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ACADEMIC WOMEN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE : CAREER PROSPECTS, ASPIRATIONS AND FAMILY ROLE CONSTRAINTS

Betty Jo Dorsey
Department of Educational Foundations
University of Zimbabwe

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Introduction

The under-representation and status of women academics in universities has been the focus of a number of research studies carried out in the developed countries, over the past twenty-five years, particularly in Britain, the United States, Canada and Australia. Universities in these countries have been accused of discriminating practices with regard to hiring, promotion and the participation of women in university governance. (Bernard, 1964; Astin, 1989; Blier, 1972; Dinerman, 1971; Hunter, 1975; Sutherland, 1985; Simeone, 1987).

Studies in developing countries have tended to concentrate on gender inequalities in education at the primary and secondary school levels and especially inequalities for girls and women who live in rural areas. Studies have been carried out in a number of countries in Africa which also show the relatively low participation of women in the general labour force, outside of the agricultural sector. Very few studies have been concerned with inequalities for women in higher education and in academic careers. However, in Africa there have been two notable studies. The first was carried out by Fapohunda (1983) at the University of Lagos in which she examined the causes for the differences in male and female career ladders in academia. She concluded that 89% of difference could be accounted for by the lower qualifications and lower productivity of academic women at the University of Lagos and 11% was attributable to discriminatory practices in a male dominated institution. The second study by White (1988) at the University of Cape Town found that women were under-represented on the university staff in all faculties and clustered in the lower ranks.

Her study showed that while some men with lower qualifications were promoted to higher ranks, women with higher qualifications remained in the lower ranks of academia. White concluded from this and other evidence that systemic discrimination was the root cause of this inequity.

At independence in 1980 the University of Zimbabwe faced two major problems with regard to the composition of academic staff: a racial imbalance and a gender imbalance. A strong staff development programme was initiated which by 1987 had considerably improved the racial balance. The gender imbalance, however remained a problem. Women represent 21% of the academic staff, an increase of only 4% over the past ten years. They continue to be concentrated in the middle and lower academic ranks in all faculties and even with doctoral degrees are less likely than men to be promoted to the higher academic ranks of senior lecturer, associate professor and professor. Their participation in University governance is low with important decision making committees composed largely of male academics.

Consequently, the Ford Foundation gave a grant to the Human Resources Research Centre for a study to be undertaken which would investigate the problem of the under-representation and status of academic women at the University of Zimbabwe. This paper is based on one aspect of the project which was a survey of current members of the academic staff conducted in July-August 1988 using a mailed questionnaire.

The purpose of the survey was to investigate factors affecting academic career prospects for women. The questionnaire included items which would elicit data on gender differences with regard to academic rank, academic qualifications, productivity, involvement in University governance, attitudes towards an academic career, attitudes towards women in academic careers, and the extent to which home and family responsibilities affect academic careers. The questionnaire was pre-tested on a small pilot sample in June and revised.

Survey Population

The main survey included all present academic members of staff who were citizens or permanent residents. The population included 344 men and 41 women. The rationale for excluding staff on short-term contracts was that they did not have a long term

commitment to the University and would not be involved in a programme of staff development. It is anticipated that the results of this study will have an effect on staff development programme policies.

Survey Response Rate

There was an overall response rate of 58%. However, 9 questionnaires arrived too late to be included. A higher percentage of women (75%) responded than men (51.2%). This is probably due to the fact that many of the items on the questionnaire were concerned with issues relating to women academics and may be indicative of the lack of interest which non-respondent academics have regarding those issues. Some of the non-response rate is also due to absence of staff on contact and sabbatical leave. Nevertheless, there was a reasonably good response rate from all faculties with the highest rates coming from the faculties of Engineering, Veterinary Science, Agriculture, Education and Medicine. (See Table 1).

Characteristics of Academic Staff Respondents:

Age

The respondents ranged in age from 22-66 years with 59% under 40 years of age. Women were on average slightly younger than their male colleagues but the difference was not statistically significant.

Marital Status

There is a significant difference in the marital status of male and female academic staff with a higher percentage of single, divorced and widowed women staff members, 40%, while only 24.5% of the men are in the non-married category. Of those who are married, a higher percentage of men have spouses who are not employed, 21.3% versus 4.5% for women.

TABLE 1
Academic Staff Respondents by Faculty and Gender

	GENDER								
	MALE			FEMALE			TOTAL		
Faculty	Resp.		Pop.	Resp.		Pop.	Resp.		Pop.
	N	%	N	N	%	N	N	%	N
Agriculture	15	57.7	26	5	62..5	8	20	59.0	34
Arts	29	45.3	64	15	88.2	17	44	54.3	81
Commerce	4	28.6	14	4	100.0	4	8	44.4	18
Law	5	33.3	15	2	100.0	2	7	41.2	17
Education	18	51.4	35	8	80.0	10	26	57.8	45
Engineering	14	87.5	16	1	100.0	1	15	88.2	17
Medicine	29	54.7	53	14	63.6	22	43	57.3	75
Science	35	49.9	71	8	100.0	8	43	54.4	79
S/Studies	23	51.1	45	9	53.0	17	32	51.6	62
Vet/Science	4	80.0	5	2	100.0	2	6	85.7	7
TOTAL	176	51.2	344	68	75.0	91	244	56.1	435

N.B.The Population includes Academic Staff who are Zimbabwean Citizens or Permanent Residents. It excludes Contract Staff.

Number of Children

Academic women in this survey have on the average slightly fewer children than their male counter-parts, 2.2 versus 2.6. The difference, however, is not significant.

University Years of Experience

The majority of respondents both men and women have been teaching at the University for less than five years. Unfortunately, we did not ask whether they had University teaching experience elsewhere. Only 17% of the men and 14% of the women were members of the academic staff before independence in 1980.

Recruitment Patterns

The majority of both men and women obtained their academic posts through responding to an advertisement (59%). However, 38% of the women and 33% of the men were also recruited through staff contacts either while students in a particular department or through personal contact with staff members through whom they were requested to apply for advertised posts. This personal contact/mentor pattern of recruiting academic staff has been noted by other authors as being particularly important for recruiting young women who are more likely to be tentative, modest and less confident about their ability than men and thus need the encouragement from a respected lecturer or professor to help launch them into an academic career. (Bernard, 1964 p. 65; Rimmer and Davies, 1985 p. 161).

TABLE 2
How Academic post was obtained

	GENDER		
Post Obtained	MALE (N=176) %	FEMALE (N=68) %	TOTAL (N=244) %
Answered Advertisement	56.1	58.8	59.0
Department Staff Request	23.9	27.9	25.0
Recruited While Student	9.1	10.3	9.4
Staff Development Fellowship	11.4	8.8	10.7
Other	5.7	10.3	7.0

N.B.Percentages do not add to 100 because respondents may have obtained posts through one or more ways.

Reasons for choosing an academic career

These did not vary much by gender. The majority of men and women said that they "enjoy lecturing," that an academic career gives them the opportunity to pursue intellectual interests, to carry out research and to work in a stimulating environment. Altruistic reasons were also given by both men and women who said they felt they were doing "something useful", helping others and that an academic career gave them a "sense of purpose in life". Both groups also equally stressed the importance of "freedom" and "independent responsibility" which an academic career gives. Women more often than men mentioned that flexible time ta-

bling enabled them to continue a career and family responsibilities. A number of male lecturers who had tried careers in government, commerce and industry said they preferred the more intellectually stimulating atmosphere of the University and one said that it is "less stressful than commerce and industry". There are very few studies of academic career choices and the factors which influence individuals to choose such a career, this is especially so in the case of women. However, Gustad (in Bernard, 1964, p.64) reports that, "intrinsic or personal interest factors outweigh external or situational factors in the decision to enter the academic profession". Findings from our study would seem to corroborate this. Other studies have shown that few young people start out with the intended goal of becoming an academic and women more so than men tend to "drift into it". (Berelson in Bernard 1964, p. 64). This is also true of women in this study. Only one said that she had "always wanted to be an academic". Others mentioned returning to the University after teaching in high schools or teachers' colleges or after children were grown to study for postgraduate degrees and then being offered a post usually as a teaching or research assistant. Whatever route was taken to academia the reasons given by respondents in this study for choosing an academic career tend to fall into the intrinsic, personal interests category rather than an external or situational one. This tended to apply to men and women equally.

Gender Differences in Academic Rank and University Governance

Academic Rank on First Appointment

As Table 3 shows, a higher proportion of men were appointed at the rank of senior lecturer or above (13.1% men; 2.9% women). Women were more likely than men to begin their academic careers in temporary posts (41.2% women; 24.5% men). The figures for temporary posts do not include staff development fellows who are in a different category since they are virtually assured of permanent academic posts if they succeed in their training programmes.

TABLE 3
Respondents' Academic Rank on First Appointment

Respondents Rank	GENDER MALE (N=175) %	FEMALE (N=68) %	TOTAL (N=234) %
Professor	3.4	0.0	2.9
Senior Lecturer	9.7	2.9	7.8
Lecturer	53.7	52.9	53.3
Temporary Full-time	6.8	16.2	9.4
Temporary Part-time	2.3	1.5	2.0
Teaching Assistant	11.4	20.6	13.9
Research Fellow	4.0	2.9	3.7
Staff Development	8.0	2.9	6.6

N.R. = Chi-Square = 16.30 df = 7 p = <.05

Present Academic Rank

The conclusions to be drawn from comparing Table 3 and 4 are that men are more likely than women to be promoted to the higher academic ranks of senior lecturer or above after first appointment (17.2% men vs. 7.6% women). Although 26.2% of the women moved up from temporary posts, the vast majority are in and remain at the lecturer rank.

TABLE 4
Respondents' Present Academic Rank by Gender

Respondents' Present Rank	GENDER MALE (N=174) %	FEMALE (N=67) %	TOTAL (N=241) %
Professor	8.6	0.0	6.2
AssociateProfessor	2.3	1.5	2.1
Senior Lecturer	19.4	9.0	16.5
Lecturer	53.7	71.6	58.7
Temporary Full-time Lecturer	4.0	4.5	4.1
Teaching Assistant	8.6	10.4	9.1
Senior Research Fellow	0.0	3.0	0.8
Staff Development Fellow	2.9	0.0	2.1

N.R. = 3 Chi-Square = 19.50 df= 7 p= <.01

Participation in University Governance.

Not only are women under-represented on the academic staff, appointed more frequently at lower ranks than men, and less frequently promoted to higher ranks of senior lecturer and above, but their election or appointment to positions of responsibility in the University is significantly less than that of their male colleagues. Of the ten positions shown in Table 5 women's participation is significantly lower than men's on six of them. These are Dean of the Faculty, Deputy Dean, Department Chairperson, Research Board Representative, Member of Senate and Member of Council. Women tend to be better represented in those posi-

tions which require a great deal of burdensome work and have low power and low prestige. (See positons 5, 9 and 10)

TABLE 5
Participation in University Governance
University Positions Ever Held by Gender

University Position Ever Held	GENDER MALE (N=176) %	FEMALE (N=68) %	TOTAL (N=244) %
1.Dean of Faculty*	7.4	0.0	5.3
2.Deputy Dean*	12.5	2.9	9.8
3.Department* Chairperson	35.2	22.1	31.6
4.ChairpersonHigher Degrees Committee	8.0	4.4	7.0
5.Co-ordinatorCourse Programme	46.0	39.7	44.3
6.Representative on Research Board*	14.2	1.5	10.7
7.Member of Senate*	34.7	17.6	29.9
8.Member of Council*	5.1	0.0	3.7
9.Faculty Representative on other Faculty Boards	30.7	29.4	30.4
10.Representative on University Committee	41.5	36.8	40.2

*Chi-square is Significant at <.05 level.
N.B.Does not mean currently held but if ever held during respondent's academic career.

Academic Women in Zimbabwe Compared with Academic Women in Other Countries

The above findings are consistent with other studies conducted in Africa (Fapohunda,1983: White, 1988) and with studies carried out in the United States, Great Britain and Australia. (Sutherland, 1985; Sawer, 1984; Emiq, 1980; Dinnerman, 1971; Hunder, 1975; Blier, 1972; Simeone, 1987; Hyer, 1985; Young, 1978; Goldstein, 1973). These studies show that women are under-represented on academic staff of universities and they are clustered in the lower ranks. In Fapohunda's study at the University of Lagos 14% of the women were senior lecturers, none were associate or full professors whereas 35.4% of the men were senior lecturers and 6.1% were associate professors. In White's study at the University of Cape Town 8.1% of women were senior lecturers or above while 59.2% of men were in this rank. White's study further showed that in all faculties except Arts and Social Science the majority of academics are at senior lecturer or above but in every faculty the proportion of women at that level is lower than that of men (p. 23). Sutherland's figures for Great Britain show that of 13.9% women in academia 2.6% are professors and 6.4% are associate professors. She does not include percentages for senior lecturers. In the United States, 24.3% of academics are women, according to Simeone (1987). Of these, 9.7% are professors, 20.6% are associate professors and 35.1% are assistant professors (equivalent to senior lecturer rank).

TABLE 6
A Comparison of Figures From Different Countries on Percentage of Women in Higher Academic Ranks and Percentage of Women Academics Overall

	C O U N T R Y					
Academic Rank	Zimbabwe %	S.Africa %	Britain %	USA %	Australia %	%
Professor	1.1	0.0	1.6	2.6	9.7	2.7
Assoc. Prof.	1.1	0.0	6.2	6.4	20.6*	4.7
Sen.Lecturer	8.8	14.0	14.7	?	35.1	9.0
All Ranks	21.0	13.0	21.5	13.9	24.5	18.7

**N.B.In the U.S the approximate equivalent rank for Senior Lecturer is Assistant Professor.*

Source:Zimbabwe-University of Zimbabwe Academic Staff List, 1988.
Nigeria-Fapohunda, 1983 University of Lagos (excludes Medical Faculty).
S.Africa-White, 1988 University of Cape Town.
Britain-Sutherland, 1985 All Universities.
U.S.-Simeone, 1987 All Universities.
Australia-Sawer, 1984 All Universities.

The comparable statistics for men in U. S. Universities are 38.8% professors and 30.7% associate professors. Despite affirmative action for two decades there has been only a slight improvement 0.2% in women academics at the professorial level. The greatest growth occurred at the associate professor (senior lecturer) level from 8.0% to 20.6% and in the lower ranks. The overall growth

since Bernard's study in 1964 is from 19.1% to 24.3%, a gain of 5.2%. According to Simeone (1987, p45)

> Today, as in 1964, higher education continues to be male-dominated in the distribution and acquisition of rewards. Systematic discrimination in subtle and blatant ways throughout their career paths remains a fact of life for academic women.

Discrimination may be more blatant in American universities than it is in universities in Africa. Both Bernard (1964) and Simeone (1987) have shown that there are salary differentials between men and women holding the same academic rank and the same qualifications, whereas Fapohunda's study at the University of Lagos concluded that the difference in the average salary of men and women was due to a greater proportion of women in lower academic ranks and not to differential salaries within ranks. (1983, p3).

On the other hand, the reasons for women being clustered in the lower academic ranks need to be examined. Is it because male administrators and male dominated committees, who interpret and apply the criteria for promotion and appointment, discriminate against women? Or is the clustering due to qualification and productivity differences between academic men and women? From a quantitative analysis of academic rank differentials by gender Fapohunda (1983, p9) concluded that 89% of the gross difference at the University of Lagos was attributable to a variation in average productivity characteristics by gender and 11% to employer discrimination. White (1988, p25) found at the University of Cape Town that older, equally qualified women with doctorates are only half as likely to attain the rank of senior lecturer or above as their male colleagues (36.7% vs. 73.8%). Of those without doctorates, 57.1% of men were at the rank of senior lecturer or above while only 17% of women were similarly placed. Based on these statistics, White concluded that there is systemic or indirect discrimination against women at U.C.T.

Gender Differences in Qualification and Productivity

Gender Differences in Qualification

This section will examine some of the reasons why women at the University of Zimbabwe are clustered in the lower academic ranks and participate less in University governance than men. Two factors among others are thought to contribute to this. One is the difference in academic qualifications and the other is the difference in productivity between men and women. In this study a higher percentage of women had only Bachelor's Degrees on first appointment (36.8% vs 24.5%) and far fewer had attained a doctorate (14.7% vs 34.9%).

Both men and women with qualifications below the doctoral level improved their qualifications after being appointed to the academic staff. However, a higher percentage of men went on to achieve a doctorate (9.6% vs 7.7%) while a higher percentage of women attained a Master's Degree (9.7% vs 2.3%). The overall result is that twice as many men on the academic staff have doctorates (44.5% vs 22.4%).

Academic Rank of Respondents with Doctorates by Gender

The differences in academic rank between men and women are even more apparent when academic qualification is controlled. As Table 7 shows of men and women with doctorates (or equivalent qualification) 49.3% of men and 42.8% of women are at senior lecturer or above. It should also be noted that of the women respondents none are full professors. It is still rare for a woman to be promoted to either associate or professor. Although 21.3% of men with doctorates are at these levels only 7.1% of the women are. In other words men with doctorates are three times more likely than women to be associate or full professor.

TABLE 7
Present Academic Rank of Respondents with Doctorates by Gender

Academic Rank	MALE (N=75) %	FEMALE (N=14) %
Professor	16.0	0.0
Associate professor	5.3	7.1
Senior lecturer	28.0	35.7
Lecturer	50.7	57.1

N.R. = 3 Chi-square =17.57 df = 3 p = < .001

Academic qualification, however, is not the only criterion upon which promotion to higher ranks is based. In this University, and indeed in most universities, particularly those with high prestige, scholarly productivity is the primary criterion for promotion to the professorial ranks. (cf. Fapohunda 1983; Simeone 1987; Hyer 1985; Bunting et al. 1970; Bernard 1964). Years of experience and qualification are important but without adequate scholarly productivity an individual is not likely to be promoted to the higher academic ranks. In the next section the differences between the scholarly productivity of men and women academic staff members are examined.

Productivity of Respondents by Gender.

Academic women publish less often than their male counterparts in academia. This is true not only at the University of Zimbabwe and in other universities in Africa but in industrialized countries as well. (See: Fapohunda 1983; Simeone 1987; Hammovitch and Morgenstern 1977; Bernard 1964; Astin 1972). The following Table 8 shows the mean academic productivity charac-

teristics of male and female academics at the University of Zimbabwe.

TABLE 8
Mean Academic Productivityby Gender

Type of Publication	Male (N=176)	Female (N=68)
	Means	
1.* Books Authored or Co-authored	0.43	0.10
2. Chapters in Books	0.80	0.46
3.* Books Edited or Co-edited	0 26	0.06
4.* Journal Articles	8.49	3.38
5. Conference Papers	4.68	3.18
6. Other Types of Publications	1.73	1.28

*t-test significant $p < .01$

In addition to these statistics 43% of the women had never presented a paper at a conference or published an article in a journal compared with 30% of the men in this category. The productivity scores for both men and women may be slightly inflated as far as criteria for promotion to higher rank are concerned since conference papers and "other types of publications" are not usually taken into consideration.

In any case the statistical analysis of productivity does not provide an explanation of the causes of the average productivity differences between men and women. Evidence from this and other studies indicates that the difference is not due to the differen-

tial ability of the sexes since at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels there is no significant difference in academic performance and one would expect women to proceed to academic careers as notable as those of men.

Causes of Lower Qualification and Lower Productivity of Academic Women

Studies carried out elsewhere suggest that a number of socio-economic, psychological and discriminatory factors contribute to the academic woman's syndrome of lower qualifications and lower productivity resulting in lower rank and lower salaries than their male counterparts.

According to Bernard (1964, p. 184) there are several channels for status mobility within academia. An individual may achieve high status in one channel without achieving a high institutional status. Women tended to be high achievers in channels which tended not to carry the highest institutional status such as teaching or working with students rather than research which leads to publication. This "status channel inconsistency", she concluded, was an important explanation for the gap between women and men. Other studies have shown that even women whose productivity is equal to that of men are not rewarded equally. (Cole 1979; Pfafflin 1979). Simeone (1987, p. 7) suggests that this discrepancy in rewards may be due to women's work not being valued as highly as that of men making it more difficult for them to have articles accepted for publication. Their work may also be undervalued by male dominated promotion committees. The absence of purely objective criteria in evaluating teaching performance and publication means that academic competition is judgemental in nature. Academic people depend on recognition from one another to a greater extent than those in professions where autonomous competition is the rule (Bernard 1964, 45). There is some evidence from these studies that stricter criteria seem to be applied to women. White (1987) observed that at the University of Cape Town in some cases men with lower

qualifications than women were promoted to higher academic ranks.

Kaufman (1978) investigated structural barriers to ascent for women and found that women tend to be excluded from "male networks" in which experience and ideas are exchanged formally. Since informal networks of communication are very important in academic life in order to be aware of the latest developments in one's field, to have one's work informally assessed and to possibly collaborate in research women are disadvantaged through this exclusion. Informal networks also affect the influence an individual has within the department and the university. Research shows that women on the whole have less power and influence than men (Simeone 1987, 87).

Gender Differences in Aspirations and Goals

The literature also suggests that there may be basic personality differences between men and women which accounts for the lower status of women in academia. Women are thought to be less competitive, less motivated and therefore less likely to strive for promotion (Deaux and Kite, 1987). In our study we examined what differences if any existed in the aspiration/motivation of academic men and women and what goals and types of achievement were important to them. Table 9 shows that both men and women academics have high career aspirations but those of men are significantly higher than women with 72.2% of men and 50% of women aspiring to full professorial rank.

TABLE 9
ACADEMIC RANK ASPIRATION
(What is the highest academic rank to which you aspire?)

Academic Rank Aspirations	GENDER Male (N=169) %	Female (N=64) %	Total (N=233) %
Professor	72.2	50.0	66.1
Associate prof.	5.9	14.1	8.2
Senior lecturer	16.0	28.1	19.3
Lecturer	2.4	6.3	3.4
Other	4.2	1.7	2.1

N.R. = 11 Chi-Square = 13.43 DF = 4 p = <.01

The goals and achievements which men and women consider important do not differ significantly except with regard to child care which will be discussed in detail later. The majority of men and women do not particularly desire to hold administrative posts such as Department Chairperson, Dean of the Faculty, Pro-Vice Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor. Consistent with the previous table both men and women want to be promoted. Other goals considered important by both sexes are university service, community service, public recognition, counselling students and family relationships. Since women seem to have similar career goals to men and aspire to high levels of formal status, the question to be answered is why they are not as productive and why they continue on the average to have lower academic status than men.

Characteristics Considered Typical of Academic Men and Women

A set of beliefs and opinions about males and females and about the characteristics of masculinity and femininity are common to all cultures. These "gender belief systems" include stereotypes of attributes of men and women and attitudes toward what is considered appropriate roles and behaviours. (Deaux and Kite 1987:97). Early socialisation into appropriate gender roles ensures that there is a broad general consensus within a society about beliefs in gender differences. The research of Williams and Best (1982) covering 30 nations also showed considerable consensus cross-culturally in perceived stereotypic attributes of men and women. Men were typically perceived as stronger, more active, characterised by high need for achievement, dominance, autonomy and aggression. Women were perceived as having opposite qualities. They were seen as being weaker, less active, more concerned with affiliation, nurturance and deference. A larger number of masculine traits were evaluated positively.

The pattern of gender socialisation which society has developed has two negative consequences for women. The first is that women develop a lower self-esteem. They grow up thinking they are not quite as good as men unfortunately, men think so too. Secondly, they may suppress the motivation to strive and succeed because achievement, especially intellectual achievement, is aggressive and therefore masculine. Some women worry that they will be less feminine if they compete. Men do not have this problem because achievement and the masculine role are compatible. Many writers feel that the resulting sex differences in self-esteem and achievement motivation account for the higher achievement of men and the greater prevalence of men in positions of power in society. Others feel that personality differences based on socialisation patterns do not wholly explain status differences. According to Bernard (1975) emphasis on socialisation does not open doors; rather what is needed is to change the institutional structure which embalms these differences in the form of prejudice and discrimination against women.

In our study we examined the perceptions academic men and women have regarding characteristics which might be considered typical of one or the other of the sexes. Items included a number of characteristics which might be thought to foster or inhibit leadership qualities and career achievement. There were 21 items on the question and respondents were asked to evaluate each characteristic as being more typical of women, more typical of men or equally typical of both men and women academics. On most of the items the majority of men and women rated the characteristics as being typical of both. The exceptions to this are: item .6 "emotions guide relationships at work": 45% of the men and 35% of the women thought this characteristic to be typical of women; item 13 "aspires to leadership": 49% of the men and 61% of the women thought this typical of men; item 18 "aggressive": 37% of the men and 38% of the women thought this typical of men; item 21 "conflict with career and family": 72% of men 81% of women thought this to be more typical of women.

When the responses of those who perceived these 21 characteristics to be more typical of one or the other sex is considered a common pattern emerges which conforms closely to stereotypical attributes of men and women. Men are perceived as having high intellect, good leadership qualities, decisiveness, high aspiration for promotion, being effective administrators, productive, aggressive and goal oriented. Women are perceived as being more conscientious in their teaching responsibilities, more emotional, less assertive on issues, conciliatory with colleagues and having greater conflict between career and family responsibilities. The perceptions of the respondents differ significantly by gender.

Attitudes Toward Academic Careers for Women

In various ways society perpetuates the myth or stereotype that the primary role of women is that of wives and mothers. Gender differences are initially learned in the first social group, the family, and later reinforced by other social institutions in society. Schools and even universities are involved in reinforcing charac-

teristics of masculinity and femininity in their students. It has been suggested by some writers that the motivation for women being given equal access to education was because educated women would be better mothers, wives and companions to men (Rimmer and Davies, 1985). The media are also responsible for perpetuating stereotypic gender differences. The result is that socially constructed female gender scripts are part of our everyday thinking and experience.

When women deviate from what society views as their primary role and take up paid employment it is often seen as secondary to their "real" role as wives and mothers. Career choices are frequently determined by ideas about the kinds of jobs which are considered compatible with women's presumed basic personality characteristics and thus restricted to such jobs as teaching, nursing, social work and secretarial work. This type of "caring work" which is concerned with the welfare of others rather than the development of the individual herself, is considered more suitable for women. There is little doubt that societal "expectations, particularly in strongly oriented patriarchal systems, influence women's choice of a career and account for the paucity of women in high status male dominated professions.

Academic women who have obviously chosen to enter a high status male dominated profession are still affected by their perception of themselves and their role in society. If a woman is married, her husband's career tends to take precedence. To behave otherwise would be "unfeminine" for the woman, "unmasculine" for the man. Women are often immobilised at the beginning of an academic career by husband and family. A number of studies have shown that a woman's career is usually ten years behind that of her husband in cases where they graduated from university at the same time. (Hunter, 1975; Bernard, 1964). Academic women generally have in addition to their career the responsibility for managing the household and caring for the children. Even with a co-operative husband, forbearing children and flexible work schedules it is often an exhausting dual role

and therefore is seen as a major contributing factor to the lower productivity of academic women.

In this study we investigated attitudes of both men and women academics towards academic careers for women which included items on: perceptions of discrimination against women, reasons for lower productivity, the need for greater representation of women on the staff, greater representation in leadership positions and on important boards and committees of the university. Using a Likert type four point scale respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed on the items described above.

Dual Careers: Household Chores

The role of women in society cannot change without men's roles changing also. The majority of both men and women in this survey agreed that in two career families husbands and wives should equally share household chores and the care of children, although women felt more strongly about this than men (93% versus 75%). Whether this positive attitude expressed by 75% of the men results in behavioural change will be examined later in this paper.

Primary Role of Women

Men and women significantly disagreed on the primary role of women as that of wife and mother. Only 28% of the women viewed this as their primary responsibility versus 46% of the men. However, the primary role of men is perceived by both men and women as being that of economic provider. Only 25% of men and 29% of women thought that a woman's most important responsibility is to further her academic career. One man when interviewed said his wife's career would become more important if something happened to him. Hunter (1975), an Australian woman academic, points out the differences that often exist in the career calendars of men and women because a husband's career takes precedence. She related how her own career began

fourteen years later than her husband's, even though they had graduated from university at the same time with first class honours, due to constraint of marriage, family and financial circumstances. Realistically, from an economic point of view a husband's career often takes precedence because his earning power is usually greater.

Academic Careers: Family Responsibilities

Academic careers for women are viewed positively by both men and women in this survey as offering better possibilities than other alternatives for combining a career with family responsibilities because of more flexible work schedules. This does not however, mean that men and women have an equal amount of time to devote to their careers. Eighty percent of women and 65% of men feel that home and family responsibilities frequently prevent women from carrying out research and publishing which is necessary for promotion.

Academic Women and Discrimination

In a predominantly male professional establishment women also have a greater perception of being discriminated against. While 52% of women feel there is discrimination towards them at this university in matters of promotion and leadership positions, 79% of the men think there is no discrimination and men and women are treated equally in these matters.

Two-thirds of women staff feel they are discriminated against by selection boards and one-third feel they are discriminated against by the Research Board in the dissemination of research and external travel grants.

Academic Women and Under-representation

The respondents to this survey also differed significantly by gender in attitudes toward the under-representation of women on

the academic staff and in leadership positions and toward measures to be taken to rectify these anomalies. A higher percentage of women than men felt that women are under-represented on the University staff (85% versus 65%); that a special staff development programme for women was necessary(61% versus 35%); and that more women should be appointed to leadership positions and to important committees/ boards of this University (90% versus 51%). A higher percentage of men thought women were under-represented in their department (54% versus 44%).

One explanation for this finding may be in the higher response rate of men from the faculties of Engineering and Science where the ratio of women to men is comparatively lower. Also, it may reflect a clustering of women in specific departments.

The Effect of Home and Family Responsibilities on Career Development.

The point has already been made in this study that academic women, particularly if they are married and have children, experience a dual career conflict much greater than single men and women or married men. This is not to infer that the latter do not have any conflicts due to home and family responsibilities. In this study we examined the external constraints on the careers of all academics, male and female, single and married. The question posed was, "Do you find responsibilities to your home and family have affected the development of your career? Table 10 shows that 67% of married women and 27% of married men said "yes" as well as 17.6% of single women and 12.5% of single men.

TABLE 10
Career Development Affected by Home and Family Responsibilities
Percentage Agreeing by Marital Status and Gender

Marital Status	GENDER MALE (N=171) %	FEMALE (N=65) %
*Married	27.3	67.0
Never married	12.5	17.6

N.R = 8
*Indicates divorced, widowed and separated persons
Chi-Square = 12.14 df = 3 p = < .01

How Family Responsibilities Affect Careers of Academic Men

In an open-ended question respondents who had answered affirmatively to home and family affecting their careers were asked to explain in what way their careers had been affected by these responsibilities. Although three male respondents said their families had had a positive effect on their careers through encouraging them to do better and permitting them to be away for a long time on overseas trips, the remainder mentioned negative effects on career development. The following are examples from reasons given by academic men which illustrate these negative effects.

Academic Men: Reasons

Time spent with family competes with my career.

> Lack time to read and attend to family issues.
>
> Caring for the children when they are ill.
>
> I have to consider my responsibility in terms of time with my family.
>
> Not as much time spent on career as would have been if I was single
>
> If one was not married, one would spend a lot of extra time on research projects.
>
> My role as a parent at home involves taking care of my child. Illness brings tension that affects my work at times.
>
> Were I to meet promotion requirements I would not be able to spend evenings/weekends with my family.
>
> Compromise time spent at home and time spent in the laboratory, field or on research.

Financial considerations due to family responsibilities were mentioned by a number of men as detracting from their career development.

> Financial drain and distraction from work.
>
> Low remuneration means that the home starves. So must "moonlight" to make ends meet.
>
> Schooling for children. One has to take that into consideration.
>
> I cannot afford to remain an academic because of financial grounds.

> Insufficiency of salary has forced me to do extra-curricular work. Hence reducing time available to publish.

Both married and single men mentioned responsibilities to extended families as affecting their career development.

> As the eldest son (polygamous family) I still have to consider whether it is best for the family for me to accept a staff development fellowship for overseas training for four years.

Academic staff from the medical faculty also mentioned heavy clinical commitments and other factors as having an adverse effect on career development.

> With a very heavy clinical service, it is impossible to further my career.

> I can't stay out in the rural areas as I should. After hours work is difficult.

> Poor transport facilities have affected my career as well as family commitments.

From the above responses of 38% of academic men, two major factors emerge as impinging upon the development of their careers. The first is that time spent with children and family competes with time that might have been spent on research, fieldwork, reading and writing for publication. The second major factor is a financial one. Because of a relatively low salary and high financial obligations to maintain a home and family, many men said they had to take on extra jobs to supplement their university salary and this inhibited career development. Some mentioned that financial worries also cause distraction which prevent creative thinking. However, it should be noted that 62% of academic men did not feel that their careers had been affected by home and family responsibilities.

How Family Responsibilities Affect Careers of Academic Women

A very high percentage of academic women (85%) felt that family responsibilities had adversely affected their careers. Many interrupted their careers to have children and only resumed them ten or fifteen years later after the children were older and in school. For them, children as well as a husband's career take precedence over their own academic ambitions. Their comments which follow illustrate these facts.

Academic Women: Reasons

> Children, husband, illness. Too much work and not enough time to think, dream and create.
>
> I stopped working completely while my children were in pre-school. As a result I virtually had to start again with my career.
>
> If there is a family programme to be attended to, that is given first preference and thus affects my career.
>
> Conflict between need to care for my children when sick and my work schedule.
>
> It took me ten years longer than my husband to achieve my PhD, although we were undergraduates together and both took first class honours. I was taking care of the children.
>
> The needs of my child, physical and emotional had to be attended to first. Now that he is older I can put my needs first. I have time to read and write and get further degrees.
>
> Started late because I felt I must be with the children when they were still young.

> By having children and looking after them when there was a chance to take a higher degree. Husband has priority when it comes to choice of job and its location because of salary differences and promotion opportunities in the society.
>
> I got started in my postgraduate studies ten years after my honours degree. The family demands a lot of attention and therefore slows down my studies and research.

A number of women said that despite domestic help the major responsibility of children and household management prevented them from taking advantage of long sabbatical leaves, attending conferences or undertaking extensive research projects.

> If I had a wife!!! I would not have as many domestic responsibilities.
>
> I find it difficult to do any academic work at home in the evenings and weekends due to family and home responsibilities.
>
> Prior to my recent marriage I could work till three in the morning. Now with a baby and two teenage step-children, I simply have to allocate some part of every evening to attending to their needs.
>
> Taking care of children, maintaining household duties, involvement in the children's activities and transport.
>
> I am unable to go on long sabbatical leaves because of my husband and household organisation which saps a lot of creative energy.

I could not go away for higher training. Very difficult to organise sabbatical leave. Unable to get time to research after hours.

I spent 12 years unemployed. I didn't publish anything or attend conferences. Now I am doing both of these things but would do more without home responsibilities.

Despite domestic help, there is a lot dependent on my organisation and duties only carried out by me.

I get home tired from work to prepare meals, take care of children and husband and prepare for lectures at the same time.

Difficult to balance commitments. Could do more research and publishing if I had less to cope with at home.

I cannot spend as much extra time as I need on my research work.

It is very hard work having two jobs - housewife and academic. I think I have managed to give both jobs 100% of my time.

Responsibility for Household Tasks by Gender

In order to examine further the commitments which academics have to their home and family, the respondents were asked to rate the frequency of their responsibilities for various household tasks. A four point Ordinal scale was used to rate individual responsibility for 13 tasks considered normal for most households. The scale ranged from always, often, sometimes to never responsible. A t-test was applied with a significance level of .05.

Responsibility for household tasks tends to fall along traditional gender lines with women largely responsible for household management and child care while men tend to take responsibility for car and house maintenance, paying accounts and gardening. Taking care of relatives and visitors and taking children to school are tasks equally shared by both. The means for single men and women were similar to those for married men and were not included in this table because not all of the items applied, particularly those having to do with children.

Conclusion

What emerges from this study of the effect of home and family responsibilities on the careers of academic men and women is that the careers of women are affected to a greater extent than those of men. Their careers are often interrupted at an early stage in order to have children. When they do return to academia they are not as mobile as men and are often unable to take advantage of sabbatical leave, attend conferences or do extensive research and field work which would require them to be away from home for extended periods of time. The greater responsibility for child care and household management, despite domestic help, limits the time they have available for professional reading, writing and publication. As one of the women academics in this survey previously noted, "It is very hard work having two jobs - housewife and academic." That women do enter this male dominated professional field and succeed despite the handicaps which bedevil them all along the way is undoubtedly due to ability, drive and ambition but their numbers are few. Bernard (1964) claims that women who achieve a doctorate are, due to greater selectivity, superior in intelligence to men with doctorates but less productive as measured by published works because of the constraints placed on their careers from home and family responsibilities. In a patriarchal society such as we have in Zimbabwe the system operates to enhance the position of men and relegates women to a subordinate position where it is more difficult for them to compete on equal terms.

The University and indeed the nation as a whole cannot afford to secure such limited returns on their investment of resources in the higher education of women. Women must play a central role in all aspects of the development process. If development is to proceed equitably all sections of society must be involved. The University can be expected to take an enlightened approach towards securing this gender balance. Since gender inequality is persuasive in society in both the socio-economic and educational pheres, the University and its committees must not be a social microcosm of the society in which we live but of the society we want to create.

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