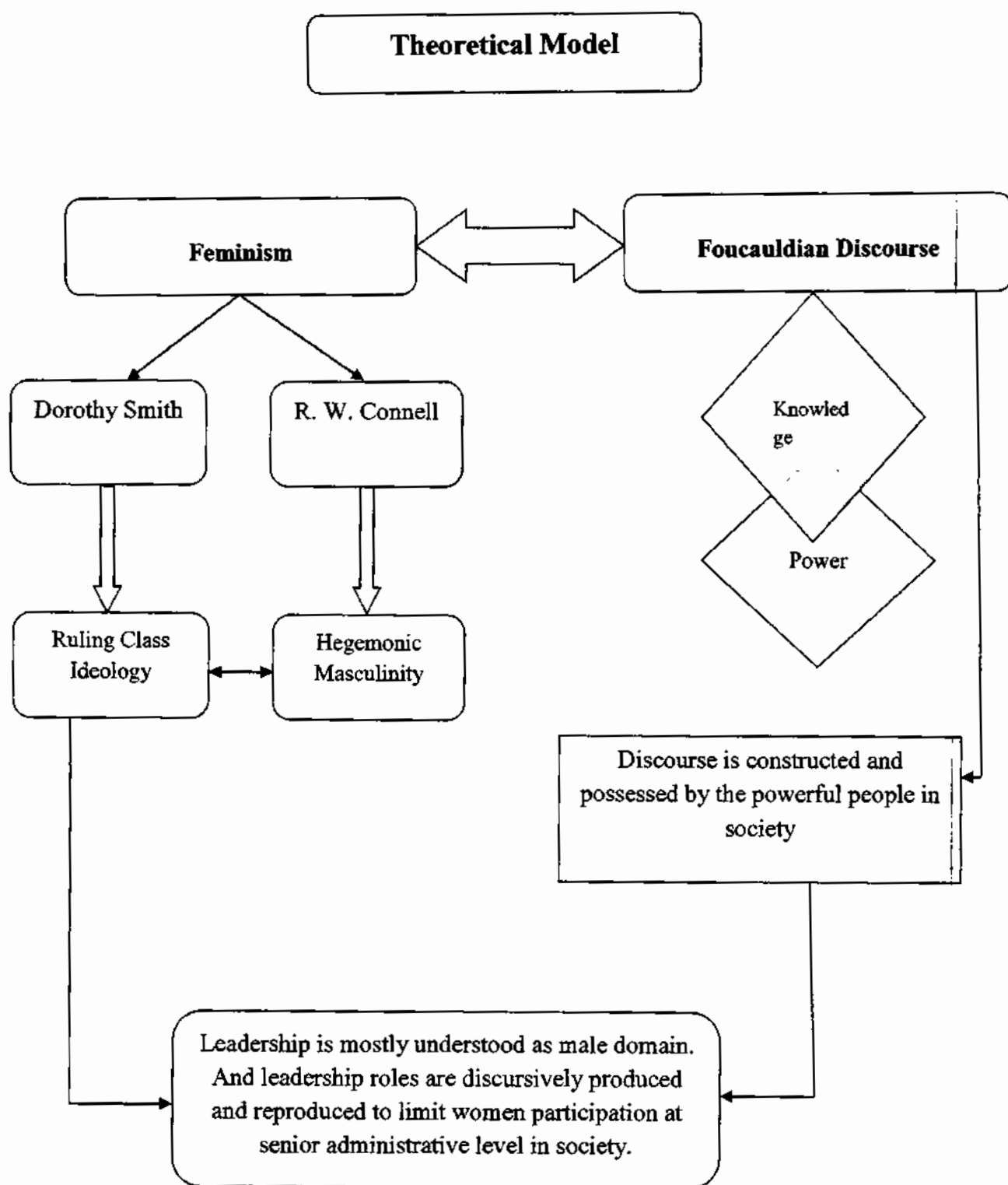
Masculinity practices occurs even in wider organizational context (Wharton, 2012), reproduce and strengthen unequal gender patterns (Frazer, 2008; Ridgeway, 2011), that put more significance on male power as compared to femininity. Connell (1995) believe that it is theoretically probable that new multiple types of masculinities might bring change in traditional hegemonic privileges. It might also alter gendered culture of entitlement (Lewis & Smithson, 2001).

Beck (1992, p. 114) argues that there is little or no tension between the development of masculine beliefs and the financial role of men, as “in the stereotypical male gender role as ‘career man’, economic individualization and masculine behavior are joined together”. In the administrative setup, career men are viewed as more culturally privileged because it improves prestige of an institution and its career constructions.

Public sector universities in Ireland are at a point of transition from collegiality to managerialism. Collegiality, the traditional model in universities, has been described as governance “by a community of scholars” (Meek, 2002, p. 254). In the collegial model, formal decision making is through a committee structure in which academics are strongly represented and which preserves their professional autonomy, while their authority is exercised ‘through expertise, peer equality and consensus decision making, all operating through white middle Organizations in general and the academy in particular have been depicted as ‘greedy’ organizations (Kvande, 2011; Morley, 2013).

The dominance of men and the subordination of women constitutes a historical process, not a self-reproducing system. Masculine domination is open to challenge and requires considerable effort to maintain. Although this point was made in early statements on the hegemonic masculinity concept, it is not just a theoretical idea. There

is a detailed work that shows the tactics of maintenance through the exclusion of women, ranging from Bird's (1996) work on homo-sociality to the organizational research by Collinson et al. (1990), Cockburn (1991), and Martin (2001). There exists considerable evidence that hegemonic masculinity is not a self-reproducing form, whether through habitus or any other mechanism. To sustain a given pattern of hegemony, requires the policing of men as well as the exclusion or discrediting of women (Hooper, 2001).



**Figure 3: Theoretical Model of the Study**

### **3.2 Foucauldian Power and Discourse**

The present study is also motivated by the post-modern concept of knowledge, power and discourse as explained by a Michael Foucault. Foucault stipulates that the varied manifestations and hierarchies of power are controlled by the organization of ideas and control of knowledge. As Foucault (2000) mentions that knowledge is reliant upon institutional support and the distribution tends to exercise a sort of pressure, a power of constraint upon other forms of discourse. He argues that historically all societies develop the system of power relations and social stability by incorporating the 'truth' or 'knowledge'.

Foucault illustrates that power operates in all social structures to pressurize human beings to behave in a specific way. He argues that power ultimately brings resistance by the subjects. Therefore, power has dual functions as it both restricts as well as develops opportunities for humans. Strategy to produce power navigates toward the solidification and intensification of themselves. The risk involved in these strategies is that it could conceal and become a state of domination as oppose to power relations, and close off the possibility of resistance (Foucault, 1978). Foucault maintains that the subject is influenced by knowledge and power in society; therefore, it is "irreducible to these," and the "subject actually functions as a pocket of resistance to established forms of power/knowledge, in the present age" (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000, p. 230).

Foucault (1976/1980) maintains that relationships of power are not absolute and constantly renegotiated. The study of power relations could make sense within an economic context and the relationships of production. It shows that power is complex phenomenon under constant re-evaluation, always maintaining a process of production and reproduction.

Foucault (1976/1980) utilizes the term 'discourse' to develop understanding about our position as subject in relationships of power. Our subjective place in society is largely dependent upon power relationships prevailing in each discourse. Moreover, these power relations are structured "through our linguistic description" (Mills, 2003, p. 47). Discourse is an inter-subjective concept, in which discourse "is not a direct product of subjectivity and has a constituent role in the production of the symbolic systems that govern human existence" (Macey, 2000, p. 101). This evolving explanation about discourse was predisposed by Foucault's "discursive formation," that

he explained as "homogeneous fields of enunciative regularities" (Foucault, 1972/2002, p. 117). Discourse is a "group of statements in which it is possible to find a pattern of regularity defined in terms of order, correlation, position and function" (Macey, 2000, p. 101).

So far, feminist scholars have long debates about criticizing Foucault for excluding women within the explanation of power and discourse at the one hand, and appreciating him for his value as a rhetorician, and the potential of his concepts in understanding gender disparities on the other hand (Danaher et al., 2000). Many feminist researchers in second wave have utilized Foucault's notion of power and discourse in multiple ways to examine gendered power relations. Deveaux (1996) also holds the view that Foucault's theory of knowledge and power can facilitate in understanding causes of resistance toward the prevailing male discourses in society. Hence, it can assist feminist scholars in explaining diverse source of women's subordination.

Sarup (1988) emphasizes that in order to understand subjectivity, one needs to understand that discourses are systematically formulated to support knowledge about the objects about which they talk. Therefore, male and female managers are subjectified by the prevailing discourses. She defines subjectivity as "the conscious and unconscious thoughts and emotions of the individual, her sense of herself and her ways of understanding her relation to the world" (Weedon, 1996, p. 32). Foucault mentions that power relations exist at all stages of discursive construction as the knowledge is also a part of power (Macey, 2000). Foucault states that both knowledge and power are interdependent phenomenon; therefore, knowledge is dependent upon the power of individuals, who hold it. He holds that one hypothesis of power is that the "mechanisms of power are those of repression" (Foucault, 1980/1976, p. 91). Discourse consist of specific principles about individuals who can produce knowledge and in which context and how these principles "exclude some and include others" (Craib, 1992, p.186).

In understanding gender roles and responsibilities, "sexism comes to feel 'natural' or dominant within a culture, it does not allow us any real sense of how it would be possible to intervene and change that process" (Mills, 2003, p. 39). Many feminist researchers have highlighted the presence of masculine and feminine norms in gendered discourse of leadership. In formulation of gendered leadership discourse,

scholarship defines masculine leadership qualities as "competitive, hierarchical, rational, unemotional, analytic, strategic and controlling, and feminine leadership as cooperative, team working, intuitive/rational, focused on high performance, empathic and collaborative" (Court, 2005, p. 5). Leadership attributes of a good leaders, for instance "aggression, vision, strength, determination, and courage are consistent with, and usually positively associated with the masculine traits that result from the ways boys are commonly socialized within American society" (Nidiffer, 2001, p. 103). Behar and Gordon (1995) mentions that women are directed to adopt the masculine traits of management to survive in organizational setup. As women administrators are few in number, therefore their discourse is often unheard and unacknowledged.

Numerous feminists and critical thinkers allowed us to comprehend that leadership is a relational, discursive and inter-subjective phenomenon between males and females. Leadership is understood in a manner, an individual performs predetermined actions which are influenced by power discourse (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Gordon, 2001; Weiler, 2008). It shows that leadership roles are discursively produced and reproduced to limit women participation at senior administrative level in society.

In present study, postmodern feminist and Foucauldian theoretical approaches are applied to understand and examine leadership status and roles of women in higher education. In our society, existing discourse of leadership is dominated by male. Incorporating postmodern theoretical paradigm helped me in examining the causes of resistance experienced by women leaders in universities. It also facilitated in understanding the influence of masculine discourses in academic administration. These discourses are formulated by hegemonic men and shape thoughts and behaviors of leaders in academia. Women are restricted in leadership role; therefore, their presence remains the exception, not the rule. Certainly, their practices rarely have a voice in leadership scholarship because they have been excised (Behar & Gordon, 1995).

In this study, I have emphasized on the following themes that are emerged from the postmodern feminist and Foucauldian discourse, to understand and explore the facilitating and hampering factors for women to achieve senior administrative positions in Pakistani universities and to evaluate their strategies in this respect.

1. A building notion that knowledge is developed according to male's perceptions and fulfill male's interest; feminist aimed at restoring and re-defining women's personal and social experiences in the academia. They are intended to change traditional patriarchal structures and hegemonic masculinities.
2. A determination to examine and evaluate the existing discourses and power relations that strengthen the gender disparities in leadership, which are mostly unaddressed.
3. An increased concentration on public and private domains that is inclined to obscure women status.
4. An effort to utilize reflexivity in research in order to explore women's lived experiences and awareness of discursive formation of power structures in academia.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Research Methodology**

This study examines the opportunities and impediments experienced by women leaders in their personal and professional life and explicates their strategies to overcome those obstacles to achieve their career goals. It is intended to get an in-depth insight on the personal and professional lives of women leaders in academia by understanding their narratives about attaining and maintaining leadership positions in a patriarchal society. I have explored my research questions by utilizing qualitative research approach. This chapter outlines the ontological and epistemological assumptions, rationale for using qualitative approach, universe, population and sample of the study, methods used to conduct the research and analyze participants' stories, along with the procedure for data collection, processing and subsequent analysis, reliability, validity, ethical considerations and reflexivity statement.

#### **4.1 Ontological and Epistemological Foundations of the Study**

Prior to clarifying the type of ontology and epistemology utilized in this research, it is necessary to distinguish the two. Crotty (2003) defines ontology as "the study of being". It is concerned with "what kind of world we are investigating, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such". Moreover, Bryman (2008) uses the term "social ontology" to define philosophical assumptions in a study that are concerned with the nature of social phenomenon. These entities can be either objective, which are independent from social actors or socially constructed from varied social interactions, perceptions and interpretations of people in a social setting. However, epistemology is "a way of understanding and explaining how we know, what we know" (Crotty, 2003, p. 3). Maynard (as cited in Crotty, 2003, p. 8) states that it is also "concerned with providing a philosophical grounding for deciding what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate"

The ontological and epistemological foundations of this study are underpinned in the postmodernist position that maintains that no objective reality exists in the social world and all knowledge is acclaimed as relative. Explicating this stance, Neuman

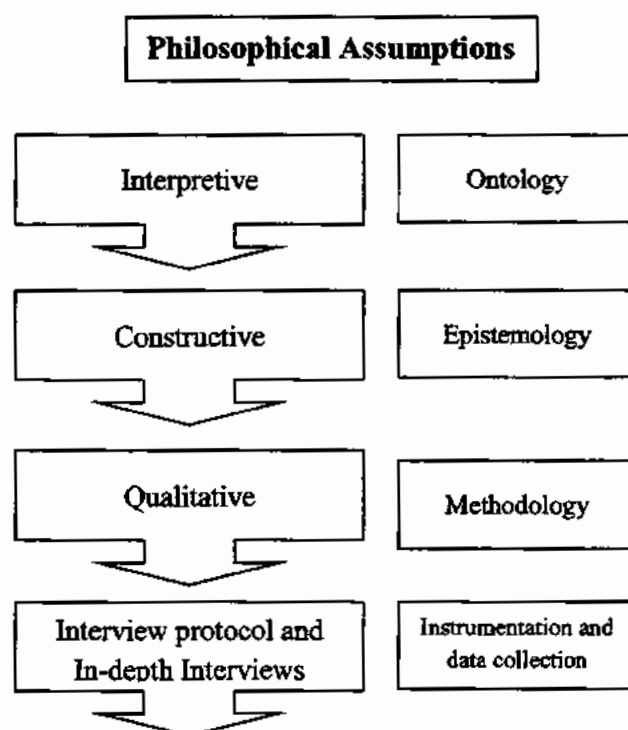
(2003, p. 91) describes the truth as a result of interpretation as he mentions that “no one explanation is more true; all are true for those who accept them”. Therefore, this study aims at expressing the subjective voices of women leaders and holds the view that knowledge is produced and reproduced accordingly to consider “numerous forms as unique to particular people or specific locales” (Neuman, 2003, p. 89). Post-modernistic social reality is regarded as “chaotic and fluid without any real patterns or master plan,” and humans’ thoughts are known as “creative, dynamic beings with unrealized potential” (Neuman, 2003, p. 91).

In contrast to the empiricist and objectivist notion, in this study I have examined leadership experiences of women, according to the postmodernist interpretive ontology and constructionist epistemology. Ormston et al. (2014) states that one can understand social world by his/her own meanings and interpretation to find the subjective realities. This kind of knowledge is produced upon one’s understanding about social world that is resulted from one’s reflection on events in a particular social context rather than only on lived experiences.

Feminist researchers believe that there is a feminist way of knowing because women have cultivated and learned to value ways that are believed to be more powerful but unfortunately ignored or disregarded by the dominant scholarly literature. It is evident that women have unique ways of understanding social reality; therefore, studies focusing women must be undertaken accordingly (Reinharz, 1992). Postmodern feminist researchers adhere the interpretive and constructivist positions as they view reality as “a destructive illusion” and understand the social world as “endless stories or texts, many of which sustain the integration of power and oppression and actually constitute us as subjects in a determinant order” (Olsen, 1994, p. 164). Consequently, feminist methodology focuses on epistemological underpinning that women experiences help to discover new ways of investigation (Harding, 1987). Dorothy Smith (as cited in Harding, 1987) argues that feminist research generated new insights into women identities by recognizing their interpretations about the social phenomenon.

This study aims at providing an explanation about women varied experiences of leadership in higher education that influence their professional as well as personal lives, and how they get aware of leadership realities from their personal everyday experiences to determine their thoughts and gendered world in a better way. As

Harding states that, "in the best feminist research, the purpose of research and analysis are not separable from the origins of research problems" (Harding, 1987, p. 8).



**Figure 4: Philosophical Assumptions of the Study**

#### **4.2 Rationale for Qualitative Method**

This study has utilized qualitative research approach to explore women experiences of academic leadership in higher education in Pakistan. According to Taylor and Bogdan, (1998), qualitative approach provides a holistic view of people, situations, and context. It also enables attention on the individuals' personal and social experiences and efforts in society by saturation. Miles and Huberman (1994) maintains that qualitative studies provide comprehensive knowledge about the social phenomenon by concentrating on the sampling unit. Researchers frequently use qualitative studies for the examination of sociological phenomena and behavioral events (Yin, 2015). According to Landrum and Garza (2015), qualitative studies are exploratory in nature and allow researchers to look for the meaning of individuals' experiences with a particular phenomenon. All qualitative methodologies have two important elements in common. The first element

is that the phenomenon occurs in a natural or real world setting. Secondly, the research involves capturing enough data to study the complexity of the phenomenon (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013).

There are many reasons for employing qualitative approach in this study. Firstly, it allowed me in comprehensive understanding of the experiences of women leaders in academia. It also helped me in getting rich data about the similar and different experiences of women leaders in academia. Sandelowsky and Barroso (2003) maintains that qualitative approach enables researchers, who are intended to obtain valuable data for developing policies and programs.

Secondly, this approach facilitated me in doing an in-depth examination of the factors that support or hinder women leaders in their career advancement and how they perceive organizational culture in achieving top leadership positions. In short, it allowed to concentrate on how women administrators in higher education attach meanings to their leadership experiences and how those experiences are different from the dominant standpoint. These perspectives are effectively addressed by qualitative studies as the primary concern of the qualitative studies is to understand reality from individuals' personal experiences and understanding about their social world (Marshall & Rossman, 2006; Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Thirdly, the qualitative method allowed me to view women leaders' experiences through constructivist lens. Power & Gendren (2015) suggests that constructivist lens allows to collect the emerging themes based upon personal experiences of the participants as opposed to a quantitative method that promotes the more positivist viewpoint requiring scientific evidence using statistical information and experimentations to reveal how public, in general, operates. According to Yin (2015), qualitative research design facilitates in the comprehensive textural descriptions that are produced through a narrative inquiry. It helped me in enlightening the nuances of the lived experience of women succeeded in attaining academic leadership positions in universities.

Finally, qualitative method facilitated me in comprehensive and careful investigation of the socio-cultural context of women leaders and facilitated me in the examination of gender differences in leadership styles and women's personal and social experiences of empowerment in higher education in Pakistan. It also helped in a

thoughtful understanding of the existing gender discourses about senior leadership positions present in academic organizations and society at large and to explore the factors contributing to change discriminative policies and practices in academic leadership in Pakistan. In addition, it allowed to explore the strategies utilized by women in achieving and maintaining their position at the top. Yin (2015) suggests qualitative studies, for exploring sociological phenomenon and behavioral events because it is exploratory in nature and helps in understanding meanings of individuals' lived experiences with particular phenomena.

#### **4.3 Universe**

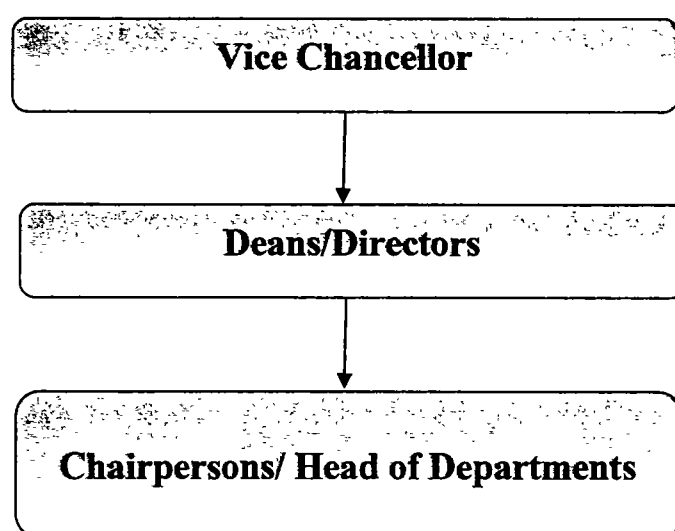
There are numerous schools, colleges and universities that are providing higher education in Pakistan. It is also delivered at many college level organizations, such as vocational training institutes, trade and business schools, and other profession training colleges that offer professional certifications and scholarly degrees. In order to limit the scope and to maintain homogeneity, this study included coeducational universities, listed in general category in Higher Education Commission, Pakistan [HEC] and that are situated in two districts of Pakistan, Rawalpindi and Islamabad. These universities are characterized for their unique professional culture, and environment of research. Coeducational university structures allowed me to explore the influence of dominant discourses and power relations on women leadership experiences in higher education.

Overall, there were total twenty-four co-educational universities present in the universe at the time of the data collection i.e. summer, 2018. In eight universities, there was no woman holding academic leadership position during the data collection phase; therefore, only sixteen universities were included in the universe.

#### **4.4 Population**

The population of women with one-year leadership experience in higher education was selected from the universe, in order to collect sufficient data about their lived experiences about academic administration. Figure 5 demonstrates that the academic leadership hierarchy in universities is consisted of vice chancellor, deans or directors, and chairpersons.

I have attained information about women leaders from the universities' official websites. Almost all universities' websites post updated information about the academic leaders. I prepared a list of women deans, directors and chairpersons in each university located in the universe. I have utilized universities' official websites as source of collecting information about population, due to the absence of gender based statistical information about academic leaders in other authentic databases such as HEC, Pakistan or Bureau of Statistics etc.



**Figure 5: Academic Leadership Hierarchy in the Universities**

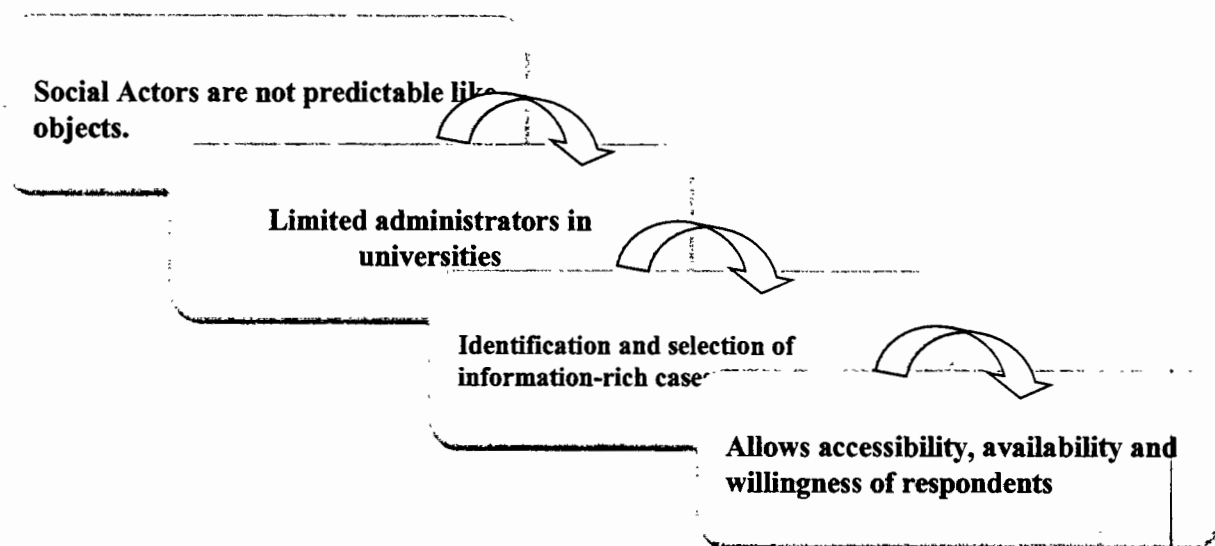
Depending upon universities' websites for collecting information, also has some drawbacks such as some universities do not update information about academic managers on their official websites. Therefore, it was important to verify that the academic managers mentioned on websites were still holding their position during data collection phase. I dealt with this issue by utilizing telephonic contact and official emails of the assistants and coordinators of each women leader to find out the most up-to-date information about presently working academic managers. I found sixty-two prospective participants in the universe based upon the information collected from universities' web sites and coordinators/assistants. Among sixteen universities present in the universe, there was no woman, holding the most senior post of the VC. Moreover, there were only five deans and directors that also showed the underrepresentation of

women in the universe. Data revealed that there were fifty-seven women, who were working as chairpersons in their respective departments.

#### **4.5 Sampling**

This study has utilized the purposive sampling technique for the selection of the prospective participants. It is a technique, in which specific individuals and events are deliberately selected to get enriched information that cannot be obtained from other sources (Maxwell, 1996). Patton (2002) describes that this is a most widely used method of sampling for the identifying and selecting information rich cases to understand particular phenomenon in qualitative studies. In this study, this sampling technique enabled me to find and select women, who were familiar to the issue and had rich information and experiences related to the research phenomenon (Cresswell & PlanoClark, 2011). Moreover, the respondents' accessibility, availability, willingness to participate in research and their capability to effectively provide information and experience about the issue was equally important in this study (Bernard, 2002).

There were several reasons for using purposive sampling technique in this study. Firstly, qualitative studies believe that social actors are not predictable as objects; therefore, non-probability sampling techniques are seemed more appropriate to understand social issues. As present study is qualitative in nature, purposive sampling technique allowed me to choose most appropriate respondents for the study. Secondly, there were limited numbers of women working at leadership positions in the universe. Thirdly, some women were unavailable to give time for interview due to their busy schedules at their workplace. Finally, some of them were unwilling to participate in the research.



**Figure 6: Rationale for Purposive Sampling**

Sampling and sample size in qualitative research is considered problematic for researchers because the experts in qualitative research do not agree on, what is an appropriate sample size (Gentles et al., 2015; Gill, 2014; Yin, 2015). However, sample sizes in qualitative studies tend to be smaller in number as compared to quantitative research. The qualitative studies believe in understanding the underlying meaning of the data rather than making generalizations based upon the quantity of the data (Mason, 2010). Saturation is the defining measure of sample size in qualitative studies (Fusch & Ness, 2015; O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Walker, 2012). Data saturation is thought to occur, when there is a redundancy found in the information being collected and nothing new is being added (Gentles et al., 2015). In this study, saturation point was achieved at twenty-second interview. However, one more interview was conducted to validate it. Therefore, sample size of this study was consisted of twenty-three women leaders.

Selection criteria for each participant required that (a) the participant is identified as a woman, (b) currently employed at an academic leadership position, i.e. dean, director or chairperson, (c) have at-least one-year academic leadership experience in higher educational institute and (d) their willingness to participate in research. The sampling procedure was a criterion-based on purposive sampling technique.

Based upon the above mentioned sampling criteria, fifty-three women were shortlisted. Personal email addresses and official telephone numbers of the potential



participants were obtained from universities' official websites. Initially, invitations for participation in study were sent via email to all the women fulfilling sampling requirements. Some women, who did not respond the e-mail, were also personally contacted by making telephonic calls. After obtaining each participant's informed consent, a second contact was made via email or telephonic contact, to schedule an appointment for the interview. At the time of the second contact, the purpose of the research was explained to ensure that participants had a clear understanding about the rationale of the study. A signed informed consent form was also obtained from the respondents at the time of interview.

#### **4.6 In-depth Interview**

Interview is an effective tool of data collection in qualitative research. Interviewing well can elicit answers that are both anticipated and unanticipated. A researcher can be flexible with the questioning as well that helps ease shifts in the interaction, allows for different flows and pacing during the exchange of words, dictate how far the interviewer can probe, and increase the depth of inquiry. Interviewing allows participants and researchers to be open about a topic and researchers may capitalize on the opportunity in order to garner the best possible set of data (Creswell, 2014, p. 45).

This study has utilized the in-depth interview technique to explore the lived experiences of women about academic administration. It is one of the most frequently used methods of data collection in qualitative research. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) defines in-depth interview as a face to face interaction between the investigator and the participant, focused on comprehensive understanding of their lived experiences as articulated in their own words. Researchers, such as Cohen and Crabtree (2006) and Yin (2015) maintain this approach allows for a conversational nature of the interviews by providing participants, the freedom to express their vision in their own words. In this study, the story-telling aspect of women's experiences in obtaining leadership roles and my interpretations of the data endorsed the narrative analysis as a relevant method for discovering the difficulties women faced in their career trajectories in academia (Sands, as cited in Padgett, 2004). I have conducted face-to-face in-depth interviews with women leaders to comprehend their lived experiences about academic leadership. It helped me to extend an understanding about women's unique career narratives. It

also allowed these women to narrate their unique leadership experiences through any changes in, how they view themselves as women and as leaders. The aim was to obtain an in-depth insight on the factors that facilitate or hinder women career advancement and analyze their strategies to overcome the obstacles that mediate their career trajectories.

#### **4.6.1 Interview Guide**

For conducting interviews, an interview guide was developed that allowed me to take relevant and comprehensive information, while remaining close to my research questions. Taylor and Bogdan (1998) defines interview protocol as a guide that comprises the list of main aspects to be explored rather than a predetermined list of questions. I have developed an interview guide as recommended by Creswell (2007) to make sure that all important concepts and issues are covered in the interview.

The interview guide was consisted of open-ended questions to explore leadership style and experiences of women in universities. Questions related to the participants 'personal skills, strategies and resources, socio-cultural factors contributing toward women leadership, and influence of dominant discourses on women academic leadership, were included in the interview guide. Such questions allowed me for an investigation of any incongruence between their feminine roles and leadership roles. The questions were designed that allowed women to describe how various leadership discourses influence their leadership behavior, how it developed obstacles in obtaining their career goals, and what strategies they utilized to overcome the barriers present in their personal and professional life due to their leadership status. The interview guide was carefully developed and shared with an expert researcher of the domain to ensure its reliability that it has served the objectives of the research (Long & Johnson, 2000). The results of the review led to few modifications in the interview guide that ensured alignment with the research questions.

I initiated the interview process by sending emails to solicit voluntary participation of the prospective participants in the research. In emails, I informed participants about the main purpose of the research, addressed participants' requirements and safeguards, and asked them to certify their informed consent. All interviews were conducted at women's own offices because they felt more contented

and convinced in their office settings and were able to give quality time for sharing their thoughts.

I have collected the data during summer, 2018. I choose this time because most of the universities offer summer break to their students and faculty during Summer. However, at that time, educational leaders still have many work demands but they get relatively relaxed during summer vacations due to less workload. Therefore, they can spare some quality time for the interviews and during interviews, I never sensed that anyone feel rushed or bothered. I have conducted twenty-three interviews with female educational leaders and each interview lasted approximately two hours. The total time spent in interviews was approximately forty-two hours. In addition, I spent time in contacting the participants, scheduling appointments, securing the place of interview, and transporting myself to the respondents.

The interviews were audio recorded by using a tape recorder after obtaining informed consent. Only two participants declined to have the interview recorded; therefore, I took thorough notes and remained careful about asking follow-up questions to insure accurate understanding of the participant's answers and clarified the notes from the prospective participants to remove any gaps and ambiguities in the data. I also took hand written field notes during the recorded interviews. Each interview was subsequently transcribed in Microsoft Word documents. These notes and digital files are kept in a password-protected laptop.

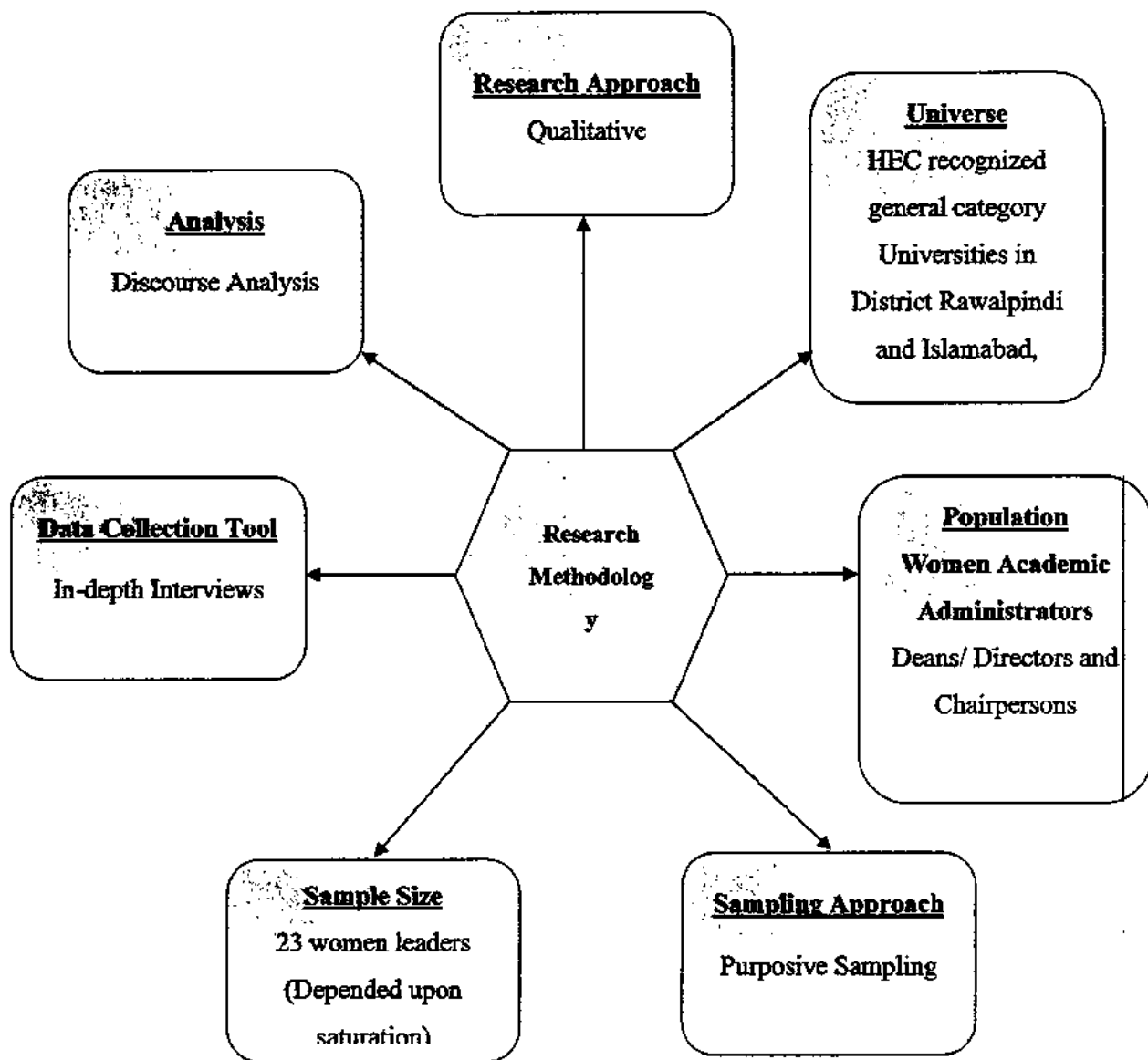
I have utilized topical interviewing technique that allowed me to remain close to my research questions. I also clearly mentioned the purpose of the research to the respondents before interview so that they had that information and context before answering the questions. It is necessary in the research because of my interest in understanding women's strategies to address the problem. As, I asked particular pre-written questions within a social interaction, I had an active role in producing the data (Glesne, 2011).

Additionally, I asked questions in a natural progression; therefore, women felt more comfortable in sharing first about what they know about leadership followed by narrating their leadership styles, describing their leadership skills and their personal efforts in learning leadership roles etc. and then moving toward the main objectives including socio-cultural contexts of leadership; organizational structures that support

or impede women in leadership in higher education; and identifying numerous discourses influencing their positions in educational leadership etc. I have chosen to align my interviewing tasks, with the “...perspective [that] suggests that the researcher engage with participants in cooperative projects that focus on dialogue, collaboration, and mutual self-disclosure” (Glesne, 2011, p. 106). That interaction included sharing stories, commenting on insights, validating information, and keeping a conversational tone between the study participants and me. Glesne (2011) also reminded me to get aware of the nonverbal feedback during the interviews. I have paid close attention to the body language of the participants and my own and looked for signs of inattention, discomfort, or confusion.

#### **4.7 Contributions of a Pilot Study**

Prior to the data collection, I have conducted a pilot study, in which I interviewed two female educational leaders using my interview guide. It aimed at finding out, if women would yield any data about my area of interest i.e. how university women experience academic leadership. Moreover, it also helped me to practice qualitative research, interviewing, analysis, etc. Furthermore, it was valuable in testing my interview guide. The pilot study results and reflections have given me future directions in my research. In addition, it helped me to alter my research guide according to the feedback from the participants and experts in this area of research. Finally, it also improved my understanding about the issue, selection of participants and interview guide.



**Figure 7: Research Methodology**

#### **4.8 Data Analysis**

In present study, in-depth interviews were the main source of data collection; therefore, it was imperative to be careful about the type of data analysis strategy used to interpret the results. In present study, a poststructuralist approach of analysis was utilized for the analysis of interview data. I have utilized Michael Foucault's discourse analysis approach to evaluate the experiences of women leaders in higher education. The data analysis happened in approximately six steps, as recommended by John W. Creswell in 2014.

At first step, I prepared the data for analysis. For this purpose, I transported all audio recording files to my password-protected laptop and transcribed all audio recorded as well as hand written interviews into Microsoft Word documents. As the interviews were conducted in both Urdu and English, I had to translate all conversations made in Urdu into English language. In order to check accuracy of my English translation of interviews, I took assistance of a friend, who was an expert in English translation. She crosschecked all English translated interview transcripts to ensure its precision with actual Urdu transcripts.

Second, I revised all completed transcriptions again to get a general idea about the major aspects present in the data to understand their underlying meanings. I utilized questions as suggested by Creswell's (2014, p. 247) such as "What general ideas are participants saying? What is the tone of the ideas? What is the impression of the overall depth, credibility, and use of the information?" I also revisited my field notes during this process and prepared analytical memos to get an in-depth insight into the data for analysis.

Third, I assigned descriptive codes to my data. According to Miles, et al. (2014) "a descriptive code assigns labels to data to summarize in a word or short phrase - most often known- the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data" (p. 74). I categorized groupings of the data with specific labels in the form of terms. Moreover, I took Creswell's (2014, p. 248) advice of the traditional route, and "...develop[ed] codes only on the basis of the emerging information collected from participants". While developing codes for my data, I referred back to my research objectives and questions to relate them with my data and codes.

Fourth, during and after formulating data patterns and descriptive codes, I started developing themes and produced a description of the participants. My respondents also facilitated me in identifying and formation of themes that was helpful in the data analysis. These themes were discursively understood and analyzed in the discussion and recommendation sections of the study. I have presented my themes with direct quotes of the participants, for a clear identification and analysis of the discourses present in academic leadership. These themes and related quotations present rich and interesting narratives of my participants about their leadership experiences in higher education. I also have developed interconnections between various themes because leadership is a complex phenomenon that can be influenced by multiple factors. Participant's descriptions helped me in explicating the details that made-up the data for the study.

Fifth, during the data analysis and discussion, I have presented my data in different ways. Themes are discussed in detail with direct quotations of the participants and paraphrasing of their narratives for detailed description of the themes for the readers.

Finally, Michael Foucault's notion of discourse analysis is utilized to interpret the data. I have tried to develop an understanding of the socio-cultural discourses of educational leadership and its influence on women's leadership experiences. I also have synthesized my findings with the information gleaned from previous scholarship and postmodern perspectives. Lastly, I have addressed my research problem by giving recommendations based upon the findings.

#### **4.8.1 Foucauldian Discourse Analysis**

As mentioned above, I have analyzed my data by utilizing Michael Foucault's discourse analysis approach. According to the Michael Foucault, discourse is "a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation [...Discourse] is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined. Discourse in this sense is not an ideal, timeless form [...] it is, from beginning to end, historical – a fragment of history [...] posing its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality". (Foucault, 1972/2002, p.117)

According to the Foucault (2000), knowledge, ideologies and discourses are developed in society to control social relationships. These discourses are utilized to develop power structures in society to control social behaviors and maintain power by systematically excluding the subjects with the help of language. Foucault's Discourse analysis is significant in exploring power relations and highlighting influential and dominant groups in a social system. It also facilitates in understanding, how various principles control power relations and discourses, and how it is affected by non-discursive social aspects (Foucault, 1994).

Discourse is not only socially constructed set of ideas, reasoning and communication (Lupton, 1992). However, Flax (1990) argues that it is also a system that has the potential to construct knowledge on the basis of interpretations. In this study, discourse analysis facilitated me in understanding and interpreting the manifestation of women leaders about multiple socio-cultural forces, that leads toward the development of specific discourses about women leaders in organizations and society at large. For this purpose, the conversations of respondents are deconstructed in order to explore their underlying meanings, perspectives and power structures. The underlying meanings of respondents' statements are understood according to the established discourses of power, domination and disparities in socio-cultural context of Pakistani society. These discourses are interpreted through deducting the quotations from the data collected from interviews that supported such claims, and synthesized the finding with literature review, and feminist theories of Dorothy Smith, Rewyn Connell and Michael Foucault.

#### **4.9 Ethical Considerations**

Research ethic is defined by Simons as "the search for rules of conduct that enable us to operate defensibly in the political contexts in which we have to conduct educational research" (as cited in Pring, 2000, p. 142). Ethical considerations in a study include principles of research that are apprehensive about the physical and psychological safeguard of the participants from potential threats (Chilisa, 2005). In this study, I have considered the ethical guidelines as suggested by Belmont Report (as cited in Childress & Beauchamp, 2001) to protect the rights of participants and beneficiaries and tried to maintain justice during my entire research. I remained careful about the potential risks



associated with the study participants and utilized some ethical measures to protect the rights of my participants. These ethical considerations include, obtaining approval from the universities, informed consent from participants, and the confidentiality of the data.

#### **4.9.1 Approval from the Universities**

Obtaining permissions from organizational Internal Review and necessity of attaining participants' informed consent is a norm in the West. However, researchers in Non-Western settings should be aware of the research ethics, keeping in view the cross-cultural variations (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). While this study was conducted in formal organizational settings, I have obtained approvals from the universities' Internal Review Board for collecting data from the prospective participants.

#### **4.9.2 Informed Consent from Prospective Participants**

I started contacting women leaders, who fulfilled my sampling criteria, by emails, telephonic contacts or meeting them in person to invite them for participation in research. Moreover, I developed a consent form that included the detailed description about my research project: the aims and objectives of the study, significance, limitations, procedures, confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation. Written informed consent forms were sent to the participants via emails after attaining their approval. After soliciting permissions from the prospective participants, I scheduled the date, time and place for interviews. All interviews were conducted in office settings, where women felt more comfortable and no potential risk involved during the interviews. The participants were also given the right to stop recording interview at any time to reduce potential risks of sensitivity to answer any interview question.

#### **4.9.3 Confidentiality of Data**

Confidentiality of data is necessary in social science research. I have taken some measures to ensure secrecy of the data collected from the participants. Firstly, I secured the data in my password-protected laptop and field notes files were also kept in a locked cabinet to which I had the sole access. Secondly, to minimize personal or professional risks associated with participants, the data was kept anonymous, indicating that the

participants were not identified either directly or through identifiers. For this purpose, I used pseudonyms in describing organizations and reporting narratives of the study participants. It helped me to increase their ability to provide honest and more meaningful data. Additionally, any potentially identifiable information was redacted from the report.

#### **4.10 Validity and Trustworthiness**

In qualitative studies, there is necessity to adopt measures to ensure validity in research. In this study, I have utilized Creswell's (2014) principles to achieve validity and trustworthiness. These tools are described in detail in this section.

##### **4.10.1 Member Checking**

In this study, I have proceeded for member checking to elucidate the misunderstandings and misinterpretations of the narratives of the participants. Creswell (2014) reminds for taking final transcripts and analysis back to the study participants to review their perspectives and to determine trustworthiness of the data. For this purpose, I shared interview transcripts and some highlights of the analysis with participants via emails. Many participants were cooperative and offered their coordination in this respect at the time of interview. They solicited their inputs and understandings about the validity of the data. Many women responded me about the results more specifically by sharing interesting and important points e.g. tolerance, stereotyping and work- family balance.

Moreover, I shared some results with my friends and colleague, and acknowledged their thoughts during the data analysis phase (Maree & Van der Westhuizen, 2009; Maxwell, 1996) and welcomed them in discovering discourses and criticizing my interpretations to improve my work further.

##### **4.10.2 Peer Debriefing**

Peer debriefing is commonly used by researchers in qualitative research to determine trustworthiness. Shenton (2004) suggests for taking feedback about research procedures and analysis from peers, colleagues, or other experts in academia. Peer debriefing is critical in a qualitative research because an investigator can utilize it to challenge his/her interpretations and assumptions. During this study, I welcomed frequent feedback from

my thesis supervisor, co supervisors, colleagues and friends. They made significant contributions in crosschecking my transcripts and critically reviewing the findings that helped me in developing an accurate insight on the experiences of women in a discursive way. They also reorganized my thoughts for truthful interpretations.

#### **4.10.3 Controlling Personal Bias**

Creswell (2014) also recommends clarifying any predispositions that I might carry out in this study by elucidating how my role as a female academician in higher education could play into it. I have clearly described my subjectivity statement in a section of this report entitled 'reflexivity Statement'. Moreover, as my subjectivity could influence interview process; therefore, I attempted to remain objective during inquiring about women's lived experiences by allowing my participants that resulted in expressing their thoughts frankly.

Moreover, I also made my position clear to the participants. At a certain point however, I realized that I could not completely remove the mantle; I wear as a female academician. It was true that I was able to speak in a common language to the women and that questioning and interviewing fell into a conversational rhythm at times, but this effect benefitted the data collection by producing more frankness in the answers. We often engaged in banter that used common terminologies and references related to the field of education, educational leadership, women, etc. It is true that I presented questions differently to a female educational leader than I would present it to, for instance, an accountant. It was also true that less explanation or context was given when I questioned the participants because all involved had exposure to similar experiences in the career their field at least. I noted that the most of the women disclosed richer and deeper insights. For example, I did not explain the process people must follow in order to obtain an administrative position. The requirements are typically standard in the field and don't differ as the women followed their paths to the leadership. Therefore, the women were free to talk about other factors that played significant role in their journeys.

I carefully transcribed all the interviews by centering on word-for-word description of the narratives of my participants. Open-ended structure of the questions was helpful in getting more detailed descriptions of the women experiences about their leadership roles and to avoid putting my personal stories in to it. In data analysis phase,

I tried hard to make sense of the narratives of women leaders by comprehending, how they could make sense and meaning of their personal leadership styles and perspectives.

#### **4.10.4 Prolonged Time in the Field of Higher Education**

As I am working in the field of higher education, since 2008; I have first-hand knowledge about the inner workings of universities in the universe. Because, I have this experience, spending prolonged time in the field was a very reliable way to check for accuracy and aid in proving the validity of the findings (Creswell, 2014, p. 252). I was able to complete this step by simply remaining on my career track and continuing my long tenure as an educational professional, especially as I conducted this research. I am aware of the inner workings of higher education and what it means to be a teacher and an administrator - while doing it as a woman. As the study participants spoke about their experiences, their gender identity, and its relation to their work; at the same time, I was able to empathize, probe, and compel them to express themselves in the deepest ways possible. Moreover, I was able to validate their answers because I was one of them and shared experiences with them in similar ways.

#### **4.10.5 Observation**

I also have utilized observational method to focus on the non-verbal feedback of my study participants by putting greater attention upon their unsolicited remarks and observations. I have paid close attention to their body language and gestures to attain accurate knowledge about the issue (Ary et al., 2010; Wright, 2006).

#### **4.11 Field Notes and Analytic Memos**

During interviews with women leaders, I have developed field notes and analytical memos to keep record of the important issues identified by participants as well as of my personal observations and interpretations. I kept field notes in a notebook; therefore, I could refer back to them during and after the interview (Glesne, 2011). I kept jotting down the follow-up questions while interviews, when any participant mentioned something that required more investigation. Instead of interrupting participants' narratives, I allowed them to continue their descriptions and tried to come back to it later in the conversation. I also have written my observations during and after the

interviews. I have utilized these notes and memos during data analysis for getting a better understanding about participants' perspectives about academic leadership and developing relevant themes (Glesne, 2011).

#### **4.12 Reflexivity Statement**

In a qualitative research, it is imperative to take into account one's reflexivity and clearly mention it in the report (Throne, 2019). A researcher must consider his/her position in relation to the study subjects and research background. It facilitates researchers in reconstructing insider and outsider status, and understanding dynamics of research with respect to the education, class, race, gender etc (England, 1994; Merriam et al., 2001; Rose, 1997).

I belong to a middle class family of the province of Punjab, Pakistan and socialized in accordance to the masculine discourses present in the socio-cultural context of Pakistan that has influence on my personality as a professional woman. I have struggled hard to attain post-graduate degree with limited economic resources. My parents know that obtaining a university degree is important, but that was the extent of their knowledge about how to navigate post-secondary life.

After first semester of my first year degree program, I realized that I need to improve my interpersonal skills for success in my practical life. Once I joined as a Teaching Research Associate (TRA) in a private university, I never spent much time in thinking about other career goals or advancements. After getting three years of teaching experience, I realized I could move up for promotion, if I look forward to pursue advance studies. Continuing professional life with pursuing advance degree seemed as a challenge for me after marriage and living in a joint family structure. However, strong and consistent support of my husband and in-laws facilitated me to achieve this goal. Similarly, I felt significance of my family commitments and tried to maintain a balance to get recognition in the community as a successfully married woman. During and after obtaining advance degree, I never intended to pursue anything other than teaching. I knew I would have learned some things related to my field, but I had no intention and never looked myself as an administrator. My few friends and colleagues also expressed their sentiment that they wish to see me in that role. However, the organizations I

worked with, during that time did not encouraged me to lead or train me, nor did anyone mentored me to pursue leadership opportunities.

In regard to this study, as a female university teacher, I worked with both male and female leaders in different time periods and encountered experiences related to my gender in academia. I was shocked by the reality of gender disparity in higher education. Despite the fact that the human resources, specifically the number of female teachers, are abundant, I was curious about why the numbers of female leaders are lesser in academia. Even though, I have worked with many qualified and capable female educators in my professional life, I wondered, why most of women are invisible at senior leadership positions. Consequently, that curiosity led me to reminisce about my own journey in my career and my position as a female educationist.

I received some teachers training workshops during my professional life and found them very helpful in polishing my professional skills such as organizing work, communication, lesson planning and confidence. After seven years of teaching experience at higher educational institute, one of my female family relative, who is also a government school teacher, encouraged me to apply for the position of an assistant professor in a government organization that was far from my residence. She reminded me that I had been thinking with that lens regardless and that she saw me making the leap in a much easier fashion that I did. She boosted my confidence and I leapt. I applied for the post, but with great hesitation due to the forthcoming challenge of daily long travel. As, I loved teaching and felt comfortable, self-assured, and acknowledged in that role, I needed to improve my professional exposure by working in diverse organizational structures. Finally, I was offered appointment as an assistant professor in another city. I accepted that offer and worked hard to maintain balance between family commitments and independent daily traveling beside new professional responsibilities. Again, I had great cooperation of my husband in adopting new roles in my personal and professional life.

Throughout my academic career, I observed more and more that how women are treated differently, have different experiences, and have to think differently in their role as a leader. Therefore, I have developed different insights about what it means to be a good leader. I came to know that most of the women are managing their leadership roles without prior trainings and formal mentoring.

In my professional life, I lived and witnessed many examples of how men and women have different experiences in academia. For instance, I have been in countless situations, where a man felt the need to explain something to me, often in a condescending or patronizing way, even though I had already indicated, I understood the situation and may have further questions. I have been talked over, cut off, and not given the opportunity to share my thoughts aloud. I often tried to make myself clear and reminded people at forums that I should be given chance to contribute.

Another example that illustrated the difference gender makes in this field, is that in numerous meetings and other formal and informal interactions, I often experienced that my voice was different from others in that environment. People often looked at me differently upon my entrance into a room; I often noticed that male eyes kept looking up and down on my personality, lastly landing on my eyes. Consequently, I become careful about my dress and started using conventional attire in order to ensure that I would be taken as seriously as possible. Despite my efforts, males as well as females often commented upon my appearance at work (superiors and subordinates) and they kept on commenting about my beauty, smile, hair etc. As I moved forward to senior academic designation, I recalled several times when top administrators hired a man instead of me for various committees and explained that they felt more comfortable with someone 'manhandling' discipline with students or with someone coming across as more powerful in dealing with difficult students and families.

Despite these experiences, I also learned many valuable lessons about teaching and leadership in academia. I felt important to consider my gender and others, while working with male colleagues. I believe to learn from my personal experiences that can shape my communication style. I also felt the need to be intuitive, a good listener, inquisitive and highly reflective, and I come to feel that these skills require patience, organization, kindness, and openness as woman. Considering the nature of my experiences, I took the following approach to pay attention to my positionality: I attempted to be "...acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others - to indwell - and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand" (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009).

As I am well aware of the academic environment so well, my positionality enhanced the research process as well in how the interview questioning came about or was enriched. Bhopal (2010, p.188) examined the researcher as an outsider and an insider and how that role impacted the rapport between the researcher and the subject. She argued that shared gender, identity, and experience between the two could create a high level of trust. I agreed with Bhopal (2010) that trust can be established and I had the responsibility to protect the study participants; the data they provided could not be compromised as it could lead to placing them in a risky position. I had to make certain that information was kept completely confidential and not exposed to anyone as it could be perceived as negative and someone may wish to retaliate in some way. As a researcher, my task was to search for contradictions and discrepancies in the text as they collapsed on each other. However, the purpose of this study was clear as I was intended to understand how women negotiate power in large hierarchical institutions. Moreover, I made my position known to the participants before the interviews took place.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Women's Leadership Identities**

This qualitative study explores women experiences of academic leadership in higher education in Pakistan. For this purpose, twenty-three in-depth interviews have been conducted from women occupying different academic leadership positions in various universities located in twin cities; Rawalpindi and Islamabad. An interview schedule is developed to investigate lived experiences of women academic administrators. Foucauldian discourse analysis is utilized for getting careful insight into the opportunities and impediments experienced by women in their struggle to achieve and maintain leadership positions in higher educational institutes. This study is intended to draw connections between existing dominant socio-cultural and institutional discourses, and women's perceptions about their potentials. It is also interested in understanding, how women experiences are being influenced by the dominant discourses present in society about academic leadership.

In this study, the participants were asked to share their identities of leadership in order to understand the influence of dominant discourses in construction of women leadership identities. It is found that women leaders demonstrate unique leadership identities in Pakistani society and their personal attributes also influence their leadership styles. These personal qualities are largely influenced by the socio-cultural factors present in society. This chapter outlines six major themes related to leadership identities of women in academia including, implications of socio-economic background in academic leadership, understanding leadership from women's experiences, leadership style of women in academia, personal attributes and leadership qualities of women, academic excellence and leadership, and leadership workshops and trainings. Before discussing my participant's leadership identities, I have given their brief introduction for a discursive understanding of their narratives about academic leadership.

## **5.1 Brief Introduction of the Participants**

A sample of twenty-three women leaders was taken in present study. They were having diverse academic and leadership experience and distinctive socio-economic backgrounds. In this section, I have provided a brief introduction of all the participants to get an in-depth understanding about their personal and professional life and to develop its relation to their leadership experiences in academia. Pseudonyms have been used to maintain confidentiality of the participants in the study.

### **5.1.1 Khadija**

Khadija was an assistant professor and a chairperson of one of the social science discipline in a public sector university. She was forty-three years old. She was unmarried and living in a nuclear family. She was a career oriented women with high degree of confidence and commitment to pursue her professional goals. She had about twenty years of teaching and five years of leadership experience in distinguishing academic institutions. She was enthusiastic to bring positive change in her organizational and societal norms about women leadership.

### **5.1.2 Naila**

Naila was a dean and a professor in a government university. She was fifty years old. She was married and living in a joint family. She had two sons, who were mature and engaged in their professional life. Her in-laws were very encouraging and supporting in managing her domestic and motherhood responsibilities. Moreover, she had an extensive teaching experience of more than twenty years in academia and around ten years of administrative experience in higher education. She was chairing various committees in her university and having active role in top university management.

### **5.1.3 Manahil**

She was a thirty-eight years old woman. She was married but had no children and living in a joint family. Her husband and in-laws were liberal and understood her professional commitments. They keep encouraging and cooperating with her to succeed in personal and professional life. She was working as a director and an associate professor in a

private sector university. She had sixteen-year experience of working in diverse organizations and five years of administrative experience in HE.

#### **5.1.4 Anum**

With over eighteen years of diversified experience of teaching and leadership, Anum was serving as a dean and a professor in a non-governmental university. She was forty-seven years old, inspirational, dedicated and motivated woman. She continued her hard work even after the death of her husband in a very young age. She was having a key responsibility of the socialization of her two sons, besides her challenging and demanding professional life. She belonged to a privileged family and never experienced any financial constraints. However, socio-cultural stereotypes often influenced her personal and professional life. She was the first and the only woman dean in her university and struggling hard to maintain her leadership position in a masculine culture. She was also ambitious to become a Vice-Chancellor. She was serving as a mentor for other women academicians in their career advancement.

#### **5.1.5 Sana**

With over twenty-three years of academic and five years of leadership experience in higher education, Sana was a successful and hard working woman. She was now serving as a director and an associate professor in a public sector university. She was forty-eight years old. She was married and having two children, who were grown-up and involved in their practical life. She was having a constant and strong support and cooperation of her husband and in-laws in her career advancement.

#### **5.1.6 Amber**

Amber was a thirty-nine years old, hardworking and a confident woman. She was working in a capacity of chairperson and assistant professor in a private sector university for more than three years. She had twelve years of work experience in higher education. She was a talented woman with excellent academic background. She got married in 2005 but had no children. She experienced many constraints in her early years of marital life due to the non-cooperative and conservative behavior of her in-laws. She also lost her first child and reproductive ability due to the domestic violence

by mother-in-law during her pregnancy. Now, she was living in a nuclear family to keep herself aside from the ugly family politics. She was enthusiastic to achieve her career goals by constant efforts, and cooperation of her colleagues and friends.

#### **5.1.7 Noreen**

Noreen was serving as a chairperson and an associate professor in a public sector university. She was forty-eight years old with twenty-three years of work experience in diverse academic environments. She was serving at her present post of chairperson for more than three years. She got married in the age of forty and had no children. She was living in a nuclear family. Her husband was very cooperative and understanding her professional commitments that facilitated in her academic advancement, and greater research and innovations in the field.

#### **5.1.8 Sobia**

Sobia was a dean and a professor in a public sector university. She was highly ambitious with strong professional profile. She was a fifty-four years old woman. She had vast experience of working in academic and non-academic organizations. She had above twenty years of academic and eight years of extensive leadership experience at different organizations. She was serving as a dean for more than two years. She was married and had three children. She lived in a nuclear family. She had strong socio-economic background. Her husband was a businessman. She had a strong support and protection of her family that motivated her to succeed in her professional life beside her inspirational leadership and proficient management skills.

#### **5.1.9 Warda**

She was a chairperson and an associate professor in a private university. She had over fourteen years of diversified experience of teaching and around five years of leadership experience in higher educational institutes. She was thirty-nine years old. She was married and having two children. She was living in a joint family, who took good care of her children in her absence. However, she was responsible for managing all other domestic activities. She was having residence in another city and was traveling daily to the university. It was most challenging due to her personal and professional

commitments. She was unable to give sufficient time and care to her children due to her hectic routine and she was highly concerned about this issue.

#### **5.1.10 Saima**

Saima was forty-two years old, married woman with three children. She was living in a nuclear family. Her family was highly conservative about women employment. She experienced many obstacles due to the rigid attitude of her family. Her husband was also non-cooperative and never acknowledged her professional achievements. She had exclusive responsibility of managing her household activities and socializing her children. She was a chairperson and an assistant professor in a public sector university. She also served at various administrative positions in different universities. She had eleven years of teaching exposure along with above three years of academic leadership experience.

#### **5.1.11 Faria**

Faria was a thirty-three years old, unmarried and self-made woman. She was working as a chairperson and an assistant professor in a non-governmental university. She had above ten years of teaching and three years of leadership experience in academia. She belonged to a middle class family, where her father was the only bread earner. She strived hard for her doctoral degree by starting her career soon after her graduation. She was also providing financial support to her siblings for their academic growth. She was continued to utilize her skills and energy to bring a positive change about career oriented women in her community.

#### **5.1.12 Liba**

She was an HOD and assistant professor in a public sector university. She was forty-one years old, single mother. She had two children, who were in school age. She had over six years of academic and one year of administrative experience in higher education. She belonged to a conservative family, who never supported her in managing her personal and professional life. Her children were suffering due to her overwhelming administrative commitments; therefore, she was not satisfied with her leadership role.

#### **5.1.13 Sara**

Sara was a forty years old, confident and an inspirational lady. She was serving as a chairperson and an assistant professor in a public sector academic institution. She had around eighteen years of professional and above four years of leadership experience in higher education. She was married and having two children. She was living in a nuclear family. Her husband was very cooperating, motivating and encouraging. She was passionate to achieve her career goals and to contribute in academic growth of her department.

#### **5.1.14 Seher**

Seher was a thirty-five years old, young and unmarried women academic manager in a public university. With over ten years of academic and three years of administrative experience in academia, she was now working as a chairperson and an associate professor in a faculty of social sciences. She was living in a joint family. She had an excellent academic background and good parental support that highly motivated her to pursue leadership career in higher education. She was constantly turned down by her family relatives and colleagues, as she came across as a 'strong headed' woman. However, it was this drive and toe-stepping demeanor that motivated her to become a successful academic leader in a well-established university.

#### **5.1.15 Zakia**

She was working as a chairperson and an assistant professor in a public sector university. She was forty-seven years old, married women. She was living in a nuclear family. She was having two children, who were independent and engaged in their professional life. She experienced many constraints during her early stage of marital life due to traditional family norms of her in-laws. However, she was motivated by her husband to succeed in her professional life. She had over twenty-two years of academic and four years of diversified administrative experience.

#### **5.1.16 Naheed**

Naheed was a thirty years old, unmarried woman. She was an HOD and an assistant professor in a private sector university. She had over six years of university teaching

exposure. She was the youngest as well as the only woman administrator in her university for more than three years. She was striving hard to maintain her status in a male dominating institution. She belonged to a middle class family. However, her parents were encouraging and providing good opportunities of learning and experience. She was also a first woman having doctoral degree in her family and became the pride of her parents. She was optimistic to serve as a mentor for other women in her family and organization by setting a good example in her professional and family life.

#### **5.1.17 Alia**

Alia was a forty-five years old, inspirational woman leader. She was working as a chairperson and an assistant professor in a faculty of social science, in a non-governmental university. She belonged to a middle class family. Her husband was employed in abroad; therefore, she had entire responsibility of the take care of her three young children. She was living in a joint family that was not very accommodating. However, her parents were very cooperative and facilitating that helps her to managing her dual roles successfully. She had eleven years of teaching exposure along with above four years of academic leadership experience.

#### **5.1.18 Saba**

Saba was an HOD and an assistant professor in a private sector university. She had seven years of teaching exposure along with above two years of academic leadership experience. She was forty-two years old. She became widow in a very young age. She was a mother of three children and having a nuclear family system. She faced many personal and professional challenges after the death of her husband. She belonged to a middle class family and was successful in managing her independent life with her children. She was enthusiastic to provide good opportunities to her children by working hard in her professional life.

#### **5.1.19 Naveeda**

Naveeda was a fifty-five years old, highly ambitious lady. She was working as a chairperson and an associate professor in a public organization. She had around twenty years of teaching and above seven years of extensive administrative experience in

academic and non-academic organizations. She was also a successful married woman and a mother of two sons and one daughter. She was living in a nuclear family. She had a strong support of her husband in her successful professional life.

#### **5.1.20 Memoona**

She was a forty-five years old, unmarried academician with high professional profile. She was a career oriented woman. She belonged to a privileged family that provided her constant support to follow her career paths and never insisted her for marriage. However, her family relatives and friends often discouraged her professional achievements. She was working as an HOD and an assistant professor in a private academic institution. She was having around fifteen years of academic and seven years of vast administrative experience in higher education.

#### **5.1.21 Shama**

Shama achieved success in her professional life in a very young age of thirty-three. She belonged to a middle class family. She earned her PhD degree on scholarship from an international university. She was married and living in a joint family. She was also a mother of one little child and utilized day-care facility for him. She was a highly ambitious and motivated woman. She was working as an assistant professor and a chairperson in a non-governmental university for more than two years. Her in-laws were not in favor of her job but she took her husband in confidence to continue her career. However, she was responsible for the care of her in-laws, beside her personal and professional commitment that was most challenging aspect of her life.

#### **5.1.22 Zainab**

She was a forty-five years old, confident, motivated and well privileged woman. She was living in a nuclear family. She was a mother of three children, who were now grown up. Her husband was a businessman. She had strong socio, economic support of her family in her professional life. She was highly ambitious to thrive for her leadership career in higher education. She was an HOD and an associate professor in a non-governmental organization. She was also in-charge of various committees in her



organization. She had over thirteen years of teaching and eight years of managerial experience in different universities.

#### **5.1.23 Najma**

She was a brilliant, self-made and dedicated woman. She was forty-one years old. She belonged to a lower class family of an underdeveloped village, where there was no trend of women education and employment. She was a first woman, who earned her doctoral degree from an international university. She started her professional journey with numerous social, cultural, financial and academic challenges. Her mother had a great role in her strong socialization and professional growth. Her husband was well educated and appreciated her efforts in her professional growth. She also paved ways for other women living in rural communities. She was working as an HOD and an assistant professor in a public sector university. She was having over fifteen years of academic and three years of leadership experience in academia.

The above introduction of the respondents showed that women leaders, in this study, belonged to diverse socio-economic backgrounds and they were working in highly challenging environments. They were dedicated to have a positive role in academic growth, and having personal and professional learning experience to get success.

### **5.2 Implications of Socio-Economic Background in Academic Leadership**

In this study, all women belonged to diverse socio-economic background that is found as one of the determining factors in their personal and professional growth. In present study, participants were asked to share their socio-economic conditions and its effects on their leadership roles. The narratives of the respondents demonstrated different ways, through which their socio-economic background intervened with their academic and leadership roles. It is found that participants' educational and family background directly or indirectly influenced their leadership style. Many participants shared the influence of their socio-economic status on their professional life. Naheed, who belonged to a middle class family, expressed the influence of her social and economic background on effective management of leadership activities. She stated that:

I belong to a middle class family that helped me to realize the worth of money because we had limited resources and needed to utilize them selectively and wisely to fulfill our needs effectively. In my professional life, it facilitated me to manage my departmental economic resources efficiently. Moreover, my father was in army and had postings around the country; therefore, we traveled a lot and had frequent interactions with diversified human groups. My parents have a vast social circle that helped me to develop my interpersonal skills and now, I feel comfortable with everyone. Moreover, I always remained the monitor of the class in my academic life that helped me to develop useful managerial skills. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Conversations with Naheed reveals that her socio-economic circumstances positively facilitated in effective management of her administrative roles. As, Pakistan is a developing country that has limited resources, therefore, higher educational institutions also have limited budget and there is a need of careful utilization of the resources. Naheed reported that her family's financial constraints played an important role in successful management of departmental economic resources at her leadership position. She considered financial factors in all the aspects because she was familiar to deal with the economy challenges. Moreover, she also developed strong professional networks due to her strong educational background. It facilitated her in learning new leadership skills that she found very helpful in maintaining her leadership status. Another participant, who belonged to a conservative lower middle class family, communicated about the strong role of her mother in developing her confidence and interpersonal skills in this way:

I belong to a lower-middle class family. My paternal and maternal family is religious and conservative. However, my mother (late) was a strong woman and she encouraged me to focus on my career by developing my confidence. No other women in my family had confidence like me, as I was the odd one out. I was in shadow of my mother and she fought for my rights at every moment. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

It is found that family environment and social circle play important role in development of women's leadership traits. Participants having lower and middle socio-economic backgrounds were having limited access to the economic resources and grown-up in

restricted environments, where they had marginal status. The conversations with such respondents revealed that they learned most of their leadership behaviors in their professional life. As Khadija believed that motivation and confidence are some of the essential qualities of a successful leader and women belonging to lower socio-economic status lack such qualities due to their traditional normative structures. Khadija was the only woman having leadership status in her family and her mother strongly supported her in achieving her professional goals by consistent encouragement and motivation in all challenging circumstances.

One of the participants, Manahil, who belonged to an elite class family, shared about privileges in her professional life in these words:

My father was an army officer and my mother was a teacher. I was grown up in a much pampered environment and never experienced any obstacles due to my higher socio-economic status. However, when I got married and settled in abroad, I experienced to live in a totally changed environment. I was shocked, because I had to manage all my activities by my own. I believe that, that tough routine life helped me a lot in grooming my personality. I was committed; therefore, I used to work hard to maintain balance between work and family. When I came back to Pakistan and joined this organization, my background facilitated me to adjust in a competitive and demanding environment, and in learning new social roles. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

The narrative of this respondent and others clearly demonstrate that social dynamics helped them in learning and improving their skills. Manahil was well aware about her challenging environment due to her diverse socio-cultural background and incorporated her previous experiences in her leadership roles for effective management. Sana also belonged to an elite class family. She narrated the influence of her social class in her professional growth in this way:

It's an advantage for me to be part of a privileged family. It makes me feel comfortable because my family has a more neutral approach about gender that helped in developing my confidence, better outlook and good interpersonal skills. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

This study found that participants, who belonged to elite class families, had unique socio-economic experiences. They were grown-up in gender neutral environments that

gave them autonomy to learn leadership skills. They also got persistent moral and economic support from their family in achieving their career objectives; therefore, they experienced fewer obstacles in their career paths. The narrative of Sana and others, who belonged to upper class families, reported that strong socio-economic status facilitated them to achieve and maintain academic leadership position. Their families raised them in gender neutral environment and they learned to fight for their rights at very early stages of their socialization. It also helped them in dealing with threats and criticism in an effective manner because they had stronger support of their family in their professional life. They also felt comfortable while dealing with people with diverse backgrounds and critical circumstances. However, the experiences of women like Khadija demonstrated that lower middle class families do not prepare women for leadership roles, such as they did not give them confidence to play vital role as a leader. Another participant, Sara, communicated the significance of political background in her professional development. She stated that:

In university, we have an Academic Staff Association (ASA) and I remained at an executive position of the association for three years due to which, people know and respect me and whenever, I have any administrative issues, my senior management listen to me more carefully and give prompt response because they are well aware about my political background. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Another participant also highlighted the influence of political factors in achieving and maintaining top leadership positions.

In this university, political factors have little to do in attaining position of a dean or a chairperson, as they are chosen according to their seniority. However, individuals require strong political relationships to attain and maintain top administrative position of the VC. Although, criteria for selection of these posts is also defined but there is tough competition and political pressures also manipulate these selections procedures. (Sobia, Dean, Professor)

The narrative of this participant clearly manifest that political networks play vital role in attaining and maintaining top leadership positions in academic organizations. Faculty and staff associations were present in many universities. Conversations with participants revealed that most of them avoided involving in organizational politics;

however, their male counterparts had active participation in such activities. Sobia reported that individual with strong political networks were successful in achieving leadership positions more rapidly because they developed good rapport with senior administration. It also facilitated in getting prompt response from their senior management for any kind of work. Sara, who remained active in organizational politics, found it very effective in achieving her administrative and academic goals. She also had good acquaintances and honored due to her political status.

The detailed discussion with the participants clearly manifest the role of social, economic and political background in achieving and maintaining academic leadership effectively. Women, who belonged to elite class families, were strong and confident in dealing with critical situations and bearing pressures. They also had strong family support to attain and maintain their administrative positions. Conversely, women from lower socio-economic backgrounds had to make their personal efforts to learn such behaviors in their professional life. However, their economic constraints helped them in effective management of scarce academic resources in their professional life. Moreover, participants, who had vast social circles, were confident and comfortable in dealing with people having diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, women, who remained active in managing their academic and extracurricular activities during their study life, had strong managerial and administrative qualities and incorporated their academic life experiences in their leadership roles. Some respondent also highlighted the significance of political networks in academic leadership. They believed that individuals having strong political associations got advantages in attaining and maintaining top leadership positions. They reported that top administrative posts, such as of deans and VCs, were more political in nature. There were fewer women at these positions due to their lack of participation in organizational and general politics.

### **5.3 Understanding Leadership from Women's Experiences**

Leadership conceptualization varies for men as well as for women that influence their leadership style in practice. Leaders tend to inculcate their personal leadership ideologies in their institutional context. Therefore, in present study, it was necessary to get an in-depth insight on, how various participants define leadership, how those perceptions influence their leadership style in practice in academic administration, and

how it varies from dominant discourses present in the society about a successful leader. It is evident in this study that leadership perceptions and personal attributes influence women's leadership style. In this theme, firstly, I have described my participants' understanding about academic leadership, secondly, I have discussed their leadership styles, and finally, their styles have been evaluated and compared with their personal leadership attributes and institutional leadership norms.

In the present study, most of the participants comprehend leadership in terms of responsibility and commitment. They believed in careful accomplishment of all the tasks in best possible manner to get recognition as a successful leader because they were accountable to their competent authorities for all kinds of work accomplished by them in the organization. It is found that women have to work harder than their team and to serve as a mentor for attaining and maintaining their leadership positions. One of the participants described her perceptive about leadership in these words:

I believe that it's a responsibility rather than an enjoyable activity. It's taking the lead by working harder than others, by taking more responsibility and showing through examples that how things ought to be done. (Nasreen, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

Women mostly take administrative tasks as a responsibility and attempt to accomplish their tasks more vigilantly. However, there is a general discourse that women don't manage work carefully and make numerous mistakes in administrative work. There is also a widespread belief that women often need some kind of assistance for successful completion of their managerial work. The narrative of this respondent and others highlight the importance of hard work for women leaders. Nasreen believed in improvement of her leadership skills in order to get work completed. She asserted that management requires conscientiousness; therefore, she doesn't enjoy her leadership status. She also illustrated that most of her male colleagues get gratification and satisfaction in administrative work but she takes it as commitment and responsibility. She rather enjoys doing research and teaching work.

In addition, she explained that she was given leadership responsibility by the higher authorities based upon her seniority among departmental faculty that was the criteria of selection of a department chair in the university. She was concerned about her work and tried to give more time to the organization for successful completion of

tasks. She also illustrated that leaders have to set pathways for others and to become role models because people observe and follow their leaders and it is only possible when leaders are more competent and skilled as compared to their team. Naila perceived that leadership requires specific individual characteristics. She stated that:

Well the way, I define leadership has nothing to do with the position. I personally feel that leadership is one's personal trait or quality. One may not possess a leadership position but still can serve as a leader or in other words, one may have certain traits to inspire people. That's how, I define a leader.  
(Naila, Dean, Professor)

According to this narrative, a successful leader is one, who has an ability to inspire people and transform their attitudes and behavior. Leadership does not have a connection with the position. Naila argued that there are many people, who hold leadership positions but they don't possess leadership traits. Team work is one of the important characteristics of a leader. Good leaders must always be ready to assist their team and it is only possible, when they are competent and understand the problems of their team and have an ability to solve them effectively. Another respondent also highlighted the influence of personal traits in leadership roles in these words:

I think leadership is all about dealing with diverse people with different habits, by utilizing numerous technical, physical and psychological skills to achieve desired outcomes. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

A leader has to deal with numerous people having unique attitudes and behaviors. Naheed believed that leadership requires several skills to understand and correspond with people with diverse backgrounds and habits. More specifically, a leader must have good interpersonal skills to lead and to accomplish work effectively by utilizing personal and social resources. A Director expressed her understanding about leadership in this way:

Leadership is a kind of opposition, where you try to manage all the administrative activities. You become a lyceum between your colleagues and higher authorities. I feel that it's like a pattern in which you try to cover all problems, prospects and issues. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

Leadership can also be understood in terms of managing various resources and activities. Sana believed that a leader has to deal with people having incompatible ideas.

Leaders also need to communicate and discuss issues of the faculty and staff with top management because they don't have direct access to the top administration. According to Sana, leaders have to develop strong connections within their department and organization to achieve their goals in required time. Khadija stated that leadership has two dimensions. She explicated that:

In my opinion, leadership has two aspects. Firstly, I started leading my life in my own way. I consider it as a leadership skill as well, because when you don't remain a follower, you start leading your life yourself. You don't let people dictate you or you don't just follow people. Secondly, I started helping people in choosing their own directions of life because once you start leading your own life, whether you desire or not, people start taking direction from you about their activities and problems. It is when you start believing yourself, not only in your professional capacity, but also in your personal capacity that you can guide people in a good way and become a mentor for them. People start recognizing you as a leader. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

It is necessary to identify personal leadership traits and recognize leadership abilities. It motivates individuals in developing vision of life and following their own will rather than allowing others to decide their career trajectories. In this study, all participants believed that a leader should have confidence in taking personal decisions. It grooms their leadership skills and people also start getting inspirations from them. Good leaders always keep ready to assist people in their life and become mentors for them. People also start recognizing them as successful leaders.

Above narratives of the respondents about their leadership perceptions illustrate their commitment as a leader by working hard and serving as role models. It is found that leadership is understood as a personal domain by women as showing ownership to their work. Conversations with participants also revealed that women leaders put individual skills at the center of leadership. It showed that however in a position of authority or not, a leader is one who acts as a role model by working harder and showing their commitment to the work.



#### **5.4 Leadership Style of Women**

People practice different leadership styles in organizational settings based upon their leadership perceptions where some leaders tend to be assertive, while others have accommodating leadership style. In the present study, majority of the respondents utilized cooperative and flexible styles of leadership. Participants also highlighted the significance of team work in successful completion of their leadership roles. Many respondents believed in decentralization of their authority to develop a healthy work environment as it resulted in improved outcomes and reduced their workload. They also elucidated that being accommodating is not always helpful for them to meet deadlines and they are required to transform their accommodating style into more assertiveness in order to accomplish tasks more effectively. They kept exchanging between firmness and flexibility to manage their work competently.

In this study, most women were democratic, accessible and accommodating in nature and opted more transformational than transactional style of leadership that is also resonated with the findings of previous researches (McMahon, 2010; Northouse, 2015; Reynolds, 2013). In this study, many participants narrated their leadership style and its influence on their professional life. Khadija expressed her non-directive executive style in these words:

I frequently ask my faculty members and other administrative staff in regular meetings, about their aims and objectives within the organization, and facilitate them in fulfilling their career goals, without directing personal point. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Khadija had a diploma in psychology along with her specialization in one of a social science discipline. She reported that psychological knowledge facilitated her in understanding and dealing with diversified human groups. She decided to become a non-directive counselor or in other words, a client-centered counselor, where she helped others in analyzing their own skills and resources, and assisted them in deciding their own pathways according to their personal desires. Similarly, as a leader, she tried to incorporate her psychological knowledge to assist her colleagues in understanding their strengths and weaknesses to get achieve better outcomes rather than imposing her instructions on them. She also facilitated her staff in their work and always welcomed

their opinions in relevant matters. Another participant, Sana, expressed her facilitating approach in these words:

I like to be people oriented. I want people to get work done in a way that they will willingly, in a nice congenial atmosphere, deliver their best. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

Sana tried to relate to her colleagues' work. She used to have frequent interactions with her team and developed a good friendly atmosphere, where everyone could explicitly share personal as well as professional views and problems. It helped her in assigning work more effectively according to the capabilities of each member. She desired to get work done by continuously encouraging her team members for successful completion of the tasks assigned. It is found that women like Sana provided good space to their team for work, where they felt more comfortable and delivered their best. It also facilitated her to bring some positive transformations in university structure. Warda, who used to practice flexible leadership style, shared her thoughts in these words:

I feel that management is a difficult task where sometimes, one needs to be firm and at times polite. However, in my case I am not very strict. I feel that if I would be firm, most of my tasks will get easier for me but naturally, I give relaxation to my team and sometimes, also compromise with them while working on various assignments. (Warda, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

The narrative of this participant highlight the influence of the discourse of assertiveness present in leadership. She reported that management requires a combination of flexibility and firmness. However, she had a compromising nature and couldn't get firm even if it was necessary to accomplish any task. Some of her team members were taking advantage of her flexible nature and were not responding professionally. They often refused to follow her instructions by making lame excuses by stating that they don't had relevant work experience or they had some personal issues due to which they couldn't perform well. They actually tried to get escape from work because they were well aware about her accommodating and compromising behavior. She was used to convince them in a requesting manner and offer them assistance in learning new roles but they took advantage of her collaborative style that often resulted in doing most of the work by her own. She further explained that in her early leadership experience, she was more accommodating due to which she experienced administrative

mismanagement, but now, she was trying to transform her administrative style toward more assertiveness for dealing with non-cooperative staff members and for smooth work accomplishments. Another respondent, Hadia, narrated about her transformative leadership approach in this way:

I like to work in a team because I feel that my team is my strength. I feel that in leadership position, one needs to be selfless. For taking work from others, sometime I need to be little facilitating and it brings personal satisfaction to me as well. At the same time, I also get firm, whenever things get out of balance. I believe that, at leadership position, one can't make everybody happy. Sometimes, I need to be harsh for effective management. (Hadia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narrative of this respondent and others highlight the significance of team work in leadership. They tried to develop an excellent coordination with their team and recognized the efforts of each member in department. Moreover, they were used to consider valid excuses of their staff for effective work management. Conversation with Hadia revealed that she never compromised on the quality of the work and for that reason sometimes, she also adopted firmness, whenever she felt it to be necessary. If any member ever refused her for doing any work, she offered her assistance in learning new roles but never accepted lame excuses. She believed that everyone was accountable for the work assigned. She learned to be assertive along with being accommodating for achieving desired outcomes. It showed that these women tried to maintain a balance between flexibility and assertiveness in their leadership roles. Decentralization of authority was also encouraged by most of the participants in this study. One of the respondents from natural science discipline mentioned that:

I do work with mutual understanding and delegate responsibilities among my colleagues. I believe in decentralization of authority and show that I trust them and count on that. I also expect from them to fulfill my expectations. That's how I get work done. (Nasreen, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

The narrative of Nasreen revealed that developing trust is necessary for a good leader. She tried to develop an atmosphere of mutual cooperation and coordination where they could discuss and facilitate each other in their professional capacities. She distributed work among her team members with their consensus and given them liberty to perform

their duties effectively. It allowed polishing their skills and exploring new talent. It also developed works ownership and each member remained accountable for his/her work. She delegated work among different coordinators in her department, e.g. PhD coordinator, research coordinator etc, who were responsible for management of all kind of activities in their specific area. It helped to reduce her work load and level of stress because minor issues were dealt by the relevant coordinators and only issues that were not administered by them were managed by her with their collaboration. She reported that leadership could be effective by teamwork, mutual understanding and trust.

The detailed conversations with women leaders about their leadership style imply that women perceptions about leadership largely influence their leadership style. Most of the women understand leadership in terms of a responsibility, where they are required to lead their team by inspiration and motivation. It is found that a leader must have a capability to manage all activities very carefully without wasting time and resources. Women believe in importance of developing a good understanding with faculty and staff in order to accomplish tasks more efficiently.

Above discussion about leadership style of women highlight that majority of the women in this study had accommodating, team based style of leadership. They preferred to develop a healthy work environment by keeping their team along in each step. They believed that their team was their strength and they couldn't get success without supportive staff and colleagues. However, they also highlighted the influence of prevalent discourse of assertiveness present in society about leadership. Some members used to take their accommodating nature for granted and intended to get escapes from work. Most of the respondent expressed their desire to become little assertive for getting work done by some irresponsible colleague and staff members. Only few women were successful in keeping balance between flexibility and assertiveness. They used to transform their administrative style according to the demand of the situations. However, their objective was to facilitate every member in successful accomplishments of the tasks assigned.

In conclusion, the detailed discussion with respondents clearly manifest that women try to incorporate their leadership perceptions in practice. Mostly women believe in team work and demonstrate accommodating and flexible style of leadership to achieve their organizational goals. It is also revealed that women's leadership styles

are contradictory to the dominant leadership discourse of assertiveness and they often experience difficulties in dealing with their male colleagues and staff. The participants asserted that they were influenced by the dominant discourses of leadership and shown firm attitude to deal with individuals, who continue to disturb the smooth transmission of department activities.

### **5.5 Personal Attributes and Leadership Qualities of Women**

Women and men have distinct personality characteristics that also influence their leadership styles in practice. These personality traits and behaviors also have an effect on their career development in academia. There are several personality attributes that facilitate or impede women in achieving senior leadership positions in higher education. In this study, respondents were asked to share their leadership qualities as well as weaknesses and how these attributes were influenced by the hegemonic masculine standards. Most of the respondents believed that they were independent, resilient, self-confident, inspirational, committed, strong decision makers and possess good interpersonal skills. Women, who possessed these attributes were able to perform their effective roles as administrators, in male-dominated organizational culture. It is revealed that women leaders tend to be more accommodating, comforting, and defensive due to their traditional care responsibilities at home and community. Most of the women leaders were intended to transform their caring attitude and developing masculine traits in order to survive in the male-world. Many respondents also highlighted the significance of masculine characteristics in their respective organizations. However, some feminine traits were also very helpful for them in good management and they incorporated such qualities in academic administration, for instance, flexibility, accommodation, guiding, respecting and tolerance. A Chairperson shared her strengths and weaknesses as a leader in these words:

I think there are several skills that are need to be improved. In terms of knowledge or skills, I always try to do the best, but still there is always a room for improvement. I also feel that sometime, I need to be emotionally detached because when somebody comes to me with a problem, I listen to it carefully, try to understand the issue and empathize. For me it's strength at times, as well as

a weakness. Sometimes, I need to be emotionally detached in order to get work done.

She continued:

Beside this I think, I cannot take quick assessments; rather, I take a balanced view before making judgments. Again, I believe that it's my strength as well as a weakness that I don't take quick decisions; rather, I take a little bit of time to get aware of the issue. I prefer to take a balanced view from everyone before reaching conclusions. Moreover, I only involve myself with certain representatives of administrative staff. I hold one or two people responsible for their team progress. I prefer them to solve problems at their own ends; therefore, all problems don't directly come to me. (Nasreen, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

The conversation of Nasreen and others reveal that women leaders tend to be emotional and sympathetic toward their colleagues and staff. They believe in cooperation that often results in deliberate delays in work by their team members because most of the colleagues take advantage of their flexible behavior and bring lame excuse to get escape from work. Nasreen highlighted the need to polish her leadership skills in order to manage her work more effectively. She had courage to do better and learn new roles in order to improve her work efficiency. She had a very caring and sympathetic nature, for instance, she was used to consider minor issues of her colleagues and tried to compensate them in all possible ways. Her few colleagues often got advantage of her sympathetic behavior and deliberately refused work by highlighting their personal problems. She was intended to understand problems of her team members in order to facilitate them but sometimes it negatively affected quality of the work. The narrative of Nasreen clearly manifest that at times, it becomes strength for a woman to be sympathetic because she can realize and get aware of the issues of people working with them and reach better decisions, but unfortunately, in our society people mostly get advantages from a woman due to her emotional behavior. Moreover, it is found that sometimes, leaders need to take firm actions; however, many women cannot do so due to their personal involvement into the problems of their team members.

In Pakistani society, the dominant leadership discourse highlighted the significance of firmness, risk taking and quick decision making, and women leaders are

often criticized for lacking these attributes. However, women like Nasreen, who don't take immediate decisions, take it as strength because it allows them to take an unbiased view from all concerned member in order to get an in-depth insight on the issue. Similarly, they don't wish to displease any colleague due to their immediate decisions. Whenever a matter requires some decision, they make sure that the responsible people are in the picture in order to get a wider view and develop neutral solutions.

Narratives of the women leaders also reveal that they focus on team work and decentralization of the authority that is contrary to the dominant masculine ideologies. The detailed discussion with respondents show that they had a wish to empower every member of their department and found it to be very helpful in bringing up new ideas in work. Nasreen delegated all responsibilities among different coordinators in her department, who were autonomous to manage activities in their specified context. She also held few persons responsible in administrative staff for their team progress and preferred to solve their problems by themselves. Therefore, minor issues were successfully dealt without her involvement and she had more time to concentrate on the major objectives. Warda also elaborated her leadership traits in these words:

I feel that I am competent as well as committed to work and try to meet the deadlines efficiently. I don't want my team and students to suffer in any case. In addition, I am flexible, as I try to cooperate with my staff in all possible ways to maintain a good office atmosphere, where everyone can feel free to come to my office to share their concerns. (Warda, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

According to this narrative, a leader must have an ability to help people, work in a team and solve their problem by listening and understanding their issues. This can only be possible, when a leader is competent and capable to handle critical situations effectively. Especially, in academic leadership, it is very important to have knowledge about the field. It allows comprehending the demands of their respective discipline and taking decisions accordingly. Warda was having experience of her field; therefore, she was successful in realizing and assessing the problems of her department, and finding best possible solutions. Organizational and departmental development was her priority. She dedicated her time and energy to the department for managing work successfully.

Conversations with the participants illustrate that these women tried to inculcate new strategies and skills for consistent improvement of their departments and

universities at large. They appeared to be more cooperative to achieve better outcomes. For instance, Warda coordinated with her students as well as with staff and tried to understand their problems and assisted them in accomplishing their work. Similarly, she never compromised on the quality of work. For instance, each staff member was responsible for the tasks assigned and if someone lacked relevant work experience, she preferred to guide them in learning that role. Moreover, if a staff member had completed work and wished to leave home early with any valid explanation; she used to give permission after ensuring that the work was successfully completed. If someone was not devoted to the work, she realized that individual about the work commitments and possible consequences of the ignorance and non-cooperation. She also trusted her colleagues and staff that helped to develop a healthy working atmosphere and brought positive outcomes. Another Chairperson described her leadership strengths and weaknesses as:

I like to be friendly, accommodating and apply outcome based strategies, so there shouldn't be wastage of resources and time rather, there should be some good outcomes of my decisions. I am also good in decision making and planning my activities. Another quality that I feel good about me is the tolerance because it helps me in solving the disputes and even not indulging into the disputes. Moreover, as I am junior among other administrators; therefore, I need to improve my management skills and to get more experience of management.

(Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The conversation with this respondent and others reveal that these women had good interpersonal skills. They had developed a pleasant environment, where all individuals had autonomy to share their ideas and problems to bring better outcomes. However, it is contrary to the hegemonic masculine culture in academia that encourages centralization and assertiveness. Sara highlighted the influence of interpersonal skills in her leadership roles. She maintained a departmental culture, in which every member could freely come to her office to discuss any kind of matters. Moreover, she aimed to cooperate with them in completing their work assignments. She believed in identifying and polishing skills of her team to get better outcomes without wasting time and resources. In this respect, she planned her daily activities to avoid any disturbance in the smooth functioning of her department.



Furthermore, she also identified an important discourse of tolerance that is usually associated with females but not encouraged in academic leadership. However, she believed that tolerance helped her in quick resolution of the disputes, because it allowed her in listening and analyzing every situation very carefully. It also facilitated her in keeping apart from the disputes and managing disagreements in a more effective manner. A Chairperson from faculty of social sciences also revealed her effective leadership qualities as:

I am committed to achieve my professional objectives that I have developed for my department. I am also confident and have an ability to lead my team from the front. I can defend and protect the rights of my department at all platforms. Moreover, I try to understand the issues of my team and facilitate them in all possible ways. Furthermore, I don't always impose my personal point of view on them. (Hadia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Commitment and confidence are highly recognized attributes in leadership and usually associated with males in society. This piece of information reveals that women leaders also have abilities to administer their professional roles with confidence. In this study, many respondents illustrated that confidence was the key indicator of their success and it was developed with increased exposure to their social world. They were required to be self-reliant and confident because they were representing their department at various platforms and advocating departmental aims and ambitions.

Conversation with Hadia and others revealed that their senior management perceive them as less committed in contrast to their male counterparts. Therefore, their leadership and professional growth was restricted in many cases. However, the above narratives of the participants reveal that they were also dedicated and faithful to their professional commitments and were able to get work done by their team due to their devotion and hard work. They always struggled hard to meet the deadlines and left an example for their colleagues. They also believed themselves to be committed toward their dual responsibilities of the household and the profession. They denied negative conceptions by arguing that at workplace they were devoted toward their leadership commitments and tried hard to accomplish their responsibilities effectively. Another HOD also expressed her administrative qualities. She narrated that:

I do quick situational analysis of all obvious possible aspects before taking decisions. Moreover, I possess good interpersonal skills. Due to the psychological background, I can dig out what people want, e.g. if any colleague hesitates to discuss an issue, I bring him/her at the level of comfort to explicitly discuss all kind of matters.

She also shared her difficulty in managing professional activities due to her flexible nature:

I am not a dictator; therefore, I cannot impose my instructions on everyone e.g. if someone doesn't obey my order, I cannot react firmly. However, I am hopeful to learn this behavior with the passage of time with increased experience. For instance, a new academic program was launched in my department and I allocated responsibilities to my faculty for planning relevant activities i.e. curriculum, outlines etc. in that month. One day, a male colleague came to my office and informed that he was not available for work and intended to take leave for two weeks due to some personal reason. I was well aware about the importance of work and possible delays due to his leave but could not refuse in an assertive way. Rather, I tried to convince him that leave was his right but that work was equally important. While I am flexible and accommodating, I quickly started thinking about the alternatives and requesting others to compensate his work. Moreover, I also faced criticism by other colleagues for always being very accommodating to that individual. I know that firmness is sometimes necessary and it is also our institutional norm. In my professional life, I have worked with women deans, who were amazingly sweet but when they required being firm, they successfully did so. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narratives of the women revealed that most of them were facing obstacles at workplace due to their accommodating and flexible personality. However, it helped them to develop a healthy work environment, where everyone could feel comfortable but some staff members took advantage of their cooperative behavior. In such cases, their workload was also increased because their faculty and staff deliberately postponed their work by giving lame justification. Most of the women leaders found it difficult to impose work on others in an authoritative way. Many women highlighted the need to adopt assertive behavior for managing such circumstances and to avoid interruptions in

work. It shows that firmness is strongly associated with the success of leaders in the organization and women like Khadija are not appreciated by their senior management due to their flexible nature. People also take them for granted and try to get escape from work; however, it never stops the work but brings delays.

The above excerpts highlight that women leaders possess unique leadership qualities that are different from their male counterparts. It is also found that women personality traits are also influenced by the dominant organizational leadership norms and they have to improve their skills to adjust themselves in university culture that has specific expectations from their administrators.

There are certain standards about a good leader and these principles are kept in consideration, while choosing a leader in organization. These institutional norms are also influenced by the larger social norms. Pakistan is a patriarchal society, where masculine traits are acknowledged in all field of life especially in leadership. Leadership roles are designed in such a manner that restricts women to participate in top administration. In this study, many participants highlighted the significance of masculine traits in the university structures. They also mentioned that women were not expected to possess those masculine attributes. These women also possessed qualities such as confidence, competence, firmness, commitment etc. that were generally associated with males and they were required to prove their abilities in order to survive in male dominated organizational culture. In this study women were also asked to share their institutional norms of leadership. Naveeda shared her organizational prospects of a good leader in these words:

Leaders in this university are preferred to have confidence to lead their team from the front. They must be capable to create balanced leadership style, as they have to be firm as well as to be flexible. Moreover, they should be all-time available to the organization as they are committed to fulfill their responsibilities beyond their office hours and can't refuse any order in any case.

She further explained that:

For instance, I received an email on a Friday afternoon about an urgent meeting of the board of faculty on next Monday morning and I was required to prepare an agenda of the meeting for my department. As, I am more accommodating toward my colleagues, I didn't instruct my colleagues to visit office on a holiday

and prepared that plan by my own. I ended-up putting more responsibilities on myself rather delegating it to others. Moreover, during working days, I often have to make alterations in my weekly plan due to some unanticipated work or urgent meetings because I have to represent my department in the meeting, even if a meeting does not include my departmental agenda. (Naveeda, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

Most of the universities demand time and energy from their administrators because they have to manage multiple tasks. Moreover, they are often required to accomplish urgent assignments and attend meetings as well. Therefore, they have to stay late in offices or take work to their homes as well. Naveeda often spent her weekends in office due to her professional commitments. She was used to delegate work among her colleagues during working days but, if there was an unplanned work with a short deadline, she never imposed it on others on weekend or on public holidays. This is another discourse present in the organizations about academic leaders that support male administrators because women have to give time to their family as well; however, males do not have such responsibilities and can designate most of their time to their organization. Moreover, most of the male leaders restrict their staff in office to accomplish their work by their assertive behavior. Participants in this study also reported that academic excellence, confidence and competence are considered important for academic administrators. A Chairperson explained it in these words:

My institute prefers an administrator, who is competent, trust worthy, confident and intelligent. He/she must be determined to work in all circumstance and always motivated to introduce new ideas for the progress of the department and the institute. (Hadia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Confidence and competence are considered as some of the essential attributes of a good leader in most of the universities in the present study. Universities prefer leaders, who are capable of dealing with diversified groups and situations with confidence. Firmness is also encouraged among leaders because it could be facilitating in institutional growth. It is evident that women, who were mostly flexible in their behavior, often experienced various obstacles in meeting work deadlines. Organizational culture was also compelling them to alter their accommodating style of leadership into more assertiveness. Therefore, most of the women reported flexibility as a constraint in their

leadership roles. They were intended to change their cooperative and caring attitudes due to the lack of acknowledgment in the universities.

Conversations with other HODs, such as Saima and Sana, also reveal that universities prefer leaders, who are competitive, problem solving, dutiful and able to give more time to their jobs. Moreover, intelligence and trustworthiness are some other essential qualities associated with a good leader in majority of the universities. It is found in this study that most of the organizations put greater importance on the intellectual abilities of a leader. They prefer leaders, who have knowledge about the relevant discipline and organizational policies. Moreover, leaders are expected to work for the development of the institute. In this study, nearly all of the respondents expressed that self-assurance, competence and honesty are essential for a good leader and they were also equipped with such qualities; therefore, they were competitive to their male counterparts. Another participant, Manahil, explained the importance of individual factors in leadership in these words:

I believe that I have some specific personal traits that distinguish me from others. There is no leadership hat to disappear my personal characteristics in administration. In this institute, leaders are expected to have a vision and ability to do all tasks assigned. Moreover, they must have some academic experience beside administrative skills. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

A good leader is fundamental to the sustainable development of an academic organization. All leaders possess distinct personality traits that contribute toward their unique leadership practices in academia. Therefore, there can't be defined criteria to evaluate the performance of an administrator. The above excerpts demonstrate that universities have developed leadership norms that encourage masculinity and pressurize women to adopt these norms. These women were experiencing vulnerable effects of this dominant masculine culture on their career progression. It shows that in universities, higher emphasis is placed on the performance, excellence, competence and managerial skills. Academic leaders are expected to be assertive, confident, self-reliant, resilient and adoptive to the institutional norms. More importance is given to the leaders, who have abilities to manage complex situations promptly and effectively. These qualities are considered more positively, if exhibited by males instead of females.

Women, who opt to change their feminine characteristics, are viewed as disruptive in the normative social order.

In conclusion, women's reflections of their personal experience highlight that women share some common traits of academic leadership that distinguish their style of academic administration. Some major characteristics include patience, cooperation, emotional intelligence and flexibility. They desire to get recognition with their unique leadership skills, rather than getting comparisons with prevalent masculine standards. Most of the women in this study were competent, resilient and confident in managing their personal and professional life but organizational leadership norms were strongly influenced by the hegemonic masculine ideologies that were not ready to accept feminine leadership styles. It is revealed that universities expect women to adopt masculine norms for their professional growth due to which women experience greater challenges in managing their leadership roles in academic organizations.

## **5.6 Academic Excellence and Leadership**

Academic excellence is one of basic indicators in choosing a leader in higher educational institutions. In the world of competition in higher education, academic qualification and research productivity plays a vital role in career advancement of a person. In university structures, VCs, deans and directors have the highest qualifications and research publications beside administrative experience. Many chairpersons also have the doctoral degree and good research profiles. In this study the participants were asked to share their views about the role of education and research in leadership, how their universities consider these factors while choosing a leader, and how their personal research and educational improvement was influenced by their leadership roles. This theme is divided in two subthemes i.e. education and leadership, and research excellence of women leaders, that are discussed in this section.

### **5.6.1 Education and Leadership**

Educational qualification is considered as a basic factor, while choosing an academic leader in universities because advance knowledge of the field is necessary to understand and manage the problems of the department. In present era, many people are getting advance degrees; therefore, there is tough competition in all fields of life. Academic

leaders are required to improve their knowledge and to keep themselves aligned with the contemporary knowledge of their respective disciplines. It also helps them in their academic and professional growth. In universities, it is assumed that if more women complete their graduate degree in an early age, more of them will carry on their advance studies and step in their academic profession and will get promoted to the professoriate and top leadership levels (Bell & Bryman, 2007; White, 2012). In this study, participants were asked to share their opinion about the significance of educational background in academic administration and to describe their organizational norms about academic excellence in leadership. One of the participants shared her personal opinion and organizational norms about academic excellence in leadership in these words:

Qualification and experience, both are important and my organization also considers these factors while choosing a leader. However, whenever there is a male and a female candidate, with same professional profile in competition, men are most likely to be chosen. Therefore, if women have to compete with men, they should have some extraordinary qualifications/skills. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narrative of Khadija and others illustrate the significance of academic excellence for a leader. Khadija believed that academic knowledge facilitated her in developing vision and achieving goals in academia. Moreover, she highlighted the gender discrimination present in selection of an academic administrator in her university. Her institutional norms systematically favored male leaders, although women also exhibited strong professional skills. She continued to share her personal experience about this discourse in these words:

I had two year of probation period, when I joined this organization as a lecturer. After completion of the defined probation period, it was further extended rather than the regularization of my service, without any justification. I received a one liner letter from the registrar office that my probation was extended for the period of six months. The same day, I forwarded an application for getting justification about my extended probation period. Eventually, I received a telephonic call from the registrar office to inform me that they were not bound to give the explanation. They also explained that the decision was taken by the

top management and registrar office just informed me about that decision. At that moment, I forwarded the carbon copy of the same application to my Head, Dean and the VC. I also attached my self-assessment reports taken during the probation period. I did a lot of work during my probation period. It wasn't me, who was speaking but my work. The VC took an immediate action and re-opened the case. He also called a meeting with me in his office to discuss the matter. I showed him the evidences of my performance in last two years i.e. two-year progress reports, research publications etc. The VC realized the issue and within two days, I received a letter about regularization of my service. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Conversation with Khadija reveals that women often experience unfair treatments in organizations that are deep rooted in organizational culture but women have to step forward and formally raise their voices to bring positive change. Whenever, Khadija realized that she was discriminated by the higher authorities, she put that in words and formally approached the administration rather than discussing with other colleagues for getting sympathies. However, the narrative of Khadija clearly manifests that many women don't have the courage to protest officially because they hesitate to take the risks. She reported that most of the women are traditionally socialized to compromise and sacrifice. Khadija pointed that her parents never socialized her in that manner. They gave her confidence and courage to raise her voice for her rights. She further shared that she used to speak louder as compared to other women in her organization that let others to listen to her point. She believed that, at a leadership position, one's tone should be firm and voice should be louder. Khadija also discouraged informal protocols prevalent in the organizations. For instance, she never wrote "submitted please" in official letters to the higher authorities. Once, her Dean called her in his office for the explanation but she did not hesitate to refuse the protocol because it was not part of the institutional policy. She highlighted the importance of raising voice against the issues.

The narrative of Khadija also illustrates many reasons for choosing men in competition. Most importantly, men are well networked and having strong professional profiles as compared to women. Moreover, males fight for leadership position. Organizations always look for their priority. They know that if they will refuse a male candidate, he will look forward to a better opportunity and resign. However, most



women are not career oriented; they never quit or raise their voice against any discrimination. This is a dominant discourse that favors males in Pakistani society. Women don't protest against discrimination formally. Most of the women are emotional; therefore, they start weeping or start feeling guilty. Women actually don't know how to fight for their rights. They communicate about the issue with one another colleague but never highlight the issue formally. Mostly, women don't demand formal explanations about their rejection. This leads to the lower representation of women at senior academic and administrative positions because if at lower leadership positions males will be preferred and women will not be given the chance; consequently, women's professional profile would be weak and later they would not be eligible or chosen for the positions of deans and VCs. Narratives of Khadija and others clearly manifest that women are systematically pushed back from leadership positions. Women lack administrative experience even at junior leadership positions.

Academic excellence is not the sole criterion for choosing an academic leader in most of the universities. Academic and administrative experience also plays important role in selection of a leader. Many women in this study illustrated that education, research and experience should be considered equally while choosing an academic administrator. In this study, some organizations only consider work experience in selection of deans and HODs. Sara shared her opinion about the role of education and research in effective leadership in these words:

Academic excellence helped me to think more innovatively and work systematically on the solution of the problems. It also helped me to learn effective time management skills that are equally important for becoming a successful leader. A good researcher can also be a good leader but in this university, the only criterion of choosing a leader is seniority. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Another HOD also expressed the role of higher education and advanced skills in academic administration as:

Doctoral degree is obligatory for obtaining leadership position in this university. I was serving as an acting chairperson until the completion of my PhD degree. I feel that learning is a lifelong process. I believe that higher education and advanced skills are necessary to keep us productive and optimistic. It also helps

us to motivate the students as well as the colleagues. I wish to serve as a role model for my students and colleagues. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor,)

Above narratives of the participants illustrate that education and research enlightens the thoughts of a leader and helps in understanding new trends and practices that are significant in academic administration. It also helps to rationalize the problems of the field and to develop better policies that are aligned with the educational goals. It also facilitates in mobilizing necessary resources to achieve those ambitions. Naheed said that research is one of the criteria for promotions in academia but not for leadership. However, usually senior academicians are good researchers as well. They grow their research profile with the passage of time by getting more academic and administrative experience.

It is evident in this study that knowledge about advance approaches in education and research helped women leaders in continuous growth and development of their organization by facilitating their students and junior colleagues in their career trajectories. It also facilitated them in identifying and utilizing available resources in an effective manner for improved outputs. It shows that effective academic administrators provide opportunities to their students and teachers to strengthen their research based skills and knowledge.

A Dean of a faculty also highlighted the role of experience and exposure beside educational competence in administration. However, she believed that research publications do not have great influence on effective leadership roles. She believed that research enlightens individual's academic and management skills but leadership on other hand requires good administrative skills beside research and management qualities. She narrated that:

I feel that education, experience, and exposure to various situations and people are important for leadership but I am not sure about research because I personally know many people, who are having hundreds of publications but they don't demonstrate leadership skills. (Naila, Dean, Professor)

An HOD also highlighted this point in this way:

In our institute, doctoral degree is not mandatory for becoming an HOD. There are many departments that are having PhD faculty but their HODs are not

having doctoral degrees and they are managing their responsibilities very well. In my opinion, good management skills are essential for leadership beside education and research in academic leadership. A good researcher might not be a good administrator. (Hadia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The above excerpts elaborate that administrative skills are essential for a good leader. Education and research should not be the primary factors in choosing a leader. It can facilitate an individual in better administration but leadership requires competencies in management and administration that are not necessarily improved with higher education and research. In this study, two respondents were not having PhD degree and managing their department in an effective way. However, many respondents who had higher qualifications were facing challenges in managing their leadership roles. It revealed the importance of leadership skills and administrative experience beside education and research for an effective leader.

#### **5.6.2 Research Excellency of Women Leaders**

Research productivity is one of a dominant concern for higher educational institutions in the modern world. Universities put research quality and productivity at the top performance indicators for its faculty; therefore, faculty has to be actively engaged in quality research publications for their career advancements. Higher educational institutions also recognize the value of research in academic administration. Research affectivity is likely to bring optimum results in academic leadership in higher educational institutes. Women, struggling to attain top academic and administrative positions in universities, need to focus on their research productivity because the obstacles women experience continues throughout their career in academia. Many researchers highlighted the effects of research publication on women's career advancements (Fox, 2010). It is found that women's research productivity rates are lower than men that negatively effects women promotions in organizations, where publication outputs are the key indicator for promotion (Leahey, 2006). In this study, women were inquired about their research productivity, effect of their leadership status on research outcomes and strategies to keep themselves aligned with organizational research metrics.

All participants were apprehensive about their research productivity because it was reduced due to their leadership responsibilities. Most of the women were unable to manage time for their personal research within university premises due to the persistent administrative workload. They also expressed their difficulty to spare time for research at their homes due to the household responsibilities. This is found as one of the dominant reasons of women's lack of research efficiency in academic environment and resulted in their slow promotions as compared to their male counterparts. It is revealed that most of the organizations in the study are not considering administrative experience in promotion of their faculty; therefore, women have to make additional efforts to meet the organizational standards for promotion. Participants applied various strategies to overcome this challenge e.g. giving extra time to research at home, utilizing library to get some quality time, developing research networks and utilizing advanced technologies to improve their research productivity. Women also utilized some other approaches to address this issue including improving quality and quantity of research publications, overcoming barriers and getting help from mentors and networks. A Chairperson shared her challenges and strategies related to research productivity as:

I am unable to manage my research activities and I know that it's negatively affected due to my leadership commitments. I have published only one research paper each year after taking administrative position. As I am supervising PhD scholars; therefore, their research benefits me too when I publish papers with them. I also focus on e-communication with them that is easy for me to manage. I think advanced skills and technologies assisted me in leadership roles. I observe that my male colleagues also don't get time for research because if I remain busy at home after job, they get engaged in other jobs. Therefore, I believe that it's a challenge for both men and women. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The conversation with Khadija and many others imply that they were unable to focus on their independent research work due to their professional commitments; however, they have developed research networks with their senior students and faculty members to compensate this issue. Khadija also highlighted the distinctive priorities of men and women in organizational structures that resulted in reduced research productivity. Family was found to be the priority for most of the women in this study and when it

combined with professional leadership roles, it became difficult for them to manage time for their research.

Managing time for research was most challenging aspect of their professional life in universities because they had to perform multiple roles at workplace and at home. Many respondents preferred to do group research work and publications. For this purpose, they also utilized modern technologies such as e-communication and e-libraries to keep themselves aligned with new research and knowledge about their respective fields. Many women reported that their sleeping habits were badly affected due to their late night sittings for research and other purposes. They couldn't spare enough time for such activities during daytime due to their administrative and domestic commitments and it was adversely affecting their health. Most of them often devoted their weekends for their research work and compromised their household commitments. It showed that women have to work harder to keep themselves optimistic about their career goals.

Narrative of participants also illustrate that organizations don't have any policies to enhance research productivity of the faculty and if there is any relevant policy, it is not implemented effectively. Therefore, the faculty doesn't get motivated toward enhancing their research profiles. Moreover, women also have to fulfill their household commitments and they find less time for their professional growth. They hardly publish research papers that are necessary for their promotion. Furthermore, women have less research networks that can provide them funding for research work. An HOD also expressed constraints in her promotion due to less research publication. She said that:

My research publications are declining due to my administrative responsibilities. Managing time for research is an immense problem for me. I have informed my senior management many times about this issue because it has influenced my promotion as well. I made request to consider my administrative experience while promotion but there is no such criteria mentioned in organizational promotion policy. I feel that it is injustice, as my promotion is delayed due to the fewer publications. This additional administrative responsibility is also given by the senior administration and I am unable to manage time for research during office hours due to administrative

work load. However, I try to spare some time for research at home in evening or on weekends. (Shama, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Number of research publication in well-reputed and valued journals is necessary for the promotion of an individual in higher educational structures. As discussed earlier that women perceive administration as a great responsibility and they have to be very careful while accomplishing these tasks. Many respondents shared that it also adversely affected their personal research work. Shama hadn't any research or teaching assistant that could facilitate her in managing work. She also highlighted the issue with the top management and they also promised to consider administrative experience while promotion; however, it was still not implemented. She reported that it discouraged many women to pursue leadership career in this university. Another participant, Sobia, illustrated the significance of professional experience in managing her research work. She shared her lived experiences about research efficiency in these words:

For me, administrative responsibilities are very time consuming. When I was a junior faculty member, I only had teaching responsibilities and had much time for research activities. Now, I cannot devote much time and energy in research due to my leadership responsibilities; however, I have learned to manage my research more effectively due to my improved experience and exposure. (Sobia, Dean, Professor)

Sobia's narrative about research reveals that her improved experience helped her to manage work effectively and more quickly. She skilled many students and junior faculty members in research and preferred to do collective research work. She had ability to get work done due to her leadership skills and research experience. However, she was also concerned about her independent research because she was unable to do direct bench work. The conversation with Sobia illustrated that women can learn to manage their roles with experience and exposure to various situations. In this study, women HODs, who were having less administrative and research experience, were struggling to manage their new roles and founding less opportunities for research activities as compared to the participants having more leadership and research exposure.

Above narratives of the respondents clearly manifest that the quality of the research was negatively affected due to their leadership roles. They got saturated due

to their multiple responsibilities of teaching, research, administration and family. In office, they couldn't concentrate on their research activity; therefore, they preferred to use library or used to spare some time at weekends to for research. Moreover, they also developed research networks to facilitate them in producing and publishing their research work in well recognized journals.

These findings are also in line with the previous studies which reported that women remain far behind in research and development in academia. It also reduces their probability of getting professional achievements. Moreover, they also experience obstacles in getting funding from well reputed funding organizations (McTiernan & Flynn, 2011; Ohlott, Ruderman, & McCauley, 1994). Studies also indicated that women have more contract jobs and have greater teaching workloads that limit their abilities to conduct quality research work (Bilimoria et al., 2008; White, 2008). Therefore, women need to concentrate on their professional advancement and negotiate their issue to compete in the male world. However, Bowles, Babcock and Lai, (2007) found that women experience hostile response to their negotiations with their senior administrators that discourage them to participate in competitive research culture.

### **5.7 Leadership Workshops and Trainings**

Higher educational institutes focus on their quality of education and research in order to achieve academic excellence and sustainable development. Therefore, effective and efficient academic administration is of a prime importance in all higher educational institutions. In other words, leaders (academic and non-academic) at all level within a university should be on the same-page in order to achieve the common goals of their departments, faculties and the university at large. The standard leadership development programs benefit them in enhancing leadership skills and potentials. In this study, all respondents highlighted the need of leadership trainings and workshops to improve their administrative skills.

In present study, respondents had diverse experiences about leadership trainings and workshops. Most of the participants illustrated that leadership programs can be helpful in simultaneously developing their skills, while narrowing existing gender leadership developmental gap, emboldening them to first acknowledge their potential and then asserting their leadership potentials. In this study, no university had formal

leadership training structure for its academic administrators. Participants reported that professional development workshops and trainings were regularly conducted for the faculty but those programs primarily focused on enhancing teaching and research skills. It only included a minor component of administration and management that was not enough to bring desired outcomes in academic leadership. Participants also had unique experiences of leadership trainings. Although some of the women attended workshops and seminars on management and administrative skills but they did not find them effective in their leadership roles. None of them had any formal leadership preparation for the post. Many participants reported that they learned leadership roles and skills from their mentors and personal on the job experience. Moreover, they developed networks with other Deans and HODs to get help and to learn everything along the way. An HOD shared her thoughts about leadership trainings in this way:

I believe that training should be mandatory for every leader. I have attended a workshop in higher education commission about policy making that helped me in improving relevant skills. Unfortunately, training is not a norm in this university. I have highlighted the need before the higher authorities but not received any positive response. (Zainab, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

A Dean described her training experiences in these words:

I have attended many professional development workshops that were not primarily focused on leadership but they had a component about management. However, I have coordinated leadership trainings for young faculty member to facilitate them in their professional life. (Anum, Dean, Professor)

The narratives of the above participants highlight the need of formal leadership trainings at all levels of administration. They reported that in university structure, professional training is not a criterion for selection of a leader at any post. Doctoral degree is completely based on research and does not enhance teaching and administrative skills. Universities haven't any established structures for regular trainings to polish administrative skills of its leaders. Most of the leaders learn new roles by their personal experience and exposure. Women in this study pointed the lack of trainings developed many obstacles for them because most of them were traditionally socialized to perform submissive roles. They also highlighted that other business organizations have prerequisites of professional diplomas and trainings for an



administrative position. It showed that leadership skills can be learned by continuous trainings and workshops. As a Chairperson stated that:

In my opinion, every leader in organization should be given leadership trainings because it's very important for effective work management. There are many professional development trainings and workshops for teachers but not for the administrators. I never received or heard about any kind of trainings for academic managers. (Najma, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Another HOD also narrated her similar thoughts in these words:

I believe that trainings help to keep us aligned with contemporary leadership trends and practices. I have attended a workshop entitled 'Leadership is not a babysitting' in Islamabad, Pakistan. It helped to get myself equipped with new skills about dealing with diversified groups and managing work efficiently. I personally organized many seminars on management and career development but they were not particularly focused on developing leadership skill as those were only seminars not workshops. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The above narratives of women also illustrate the significance of training about all aspects of leadership. Women, who didn't receive any training, highlighted the need for formal leadership preparation programs. Naheed, who attended few workshops on various issues concerning management, found them very helpful. Learning by experience also helped her in enhancing leadership skills. However, workshops and courses benefited her by listening to other's experiences and developing professional networks. It also facilitated in achieving her professional objectives.

The detailed conversations with participants reveal that women in this study had different experiences about leadership trainings and workshops. All women maintained that leadership programs could be very helpful in simultaneously developing their skills, while narrowing existing gender leadership developmental gap, emboldening them to first acknowledge their potential and then asserting their leadership potentials. It is also revealed that no university had formal leadership training structure for its academic administrators. However, participants reported that professional development workshops and trainings were regularly conducted for the faculty but those programs primarily focused on enhancing teaching and research skills. It also included a minor component of administration and management that was not sufficient to bring desired

outcomes. Although, some of the women attended off-campus workshops and seminars on management and administrative skills, but they did not find them very effective in leadership. None of them had any formal leadership preparation for the post. Many participants reported that they learned by their mentors and personal on the job experience. Moreover, they developed networks with other successful leaders for getting professional assistance.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Organizational Practices and Women's Leadership Experience**

This new era of globalization has placed new expectations upon academic leaders in higher education and they have to inculcate intellectual abilities beside leadership skills to become successful. This seems to be one of a major challenge for many new academic administrators in Pakistani society. In the past, individuals with strong academic profiles could attain leadership positions because it was the sole criteria for appointment of academic leaders in universities. Moreover, they were required to manage light administrative roles in less competitive and demanding environment; therefore, they were successful in managing their research and teaching roles beside their leadership responsibilities. However, these traditional leadership roles are changed in today's commercialized educational economy. As discussed in the previous theme about academic excellence of women leaders, universities still place higher emphasis on intellectual abilities of their leaders beside some administrative skills. Additionally, they are required to develop research and academic culture in their organization, and to guide their faculty and students in this respect. However, in recent years their superlative status as academic leaders, has been greatly criticized because new legislative, organizational and financial pressures demanding modifications in traditional roles of academic leaders. Now, they need to develop more effective executive capabilities to meet new expectations. They need to manage their scarce university resources more competently by demonstrating their strong leadership skills.

Certain institutional and departmental structures are required in place, to facilitate work of the academic managers. In present study, participants identified many departmental and organizational factors that facilitated or impeded their work as an academic administrator. Facilitating factors included regular meetings with colleagues and senior management, and well qualified and cooperative members of administrative staff. It is found that cooperative and accessible administrative team and teaching faculty is essential for women to manage their leadership roles successfully. On the other hand, there are also some impeding factors at both departmental and institutional

levels including absence of leadership trainings and workshops, unavailability of resources, work overload, and lack of time.

In this chapter, I have discussed various departmental and organizational factors that facilitated or hindered women in successful execution of their organizational leadership responsibilities. These factors are discussed in ten themes i.e. organization of leadership responsibilities, exercising executive authority, decision making, managing threats and criticism, dealing with stress and disappointments, negotiations and engagement with senior management, professional development, networking, mentoring, and personal and professional benefits of academic leadership.

### **6.1 Organization of Leadership Responsibilities**

Effective work management is fundamental for a leader to accomplish all activities successfully. An academic administrator is responsible to execute numerous roles and responsibilities during his/her tenure as a leader. An academic leader is also required to manage multiple tasks effectively to encourage and endorse academic and administrative excellence, and to develop enduring principles and vision for the development of the institute. Women experience numerous challenges and opportunities while managing their leadership roles. In this study, participants were asked about their work organization, challenges in managing administrative activities and strategies utilized for effective management of all kinds of leadership roles. Time management, team work, networking, preplanning activities, mutual assistance, punctuality and family support are found important factors in meeting deadlines. Many participants shared their experiences about work management that are discussed in this theme. One participant narrated about work organization in these words:

I have delegated responsibilities among various coordinators and they have autonomy in smooth conduction of their allocated activities. I frequently arrange meetings to discuss the matters with them. On the other hand, I strictly follow office timings and sit late whenever required. As I remain very busy in my administrative work, I seldom find time for teaching responsibilities such as lecture preparation, paper checking etc in office and I try to spare time for it at home. (Nasreen, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

Distribution of work is one of the important factors in successful accomplishment of all professional roles. Nasreen believed in decentralization of the authority. She distributed responsibilities among various coordinators such as BS (Hons) coordinator, PhD coordinator, examination in-charge, admission in-charge etc., who were independent to manage their designated activities. Her team was professional; therefore, all problems didn't come directly to her and normally settled by relevant coordinators. It also developed work ownership in the members; therefore, they remain very careful about their work. It also helped to reduce her personal workload, and to concentrate on important events and activities of the department. Nasreen also highlighted the significance of punctuality for a leader. She believed that a leader should serve as a role model for his/her team. Time is one of the important factors that shouldn't be ignored by a successful leader because if a leader would be punctual, his/her team would also remain available for work in office that will help in meeting deadlines.

Conversations with this participant and others reveal that they mostly remain busy in their leadership roles due to which their teaching responsibilities are negatively influenced. Therefore, they were concerned about their teaching commitments. It is found that many women hadn't any teaching assistant; therefore, they had to manage time at home for their teaching and research responsibilities that adversely influenced their domestic activities. Manahil shared the significance of team work and networking in managing her work successfully. She said that:

My team is very cooperative and we often stay late in office to meet deadlines. I believe in team work and also acknowledge work of my colleagues. I always get ready to learn from others. Moreover, at this leadership position, I have learned public dealing because I have frequent interactions with the senior administration, faculty, staff and students. I keep interacting with people all day that helped me in developing patience in dealing with diverse groups. I always try to interact pleasantly and never get aggressive. I also feel that my colleagues show discomfort whenever, I become firm. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

The narrative of Manahil reveals that her team is her strength as she couldn't accomplish every task alone. She respected the opinions of her team and appreciated their work that encouraged them to work more effectively. She had accommodating

leadership style and believed in the significance of politeness while communicating work instructions because most of her team members were males, who never accepted her firm behavior. She learned to speak delicately because she was dealing with diverse groups. She also developed various professional networks for taking help in organizing her leadership roles. Another participant, Sobia, delineated her work priorities and developed her daily work plan accordingly. She shared her work management strategies in these words:

I have to set priorities at first because I have limited time to accomplish all tasks. I think, at the end of the day, my success actually depends on my ability to set right priorities at the right time. I do situational analysis for this purpose e.g. if there are two meetings at the same time, I assess their significance and decide to attend one where my presence seems necessary and designate any other colleague to attend other meeting. (Sobia, Dean, Professor)

Leaders have to perform multiple tasks at a time; therefore, it is important for them to analyze the nature of work and to set priorities that require a lot of intellectual and management skills. It is clear that the women like Sobia prioritized their professional commitments each day for establishing effective work plans. Moreover, they were having a good understanding about the capabilities of each team member that helped them in successful division of labor. They were used to take frequent updates about their work in progress and guiding them, whenever required. Naheed mentioned the effects of lack of motivation and recognition in managing professional responsibilities. She said that:

It's one of the major challenges for me. I feel that I am not good in organizing my work. I prepare a list of activities and review them every morning but most of these tasks remain uncompleted. I feel that lack of motivation and recognition are the main impeding factors behind it because I don't receive the right appreciation of the work at the right time by the senior administration. It develops disappointment and influences my work efficiency. I am trying hard to improve my management skills but top leadership is not recognizing my efforts.

She continued with a slight pause:

I try to bring all members at same page in order to get work done and to communicate a single reputation of the department to the students and senior management. Therefore, I consider everyone's issues, problem and behaviors, and take all members in confidence to manage activities for better outputs, while keeping aside the differences. I am continuously polishing my leadership skills for dealing with diversified gender, age and cultural groups that helped me to develop inner motivation to do better and improve myself. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narrative of Naheed and others illustrate that gender and age are the main obstacles in good management for women. Naheed, who obtained HOD position in a quite young age, was confronting with numerous challenges in organizing her administrative work. She was unable to meet all work deadlines due to the lack of acknowledgement from her senior colleagues and administrators, who were predominantly males. It showed that some behaviors are implicit in culture about women leaders and expressed by the males through their gestures and body languages, and women have to deal with them implicitly or explicitly. Moreover, it became more challenging, when added up with the age factor. Naheed was the youngest women leader in her university and most of her faculty was also senior in terms of age but not in the designation. Her male colleagues were more powerful due to their age and gender; therefore, they were unwilling to get instructions from a younger woman.

Conversation with this participant implies that however, there is a prominent change in professional behavior in modern world but gender discrimination is still unchanged due to the existing power relations between men and women. It is clear that the traditional patriarchal structures support and strengthen the gender based power structures. Consequently, it increases workload of women administrators because they have to accomplish most of the work by their own or have to be obliged of the work done by their colleagues in order to maintain the leadership position. Another HOD narrated the influence of heavy workload on her quality of work and issues of time management in these words:

I have teaching workload beside administration but don't have any teaching assistant, who can upload marks or check quizzes and assignments. My lunch often remains on my table all day and I don't find time for it due to the higher

workload and consistent deadlines. In office hours, I can't spare time for my teaching commitments because I have to accomplish my leadership tasks and I do most of the teaching work at home in evening or on weekends.

She continued:

I often sacrifice my family responsibilities due to the work overload. I often have to spare time at home for official tasks. For instance, I often remain busy in administrative work during office hours and my teaching and research work is neglected. I prepare my lectures, and check papers and assignments at home.

(Memoona, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Memoona was working in a private sector university. She expressed her impediments of heavy teaching and administrative work load due to which she was unable to manage her office time effectively and it often developed role conflict. She was also a young woman as compared to her colleagues and her leadership was not acknowledged in her department. Moreover, she was not provided with any departmental assistant; therefore, she had to accomplish most of the departmental and teaching work by her own that sometime influenced her work productivity. She tried to manage time for her teaching responsibilities at her home. Her family was cooperative and understanding her work commitments.

The above narratives of the respondents reveal that effective and appropriate delegation of work among colleagues and staff is helpful in executing administrative work successful. However, lack of motivation, less cooperative team members, and lack of aspiration are the impeding factors behind delays in work. Women leaders are more careful in planning their activities for successfully achieving their management goals. It is also found that women leaders have to give priority to their administrative responsibilities in their organization that negatively influence their teaching commitments and they often have to take their teaching tasks at home. Participants also highlighted the important role of their families' in understanding their professional commitments and acknowledged their cooperation in this respect.

## **6.2 Exercising Executive Authority**

All leaders have some legislative powers and they have to utilize those in best possible ways to achieve effective outcomes. In this study, many participants believed to have



good communication skills that helped them in developing a responsible and trustworthy team in their respective departments. They encouraged accomplishing work with mutual coordination rather than imposing work on each other. However, they showed assertiveness whenever a staff member or a colleague frequently refused or delayed their orders. Participants mentioned numerous factors e.g. conflicting hierarchies, powerful lobbies, age and gender that intervened implementation of their authority. They also utilized various strategies in such situations for instance, following rules, timely assigning tasks, defining work categorically, empowering team, avoiding too much orders, direct communication, reminders, written explanation, reporting in Annual Confidential Report (ACR) and expelling from job. According to a Director, exercising executive authority varies with respect to gender, age, nature of employees' contract and loyalty of the colleagues with their department. She pointed that:

I find it challenging to exercise my authority because I am part of a public sector university where most of the employees are permanent, so they don't take pressure. Moreover, most of them are males, who don't take my instructions at a serious note. I feel that work get easier, when you have people on your side. Sometimes, I have taken written explanation or reported it in their ACRs but it was mostly ineffective because they are having very powerful lobbies inside and outside the organization that systematically favor men. They also forwarded threats in response to the firm actions. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

Sana was confronting with numerous obstacles in exercising authority due to the permanent nature of contract and powerful lobbies of employees. She also had less support from her team and they often refused to follow her instructions. She mentioned that gender was the dominant factor behind this attitude because males were having strong supporting networks in critical situations. Therefore, she was very careful while taking any assertive action. Another participant illustrated the influence of gender and age in exercising her authority. She preferred to take decisions according to the rules, while accommodating someone. She said that:

I like to collaborate with all of my colleagues, subordinates and students, while following the rules. I utilize my authority where it is for the best interest of the department. I have become in-charge in a very young age and it's a major challenge for me because many elder colleagues take my instructions

unconscientiously. The clerical staff is also older than me and most of them are males. Some of them don't take my orders sincerely. I am polite by nature but once, I feel that they are not following my orders or deliberately trying to delay work then I take some firm action. However, I usually avoid taking written explanations and prefer to ask them verbally. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Faria also shared her similar experiences in these words:

Most of my staff members are elder and I cannot enforce my authority on them because they are not ready to accept a younger woman on a leadership position. They often don't cooperate in work but due to my respecting and cooperative attitude, I cannot impose orders on them. It ends up in doing most of the work by my own and results in ineffective outputs. (Faria, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The above narratives of women clearly manifest that women leaders prefer to maintain conducive work environment, where all members feel free to communicate their ideas and work effectively. It is also clear from the above excerpts that when women are accommodating, they are not taken seriously by their colleagues and staff. Many respondents maintained that they strictly follow the rules and don't take any action against institutional policy. Moreover, they reported about many males, who are very confident in doing any work beyond their defined limitations.

The conversations with the respondents also reveal that gender and age influence the utilization of their authority. The dominant discourse present in community systematically favors male leaders and men don't want to take instructions from a woman leader. They are traditionally socialized to control women. This discourse influences the behavior of the male colleagues and staff toward women. Moreover, majority of the male administrative staff members are elder. Therefore, many women leaders prefer to forward any instructions in a very respectful and polite manner that also develops a sense of power among men; therefore, they don't value the instructions of women that leads toward the deliberate delays in work.

It is found in this study that majority women avoid to take any firm action and keep trying to resolve the issues by offering existing resources and assistance, forwarding soft reminders or communicating the possible consequences of their

inadequate behaviors. Khadija expressed that the authority associated with her leadership position facilitated her in getting work done. She shared her strategies to get work done in these words:

Most of the colleagues and staff take my orders on a serious note due to my leadership position. I have adopted various strategies to handle individuals, who frequently delay work. It includes counseling, direct verbal communication, formal warnings and other assertive actions. However, I try to resolve most of the matters without taking firm actions. Moreover, I always consider the rules and regulations while taking any decision. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Narrative of Khadija and others reveal that taking any action according to the rules is very important to keep their position strong and safe. Khadija shared that her staff and colleagues were cooperating and understanding their work commitments. She felt that this was due to her authority as a chairperson but sometime, it became necessary to deal with individuals disturbing the work. She utilized her legislative powers in a very systematic manner. Firstly, she starts counseling, realize them about the value of their work, offer them assistance in understanding the task, and explain them the consequences of the continuous refusals. Secondly, she starts giving verbal warnings. For instance, she reminds them repeatedly in every morning about their assigned task and warns about the careless attitude. However, she illustrated that verbal warnings were mostly ineffective. Thirdly, she gives formal warnings; such as she begins generating emails one after another to remind them about their duties and forward its carbon copies to the Dean and Registrar as well. Khadija said that it often brought positive feedbacks. Finally, if someone still doesn't change his/her non-professional attitude, she doesn't hesitate to take formal action that includes written explanations or reporting in Annual Assessment Reports (ACRs) that can affect their future promotions and annual increments. Another Chairperson, Naheed, preferred to forward her instructions politely to make her team feel comfortable and to achieve desired outcomes. She stated that:

I seek to address most of the issues by counseling; but sometimes, I have to be firm. I try to maintain a healthy academic environment; for instance, I am used to crack some jokes in meetings to make my point very light and compensate

any harsh words. Moreover, I cooperate with my team in accomplishing any task that they find difficult.

She continued to share her experience about exercising her authority in these words:

Recently, I made a show cause notice of one of my faculty member due his inadequate behavior. In a final defense of a student, he asked questions to the student in a very loud and harsh tone. When another faculty member interrupted in that particular context, he took it on his personal side. He found it offensive, responded aggressively and moved out by shutting the door very hardly that adversely affected the academic environment and could not be ignored.

(Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The conversation with Naheed reveal that she facilitated her team in case of any difficulty in fulfilling their responsibilities. She didn't aim to take any firm action against any of her colleague or staff member; however, sometimes it became necessary to maintain academic discipline. Her female colleagues were more supporting and understanding; but males often created obstacles. Most of them were elder and intended to take leadership position. Therefore, she avoided forwarding too many orders and preferred team work. Moreover, she divided workload equally among all colleagues to avoid any criticism. Naila expressed her experiences of exercising executive powers in this way:

I try to remain polite while communicating any instructions to my colleagues. I don't like to shout on their misbehavior. I follow the rules and never demand beyond it; therefore, all have to obey my orders. They also know the consequences of any refusal to the work. I don't hesitate to call written explanations and sometime also expel people depending upon the issue. I believe that if a leader is competent and work honestly, both male and female colleagues, take instructions at a serious note.

She continued:

I never experienced direct refusal but observed their reluctance by their arguments. For instance, they respond apologetically that 'madam it would be difficult for me' or 'I don't understand the task' etc. I consider genuine excuses, if they are not habitual. (Naila, Dean, Professor)

The conversations with this participant and others about exercising their authority reveal that women leaders prefer to maintain a responsive environment by assigning tasks to their colleagues and staff in a respectful manner and try to compensate any harsh words by their accommodating behavior. They focus on team work because they know that team is their strength. As a women leader, they are required to prove their credibility by working hard and honestly. They need to become a role model for the team and other women because it motivates them to accomplish their tasks in an effective manner. However, sometimes strict actions are also taken against individuals, who deliberately delay orders and develop obstacles in development process.

It is also found that gender and age significantly influence women effective use of authority. In this study, young women leaders were confronting greater impediments in forwarding their orders to their male colleagues and often received serious threats from them. It showed that women, who attain leadership position in early stages of their academic career, face constant challenges from their elder male colleagues and staff members because men don't like to take instructions from women administrators due to the prevalent male dominated organizational norms. They have strong lobbies that propagate their interests and discourage women academic leaders. Therefore, many participants in this study avoided forwarding too many orders and preferred to work in team to maintain their leadership positions.

### **6.3 Decision Making**

Decision making is one of the important elements of leadership. A successful leader needs to take effective and optimistic decisions that contribute toward long term progress of their institution. It is necessary to analyze multiple factors before taking any decision. In this study, participants were asked to describe decision making process, and participation of their colleagues and staff in this process. It is found that most of the women involved their team members in decision making process. Anum respected the opinion of her colleagues, while taking any decision. She narrated that:

I don't believe on dictatorship. I listen and respect the opinion of individuals working with me but at the end, I take final decision. I also share a valid reason for refusing any idea; therefore, I never experienced objection. I have an ability

to take effective decision at a right time and strong enough in implementation.

(Anum, Dean, Professor)

Anum exhibited a democratic leadership style and involved all colleagues in decision making process. She believed that every individual has unique insight on the matter and can contribute to the development of the institute; therefore, a leader should listen and respect every opinion and choose the best option by evaluating all ideas. She felt it necessary to share a logical reason for refusing any idea by a colleague in a very humble way that helped her in effective implementation. Khadija preferred to get factual information before taking any decision in her personal capacity. She said that:

Whenever, I have to take decisions in my personal capacity, I rely more on the relevant facts rather than taking opinions from my colleagues. Such as, I am the in-charge of the department as well as the PhD coordinator; therefore, I independently take decisions about offering admissions in PhD in new session by looking at the previous trends from relevant data. However, if some decision has to be taken about the faculty, I take their opinion while taking the decision.

(Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Khadija emphasized the importance of monthly or bimonthly meetings with her faculty and staff because it helped her to take their opinions about the growth of the department. She welcomed their opinion whenever, it was relevant to them. However, where her personal cycle of work was concerned, she relied more on statistical information rather than collective decision making. Another participant highlighted the significance of collective decision making. She mentioned that:

I frequently arrange faculty meetings, in which I discuss various academic and administrative issues to get diverse opinions. I also welcome suggestions from my team members. Although, I am experienced and having the authority to take any decision but I believe that each member has unique qualities that can facilitate in better decision making. It also makes them feel motivated due to the recognition of their ideas while taking a decision. It helps me as well to maintain conducive work environment. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

Above conversations of women clearly manifest that women leaders frequently arrange faculty and staff meetings to share important information and to discuss any matters of collective and professional interests. It helps them in improving individual's

performance by recognizing their work and motivating them to participate in the process of academic growth. It also reduces the criticism on decisions because of the liberty to share their perspective with everyone. All participants reported that they were strong enough to take final decisions by reviewing multiple ideas and once the decision was made, they had the ability to implement that effectively.

#### **6.4 Managing Threats and Criticism**

Individuals, who hold leadership positions, often experience criticism and threats from their colleagues, staff and other relevant personals. Moreover, women leaders confront greater threats and criticism, when they perform administrative responsibilities and the risks increases with their promotion to senior leadership positions. Many respondents shared their narratives that helped in understanding their challenges due to their executive position. They also shared their strategies to manage such situations. Anum reported that:

I often face criticism, especially when I take firm action against someone's misbehavior or misconduct. Most frequent comments include 'madam does favoritism', 'she victimizes' or 'she is not following the rules'. Once, I made a show-cause notice of few lower staff members due to their disobedience. After a period of time, when I made some appointments, they approached the VC and blamed me for doing favoritism in the selection process. After that, VC called a meeting with me to discuss the issue where, he understood the reality.

She also shared her approaches of managing criticism as:

I avoid paying attention to the criticisms because I am honest in my work. I always keep myself prepared for giving any explanation to my top administration but I am not answerable to everyone. (Anum, Dean, Professor)

The conversations with this participant reveals that she often received criticism, particularly, when she has taken any firm action against any colleague or staff. As discussed in the previous theme, she never hesitated to become assertive while dealing with deceitful behavior of her colleagues and staff, and followed the rules while taking any decisions. However, she was often criticized for being biased and victimizing her team. She always kept herself prepared for any kind of criticism and threats, because she was occupying a senior leadership position and managing a large mechanism of a

faculty. She was competent and her senior management also recognized her potential as a good administrator; therefore, they always supported her in critical situations. She also avoided giving explanations to everyone because it could lead toward greater misunderstandings. Therefore, she always took her top management in confidence about any firm action. Her family was also supporting and defending her in such circumstances. An HOD elaborated the nature of threats received from her colleagues and students in these words:

I am working in a multicultural university. Students often threaten me in response to the identification of the mistakes in their work. I cannot leave my kids alone in the university due to the possible risks. My car was also scratched and punctured. Moreover, once I took action against a colleague due to his lack of coordination and he directly threatened me that ‘kal ko meri bari bhi ani ha, ma tumhain dekh loon ga’ (I will see you, when I will get my turn of leadership). In such situations, I try to learn lesson and become more careful for the next time while dealing with such individuals. Moreover, in case of students, I also start counseling to avoid further harm. (Liba, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Liba was employed in a public sector university, where there were students from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. Most of the students had traditional cultural values, where women were given less powers and this discourse influenced their academic life as well. Liba was often threatened by her students and sometime they also damaged her personal property. As she was a single parent; therefore, she remained very careful while dealing with such students because it could also be a threat toward her children, who stay with her in university. Another Chairperson also shared similar experiences. She stated that:

Sometime, I get firm in order to achieve the deadlines and face a lot of criticism. For instance, I experience it when I don't approve leave of any staff member. I feel that my staff has low patience and quickly get angry. In such conditions, I try to keep calm and listen to them very carefully. It's an effective strategy to avoid conflict. I always welcome healthy criticism from my colleagues. (Hadia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Hadia expressed that as leader; she was always prepared to deal with criticism because she couldn't approve all kind of requests of her colleagues and staff. Sometimes, she



had to take some firm actions against them in response to their inadequate behaviors and they used to criticize her for being biased and assertive. Healthy criticism always helped her to realize and correct her mistakes. However, if it wasn't true about her, she remained calm for a while to avoid any conflict because it helped others to get some time to realize their mistakes as well. Khadija, who was an unmarried woman, reported that her personal and professional life was often publically discussed by her colleagues. She said that:

I receive more personal than professional criticism in my routine life within university. For instance, after attending any meeting or conference, I anticipate that the people would talk about my work etc. but unfortunately they get more interested in discussing my personal life i.e. my marital status. Moreover, every third or fourth day one of my colleague asks me to start thinking about marriage. They also criticize me for not offering prayer or make objections on my nail paints. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Personal life of a leader also remains in conversations of their colleagues and some people also try to interfere into their lives. Khadija, who was an unmarried woman, often received comments about her marital status. She was inquired about her personal life decisions in many formal meetings and gatherings; whereas, she expects some reviews about her professional work. She expressed that in her society, women marriage is the most essential phenomenon and unmarried women is viewed as deviant and unfit for the society. She maintained that most of her colleagues were highly qualified, but it didn't brought change to their traditional thoughts about a career oriented woman and they kept realizing her about the need for marriage. She didn't wish to discuss her personal life in her organization and felt unhappy due to her colleagues' behaviors. She continued to share about criticism on her work in these words:

I am committed to my work but individuals, who want to get escape from work often, criticize me. Such as, when I proposed to check plagiarism of all students' work and suggested some alterations in paper marking rules, or assignment criteria; people started objecting that I am victimizing the students. Moreover, I follow office timings and stay late in office when required; consequently, I often receive comments from married colleagues e.g. 'you don't have a family', 'you

don't have such responsibilities' or 'you don't understand our issues'. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

In professional life, people often criticize women upon their personal likes and dislikes. In professional life, women have to take multiple decisions for the constant growth of their respective departments and faculties. They often have to take actions that are not appreciated by their colleagues and staff; therefore, they receive threats and criticism. It is evident that a successful leader should have an ability to address such circumstances in an effective manner.

The conversations with respondents about this issue reveal that all of them received more or less criticism in their leadership tenure. Sometime, there is healthy criticism that helps them to improve and grow as a leader. However, many participants reported getting unhealthy and irrelevant criticism about their personal and professional life. Khadija's colleagues often criticized her right work because that could become a rule for everyone. She often received statements e.g. 'ap students k saath zyadti kr rhi hain' (you are behaving deficiently with the students), 'Khadija gunda gardi kr rhi ha' (khadija has abusive attitude) or 'she influenced the decisions of the Dean or the VC'. However, she reported that that it was her logical reasoning that influenced her senior management and they trusted and supported her in such cases. Another participant, Sara, often received criticism from her male colleagues. She said that:

I personally try to maintain balance by simply following the rules but my male colleagues usually believe that I am more biased toward them. Moreover, whenever I take some firm action against any staff or colleague, I get criticism. However, I usually try to ignore such criticism that I believe to be incorrect about me. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narrative of Sara and others manifest that they often received criticism from the male colleagues and staff. Sara was competent and obtained leadership position according to university policy; therefore, her authority was never questioned. However, her assertive behavior was often displeased by her colleagues but she avoided indulging in such disputes by ignoring criticism that she believed to be fictitious about her. Sara also mentioned the nature of threats and criticism received from her male staff and colleagues. She said that:

My colleagues often mentioned that I am much authoritative or inaccessible etc. dealing with males become more difficult because they give threats of injuring or damaging my property or often strike against decisions. Sometime, I lose my temperament and get rude or start screaming. I know it's my weakness and I am trying to reduce these episodes of anger. Now, I seek to remain calm and don't pay attention to such criticisms. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

It is revealed in the previous theme about leadership style that women leaders are mostly accommodating and flexible in nature but some time they need to become assertive to manage their work effectively. The conversation with Sana and others implied that women aggressiveness is not appreciated by their colleagues and they are often criticized for their assertive behavior. Most of their male colleagues often threaten them in response to their assertive attitude and create obstacles in their work because they have very strong lobbies that support their interests. Women leaders tend to be more emotional and sometime they react rudely and lose their temperament. Naheed also received criticism and warnings due to her leadership status. She stated that:

Some of my senior officers often backbite that I am not capable of managing departmental activities. Once a senior administrator inquired me about the attitude of a faculty member and I reported about his normal behavior but he provoked me for some offensive comments. I restricted myself for passing such discourteous remark to overcome the situation. Moreover, that particular person met my colleague and forwarded him opposite comments from my side. As I always welcome my colleagues to ask any query, he directly came to my office to verify my statement and I clarified the situation; although, felt disappointed due to the dirty political attitude of my senior officer, who tried to bring conflict in my department.

She confronted with the threats and criticism very tactfully. She stated that:

I remain careful and try to convince all related members before taking any decision. I act humbly and listen openly to the criticism. I also take some break from work, do some outing and have good food to release my stress. Moreover, I make some gossips with friends or start browsing face-book to overcome that situation and restart work with a refreshing mood. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narrative of this participant highlight that sometime senior officers try to monopolize the situations for their vested interest. They attempt to engage faculty into disagreements and want people directly come to their office to backbite about their colleagues. They also criticize the work of others to maintain their authority because they don't want others to achieve the similar status. Naheed was well aware about such politics; therefore, she tried to keep her faculty in confidence about all activities and decisions to avoid any misunderstandings and maintain a friendly environment, where everyone had liberty of direct conversation about any issues or misinterpretations. Moreover, she was used to spare some time for leisure activities to refresh her mind and release stress. She also shared her experience about losing job passion due to non-cooperative behavior of her top management. She shared that:

I was initially much passionate and enthusiastic about my work, and actively participated in all discussions. However, many colleagues don't want to work hard and also discourage me too to bring any new ideas to work because they know that I often share a proposal that make them away from their comfort zone and let them work. I often receive statements like 'Khud to krna ha isny or hmain bhi apny saath museebat ma daal dana ha' (she will do such work and develop difficulties for ourselves too by engaging us in such activities). This negative attitude disappoints me and reduces my job passion. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Naheed attained leadership position in a quite young age. Therefore, she was facing many challenges while adjusting with her senior academic leadership. She was a hard worker and wished to alter the traditional academic structures. She was also enthusiastic to improve quality of education by bringing new ideas to work but her senior colleagues often discouraged her ideas. They kept on criticizing her less administrative experience and perspectives because her work commitments often let them to work hard and put more efforts. Naheed was facing such discriminations due to her gender and age. She was the only women leader in her university and her male colleagues were not willing to take directives from a woman and restrained her from participation in the discussions. Her standpoint was rarely appreciated by her top management that brought disappointments and reduced her self-confidence.

The above excerpts clearly manifest the nature of criticism and threats received by women and their response to such circumstances. It is revealed that women leaders face greater obstacles when they become assertive; however, they believe that some sort of work could not be accomplished by their accommodating behavior. They try keeping themselves realistic about the critiques; although the nature and extent of criticism is increased with their improved leadership positions because they participate in major decision making processes and deal with diverse groups frequently. The narratives of the participants also reveal that women personal and professional lives are constantly discussed by their colleagues. They often make opposition against their effective decisions because it leads them to come out from their comfort zone and to work hard for which they are least interested. The above discussion clearly manifest that women leaders utilize numerous strategies for dealing with threats and criticism including careful listening with patience, ignoring unreliable critiques, following rules, direct communication to avoid misunderstandings, dealing tactfully, getting trust by senior management, taking advice from mentors and self-confidence.

### **6.5 Dealing with Stress and Disappointments**

As discussed in previous theme, women leaders often experience discriminations, threats and criticisms that often lead to the disappointments and stress among them. In this study, participants were also asked to share their experiences of dissatisfaction and discontentment, and their approaches to overcome such conditions. Many participants shared their experiences of frustrations and sadness due to the non-cooperative behavior of their senior and junior colleagues. An HOD shared her experience of increased dissatisfaction as:

Our current VC is in opposition with my department and illegitimately banned new admissions. However, I want to launch admissions to benefit the students and university at large. I am struggling hard for it and discussed the matter with the higher authority at different forums. I also wrote a letter to the Chancellor of the University and met him personally to resolve the issue. I also raised this issue in the syndicate to revert the decision. Resultantly, a committee is being constituted for the investigation. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Women get displeased, when their colleagues create obstacles instead of facilitating them in academic development. Conversation with Sara implies that her department was quite young and when the new VC took the charge, it was just four years old. Instead of supporting, he started crushing due to its narrower scope and less profitability. He was even not willing to take her standpoint about the issue. It was found that the top administration actually wasn't in favor of a woman to establish and develop a department in such an early career stage. She was sad but not disappointed, and continued struggling for the survival of her department. Sometimes, she got a bit frustrated due to the non-cooperative attitude of her senior management and colleagues. Some of them also had unethical and unfair attitude with her due to the prevailing leadership discourse that was systematically marginalizing women in the University. She also got disturbed when her thoughts were not appreciated by her higher authorities but she strived hard to motivate herself by understanding that, it might not be the right time for such decision. Another participant also expressed her job dissatisfaction in these words:

Being part of a public sector organization, we often have to wait longer for getting little equipment and assistance. Recently, I had to purchase some computers for a lab and forwarded a request for it via appropriate channel but there was consistent delay in work that was disturbing the academic environment. All approvals were made but the clerks were not issuing the equipment. They wanted me to make frequent visits to request them for work but I follow the policy and being a woman, don't like to sit in clerical offices to let my work done; therefore, I faced obstacles. These behaviors developed little stress but I have learned to deal with patience and tolerance in such circumstances. (Nasreen, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

The narrative of this respondent and others highlight that they were dedicated to their work and always followed organizational policies. However, they were experiencing obstacles due to their feminist aptitude. Nasreen's departmental activities were often affected due to the administrative delays in getting approvals and funding for purchasing equipment. She reported that other male HODs frequently utilized their networks to get prompt response but she was unwilling to get such benefits due to her honest behavior. Moreover, the clerical staff wanted her to make frequent visits and

requests for minor assistance but she, as a women avoided it and tolerated such behaviors of the lower staff. She learned to maintain patience to overcome her disenchantments. Alia also shared her disappointments in leadership roles in these words:

I cannot find enough time for strengthening my research profile due to my administrative responsibilities. However, our policy makers do not consider administrative experience while promotion. I couldn't get promotion in last selection board due to the lower number of research publications. On the other hand, a new faculty member with less academic experience was recently appointed with attractive pay package, beyond organizational policy. Such kind of discriminations sometime disheartens me and develops frustration but I quickly start self-counseling and motivate myself with a new hope to identify and improve my weaknesses. (Alia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The above excerpt highlights that women academic leaders experience discriminations in their promotions due to their dual responsibilities. Most of the participants reported having weak research profiles as compared to their male counterparts. All of them prioritized their family and found less time for their personal research work. In addition, it is found that universities systematically favor male faculty members in selection boards that discourages women leaders to give better outputs. They get little or no appreciations of work from their top leadership, who are mostly males and systematically favor their male counterparts in selections and promotions. The detailed discussion with women leaders revealed that discriminations were common against women in their professional life that often lead toward disappointments and frustrations but most of them were enthusiastic to contribute in academic growth and learned to overcome their dissatisfaction by self-motivation, counseling and learning from experiences.

## **6.6 Negotiations and Engagement with Senior Management**

Women, who achieve leadership positions, also get amazing opportunities to engage in major academic and administrative activities. As most of the universities included in this study had limited women representatives in their top administration; therefore, it was important to get an in-depth insight on women's involvement in top decision

making processes, and how their perspectives were taken by their executive bodies. Many participants expressed their opportunities and constraint in sharing and defending their standpoints with their senior management. A Chairperson expressed that her viewpoint was acknowledged by her senior management that increased her confidence and motivation. She elaborated that:

My institution has an excellent professional culture where ideas of women are always respected. I arranged various programs and our Campus Director has given me autonomy to manage all programs and to direct other HODs as well. Recently, I have organized a job fair and during a meeting, my Director told me to instruct all HODs about their roles and responsibilities in the activity. It helped me to boost my confidence and manage activities in a successful manner.

(Alia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The conversation with Alia reveals that women are now becoming part of senior administration and frequently taking part in top decision making processes. Their perspectives are also acknowledged by their senior leadership. Alia's organizational culture promoted equality, as many women were part of the senior administration. Their voice was also respected that encouraged them to contribute into the academic growth of the university. Another participant mentioned that:

I am outspoken and make myself heard by speaking louder than other women that helps me to grab the attention at different forums. I try to interact with all members during official meetings, and they always listen and consider my ideas. I also try to maintain office decorum while sharing my opinion. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

The above excerpts clearly manifest that there are fewer women at senior academic administration and most of them hesitate to exchange their ideas with senior management due to the prevalent male domination, and their inner self-doubt that they are incompetent. Moreover, women usually have low voice pitch, due to which their conversation cannot be heard by all members on the board. However, Sana was confident in sharing her perspectives with her senior colleagues and advantaged due to her louder voice pitch. She always made herself heard by her senior management and defended her standpoint in best possible ways. She believed that women have to participate in decision making process by struggling hard with competence; but



unfortunately, many women don't attempt to share their ideas and remain invisible in top decision making processes. Khadija also shared her similar experiences as:

I am a member of various committees and in past four years, I am given autonomy to work in my own way and my voice is also respected at different platforms. My voice is louder that is one of the reasons that I am never slummed. For instance, recently I have attended a meeting; where I was sharing my viewpoint and the board Chairman straightforwardly stated that he was not interested in listening to my argument. However, I continued by saying, 'Sir you will have to listen because I am part of this committee or otherwise you may ask me to leave'. That's how I defended my agenda and at the end, the Chairman acknowledged my idea. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

People resist opposite opinion especially when it comes from women because there is a dominant discourse in society that women never come up with good ideas. Moreover, women are expected to be tolerant and patient while communicating with their male counterparts. In Pakistani society, the ideology of gender disparity is very strong that influenced all spheres of women's lives including personal and private. Loud voice is strongly associated with males and reflects their confidence; but whenever a woman speaks louder, she is criticized to be muscular. She is always anticipated to speak slowly and politely. Khadija was often condemned due to her louder voice. Her extended family often objected her louder voice tone. However, there was liberal approach toward women in her university; as there were many louder women leaders, who gave her the courage to argue on rational grounds. A Dean narrated her challenges in communicating her opinion with senior leadership in this way:

I feel that women need to establish their credibility to get acknowledgment from the top management. Once, our new VC arranged a meeting with the senior management and I attended that meeting as an HOD. During group discussion, I raised hand to share my idea but the VC completely ignored. Likewise, when a male colleague raised his hand; he got prompt response. At another occasion, I eventually had a moment to talk but felt that the VC was not giving importance to my opinion but males' ideas were more carefully listened and acknowledged. After some time, when he went through my resume or trolled about me from

some colleagues; he started respecting and focusing on my standpoint. (Naila, Dean, Professor)

The above excerpts reveal that there is a blind perception in society that women don't have strong proposals, and it also develops self-doubt among women that they should speak or not. Consequently, most of them keep themselves aside from decision making processes. They even do not intricate; even if they know that their male counterparts are not having a valid argument. It is also clear from the above conversation with Naila that the top management don't acknowledge the perspectives of women, unless they know their competencies. Women have to demonstrate their skills effectively to get recognition in a male dominating culture. However, men thoughts are always appreciated and encouraged because they are believed to be competent unless they prove themselves otherwise. These discourses are deep rooted in society and adversely affect the professional growth of women. Women are required to be strong and struggle hard to become visible in top leadership.

### **6.7 Professional Development**

Each university has developed specific criteria for selection of their faculty and academic managers. However, most of the organizations don't implement these standards equally on everyone. Young leaders often experience obstacles in attaining and maintaining their leadership positions. Organizations have very strong monopolies that systematically favor specific individuals for leadership positions. Therefore, it is imperative for women leaders to understand leadership structures for adjusting themselves in a competitive environment. I had detailed conversations with participants to explore the factors influencing the process of the selection of academic leaders in higher education and its relation to the dominant leadership discourses. Most of the participants revealed that seniority is one of the basic criteria for selection of academic leader but sometime this principle is not observed due to the organizational politics. Some universities are following the tenure system to develop leadership opportunities for everyone. Participants reported it to be very helpful in getting opportunities of administrative experience. An HOD shared the selection and promotion procedures in her university in these words:

Selection of a chairperson in this university depends on the active participation of a person in various departmental activities beside academic excellence. There is no fixed tenure system for this administrative position. Rotations are less likely occurred and it's mostly depended upon the university's larger interests and individual's networking with the top management. (Saba, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The detailed discussion with Saba, Naheed and others reveal that there is no fix tenure system for HODs in many universities. Individuals maintain their leadership positions for a longer period of time by getting regular extensions. Leaders are mostly chosen on the basis of their seniority and administrative experience. Naheed reported that it reduces the probability of other faculty members to get leadership experience and they often get disappointed. Naheed was the only women HOD in the university and experienced many challenges for maintaining her position. Similarly, Saba highlighted that in her university, leaders were only replaced by active campaigns of their colleagues and staff or by bringing strong obligations. However, they reported that leaders usually have strong political and social networks that help them to maintain their positions for longer duration. Khadija shared her experience of selection as:

My previous Chairperson handed over the responsibility of department administration to me before resignation because I was the most senior faculty member in the department. Later, I also received a letter of appointment as an In-charge of the department from the registrar office but the Dean made an objection on the decision. Actually, the Dean had an issue with the Ex-chair and this decision was made by him; therefore, the Dean was resisting the decision. The VC called meeting in his office with Dean and me to resolve the matter.

She continued to share the influence of gender in selection and promotion processes in these words:

I feel that gender of a person influence the selection and promotion processes in academia. Males are generally preferred by most of the selection boards. In my case, I never experienced such kind of discriminations because I realized my senior management that I will fight for any discrimination officially rather crying or remaining calm. Moreover, I keep searching for a better opportunity

and to leave the organization in case of any disparity. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Khadija expressed about the strong influence of gender in selection and promotion practices. She argued that women are more easily pushed back by their senior management because most of them don't protest formally against the disparities. Rather, they keep discussing about the issue with their friends and colleagues, and never demand official explanation about the decision. It encourages their top management to prefer males because they know that if they will reject a male, he will immediately quit the job. However, a female will remain in the organization despite of the discriminations due to her compromising and tolerating characteristics beside the lack of support from her family. She also avoids taking risks due to her household commitments. Khadija developed her strong reputation in the university and never hesitated to take any risk to protect her rights. She also mentioned that in her organization, there were many women at leadership positions, who supported each other in dealing with the discriminations. A Director highlighted the administrative delays in recruitments and promotions. She said that:

Although, I have met all criteria for promotion but there is a ban on recruitments and promotions in this university. Our top management is in a transitional phase and many petitions are filed in the courts. Even the VC position is vacant since once year, and the government is still failed to appoint a VC due to which many administrative activities are pending. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

This piece of information highlights an important discourse of institutional instability that impedes the selection and promotion of academic leaders. Some institutions are facing serious crisis in their senior administration that is causing delays in meeting of the selection boards. Sana, who fulfilled all the prerequisites of next promotion, is waiting for long due to a ban on promotions. Her organizational political lobbies didn't allow any person to join the vacant post of the VC against their will. Sana stated that it is not only affecting promotions of the faculty but many administrative issues of students are also not addressed. She also mentioned that the delay in her promotion is negatively affecting her academic and administrative career. Another Chairperson stated that:

In this university, the HOD post is never advertised. They are mostly chosen among existing departmental faculty based on their seniority. My selection as a Chairperson was based on an interview with the VC, in which he assigned me this responsibility due to the resignation of the previous HOD. I was the most senior faculty member of the department at that moment. Similarly, the post of the Dean is never advertised; while, HEC criteria for selection are available that is not equally implemented on all. Networking plays an important role in selection of a dean.

She continued that:

I got opportunities of promotion in my academic career from lecturer to the assistant professor and then to the post of chairperson. It facilitated me in becoming member of various boards and committees. I am still working hard to achieve further senior academic administrative position. (Memoona, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Above narratives of the participants clearly manifest that all institutions have the policies for recruitments and promotions of their faculty and academic leaders; however, these are not equally implemented. Individuals having strong socio-economic background, and professional and political networks, are more likely to attain leadership positions. Academic promotions are necessary for achieving senior leadership positions as it strengthens their professional profile. It is found in this study that the selection boards are mostly male dominated that reduce the probability of selection of women leaders because they are evaluated upon the predetermined masculine standards present in the society and women are doing great efforts to become successful leaders in this masculine world.

## **6.8 Networking**

Access to influential networks is critical for moving up to the leadership hierarchy. The social capital, gained from networking with successful leaders, is even more important for career advancement beside academic excellence. Scholarship suggests that, although women and men are likely to have networks, women may benefit less than men from this arrangement, especially in the areas of salary, administrative selection and promotions (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hewlett et al., 2009). This study finds that women

have strong communication skills; therefore, they quickly excel in networking. However, networking often occurs around activities that typically favor males such as outdoor sports, official trips and dinners. It is evident that women with substantial family responsibilities found limited time for building professional networks or socialization. In this study, participants were asked to communicate their experiences of networking, its advantages on their professional growth and obstacles in developing effective professional networks. A participant, Sara, shared the role of networking in her professional life in these words:

Leadership requires becoming a lyceum between the senior management and the junior faculty and staff. There are various inter-organizational and intra-organizational hierarchical structures and a successful leader need to have good and strong networks in both structures. I frequently organize seminars and workshops in which I invite different international and national guest speakers that also provide a great opportunity of networking. It helps to enhance my knowledge about academic leadership and professional relationships. (Shama, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Seher also shared the advantages of formal and informal networks in her professional growth. She said that:

Networking helps me a lot in managing departmental activities. I take assistance from experienced friends and colleagues for better management. For instance, in organizing seminars and conferences, I communicate with the relevant resource persons for planning and funding. Moreover, I also take their help while organizing departmental activities and developing new policies and programs. (Seher, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

The narratives of the above participants clearly illustrate the significance of networking in attaining and maintaining leadership position. A leader needs to develop good relationships with their colleagues and senior management to manage their departmental activities more effectively. Women also develop strong inter-organizational and intra-organizational associations that help them in understanding leadership roles. It is evident that seminars and conferences are great sources of developing networks with successful professionals. It also enhances knowledge and

skills, and establishes new opportunities of professional growth. Naveeda was also involved with many informal networks. She stated that:

I have less time for developing formal networks but I have several informal networks that increase my exposure. We share information with each other about new policies, skills and opportunities. It also helps me to grow as a leader.

(Naveeda, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

Formal networks require more time and efforts but most of the women find less time for developing such professional relationships. Women usually focus on increasing their informal networks that facilitate them in learning advance knowledge and techniques in their professional life. Naveeda stated that informal networks are quickly developed and helped her at any time and situation. These connections also facilitated her in successful management of her leadership roles and career advancement. Liba, who had a friendly nature, shared her experiences of developing professional associations in these words:

I am very social; therefore, make friends very quickly. It helps me in developing strong networks that facilitate me in managing many leadership roles in an effective way. I have maintained strong association with other academic and administrative leaders of the organization to keep myself well informed about new plans and policies. Networks also assist me in accomplishing my work more quickly and effectively. (Liba, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Developing networks requires good communication skills and many women have such skills, therefore, they quickly make friends. The narrative of Liba reveals that she had developed informal networks with other HODs, deans and good researchers. She expressed that strong associations with the top management helped to keep her well informed about new policy developments. She also had taken help from the networks to manage critical situations and to learn new roles and skills. Many participants reported that while they lack fundamental leadership socialization, networks helped them to learn and polish leadership qualities more effectively. They learned many skills about their professional life by discussing their issues with competent individuals. Anum, who was a widow and a mother of two children, elaborated her constraints in developing networks. She stated that:

Networking is essential to develop academic and research collaborations. It also helps in getting research projects and attaining new ideas. I also have developed various professional networks but I feel that I am far behind than my male counterparts in establishing strong collaborations due to my extraordinary family responsibilities. Networking needs time but at my early career stages, I was busy in my family life after death of my husband. Now, at this stage of my career, I have some time for such activities but family is still my first priority due to which I often refuse to attend seminars and conferences. (Anum, Dean, Professor)

The conversation with participants like Anum clearly manifest that they were intended to extend their networks but time was a major constraint for such activities. As discussed earlier, family is the priority for all women and they are not willing to compromise their household commitments. It results in numerous impediments in their professional growth. It is found that networks are essential for professional growth of women, particularly in early stages of career. However, at the same time, many women also start their new marital life and experience marital adjustment issues that influence their professional growth. Conversely, males don't experience such constraints and give enough time to their professional growth that result in their rapid promotions and success. Another Dean expressed that even at advanced stages of her leadership career; she is unable to manage much time for networking and continued to refuse many invitations due to her family commitments. She reported that this is one of the important factors behind the lower number of females in academic leadership. She also believed that networks facilitated her in developing many new and great professional opportunities.

## **6.9 Mentoring**

Besides networking, mentors also facilitate women in their professional growth. Leaders prefer to have mentors, who assist them in their career projection. One can have more than one mentor at a time, who can guide in different dimensions. Leaders get aspirations from their mentors and get their advice in dealing with exceptional and critical situations. This study found that mentors assisted women leaders in successful management of their leadership roles. Women, who were traditionally marginalized by



society, were strongly motivated by their mentors. They enhanced their confidence and refined other leadership skills that facilitated these women in competitive organizational cultures. Sobia shared the role of her mentors in developing confidence and strength, which are fundamental leadership attributes. She said that:

I believe that mentors are very helpful in developing confidence and extending professional networks. They also update me about the new opportunities. I have many mentors including my PhD research supervisor, teachers and senior colleagues. In my early stages of academic career, I was less confident in taking risks but my mentors always encouraged me to identify my skills and capabilities that helped me managing leadership roles. (Sobia, Dean, Professor)

All women have the abilities of effective management but their traditional socialization patterns suppress their potentials. Women are often perceived by society to be less confident and emotional. These social perceptions often develop self-doubt among women about their capabilities. They become scared of being unsuccessful or criticized. Conversely, males take inappropriate actions but they always get ready to take risks even if they don't have such capabilities due to their strong socialization. Conversation with Sobia revealed that women leaders always need a mentor to keep them motivating and encouraging. She believed that all women have confidence and they need to utilize their skills to establish themselves as good leaders and mentors play vital part in this process. Saba also expressed that mentors were effective source of inspiration in her professional life. They helped her in learning new leadership roles. She stated that:

I get inspired by numerous people around me; however, my mentor at this stage of professional life is my previous Chairperson, who is also my best friend. When I joined as a Chairperson of the department, she helped me a lot in understanding and dealing with new roles and responsibilities. It facilitated me in quick learning and overcoming new challenges. (Saba, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

A Director shared her learning experiences from her mentors in these words:

My mentors taught and guided me about new career paths. They also played an important role in strengthening my leadership qualities. I had many mentors at different times. They assisted me in identifying my strengths and weaknesses, and encouraged me for professional growth. At this leadership position, my

previous Chairman is one of my mentors. He was a very demanding person, who encouraged me to learn from my mistakes. I also learned a lot from him to grow in diversified and challenging environment. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

The conversations with the participants highlight that their mentors facilitated them in defining their career paths and motivated them to identify their inner talent that was suppressed by the social pressures of family and the community. They contributed in developing their confidence and encouraged them to survive in competitive environment. They taught them about academic excellence and helped them in planning new programs and policies for their respective departments. They also learned skills for instance, patience, respecting people and problem solving techniques from their mentors. A Chairperson, Sara also described the role of mentors in learning academic leadership. She said that:

I have many mentors in my academic leadership career and all of them facilitated me in improving my knowledge and skills. My PhD research supervisor is one of my mentors. He is a good researcher and an excellent academician. I take his advice in many situations for effective management. My previous HOD is also my mentor. She has good leadership skills and vast administrative experience. Moreover, my father is a retired college professor and served as a principal of a college, and I learned management skills from him. He taught me to be flexible, polite and tolerant. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Another participant also shared her similar experiences in these words:

My mentors remind me time to time that Allah Almighty has given me capabilities to deal with different situations effectively. They are the continuous source of motivation and inspiration. My supervisor, who is also the Chairman of department in a university, is one of my mentors. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The above excerpts highlight the influence of mentors on women's academic leadership career. They get inspired by people, who are successful and experienced in their professional life. They take their advice to understand their academic and leadership roles. Almost all participants reported that their research supervisors were very helpful

in encouraging them to struggle hard, to improve their socio-economic statuses, and to recognize their abilities in a male dominated world. They were continuous source of motivation for these women and assisting them to overcome academic and administrative challenges.

The detailed discussions with the participants clearly manifest the significance of mentors in the professional life. It is found that mentors helped to learn new leadership roles and encouraged them to struggle hard for attaining senior leadership positions. They also realized them about their covert abilities and skills. It is also revealed that many respondents had more than one mentor in their professional life and most of them were males. They get exposed to the new opportunities that facilitated them in their academic and administrative career paths. Mentors also assisted these women in overcoming new challenges with confidence.

#### **6.10 Personal and Professional Benefits of Academic Leadership**

It is found that women have abilities to manage their role of academic administration effectively. Beside challenges, leadership brings numerous advantages for women. After sharing their leadership traits, the participants were asked to explain the benefits and rewarding aspects of their job. A summary of their experiences is given in this section. The most rewarding aspect of the job for the majority of the participants was satisfaction and honor. They felt happy for contributing in organizational growth and achieving their potential goals. Another advantage of leadership was that it enabled them to delegate tasks efficiently that increased their work productivity. Other benefits included monetary allowance, professional learning, networking, empowerment, administrative experience etc. This study found that women got many personal and professional benefits due to their administrative experience. These benefits are discussed in this section.

Conversation with women reveal that many chairpersons are not getting any economic benefit; however, deans and directors are receiving additional monetary allowances, house requisitions and official transportation. Moreover, all respondent reported that leadership provided them with many professional advantages. It facilitated them in developing networks with qualified and experienced professionals, who improved their skills and abilities. Moreover, it enhanced their knowledge regarding

plans and policies of the organization about which, they were unaware before occupying administrative roles. Awareness about policies is essential for employees at different stages of their career advancement. Males are more likely to take interest in getting information about new developments in policies. However, females only look for the policies, when required. Therefore, females are often disadvantaged and manipulated by their male counterparts in the organizations. Leadership roles require the understanding of all kinds of institutional policies. Women leaders need to be well aware about all rules and regulations for effective task management. They also get opportunities to participate in new policy developments in the organization. A Chairperson expressed advantages of leadership in these words:

I feel that there are no personal benefits for this leadership position, although there are a number of professional benefits. It helped me to develop management skills and professional networks. I was previously not aware about many rules and regulation but now, I came to know about many policies. (Liba, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

One of the advantages of leadership is that if leaders are able to delegate tasks efficiently, they can help increase worker productivity. Good managers are able to determine the strengths and weaknesses of different employees and delegate work accordingly. Efficient division of labor can result in higher work output, which ultimately results in higher sales and higher profit. On the other hand, ineffective leadership can reduce productivity. For example, if a manager decides to perform tasks that are easy, and delegates difficult tasks to employees, it could result in suboptimal productivity. However, a leader who understands how to assign work tasks that are tailored to each employee's skills and talents will often find that employees accomplish those tasks more efficiently. Another HOD communicated personal and professional benefits of academic leadership in these words:

Being a leader, I have the liberty to frequently demonstrate my skills. I am organizing and managing many departmental activities. I also get opportunities to involve in top decision making process. I consider it as an honor for me to communicate my departmental agenda with the top management. It also gives me contentment and personal satisfaction. I feel pleasure for being an HOD and I will feel nicer, if I will get improved leadership position in future.

She continued...

Professionally, I believe that it's very helpful. First and foremost, it strengthened my profile because I have additional administrative exposure besides teaching experience. It also helped me to defend my argument and gave me confidence to say no to my authorities and staff as well because it's important to make rejections rather than accepting all kind of orders. I learned how to argue and what tone should be used for interaction at various levels. It also developed courage to defend my departmental interest at various forums with support of my departmental faculty and staff. (Hadia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Hence, leadership provided great opportunities of learning new skills and knowledge to women; it also facilitated them in developing interpersonal relationships and helped in effective dealing with diversified groups. In the present study, most of the respondents agreed that they were learning new leadership skills at their leadership position. It also strengthened their profile and helped them in their career progression as a leader. It provided them personal satisfaction to participate in academic administration. They were also honored and respected by their colleagues due to their leadership position. It gave a sense of achievement in their personal and professional life.

Leadership also provided numerous professional advantages to the participants. Most importantly, it strengthened their professional profiles that helped them in their career advancement in academic administration. Women leaders got opportunities of interaction with top management, for which they hadn't access as a faculty member. They were advantaged to share their ideas and problems directly with their competent authority, which was an amazing opportunity for women leaders in academia. Hadia shared that her leadership roles encouraged her to raise her voice at all forums in the organization and to protect her departmental interest in organization. Her confidence was boosted and her communication skills were also improved due to her administrative position. Warda also shared the benefits of leadership as:

I enjoy being part of the academic administration beside teaching and research. It gives me a sense of achievement and I feel good to contribute in academic management. It helps me to learn new skills and manage multiple tasks. Due to

this leadership position, I am involved in various institutional committees, where I can represent my department and learn something new. It also allowed me to participate in academic planning and decision making such as in Board of Advance Studies and Research (BASAR), Board of Faculty (BOF) etc. I try to convince top management to develop specific plans for my students and staff as well. (Warda, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

Power provides a sense of contentment to an individual that is enhanced with getting more powers. Women were traditionally restricted from leadership roles but contemporary practices facilitated them to participate in academic administration. It is found that the women felt empowered by achieving top leadership positions in academic administration in higher education. They were enjoying their leadership status because it provided them an opportunity to contribute in academic policy making. Warda shared that leadership has produced new opportunities of learning skills and participation in various activities. Her department was quite young and she contributed in the establishment of her department. She also mentioned that in mature and well established institutions women are rarely given a chance of leadership. However, developing a new academic discipline provided her a sense of achievement and happiness and she was utilizing her knowledge and skills in development of the institute. Another HOD expressed the rewarding aspects of leadership as:

I feel that there are little personal benefits for me at this position. However, professionally, it facilitated me in many ways. I can directly communicate my view to the higher authorities. I attend meetings very frequently and also get various invitations for seminars and conferences, to which other faculty members don't have an access. I can interact with various deans, chairpersons and other administrative staff, and learn new academic and administrative skills from them. Previously, when I was only a faculty member, I had limited access to interact with the VC. However, now I can easily get an appointment with the VC and share my ideas due to this leadership position. (Faria, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Leadership provides numerous opportunities of frequent interaction with top administration. When Faria was working as a faculty member, she rarely had opportunity of direct communication with the top leadership; for instance, with the VC

or Dean. The organizational structures provided fewer opportunities of direct interaction of faculty with the top hierarchy. When Faria achieved leadership position, she had to attend various meetings, where she could interact with the academic administrators. She also got opportunities to participate in policy making and decision making processes. It also facilitated her in developing new academic networks with academicians in other institutions. She was also honored and respected due to her leadership position. It is revealed that women were suppressed due to the traditional patriarchal structure and their ideas were given less importance by senior management. However, when these women attained leadership position, they got an opportunity to raise their voices before the administration and their ideas were also acknowledged with the passage of time. A Dean elaborated her professional grooming and self-satisfaction in these words:

It helped to develop my profile a bit stronger that could help me further in administrative career advancement. At personal level, it provided me a lot of opportunities of learning. It's also an honor for me and my family. People respect me and I also enjoy it. It helped me in professional grooming as I chair various committees and deal with diverse situations and people. Beside this, I also receive monetary benefits e.g. leadership allowance, accommodation and transportation facilities. However sometime, I don't feel happy; especially when I chair an inquiry committee because it doesn't seem good to give decision against someone. (Naila, Dean, Professor)

The narratives of the women illustrate that leadership experience helped them in their administrative career development and strengthened their professional profile. Naila elaborated that administrative position facilitated her in grooming her managerial skills. She learned to manage administrative activities beside teaching and research. She served as a chairperson for four years. She was also serving as a provost for more than ten years. Meanwhile, she got opportunities to chair various academic and administrative committees in her university. All those experiences were very helpful in attaining position of dean of the faculty. Her profile was strengthened enough to fulfill the criteria for the post of VC in any well reputed university.

In Pakistani society, most of the women are deprived from higher leadership positions; therefore, women who become leaders view it as an honor because it is a

great achievement for them in existing patriarchal structure. Most of the women in this study were not socialized for administrative roles but their leadership positions developed new opportunities of learning managerial and administrative skills that helped them in their career advancement. It also provided them an opportunity to recognize their leadership abilities in a male dominated world, where they also had to compete with traditional stereotypes that were discouraging them for administrative positions. Some participants, particularly in public sector universities, were also getting economic benefits in term of monetary allowance, transport facility and residence that developed more attraction in leadership positions. Khadija also said that she got recognition in university due to her leadership position. She narrated that:

This position has opened-up many opportunities. One of the amazing opportunities that I got in last four years was recognition of my capacity of conference management. Professionally, I become acquainted with talented and skilled individuals and they also started knowing me. I am connected with national and international organizations and obviously my professional profile is strengthened. It also helps me to polish my administrative and managerial skills. It gives me personal and professional satisfaction as I am incorporating all those skills and knowledge in growth of my department.

She continued that:

I can evaluate personal benefits in terms of the quality of life. I feel happy that I am living in a nicer place and have a very nice social circle. I got opportunities to avail various research consultancies from national and international organizations. I am not getting any monetary benefit because I am an acting-chairperson. I am an assistant professor and university policy for chairperson is to be at least associate professor. However, I am not agreed to this rule because I feel that benefit should be associated with the quality of work. My job description is comparable to that of a chairperson but just because I don't have that title, I am discriminated. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

In this study, it is found that most of the institutes do not recognize the abilities of their faculty until they hold a leadership positions. Although many faculty members have effective management skills but they don't get opportunities to demonstrate their abilities. This dilemma was highlighted by Khadija, Sara and many others, who got



many opportunities due to their leadership position. Khadija had excellent conference management skills and organized more than fifty percent of the conferences in her university during her leadership tenure. Other departments also started recognizing her capacity of organizing conferences and seminars. She felt good that her institute was giving respect to her voice and skills. She was able to demonstrate her leadership skills and to rationalize all the activities. She believed that leadership position unwrapped many professional opportunities for her.

The conversations with women about leadership rewards unveil many opportunities of learning and professional grooming for them. It also facilitated them in strengthening their profile to compete for top leadership positions. Moreover, it helped them to develop formal and informal networks because they were the first contact person in their department. Their professional leadership skills were also recognized by their senior management that developed gratification and honor. Women also considered it as an achievement and a door step to their professional success in academic environment that was predominantly male. They were enthusiastic about the wellbeing of their department and institution at large and continued to motivate their staff to engage in development process. In this process, women learned new leadership roles and thereby become more creative. They frequently developed and implemented new ideas efficiently to bring positive change within the institutions and society as well.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Socio-Cultural Context of Women's Academic Leadership**

Culture plays a vital role in defining gender roles in a society. Existing scholarship related to the cultural factors in women leadership in academia worldwide have highlighted that stereotypes often influence women's leadership roles. Universally, many studies have described the effects of socio-cultural factors on women leaders in higher education. Historically, cultural values describe women as weak and dependent on men. Consequently, mostly women do not try to attain the leadership roles at their workplace. They often perceive themselves as inadequate for such roles. Therefore, women avoid accepting the key roles that can develop their career and improve leadership traits (Desai et al., 2014; Madden, 2011; Northouse, 2015; Shah, 2009). This attitude limits professional opportunities and progress for women academician in higher education.

This study finds that women leaders face many socio-cultural pressures while maintaining their professional identity as a successful leader. It is found that women experience obstacles in utilizing their authority in an effective way due to the existing power structures in society. Beside culture, social system also induces numerous effects on women's managerial and leadership positions in higher education. The existing scholarship also highlighted the positive influence of the social organizations on gender differences in leadership in the egalitarian societies of the world (Bain & Cummings, 2000; Cundiff & Vescio, 2016; Stoker et al., 2012). In this study, the participants were also inquired about the advantages and constraints in their socio-cultural context. These factors are discussed in detail in this chapter.

#### **7.1 Discursive Construction of the Balance between Family and Profession**

One of the most challenging aspects for participants in this study was maintaining balance between their family and professional responsibilities. They had primary responsibility of managing their household activities due to their ascribed status as women. At home, most of them were wives and mothers and had to meet their family expectations. At office, they were administrators and teachers as well, and had to meet

multiple deadlines in an effective manner. They had to induce more efforts to keep all activities smooth at home as well as in office. However, all of them mentioned that their family was their primary responsibility and they were well concerned about their roles in family. Most of them had cooperative spouses and in-laws. Moreover, all of them had house maids to assist them in their household chores. Liba, who was a single mother, shared constraints in socialization of her children due to her demanding professional life in these words:

I am a single mother; therefore, I have to manage all activities of my family. My kids are little and suffering a lot due to my administrative roles. They stay with me in office after their school and during summer vacations because I can't leave them alone at home. I can't give them quality time for their effective socialization due to my busy schedules. Their health is also affected due to my lack of care. I feel that when I had only teaching responsibilities, I had much time for my family. (Liba, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Single mothers have greater family responsibilities; therefore, they have to be very careful while managing their personal and professional responsibilities and it's become more difficult when it added up with leadership roles. Liba and other single women were apprehensive about the socialization of their children because they were unable to find quality time for their children due to their leadership commitments. They were also criticized by their relatives and colleagues for giving less care to their children. Leadership demanded more time and they often had to stay late to meet the deadlines. Moreover, they hadn't any supportive structure around them to take care of their kids in their absence. Their close relatives were not concerned about their issues and housemaids were also not reliable to leave children with them for longer durations. Therefore, these women often excused their top hierarchies for attending late meeting or conferences. This is an important discourse present in the society that created barriers for career advancement for single mothers. Sana, who was living in a joint family, shared the role of her family in balancing her domestic and professional activities. She said that:

I often have to attend international conferences and seminars or need to stay late in office due to official commitments. My children are now mature and can manage their activities independently. My husband and in-laws are also very

supportive. They take care of my children in my absence. I also have household assistants, who help me in accomplishing household chores. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

Family support is found essential for women leaders in organizing their dual roles. Sana, who was married and having children, was successfully managing her family beside her profession. Her family understood the importance of her work and assisted her in all possible ways to accomplish her tasks. She achieved her career goals due to the cooperation of her family. However, she could not give much time to her family due to her administrative responsibilities. She was satisfied because her children were mature and cooperative. Another participant also mentioned the cooperation of her husband and children in these words:

My family is my first priority and I don't want it to be suffered in any case. I have two sons, who are young and getting higher education. They often help me in domestic activities because they understand my professional demands. My husband always remains beside me in facing difficult situations. (Sobia, Dean, Professor)

Sobia acknowledged the positive role family in managing her dual roles. She could not continue her leadership roles without active support of her family. She was at the position, where she had to confront various risks and threats every day and had to take firm actions. Her husband supported her in dealing with all kind of issue that motivated her in taking firm and effective actions. Being a married woman and having a family, beside professional commitments like teaching, research and administration requires a lot of skills for effective management. However, it is clear from the conversations with participants that family support and cooperation decrease the workload of working women and help them to attain and maintain leadership position. Manahil, who was a childless woman, shared her experiences as:

I learned to keep balance between work and family. My in-laws are very accommodating. They understand the nature of my job. On the other hand, I don't have kids and housemaids are also available for assistance; therefore, I have less household responsibilities. However, sometime my family gets apprehensive due to my work overload and late sittings but they never resisted. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

Another participant also highlighted the constructive role of her family in these words:

I got married in a mature age and don't have kids; therefore, I have less household commitments. I can give more time to my profession and my husband also realizes my work obligations. I am grateful to my parents, who have given me autonomy of professional growth. (Nasreen, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

The narratives of the above participants clearly manifest the significance of work-life balance. It was found that family was their priority. All participants had part-time or full-time housemaids, who were accommodating in the household chores including washing, ironing, cleaning, cooking etc. Their leadership position often demanded more time and energy at workplace due to which they found less time for domestic activities. In such situations, domestic assistants facilitated them in accomplishing their family roles in time. Moreover, joint family system, which is common in Pakistani society, also provided support to these professional women by organizing their household activities during their office hours.

Furthermore, women who were married and hadn't kids were more relaxed as compared to the working mothers. Mothers were having an important role of the socialization of their children because it could not be done effectively by any other. They were required to spare time for their children from their busy schedules because most of the husbands put this responsibility exclusively on them and didn't cooperate in this respect. Consequently, most of the participants in this study decided to keep their family small, as none of them had more than three children. They understood their primary responsibility of child socialization and didn't want their children to suffer due to their professional commitments. Small family size facilitated them in successful management of all personal and professional activities. An unmarried participant shared her concerns about work-life balance in these words:

I am a career oriented women due to which I never got married. People believe that I am professional; therefore, would not be able to give time to my personal life. However, I personally don't agree with this assumption, as I am managing my current life with my parents who are growing old and I spare time for their caretaking. I believe that I can manage my married life as well but our society doesn't realize it. (Memoona, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narratives of unmarried women highlight a dominant discourse about career oriented women in Pakistani society, due to which they never got married. It is believed that a career oriented woman can't manage her married life successfully. Moreover, society also victimizes those women by frequently asking about their marriage. Memoona had primary responsibility of managing her home for last ten years. Her mother was bed ridden for two years and she took care of her. Her brother was mentally retarded and she was responsible for her care too. There was a time when she also started realizing that she couldn't manage her married life due to her professional commitments but in last few years, she realized her ability of managing all family roles beside her professional commitments.

Khadija also shared that people often asked herself and her family about finding a mate. She kept listening to those narratives and started looking for her priority in career. Whenever, she met any male or his family; they directly started inquiring about managing time for family. She communicated men of different educational and socio-economic backgrounds for this purpose but all of them had the same thoughts about women like her.

The participants illustrated that this discourse is internalized in males through the process of socialization. Social curriculum is taught in diverse ways by family, education, religion etc that defines gender roles and changing these roles are assumed to bring dysfunction. Career oriented women are not considered ideal for marriage as they can't give much time to their family. Power is badly associated with earning hands in Pakistani society that is predominantly male. Society determines that only males are bread earners and the decision makers of the family. Decisions about the minor household aspects like kitchen are also taken by them. This power structure is influenced when women started participating in economic activities because now the power has to dilute to which men are not ready.

Khadija reported that she knows many women HODs, who put their pay on the hand of their husbands. However, it is always spent on home but many women are not empowered to spend their money by their own. Society doesn't recognize the efforts of a professional woman. Moreover, she also does not fight for her rights and silently face all discriminations as normal. She is traditionally socialized to compromise her career progression due to her domestic responsibilities. However, women who fight for

their career are not accepted by the society and most of them remain unmarried or experience separation or divorce.

The above conversations with women reveal that the women's professional growth is largely dependent upon their skills to manage their family responsibility effectively along with their professional commitments. Family support is essential for the career development because they often have to stay late in office due to their leadership responsibilities. It is also revealed that women leaders, who have little kids experience greater obstacles in managing their responsibilities as compared to the women who are unmarried, married with no children or with grown-up children.

## **7.2 Gender Stereotypes and Labeling Women in Academic Leadership**

Stereotypes negatively influence the success of women in professional life. Women leader are negatively portrayed by the society that develops many challenges for career oriented women. Power is strongly associated with the male members of the society and they don't want to share their powers with women. Stereotypes restrict women in their family environment and discourage them to involve in decision making processes. Organizational culture is also strongly affected by the prevalent stereotypes that do not allow women to participate in senior leadership roles. Women in this study also experienced stereotypical attitudes from their family, colleagues and community. These stereotypes are discussed in this section. A participant expressed typecasts present in community and organization about women leaders in these words:

My family is well educated and respects career oriented women but unfortunately, community has many negative perceptions about women leaders that sometimes also influence the perceptions of my family. These judgments include 'women are not better leaders', 'women don't deserve senior leadership positions because they lack leadership qualities', 'she cannot handle pressures and get scared very soon', 'she could not take quick and good decisions' etc. However, there are also some thoughts that support women leaders such as 'women focus on minute details', 'they are flexible and accommodating' and 'they are emotionally intelligent', but I feel that negative stereotypes outweigh these positive perceptions in many cases.

She continued to express its effect on selection and promotion processes as:

These stereotypes adversely influence women's career trajectories because most of the selection boards are male dominated and having all these perceptions deep rooted in their minds that reduce probability of women's selection at top administrative positions. (Hadia, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The above excerpts clearly manifest the effect of stereotypes on women's professional life. People believe that women are incapable of dealing with critical situations and quickly get confused. It is also assumed that women could not be good leaders; therefore, they should not be given a chance. Males, actually don't want women to hold the positions of power. Women are also raised up with all these perceptions in their minds and start believing that they lack leadership skills; consequently, most of them don't fight for the leadership positions. Sara narrated the prevailing negative perceptions about women leaders in these words:

I often listen to the statements that develop pressures among women and decrease their confidence to grow as empowered leaders. For instance, there is a general perception that women can't control their nerves and immediately become angry. Moreover, they take decision in hurry, more biased toward men, and not reflexive. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The conversation with women reveal that most of their family members are encouraged, inspired and honored by their leadership skills. However, community has strong masculine discourses that are developed to maintain male domination. These perceptions are deep rooted in society and developed obstacles for these women in achieving senior leadership positions. Most of the selection boards are male dominated and have rigid perceptions about women's abilities and skills. Naheed also shared that:

I do veil due to which I am often stereotyped by my colleagues. Although, I never felt it as an obstacle in my professional life but people associated many negative thoughts with it. I try to keep my gender aside at leadership position due to which some people argued that I don't behave like a woman. I receive comments such as 'janny ka jara' (she is like a male) or 'she is doing too much work like a male'. I try to ignore such gossips of people and don't pay heed to them. Moreover, there are labels for instance women are not good leaders, they are emotional, or too accommodating that shows that society doesn't accept women as leaders. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)



Good leadership skills are defined on the basis of dominant masculine traits; therefore, women are systematically pushed back in leadership struggle. The conversations with the participants highlight that qualities such as patience, flexibility and accommodation are also very effective in leadership but unfortunately, not encouraged in leadership and negatively associated with women leaders. Women leaders also try to incorporate dominant leadership attributes to keep themselves well aligned with prevalent leadership practices. They wish to maintain a gender neutral environment, where both men and women get equal opportunities but society keeps on criticizing women behaviors and skills.

Naheed was often criticized in her professional setting due to her veil. She asserted that her veil never affected her work but her colleagues often criticized her for being conservative. She had frequent interactions with her male colleagues to discuss many matters while maintaining good distance. It is evident in this study that whenever a woman becomes strong and confident, she is often stereotyped as 'being a male'. There are particular comments such as 'she is like a male' or 'she behaves like male' that helped me in understanding the influence a strong dominant masculine discourses present in the society. They start associating those women with men because they don't believe women to possess these attributes. Women wish to get recognition as women instead of correlating them with males. Saima belonged to a conservative family. She expressed its influence on her personal and professional life in these words:

My family doesn't allow a woman to pursue career; however, there are no restrictions on higher education. I made great efforts to convince my family for this job. Most of my relatives still don't know about my leadership status and only recognize me as a university professor. Moreover, at home, I am only a wife and a mother. I have four kids and I am responsible for their entire care. My family never accepted me as a leader. They want me to utilize my authority only in the organizational settings. All these family pressures are challenging for me because they not only influenced my marital relationship but also affected my professional life. (Saima, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Women, who had traditional family norms, experienced greater impediments in their professional life. Some families had rigid norms about women employment. Saima's family was against working women and most of her family members were even not

known about her leadership status. They discouraged authoritative women and most of her family decisions were taken by men. Her husband also had stereotypical attitude toward working women and discouraged her leadership role. He perceived working women as careless about their marital responsibilities. She was no more than a housewife at home and responsible for all kind of household chores. These stereotypes adversely influenced her leadership roles because she hadn't any support from her family in case of any risks or threats. She had to deal with her dual roles very carefully to meet the challenges and to change her family's perceptions about women leaders by working harder and demonstrating their skills in an effective way. Another participant also shared her family's perception about working women. She stated that:

My family restricts women to join employment that is far away from homes. They perceive women as weak and unable to manage life alone. Once, I was interested to apply for the position of the VC in another province. When I discussed it with my husband, he discouraged me with the statement, 'you shouldn't pursue this opportunity, leave it and look for a nearby option. I have socialized my children in a neutral way but general social perceptions are very strong that don't let women feel strong and confident. My sons often stated that women always do something wrong. When I argued that I am a woman too, they replied, 'you are an exception'. I feel that they never considered me in that category of women because they knew my personality and also observed that I can manage things well. (Naila, Dean, Professor)

Conversation with women reveal that stereotypes often create impediments in women career trajectories. Many families perceived women as weak and less confident; therefore, they don't allow them to apply for the jobs that are far away from their homes. They believe that women cannot manage independent living in a patriarchal structure. On the contrary, men don't experience such obstacles in their professional life. Naila was interested in attaining senior leadership position i.e. VC. She mentioned that most of the opportunities are available in new universities and most of these are in small cities. Her husband discouraged her to apply for such opportunities and asked her to wait for better opportunities within the city.

She also expressed the influence of dominant masculine discourses present in society that influenced the perceptions of her family members. Although, she did

neutral socialization of her sons but general social perceptions about women are deep rooted and influenced her son's thoughts. They expressed that women are weak and emotionally instable; however, their mother was an exception. Naila was contributing in bringing change in conservative norms about women. She expressed that it's a gradual process and will take a long time to achieve gender sensitivity in society. Anum also highlighted the stereotypes present in family and community in these words:

Stereotypes often disappoint me because social expectations about the traditional gender roles are still very strong. Women have the primary responsibility of her home and she is not considered successful, until she manages her household successfully. Family friends often comprehend about this discourse with the statements such as 'humain kya, bry afsar hon gy to apny office ma hon gy', (we don't care of her leadership status. She would be an officer in her office but not in family). (Anum, Dean, Professor)

This is an important discourse that influences women status in the society. Women have to manage their dual identities in two different domains. One at family, where she is a house wife and don't have powers to take independent decisions and the other at organizational setting, where she is a leader, who have to take major decisions independently and exercise her authority. Consequently, she often gets confused to behave in these two entirely different settings and face numerous obstacles in managing her dual roles. Moreover, they are not only stereotyped by their male counterparts but also by the females in their family and community, who are mostly housewives and can't see other women to succeed. Anum was a dean in a well reputed university but her family relatives never appreciated her professional success; rather, they often got envious of her achievements and inculcated negative thoughts about her personality.

The detailed conversations with the participants about the stereotypes present in community imply that such perceptions are very strong and deep rooted in society and supporting dominant masculine ideologies. Women leaders are often labeled as less confident, weak, confuse, emotional etc. It is evident that these ideologies are internalized in members of society by the process of socialization. These stereotypes limit women's participation at senior leadership position because most of the selection boards are male dominated and influenced by the dominant masculine discourses present in society. Men are not ready to dilute power among females and wish to

maintain their masculine hegemony. It is also clear that women are struggling hard to bring some positive changes in social perception about women leaders by managing their dual roles in successful manners. Change is coming in a very slow manner and will take longer time to transform conservative attitudes of people.

### **7.3 Socialization of Women as Leader**

Family plays a fundamental role in socialization of a person. Our society, that is patriarchal in nature, socializes male and females differently. Women are taught to perform household chores, while the males are learned to become bread earner. However, in this modern era, the traditional patterns of socialization are changing due to the increased awareness about gender. Now parents are encouraging their daughters to participate in all fields of life and to fight for their rights. Consequently, women are now getting higher education and participating in leadership roles as well. Women, who have strong socialization, get more achievements in society; however, others try to learn leadership traits in their practical life by their personal experiences and observations. A Dean reported that she learned many leadership traits from her family that contributed in her professional success. She said that:

I have learned many skills at different stages of my life cycle and got aspirations from various individuals around. However, I believe that my family has a great role in my personality development. They always encouraged and motivated me to achieve my aims of life. They supported me in all good and difficult times. I was always good in academics and earned PhD degree on scholarship from United States. My family trusted me and boosted my confidence to manage life independently. (Sobia, Dean, Professor)

A Director also narrated the influence of her family socialization on her professional success. She stated that:

In my family, many women are working at various leadership positions. They are always honored and motivated. They are encouraged to utilize their knowledge and to contribute in social progress. My family supported me in all critical situations that developed my confidence to manage such circumstances. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

The above conversation with the respondents reveal that their family had a strong role in developing their confidence and autonomy. Sobia believed that her success was strongly associated with her strong socialization. Her parents never maintained difference between her siblings and provided them equal opportunities. They trusted and encouraged her to decide her own goals of life. Her family also supported her in achieving her ambitions and felt proud of her achievements. Manahil also learned fundamental leadership skills in her early stage socialization. Her family was liberal toward both men and women and always protected her rights. In her family, many women were working at senior leadership positions that paved a way for her and motivated her to become empowered. On the other hand, Warda shared the influence of traditional patterns of socialization on her personality development. She narrated that:

I was an introvert and shy woman in my childhood. My parents raised me according to the traditional feminine expectations. They always maintained a gender difference between my siblings that influenced my personality. When I started my career, I faced many challenges due to the lack of confidence and family support. However, I started learning leadership skills from my practical life. I learned to manage my dual responsibilities by personal experience and by help of my mentors, who polished my leadership skills and developed my confidence. Now, my family recognizes my efforts and feels proud of my achievements.

She continued to narrate her marital life experiences in these words:

Power is still not equally distributed in my family. My husband takes most of the decisions at home and I am unable to contribute equally in this process. Weekend is mostly not a holiday for me because I have to accomplish many household tasks that remain pending during the week due to my professional commitments. My husband provides me enough moral and economic support but don't assist in household chores. Therefore, I kept a housemaid for assistance but I still feel myself responsible for the care and socialization of my children. I wish to spend most of the time with my family on weekends. (Warda, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

This excerpt clearly manifests the constraints of women, who are socialized in accordance to the traditional gender norms. They experience issues such as lack of confidence and motivation. Warda experienced many obstacles in accomplishing her professional roles due to the lack of administrative skills. She belonged to a rigid family that limited her participation in decision making processes and reduced her confidence by constant realization of household commitments and discouraging her professional achievements. When she joined as a Chairperson, she initially thought that she couldn't manage administrative responsibilities; however, her mentors contributed significantly in bridging the gap and she became aware about her inner strength as a good leader.

She also shared that traditional gender norms are still unchanged in her family that doesn't allow equal allocation of power among males and females. Her husband was well educated and motivated her in professional life but family values pressurized him to avoid participating in household activities that showed the influence of unequal power relations in her family. Khadija expressed the powerful role of mother in her personality development. She stated that:

My mother was a teacher, who developed a balanced environment at home where I got opportunities to polish my skills. She confronted numerous challenges in this process but never compromised on my rights. I was a brilliant student and got highest marks in intermediate, part-one examinations, in all five subjects in my college. I wanted to become an engineer but at that time there were only two engineering universities located in two different cities of the province. When I shared my interest with mother, she informed me about existing conservative thoughts of the family that never allowed women to study out of the city. Consequently, I felt disappointed and didn't work hard and passed in second division in intermediate part-two examinations. When my mother came to know about the result, she was shocked and started crying. At that moment, I realized my mistake. Hereafter, me and my mother decided my career path very logically and confronted any obstacle very tactfully. Later, when my brother went to United Kingdom for higher studies, my mother also fought for my right to study abroad; therefore, I got a great opportunity of foreign academic exposure that unveiled many professional opportunities for me. (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The narrative of Khadija and many others reveal that mothers play significant role in their daughter's strong personality development. It is found that if a mother realizes the significance of equal opportunities for her children, she can also struggle to provide them such opportunities. As discussed earlier, gender stereotypes are deep rooted in society and internalized through the process of socialization. In this study, many women had gendered socialization that suppressed their abilities. Khadija also expressed about similar conservative norms that restricted women mobility in her family. She was the only woman in her family, who got an opportunity of foreign academic exposure and all this became reality due to her mother's extraordinary efforts. Her mother raised her children on similar grounds and fought for the rights of her daughter. She believed that her present professional achievements were the outcome of the strong primary socialization by her mother.

To conclude this discourse, it is evident that primary socialization plays a vital role in developing leadership attributes among women. Women, who have weak early stage socialization, experience lack of confidence, incompetence, and emotional disorders etc. Moreover, they try to learn such qualities from their practical life by their personal observations and experiences. Mentors also play important role in identifying and polishing women inner strengths. Many participants experienced greater obstacles in their early stages of career development due to their rigid socialization. However, women who belonged to the liberal families found it facilitating in achieving their career trajectories as they had constant family support, encouragement and motivation in achieving their goals and participating in the development process. Their families also respected and felt proud of them that improved their confidence and self-esteem in their professional life.

#### **7.4 Gender Harassment and Critical Attitudes**

Pakistan is a patriarchal society, where many women experience gender harassment and critical attitudes. Therefore, it was important in this study to get an understanding about the lived experiences of women about this issue in a very careful manner because it is a sensitive issue and women often hesitate to share their experiences about it. Contrary to my expectations, many women generously shared their stories of harassment and critical attitudes in their professional environment that helped me to understand the

intensity of the problem experienced by these women leaders in academic organizations. It is found that all universities have anti-harassment policies. Many participants shared their relevant experiences and strategies to deal with such issues. Warda often received demeaning jokes and comments that included sexual elements. She said that:

My administrative position demands interaction with all kind of people within and out of the university. As a woman, I remain very careful while interacting with the male colleagues because they take no time to cross their limits. Therefore, while interacting with men, I keep my behavior well controlled and slight harsh voice tone. Once, after a meeting, a male colleague commented that ‘madam you do things very well because you explain your point very interestingly’. I was alarmed by his statement and responded carefully. (Warda, Chairperson, Associate Professor)

Women leaders have frequent interactions with every staff member and colleagues. As our culture legitimize the powers of male members; therefore, they often attempt to harass women by their verbal and nonverbal communication. Warda asserted that the sexist hostility is deep rooted in organizational structure that is evident in the form of gender harassment against women. It included undignified jokes or statements that contain elements of harassment for women. She also mentioned that males also take advantage of their age and designation, and quickly change their attitude to defend their gendered behavior. Naheed also shared her experiences of harassment in these words:

Our previous VC was extremely respectful toward the females and always considered gender issues while developing policies and programs. He even used to surprise us by celebrating ‘women day’. However, current management believes in less respect toward women and often use disrespectful language for women for instance ‘wo yeah keh rhi thi’ or use the word ‘bibi’ (a typical word used for women) instead of ‘madam’ or ‘miss’. These are very hurtful behaviors and I take it as a kind of harassment.

She continued that:

I don’t keep myself segregated and feel comfortable with both male and female colleagues. They can discuss every matter with me including their domestic issues. I have given them the liberty with some limitations. I observe the dress



code and keep my voice relatively loud, harsh and rude while interacting with males to avoid any misconceptions. (Naheed, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

The conversation with Naheed and others highlight the frequent use of impertinent language by their senior and junior male colleagues. It showed that education did not bring any positive behavior change in many males about women and they were still not ready to share their dominance with females. They tried to discourage women leaders by using slang language and many participants reported it as a kind of harassment.

Naheed shared that instead of saying miss or madam, her male colleagues often used discourteous language. They even didn't avoid harassing them in official meetings. Conversely, males always call each other in a respectful manner. She considered respect as her basic right that was often violated by her male colleagues. As a leader, she had to communicate with many individuals and she tried to maintain a balanced attitude with both male and female colleagues. At times, her little negligence led her male colleagues to cross their limitations; therefore, she decided to keep her voice tone quite hard and rude, while communicating with her male colleagues. It is evident that women's frank behavior is negatively perceived by the males and adversely affects women in their career trajectories; therefore, women should remain very careful while dealing with their male colleagues and staff. Khadija, who was an unmarried woman, shared her experiences of harassment in these words:

I never let anyone to cross the limits but some individuals tried to cross the line. For instance, I love nail art and my nails remain well grown and shaped. Once, my male colleague, who was sitting beside me commented, 'ab bnda ap ky haath dekhy, ya ap ka kam' (you are typing with such beautiful hands, should I focus on your hands or on your work). I was alarmed and replied quickly that 'ma in hathoon sy thapar bhi bohat acha mar sakti hoon' (I can also slap badly with these beautiful hands). He was an elder and had same designation but I felt that males take every single woman status as an 'available status'. At this stage of my life, I can also realize and respond to comments that have dual meanings and one can't quickly perceive its actual meaning. Such as, after a meeting, one of the male colleagues said, 'madam ap ny to kmal kr dya, ap hain hi kmal ki' (madam you have done good job, as you are really great). (Khadija, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

Power discourses are very strong in society that facilitate men in their attempt to harass women. There is a general perception that a woman leader is a woman first. This perception encourages not only male colleagues but also the staff to harass their female counterparts. Especially, when they become aware of a single woman, they become powerful and use unfair means to grab their attention. Khadija believed that women should raise voice against all kind of harassments and should become strong enough to respond directly to such situations. She also elaborated that these behaviors are persistent; therefore, women leaders need to be very careful while interacting with their male colleagues and staff. It's also important to define limits and convey very clearly to everyone to avoid any humiliation and embarrassment.

She also shared another experience of harassment. Once, a very young lower clerical staff member attempted to harass her verbally in the university car parking. That person was on his phone and commented, 'yar tum ho hi bohat achi' (dear you are so sweet). She thought of the comment as a misunderstanding but the very next day in parking, the same man was on his phone and commented again. She became vigilant, suddenly stopped and asked him about his communication on phone. He replied that he had some good friend on the call. She again asked to confirm that to whom he was commenting. That man was shocked by her epic reaction and became careful. However, after few days, he dared for the third time although, he was known about her leadership position as well but still he did not hesitate. At that moment, she stopped him and inquired about his name and department. Later, she reported the security officer about the misconduct.

Khadija was often confronted with such sexual harassments but her strong and implicit behavior helped her to control the circumstances very successfully. She never demanded help from her colleagues or tried to bring the matters in public rather she reacted very tactfully to avoid such situations. She also reported about her organizational policy regarding harassment against women and a committee to address such matters but its decisions were mostly against females. It was highly influenced by socio-political factors; therefore, many cases remained unreported. Faria, who was also a single woman, stated her experiences of harassment in this way:

I always try to maintain good distance with my male colleagues. Whenever, I accept an offer of a cup of tea from a male colleague, they often perceive it

negatively and if, I accept their invitation for a second time, they completely misinterpret and start crossing the limits. In such cases, I refuse them straightforwardly in a bit harsh tone that ‘app is qabil nhi hain k ap k saath chay pee jay’ (you don’t deserve to have a cup of tea with me). Furthermore, I often receive odd jocks on mobile. Below the age of thirty, I used to ignore them and never replied but now, I reply them with a one liner note that don’t you ever dare to send me such message again and it is very effective as no one ever tried to attempt again due to my first harsh response. (Faria, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

This piece of information uncovers the conservative attitudes of males about women. It is also found that women leaders frequently experience harassment at their workplace. Males don’t miss any chance to exploit females by utilizing their traditional power. Particularly, they more often attack unmarried women and try to suppress them by typical behavior. Faria often experienced verbal harassment from her male colleagues. Many males tried to take advantage of her single status and attempted to harass by their body language while interaction. She also reported that married women feel more secure while interaction with their male counterparts and males also remain more careful with them. However, she learned to manage such critical situations by recognizing her self-confidence and controlling her emotions. Another participant shared her experience of harassment in these words:

My senior administrators attempted to harass me many times for their vested interests. For instance, once a senior colleague offered me promotion by accepting her demand to stop struggling for my own department and to start working with his team that I simply refused. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

This piece of information highlights that strong and confident women also experience harassment at their workplace. Especially, their senior male administrators try to suppress them by utilizing their power and offering them good positions in order to gain their vested interests. Sara was known as a strong lady in her university because she used to speak up about any issue before the senior management and even didn’t hesitate to discuss it on media but she still experienced verbal and non-verbal abuses from her senior male colleagues.

### **7.5 Invisibility of Women at Top Academic Leadership Positions**

There are lower numbers of women in academic leadership and this number is further decreased at senior leadership positions. Respondents were asked to share the causes of invisibility of women senior administrators. The discussion with participants reveals that it is strongly influenced by the historical discourse of patriarchy that developed family as a priority for women; therefore, their participation in economic activities is not appreciated by the cultural norms. Many respondents shared various factors that influenced their career advancement. Sara highlighted the effects of institutional policies on women selection at senior leadership position. She said that:

This university has developed a tenure system for the posts of dean and chairperson, and seniority is the basic criteria to get the tenure. Moreover, they cannot get extension and after completing the tenure of chairperson, they wait for their turn for the position of dean. I feel that it is unbiased toward women because it provides them opportunities to attain leadership positions. However, women deans are not acknowledged by many male senior administrators due to the prevalent dominant masculine discourses and they experience numerous constraints to maintain their positions. For instance, our previous Dean was mentally harassed by the top management; consequently, she could not bear the pressures and finally resigned. She took her retirement earlier and also got financial loss.

She also shared the influence of male dominated selection boards on women career advancement in these words:

This university never had any women VC because I feel that it's more than an academic administrative position and numerous social, economic and political factors are involved in the selection process. There are many women professors with strong professional profiles in this university but the decision makers are predominantly males, who usually give favor to the male applicants. (Sara, Chairperson, Assistant Professor)

This piece of information clearly manifests the influence of male dominated selection boards that strengthen masculine hegemony in academic administration. Women, who apply for the senior leadership positions, are rarely shortlisted and most often rejected by the selection committees. Discussion with participants reveal that tenure system is

supportive for women leaders as they get a chance to attain leadership position. It also helps them in career advancement. Sara reported that in her institute many women were serving as dean and chairperson due to the tenure system. It facilitated them to get leadership experience that will be facilitating in their career trajectories. She said that other universities also developed tenure system but it's not implemented; therefore, many leaders hold their positions for a longer time by getting extensions that limit others chances to get administrative positions. She felt that policy implementation is necessary to remove gender gaps in leadership. Manahil also communicated about many socio-cultural factors that cause lower representation of women in academic administration. She mentioned that:

I think many factors are contributing in lower representation of women in academic leadership. Firstly, we are living in a patriarchal society, where males are controlling all segments of society, who don't want women to attain legitimacy in society. Secondly, women need support of their family to achieve her career goals that is not available for many women. Thirdly, she gets many breaks in her professional life due to the marital roles and responsibilities. I know many women, who compromised their professional life for their family. Finally, they don't have professional attitude and lack leadership socialization and trainings. (Manahil, Director, Associate Professor)

The discussion with Manahil and others clearly manifest that many social, economic and political factors are involved in invisibility of women at top leadership positions. They believed that each gender has its unique qualities and we shouldn't compare them but unfortunately, women are most often evaluated upon the dominant masculine standards that decrease their probability of selection as administrators. Moreover, society realized women that family should be their first priority; therefore, they remain busy in fulfilling expectations of society, as a good daughter, wife and mother etc. They can't give quality time to the professional life and left behind in their career. It was also discussed in the previous theme about academic excellence that women leaders could not manage their research work effectively due to their marital responsibilities beside their administrative responsibilities. Sana also shared her similar thoughts in these words:

In our society, it is very difficult for the women to reach top administrative positions because their strategic needs are fulfilled but practical needs are not satisfied. There are two categories of women; privileged and under-privileged. Privileged women have a lot of opportunities in terms of emotional and financial support that facilitate them in leadership roles as compared to the underprivileged women. However, these women are fewer in number. (Sana, Director, Associate Professor)

The conversation with Sana implies that women need financial, political and emotional support to attain and maintain their leadership position. In Pakistani society, many women belong to the lower and middle class families that follow conservative gender norms. They get less socio-economic cooperation from their family and community. They are struggling alone to achieve their professional goals; therefore, only few of them get enough opportunities to attain and maintain their leadership positions. Sana mentioned that privileged women are blessed with all kind of social, political and financial support of their family, friends and community. They can easily manage their administrative responsibilities beside their family commitments.

However, family always remains the key responsibility for them and they have to balance their dual roles. Their socialization and family cooperation facilitates them in managing their activities more effectively. Sana stated that senior leadership position demands more time and energy. Sana, who belonged to a privileged family, was least interested in attaining top leadership position because it requires sacrifice of family life and family was her preference and the present administrative position was influencing her family life. Her children were suffering due to her leadership commitments. Although, now they are grown up, she wished to spare more time for her children. She believed that top leadership position demands more official commitments and she will have to sacrifice her family life to which she was not ready.

There are many constraints for a woman that results in fewer professional achievements. These limitations include her dual roles, less networking opportunities, time constraints etc. Young women faculty experience greater constraints because they have to manage their family life. Especially, when she gets married, she experiences adjustment issues in a new family structure and adopts a new role of motherhood that demand a lot of time and commitment. Simultaneously, she continues her doctoral

studies, joins organization and struggles to establish her research profile. All these activities are physically and mentally exhausting and the lack of family's cooperation develops further constraints. Consequently, she compromises her professional achievements to fulfill expectations of society of a good wife and a mother. Naila also shared numerous causes of less visibility of women senior academic leaders. She stated that:

Women can't join any job far away from her home due to her family and community pressures. Furthermore, she experiences discouragement and harassment from males that leads to her slow progress. Moreover, there are fewer women professors, who can apply for the top academic leadership positions. (Naila, Dean, Professor)

Leadership requires extensive and consistent efforts of an individual. While, working women have to manage their dual roles and find less time for their professional growth. They start their marital life and career at the same time that demands a lot of commitments. On the one hand, women have to adjust with in-laws and to develop their family; on the other hand, they have to strengthen their professional profile by advance studies and research. In this entire scenario, they often take breaks from the work for child bearing and rearing.

Moreover, they find less time for networking that is necessary for the professional growth. It leaves them behind in education and research that negatively influence their professional life. Consequently, they get late promotions as compared to their male counterparts, who continue their professional life without any gap and have strong networks and professional profiles. Furthermore, women also have restricted mobility. Many women are discouraged by their family and friends to apply for the jobs that are in any other city or state. Leadership requires administrative experience that can be easily attained from new universities and such institutes are mostly located in small cities. Most of the families don't cooperate with women in their professional growth; therefore, they cannot join senior leadership positions.

The detailed discussion with participants reveal that women experience many constraints in attaining and maintaining top administrative positions. Dominant masculine culture is one of the major impediments that limit women participation in senior academic administration. Women are bound to manage their family as a primary

responsibility. Moreover, males are not willing to share power with females; therefore, they keep women busy in their domestic affairs. Furthermore, if a woman overcomes all these challenges, she is often rejected by the selection boards that are mostly male dominated. Finally, if a woman gets an opportunity of leadership, she experiences much threats and harassments from her male counterparts; therefore, she needs to be strong enough and requires more social, economic, political and emotional support from her family and friends to maintain her position at the top.



## **Chapter 8**

### **Leadership Pathways of Women in Higher Education**

This qualitative study investigated the lived experiences of women working as leaders in higher educational institutions, located in twin cities of Pakistan; Rawalpindi and Islamabad. It is intended to extend an understanding about personal, socio-cultural and institutional factors that support or impede women in attaining and maintaining leadership positions in academia. This study is also interested to develop an in-depth insight on how women leaders utilized their personal skills and resources to navigate the challenges that are intervening in their personal and professional domains. It is tried to develop connections between existing dominant socio-cultural and institutional discourses, and women perceptions about their potentials.

It also explored that how women standpoints are influenced by existing dominant discourses present in society about academic leadership. For this purpose, twenty-three in-depth interviews were conducted from women occupying different academic leadership positions in universities located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. An interview schedule was developed to explore the lived experiences of women academic administrators in the transformational and restructuring climate of higher educational institutes and to document their efforts in managing their leadership roles in this competitive environment, where they experience numerous constraints at both organizational and community level.

In this chapter, I have provided a synthesis of the findings of this study with the existing scholarship on women leadership in higher education across the world, to situate the status of Pakistani women in contemporary academic leadership discourse. I incorporated the postmodern feminist approaches of Dorothy Smith i.e. ruling class ideology and standpoint theory and R. W. Connel's hegemonic masculinity model to understand the lived experiences of women academic leaders in Pakistan. Moreover, I have utilized Michael Foucault's assumptions of power and discourse to understand the existing power structures that are systematically restraining women academicians from top leadership positions in higher education. These theoretical underpinnings facilitated me in interpreting women narratives of leadership, and understanding their construction

of leadership identities and standpoints in male dominated academic environment. This framework provided me unique ways of understanding women experiences in higher education by utilizing Foucault's conception of knowledge and power with postmodern feminist ideologies. It also helped me to explore the discursive construction of leadership roles that limit women's participation at senior administrative positions in academia.

There are large numbers of women working in the academic organizations; however, they are invisible at senior leadership positions. This lower representation of women at top leadership positions in higher educational institutes is well documented in the West that reported numerous challenges and constraints experienced by women leaders. Some studies also documented women strategies to overcome these obstacles (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Luke, 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Madsen, 2008; Turner, 2007; Zulu, 2011). However, few studies have been attempted in Asia and other developing regions of the world, where women also constitute half of the population and increasingly participating in the higher educational management (Morley & Crossouard, 2016; Murniati, 2012; Oplatka, 2004, 2006).

In Pakistan, most of the studies conducted to date on leadership, primarily focused on women managers and entrepreneurs (Alam, 2009; Manzoor, 2015; Rehman & Roomi, 2012) and only few studies documented the experiences of women leaders in academia that particularly focused on school and college principal's leadership styles and constraints. These women work in distinct organizational structures and cultures, as most of these institutes are gender segregated (Bana & Khaki, 2015; Jehan, 2015; Shah, 2009; Shah & Shah, 2012; Tahir, 2018; Taj, 2016). However, the review of literature revealed scarcity of scholarship about the perspectives of women leadership in higher educational institutes in Pakistan, where women's participation in senior administrative roles is also increasing day by day (Ahmad, 2016; Qureshi et al., 2011; Shaikh, 2014).

This study intended to fill this gap in literature by exploring the lived experiences of women leaders in higher education, in twin cities of Pakistan; Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Few studies carried out in Pakistan, about women leadership in higher education, primarily focused on the challenges but overlooked the opportunities available to them in their career advancement, and their distinctive strategies to

maintain and improve their leadership positions. This study intended to bridge this gap in existing scholarship by extending an understanding of women's academic leadership in Pakistani universities and providing a holistic view of their experiences of constant struggle in the socio-cultural context of Pakistan. It is found that these women tried to maintain their unique identities as leaders within their religious and cultural context and struggled to build strong and positive perceptions about women that are contrary to the dominant discourse of masculinity.

This study also reveals some unique and interesting findings regarding women leadership in higher education. First, tolerance, which is usually, associated with females and not an encouraged norm in academic leadership, help women leaders in understanding and managing critical attitudes and situations in organizational settings. Second, women aim at working harder and establishing their credibility to get recognition in the male world. Third, they never receive any formal leadership training or mentorship program that is important in learning and managing leadership responsibilities. It is found that they achieve and maintain their leadership status by utilizing personal leadership experiences and exposures, professional networking and informal mentors. Fourth, women need strong support system to confront leadership challenges such as networks, mentors, family and household assistants. Fifth, age and marital status have important implications on women's leadership role management. Finally, single women leaders experience greater verbal and non-verbal harassment from their senior as well as junior colleagues and staff.

Scholarship on women leadership in higher education in the West and the East document numerous constraints and challenges experienced by women leaders in higher education e.g. lack of support system, stereotypes, discriminative organizational practices, dual responsibilities, lack of trainings and mentorship (Eagly, 2007; Luke, 1997, 1998a, 1998b; Madsen, 2008; Naz et al., 2017; Rehman & Khan, 2018; Turner, 2007; Zulu, 2011). Many leadership constraints experienced by women in this study resonate with the previous scholarship, that is however limited. Women's leadership styles and challenges in developed and developed countries differ in many respects. However, the reviewed literature provided a useful insight to address my research questions. This study is carried out in Pakistan that has a patriarchal structure, in which males are dominating almost all segments of society and women are found as a passive

figure (Ali et al., 2011). This socio-cultural context, in which Pakistani women live and manage their work beside traditional socialization and restricted mobility, makes it more difficult for them to attain and maintain senior leadership positions. In addition, fundamental responsibility of managing their family also serves as an obstacle in their career projection. Pakistan has a unique national and cultural context that shapes the realization of the constraints of women academic leaders.

The identities of women as leaders are evident in their conception about leadership and their leadership styles in practice. It is found that most of the women practiced democratic, accommodating and consultative team based style of leadership to achieve their organizational goals that is consistent with the previous leadership researches that concluded that women demonstrate transformative and assessable styles of leadership (Blackmore, 2002; Reynolds, 2013; Rhode, 2003, Singh et al., 2012). Women's reflections on their personal experiences as leaders highlighted that they shared some common traits of academic leadership that distinguished their style of academic leadership. Some major characteristics included patience, cooperation, emotional intelligence and flexibility. All women wished to get recognition as good leaders with their feminine attributes, rather than getting comparisons with prevalent masculine standards. However, their organizational cultures enforced them to adopt masculine characteristics for their professional growth and it is reported as a major constraint by women in this study in managing their leadership roles in these organizations.

It is revealed that women's leadership styles are contradictory to the dominant leadership discourse of assertiveness that results in greater challenges in dealing with their male colleagues and staff. They findings of this study indicate that assertiveness is more closely associated with the masculine norms of the society and women are forced to develop firmness in their behavior for effective leadership. Males often try to take advantage of the accommodating behavior of women leaders and get escape from work. Therefore, participants were careful in distributing workload among men and developed monitory system to control such behaviors. They did not find any difficulty in managing their leadership responsibilities with their feminine leadership characteristics.

Moreover, some feminine traits e.g. emotional intelligence, flexibility and tolerance, facilitated them in managing their leadership responsibilities. However, sometime they switched between firmness and flexibility to control intentional work delays from their colleagues and staff. This is contrary to the finding of a previous study focused on the women college principals in Pakistan which finds that women principals incorporate both masculine and feminine traits in leadership (Shah & Shah, 2012). However, this study found that women leaders in higher education lay greater significance on demonstrating their feminine characteristics in their leadership style in practice. However, sometime due to the strong masculine cultural norms, they unwillingly become assertive to deal with rigid and annoying individuals.

The narratives of the respondents clearly manifest that women are enthusiastic to maintain their unique identities by incorporating feminine traits such as cooperation, team work and flexibility in their leadership roles. An important discourse of tolerance is also asserted by the participants in this study which is usually associated with females and not an encouraged norm in academic leadership in Pakistan. However, it is evident in this study that tolerance helped these women in quick resolution of the disputes, and allowed them in careful understanding and analysis of the issues. It also kept them apart from the disputes to manage the disagreements in a more effective manner. They found it very helpful in organizing their leadership roles in an effective manner; however, they highlighted the need of consistent hard work to establish themselves as successful leaders in existing masculine hierarchies. They did not find it necessary to incorporate dominant masculine traits such as assertiveness to manage their administrative responsibilities.

Since leadership in the academia is increasingly dependent on team work; the challenge for those in management and leadership roles is to become an 'effective team leader'. It might also be safe to assume that male managers are more likely than female managers to find it difficult to relinquish the 'control and command' type of leadership in favor of the softer skills and values which are believed to be in demand in contemporary management. In academic organizations, the 'command and control' models of leadership have little or no importance as there are other more suitable models to substitute or neutralize this model (Middlehurst, 1993).

It is evident in this study that power is strongly associated with males in the academic organizations and stereotypes help to endorse these powerful masculine ideologies. Organizational cultures strengthen the widespread stereotypes that restrict women to participate in senior leadership. In this study, participants expressed various stereotypical attitudes of their family, colleagues and community that developed constraints in their personal and professional life, and challenged their unique identities as women. The detailed conversations with participants, about the stereotypes present in community about women leaders, imply that these perceptions are very strong and deep rooted in the society. Women leaders are labeled as less confident, weak, confused, emotional etc. These ideologies are internalized in members of society by the process of socialization and limit women's participation at senior leadership position because most of the selection boards are male dominated and influenced by the dominant masculine discourse of society. Men are not ready to dilute their power to maintain their masculine hegemony.

It is understood that women are struggling hard to create work-life balance and get recognition as successful academic leaders in society by utilizing more time and energy. Participants believed that their constant and hardworking approach brought positive ideological change in society; however, slowly. It is found that when a woman becomes strong and confident, she is often stereotyped as 'being a male'. The particular comments such as 'she is like a male' or 'she behaves like a male' helped me to understand the influence a strong dominant masculine discourses present in the society that don't recognize women as being confident, strong decision maker and risk taker. These findings are consistent with the previous studies which find that people stereotypically define women leaders as less confident, emotionally instable, passive, weak and incompetent that lead toward the development of prejudices against women leaders to systematically favor males in leadership roles (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ely et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2008; Singh, et al., 2012; Wynen et al., 2015). However, these prejudicial attitudes are stronger in Pakistani society due to the prevailing patriarchal structure that is distinct from the West. Women are perceived from the stereotypical lens, that portray women leaders as weak, less confident, non-professional and less fit for leadership roles.

More importantly, this study found that these embedded stereotypes strengthen men in their attempt to harass women leaders. The narratives of the women clearly manifest that there is a strong general perception in Pakistani society that ‘a woman leader is a woman first’, that not only encourage their male colleagues but also the staff, to harass them. Especially, unmarried women reported greater verbal and nonverbal harassment at their work place. The narratives of the participants also highlight the frequent use of impertinent language by their senior and junior male colleagues which shows that men are still not ready to share their powers with women. They try to demoralize women leaders by using slang language and many participants reported it as a kind of harassment. For instance, instead of saying miss or madam, their male colleagues often use the word “bibi” (a typical word used in community for women).

However, the participants were strong enough to respond directly to such behaviors and never seek organizational help to handle such individuals. These women were explicit in their behaviors toward harassment and defined clear limitation to avoid any kind of harassment. It is also found that all universities had anti-harassment policy and constituted committees to address harassment issues but that were not very effective and strongly influenced by socio-political factors. Other studies also highlight the experiences of women faculty and staff about harassment at their work place (Bennett, 2011; Chira, 2017; Joubert, 2009; Monroe, 2008; Oguntoyinbo, 2014; Zarya, 2017). However, little or no studies have highlighted the issue of harassment of women leaders in higher education, especially in the socio-cultural context of Pakistan.

It is revealed that women leaders experience greater obstacles i.e. threats and criticism, when they behave assertively; however, they believe that some sort of work can’t be accomplished by their accommodating behavior. Therefore, they keep themselves realistic about the critiques from their colleagues and staff. It is evident in this study that the nature and extent of criticism increases with their promotion to senior positions because they get involved in major decision making processes. The narratives of the participants also reveal that their personal and professional life remain in discussions of their team members. They often criticize the effective decisions of women because it could compel them to come out from their comfort zone and to work hard for which they are least interested. Participants in this study utilized numerous strategies for dealing with threats and criticism e.g. careful listening with patience,

ignoring fallacious critiques, following rules, direct communication to avoid misunderstandings, dealing tactfully, obtaining trust of senior management, taking advice from mentors and self-confidence.

Lack of early stage leadership socialization is also reported as one of the major obstacles for women leaders in this study. Most of the participants belonged to the middle class families that generally practice traditional patterns of socialization. It is evident that weak family socialization produced greater challenges for women in early stages of their professional lives such as they experienced lack of confidence, incompetence, emotional disorders etc. However, all of them were much enthusiastic to bridge this gap by learning leadership skills from their lived experiences and observations. Their networks and mentors contributed in identifying and polishing their inner strengths. On the contrary, participants who belonged to the elite class families reported that their professional success is associated to their strong family socialization. Their parents never maintained discrimination and provided them equal opportunities. Moreover, their family trusted and motivated them to define their own goals. Therefore, women who had strong primary socialization experienced fewer constraints in managing their professional lives. They also had women mentors in their family that was a constant source of motivation for them. They also had consistent family support and encouragement to achieve their goals and to participate effectively in the development process. Their families respected and felt proud of them which improved their confidence and self-esteem in practical life.

Many prior studies undertaken in the West and East also report that females are socialized differently from their male counterparts that discourage them to participate in leadership roles and create gender imbalance in leadership (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fitzsimmons et al., 2014; Hoobler et al., 2014). Kirk (2004) finds that women principals in Pakistan lack leadership aspirations due to the specific socio-cultural beliefs that force them for marriage, child rearing and domestic chores. The results of this study are unique as it highlights the difference of socialization pattern among various socio-economic classes and finds that most of the women leaders belong to middle class families, who are raised according to the tradition gender patterns.

Another major impediment reported by the participants in this study is lack of formal leadership trainings. The participants expressed the necessity of leadership



trainings to bridge the gaps of leadership socialization. Participants reported that professional development workshops and trainings are frequently conducted for the faculty but that primarily focus on enhancing teaching and research skills. It also includes small components of administration and management that are not enough to bring desired outcomes for academic leadership. Few women attended workshops and seminars on management and administrative skills in their institute, but they did not find them effective in improving their leadership qualities.

The participants highlighted the need of formal leadership trainings for all academic leaders. They believed that administrative trainings and workshops could be effective for simultaneously developing their administrative and managerial skills, while narrowing existing gender leadership developmental gap, emboldening them to first acknowledge their potential, and then asserting their leadership potential. They explained that in university structure, professional training is not the criterion for selection of a leader. Doctoral degree is completely based on research and does not enhance teaching and administrative skills.

It is evident in this study that no university has structure of regular trainings to polish administrative skills of the academic administrators that develops many obstacles in effective management for women leaders. Some participants attended relevant workshops by utilizing their personal resources and found them very helpful in understanding and managing their roles and to transform academic structure. They also mentioned that other business organizations have prerequisites of professional diplomas and trainings for selection of their executives. Lack of trainings developed many hurdles for women because most of them were traditionally socialized to perform submissive roles. Many participants believed that they learned new leadership roles by their mentors and personal on the job experience. Moreover, they developed networks with other HODs and deans to get professional help.

Warwick and Reimers (1995, p. 99) observed this point about two decades ago. They made an observation that in the Pakistani educational system, most of the Heads in educational institutions are 'not trained to be leaders, did not see themselves as leaders, and did not act like leaders'. Scholarship also highlight the need of formal trainings and workshops for women leaders in order to foster their career goals (Bilimoria et al., 2008; White, 2012). However, there are limited examples of successful

leadership trainings and workshops of academic administrators in developing as well as developed countries (Braun et al., 2009; Deem, 2002; Gmelch, 2002; Montez, 2003; Peus et al., 2015). This situation is found more critical in this study, where no women had formal leadership training and most of them were socialized to perform traditional gender roles. Therefore, they were working harder to learn new leadership roles with their personal experience and exposure.

It is evident in this study that networks and mentors served as great opportunities for the participants to learn and polish their leadership qualities in absence of the fundamental leadership socialization and formal trainings. Unlike previous studies which highlight that women lack good networks and mentorship; women in this study had many professional fellows and associates, who facilitated them in understanding critical leadership roles. Networks also helped them to enhance their knowledge and to establish new opportunities of professional growth. The participants also recognized the importance of formal networks in their professional growth but it required more time and efforts. Most of them couldn't spare much time for developing strong professional networks due to their dual roles in family and organizations. Family was their first priority and were unwilling to compromise their household commitments.

However, they focused on increasing their informal networks and found them facilitating in learning advance knowledge and techniques. It shows that networks are essential for professional growth of women, particularly in early stages of the career progression but at the same time, many women also start their new marital life and experience marital adjustment issues that adversely influence their professional growth. Conversely, males don't experience such constraints and spend enough time in developing professional networks that result in their rapid promotions and success. These findings also resonate with the previous studies that highlight the significance of networking and mentoring in career progression (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Fitzsimmons et al., 2014; Peus et al., 2015; Sanchez & Lehnert, 2019). It is evident that it requires more time and efforts due to which women leaders are less likely to get benefit from the mentors (Ramaswami et al., 2014). Ashford and Schinoff (2016) highlighted that many men don't take interest in mentoring their women colleagues.

The findings of this study highlight the prevailing discourse of gender and age in Pakistani society. It has strong influence on women's leadership role management

and implementation of their authority. Participants, who achieved leadership positions in quite young age, were confronting greater challenges in exercising their authority. They experienced constraints in meeting deadlines due to the lack of cooperation of their male colleagues and administrations, who were senior in terms of age but junior in terms of designations. It is clear that some behaviors are implicit in our culture about women leaders that are expressed by the males through their gestures and body language and women have to deal with them implicitly or explicitly. Moreover, it becomes more challenging, when it added up with the age factor. Males believe themselves as more powerful due to their age and gender; therefore, a woman has no right to impose work on them. They have strong lobbies that propagate their interests and develop pressure on women. It seems that however, there is a prominent change in professional behavior due to the higher education but gender behaviors are still unchanged due to the existing power relations between men and women, and the traditional patriarchal structure that support and strengthens these power structures. This discourse not only affects the behavior of the male colleagues but also the attitude of the subordinate male staff with women.

Participants reported that the majority of their lower staff members are elder males. Therefore, most of the women forwarded their instructions in a very respectful and polite manner. This courteous behavior developed a sense of power among male members that often resulted in deliberate delays in the work. Consequently, it increased workload on women leaders as it often ended up accomplishing most of the tasks by their own. They were also obliged their colleagues for their work and cooperation. Women reported numerous approaches to overcome this challenge i.e. following rules, timely assigning tasks, defining work categorically, empowering team, avoiding too much orders, direct communication, reminders, written explanation, reporting in ACRs and expelling.

Although women leaders have the right to take firm actions but as discussed earlier, most of them are accommodating; therefore, they avoid taking such actions and intend to resolve the issues by offering available resources and assistance, soft reminders or communicating the possible consequences of the inadequate behaviors to their team members. These strategies are very helpful in successful management of their leadership roles. Literature also suggests that male colleagues respond differently

to a woman's orders and feel reluctance in followership of women due to which women leaders experience obstacles in adequate exercise of their authority (Jiménez et al., 2017). However, no study so far have been focused upon the influence of age factor upon women's exercise of authority in academic leadership that is an important discourse in countries like Pakistan which have distinct cultural patterns that associate greater respect and power with elder males in society.

Another interesting finding of this study is that all women were concerned about the wellbeing of their family and considered it as their priority. However, balancing personal and professional life was most challenging part of their life (Ahl, 2007; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Noor, 2004; Rehman & Roomi, 2012; Roomi & Parrott, 2008; Sandberg & Scovell, 2014; Shelton, 2006; Welter, 2004). At home, they had primary responsibility of managing all kind of domestic activities (Ahl, 2007; Carter & Allen, 1997); and at the workplace, they were academic leaders, researchers and teachers. They were required to handle abundant and multiple tasks. This is distinctive in socio-cultural environment of Pakistan, where life of women revolves around their families' traditions. The successful management of all these responsibilities requires various skills, time and resources (Clark, 2000; Morris et al., 2006). Rehman and Roomi (2012) also report that the socio-cultural norms about women's family responsibilities are even more complex in Pakistani society as compared to Western societies, where husband and family may not have significant influences on women's career.

This study finds that most of the participants had good family support system in organizing their dual roles. Most of the participants had families that understood the nature of their job and assisted them in all possible ways to accomplish their tasks. However, they also reported that their family life was disturbed due to their administrative responsibilities. Moreover, joint family system, which is common in Pakistani society, also provided assistance to these professional women by organizing their household activities during office hours. Furthermore, women who were married but hadn't kids were having less responsibilities as compared to the mothers. Married women with children were very careful about socialization of their children because it could not be done by others family members effectively. They had to manage time for their children from their busy schedules because most of the husbands laid this responsibility exclusively on them and didn't cooperate in this respect. Most of the

participants in this study decided to keep their family small as none of them had more than three children. They were well aware about their primary responsibility of child socialization and didn't want their children to suffer due to their professional commitments. Small family size facilitated them in successful management of all personal and professional activities.

Unlike women in developed countries where house maid is not a norm and women have to arrange baby sitters or childcare providers (Eagly, 2007); Pakistani women have great opportunity of having part-time or full-time domestic assistants on very low remunerations, beside the support from their immediate and extended family. In this study, women found their house maids very accommodating in managing most of their household chores including washing, ironing, cleaning, cooking etc. They mentioned that their leadership position often demanded more time and energy at workplace due to which they found less time for domestic activities. In such circumstances, domestic assistants facilitate them in accomplishing their roles within time and taking care of their children during office hours. This finding is aligned with the previous studies conducted in developing countries which reported that women leaders can balance their dual responsibilities due to the support from their relatives and house maids (Luke, 1997; Murniati, 2012).

It is also evident that single mothers have greater family responsibilities; therefore, they remain more careful in managing their professional and household activities. Two of the participants were single mothers and also had little kids. They had great concerns about the socialization of their kids because they could not find enough time for their socialization due to their leadership commitments. Pakistan is a male dominating society, where single mothers are responsible for the care of their children. People often criticize working women for giving less care to their children. Leadership demands more time and women leaders often have to stay late in office to meet the deadlines. Moreover, they have less supportive environment for child care at their homes. Furthermore, they cannot completely rely on their housemaids. Consequently, they often apologize to their top hierarchies for not attending late meetings and conferences. This is an important discourse present in Pakistani society that created barriers in career advancement for women. Many studies conducted in the West and the East report that women with children confront unique set of challenges

that often leads to the distraction from professional life. Therefore, women require multi skills to maintain work-family balance (Budig et al., 2016; Kitroeff & Silver-Greenburg, 2018; Kittelstrom, 2010; Pauw, 2009; Riordan & Louw-Potgieter, 2011; Williams, 2004). However, little is known about the problems and strategies of single mothers occupying leadership positions.

The findings also emphasize the influence of a prevailing discourse about the career oriented women. In Pakistani society, it is assumed that women can't manage their marital life successfully. Moreover, society also victimizes these women by frequently asking about their marriage. Social curriculum is taught in diverse ways by family, education and religion that defines gender roles, and changing these roles is assumed to bring dysfunction. Career oriented women are not considered ideal for marriage as they cannot give much time to their family. Power is badly associated with earning hands in Pakistani society that are predominantly men. Society determines that males are the bread earners and the decision makers of the family. Decisions about the minor household aspects like kitchen are also taken by them. This power structure is influenced, when women start participating in economic activities because now the power have to dilute and men are not ready to share the power. Society doesn't recognize the efforts of professional women.

Similarly, she also does not fight for her rights and silently accept all discriminations as normal. Women are socialized to compromise their career progression due to their domestic responsibilities and women, who fight for their career, are not acknowledged by the society. Consequently, most of them remain unmarried or often experience separation or divorce. They also experience harassments and threats from their male counterparts, as discussed earlier. Review of literature also suggested that women are considered as the primary care givers of the family due to which they often sacrifice their professional life and left behind in their career trajectories (Ahl, 2007; Celikten, 2005; Firdouse, 2006; Kamal, 1997; Sidani, 2005; Su et al., 2000). However, there is lack of scholarship about the challenges of career oriented women leaders in academia (Cubillo & Brown, 2003).

The results of the present study indicate that all women leaders are apprehensive about their research productivity because it is negatively affected due to their leadership responsibilities. Most of them cannot spare quality time for their personal research in

universities due to the persistent administrative workload. Moreover, they are unable to spare enough time at home for research productivity due to their household commitments. This is found to be one of the major reasons of women's lack of research efficiency in academic environment that further leads to their slow promotions as compared to their male counterparts.

Most of the organizations in this study do not consider administrative experience while promotion of their employees and research publication was the main criteria for promotion of the faculty. Therefore, women have to make some additional efforts to meet the organizational standards for promotion. It is evident that women utilize various strategies to overcome this challenge such as giving extra time to research at home, utilizing library to get some quality time, developing research networks and utilizing advanced technologies to improve their research productivity. Most of them are engaged in collective research projects with students and junior faculty to compensate research gaps. They have an ability to get work done due to their leadership skills and research experience. However, they are also concerned about their independent research because they couldn't do direct bench work.

It is clear that women HODs with less administrative experience struggle hard to manage their new roles. They also find fewer opportunities for research activities as compared to the participant having more leadership and research exposure. Many studies in developed countries also highlight that women are marginalized in gendered research economy that leads to their underrepresentation at senior leadership positions in higher education (Bagilhole & White 2011; Fox, 2010; Hacifazlıoğlu, 2010; Leahey, 2006; Morley, 2010, 2013; O'Connor, 2015). However, there is scarcity of scholarship in developing countries like Pakistan that have unique cultural settings in which women leaders confront distinct challenges in research productivity because they are overburdened due to their dual roles and have less resources that are necessary to publish research in impact factor journals.

While, women leaders confront multiple challenges and utilize numerous strategies to overcome such challenges, they also get numerous personal and professional opportunities that keep them motivated in achieving their career goals. The most rewarding aspect of leadership for the majority of the participants was their satisfaction and honor to contribute in organizational growth and achieve their potential

goals. It gave them a sense of achievement in their personal and professional life. In Pakistani society, most of the women are deprived from higher leadership positions. Woman, who become a leader, take it as an honor because it's a great achievement for her in existing patriarchal structure. Power provides a sense of contentment to the individuals and it increases with the increase of power. Women were traditionally restricted to perform leadership roles but contemporary practices facilitated them to participate in academic administration. Now they feel empowered by achieving senior leadership positions in academic administration in higher education. They enjoy their leadership status because it provides them an opportunity to contribute in academic policy development.

As most of the participants were initially not socialized for administrative roles, their leadership status developed opportunities of learning managerial and administrative skills that helped them in their career advancement. It also facilitated them to recognize their leadership abilities in a male dominated world and to confront the traditional stereotypes that discourage women in administrative roles. It also improved their interpersonal skills that helped them in effective management with diversified groups. Women leaders considered it as an amazing opportunity of interaction with top management to which they were previously denied as a faculty member. Furthermore, it helped them to develop strong formal and informal networks because they were the first contact person in their department. Their professional leadership skills were also recognized by the senior management that developed gratification and honor for them. Women took it as an achievement and a door step to their professional success in academic environment that is predominantly male. Moreover, it strengthened their professional profile because it added leadership experience that could help them in their career advancement. They were also getting economic benefits in term of monetary allowance, transportation facility and residence that developed more attraction for them in leadership positions, particularly in public sector universities.

Women also get opportunities to participate in major academic and administrative activities. As most of the universities included in this study, had fewer women representatives in their top administration; therefore, it was important to get an in-depth insight on women's involvement in top decision making processes and how



their perspectives are taken by their executive bodies. Many participants expressed their opportunities and constraints in sharing and defending their standpoints with their senior leadership. Narratives of the respondents revealed that there are fewer women in senior academic administration and most of them avoid to exchange their ideas due to the prevalent male domination and their inner self-doubt that they are incompetent.

Moreover, women usually have lower voice pitch, due to which their perspectives could not be heard by all members on the board. It is found that people resist the opposite opinions, especially when it comes from women because there is a dominant discourse in society that women never come up with good ideas. In Pakistani society, there is a strong masculine ideology that influences all spheres of women's lives including personal and professional. Loud voice is strongly associated with males and depicts their confidence but whenever a woman speaks louder, she is criticized for being masculine. Solnit (2014) also found that women often subject to the interruption by their male colleagues while interaction. They learn to deal with such micro aggressions by wisdom and gaining more professional experience.

Most importantly it is evident in this study that women have to prove their credibility at their workplace to get recognition as leaders in the masculine world. Universities' top management do not acknowledge women standpoints unless they make extraordinary efforts to justify their arguments because there is a blind perception in society that women never come up with a strong proposal. However, men thoughts are always appreciated and encouraged because they are perceived as competent unless they prove themselves otherwise. These discourses are deep rooted in society and adversely affect the professional growth of women; therefore, they have to be strong and struggle hard to become visible in top leadership. It also develops self-doubt in some women about their leadership abilities; consequently, they don't participate in the decision making process. They even do not intrude even if they know that their male counterparts are not having a valid argument.

It is concluded by the above detailed discussion about women's experiences of academic leadership that women in Pakistani society confront numerous challenges that include work-life balance, lack of fundamental leadership socialization, lack of formal trainings, less research productivity, age and gender disparities, harassment, and threats etc. It is also found that women try to maintain their unique feminine identities by

utilizing distinct strategies that include accommodating style of leadership, proving their credibility by consistent hard work and efforts, learning new roles, focusing on team work, careful listening with patience, ignoring fallacious critiques, following rules, taking advice from mentors, self-reliance, following rules, empowering their team etc. It is found that leadership also brings great opportunities for women that include learning and professional exposure, mentoring and networking, role modeling for future women leaders, honor and self-esteem, participation in academic policy and planning, strengthening profile for future leadership endeavors, family support system and household assistants.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Conclusion**

Education is one of the fundamental institutes of society, where women were previously underrepresented. In recent decades, globalization has put great emphasis on women education and participation in the workforce around the world. The recent transformations in academic structures led to the increased visibility of women in all spheres of society. Now many women are working in the academic organizations; however, they are invisible at senior leadership positions. The experiences of these less represented women at top leadership positions in higher educational institutes is well documented in the West; however, few studies have been attempted so far in Asia, particularly in Pakistan, where women are increasingly participating in the higher educational management (Morley & Crossouard, 2016; Murniati, 2012; Oplatka, 2006).

This qualitative study aimed at investigating and exploring the lived experiences of women at academic leadership positions in higher educational institutions in twin cities of Pakistan; Rawalpindi and Islamabad. It was intended to extend an understanding about personal, socio-cultural and institutional factors that supported or impeded women in attaining and maintaining senior leadership positions in academia and explored the strategies to achieve their career goals.

It is concluded that women tend to practice democratic, accommodating and consultative team based style of leadership to achieve their organizational goals. Women also share some common traits of academic leadership that distinguish their style of academic leadership that include patience, cooperation, emotional intelligence and flexibility. These leadership styles of women are found contradictory to the dominant leadership discourse of firmness and assertiveness that results in development of greater challenges for women. However, tolerance is found as an effective strategy of women in quick resolution of the problems, because it allows them in careful understanding and analysis of the issues. It also keeps them apart from the disputes for managing disagreements in a more effective manner. Women leaders experience greater obstacles in managing unique and critical leadership roles due to traditional gendered

socialization and lack of formal leadership training programs. Therefore, women need to become more self-reliant by working harder for learning new leadership roles with their personal experience and exposure, and by taking help from their mentors and social networks.

More importantly, there is prevalence of strong masculine ideologies in Pakistani society that get strengthened by the deeply embedded stereotypes. It also persuades men in their attempt to harass women leaders in academia. Especially, unmarried women experience greater verbal and nonverbal harassment at their work place. Males often use impertinent language because they are still not ready to share their powers with women. Moreover, the established discourses of gender and age in Pakistani society also influence women's leadership role management and implementation of authority within the organizations. Young women experience greater constraints in achieving professional goals due to the lack of cooperation from their male colleagues and administrations. Most of them are elders but working at junior positions. These behaviors are implicit in our culture about women leaders and expressed by males through their communication, gestures and body languages. Women have to deal with them implicitly or explicitly.

Beside numerous constraints experienced by women leaders in higher education, there are also some good opportunities that keep them motivated and enthusiastic in achieving their career goals. Family support is found to be instrumental in maintaining work-life balance and dealing with critical attitudes present in universities and community. It is evident that family life of women is disturbed due to their administrative responsibilities. However, their life partners, immediate family, in-laws and house maids provide good assistance by organizing the household activities. Furthermore, they prefer to maintain small family size for effective management of their primary responsibility of child socialization because they don't wish to ignore their children due to their professional commitments.

Women leaders also get opportunities to participate in major academic and administrative activities and policy making. Universities have fewer women representatives in their top administration and most of the women don't exchange their ideas due to the prevalent male domination and their inner self-doubt that they are incompetent. Moreover, women usually have lower voice pitch, due to which their

perspectives cannot be heard by all members on the board. Loud voice is strongly associated with males and it shows their confidence but whenever a woman speaks louder, she is criticized to be muscular. People usually resist the opposite opinions, especially when it comes from women because there is a dominant discourse in society that women never come up with good ideas. It influences all spheres of women's lives including personal and professional. It is concluded that women academic leaders in Pakistan confront numerous challenges and try to maintain their unique feminine identities by utilizing distinct strategies. Leadership position also brings great opportunities for them and they are struggling hard to maintain their leadership position and enthusiastic to bring a positive change in traditional leadership discourse.

## **9.1 Implications**

This study was carried out at a small scale as a first step to document the voice of underrepresented women leaders in higher education in Pakistan; therefore, the implications cannot be generalized in terms of its actual findings. However, the findings can contribute to an understanding of a general context in which women leaders manage to attain and maintain senior administrative positions in academia. The findings of this study can be implemented at various levels.

### **9.1.1 Implications for Women**

This study established the importance of in-depth analysis of problems/issues/dilemmas faced by women leaders in the context of Pakistan. It is found that women lack updated knowledge about the policies and programs related to their selection, promotion, monetary benefits and child care services and they often rely upon their male colleagues to get certain information, who often misguide them. Therefore, awareness about the policies and programs related to their personal and professional growth is necessary.

Women also need to develop strong formal women networks and mentorship programs for their junior women colleagues, who are also struggling in career trajectories. Strong support system from their female counterparts would be valuable in terms of identifying their leadership strengths and eliminating their weaknesses by continuous moral and intellectual support. Social media can be helpful for women in

developing women forums because they can assess it any time without disturbing their regular work and family commitments.

It is found in this study that many women hesitate to discuss their issues with their senior administration due to which they often experience disparity. Therefore, women need to boost up their confidence and fight for their rights in community and organizations by using formal procedures that can be very effective rather than crying and highlighting the issue in their social circle.

It is found that women have unique leadership identities that are complementary to the dominant masculine discourse. So, there is a need for these women to maintain their unique identities as a women leader and work hard to prove their credibility's in dominant patriarchal structure.

They also need to share their success stories with other women at different platforms. Women leaders deal with conflicts and fragmentations in their family as well as in professional lives. They have an ability to produce and reproduce new cultural norms favoring women. This study has given an opportunity to women to share their ideologies and efforts that can help other women in identifying their skills by getting knowledge about successful women. Their unique reflections will help in discovering new patterns for leadership for women leaders in community.

### **9.1.2 Implications for Future Research**

A significant gap in leadership scholarship is found because most of the studies are conducted in the Western contexts and findings are generalized in other cultures. As discussed earlier, there is dearth of scholarship about women academic leadership in East Asia, particularly in Pakistan. Therefore, the results brought some important implications for further interventions.

This study is qualitative in nature and focused on universities of general category located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, Pakistan. These universities represent unique organizational structures and cultures. This situation might be different in universities in different categories, i.e. medical, engineering, information technology etc. or universities present in other geographical territories. Future research can explore women's experiences in other university settings, such as less-competitive and prestigious universities, or public and private sector universities. The results would be

useful in ascertaining whether women's opportunities, impediments, and the strategies they use to succeed in their careers are similar or different in other university settings.

This research provided a valuable approach for exploring both challenges and opportunities experienced by women educational managers in the context of Pakistan. However, women patterns of higher educational leadership can be investigated in multinational perspective to highlight the patterns of change and variations in experiences of women academic leaders across the world. In this new era of commercialization and globalization, it has become necessary for researchers to make cross-cultural and cross-social comparisons of women leadership to understand their issues. Moreover, it is necessary to explore this phenomenon in other organizational setting such as industries, media, health etc. and also make cross-industrial comparisons, as this study was limited to the women executives in higher education.

Many women also identified the need to get aspirations form other successful women. Many researchers in the developed countries investigated the factors of women administrative aspirations; however, such studies are missing in the developing countries of the world, especially in academia. Therefore, there is a need to design studies to explore the motivational factors that determine leadership career for women in developing countries. These studies can involve young faculty with mid-level managerial experience to evaluate factors behind their slow professional growth and success. Such researchers should prefer mix method approach to get good understanding of multi-dimensional issues mobility for women.

This study is limited to the experiences of women leaders in higher education and have not incorporated perspectives of men. Future research can focus on the comparative analysis of leadership styles, opportunities and obstacles for both men and women to get a holistic view of academic leadership in higher education in Pakistan. It is most often assumed that only women experience obstacles in their career paths but it might not be true. Therefore, there is a need to take a contrasting view to reveal the accurate information about distinctive constraints for both men and women.

In studies of leadership, the followers' stories are rarely taken into account, which are fundamental part of the organizational structure. Further research should also include the silent voices of those who work with these women to understand that how do these administrative assistants view leadership and what are the views of the

“powerless” who can become powerful by their action or inaction? As Weiler (1988) suggested, the less powerful find creative and even powerful ways to resist, and individuals struggle to create their own meaning. Previous research shows that men oppress women, but there is need for further study on how women oppress and limit themselves. More research is needed on how women perceive and act toward other women and how can women negotiate oppression from other women and themselves?

### **9.1.3 Implications for Policy and Practice**

The results of this study also suggested many practical and policy related implications. There is growing awareness about the importance of the role of women in academic leadership in Pakistan (Bana & Khaki, 2015) and many women are now imparting their skills and knowledge in academic leadership; however, it is found that little or no attention is paid to polish their leadership skills. Although, some women attended leadership development workshops but these trainings are insufficient to provide with an effective framework for guiding their actions in uncertain, unexpected and unknown situations and they consider their own leadership orientation as well as personal beliefs in such circumstances. Therefore, there is a need to develop formal leadership training programs for academic leaders in higher education because most of them have academic and research backgrounds that is not helpful in managing and organizing leadership responsibilities in a successful manner. The trainings should be more practical and utilize current officers as instructors. Women leaders should be provided the specially tailored training manuals. Moreover, the trainings should be imparted before joining the respective position.

In addition to the trainings, organizations should develop support systems to enhance women confidence to discuss their challenges in decision-making “create[ing] practice analysis groups in order to promote reflection, judgment, and a sense of responsibility among their leaders” (Langloise & Lapointe 2007, p. 258). It is recommended that collaborative opportunities should be provided to the women to develop an understanding of ethics in their practices (Denig & Quinn, 2001). These collaborative opportunities may foster “dialogues about ethical situations with peers” (Norberg, & Johansson, 2007, p. 289) before making a decision.



All participants highlighted the importance of mentoring in learning leadership roles; however, none of them had formal mentoring that could assist them in an effective way in organizing critical and advanced leadership requirements. Many studies conducted in different times have highlight the significance of mentoring for women executives, as it helps to develop confidence, trust and satisfaction among women (Arokiasamy & Ismail, 2008; Kaminski & Yakura, 2008; Zachary, 2005). Therefore, there is a need to design formal mentorship programs for women working in academic organizations. It will help to identify women's leadership abilities and to integrate them with the skills of other successful women leaders working in various organizations. It would also increase their access to new opportunities and resources, as well as develop strong networks of women faculty and leaders.

Another major obstacle experienced by many participants in this study is the lack of supportive and skilled administrative staff. Many women were facing challenges due to the unethical behavior of the staff. These women were unable to meet the deadlines due to the deliberate delays in work by their staff and they ended up by doing most of the work by their own selves. Therefore, academic institutions need to develop policies and programs that aim at increasing productivity, effectiveness and work ethics of the administrative staff such as training for effective time management and advance computer skills. Moreover, workshops and technical education should be initiated for the old staff members to improve their work efficiency. Furthermore, ethical counseling should be started for the employees to develop professional attitude.

Women leaders in this study were cognizant of their challenges in maintaining balance between their family and professional roles. They were highly motivated to pursue their leadership career but they also recognized their primary responsibility of managing their domestic responsibilities effectively. At home, most of them were wives and mothers and had to meet their family expectations and at office, they were administrators and teachers as well, and had to meet multiple deadlines in an effective manner. They had to induce more efforts to keep all activities smooth at home as well as in office to get success. It is found that most of them had cooperative spouses and in-laws. Moreover, all of them had house-maids to assist them in child care and other household chores. Furthermore, all universities were providing daycare facility for

employees as well as for students; however, many women avoided utilizing that service due to insufficient knowledge or the low quality of the service and care.

In addition, women leaders also required late sittings to attend meetings and conferences. They couldn't leave their children in a low quality day care; therefore, they preferred to keep their own housemaids. Unlike participants in this study, other women in different regions of Pakistan might not have potential resources to manage full-time maids for their children; therefore, universities should provide affordable and improved facilities in daycare centers. Training should be regularly conducted to improve effectiveness of the daycare staff because many women lag behind in research and networking due to the unavailability of high-quality and reliable child care services in their organizations. They cannot take risk to leave their children alone for longer durations for their professional commitments and most of them even cannot stay late due to their child care and domestic responsibilities. Universities can use their existing health clinics or women centers to begin the dissemination of information to all women.

It is also evident that top leadership positions such as the post of VCs and deans are highly politicized in most of the universities. As women have less strong political networks; therefore, they remain invisible at top leadership position in higher educational institutes. It is recommended that the policy makers should formulate policies for fair selections and promotions of the leaders in the universities. For example, leadership positions should be de-politicized, so that political leaders will have no role in appointments and promotions of the faculty and administrators.

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## **Appendices**



## **Appendix A: Interview Guide**

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Background Information of the Interviewee**

1. Name of respondent
2. Contact details
3. Age
4. Marital status
5. Family type
6. Education
7. Current workplace
8. Current designation/ leadership Position
9. Total work Experience
10. Total experience as academic leader in higher education
11. How long you are working at your current administrative position

### **Theme 1: Personal Skills, Strategies and Resources**

1. What is the meaning of leadership for you from your personal experience?
2. What is your leadership style? i.e. assertive, submissive, accommodating etc.
3. What kind of leadership traits do you possess? And how do these traits facilitate/hamper you in your work responsibilities? i.e. Flexibility, Resilience, Commitment, Confidence, Determination, Self-motivation etc.
4. What are your institution norms about a good leader? i.e. independent, flexible, strong, eager, self-confident, inspirational, dedicative, strong decision maker etc.
5. What opportunities do you get to show your leadership in your organizations? Departmental activities/issues, heading different committees, participating in top management meeting, leading seminars, workshops etc.
6. What personal and professional benefits do you think there are as an academic leader?

7. How do you manage your work responsibilities? What challenges and opportunities do you experience and what strategies do you apply?
8. What kind of strategies and skills do you require to improve your leadership position? And how you are preparing yourself for that?
9. Does your institute consider educational qualifications and research publication as factors in choosing an academic leader? Please explain.
10. How do you value advance studies in attaining higher leadership positions?
11. How leadership roles influence your research work? And how do you manage time for your research work?
12. How do you view the significance of leadership workshops, seminars or conferences with regard to your present role? What kind of trainings did you receive? What was the nature of those trainings? Also describe its outcomes?
13. What are your institutions norms about leadership trainings? (probe for gender aspects in training). Share your personal experiences
14. How do you exercise your authority in your organization? Do you feel it easy to handle critical situations in an effective manner? What kind of challenges do you face in such situations? What kind of cooperation do you receive by your colleagues both male and females in such conditions?
15. How your instructions/orders are perceived by your subordinates (male/females)? Did they take them at a serious note?
16. Can you please share an experience, when anyone ever questioned your authority? How did you manage in that situation?
17. How do you view the involvement of your subordinates in decision making process? And how it influences effective decision making process?
18. What kind of criticism do you receive by your colleagues? How do you influence by that? And how do you respond to that?
19. What kinds of risks/threats are there for you at this leadership position and how do you manage such risks in this administrative setup?
20. How do you behave whenever you feel disappointed at your current leadership position? What were the reasons? Share your experiences
21. Do you feel yourself as an empowered leader? Please give reasons and give examples? i.e. decision making, accessing and controlling of resources etc.

22. What factors facilitate/hamper you to achieve empowerment in this institute?
23. How promotion to senior leadership position leads toward your empowerment?
24. How do you feel the difference in your empowerment in last ten years of your work experience? (At family, community and institutional level)
25. How do you view the importance of socio-economic background in obtaining and maintaining higher leadership positions? How it influenced you in obtaining and maintaining this position?
26. In your opinion, how political factors influence in obtaining and maintain higher leadership positions? Share your experiences

## **Theme 2: Social and Cultural Factors Contributing Toward Women Leadership**

1. What was the selection process for this leadership position like for you?  
(Please comment on the entire process, including the advertisement, criteria for application, number of attempts that you made, and difficulties you faced during the process of application.
2. What are the promotion criteria in your institute? And how does this criterion is implemented on all the members? (Probe for gender aspects)
3. How many opportunities of promotion in your job do you had in last five years in current institute? Do you think, promotion to higher rank can contribute to your leadership position? Please explain.
4. What kind of formal and informal networks do you have in your institute and community? (Probe for gender aspects). How these networks facilitate or hamper you in your career development and in gaining access to leadership position.
5. How do you think that mentors play vital role in success of a female leader?  
How did mentors created opportunities for you in extending your networks that resulted in your promotions? Can you please share your own experience?
6. How women leaders are generally perceived in your family, community and organization? Discuss the norms that support or deny women leadership in your community? And how they influenced your leadership status and roles?

7. What is the role of socialization for you in learning leadership roles? How does it facilitated or hampered you to become a successful leader?
8. How did your family responsibilities influence your leadership roles? What kind of social and cultural pressures do you face to maintain balance between your dual roles? How do you overcome these pressures (strategies)?

### **Theme 3: Influence of Dominant Discourses on Women Academic Leadership**

1. What kinds of gender based power relation/power structures operate in your institute? And what kind of gender based knowledge they produce? i.e policies, decisions, curriculums etc.
2. How these patriarchal structures/power relations influence your leadership in this institute? How do you try to modify these power structures? What challenges do you face and how do you overcome? Share your experiences.
3. How do you think that the leadership roles are discursively produced and reproduced to limit women participation at senior administrative level in society?
4. How do you participate in top decision making process?
5. How is your standpoint viewed by your senior and junior male/female colleagues?
6. How your standpoint is influenced by dominant standpoint in your institute? What are the reasons behind that and how you try to implement your standpoint? Please share your experiences.
7. Was there a time while serving in your present role when you were treated less or more because of your gender? Share your experiences.

### **Closing:**

- A. Future correspondence for clarification and cross checking.

## **Appendix B: Invitation Letter**

### **To Whom It May Concern**

Subject: Invitation to participate in a research project on “Women Experiences of Academic Leadership in Higher Education in Rawalpindi and Islamabad”.

Dear Madam

I wish to invite you to participate in a research project, which I am undertaking under the supervision of Dr Rabia Ali at the Department of Sociology, International Islamic University, Islamabad. This research is the part of my PhD degree in sociology.

This research tends to explore women’s views and perceptions about their leadership experiences in higher education. By investigating women educational leadership experiences and reviewing current literature on the topic, I hope to develop a better understanding on the barriers and constraints that women leaders experience in academia.

I am inviting you to participate in this study because you are an academic administrator in your university. I obtained your name and address from your university’s website. Approximately 20 - 25 women administrators will take part in this study.

If you are agreed to participate in this study, I would like you to answer interview questions about the factors that facilitate and impede your career advancement as a senior academic administrator. The interview will take about an hour. The interview will take place in a venue of your choice. After the interviews, I might contact you again via email, if I would need to clarify something from you.

I will keep your information confidential and if I will write a report about this study, I will do so in such a way that you couldn’t be identified. There are no known risks from being in this study, and you may not be benefited personally. However, I hope that

others may benefit in the future from what we will learn as a result of this study. Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary.

If you decide to participate in this study, please send me an email at [aishauw@gmail.com](mailto:aishauw@gmail.com).

Thank you very much for your consideration.

My departmental permission letter is attached herewith.

Sincerely

Aisha Bhatti

PhD Scholar, IIUI

## **Appendix C: Consent Form**

I ....., have read and understood the purpose of the study and provide my consent to participate as requested.

I accept the terms and conditions governing this research and grant the permission for audio recording of the interview.

I understand that my identity and that of my university will be kept anonymous and any information provided by me will be treated as confidential.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time but up to the point where I confirm the accuracy of the interviewed transcript and the analytical process begins.

Sign:

Date:

## Appendix D: Brief Profile of the Participants

**Table 1: Brief Profile of the Participants**

Sr. No.	Participant	Position	Brief Profile
1	Khadija	Chairperson Assistant Professor	43 years old, unmarried, nuclear family.  Above twenty years of total work and five years of academic leadership experience.
2	Naila	Dean Professor	50 years old, married, two children, joint family.  Above twenty years of total work and around ten years of academic leadership experience.
3	Manahil	Director Associate Professor	38 years old, married, no children, joint family.  Sixteen years of total work and five years of academic leadership experience.
4	Anum	Dean Professor	47 years old, widow, two children, nuclear family.  Around eighteen years of total work and twelve years of academic leadership experience.
5	Sana	Director Associate Professor	48 years old; married, two children, joint family.  Twenty-three years of total work and five years of academic leadership experience.
6	Amber	Chairperson	39 years old, married, no children, nuclear family.



Sr. No.	Participant	Position	Brief Profile
		Assistant Professor	Twelve years of total work and three years of academic leadership experience.
7	Noreen	Chairperson Associate Professor	48 years old; married, two children, nuclear family. Twenty-three years of total work and three years of academic leadership experience.
8	Sobia	Dean Professor	54 years old; married, three children, nuclear family. Twenty years of academic and eight years of academic leadership experience.
9	Warda	Chairperson Associate Professor	39 years old, married, two children, joint family. Over fourteen years of total work and five years of academic leadership experience.
10	Saima	Chairperson Assistant Professor	42 years old; married, three children, nuclear family. Eleven years of teaching and above three years of academic leadership experience.
11	Faria	Chairperson Assistant Professor	33 years old, unmarried, nuclear family. Above ten years of teaching and three years of academic leadership experience.
12	Liba	Chairperson	41 years old; divorced, two children, nuclear family.

Sr. No.	Participant	Position	Brief Profile
		Assistant Professor	Six years of academic and one year leadership experience in HE.
13	Sara	Chairperson	40 years old; unmarried, nuclear family.
		Assistant Professor	Eighteen years of academic and above four years of academic leadership experience.
14	Seher	Chairperson	35 years old, unmarried, joint family.
		Associate Professor	Around ten years of total work and three years of administrative experience in academia.
15	Zakia	Chairperson	47 years old; married, two children, nuclear family.
		Assistant Professor	Twenty-two years of academic and four years of leadership experience in HE.
16	Naheed	Chairperson	30 years old, unmarried, nuclear family.
		Assistant Professor	Around six years of university teaching and three years of academic leadership experience.
17	Alia	Chairperson	45 years old; married, three children, joint family.
		Assistant Professor	Eleven years teaching and four years of academic leadership experience.
18	Saba	Chairperson	42 years old; widow, three children, nuclear family.
		Assistant Professor	Around seven years of academic and two years of academic leadership experience.

Sr. No.	Participant	Position	Brief Profile
19	Naveeda	Chairperson Associate Professor	55 years old, married, two children, nuclear family. Around twenty years of teaching and seven years of academic leadership experience.
20	Memoona	Chairperson Assistant Professor	45 years old, unmarried, joint family. Fifteen years of academic and seven years of academic leadership experience.
21	Shama	Chairperson Assistant Professor	33 years old, married, one children, joint family. Two years of teaching and academic leadership experience in HE.
22	Zainab	Chairperson Associate Professor	45 years old; married, three children, nuclear family. Over seventeen years of teaching and eight years of academic leadership experience in HE.
23	Najma	Chairperson Assistant Professor	41 years old; married, two children, nuclear family. Fifteen years of academic and three years of academic leadership experience.

Source: Interviews with the Participants

