# Master of Philosophy

*Comparative and International Education*

**Life Cycle and Career Patterns of Academic Women in Higher Education in China Today**

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# Abstract

It is an universal phenomenon of academic women's lower representation in higher education. The topic of my study is " Life Cycle and Career Patterns of Academic Women in Higher Education in China Today". The aim of this study is to explore the situation and challenges academic women face in higher education in China today from a life course perspective.

My research design is also to focus on gender issues in higher education. Gender is one of the central organizing principles around which social life revolves, it is a social, cultural and historical phenomenon. As a socially constructed system it is organized differently in different societies, cultures and at different times in history (Lie, lecture 2007). " Academic women are of particular interest because they have the potential to play a critical role in shaping women and men of the future and, in addition to influencing the form and content of knowledge, they also serve as models for female students" (Malik& Lie in Lie& Malik, 1994:4).

One of the profound changes that has taken place since the establishment of P.R. China in 1949 is the announced emphasis of men and women's equality, both in public and domestic sphere. However, China is no exception in terms of gender stratification in higher education and there's much to be improved. Moreover, little is known about the institutional, cultural and personal barriers academic women face in their career progress in higher education today. In this study, I investigated Chinese academic women's early educational background, occupational profile and family from a life course perspective in order to shed light on the above mentioned issues.

My study adopts both qualitative and quantitative approach with an emphasis on the qualitative research design. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in one comprehensive university in Shanghai. There are altogether fourteen interviews with faculty members, ten females and four males. Each interview lasts from 45 minutes to one hour. By exploring the institutional, cultural, and personal backgrounds as well as examining several relevant aspects in the specific social context of China, the life course of academic women in China are explored.

The findings in the study indicates that within the social system, the academic structure in universities in China is highly hierarchical and women's participation in higher education institutions is disadvantaged compared with men's. Therefore, the institutional aspect poses challenges towards academic women, such as the structure of the academy, gender composition, division of labor, career advancement, promotion, network, leadership, and cumulative advantage.

Within the cultural system, my findings indicate that academic women in China experience gender stereotypes. In modern China, the old legacy such as Confucianism 's view towards women (subordinate to men) still partially exists. Men's traditional conceptions of women's virtue - an ideal wife are still popular in modern China, thus academic women, despite their public roles at universities, have to perform their best to meet these gender specific expectations as care-providers.

Within the personality system, academic women are still expected to perform their role in family, thus to balance family and career is a " Juggling act" (Lie in Lie & O'Leary, 1990). From my fieldwork interviews, I find that academic women take the majority of housework, take care of child's everyday life, while men only do temporary house maintenance, and tend to join in children's weekend activities. This finding coincides with western scholar's finding concerning domestic housework share (Bjeren & Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1994; Jacka, 1997; Zhang, 2000). In my study some of the female respondents get help from their own parents and the extended family. The extended family help to young couples is derived from traditional Chinese value – familism. Compared with academic women in western countries, Chinese women enjoy this advantage. For in a research concerning women academics in fourteen countries, only in Turkey academic women get help from the extended family, which is similar to the Chinese pattern (Acar in Lie & Malik, 1994).

The study concludes that there is a possible trend of expended gender gap in higher education in China. Although China has a large population, the number of female doctorate students is still low. The future is not that positive because of this limited pool, where academic women are already disadvantaged in higher education reforms because of the trends in Globalization. Furthermore, as the "one-child" policy in China continues, a potential crisis on gender balance hints. The sex ratio in China is continuously high, which means there are more male than female in China. Decreasing female population will lead to

low percentage of female students in all levels of education. Therefore, unless special policies are introduced, there's a danger of enlarging the gender gap in higher education in China.

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# List of Figures

# Chapter I Introduction

## Introduction

"Is education an "open sesame" in the struggle for equality between the sexes? If so, why are women's educational routes often winding and their career patterns fragmented? Does occupational status have a different significance for women and men?" (Bjeren & Elgqvist-Saltzman in Bjeren & Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1994:1). Scandinavian social researchers have raised these questions concerning with higher education, society and gender. It is an universal phenomenon of academic women's lower representation in higher education. One of the profound changes that has taken place since the establishment of P.R. China in 1949 is the announced emphasis of men and women's equality, both in public and domestic sphere. However, China is no exception in terms of gender stratification in higher education and there's much to be improved.

The aim of this study is to explore the situation and conflicts academic women in higher education in China face today:

- What are their life cycle and career patterns?

- What are the links between women's academic work and different role modes (for instance, domestic responsibilities)?

- What are bound by history, culture and the broader gender codes which organize and shape academic women's working conditions and career trajectories?

## 1.1   Statement of the Problem

The topic of my study is " Life Cycle and Career Patterns of Academic Women in Higher Education in China Today". My research design is to focus on gender issues, especially the gender gap in higher education in China at the faculty level. "Gender is a term utilized by feminist theoreticians in the 1970's to differentiate between the biological and cultural aspects of the lives of men and women. Gender refers to the understandings, explanations,

behavioral prescriptions and actions that organize differences between them" (Malik & Lie in Lie, Malik, Joe-Cannon & Henrikus, 2006:29). Gender is one of the central organizing principles around which social life revolves, it is a social, cultural and historical phenomenon. As a socially constructed system it is organized differently in different societies, cultures and at different times in history (Lie, lecture 2007). My study is focused on gender in higher education. Higher educational institutions, as maternities of knowledge and cradle of elite talents, play a vital role in a country's development. " Academic women are of particular interest because they have the potential to play a critical role in shaping women and men of the future and, in addition to influencing the form and content of knowledge, they also serve as models for female students" (Malik& Lie in Lie& Malik, 1994:4). Academic women in higher education, who are well-educated and informed, are supposed to be not just the part of elite in Chinese society, but also the most aware of issues of modernity, specifically gender. However, little is known about the institutional, cultural and personal barriers academic women face in their career progress in higher education today. In this study, I plan to investigate Chinese academic women early educational background, occupational profile and family from a life course perspective in order to shed light on the above mentioned issues.

Another factor that led me to this topic is my personal experience. I grew up in a traditional Chinese scholar's family and have been working as a college teacher for four years before studying abroad. As a junior assistant lecturer I personally experienced the heavy workload and hierarchy academic culture in the institution. As a single female, I witnessed and shared the life stories of my colleagues. My experience deepened my understanding of academic women's life and the problems we face in China.

## 1.2    Research Questions ( the Grand-tour Question and the Sub-questions)

The original key research question is:

- What is the life cycle of academic women in China? How does this affect their family and career?

There are a number of issues that call for a more integrated approach to the study of academic women in China and the gender gap in higher education. My field study is focused

on academic women in China, particularly their position and role in higher education as faculty members. Originally I planed to conduct in-depth interviews with academic women in typical comprehensive universities of China's three biggest metropolitan cities respectively (Beijing, Shanghai, Xiamen). Because of circumstances beyond my control, later the fieldwork was done only in one comprehensive university in Shanghai (see Chapter IV). By exploring the institutional, cultural, and personal backgrounds as well as examining several relevant aspects in the specific social context of China, the life course of academic women in China shall be unfolded, thus a set of sub-questions are formulated:

- What are the academic women's early educational backgrounds?
- What are the institutional (gender composition) and structural challenges? (regarding academia and academic advancement affecting academic women career patterns )
- What are the social and cultural challenges? (academic career and domestic responsibilities - life cycle - a life course perspective )
- What are the personal challenges? ( realization of their combined roles and rights their level of gender awareness )

## 1.3    Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is to raise gender awareness within the field of education. Women constitute half of the population of the globe, their role in education, science and technology, economic and political activities is an important criterion for the advancement of society and civilization. It is only when women's intellectual resources and potentials are given full play through their gaining the highest education possible that the all-around development of humankind as a whole can be achieved. China has consistently attached great importance to the special position that women and women's education occupies in the construction effort to modernize the country. Yet little is known about life cycle and career patterns of female faculty in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in China today. Women's education, as Ms Chen Muhua stated during the 4th UN World Conference on Women, is not only conditioned by the reform and development of education per se, but also closely tied up with other social factors (Chen in Wei, 1995:3). Thus research and discussion in this area will be highly beneficial to the advancement of women's education in China both in depth and in extent.

## 1.4   Delimitations and Limitations

The constraints in my fieldwork and the relatively small sample decrease the generalizability of findings. Thus the norms of representative-ness was not met, due to the context of the study and a lack of resources available. The fieldwork is conducted in a comprehensive university in Shanghai, though the results cannot be generalized to all higher educational institutions in China, the study is unique concerning academic women in a comprehensive university. Furthermore, it may give a glimpse of some of the mechanisms which advance or hinder academic women's career patterns.

## 1.5   Organization for the Study and Thesis Structure

Below Figure 1.1 is a diagram showing the logic of thesis and focus of the study presented in the different chapters.

Logic of the thesis and focus of this study

Box I           Main research question:
What are the main challenges academic
women face in higher educational institutions
in China today ?           Chapter I

Box II Setting up a backdrop to the study
The Chinese society and higher education
    Introduction of Shangha      i Chapter II

Box III   Theoretical
framework & literature
review
          Chapter III

Box IV    Methods and
Methodology
Qualitative &
Quantitative Approaches
          Chapter IV

Box V Data Presentation and Analysis
Fieldwork interviews in an university in
Shanghai           Chapter V

Institutional challenges
Social and cultural challenges
Personal challenges       Chapter V

Box VI   Discussion and Conclusion
          Chapter VI

**Figure 1.1 Logic of the Thesis and Focus of the Study**

# Chapter II Setting A Backdrop to the Study

## Introduction

This chapter aims to present an overall backdrop to the research by introducing and describing features of Chinese society. A brief history since the establishment of P.R. China is presented. Development of higher education in China, women's participation in higher education, and the impacts of Globalization are reviewed. Together with above mentioned aspects, specific culture values of Shanghai is also introduced as it is the location of the comprehensive university where the interviews take place.



## 2.1 China

Knowledge of the cultural framework within which everyday behavior takes place is beneficial to the individual because the reactions of others can be predicted (Malik & Lie in Lie & Malik, 2006: 27).

Individual behaviors are closely interacted with social and cultural structures. Therefore it is important to have a review of the Chinese society. I focus primarily on China's historical development period after 1949. China is a multi-ethic country of 9.6million square kilo meters and a population of 1.320864 billion people, with 51.07% being male and 48.93% female (UNICEF, 2008 www.unicef.org). In 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded, the society's ideology is Chinese socialism.

*Chinese socialism is a set of economic and sociopolitical values that were modified from Marxism and Leninism and interpreted differently by PRC leaders in specific periods: Mao Zedong from the 1950s to the 1970s, Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s, and Jiang Zeming in the 1990s (Law in Mazurek, Winzer & Majorek, 2000:355).*

## 2.2 Ideas in Confucianism

Prior to 1949 establishment of P.R. China, the official ideology has been Confucianism, which was the dominant moral philosophy in thousands years of feudal society. The founder Confucius (551-479 B.C.) had contributed the idea of Ren ( benevolence or universal love), but with the major emphasis of rites and customs to keep a society in harmony within a highly hierarchy social system. The system is, "both within and outside family, based on gender and age" (Bauer, 1992:350). Under Confucian ideology, " women with no talent are virtuous ", women were subordinate to men and had to obey " Three Obedience" and " Four Virtues" (San Cong Si De, to follow their father, husband and son). Women's place was limited within domestic sphere. The justification of women's inferiority in this theory influenced other Confucian classics to present a rationale for women's oppression and affected gender relationships in society. "Confucius indicated the main line of the Confucian view of women in Analects: women were born with a lower identity that was unchangeable in Chinese history"(Yuan,2005:29). Confucianism had been adopted by different dynasties' ruling class in thousands years of feudal society and hence had greatly influenced Chinese values and attitudes.

## 2.3 Equality Policies in the People's Republic of China

The Communist Party of China (CPC) has always distinguished its difference from feudal society leaders, and women's liberation are considered as crucial to the success of revolution and construction of new China. As a result, from the very beginning of CPC leadership, the equality of men and women were advocated and put into party policy. Besides, the "socialist solution", derived from the writings of Engels, had always required the participation of women in the paid labor force on a large scale. Women shall go out of the domestic sphere and participate in the revolution and "socialist modernization construction". In 1949 March, prior to CPC's leadership of the whole China, the All China Women's Federation (ACWF)

was established (Jacka, 1997). The Land Law and the new Marriage Law in the 1950s have empowered women's legal rights and status to inherit land, to choose a marriage partner, and to devoice on an equal basis of men. On April 3, 1992, at the 5th session of the 7th National People's Congress, the state adopted " Law of the P.R.China on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women (Extracts)", to protect women's lawful rights and interests, promote the equality between men and women and "allow full play to women's role in socialist modernization"(Appendix in Wei, 1995:345). There are items concerning especially on equality of education for women and men, according to Chapter III, Article 14, " The state shall guarantee that women enjoy equal rights with men with respect to culture and education" (Appendix in Wei, 1995:345). School age children, whether boys or girls, are mandated to take compulsory education. In Chapter IV, Article 21 and 24 clearly state that "The state shall guarantee that women enjoy the equal right, with men, to work. In such aspects as promotion in post or in rank, evaluation and determination of professional and technological titles, the principle of equality between men and women shall be upheld and discrimination against women shall not be allowed" (Appendix in Wei, 1995:346). Significant progresses have been achieved in terms of women's participation in education and workforce. However, participation alone doesn't ensure equality. In spite of above laws and policies, in reality, there's no systematic supervision of the implementation. As stated earlier, when it comes to job placement and evaluation, the policies are more based on gender-sameness. As Rai has argued, there has been a gender-blindness that characterizes the CPC's policies in reform years, during which " prejudice and patriarchy combine to undermine the very " rationality" the market seeks to build upon notions of competition" (Rai,1994:6). At the same time, little has been done to alter the traditional roles women played within the family (Rosen in Hayhoe, 1992: 256).

As early as P.R.China was founded, the state advocated women's participation into work and society and emphasized the equality of men and women. In this way CPC distinguishes itself as leaders of a " new China", opposite to traditional feudal society. CPC leader Chairman Mao said, " Women hold half of the sky", thus in new China, " half of the sky" is a publicity symbol of women. Between the 1950s and the 1980s, the state has launched laws and policies concerning women's equal status in society and job-placement, guaranteed a gender-neutral state-assigned employment system. Within the first decade of P.R. China, more than 70% of Chinese women were employed (Bauer et al, 1992:350). However, the

version of gender equality was sex sameness as demonstrated in Chairman Mao's saying " Whatever men can do, women. can do", requiring women to perform completely the same as men and compete on that "equal" terms, ignoring women's own characteristics. Under such circumstances, the gender equality policy is a political strategy rather than empowerment of women.

## 2.4 Higher Education in China and Women's Participation

> *"Chinese classical institutions of higher learning had reached their definite form in the 12th century, at around the same time as universities in Europe came into being. The one point of confluence between the Chinese academy and the European university, as they took form in the 12th century, was the exclusion of women from formal participation in scholarship. It is a remarkable historical coincidence that this seems to have happened at the same period in both civilizations" ( Hayhoe in Hayhoe & Pan, 2001:329).*

Since 12th century, in China, the higher education institutions from capital to provincial levels are Taixue, Guozijian, and Shuyuan respectively. At that time the idea of women participating in education was "simply unthinkable"(Hayhoe,1996:14). By the late 18th and 19th century, the development of modern science and technology in western countries has left China behind. Patriots and intellectuals speculated over the question of why western countries developed far beyond China. In the early 20th century, the status of women's education emerged from a non-issue to a social concern by educated men, later women as well, emphasizing the 'worthy mother and good wife" ideal to justify the implementation of women's education (Bailey in Peterson, Hayhoe & LU, 2001:321). But women's participation in education is limited to a small number of urban elites.

What is worth mentioning in this period is that missionary schools exerted a great influence on women's education and the development of modern education in China ( Luts,1971). Girls schools were set up by private indigenous groups (Note 1). The development of girls primary and secondary education generated a demand for higher education. Girls' schools and female patients created the demand for women teachers and doctors( Lutz,1971). Women were permitted in early missionary universities. Coeducation Lingnan College in Guangdong province first admitted women in 1905, and three women's colleges followed suit (Mak in Lie & Malik,1994).

Since the 1911Republican China era, revolution overthrew the imperial system, paving the way for learning from western countries (Pepper,1996). In 1920, Peking University, as the first modern government university in China, recruited female students, set a precedent for coeducational public higher education for women. Women constituted 2.5% of higher education students by 1922 and 10% by 1930, according to a League of Nations report written by western observers (Becker et al., 1932). In the late1920s and 1930s, China has undergone nationalist civil wars and communist revolutions. The Communist Party of China (CPC) was founded in 1921 in Shanghai, which eventually grew stronger in the revolutions and became leading party. As early as CPC was founded, it brought women's participation in revolution and education into its agenda .In June 1929, Chairman Mao said women should " take part in the revolution by going in for production and studying to be literate" (Wei in Wei Yu, 1995:19). Women actually took an active part in the Red Army and reached a certain level of awareness of women's place and worth in the wars. The first comprehensive CPC University and cadre schools were built up, aiming at training party cadres, preparing qualified solders with Marxist ideology, thus many women joined CPC cadre schools and trained as female cadres (Note 2). During the Sino-Japanese War (1937-45), majority of men joined the army, some women joined the army and some women filled men's vacancies in the economy ( Mak in Lie & Malik, 1994).

In, 1949, the People's Republic of China was founded. The revolutions brought about social transformation and significant expansion in education. At that time, the Chinese social and economic system were highly centralized, also the former education system, in which China followed suit of the former Soviet Union. The First National Conference on Higher Education in 1950 formulated a framework for the university development in the new era (Harnett, 1998). All educational institutes and activities, public or private, are under the supervision of the CPC central government through Ministry of Education (MOE). Higher education can be divided into the five following types: 1) comprehensive universities of 4-year programs, offering study in humanities, social sciences and nature sciences, 2) technological universities and institutes focus on certain subjects, 3) undergraduate level 2-year and 3-year colleges(sometimes also called short-cycle colleges, offering programs in both academic and vocational subjects), 4) Normal Universities and teachers' colleges, 5) TV E-learning universities for adults and senior citizens. Many institutes and universities in the first two categories offer graduate programs leading to the master's or Ph.D.

degree(Higher Education, Ministry of Education, P.R.China). To access higher education, students must pass a national university entrance examination.

In the 1950s, Chinese universities were remodeled on the former Soviet Union system, focusing on social reconstruction. " Centralization, expertise and specialization were emphasized; a national assignment system allocated faculty to university around the country. Women continued to increase their enrollment during this period" (Hayhoe, 1996: 55, 88 ; Gaskell, Eichler, Pan, Xu & Zhang, 2004: 514). The academic structure in universities is highly hierarchical. " Advancement within the hierarchy is based on the accumulation of academic capital, primarily research productivity. Other criteria can also be important ( e.g. teaching ability, seniority, etc), depending on the particular institution and the country in which it is located" ( Malik & Lie in Lie & Malik, 1994:8).

"The Great Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) cast China into the depth of political chaos and left the country at the verge of economic bankruptcy" (Liu, 2005: 25). Chairman Mao's main idea of the unprecedented mobilization was " to re-educate the intellectual by unifying them with the peasants and the workers, to address the importance of labor work over the academics, to decentralize the decision-making to the local level, to promote the leadership of proletarian leadership, and to establish a mechanism with the rule of non-professional" (Zhu, 2006: 102; Pepper, 1996). It has a destroying impact on universities but with a seemingly increase of women's participation:

During the Culture Revolution, which began in 1966, universities were closed and in some cases destroyed. The importance of being " expert" was de-emphasized in favor of being " red", i.e., politically acceptable. The political ideals that replaced expertise as a basis for university entrance included the idea that " The day all women in China stand on their feet is the time for victory for the Chinese revolution" (Andors,1976). Faculty were sent to the countryside for reeducation. Traditional academic work was seen as elitist and bourgeois. Hierarchical academic distinctions among schools and universities were removed. There was a rapid expansion of secondary education, from around 14 million in 1966 to over 70 million by 1976. Women increased their enrollment in secondary education to 40%, and their university enrollment to 34% by 1976, reflecting the increased participation in rural area(Hayhoe,1996:100, Gaskell,Eichler,Pan,Xu& Zhang, 2004: 514).

The Culture Revolution was ended in 1976. China is deemed to rescue the country. In 1978, China's reform started, when new CPC leader Deng Xiaoping totally reversed priorities set during the Culture Revolution (Zhu, 2006). "The concept of " socialism with Chinese characteristics" was initially put forward by Deng Xiaoping in 1982 and has since served as the theoretical basis and legitimatization for China's political, social, and economic practices in the reform and opening era" (Liu, 2005:521). Deng also pointed that the future direction for higher education is to serve the "Four Modernisations" of China. National entrance exams to higher education were restored. The party also demonstrated commitment to gender equality. Accordingly there was a significant increase of women faculty members.

> *"Women faculty have increased their representation in the total faculty continent from 25 percent to 29.1 percent over the reform decade, and there is increasing evidence of a higher and higher female representation among younger faculty, 37 percent of those under thirty, and 30 percent of those between thirty-one and forty in 1991" (Hayhoe, 1996 : 131).*

The opening-up and reform era is aimed at "Four Modernisations", since then China's higher education has undergone fundamental changes. In 1985, a large reform of education in China was launched in line with the principle that " Education must serve the socialist construction, which in turn must rely on education" ( CCP, 1985:1). Thus Chairmaan Mao era's mass-line higher education was substituted by Deng Xiaoping's "elitist approach to mobilize resources to rebuilding higher education" (Zhu, 2006). A striking feature is higher education's marketization. For universities, "marketization" means more competition, more emphasis on credentials and less security for faculty and considerable restructuring (Hayhoe,1996).

The social and educational trends in China have been summarize as below Figure 2.1

Social and Educational Trends and Changes in China

| Societal | Education |
|---|---|
| 1977-1985 | |
| Four modernizations | Redevelopment of higher education |

| | |
|---|---|
| De-collectivism | Reintroduction of "key schools" |
| Pragmatism | Academic over ideological |
| Economic rehabilitation | Growth of technical and vocational education |
| 1986- 1988 | |
| Open-door policy | Over expansion of HE |
| Special economic zones | More autonomy to presidents |
| Joint Venture companies | Professionals dominant over Party |
| High economic growth | Overseas study |
| Inflation | Mismatches with job placement |
| 1989-1991 | |
| Recession | Growth halted |
| Ideological conflict | Politics class reintroduced |
| Leftist conservatives | Military service for some universities |
| Politics in control | Party dominant over professionals |
| International isolation | Recentralization |

Figure 2.1 The Social and Educational Trends and Changes in China Source : Educational innovation in China. Tracing the impact of the 1985 reforms. K. Lewin, Xu Hui, A. little& Zheng Jiwei(1994) Harlow, England: Longman Group Limited.

In the early 1990s, higher education's " marketization" was extended under the trend of globalization(See Chapter III regarding Globalization). Globalization is a contested and complex term. Inherent in the concept of globalization are economic, political, demographic, social and cultural processes that are taking place, bringing the global into the local and vice versa. A vital force in these processes is the modern market economy bringing Western enterprises into China. In the context of globalization, knowledge is highly portable, and can be seen as an economic commodity. The emergence of a global economy are changing the

nature of higher education and the role of universities. Trade in education is a trend worldwide in line with economic development concerns (Neave, 2001). Competition was emphasized in a global context and higher education changed from elite orientation to mass orientation. As has been documented by western researchers, in Australia and U.K, " A higher education policy that was tired to post-colonialism has given way to one of global competition. This shift has coincided with the changing domestic concept of higher education from an elite oriented to a mass based system" (Rhoades & Smart in Kempner & Tierney,1996:126). China's higher education also experienced the mass orientation .In 1999, the Ministry of Education set up an enrollment increasing plan, to "propelling economic development with educational expansion" (Zhang in Tjeldvoll, Juceviciene, Janiunaite & Ceseviciute, 2005:116). Actually much of the educational transformations are of a consumer nature and to meet the demands of global market. Access to higher learning was increased. Students pay higher tuition fees and are considered as consumers. Demands for faculty members are raised. The concept of "cost-effectiveness", of which the main goal is to improve the productivity and the efficiency of resource-use, is mainly geared to male career/ life pattern ( Professor Suzanne Lie's lecture, 2007). "On the one hand, social processes such as individualization and opening-up to the outside world have released impulses among women as individuals for independence, autonomy and self-actualization in ways distinct from the pre-reform era. On the other hand, as has been documented by many researchers, women in general are being hit hardest during China's transition to a market economy (Liu, 2005:42). By hitting, it means there are more female laid-off workers when competing with male counterparts.

## 2.5 Values in Shanghai

### 2.5.1 Shanghai

I have chosen a comprehensive university in Shanghai for fieldwork. As quoted earlier, higher education institutions in China can be divided into five types, a comprehensive universities is an institution of 4-year programs, offering study in humanities, social sciences and nature sciences and is able to grant degrees at bachelor, master and doctorate level. Hence a comprehensive university is more gender-neutral, with both social science and

natural science study subjects, and a possible neutral composition of faculty members. Hence it may provides a complete overall view of gender composition in higher education. While in technology institutes or Normal universities (teachers' colleges), both the content of study, faculty member composition and students are likely to be gender segregated .

The development of higher education in China varies in different regions. Generally speaking, provinces along the east coast are more advanced in economy and education development. Many studies have been done on normal teacher education where the majority of students and teachers are women (Hayhoe,1996; Gaskell,Eichler,Pan,Xu& Zhang,2004). While little research has been done on comprehensive universities regarding gender. Shanghai, as a municipality administered directly by the State Council, is an excellent setting for further exploration.

Shanghai, located in the mouth of the Yangzi River, is China's largest city. Shanghai was among one of the first port cities opening to Western trade and residence in the 19th century. After 1949, Shanghai became one of the three special municipalities in China (the other two are Beijing and Tianjin). As a leading metropolitan city, Shanghai has "been designated as the dragon head to lead the Yangzi Delta and Basin, and, more broadly, China, into the twenty-first century through rapid economic growth and a new phase of openness, modernization and development"( Yeung in Yeung & Sung, 1996:3). Shanghai distinguishes itself with its entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic culture.

In history, Shanghai, as a trading port, modern industry and economy boosted rapidly; while traditional schools such as Sishu remained, quasi-colonial school opened by western missionaries and modern schooling sprout early, too (.Mak & Leslie.N.K.Lo in Yeung and Sung, 1996:377). In higher education, Shanghai excelled.

Of 205 institutions of higher learning in China, in 1949, Shanghai had 40 ( 20 %), while the city account for 1.43% of the nation's population. In some of the best universities in China, including Fudan University, Tongji University, Jiaotong University and St. John's University (Mak & Leslie in Yeung& Sung, 1996:378).

In education, the shared goal for many in Shanghai is " first-rate education for a first-rate city"(Yeung in Yeung & Sung, 1996:13). After 1978, in the Opening and Reform policy, the content of education, "has veered towards more vocational education and an emphasis on

utilitarianism in tertiary education"( Yeung in Yeung& Sung, 1996:13).At that time, schools attempted to fit into the economic development through utilitarianism. Vocational schools taught manufacturing, commerce and English that leads to higher commercial value were popular. Shanghai was a pioneer in taking new educational initiatives and was flexible in adapting to new developments. " Shanghai's development as an economic center and as a meeting point of Chinese and foreign influences made this possible. Shanghai's pride in its identity has been a source of psychological drive in its pursuit of excellence"(Wang, 1990: 5-7).

Also measures have been taken to improve the quality of education. In the 1980s Shanghai was a burgeoning economic center supported by experts in science and technology. By the early 1990s, Shanghai has expended its development goal as to become an international finance and economy center by the year 2010 (Mak & Leslie in Yeung& Sung, 1996:380): Education carries an unambiguous mandate: to reform in such a way as to fit the "socialist market economy" and its accompanying political characteristics, and to ensure an abundant supply of quality workers.

The situation of education in Shanghai, as Mak and Leslie commented, is a test case of just how many roles education can serve and how well it can play them (Mak & Leslie N.K.Lo in Yeung & Sung, 1996:376). Education in Shanghai has been charged with the goals of China's national development. "Optimism regarding education's contribution to greater prosperity in Shanghai is evident in both policy formulation and daily practice"(ibid). Schools are more sensitive to market needs, an interactive relationship exists between education and the economic development.

In higher education, characteristics of new utilitarianism are also featured. In the 1990s, there has been a decline in the proportion of what used to be priority fields such as teachers education and humanities, and a rise in fields with high demand in the economy such as finance and economics (Mak & Leslie N.K.Lo in Yeung & Sung, 1996). With the 1990s universities extension trend, branch campuses were set and college teachers in above areas were in great demand; from 1994 to 2000, university mergers took place, which have been considered as a significant improvement in efficiency. In September 1999, China has increased first-year enrollments by 48%, from 1.08 to 1.53 million students. According to UNESCO statistics of 2006, the student enrollment in tertiary education for China is

23,360,535, and female student enrollment in tertiary education is 10,993,885, exceeds the leading country of student enrollment in tertiary education in the U.S. (17,487,475 and 10,031,556. UNESCO statistics, http://stats.uis.unesco.org )

The expansion of higher education is to stimulate and boost the economy. Inadequate funds to universities is a problem in the expansion process. Higher education institutions tackled the problem of funds by cost-sharing devices. From 1995, all university students in Shanghai have to pay tuition fees. The rationale behind the policy is that higher education yields high economic rewards to individuals, thus individuals shall share the costs. However in university personnel, Party Secretary still holds the highest political leadership, and the school principal has authority on academic and educational issues. For faculty members and staff, the "iron bowl" (a stable job contract) system has given way to recruitment based more on performance. " A complex salary structure has appeared, comprised of one's basic salary, which is uniform across the board, and of pay for additional hours of teaching, performance, seniority, and the like " (Mak & Leslie N.K.Lo in Yeung & Sung, 1996:391). All of above factors have impacts to academic's life.

When compared to the 14 countries in the 1992-1993 Carnegie International Study of the academic profession, Shanghai's academics fall in the middle in terms of age (45 years) and gender profiles (73 percent male and 23 percent female), with six countries above and four below in both profile tables "Shanghai academic's experience was mostly limited to the institution where they were originally appointed. This is largely a function of the danwei (work unit) system" (Postiglione & Jiang, 1999:12). Chinese academics have great commitment to the academy though their salaries are lower and work conditions are modest compared with their western counterparts.

## 2.5.2 Culture Values in Shanghai

Just like other regions in China, Shanghai has its own traditions and culture values both in history and in the modern era : familism, pragmatism, social networks featured by Guanxi (personal connections) and Renqing (mutual obligations). Familism is accords with traditional culture in Asia and grand China. Pragmatism and an emphasis on social networks are typical local characteristics. After 1949, during the Culture Revolution (1966-1976), traditional cultures were de-valued and denied; at the end of 1977, eventually there was a

revived recognition of traditional culture. In an article by a local researcher in Shanghai Academy of Social Science, he endorses traditional culture value, "Culture is the spiritual pillar of the political structure, the economic system, and social relations; it is the well-spring of social cohesion…a new order must be accompanied by the continuity, rebuilding, and flourishing of the traditional culture under new conditions" (Zhang, 1990:104).

A new adaptation of the traditional culture to the new circumstance and social development in Shanghai, as Wong Siu-lun points out, " is a selective process which brings the values of familism, pragmatism, autonomy and personal trust" (Wong in Hamilton,1991:13).

Familism is central in Chinese culture. Shanghai, as a cityin northeast China, is no exception. The significance of family (jia) is well observed. For a better understanding of women's work patterns and gender divisions of labor, I shall present the significance of family first. Compared with other cultures, a western researcher observed:

In China today, as in times past, " the family" (jia) is central to women's and men's perceptions of themselves, their work patterns and their relations with others. As in other culture, however, the Chinese concept of family is fluid. Associated with it are a range of meanings and spheres of significance. On the one hand, women and the family have commonly been linked in discussions of one particular set of issues – women as wife, mother and daughter in-law, as domestic worker, and as belonging to, and being most strongly identified with, the "inside" sphere. In this sense the family has been both central and delimiting for women's lives, and has been defined in opposition to the " outside" domain of men. At other times, women have been cast as outsiders to the family, here defined in terms of patrilocality, patrilineality, networks of male kinship ties and the importance of male descendants (Jacka, 1997:54).

With these traditions and understanding of " jia", people in Shanghai attach greater importance to family and family life. In a volume reviewing Shanghai's social development in past forty years, survey findings regarding goals in life show that " 93% of the respondents upheld the pursuit of family harmony, 79% valued filial piety, 67% prized children's education, while only 64% subscribed to devotion to the prosperity of the nation"(Wong in Hamilton, 1991:29) and that " close and warm family and successful children have always been high on the list of desirable ends for Chinese, and they still are"(Chu & Ju, 1993: 195). Family relationship is the core of social relationship.

Pragmatism is a feature of Shanghai. Standing as a trade port, Shanghai adopted pragmatism as early as the 19th century when it was first open to western countries. Globalization therefore can be considered as an extension of traditional pragmatism in Shanghai. Many local people work in both domestic and foreign trade areas. Efficacy and efficiency are naturally accepted by them. A renewed pragmatism can be found in popular attitudes towards work and employment- it was found in a Shanghai survey that among the various factors affecting job satisfaction, respondents were mainly concerned about material rewards (Wong in Hamilton,1991:32). Economic development has always been given the priority in the whole society (See Chapter III for a more detailed discussion on Globalization).

Besides familism and pragmatism, social networks featured by Guanxi ( personal connections) and Renqing ( mutual obligations) are regarded as equally important by Shanghai people. It can also be understood as a matter of trust in social relations especially in the kinship and Danwei (work units). If Guanxi and Renqing are positive in sustaining a big family's harmonious relationship, they also have negative effects concerning career network and promotion which will be make clear in Chapter V.

## Conclusion

This chapter aims to present an overall introduction of China, social transformations, women's position in society derived from Confucian gender ideas, higher education development and women's participation, with an emphasis on the specific context of Shanghai. It helps to obtain a glimpse of Chinese society in which academic women's life stories occur. As the chapters go on, the picture of academic women's life cycle and career patterns in specific context will be unfolded.

Note 1 The McTyeire School for Girls, Republican China's most prestigious girls' secondary school was founded by southern Methodist missionaries in 1892 to provide a Christian education to Chinese daughters of "the well-to-do classes". (Heidi Ross, 2001:376)

Note 2  As Suzanne Pepper has pointed out, the link between education and political radicalism spanned the century, culminating in the revolution vision of education as the "training of revolutionary successors" ( Pepper, 1996)

# Chapter III Theoretical Framework

## Introduction

According to Malik and Lie in Lie& Malik (1994:3), "One of the most widely reported findings of the post-war era has been the ubiquitous presence of gender stratification…Although its occurrence is almost universally recognized, fundamental

questions about its causes and development remain unanswered". This can shed light on why there is an abundant literature and concepts when it comes to gender issues. It is beyond my ability to cover all the literature, however, it is necessary to present a brief review of the theories framework and concepts related to my study.

## Theoretical Framework and Gender Perspective

## 3.1.1 Previous Studies

Studies on academic women in higher education concerning their life cycle and career patterns have been conducted by western researchers for decades (Lie & O'Leary, 1990; Lie & Malik, 1994; Bjeren & Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1994; Gaskell, Eichler, Pan, Xu & Zhang, 2004).The Canadian International Development Agency ( CIDA) has funded a project on women and minorities in Chinese universities, part of which involved research on women faculty, thus a large scale survey was done in 1997 among 12 Chinese Normal universities (universities that provide education for teachers). However, no studies have been made on comprehensive universities (Gaskell, Eichler, Pan, Xu & Zhang, 2004). That survey was the only one with detailed information about family, work, and aspirations of women faculty members in China Normal universities. For other questionnaire-based studies of women faculty in China Zhang (2000) and Fan (1999) have conducted similar research, but neither has data on gender attitudes or domestic work. Therefore, little is known about academic women's life cycle and career patterns in China today.

## 3.1.2 Theoretical Framework

According to Denscome,

> *A theory is a proposition about the relationship between things. In principle, a theory is universal, applying at all times and to all instances of the things in question. In the social sciences, the notion of " theory" needs to be treated more cautiously than in the natural sciences, because of the complexity of social phenomena and because people react to knowledge about themselves in a way that chemicals and forces do not (Denscombe, 2003:300).*

Theory is empirical tested, it is an approach which is formed from rigid definition. In my study I cannot quantify rigid theories, therefore, what I am referring to is a theoretical framework. Furthermore, taking into consideration of the complexity of theories, what I applied to formulate the study are different theoretical approaches and perspectives.

The first theoretical approach is Gender perspective in higher education, especially the gender inequalities in higher education. Contemporary research on gender issues in higher education, according to Lie and Malik, should focus on such aspects as " the structural characteristics of the university system", " the importance of individual motivation", and " cultural and societal barriers to the advancement of women" as well as interactions of cultural, social and personality factors (Malik and Lie in Lie & Malik,1994:5).My study cannot include all, but basically is based on the above perspectives and hence questions were designed within these categories. A multi-dimensional model explaining inequalities in higher education can be illustrated by Figure 3.1 and 3.2 in Malik and Lie's research, part of which is included in my theoretical framework as well. But my study scale is smaller and only covers one or two elements in each of the three characteristics (cultural system, social system, personality system).

Figure 3.1 Multi-dimensional Model Explaining Inequalities in Higher Education

Cultural System          Social System          Personality System

(nation as context)
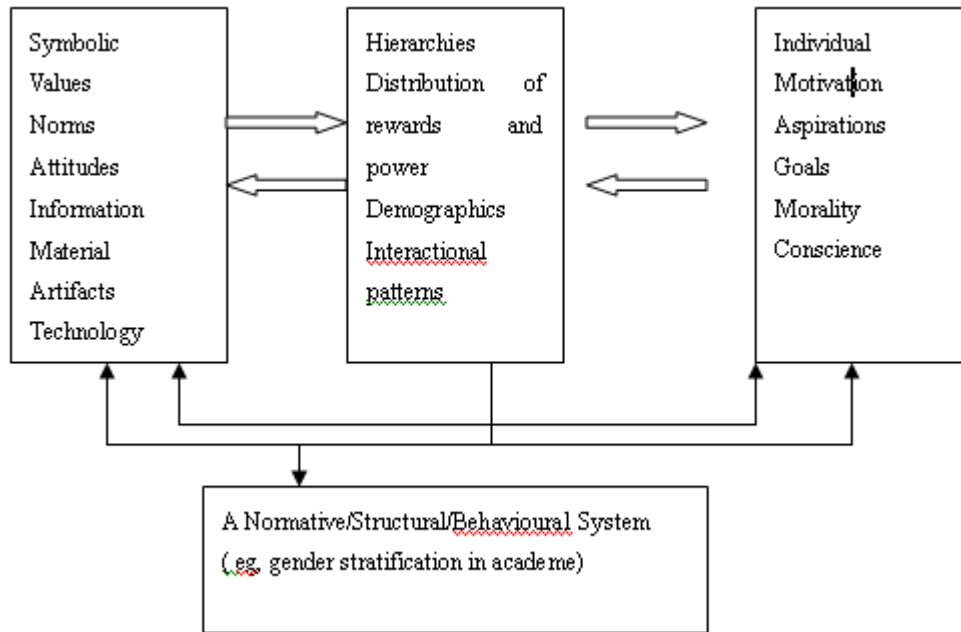
| Symbolic<br>Values<br>Norms<br>Attitudes<br>Information<br>Material<br>Artifacts<br>Technology | Hierarchies<br>Distribution of<br>rewards and<br>power<br>Demographics<br>Interactional<br>patterns | Individual<br>Motivation<br>Aspirations<br>Goals<br>Morality<br>Conscience |
|---|---|---|

A Normative/Structural/Behavioural System
(eg, gender stratification in academe)

Source : Malik and Lie in Lie & Malik(1994) "The Gender Gap in Higher Education : a Conceptual Framework" in World Yearbook of Education 1994 The Gender Gap in Higher Education (eds) London: Kogan Page  p. 6

Based on Figure 3.1, my illustration in cultural system is focused on cultural norms and values in China towards women (for instance, Confucianism), and people's attitudes towards different sexes (Gender stereotyping). Concerning social system, I focus on China society's structure after 1949, as has been presented in Chapter II. Hierarchies in higher education institutions shall also be mentioned ( See figure 3.2). On the one hand, the social system is a platform for the cultural system. Accordingly, they are inter-related. The social system, on the hand, influences the personality system. Therefore, in the personality system, the individual's aspirations and goals will be discussed in the context of Chinese universities, for instance, respondents' reflections on their career and the influence of the broader social and cultural systems on family responsibilities, academic women's determination to take heavy workload to achieve career goals and a sense of guilt if more time is spent on input in career instead of on the family .

Figure 3.2 Concepts Related to Gender Inequality in Higher Education

Higher Education          Social System          Personality System

Sub-culture

| Prominent scientific Values Intellectual activities Production and transmission of knowledge Work ethic Competition Success Recognition Prestige | Division of labor Research funding assistance Teaching Administration Professional Bureaucratic-managerial Colleague Networks Mentor-Protégé relations | Work family first Career commitment (dedication,involvement) Achievement Motivation Affect- logic Feelings of "invisibility" vis-à-vis colleagues |

Gender Stratification in Academe: In equality in work tasks, grants, tenure, salary, promotion, rank, power, influence, prestige

Source: Malik and Lie in Lie & Malik(1994) "The Gender Gap in Higher Education : a Conceptual Framework" in World Yearbook of Education 1994 The Gender Gap in Higher Education (eds) London: Kogan Page p. 8

In relation to the above frameworks, I explore academic women's life cycle and career patterns from their personal backgrounds, the links between women's academic work and different role modes (for instance, domestic responsibilities) and the obstacles they encounter bounded by history, culture and the broader gender codes which organize and shape academic women's working conditions and career trajectories. Based on Figure 3.2, I will take up concepts in relation to gender inequality in higher education. Higher education sub-culture and the social system will be introduced, hence the following topics will be presented: academic recruitment, career advancement, career network, promotion criteria and leadership, Mentor, and cumulative advantage. In relation to the personality system, work-family relations will be discussed, academic women's family obligations, child-birth leave and child-rearing, husbands supportiveness and attitudes. Furthermore, both academic men and women's attitudes towards feminism will be discussed. The starting point of my

study is academic women's life course, I will discuss in the concluding chapter the gender gap in higher education and gender stratification in general terms.

**3.2 Life History Story, Life Event History and the Life Line**

Large-scale retrospective life event history studies are common in demography (Bjeren in Bjeren & Elgqvist-Saltzman,1994). In this study I apply different terms- "life event history", "life-course research", and "life-line" – to denote data stemming from large parts of the life-course of an individual, including both events and periods. In my research such events and periods have typically been educational attainment, entrance into academia, career promotion, childbirth, and domestic responsibilities. The events and periods can be seen as the "skeleton" of a life history.

In small-scale studies, further dimensions can be added to the life-line. Life-line data are often embedded in denser life history material which adds meaning and depth to the bare bones of history… the writers make use of life story material in describing and interpreting life-lines. The life-line and the life story are interrelated but not congruous. The life-line is used as a tool in social research projects aimed at describing and analyzing life as a process. Regardless of how one uses the life-line, much of its attraction stems from the fact that it is a visual device, a wordless description that adds new demensions to an understanding based on oral presentation. The life-line is open to interpretation from different perspectives, of which the actor's perspective is only one. The life story belongs to another realm of knowledge, each story-teller is the authority on her own story (Bjeren in Bjeren & Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1994:20).

My study is actually a small-scale study at the masters level. Life-line data with its denser history well suits a small-scale social study. Life line is a method in social science research, which, I will further illustrate in methodology chapter (Chapter IV). From theoretical point of view, life-course theory is applied through the life history story-telling.

## 3.3 Life- course Perspective

"The life-course perspective is part of an established tradition in sociology, which is generally known as life history research" (Nilsen A. in Bjeren & Elgqvist-

Saltzman,1994:101). As life history unfolds, there's a focus from theoretical aspect, which is, life-course theory.

The life-course theory looks at the distinctive series of roles and experiences through which the individual passes as she or he ages from birth to death and inquires into the impact of various changes on these patterns (Schroots, J.J.F, 2003). Moreover, it calls attention not only to the ways in which people's lives are influenced by broad economic, political, social, and cultural developments, but also to how the collective impact of individuals' reactions to these changes. According to Schroots, one of the major advantages of a life-course approach is the key it provides to understanding the various consequences of social change at different stages of a person's life. The essence of a life-course approach lies in the continuous interplay between social change and the life-course of individuals. People begin their lives in one historical period distinguished by a characteristic set of cultural norms and perceptions and institutional arrangements, and, as they age, these larger forces change. A life-course approach implies the notion of a society that is structured by age. That is, roles in a society differ by age, so that one can imagine a society that is structured by age in much the same way as it is structured by class and gender. Each society has its own cultural timetable for the appropriate progress of the individual through the life-course. There are social pressures which encourage individuals to make transitions between roles (for example, from unmarried to married) at points that arc defined as culturally appropriate ( Schroots, J.J.F, 2003).

The life-course approach, then, puts a sense of change and history into life-cycle research-focused on the lives of academic women, meaning that their lives could only be validly seen in terms of the broader social context - as represented in academic career, and family relationships, which is in accordance with my research questions.

## 3.4 Globalization Perspective

> *Capitalist globalization denotes a world war. It was incubated with the development of new technologies and the changing face of production and of labour in the capitalist world…This was has proceeded with transnational capital being liberated from any constraint on its global activity (Robinson, 1996:13-14).*

*Globalization is not just an " out there" phenomenon. It refers not only to the emergence of large-scale world systems, but to transformations in the very texture of everyday life. It is an "in-here" phenomenon, affecting even intimacies of personal identity...Globalization invades local contexts of action but does not destroy them; on the contrary, new forms of local cultural identity and self expression, are causally bound up with globalizing processes( Giddens, 1996:367-8).*

As stated in Chapter II, Globalization is a contested and complex term. A vital force in these processes is the modern market economy bringing Western enterprises into China. Together with the rapid economic growth in China generated by the reform and open-door policy, it has brought about emerging problems such as the re-stratification of Chinese society (Liu, 2005). "China has experienced one of the fastest increases in income inequality in the world and has become one of the few countries with the highest level of inequality"(Liu, 2005:34). Globalization is a trans formative process influencing women's and men's position on the labor market and their everyday life practices and identities. The emergence of a global economy is changing the nature of higher education and the role of universities. The concept of "cost-effectiveness" has been introduced and hence used to re-evaluate academic men and women's performances in the global context. China's higher education institutions have launched various policies in respond to it, affecting faculty members' career and life to certain extent. All of the interviewees have experienced the influence and consequences under Globalization. It is a perspective and approach implemented in this study.

## 3.5 Feminist Theory

The focus of my study is academic women. And in order to fully understand women in a historical perspective, I shall briefly review feminism. Simone de Beauvoir in her work The Second Sex argues about the division of sexes, " Women is a biological, not an historical, category, and she thus suffers from a singular oppression which knows of no historical period that precedes it" (Mitchell & Oakley in Mitchell & Oakley , 1986:2). It is a need to discover a history for women in women's own eyes. According to Delmar,

In the writing of feminist history it is the broad view which predominates: feminism is usually defined as an active desire to change women's position in society. Linked to this is the view that feminism is par excellence a social movement for change in the position of women. The fragmentation of contemporary feminism bears ample witness to the

impossibility of constructing modern feminism as a simple unity in the present or of arriving at a shared feminist definition of feminism. Such differing explanations, such a variety of emphases in practical campaigns, such varying interpretations of their results have emerged, that it now makes more sense to speak of a plurality of feminisms than of one (Delmar in Mitchell & Oakley , 1986 : 9-14).

In the final part of interview form, I tap questions concerning feminism and feminists in China. There's an discrepancy of understanding towards feminism among people (even in the intellectual circle) in modern China. Besides, misunderstandings of feminists images and mis-leadings still exists. Awareness should be raised and lack of knowledge be corrected. China was pre-occupied by feudal society ideologies for thousands of years, thus the acceptance and development of feminism is just at the beginning. In contrast to people's view of extreme feminists and feminisms, the core of feminism is achieving gender equality and eliminating gender roles. As Mitchell and Oakley pointed out, "All the varieties of feminism contain at their heart a paradox – requiring gender consciousness for their basis, their political rallying cry is the elimination of gender roles" (Mitchell & Oakley in Mitchell & Oakley, 1986:3).

## 3.6 Definition of Concepts

## 3.6.1 Gender

According to ILO ( International Labor Organization www.ilo.org ) 2003 definition,

> *Gender refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on a differential basis. Whereas biological sex is determined by genetic and anatomical characteristics, gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them.*

This definition distinguishes the biological aspect and social relations aspect of gender. Gender is the center theme both in my theoretical framework and in data presentation and analysis. Human beings are social beings. Individual life is closely linked with social events and development. Gender roles are behavior and psychological patterns displayed by men

and women. "Some sociologists are more concerned with gendered institutions which shape, reproduce and reconstitute gender than with the specification of gender roles themselves" (Malik & Lie in in Lie, Malik, Joe-Cannon, and Henrikus, 2006: 29). My focus is on academic women and society's understanding of gender roles in China. Through academic women's life stories, we see the roles they play in different phrases of their life-course. At the same time, academic women's life stories are interwoven in the social relationships and gender is the rational bind.

## 3.6.2 Gender Equality

According to the International Labor Organization (ibid) 2000 definition:

> *Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.*

Gender equality is the core of mainstream of feminism. To achieve gender equality has been put into official agenda by many governments. China has the largest population in the world, with which women account for about half. The CPC government has launched Gender Equality White Paper in 2004 and states that " The promotion of gender equality and the overall development of women is not only of great significance for China's development, it also has a special influence on the advancement of mankind" (Gender Equality White Paper www.china.org.cn). What is the reality of gender equality in China concerning academic careers? the question will be answered in the following chapters especially in data presentation and analysis. An important point in the ILO definition is that gender equality doesn't mean men and women's sameness. On this China had a different view in history which I will discuss later.

### 3.6.3 Gender Stereotyping

According to Singleton, gender role stereotypes are widely-held beliefs about those behaviors and characteristics, and then the stereotyping to a large extent become the roles (Singleton in Hargreaves,D.J.& Colley,A.N, 1986). However Hargreaves 's view is more widely accepted:

> *Sex-roles are the behavior patterns which are differentially displayed by the sexes, and sex-role stereotypes are the beliefs that people hold about these patterns... Sex-role stereotyping is an integral and fundamental part of the process of socialization... the process whereby the individual is converted into the person ( Hargreaves in Hargreaves,D.J.& Colley,A.N., 1986:27)*

Thus we can see that gender stereotypes present a conventionally simplified and standardized conception or image concerning the typical social roles of male and female, both domestically and socially. This phenomenon can be found in China, its presence is also felt in academic careers or other professions. As the product of social activity, gender stereotypes are neither perpetual nor static. They are influenced by the social ideology and economic mode held at a certain period of time accordingly, and are changing, even at times reversing, with every significant social transformation (Diekman & Eagle, 2000). In the academy, gender stereotypes affect students' choice of study and faculty members work. Gender stereotypes should be eliminated if we want to achieve gender equality goals. However, it is still held by many people in China which will be revealed in the questions I tap.

### 3.6.4 The Concept of Mentoring

> *"The word mentoring is from Greek mythology that implies a relationship between a young adult, and an older more experienced adult that helps the younger individual learn to navigate in the adult world of work"(O'LEARY & Mitchell in Lie & O'Leary , 1990:66).*

Mentoring occurs when a senior individual helps with the learning and development of a junior individual. Mentoring connections have been created to orient young employees, foster executive development, assist in career advancement, improve job performance, lower employee turnover, enhance creativity, and increase leadership potential (UNESCO, 2002). The mentor acts as a guide in the professional development road by providing information, resources and various kinds of support. In an university, generally speaking, a mentor is

usually head of a department or a full professor with years of experience. "To the extent that people in academe are isolated and even alienated, networking and mentorship provide them with potential avenues for integration" (O'LEARY & Mitchell in Lie & O' leary, 1990:69). In reality, there are mainly two kinds of mentoring: formal mentoring and informal mentoring. In most cases the dean or department head appoints the formal mentoring to a new faculty member.

Informal mentoring happens naturally among faculty members. Thus it is important for senior faculty members to introduce and help new comers into the academic circle, give guidance on the professional role, publication, research funding, and so on. In this way, new faculty members will eventually grow mature in the academic field.

## 3.6.5 The Theory of Cumulative Advantage

According to Kyvik, people reach a high academic position as a result of high productivity (Lie in Lie & O'Leary, 1990). However, a high academic rank is in itself decisive to high productivity. The theory of "cumulative advantage" (Cole, 1979) thus applies. (That is, scientists seek recognition by publishing. Professional recognition leads to greater access to economic resources, assistants and network connections, which again has consequences for productivity. The processes of cumulative advantage and disadvantage are essential in understanding differences in productivity) ( Lie in Lie & O'Leary, 1990:112). The most valued academic capital is research and publication, which requires commitment and devotion. The differences of productivity here refers to the differences between men and women academics' productivity. Research and studies in western countries have shown a discrepancy in male and female academics productivity, especially the discrepancy between married academic men and women, their children's age is an important factor interfering academic productivity particularly for women academics (Kyvik, 1990; Lie & Teigen in Lie & Malik, 1994). When conducting fieldwork, I shall tap questions on academic productivity and publication, though with fieldwork constraints, research questions have been modified. The adage "Publish or Perish" indicates that academic productivity is a crucial evaluation standard when it comes to professional recognition and promotion. On this point studies need to be done within the context of Chinese higher education institutions.

## Summary and Conclusion

This chapter is intended to provide a theoretical framework for the research and give a brief review of concepts which are relevant. The main approaches applied are gender perspective, life-course perspective, globalization and feminism. In addition, relevant concepts such as gender equality, gender role stereotyping are introduced. Concerning the emphasis in academe, the concept of mentor and cumulative advantage are discussed. My study will take into account these theoretical frameworks and data will be presented and analyzed in light of them.

# Chapter IV  Methodology

## Introduction

This chapter is intended to explain the methodology and methods applied in this study. I shall briefly review the main characteristics of both the quantitative paradigm and the qualitative paradigm to provide the grounds for the particular approach I have chosen especially in doing feminist research In addition, the triangulation method is utilized, which

presents the problem addressed by the research as well as the data collection procedures used. In addition, I will take up the difficulties I encountered during field work and how I had to modify the research design in light of the fieldwork constraints. A brief summary of how I will conduct the particular analysis and the issue of validity and reliability has also been discussed.

## 4.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches

Basically it is held that the quantitative paradigm and the qualitative paradigm are two major approaches in social science. Though some argue whether the two paradigms are based on incompatible and incommensurable philosophical assumptions or conceived as methodological variants within the same paradigm (Lund, 2005). The two approaches are grounded on similar perspectives with respect to ontological and epistemological questions about reality and knowledge construction.

## 4.1.1 The Quantitative Paradigm and Critical Realism

The quantitative paradigm is rooted in positivism.

> *Social researchers usually choose from alternative approaches to studying the social world. Each approach has its own set of philosophical assumptions and principles and its own stance on how to do research. The quantitative paradigm has its roots in positivism, which is broadly defined as the approach to natural science (Neuman, 2000:67).*

A researcher in the quantitative paradigm carries out a research by setting a priority defined hypotheses and gathering data to test the hypotheses. The researcher is independent and the researcher's values are kept out of the study and he/she is supposed to remain as neutral and objective as possible (Creswell, 1994).

Within the quantitative tradition, some critical realism is presupposed (Cook & Campell, 1979). What is meant by critical realism is that the phenomena studied in scientific research are not completely constructions in the scientists' "minds", but correspond to real entities. Therefore it is necessary to adopt a critical attitude concerning observations and inferences.

The critical-realistic position is universally accepted in modern quantitative methodology, and is the base for studying unobservable phenomena such as intelligence, experienced identity, self-concept and so on…the achievement motives, incentive values, and attribution-refer entirely to subjective phenomena, not directly observable to the researcher, but the observations are supposed by the researcher to correspond approximately to real states and processes in the participants' experiences. In line with the critical attitude implied by the critical-realist position, the instruments are standardised in an attempt to rule out possible threats to valid inferences about the phenomena (Lund, 2005:118).

## 4.1.2 The Qualitative Paradigm

The qualitative paradigm has been embedded in interpretive social science tradition. The interpretive approach is the "systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds" (Neuman, 2000:71). In a qualitative methodology inductive logic prevails. The qualitative research design is well suited to my research questions. What are the challenges academic women face in higher education in China today ?

## 4.2  A Qualitative Research Design in Doing Feminist Research

As the characteristics of both the quantitative and qualitative paradigm have been reviewed, I will apply both research methods with an emphasis on the qualitative method. Triangulation method is also utilized to validate the data:

> *The use of triangulation helps to eliminate biases by relying exclusively on only one data collection method, source, analyst, or theory…The researcher should provide an audit trail, which in a documentation of the research process. The thesis could then serve this function in that it documents the research process, which includes the fieldwork, the theoretical background as well as data collection and subsequent analysis in combination with the presentation of the research results (Gall et al.,1996 ).*

Figure 4.1. Triangulation method

Interview on different levels

Literature
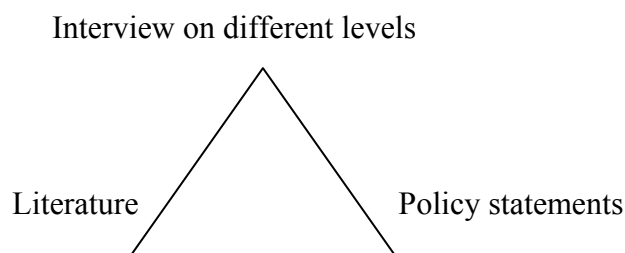
Policy statements

The triangulation method, which consists of literature review, policy statements and interview on different levels, is the basic research design.

Documents analysis and secondary data: in conducting my study, based on policy statements, document analysis and secondary data will be utilized. According to Denscombe, from narrative, cognitive and or primary and secondary (documented reports and studies) is also essential to analysis, and so will concept and content analysis of the same sources of information, so as to obtain comparative information for analysis and discussion (Denscombe,2003:103 ). Thus it is an essential part in my study as well.

## 4.3 In-depth Interviews and Sampling

This research is of a qualitative and semi-quantitative nature. I employ an interactive approach in collecting information mainly through in-depth interviews from respondents based on purposive sampling .

"Interviews involve a set of assumptions and understandings about the situation which are not normally associated with a casual conversation" (Denscombe, 2003:163). There are many ways to do interviews. Interviewing, which is one means of conducting a survey is essentially, though not always, a conversation, and more significantly, an instrument of data collection. I conducted a semi-structured in-depth interview guided with both open-ended and close-ended questions (See Appendix).

*With semi-structured interviews, the interviewer still has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However, with the semi-structured interview the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issued raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest (Denscombe, 2003:167).*

A question we cannot ignore in doing feminist research is the researcher's stance in interviewing women. As Ann Oakley states:

Each of those paradigms of traditional interviewing practice creates problems for feminist interviewers whose primary orientation is towards the validation of women's subjective experiences as women and as people, there is a lack of fit between theory and practice in this area (Oakley, 1981:30).

As the main data collection method, semi-structured in-depth interview, with its flexibility and interactivity, is well suited in conducting my research. The attitude I conveyed during interviews was respectful and encouraging, I'd try to be friendly and open-minded rather then a formal data-collector towards respondents .

Sampling: In line with the qualitative design of the study, I have adopted a purposive sampling approach.

*With purposive sampling the sample is "hand picked" for the research. The term is applied to those situations where the researcher already knows something about the specific people or events and deliberately selects particular ones because they are seen as stances that are likely to produce the most valuable data (Oakley, 1981:30).*

Qualitative inquiry typically focuses on relatively small samples from which one can learn a lot about issues of importance for the purpose of the research. I conducted in-depth interviews with primarily academic women in one comprehensive universities in Shanghai, China's biggest metropolitan city (See Chapter II).

## 4.4 Data Collection and Fieldwork Constraints

In order to seek a deep understanding of the research question, I collected data both from Beijing, China's capital at the national policy level and conducted interviews at one

comprehensive university in Shanghai of faculty members during fieldwork. Through the interviews with academic women in Shanghai I planed to tap questions regarding employment and academic career promotion. In addition, I planed to investigate their early educational background, occupation profile and family life  from a life course perspective. The relationship and impacts of academic productivity, social obligations as well as domestic responsibilities will also be discussed as little is known about the personal, cultural and structural barriers academic women faculty members face in higher education today. I also took full field notes and referred to official documents that can provide relevant data for my research area. The choice of the interviewed faculty members are from both social science and nature science departments, they are divided into four groups by age and academic rank. As a routine females in China retire at the age of 55 or 60,thus it is helpful to interview some male academics- on the full professor and associate professor level which emphasized the time it took them to proceed to the different academic levels.

Figure 4.2  Interviews and Methods for Data Collection

⇨ NWCCW....Office of the National Working Committee

for Children and Women under

the State Council of P.R.China          Ms Wan Yan ,*Deputy Director of NWCCW*

⇨ Women's Studies Institute of China

at the national policy-making level

(http://www.wsic.ac.cn/)          Ms Tan Lin,, *Director

⇨ Literature on Government Policies regarding Women in Higher education in

China

⇨     General information and documents

**Interviews in Shanghai**

⇨     Female faculty members of one comprehensive University (Shanghai)

⇨     Male faculty members of the same university

⇨  University recruitment policy and promotion policy

⇨  Documents

The choice of the participants in one university as interviewees are divided into 4 groups by age and academic rank:

Figure 4.3 Choice of Interviewees by Age and Academic Rank

| Age | Academic  Rank                    number |
|---|---|
| 25- 35 | assistant lecturer/lecturer /other |
| 35- 45 | lecturer/associate professor/ full professor/ other |
| 45- 54 | associate professor/full professor/ other |
| 55- above | as a routine female professors in China retire at the age of 55 or 60 |

Patton's statement was relevant to my fieldwork, "Qualitative inquiry designs cannot be completely specified in advance of fieldwork... A qualitative design unfolds as fieldwork unfolds" (Patton, 2002:63).

Qualitative inquiry means going into the field- into the real world of programs, organizations and getting close enough to the people and circumstances there to capture what is happening. "Given the qualitative emphasis on striving for depth of understanding, in context, attitude surveys and psychological tests are inadequate for revealing inner perspectives"(Patton, 2002:43).

On the academic preparation for field work, from the first draft to the final interview forms and research permit application letter, my supervisor Professor Suzanne Lie has devoted great efforts in supervision both in-depth and in detail. Thus pre departure, a well organized interview form of nine sections has been developed.

From my original research design, the fieldwork involved visiting China's three biggest metropolitan cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Xiamen) to conduct in-depth interviews with academic women in typical comprehensive universities. Based on the lack of appointment responses, of practical concerns, and limitations of the researcher (me), I chose instead to go to two cities: Beijing and Shanghai. The fieldwork was conducted between 8th and 24th , December, 2007.

Gaining access to people, places and events is a crucial part of successful research. For field researchers this access cannot be taken for granted. Researchers need to set about gaining access, and to do this they need to "engage in negotiations that have political, ethical and practical implications"(Denscombe, 2003:89). It took longer time to make specific contacts in Beijing; Nordic Centre, Shanghai responded positively and offered help. According to Denscombe, Identifying key people who can grant permission, and successfully negotiating with them for access to people, places and events, is often a prerequisite without which the fieldwork cannot begin (Denscombe, 2003:91). Actually I had planned to apply for a research permit to the administration of the university where I intended to conduct interviews. Tone Helene Aarivik, Program Manager in Nordic Centre , Shanghai, advised me not to apply for a research permit, but "go to the field", in other words, contact respondents directly, otherwise, she said it takes 2-3 months to receive a research permit from approval. Professor Suzanne Lie kindly wrote me a recommendation letter, Ms Mette

Katrine Oftebro, Senior Executive Officer and CIE Administrative coordinator helped to fax all the relevant documents to Beijing and Shanghai.

Access to fieldwork settings and modify location of the research design. Going to field work is still not as expected. As an indigenous woman and feminist, on the one hand, I am familiar with the local environment and culture in Chinese society, with an "insider" status. On the other hand, as one researcher stated, " it is often hard to conduct fieldwork without help through personal contacts…this may be partly related to the political climate and partly to the widespread practice of "guanxi" (social relationships"…the experience of the constraints- and convenience in some cases- incurred by this phenomenon seems to be a shared one by researchers conducting social research in China" (Liu, 2005:105). Local participation makes a difference. The fieldwork in Beijing was focused on documents/statistics data collection and literature review. Upon arrival, I accessed to the NWCCW documentation center and found relevant literature for my study. Although this was not among my initial fieldwork plans, it is beneficial to my research. This flexibility in fieldwork is supported by Bryman (2004) who contends that during the process of fieldwork, alternative avenues of inquiry might arise which do not necessarily lead to superficial or unscientific data but instead may help to strengthen data.

However, from previous responses during pre-tests, I realized the original research plan and research questions were too ambitious, which is usual among master students. Thus after my supervisor Professor Suzanne Lie and Professor Halla Holmarsdottir's recommendation, I modified the research design:

1)      Modify the research questions

2)      Cut out the original ideas of comparing Norway and China gender policies

3)      Narrow down the number of participating universities from 3 to 1.

4)      Narrow down the respondents number and age groups

5)      Pre-tests

After arrival in Shanghai, specific appointments for interviews and the arrangements for meeting faculty members were made. Tone Helene Aarivik, Programme Manager of the Nordic Centre in Shanghai, has been very helpful in contacting faculty members. Though

when I arrived in the university, she was on an early Christmas holiday, she has informed and forwarded to me four professors' contacts in advance. I have two friends (faculty members) in that university, and we also contacted the other respondents based on purposive sampling. Prior to the fieldwork, I have had pre-tests based on my research questions in University of Oslo, and counted the length and time each pre-test interview takes. After arrival in Shanghai, I had two more pre-tests based on modified research questions and hence had in mind of interview length and other factors that I may encounter during interview.

Taking into consideration of the reality and social constraints, I had to modify the research design once again. For a relaxing and better conversation, I didn't use a recorder as originally planned, only took notes by hand. I cut out the "academic productivity" part of the research design since the topics covered are too broad and respondents could not answer immediately.

A major problem I encountered is the difficulty of getting up-dated data regarding gender distribution of faculty and students in the university. My supervisor emphasized that I should have the tables showing the gender distribution of the faculty in the universities I research on, either from their statistics or from tables I shall make on the basis of university catalogs. Thus I asked both the university and different faculty members about the data, the answer was that they don't know in detail or they don't have statistics by gender, which is common in Chinese universities. Then I accessed to the university website, there is a name list of distinguished professors, however, in the Chinese language, a person's gender cannot be judged merely by names. After the fieldwork , I have inquired about the statistics via e-mails twice, there was still not positive answers, thus I turned to books for references. The latest statistics of gender distribution in China's higher education is in a book especially edited for the 4th UN World Conference on Women in 1995. For general enrollment statistics, I referred to the UNESCO statistics. As of university faculty members composition by rank and gender, I applied the statistics in Lie and Malik's World Year Book of Educatio : The Gender Gap in Higher Education (Lie & Malik, 1994).

Another problem I encountered is respondents' cautious answers. Even in academia the attitudes towards interviews is not that open, cautious about airing their opinion. "A feminist interviewing women is by definition both inside the culture and participating in that what

she is observing"(Oakley, 1981:31). Actually as an indigenous woman and have been working in academia for years, I have certain advantages in doing this research. However, there are still limitations and cautious reactions from respondents. From my case I assume it is a matter of trust to the person met for the first time, as a junior researcher I need more experiences. Furthermore, an important reason is that the old legacy of 1966-76 " Cultural Revolution" still exists (See chapter II ). Conducting social research in China is still difficult compared with a western country. There is the CPC Party's concern about social control, and the skepticism against researcher going to people discussing various social issues (Liu, 2005). The middle-aged and older generation females may think more of social constraints and consequences. "In such a climate, people are not used to being interviewed for social research purposes and many are unwilling to participate for fear that the investigation may cause political trouble for them. This reflects the more general nature of social transition in China, whereby the considerable economic liberalization the country has experienced since the late 1970s has not been accompanied by significant political liberalization"(Liu, 2005: 105).

During my fieldwork in China, an unexpected accident happened. My father was wounded in a traffic accident and had an operation on the leg bone on 19th, December. The whole family hide this from me until I finished the major part of my fieldwork. But as I am the only child, there are decisions to make and obligations to be done. I had planned to re-visit one university in Beijing and do some follow-up interviews, but due to the limited time and practical situation, this could not be fulfilled.

## 4.5  Life Line Method

As have pointed in chapter III, I have utilized a life course approach as theoretical framework. Therefore in my research I applied life-line method. One of the major developments in social science research over the past two decades has been the shift away from static approaches towards perspectives and methods that can shed light on the true flux of life- Life line method (Dijkum & Schroots, 2004). In chapter III, I have illustrated the line course approach in light of theoretical framework, here I shall give an account of the life line method in relation to my research. According to Nilsen, " Life-lines are linear, chronological presentations of an individual life-course, where the person's age and the year of phases and

events are marked out on a line. The design of the lines may vary according to the problem area addressed by the researcher" (Nilsen in Bjeren,G.and Saltzman-Inga, 1994:101). Taking my topic " Life Cycle and Career Patterns of Academic Women in Higher Education in China" as basis, themes related to methods using life lines will be digested through life-line data presentation.

Life-line data are often embedded in denser life history material which adds meaning and depth to the bare bones of history… the writers make use of life story material in describing and interpreting life-lines. The life-line and the life story are interrelated but not congruous. The life-line is used as a tool in social research projects aimed at describing and analyzing life as a process. Regardless of how one uses the life-line, much of its attraction stems from the fact that it is a visual device, a wordless description that adds new demensions to an understanding based on oral presentation (Bjeren in Bjeren & Saltzman-Inga, 1994:20).

In life line method an important aspect is life history. Life history is a method applied across the social science disciplines and the researcher's definition of life history may vary accordingly (Cole & Knowles, 2001;Goodson & Sikes,2001; Liu,2005). Purely qualitative biographical material was the standard empirical basis within this research tradition during early days. What is new is the increased attention to the interplay between the larger, societal forces of change and the actual experiences of people. In studies concentrate on individual cases, "life-line data are often embedded in denser life history material which adds meaning and depth to the bare bones of history"(Bjeren, 1994:20; Nilsen in Bjeren & Saltzman-Inga, 1994). Social scientists are moving away from simply models of "before" and "after" from traditional to modern, from pre-industrial to industrial, from rural to urban towards much more subtle formulations of how people's lives are lived and how the course of their lives may vary as a result of macro-level developments. (Nilsen in Bjeren & Saltzman-Inga, 1994;Dijkum & Schroots, 2004). The drawing of life-lines allows a macro view of personal life in history and provides a basic method for my empirical study.

## 4.6 Life-Line Interview Method

"The life line was used in connection with in-depth biographical interviews, which were the first stage in the collection of data" (Nilsen in Bjeren & Saltzman-Inga, 1994:102). The topic of my investigation is " Life Cycle and Career Patterns of Academic Women in Higher

Education in China", within which the life-line method suited well. Hence I applied life-line methods in conducting interviews with faculty members. In a typical life-course research, four general life-stages have been distinguished: child (0-16), young adult (17-39), mature adult (40-59) and old age (over 60). In my study, respondents are also divided into four groups by age and academic rank: assistant lecturer/lecturer /other (25- 34), lecturer/associate professor/ full professor (35-44), associate professor/full professor/ other ( 45-54), and above 55. In general, an attempt was made to collect information from individuals representing different cohorts and different subgroups.

People in different age groups are affected by varies events in historical periods. Biographical interviews have a retrospective element by nature (Nilsen in Bjeren & Saltzman-Inga, 1994). Thus my respondents' life stories and life histories are valuable sources in specific historical context, which, in turn are affected by individual interpretation of these events. I will tap questions on central research themes- life cycle and career patterns. To elaborate on the point, I will draw life lines of different respondents and focus on the subject from academic women's point of view in particular. As Ann Nilsen pointed out, "If the interviews start out with the filling in of a life-line, this will invariably have the function of a structuring element. There's a danger that informant and researcher alike will relate to what the life-line shows, rather than to the spontaneous aspect inherent in the narrating of the biographical account without this structure" (Nilsen in Bjeren & Saltzman-Inga,1994:105). I will try to avoid this danger and attach importance to the spontaneity to present a full picture in a large context.

## 4.7 Data Analysis

Life-course analysis is applied in my study. Life-course analysis introduces a historical perspective into the study of how people live from birth to death. A central concept in life-course analysis is the cohort or group of individuals who enter a given system or a given status at a particular time( Dijkum & Schroots, 2004). In the analysis, life-lines will be drawn. "The life-line provides an exceptionally useful device for continuous translation between different levels of analysis, since the data on which it is based are amenable both to advanced statistical analysis and convincing case studies" (Bjeren in Bjeren & Saltzman-Inga,1994:105, 1994:21). Another advantage in drawing life-lines and making life-course

analysis is in that, when looking at the careers and households - the primary links of social organizations - the life-course approach forces us to see the real dynamism of people's lives and to avoid the reification of academic analytical categories (Schroots,2003).The emphasis of my study is on the experience of academic women, given this goal, the selection of a life-course approach and analysis are well suited to provide a common methodological framework.

## 4.8 Gender Analysis

> *Gender analysis is a systematic way of looking at the different impacts of development, policies, programs and legislation on women and men that entails, first and foremost, collecting sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive information about the population concerned. Gender analysis can also include the examination of the multiple ways in which women and men, as social actors, engage in strategies to transform existing roles, relationships, and processes in their own interest and in the interest of others. ( ILO International Labor Organization, www.ilo.org )*

## 4.9 Transcribing the Interviews

Shortly after each interview was conducted, I transcribed the interviews based on field notes since the memory was fresh. In reviewing and recalling the interviews, a panorama of both words, behaviours as well as respondents' non-verbal and facial expressions are figured out and could be used for further data analysis.

The interviews were conducted in Chinese, thus translation is a necessary process in transcribing. As an indigenous researcher, I have done all the translation (Chinese into English) by myself.

## 4.10 Confidentiality

Confidentiality According to Neuman, "even if anonymity is not possible, researchers should protect confidentiality…That anonymity protects the identity of the individuals from being known by anyone" (Neuman, 2000). For the ethical concern, I have informed all respondents the interview is anonymous and all of them shall sign a consent form in

advance. As stated earlier, some respondents were reluctant to air their opinions, therefore I have not identified the specific university in Shanghai nor the specific area in which the interviewee is employed but briefly identified them as faculty in social or natural sciences in order to protect them.

## 4.11 Validity and Reliability

According to Birgit Brock-Utne, the question of re -liability and validity are equally important in both quantitative and qualitative research (Brock-Utne,1996) .Validity in qualitative research is truthfulness, which can be defined as the ability of the researcher to produce true knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation. Qualitative researchers are more interested in authenticity than validity. The core principle of qualitative researchers is to be truthful by avoiding false or distorted accounts( Neuman, 2000) . The system consists of four kinds of inferences: statistical, casual, construct inferences and generalizations (Lund, 2005). The validities of these inferences are termed statistical conclusion, internal, construct and external validity, respectively.

Reliability in qualitative research is dependability and consistency. It "refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions" (Hammersley, 1992:201). Qualitative researchers use different types of data collection techniques such as interviews, documents, observations, audiovisual materials and record consistently their observations (Creswell, 1994).

Validity and reliability depend on the empirical steps in all phases of a research process (Lund, 2005). In my research field work, I conducted face-to-face semi-structured in-depth interviews with academic women and men in Shanghai, China. The research design suits well the validity and reliability issues. Length of each interview was 45- 60 minutes and the locations were in offices or campus café for a relaxing environment to conduct a longer dialogue. As in doing feminist research, respondents questions " ask back" situations are properly settled (Oakley, 1981). Observations of the interviewees' verbal and non-verbal language such as body language has also been taken into consideration. Full field notes have been written.

As an indigenous woman and feminist, I am familiar with the environment and the academic culture in Chinese society, the "insider" status may lend additional reliability and validity to the research.

## Summary and Conclusion

This chapter deals with the methodology and methods applied in this study. I begin with an attempt to justify the qualitative research design through a brief comparative review of both the qualitative paradigm and the quantitative paradigm. The specific research methods and data analysis design such as the life-course methods were discussed and justified, which are in line with the research theme of life-cycle and career patterns of academic women in higher education in China. Furthermore, fieldwork constraints were also discussed. Subsequently, I gave an overall account of how the sample was organized, how data was collected, how it was analyzed, and how the issues over validity and reliability were addressed.

Note

1966-1976"Cultural Revolution" in China, intellectuals cautious about airing their true opinion or critical views for fear that later it may be quoted and used against them in social movements, the discrepancy between actual behavior and expressed belief is the product of adjustment to a special social context.

# Chapter V  Data Presentation and Analysis

## Introduction

This chapter intends to present and analyze the data guided by the research questions along three main themes: 1) the institutional and structural challenges academic women face (gender composition, the entry into academia, career trajectory, promotion and aspirations, factor affecting their work – career pattern). 2)their own social and cultural backgrounds (early educational background, life events, domestic responsibilities from a  life cycle perspective). 3) the personal challenges (experiences and awareness of their own rights, views of equal opportunity policies - what is their level of gender awareness). Each of these themes represents the dilemma and paradox described as central to the research questions and the social organization of women's work in the university. The analysis will be done in relation to the concepts and theories taken up in chapter III and chapter IV.

The respondents for this study are faculty members in a comprehensive university in Shanghai. An open-ended interview was used in which respondents were encouraged to talk generally about work and their life experiences. Data will be presented in a descriptive and narrative form in accordance with the qualitative research design outlined in chapter IV. The picture of Shanghai, a metropolitan city in China, as stated in chapter II, is served as a epitome of modern China. A comprehensive university chosen in Shanghai will shed lights on the broad lines of life cycle and career patterns of academic women in China. Much of the life stories in the interviews, while highly personal and illuminating, represented social accounts of academic women's life. Each interview lasted from 45 minutes to one hour.

The interviews with academic members (both women and men) are also aimed to further explore their views of equality, attitudes towards feminism, and any recommendations they may formulate to better facilitate the progression of academic women's careers.

Due to fieldwork constraints and limitations, I could not use a large sample. In order to protect the interviewees in accordance with " Interview Consent " form we signed, I will not mention their names, age or origin of faculty, using " Social Science" and " Natural Science"

instead. Fourteen interviewees from different disciplines were selected, ten women and four men. Below is the distribution of the sample according to age and academic rank.

Figure 5.1 Distributions of Interviewees

| Age | Academic Rank | number |
|---|---|---|
| 25- 34 | assistant lecturer/lecturer /other | 7 |
| 35- 44 | lecturer/associate professor/ full professor/ other | 3 |
| 45- 55 | associate professor/full professor/ other | 4 |
| 55- above | as a routine female professors in China retire at the age of 55 or 60 | |

Accordingly I utilized a Life-line interview method as have been illustrated in Chapter IV ( See Chapter IV Life-line interview method). Respondents reported the following ages: seven are between 25-and 34-years-old (four women and three men); three are between 35- and 44-years-old (two woman and one men); four are 45-years-old or older (all women). Ten of the respondents are married, eight women and two men. One female respondent was divorced. The other four are single ( two men and two woman). Six of the respondents have child, based on the one-family-one-child pattern. One female respondent has two children when she was doing her oversea doctorate study with husband.

5.1 Areas Investigated and the Respondents' Background

To further understand what is presented in the interviews, I will first present the interviewees' background with the following tables, and use F ( female) and M ( male) to specify their gender.

Figure 5.2  A Profile of 14 Interviewees by Gender, Family Background, and Field of Study

| Interviewee | Father's education | Father's occupation | Mother's education | Mother's occupation | Highest degree of interviewee | Current position | Faculty |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No.1 F | B.A. | teacher | B.A. | teacher | PhDoversea study | Professor | Social science |
| NO.2 F | Primary school | worker | Primary school | housewife | PhD | Professor | Social science |
| NO.3 F | Middle school | worker | Middle school | worker | PhDoversea study | Associate professor | Social science |
| NO.4 F | B.A. | teacher | B.A. | teacher | PhD | Professor | Social science |
| NO.5 M | | Peasant | | Peasant | PhDoversea study | Associate professor | Social science |
| NO.6 F | B.A. | teacher | B.A. | teacher | PhD | Associate professor | Economics |
| NO.7 F | Primary | worker | | housewife | M.A. | lecturer | Social science |
| NO.8 F | B.A. | teacher | M.A. | teacher | PhD | lecturer | Naturalscience |
| NO.9 M | B.A. | teacher | B.A. | teacher | PhD | Associate professor | Natural science |
| NO.10 F | Primary school | worker | | housewife | PhD | Associate professor | Natural science |
| NO.11 M | B.A. | teacher | B.A. | engineer | PhDoversea study | Associate professor | Economics |
| NO.12 M | B.A. | Personnel | B.A. | accountant | M.A. | lecturer | Socialscience |
| NO.13 F | B.A. | company | B.A. | teacher | PhD | Professor | Socialscience |
| NO.14 F | B.A. | Cadre | B.A. | accountant | M.A. | Assistant lecturer | Social science |

Figure 5.3 A Profile of Interviewees' Siblings

| Interviews | Urban/rural Hukou (residence permit) | How many siblings | same encouragement as siblings of opposite sex |
|---|---|---|---|
| NO.1. F | urban | 1 brother | Yes |
| NO.2 F | **rural** | 1 brother 1 sister | Yes |
| NO.3 F | urban | 1 brother | Yes |
| NO.4 F | urban | 3 brothers | Yes |
| NO.5 M | **rural** | 2sisters, 2brothers | Yes |
| NO.6 F | urban | 1 sister | Yes |
| NO.7 F | **rural** | 1 brother | Yes |
| NO.8 F | urban | 1 brother 1sister | **Yes** |
| NO.9 M | urban | 2 brothers | Yes |
| NO.10 F | **rural** | 4brothers 1sisters | Yes |
| NO.11 M | urban | Single child | Yes |
| NO.12 M | urban | Single child | Yes |
| NO.13 F | urban | 2 sisters | Yes |
| NO.14 F | urban | Single child | Yes |

## 5.2 The Cradle:Academic's Own Family Background and Education

### 5.2.1 Urban Middle Class vs Rural Hukou People

Individual interviews were held with each respondent, first eliciting general information on their family background social-economic status (SES), then asked to comment in some detail on their own experience including intellectual background, their parents' education and occupation, their residence and family composition. Here social-economic status (SES) is also called " Jiating tiaojian (family condition)". According to Liu, " it is used interchangeably with social-economic status and one's family condition is defined by a constellation of interrelated factors, such as parents' education levels, occupations, incomes, guanxi ( social relationships or networks) and health status"( Liu, 2005:22). Parents or fathers work in the government, state-owned or joint enterprises management level, educational institutions at various levels and so on, often in urban cities, can be considered of higher social-economic status (higher SES). Parents or fathers work in rural areas farm lands, laid-off factories, or jobless, can be defined of lower social-economic status (lower SES).

As specified in chapter IV Methodology, I will apply analysis which emphasize on gender perspective and life-course perspective, thus I will fully convey respondents' experiences and individual stories in their own words during data presentation whenever it is possible.

As Figure 5.2 revealed, of the 14 respondents, one female respondent has a father who's a government cadre (higher SES), one female respondent and one male respondent have parents work as company team leaders, seven respondents are from intellectual family backgrounds (four women and two men). Among the seven interviewees, five of them have school teacher parents. From the interviews it was learned that they have a comparatively good cultural background and stable family income, parents in such families encourage and can afford children to achieve higher academic pursuit. Respondents from such families can be considered of an urban middle class origin. This finding coincides with western studies which show that a  great  portion of women academics are born of a middle class background which can provide them extra sources to succeed in an academic environment, " these women are overwhelmingly daughters of the middle class" ( Lie & Rorslett ,1986:28).

Consistent with the finding, research conducted by Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) also shows that women university teachers come from more educated families. " Among the older cohort, 79% of women had fathers who had completed secondary school or more, while only 58% of male university teachers had equally educated fathers. Almost half of the women in the older cohort and 30% of the men had mothers with at least secondary education" (Gaskell, Eichler, Pan, Xu & Zhang, 2004: 522).

Four interviewees are from rural areas (three female one male), with rural " Hukou", their parents are peasants or workers (lower SES). For people resident in rural areas, education is the only hope to improve their Hukou condition, to go to university and find a city job after graduation, which is the most feasible way to change their rural " Hukou" (Note 1). Though financial ability is limited, parents in such families tended to be more serious about their children's school performance and academic work. As one middle-aged female respondent recalled:

> *I come from a village. Both my parents are peasants. I have three elder brothers, one younger brother, and one younger sister. What are my parents' expectations when I was a child? I am lucky to be born in a family which treats girls and boys equally, I got praise for my good academic performance at school, and parents' just want us to study well, so that when we grow up we don't have to be tied to the land, and have a better life condition; any extra education course? No, in my family, we cannot afford this, and I study hard on my own.*

Whether from intellectual or peasant backgrounds, one thing in common is that all respondents grew up in families which put emphasis on educational achievements. This is in line with findings on China family by western researcher that "no difference can be discerned between lower SES parents and higher SES parents, concerning the maximum education they would like their child to have" (Liu, 2002:54). The phenomenon that the respondents' families provided a supportive environment strengthened respondents' own aspiration to go to academia .

Regarding family member composition, all 14 interviewees were born before 1979 the year of "one-family-one-child" policy launch (Note 2). Thus ten of them have brothers/sisters, only three respondents are from single-child family. On the whole respondents from rural areas have more siblings than those from urban areas. When asked " If you have siblings/cousins, did you get the same encouragement for your pursuit of study?" eleven out of 14 respondents answered positively. In most cases regarding early education, gender

identity was not apparent during childhood. Some female respondents recalled they were treated more like a Tomboy in their early childhood.

If we can say respondents early education was smooth, situations become different when they trying to achieve higher education. A female respondent, whose major was changed from electronics into civil engineering, has passed all the written exams to her doctorate study, yet was refused in oral exam:

> *During your educational period, have you felt you have been discriminated against because of your gender? Yes. I remember clearly it happened when I applied for doctorate study for the first time. I had passed all the written exams. It is quite demanding, you know, only a few of the candidates can pass it successfully. The next step is an oral exam/interview. During the interview, before asking any questions, the examiner was surprised when I came into the room, then he told me directly they don't want female students...I felt hurt and discouraged... later I had to change to another major in another university (in order to take doctorate study).*

It is a single case in the interviews, which may not serve as the general outline of situations in China. However, it indicated the already existed gender discrimination. If the single case still exist in modern China, then the way to achieve Gender equality is going to be hard. As I have demonstrated in chapter III, "Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices" (see Chapter III). The difficulties and dilemma women encountered in pursuit of academic study and career will be unfolded later.

## 5.2.2 Way to Academia- University Recruitment Policies

From the 1890s to 2000s, over centuries, there have been several ups and downs in the development of China universities and policy changes/reforms. After the harrowing struggles in the Cultural Revolution decade (Note 3), since 1978, the academic ranking system was restored gradually. Most middle-aged respondents ( 35-44, 45-55) felt that the recruitment policy, and their career development, in terms of promotion through the ranks, had been relatively smooth in the time after the Culture Revolution. As one female respondent said:

> *It was a healing period after the Culture Revolution. In the early 1980s we emphasis equality, in work, in recruitment, everywhere, " What men can do, women can do", the slogan carries on from previous revolutionary period... I didn't feel any discrimination.*

Similarly, three other interviewees in the age group shared the view that in the early 1980s, no matter in what career, working colleagues are comrades in building up the "Four Modernizations" to strengthen China, an ideal brotherhood/sisterhood sharing common goals. At that time, three now professor respondents were then assistant lecturers. They indicated that they were not particularly aware of, or bothered by, the impact of gender on their work performance and assessment while occupying junior positions. Once I saw a poster in a magazine with the slogan " What men can do, women can do". The portrait in a picture of a male and female worker working together (use a machine tool), the female wearing unisex trouser suit. As Liu stated, the idea of gender equality at that time was embodied in the model females, namely the " Iron girls" (Liu, 1996:32). The " Iron Girl" displayed a strength and gesture that women had no difference from men workers in terms of physical labor, speed and so on. It is however, an emphasis of gender sameness rather than gender equality. As I have pointed in chapter III, "Gender equality does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female" (ILO www.ilo.org ,2000). Therefore, gender sameness demonstrated in the " Iron Girl" ideology is an abuse of gender equality. Furthermore, it is far from gender equity, which, should treat women and men fairly according to their respective needs.

Since the 1990s, with the higher education reform and the trend of Globalization, emphasis on " efficiency", "cost-effective", "means-end rationality" – efficiency as the basic aim/value, new challenges were put up. Globalization is a trans formative process influencing women's and men's position on the labor market and their everyday life practices and identities. The emergence of a global economy are changing the nature of higher education and the role of universities. (See Chapter III).Qualification requirements are higher, publication and research projects in related area are assets. In 2007, Shanghai and nation wide, the basic requirement for faculty member recruitment is a PhD degree, which was not common in the 1980s and early 1990s. As UNESCO statistics indicated, in China, female enrollment in PhD level is 20.2% (1999) and 28.1% in 2003 respectively ( http://status.uis.unesco.org TableB: Enrollment by ISCE level). Accordingly female

candidates with PhD is much lesser than males. When recruiting new faculty members, if both candidates hold a PhD and have similar qualifications, gender is a subtle element in the recruitment process. One female respondent said although all the recruitment policies emphasis "equal opportunity", bias is subtle:

> *Yes, when it comes to the job market, I feel the discrimination. It is rather subtle. On policy documents they state " equal opportunity" for both male and female, but as I have experienced, sending many resumes before my graduation, I only got a few responses. My classmate (a boy) and me both have PhD as required. For some institutions, they just announced directly that they recruit male graduates only! Many institutions didn't state it out but in fact favor male graduates in the whole recruitment process, filling in forms, first round and second round interviews...A female candidate has to be twice or three times more competent than the male to get a position.*

The above phenomenon coincides with western researcher's fieldwork notes concerning university graduates in China, " In the case of women graduates, the reasons(of disadvantage in job placement) given were a reluctance to take responsibility for maternity leave, and a perception that women graduates were less likely to be able to travel and take on difficult assignments"(Hayhoe, 1996:227). An early survey held jointly by China Youth Daily and Tencent.com in 2007 revealed that among the 6,106 polled graduates, 66.5% respondents said there is recruitment and job discrimination between different genders. (Beijing Review, November 8,2007). The impacts of Globalization has enlarged the existed gender discrepancy in job market, in addition to the oversupply of male labor in China, accordingly, women are pushed to a vulnerable position (See Chapter II & III).

## 5.2.3 Female Faculty Representation and Affirmative Policies

Recruitment is concerned with new faculty members, then how about the exact faculty member gender composition? As pointed in Chapter II, when compared to the 14 countries in the 1992-1993 Carnegie International Study of the academic profession, Shanghai's academics fall in the middle in terms of age (45 years) and gender profiles (73 % male and 23 % female), with six countries above and four below in both profile tables (Postiglione & Jiang, 1999:12). In order to clarify the faculty members' opinion, I probe with a question, "In many faculties in Chinese universities, there are more males in academic positions than female. Is it the situation in your faculty?" and further I asked for the reasons that account for the feminization of low positions in the academe.

Ten out of 14 respondents share the opinion that at assistant lecturer and lecturer level, male and female percentage is about the same while in higher academic levels female percentage is smaller. "Yes. For instance, in the department I worked before, 42% associate professors are female, but only12% full professors are female." One female professor said. I asked for the faculty members gender distribution statistics, both during the fieldwork and via three follow-up e-mails later, but I didn't get the statistics. However, an updated statistics of full-time females' share of faculty positions in another comprehensive university in south China, SUN YAT-SEN University, may illustrate the gender discrepancy:

Figure 5.4 Full-time Females' Share of Faculty Positions

| Department | Rank Total | Full Professor | | | Associate Professor | | | Lecturer | | | Assistant Lecturer | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | MF | F | %F | MF | F | %F | MF | F | %F | MF | F | %F |
| International Business | 14 | 6 | 1 | | 5 | 1 | | 3 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | |
| Economics | 14 | 3 | 0 | | 8 | 0 | | 3 | 2 | | | | |
| Literature& language | 57 | 24 | 1 | | 23 | 5 | | 10 | 6 | | | | |
| Institute of Educational Research | 11 | 3 | 0 | | 3 | 1 | | 3 | 1 | | 2 | 2 | |
| Applied Mechanics &Engineering | 24 | 9 | 4 | | 6 | 0 | | 4 | 0 | | 5 | 2 | |
| School for Oversea Education Exchange | 23 | 2 | 1 | | 8 | 3 | | 13 | 2 | | | | |

中山大学　　师资统计　　SUN YAT-SEN UNIVERSITY retrieved from http://www.lingnan.net/jiaoxue/gjswxsz.asp on March 31, 2008

This can be further confirmed by the national statistics before the 4th UN World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995 (Figure5.5&5.6) and the UNESCO statistics in 2006(Figure 5.7). From Figure 5.4, we can see that in lecturer and assistant lecturer level, women

constitutes 32.69% and 41.36% respectively, however in professor and associate professor level, women only constitute 12.01% and 21.93%. If we divide the teachers by age (Figure 5.6), the younger generation (under 35) has a higher ratio percentage (36.9%) than the elder generation (56-61, 15.4%). Taking all faculty and staff into account, the majority of women is in "supporting personnel" section (60.14%). According to a recent study, in 2005, percent of female faculty members in China has risen to 41.61%, which is quite a progress, but still leg behind compared with other countries such as the U.S. (43.4%) , Russia ( 54.1%), and Bulgaria( 45.0%) (Lie & Malik, 2008 under publication). The UNESCO 2006 statistics (Figure 5.7) on China also provides an overview of relative position of women in higher education, which shows academic women have made progresses in relative positions over the years. But there's still an obvious gender discrepancy in faculty composition in China's higher education institutions. Research conducted by CIDA (ibid) confirms that in China women faculty members are lower ranked. " At our workshops, researchers presented statistics that suggested women at the five normal universities constituted around 10% of full professors, 20% of associate professors, 35% of lecturers and 50% of assistants. The numbers are about equal to the statistics on Chinese universities as a whole" (Gaskell, Eichler, Pan, Xu & Zhang, 2004: 521).

Figure 5.5 Number of Female Teachers, Staff &Workers in Regular Higher Education Institutions in China（1993)

Unit: person

| | Total | Teachers, staff &workers in universities | | | | | | | | | | Personnel Affiliated Research orgs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Sub total | Full-time teachers | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | Sub total | Professor | Associate professor | Lecturer | Assistant Lecturer | Other Teaching staff | Support personnel | | Worker | |
| Total number | 1,021,338 | 833,046 | 387,808 | 24,385 | 95,360 | 162,543 | 83,801 | 21,719 | 123,009 | 172,046 | 149,823 | 48,511 |
| Number of female | 380,093 | 302,173 | 119,683 | 2929 | 20,921 | 53145 | 34,667 | 8,021 | 60,140 | 63,348 | 59,002 | 13,083 |
| Percent of female in total | 37.22 % | 36.27% | 30.96 % | 12.01 % | 21.93 % | 32.69 % | 41.36 % | 36.93 % | 48.89 % | 36.74 % | 39.38 % | 21.40 % |

Wei Yu Women's Education in China (1995)  P 366 Beijing : Higher Education Press

Figure 5.6 Ratio between Full-time Female-and-male Teachers in Higher Education Institutions in China in 1993

| Age | Under 35 | 36-45 | 46-55 | 56-61 and above |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 186,404 | 65,727 | 77,361 | 58,316 |
| Female teachers | 68,816 | 19,597 | 22,315 | 8,955 |
| Percentage of total | 36.9% | 29.8% | 28.9% | 15.4% |

Wei Yu Women's Education in China ( 1995)  P 82 Beijing : Higher Education Press

5.7 China Teaching Staff in Total Tertiary, Public and Private, Full and Part time, All Programmes, Female 1999-2006

| Teaching staff in total tertiary, Public and private, Full and part time, all programmes | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
| | 503,865 | 523,326 | 588,641 | 679,888 | 850,227 | | | 1,332,483 |
| Female | | | 267,084 | 308,485 | 385,773 | | | 554,456 |
| Female % | | | 45.37% | 45.37% | 45.37% | | | 41.61% |

Teaching staff by ISCED level  Retrieved from UNESCO

http://stats.uis.unesco.org/unesco/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=181

What are the reasons for the feminization of low positions? The following discussions will illustrate this point. Some respondents consider it a developing stage under traditional cultural influence; some think it is just a matter of time to achieve gender equality. One female professor gave a practical reason, the pool of academic women is small, as have demonstrated earlier in this chapter (28.1 % female PhD in 2003), and the reason for the small pool is that "the chances are less in choosing marriage partners for women with higher degree":

Yes. It is so (less women) in my department. The reasons are complicated. The academic constitution and promotion are also affected by culture. For example, as I observed, there are not many female PhD students nowadays, but PhD graduates is a pool for faculty members. I can understand the girls choices…It takes 4 years to achieve a PhD degree, and thinking of suitable age for marriage, there are lesser chances for female PhD students. In society, it is hard for a girl with such a high degree (PhD) to find a husband who can match her. Don't you think so? Men traditionally don't want to marry a woman with higher degree than them.

The culture factors in China also plays an important role. Here my perspective is the Gender stereotyping as has been illustrated in Chapter III (See Chapter III). Based on Singleton's concept, gender role stereotypes are widely-held beliefs about those behaviors and

characteristics, and then the stereotyping to a large extent become the roles ( Singleton, 1986). Men's traditional conceptions of women's virtue and an ideal wife (Xianqi liangmu) are still popular in modern China. Too much education may limit women's marriage prospects (Malik and Lie in Lie & Malik,1994). "If they (women) wished to go on to graduate school, they would likely face difficulties in finding a spouse due to the revival of traditional values that encouraged men to select wives who were less qualified than themselves and who'd make sacrifices for their (husbands) careers" (Hayhoe, 1996: 243). And in line with Mak's research, " such gender role stereotyping does not permit women to develop their own potential. Married women who may desire graduate education tend to give priority to their husbands" (Mak in Lie,Malik &Harris,1994:51).

Though almost all respondents observed the phenomenon of female faculty members low representation, their attitudes differ when asked about what kind of policies should universities introduce to aid female academics in their careers (affirmative policies). Some believe there should be such policies, while other strongly disagree.

One female respondent said,

> *"No. I have not experienced discrimination as a female. However, in my opinion, there should be encouraging and affirmative policies towards females."*

Another female respondent had an opposite opinion,

> *"What? affirmative policies? I don't like affirmative policies, we shall and can compete on equal terms, based ability. No need to aid. We shall compete with men on equal terms. As in my time, we stated " What men can do, women can do".*

Some points out to achieve equal opportunity and eliminate gender discrimination, legislation is the root and solution. However, one female respondent pointed out that policy is not an effective solution. Only when people's mindset changes could the problem really be solved.

In my opinion, it is not a matter of policies, but a matter of mindsets and understandings. In China, we cannot find discriminative policies, so to add up some protective policies won't have further impact towards women on the large social and cultural context.

On the policy level, Ms Tan Lin, Director of WISC Chinese Women's Research Society and Women's Studies Institute commented that " Discrimination happens only when resources are limited. In China, under current legal framework, there are policies emphasis "equality", yet there is no policies that are "anti-discrimination", they are two different concepts. Legislature should be aware of the trap of discrimination legitimacy. The root is in legislation."

There is also an interesting respond from a male respondent, who is strongly against any affirmative policies for fear of possible male discrimination.

> *I don't think we shall introduce into university affirmative policies towards women. Men and women are equal. As long as we compete on equal terms, we don't need those policies...besides, don't you think it is a discrimination against men? It is ! I am strongly against this type of unfair treatment towards men.*

However, he couldn't give any definition of what is " compete on equal terms" and on what conditions. Actually, from a life course perspective, in emphasizing on absolute equality between men and women through the introduction of policies and practices, academic women are expected to perform and to be assessed exactly the same ways as men without regard to their special needs, characteristics and life course demands. Women in the academia are still expected to perform most of the "feminine" roles at home (cooking, homemaking, childcare, elder care, etc.) regardless of their positions and social status. In the context of Globalization, the evaluation and the concept of "cost-effectiveness", of which the main goal is to improve the productivity and the efficiency of resource-use, is mainly geared to male career/ life pattern ( See Chapter II & III).

## 5.2.4 Career Advancement and Career Network

Equal Opportunity

In response to the question of whether men and women teachers were given the same opportunities in career promotion, the majority respondents (12 out of 14) consider it equal to both male and female, and career development depends on personal devotion. As one female respondent explained:

*In teaching, I do think we were given equal opportunity. Maybe not in all careers. But I think in teaching it is. It's also up to the individual. How well you perform .As long as you do well and meet the goals, it doesn't matter whether you're male or female.*

Some male respondents called for individual responsibility in relation to gender equality and inequalities. For instance, one male respondent indicated:

*Equal opportunities for career promotion? I think it cannot be totally equal, but a lot of that I think is the responsibility of the women, that don't fight for or insist upon it*

Accordingly men's view of equality in relation to opportunity is more subjective, ignoring different characteristics of sexes, and that women's life courses are different from them. The assumption that it's women's fault not to fight for or insist upon equality is more or less to " blame the victim" mentality.

## Workload

In Chinese universities the workload is heavy. It is true especially for academic women. As most of them work as assistant lecturer and lecturer for years, they were a necessity for keeping the institutional work of professors afloat. But since most did not hold power positions such as tenured professors/administrators, they were provided with no institutional security. Ruth Hayhoe, who is a specialist in China higher education, commented:

Their future career development in the university context is threatened by the fact that relatively few of them have masters and doctoral degrees, compared to their male counterparts. They are in a situation where they will be expected to take on heavy teaching loads and be responsible for routine administration at the lowest level, instead of being able to compete on an equal basis with male colleagues for promotion. Heavy teaching workloads, combined with household responsibilities, hindered their achievements in writing and publishing, and so affected promotion prospects. Generally, they felt that men in the same ranks, including their own spouses in some cases, tended to be promoted first, partly because they had more time for research and writing, and partly due to a general bias in favor of male faculty. (Hayhoe,1996:131 -242)

This corresponds to international researches on academic women's career (Lie & O'Leary,1990; Lie & Malik,1994; Hayhoe,1996). Thus although working in universities have certain advantages such as flexible working-times (part time work may be benefiting teachers' work-life balance), there is also a risk and impact on career progression in a negative way concerning promotion.

## Promotion Criteria

> *"One professional domain that has captured increasing research attention is the academic. One reason for this is that academic offers relatively standardized and identifiable criteria for measurement of status attainment and its contributing factors" (Davis& Astin in Lie & O'Leary, 1990:87).*

In the university official documents, the criteria for promotion can be divided into three main areas: Research achievements (projects and publication), workload (subjects and hours of teaching), other skills and networking. "Job evaluation is accomplished through the use and interpretation of documents that describe jobs and how they are to be evaluated. These documents contain symbolic indicators of structure; the ways that they are interpreted reveals the underlying organizational logic" (Kimmel & Aronson, 2000:111). Please also refer to the Appendix Recruitment & Promotion Criteria Forms.

As the saying goes in western countries, "Publish or perish", the first important criteria for promotion in China universities is the number of publications one has. So in the interview form I posed a question on obligations for publishing in the respondents' university. From respondents' feedback, it is of vital importance especially on the stage to associate professor and full professor. In this university in Shanghai, the criteria from lecturer to associate professor is high: basically one book and several articles in key journals published.

One female respondent said :

> *"In the faculty where I worked, the criteria for career promotion are : Publication, Projects nationally or locally led by you , teaching hours and ability to develop new resources, academic ability"*

Another female respondent said,

> *"Yes, publication is important. In our institute, the publication requirement (from lecturer to associate professor) is one book and 10 articles in key journals"*

A male respondent said :

> *"In our science faculty, in order to advance to associate professor, you need to have one book published, 3 SSCI or EI key journal articles, and 5 papers."*

To publish an article in SSCI or EI key journals requires high devotion ( Note 4). Respondents also mentioned that for lower academic ranks, for instance, from assistant lecturer to lecturer, the promotion process is focused mainly on workload.

Under such circumstances, the process of evaluation and promotion is challenging and demanding: a general increase in workload, a rise of demand in research and publication, and administration designed to meet accountability measures.

In a survey conducted by Shanghai Academy of Educational Science during the academic year 1996-1997 in three key universities in Shanghai, the researchers found that 84% of Shanghai academics expressed the need to improve teaching and find better ways to evaluate it. " While 46% of the respondents feel pressured to do more research then they would like, relatively few (19%) agree with the statement that " the pressure to publish reduces the quality of teaching in the institutions". Just like their Western counterparts, they have to find a way to resolve the dilemma. As stated in Chapter II, the universities large expansion in the 1990s and transition from elite to mass higher education demands improved teaching strategies. And inevitably, "it is the academic profession that will be the driving force behind how universities maintain and improve their central functions of teaching, research, and service" (Postiglione & Jiang, 1999:13).

Consistent with above findings, academic women's career advancement in the university contexts are actually threatened. Not to say advance to leadership positions.

## Leadership

Regarding leadership positions, most respondents in my fieldwork interviews prefer to stay as academics and did not actively seek for promotion to administrative leadership positions. Of all 14 respondents, ten are female, only two females hold administrative leader positions

(vice dean), one of them said she was promoted for the need of including the female gender in the leadership team. Respondents are apprehensive, or even reluctant to apply/accept such promotion opportunities, especially during periods of excessive family demands. Three female respondents said they just don't like an organizational culture of male-dominated senior management in university, power politics, and exclusive networks among male colleagues. Two female respondents and one male respondent indicated negative comments from both male and female colleagues towards women leaders as "ambitious" and "aggressive", which is unpleasant and less desirable for female especially in the context of Chinese culture. It is far from traditional "virtuous wife and caring mum" (Xian qi liang mu) ideal gender image. No matter in which career, women leaders are more or less regarded as "superwomen" in a subtle sense. The rest respondents haven't thought of or put seeking leadership positions as their priority.

What are the reasons for the lack of academic women in leadership positions? The due responsibility of public input (career) and private input (family) counts. A similar survey in Shanghai also showed how a variety of constraints limited the opportunities of women to rise to the top. " While achievements are necessary for promotion, women are not put into a position to demonstrate their abilities…pressure builds, but advancing age makes it even less likely they will be given the necessary opportunities. As a result, many simply end up clustered at mid-level career positions" (Rosen, 1992: 268). The pervasive phenomenon is known as the "glass ceiling", which assumes that women have the motivation and capacity for position of power and prestige, but invisible barriers keep them from reaching the top (Kimmel& Aronson, 2000:272). The invisible barriers are usually based on attitude bias, institutional, structural and culture limitations.

If we look at the above phenomenon from a life course perspective, besides structure and culture limitations, there are underlined reasons for women's " lack of ambition". The meanings and significance of such ambition acknowledged by women in a life span. As Professor Lie illustrated :

> *Many don't desire a leading position, but if we go to the root of the problem women don't wish a still greater burden than they already have with the double responsibility of employment and family. But there might yet be another explanation. Women may simply have other priorities of what is meaningful in life. ( Lie& Rorslett,1986:34)*

## Mentor

Networking is important in every career advancement. Academic work and a lot of inter-personal or collegial relationships are established and critical information about academic success expires through the interactions. In academia, there is a Mentor relationship (See Chapter III). "The word mentoring is from Greek mythology that implies a relationship between a young adult, and an older more experienced adult that helps the younger individual learn to navigate in the adult world of work " (O'Leary and Mitchell in Lie & O'Leary, 1990:66)

As discussed in Chapter III, the Mentor acts as a guide in the professional development road by providing information, resources and various kinds of support.

There are two forms of mentoring: formal and informal. The informal mentoring is casual, can take place in the coffee room, faculty, lounge, after work activities – what O'leary and Mitchell refer to as boy network and male club (O'Leary and Mitchell in Lie & O'Leary,1990).

However, of all respondents, only two (both female) said they have mentors and they have benefited from mentors. One has a female mentor who has given valuable advice and guidance, another respondent has a male mentor who was not gender-biased on women's career development. Both expressed appreciation for guidance given by their mentors.

In the university where I conducted fieldwork, there are only two faculties set rules regarding mentors. But all respondents expressed their wish to have a mentor who could help with academic progress (research, how to apply for projects and organize projects) and networking.


## 5.2.5 Publication and Cumulative Advantage

A number of studies in this field has shown that male faculty members take more research activities and have higher publication rate (number of articles and books)　than those of female faculty members (Lie & O'Leary,1990; Lie & Malik,1994; Gaskell,Eichler,Pan,Xu& Zhang, 2004). How is the situation in China universities?

A male respondent commented:

> *Female faculty members need to put more time to family...men and women both have differences... but, yes, men can and are much likely to put more time to research, there's no problem for more publications, just a matter of time and energy*

Though a middle-aged female respondents disagree:

> *No. I don't agree with it. My research activities and publications are beyond my male colleagues. I proved females can do better than males. For example, during my work in Academy of Social Science, I excelled beyond my male colleagues.*

Above are answers from fieldwork interviews. However, due to a busy schedule and other personal reasons, only two of the fourteen interviewees can give me a detailed publication list immediately, others couldn't remember well or didn't answer further in follow-up e-mails. Therefore my original design of a quantitative statistics to compare the respondents' publication is not available. However, there are researches in western countries concerning female and male faculty members' academic productivity, which shows that there is a "cumulative advantage" in academia(Cole,1979; Lie& Malik,1994; Lie& O'Leary,2000). Academics need "academic capital" so as to advance on the hierarchy. The most valued academic capital is research and publication, which requires commitment and devotion in terms of research efforts and time input (See Chapter III on Cumulative Advantage). As stated earlier, a majority of female faculty members take heavy teaching workloads and perform routine administration at lowest level, have less time than their male colleagues to devote to their career. With the fact that they acquire limited resources, time, funding and assistance, to acquire high publication rate is demanding. Publication, as the base of academic achievement, leads to promotion. As Kyvik points out, "people reach a high academic position as a result of high productivity. The fact that fewer women are full professors is a result of their lower rate of publications. However, a high academic rank is in itself conductive to high productivity" (Kyvik in Lie & O'Leary, 1990:110). Another reason is networking. In response to the question of mentor, only two of the 10 female respondents have mentors, which means the majority are excluded from the academic social network. Male colleagues enjoy certain advantages in the "male club", in terms of accumulated resources and network thus paving ways to top easier than female counterparts. At the same time, a great proportion of women faculty members are found at the sub-lecturer, non-

tenured teaching ranks and are under-represented in the ranks of associate professors and professors (Figure 5.5).

Accordingly, a gender gap was revealed in relation to academic women and men's career. Gender divisions are marked in departments in a subtle way. Departments are structured by seniority and gender with a long tradition of patriarchy. Men predominate in positions of authority, and deploys the labor of other faculty members since there are relatively few women in the higher ranks (Thorne & Hochschild in Glassner & Hertz, 1999). The academic career evaluation and promotion standard is geared to men's life courses, which push women to less institutional security. While academic women are taking a heavy workload such as a majority of teaching, men take the time to devote to research and publication.

## 5.2.6 Family Obligations and Childbirth Leave

Family is an important section in women's life course. As have been illustrated in Chapter III (See Chapter III, Life-course Perspective & Chapter IV, life-course Analysis), the life-course theory looks at the distinctive series of roles and experiences through which the individual passes as she or he ages from birth to death and inquires into the impact of various changes on these patterns (Schroots, J.J.F, 2003). The stage from birth to death is mainly based on family life. Academic women, while conducting their academic roles, are still expected to perform their role in family (Lie in Lie & O'Leary, 1990). What are these family obligations and how's the housework shared within family ?

Family Obligations vs Housework Share

Figure 5.8  Organization of Family Life

Mother More        Grandparents help      Father more

Planning of household

Food preparation      Food preparation      House maintenance

Daily shopping      Daily shopping

Cleaning

Washing

Pay family bill                                Pay family bill

Feeding children        Pick up children        Play with children

when they were small

pick-up children from school

help with study and homework

Take children to

Extra-curricular activities

Attend parents meetings

Regarding family and women's position in family, it is surprising that the continuing influence of traditional culture attitudes, as discussed in previous chapters (See Chapter II & III), and the gender roles that men are breadwinners and women are homemakers, are still dominant even among accomplished academic women. It is Gender stereotyping, which has been discussed in Chapter III.  As we can see from Figure 5.8 and the questionnaire concerning housework share(See Appendix), all female members take part in everyday housework. Women take the majority of housework (planning of household, food preparation, cleaning, washing, daily shopping), take care of child's everyday life (feed children, pick-up children from school, help with study and homework, take children to extra-curricular activities, attend parents meetings ). While men only do temporary house maintenance, and tend to join in children's weekend activities (playing with child). I should note that of all six married respondents, four of the female respondents get help from their own parents, two have paid maid for cleaning help. Grandparents' help mainly on childrearing when the child was small (0 – 3 years old). The extended family help to young couples is derived from traditional Chinese values – familism ( See Chapter II). Compared with academic women in western countries, Chinese academic women's getting help from extended family grandparents is quite unique. Among around 20 countries studied by western researchers, only in Turkey academic women get grandparents help from extended family, which is similar to the Chinese pattern (Lie & Malik, 1990).

It seems that such pattern of family life and housework share is fine for both male and female, as a man stated, " Housework ? it's not men's work. I believe man does have stronger research ability. and more social network. It is socially acceptable that men devote more into careers, more public input than private input. Men almost don't need to bother with family chores". His view is a gender stereotype (See Chapter III Gender Stereotyping). A female respondent confirmed his view by expressing a sense of "guilt" if she doesn't do housework well, "Women are supposed to do more housework, " she claimed, "otherwise we will be considered not competent enough as women." Therefore in a sense, "women's time is other's time", from life course perspective, "In the most pressing period in a woman's life cycle- with children in nursery and primary school- she has much the same adjustment pattern as other women in the labor force" (Lie & Rorslett, 1986:33). Furthermore, academic women have to deal with academic productivity.

From respondents' feedbacks, if both of the couple have careers, the wife is supposed to be more supportive to husband's career. One female respondent pointed out :

> *I have adapted my career to suit circumstances that my husband probably didn't do. I mean he has his career, as a manager shoulder more responsibilities, so my career fitted around the family, that's how it is really, probably true in most families in China I think ... being a married woman whose family come first, yes. I think I am a wife and mother first.*

Some academic women choose teaching as a 'women-friendly' job compared with other jobs, with particular references to working hours (described as fitting with children's schooling times), as described by one female respondent:

> *When you are married and have children it must be difficult to juggle family and career, but at least as university teachers we don't need to sit at school all day. While in a lot of other jobs you cannot do that and take it at home, it is such an advantage( time is quite flexible ).*

For many interviewees the reference to teaching as 'woman-friendly' draws on a traditional construction of a woman's role, implicitly relating to a woman as the main child-carer (and to the opportunity teaching offers to combine work and family demands) rather than seeing a woman as pursuing a career in her own right. It is again gender stereotyping, surprisingly the old legacy still exists among intellectuals in China today.

## Supportive Husband

There are exceptions and different domestic share patterns .A middle aged female respondent, now a full professor, showed her genuine appreciation to her husband:

> *I think I have been very lucky that I have a very supportive husband, who understands my career devotion and shares housework. But sometimes I feel a little guilty of not being a perfect wife and mum...At school , I totally focus on teaching and research project; so once back home, all my time is for family. Though school takes up more time than I would like for it to. I would like to spend more time on my personal life.*

Her life experience indicated a trend of equal domestic sharing and harmonious relationship, which requires the spouse's deep understanding and practical support for a long time. But the pressure of not being a "perfect wife and mum" is still derived from traditional gender-role pattern.

**Sleeplessness**    In order to accomplish both academic and domestic tasks, some respondents sacrificed sleep:

> *I'd get home generally around six. Between six and nine was the child's time, and then from nine o'clock I would work probably till midnight or one o'clock in the morning and then get up at half past six prepare breakfast and catch university shuttle bus.*

It is said that sleeplessness is a common story for women academics across the generations, as academic work has been intensified and standards of production are higher. Besides sleeplessness, one of the female respondents devotes all her own leisure time as "family time "(family chores), though she has no time of her own, ignoring her own personal space, she considers it natural, "Well, for me, I do the majority of teaching and research during time at school, and I take good care of family during my leisure time, it is not a conflict really."

## Childrearing vs Childbirth Leave

Marriage and childbirth are significant events in a woman's life course. Along with these events, there are certain changes on these women's life and career. It is different from men's life course in that for women, for as wife and mother, more coping strategies need to be taken and compromises to be made in the long road.

One respondent recalled her time after childbirth, struggled to fit a career around family obligations. There was a conflict between the public aspect of her work as researcher and her social role as mother. She started a university career doing research work in the late 1970s:

> *Then in 1980 I had my son. I didn't take three months off as the policy allowed, actually I just rested for one month and went back school . But at that point I didn't do any research, just managed teaching, I had no research projects and seldom did any research publication. ..and then in about three years when my son was old enough go to kindergarten did I continue my research. The main projects began from the 1990s, when my son was 6 years old.*

As have been discussed earlier in this chapter, in China, the emphasis of the extended family instead of nuclear family is a tradition, which in turn provides positive in-family social support. It is natural for the grandparents to help within family. After the grandchildren were born, grandparents move into the young couples' family to help, which is a release of young couple's pressure. It is derived from traditional Chinese family values, and grandparents with younger generations together is considered as " Tian lun zhi le" (heavenly joy of generations together in one family). On this point it is different from study results in western countries, where nuclear family is the general pattern and grandparents seldom move into to help young couples. On detailed length of time of the help, below are answers from three female respondents :

> *"In my case, childbirth didn't affect much of my career. My parents helped to look after my child. In China, personal life is closely linked with the big family, so they shared my duty."*

> *"Yes. When my child was small, especially 1-3 years old, the grand parents helped a lot at home; after my child turned 3, I took the main responsibility."*

> *"Before our child is 20 months old, grand parents took care of him; after 20 months, I take care of my child. I really appreciate my own parents' help in childrearing."*

A female associate professor with extremely excellent qualifications (Ph D degree and international work experiences in two developed countries), now being a mum of two children, commented childrearing, work-family issue from her own point of view:

*Academia is a special career. As an university teacher, I don't have to sit at the table all day, but I face big pressure, too. Sometimes work and everyday life are mixed. As a female faculty, I feel anxious. Academic women need a quiet environment to totally focus on teaching and research. Though at home, we may get grandparents or baby-sitter or paid maid's help, kinship cannot be replaced by others. It is so not easy to balance, China universities should have female-friendly policies.*

By nature mothers' focus and devotion towards children is all through their lives, birth, healthy growth, education, and so on. In addition, as the respondent stated, kinship cannot be taken by others instead, which indicates that she shall do everything in person and make this a lifelong time devotion.

However, mother's role is not recognized or appreciated in labor share and when it comes to academic hierarchy. At home, their labor is unpaid, they are in a sense " invisible". At school, universities culture is hierarchically male-dominated. The academic procedures, promotion and appraisal systems, etc. are based on the male life span and ignore female's multi-roles in their life-course. Several studies suggest that women faculty members find their work lives constituted differently from those of their male counterparts and in their roles in domestic life ( Lie& Malik, 1990; Lie & Malik, 1994; Hayhoe, 1996: Wei, 1995; Kimmel & Aronson, 2000).

Actually the majority of respondents perceive marriage and family formation as a natural and logical step in their life course development. It is also true that some female respondents have given up or postponed career pursuits (oversea study, promotion to leader position, prestigious research projects, etc) at certain point in life because of family demands and childrearing responsibilities. Of all 14 respondents, only six have children. Most of them gave birth to their child/children within a few years of marriage, when they were in lower academic rank positions (assistant lecturer/lecturer). Some married couples choose to be DINK families (Double Income. No Kids). Two respondents choose to be single. One single female teacher said, "I am still single and choose to be single. If I have a family, my time will be occupied... traditionally we Chinese believe that women shall put family first and the most important, I don't agree with it."
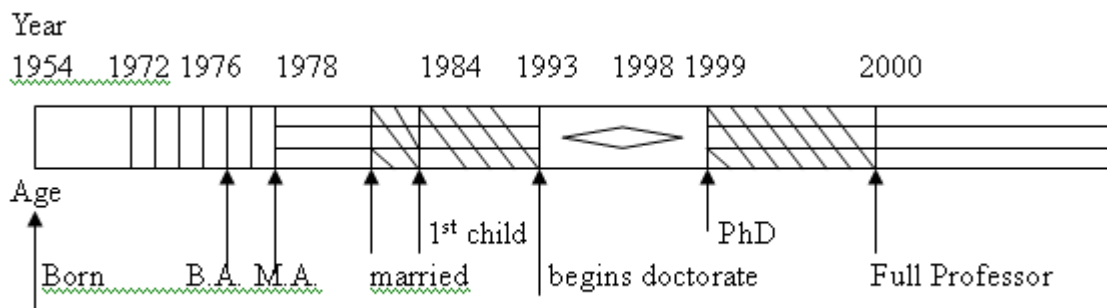
## 5.2.7 Life-lines

In respond to interviewees' life courses, I draw below life-lines based on the information I get during these interviews:
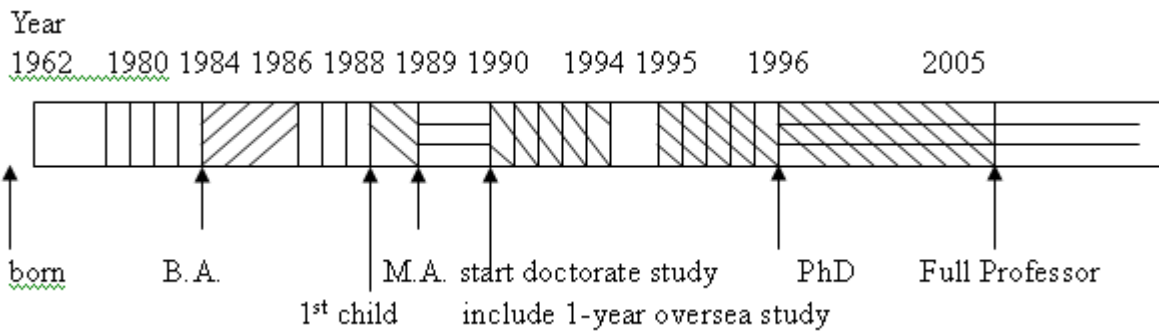
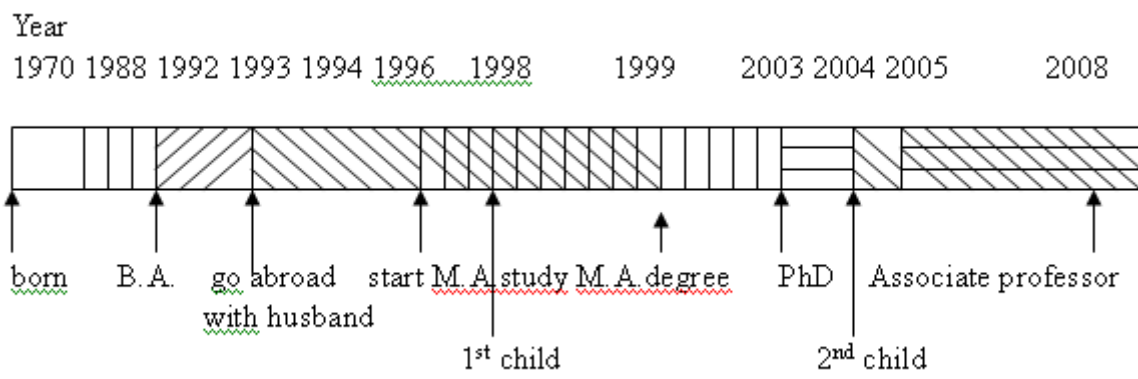Figure 5.9 A Comparison of Life-lines of Women and Men Academics
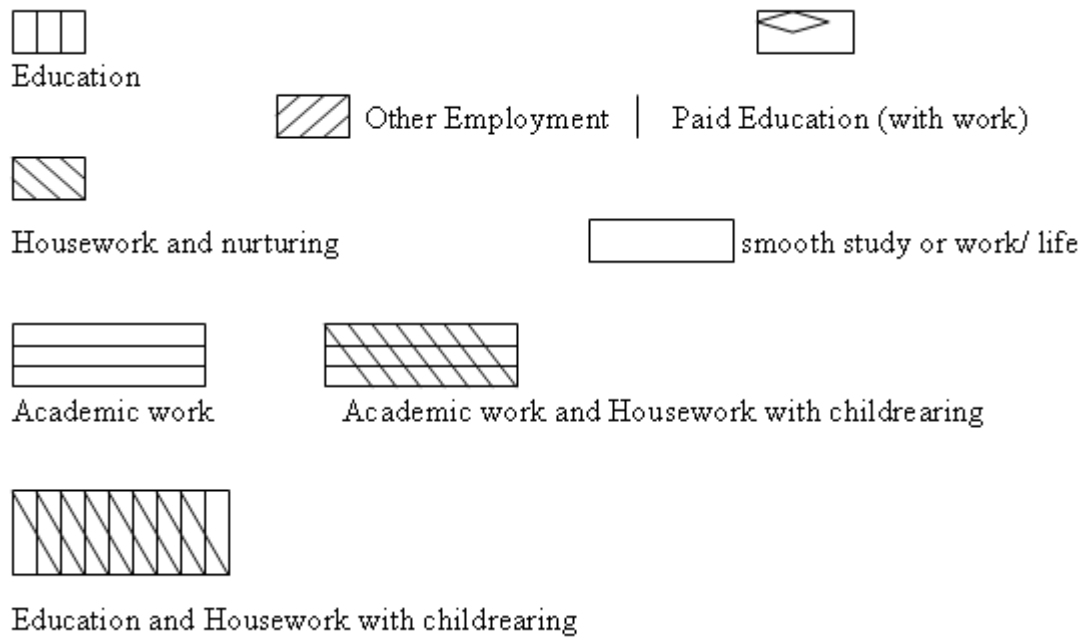


1.      Interviewee NO.2. Female Professor, Rural background, Married , 1 child

2.     Interviewee     NO.4.          Female     Professor,     Urban,     divorced,     1     child

Year
1962    1980 1984 1986 1988 1989 1990    1994 1995    1996         2005

born          B.A.              M.A. start doctorate study      PhD      Full Professor

1st child      include 1-year oversea study

3.     Interview NO.3. Female Associate professor, Urban, Married, 2 children

Year
1970 1988 1992 1993 1994 1996    1998         1999      2003 2004 2005      2008

born      B.A.     go abroad     start M.A study  M.A.degree      PhD   Associate professor
with husband

1st child                          2nd child

4. Interviewee NO.5.  Male Associate Professor, Rural background,     Single

Year
1977     1994    1998     2001      2005                         2007 −2008

born          B.A.     M.A.          PhD                Associate Professor
study abroad      study abraod
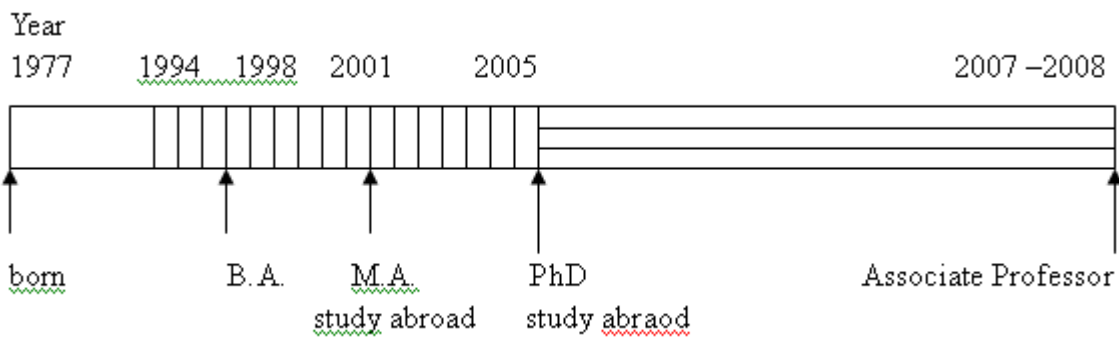
5       Interviewee NO.11 Male Associate Professor, Urban Single-child, Married, no kid

Year
1973   1991 1995   1997   2000 2001       2005                    2007

born       B.A.              M.A.         PhD and start post-doctorate study
                          (start PhD study oversea)    Associate professor
                          married
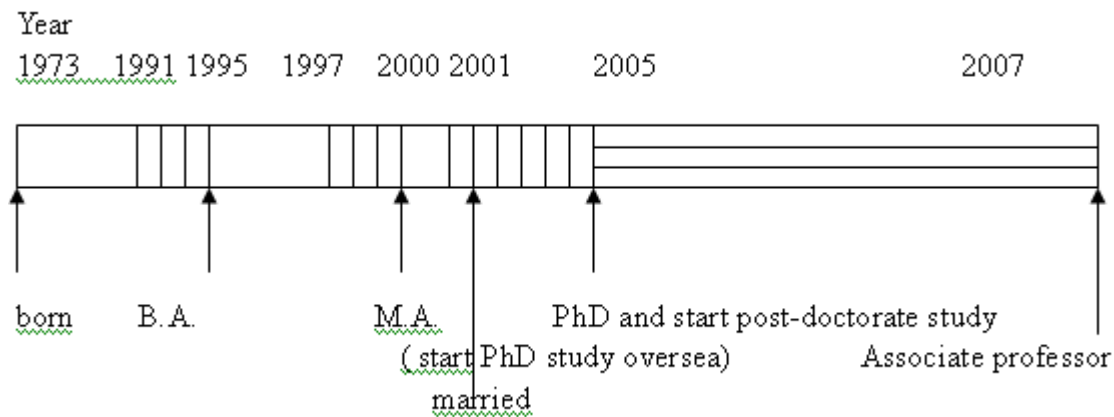
As stated in Chapter III, a life course perspective provides a unified approach since important events in life such as higher education, work, marriage and child birth are recorded in time lines ( Lie in Lie & O'Leary, 1990). Therefore I draw five life-lines over time, two female full professors who are in their 40s, represented an older generation, one female associate professor in her 30s, and two male associate professors in their 30s who can compare with the female associate professor. Due to the fieldwork limitations, the male interviewees are in their early or mid 30s, and they both have no child (one is married, another is single). It is not comparable in every aspects with female colleagues. However, we can have a glimpse of the different life-lines.

Life-line 1 is drawn on interviewee NO.2. As a full professor and administrative leader in her faculty, she has a typical life pattern in the older generation in 1950s: further pursuit of education, participation in work, chose to have child shortly after marriage, and have on-job doctorate study in her 40s. But her higher education is not continuous, and please note that it takes her six years to achieve the PhD degree, and finally she got the degree when she was 45. Life-line 2 is based on interviewee NO.4. Similar to the first life-line, she is also a full professor and administrative leader. It takes her six years to achieve PhD degree, and her education, work, housework and childrearing are interwoven. She was divorced later and shouldered domestic responsibilities alone. Life-line 3 belongs to Interviewee NO.3, a female associate professor in a younger generation (38). She went abroad together her husband and had her MA and PhD abroad. She told me that because of the first child birth was during her MA study, she took one more year longer to achieve the degree. And only after she almost finished PhD study could she have the second child. Prior to her life abroad,

she had worked as sectary. When she and her husband arrived abroad, the first three years she was a homemaker without a job, totally devoted to taking good care of her husband ( who was doing his PhD study). Life-line 4 belongs to Interviewee NO.5, who is a young male associate professor with oversea study PhD. From his life-line, we can see that his line is comparatively simple, his education and academic work are continuous, after graduation, he began academic work immediately and got promotion smoothly. Life-line 5 belongs to Interviewee NO.11, he is a male associate professor in his mid 30s. He also achieved oversea PhD, which is highly evaluated in higher educational institutions in China today. He is married during the study period, but it didn't affect his study or work. He said his wife is very supportive, and their next plan was to have a child. Both the two male interviewees have finished their doctorate study in time ( four years as scheduled).

From the analysis of the above five life-lines, we can see that academic women's life-lines are winding and their higher education pursuit are easily interrupted by family and child rearing. It takes longer time (2 years) for the three female interviewees in the study to achieve PhD than the male respondents. Once have child, they have practical concerns about family and childrearing as have been presented earlier in this chapter in the interviews. The two male interviewees' life-lines are simple and smooth, almost no interruptions or interwoven of education and work. They both have studied abroad and have PhD from prestigious universities, thus they have broader academic capital and international networks. Compared with their female colleagues, they have advantages concerning further career promotion.

## 5.2.8 Attitudes towards Feminism

The last part of my interview questions is focused on academics attitudes towards feminism. Feminism as an ideology originated in the western countries. China, as have discussed in chapter II, has a patriarchy featured culture. Beyond academia, people seldom talk about it ; within academia, people are reluctant to admit they are " feminists" or further explore the topic.

Are you a feminist ? Why or why not ? ---please explain

From a female respondent,

*No, I am not . In fact, I don't like the word "feminist". It is so likely to give people a strong impression, and replacing men's position in society. To point out " women in power" and feminism, is because we women are oppressed in many aspects, cannot practice our potential to the fullest, and cannot get the benefits and social status we deserve. The feminism theories, raised people's awareness and asked for research and solutions. But if we emphasize women's rights too much, it makes men and women compete against each other. Society should create a good environment for women's development, but also make space for women's true image, women's charm,. God created men and women, we are equal, but different.*

This respondent is in her middle ages. She has experienced many social events such as the Culture Revolution. She expressed the idea that studying feminism is because in China women are oppressed in many aspects. But her dislike of feminism and a strong impression reveals a misunderstanding of feminism and feminists, which has been discussed in Chapter III ( See chapter III, Feminist Theory). Therefore a lack of knowledge and understanding towards feminism among Chinese intellectuals could be an obstacle in feminist movement and development in China.

In your opinion, how does feminism play itself out in China context ?

From a male respondent,

*I think it has some development in China already. But the pace is slow. There're many obstacles. The biggest one is thousands years of feudal society mentality. It is so difficult to move forward.*

From a female respondent,

*No. I don't think feminism can play out in China. The development is different. Western feminism, as far as I know, was rooted in the bottom, bottom up; but in China, it is the state that advocates , closely associated with politics , social policy, and the pattern may be hurtful to females. To give equal opportunities to women doesn't mean women shall be the same as men. Women being independent doesn't mean a struggle against the opposite sex, the society is constructed by both men and women.*

Here the male respondent agreed with the difficulty in developing feminism in China. He contributed it to feudal legacy. The female respondent compare China society with western societies, and pointed out a bottom-up pattern which was successful in western countries may not be feasible in China. She observed the problem deeper than the male counterpart.

As suggested, this question will lead to different answers in different times; but clearly the nature of the gender conflicts raised by women is not only bound by profession, culture or identity. Feminism development is no smooth way. At the same time, the very dilemmas academic women experience – east or west, needs to be resolved and firstly voiced. Only when the majority's gender-awareness are raised and both men and women actively participate in the movement, sometimes even in the extreme feminist movement, could gender equality be achieved.

## Conclusion

This chapter aims to present and discuss the facts and opinions of both male and female faculty members in terms of educational background, academic career advancement and family obligations. Furthermore, it serves to explore the institutional, cultural, and personal challenges academic women face. Through the respondents' own life story-telling, the fieldwork interviews revealed various factors that contribute to the lower representation of female faculty members, discrimination and the work versus family conflicts they encountered in reality. Many findings are in line with or similar to trends of research on academic women in other countries. Because of the limited number of interviews, it is not feasible to generalize the findings to all higher education institutions in China. However, it can shed light on current situations and open space for further discussion and can be the basis for a large qualitative study.

Note 1. Hukous are issued for all Chinese and are inscribed to identify the carrier as a rural or non-rural, i.e., urban, resident. Each urban administrative entity (towns, cities, etc.) issues its own hukou, which entitles only registered inhabitants of that entity full access to social services, like education. More than just an identification document, the hukou also symbolizes China's two-tiered society, comprised of urban-dwellers and peasants. China adapted its hukou system from other Communist countries during the famines of the 1950s to distinguish farmers, who could grow food, from urbanites, who needed grain rations. During ~he 1960s and 70s, the system hardened to the point that peasants could be arrested for entering cities. In the 1980s and 90s, most urban areas relaxed these barriers to travel, prompting an influx of rural migrants. Reforms to China's household registration (hukou) system have begun to redress the historical bifurcation of Chinese society into urban and

rural classes. The principal obstacle to more liberal hukou reforms is the fear among city leaders that urban social welfare systems cannot support large inflows of rural migrants, the economist stated. (Retrieved March 1, 2008 from U.S. Embassy website Economic Section : http://www.usembassy-china.org.cn/econ/hukou.html)

Note 2 "one-family-one-child" policy launch : The Only-Child ( Dusheng Zinu) The only-child, also referred to as the single child, or in Chinese, " dusheng zinu", is defined here as the product of the Chinese family planning policy, the one-child-per-couple policy first implemented in 1979. A child's one-child status is obtained when the only-child certificate is issued by the state to the parents to verify the latter's acceptance to have only one child. The majority of urban school-age children and young adults in present-day China fit into this status. (Liu, 2005: 21) Modernization as Lived Experiences Identity Construction of Young Adult Only-children in Present-day China ( 2005) Oslo: University of Oslo

Note 3 the Cultural Revolution decade (1966-1976) and its impacts on higher education : During the Culture Revolution, which began in 1966, universities were closed and in some cases destroyed. The importance of being " expert" was de-emphasized in favor of being " red", i.e., politically acceptable. The political ideals that replaced expertise as a basis for university entrance included the idea that " The day all women in China stand on their feet is the time for victory for the Chinese revolution" (Andors,1976). Faculty were sent to the countryside for reeducation. Traditional academic work was seen as elitist and bourgeois. Hierarchical academic distinctions among schools and universities were removed. There was a rapid expansion of secondary education, from around 14 million in 1966 to over 70 million by 1976. Women increased their enrollment in secondary education to 40%, and their university enrollment to 34% by 1976, reflecting the increased participation in rural areas. (Hayhoe,1996:100) Gaskell,Eichler,Pan,Xu& Zhang, (2004) "The Participation of Women Faculty in Chinese Universities : Paradoxes of Globalization" in Gender and Education,VOL.16,No.4,December 2004, 511-529

Note 4 SSCI EI   SSCI : Social Science Cite Index   EI: Engineering Index

## Chapter VI        Conclusion

Introduction

In this study, I have attempted to explore a range of issues concerning academic women's life course and career patterns in higher education in China today. More specifically, my intent was to gain an insight and understanding of their situations and questions they face, the institutional/ structural, social/cultural, and personal challenges in their life and career within the social system, the cultural system, and the personality system. Altogether I conducted 14 interviews with respondents from both social science and natural science departments in a comprehensive university in Shanghai (See Chapter II & V). Each interview lasted from 45 minutes to one hour. Because of the limited number of interviews, it is not feasible to generalize the findings to all higher education institutions in China. However, it can shed light on current situations and open space for further discussion and can be the basis for a large qualitative study.

Throughout the study, I have tried to locate these academic women and men's life experiences based on my research questions. With theoretical frameworks and methodological tools, the study has investigated above themes which have been presented in Chapter V. To gain a deeper insight into these research questions, I shall reach conclusions and discuss implications for further research.

## 6.1 Social System – Institutional and Structure Challenges

This part corresponds to the Social System in theoretical framework (See Chapter III) and answers the research sub-question "What are the institutional (gender composition) and structural challenges?" academic women face. As has been explored in Chapter II & Chapter V, the academic structure in universities in China is highly hierarchical and women's participation in higher education is disadvantaged compared with men's. Therefore, the institutional aspect within the social system poses challenges towards academic women, such as the structure of the academy, gender composition, division of labor, career advancement, promotion and network, leadership, and cumulative advantage. And should be addressed by Chinese policy makes on the university level.

From respondents' backgrounds, of the 14 respondents, a majority of them (ten) are from higher social-economic status (SES) families in which parents have better education, occupations, incomes, and guanxi (social relationships or networks). Academic women from this category can be defined " daughters of middle-class" (Lie & Rorslett,1986:28). They acquire better resources and support provided by family. Four interviewees are from rural areas, with rural " Hukou" and less advantaged family background(lower SES). However, all respondents received encouragement in academic pursuit from family despite their family conditions, no difference can be discerned between lower SES parents and higher SES parents, concerning the higher education aspirations.

Concerning faculty member gender composition in universities and recruitment policies, gender discrimination is revealed. In many faculties in the university I conducted fieldwork, there are more males in academic positions than female. Majority of respondents (10 out of 14) shared the opinion that at the assistant lecturer and lecturer level, male and female percentage is about the same while in higher academic levels such as professors, female percentage is smaller. In 1988, the percent of female full professors was 11.0 % and for the female faculty is 23.8% (Lie& Malik, 1994:226). In 2006 the percent of female faculty members rose to 41.6%, however the percent of female full professors is unknown (Lie & Malik, 2008 forthcoming).     Regarding recruitment female respondents reported discrimination, and the number of female PhD students is limited as have been demonstrated in Chapter V (28.1 % female PhD in 2003). The low percentage of female PhD students will most likely cause a lowering of the pool for women academics in the near future if steps are not made by the government to redress the problem.

As I have stated in Chapter V, in Chinese universities, academic women take heavy workloads and they were a necessity for keeping the institutional work of professors afloat. But since a great number of women did not hold PhD degrees or take power positions such as administrators, they were provided with no institutional security. Therefore, their future career development in the university context is threatened by the fact that relatively few of them have doctoral degrees or hold power positions, compared to their male counterparts. From the policy level and documentations, academic men and women were given the same opportunities in career promotion. However, the career evaluation standards are geared to male life course and females' differences in a life perspective are ignored. The evaluation policies, documents actually contain symbolic indicators of structure, "the ways that they are

interpreted reveals the underlying organizational logic" (Kimmel & Aronson, 2000:111). In the university where I conducted fieldwork, the criteria for promotion can be divided into three main areas: research achievements (projects and publication), workload (subjects and hours of teaching), other skills and networking. Among my respondents, academic women have heavier teaching workload, however the most important promotion criteria, like in western countries, is research achievements (projects and publication). Hence a conflict occurs, the standard based on the male life course is a difficult one for women to achieve, and women are frequently disadvantaged by it (Lie in Lie & O'Leary, 1990).

Women are also less represented in leadership position. Of all 14 respondents, ten are female, only two females hold administrative leader positions (vice dean). A variety of constraints limited the opportunities of women to rise to the top, such as the "glass ceiling", which assumes that women have the motivation and capacity for position of power and prestige, but invisible barriers keep them from reaching the top (Kimmel& Aronson, 2000:272).

An important factor for the obstacles academic women encounter in career promotion and leadership is a lack of networking. As stated earlier, the university subculture is highly hierarchical and male dominated, male colleagues participate so-called " old-boy clubs". But for new faculty members including female members, they should have mentors to help. Mentoring implies "a relationship between a young adult, and an older more experienced adult that helps the younger individual learn to navigate in the adult world of work " (O'Leary& Mitchell in Lie & O'Leary 1990:66). Mentor acts as a guide in the professional development road by providing information, resources, network and various kinds of support. However, of all respondents, only two (both female) reported they have mentors and have benefited from them. Academic women are excluded in the network. The exclusion may in large part account for academic women's less advantaged advancement in the academic hierarchy.

Furthermore, compared with women, men enjoy a "cumulative advantage" in academia(Cole,1979;Lie&Malik,1994;Lie&O'Leary,2000).The most valued academic capital is research and publication, as has been earlier documented, "Advancement within the hierarchy is based on the accumulation of academic capital, primarily research productivity. Other criteria can also be important (e.g. teaching ability, seniority, etc),

depending on the particular institution and the country in which it is located" ( Malik and Lie in Lie & Malik, 1994:8). While academic women are taking a heavy workload such as a majority of teaching, men take the time to devote to research and publication. With the impact of Globalization, and the introduction of the concept of "cost-effectiveness", the main goal of which is to improve the productivity and the efficiency of resource-use, is mainly geared to male life-course.

## 6.2 Cultural System – Gender Specific Expectations and Cultural Challenges

This part corresponds to the Cultural System in Chapter III and answers the sub-question "What are the social and cultural challenges?" academic women face. Researchers reported findings that academic women in China experience gender stereotypes (Fan, 1999; Zhang, 2001). My study supports their view. As have been presented in Chapter II, III & V, Confucianism was the dominant moral philosophy in thousands years of feudal society, which emphasized that women were subordinate to men and that women's place was limited within domestic sphere. Confucianism presented a rationale for women's oppression and affected gender relationships in Chinese society. In modern China, the old legacy still partially exists. Gender stereotypes (See Chapter III ) present a conventionally simplified and standardized conception or image concerning the typical social roles of male and female, both domestically and socially. As the product of social activity, gender stereotypes are neither perpetual nor static (Diekman & Eagle, 2000). The gender stereotyping found in China is in line with western researchers' findings concerning men and women's gender roles:

> *"Although gender roles and gendered institutions differ from society to society, cross culture data reveal certain regularities. Every culture assigns certain roles to males and others to females. Male roles tend to be primarily in the public sphere (political, religious, economic, etc). Female roles generally emphasize responsibilities within the family. Men's and women's autobiographies mirror these gender role differences" (Malik and Lie in Lie & Malik, 2006:29).*

Female's gender roles are within the domestic sphere, as wife, mother, and daughter, who are supposed to give care and look after the family. This is confirmed by respondents' answers. Men's traditional conceptions of women's virtue and an ideal wife are still popular in modern China, thus academic women, despite their public roles at universities, have to

perform their best to meet these gender specific expectations. " A double standard lies behind sexual stereotypes, and means men and women will be judged differently for the same behavior. This will always hurt women in a society where men are more powerful" (Gaskell, Eichler, Pan, Xu & Zhang, 2004:527). Hence the consequences of such gender specific expectations , which are based on gender stereotypes, are harmful to academic women's life and career. From my respondents' feedbacks, it is surprising to me that the continuing influence of traditional culture attitudes, as discussed in previous chapters (See Chapter II & III), and the gender roles that men are breadwinners and women are homemakers in addition to their employment, are still dominant even among accomplished academic women. It takes time to reduce the negative consequences of gender stereotypes, to build up more equal gender role concepts based on men and women's different life courses in response to their respective needs. However, it is a road worth taking and an inevitable struggle for both men and women.

## 6.3 Personality System – Family obligations, Gender Awareness and Personal Challenges

This part corresponds to the Personality System in Chapter III and answers the sub-question "What are the personal challenges?" academic women face. The life-course theory looks at the distinctive series of roles and experiences through which the individual passes. Family is an important section in women's life course.. As have been illustrated in previous chapters (See Chapter II & V), while conducting their academic roles, academic are still expected to perform their role in family, thus to balance family and career is a " Juggling act" (Lie in Lie & O;Leary, 1990).

From fieldwork interview data, we can see that all female members take part in everyday housework. Women take the majority of housework (planning of household, food preparation, cleaning, washing, daily shopping), take care of child's everyday life (feed children, pick-up children from school, help with study and homework, take children to extra-curricular activities, attend parents meetings). While men only do temporary house maintenance, and tend to join in children's weekend activities (playing with child). This finding coincides with western scholar's finding concerning domestic housework share (Bjeren & Elgqvist-Saltzman, 1994; Jacka, 1997; Zhang, 2000). I should note that some of

the female respondents get help from their own parents, especially when the child was small (0 – 3 years old). The extended family help to young couples is derived from traditional Chinese values – familism. Compared with academic women in western countries, Chinese women enjoy this certain advantage. Only in Turkey academic women get grandparents help from the extended family, which is similar to the Chinese pattern ( Acar in Lie & Malik, 1994).

However, it is widely accepted among my female respondents that making sacrifices for the family is necessary. If both of the couple have careers, the wife is supposed to be more supportive to husband's career. "Women are supposed to do more housework ", otherwise women will be considered not competent enough. In a sense, "women's time is other's time", from life course perspective, "in the most pressing period in a woman's life cycle- with children in nursery and primary school- she has much the same adjustment pattern as other women in the labor force" (Lie & Rorlett, 1986:33).

In a broader context, these academic women's career commitment and family commitment are inter-related. Academic career doesn't attain high material rewards, it is a career of honor rather than profits. In such a circumstance, it is an art for academic women to bear certain burdens and deal with pressures, and to shoulder well the responsibilities of career and family. A few female respondents note that they sacrificed sleep to accomplish both academic and domestic tasks. It is said that sleeplessness is a common story for women academics across the generations, as academic work has been intensified and standards of production are higher. Two respondents expressed sincere appreciation for supportive husbands who share burdens. Two respondents employ paid maid despite the extended family help. One female respondent choose to have DINK (Double Income No Kind) family pattern. One single female respondent choose to keep single status instead of having family.

As has been stated earlier, several studies suggest that women faculty members find their lives constituted differently from those of their male counterparts and in their roles in domestic life (Lie& Malik, 1990; Lie & Malik, 1994; Hayhoe, 1996: Wei, 1995; Kimmel & Aronson, 2000). Academic shoulder more responsibilities, but their domestic role is not appreciated in academic hierarchy. On the one hand, university culture is hierarchically male-dominated, domestic responsibility is not a valued skill within the department or faculty. On the other hand, academic women's labor at home is unpaid, they are in a sense

"invisible", which can be defined "invisibility" in academic women's personality system (See Chapter III).

Accordingly, when comparing academic women and men's life-lines, significant differences were revealed, as have been illustrated in Chapter V. Challenges concerning academic women's life and career are pronounced.

In respond to questions concerning gender equality and feminism, respondents show different views, yet a lack of gender awareness was common. Some respondents are reluctant to comment on gender issues and feminism. Some showed strong dislike and misunderstanding of feminism and feminists. One female respondent pointed out that a bottom-up pattern which was successful in western countries may not be feasible in China.

Actually, as I take gender studies in Norway, I learned from professors that the core of feminism is to achieve gender equality and respect men and women's respective differences and needs. Although from the very beginning of CPC leadership, the equality of men and women were advocated and put into party policy, laws were also launched concerning protection of rights and interests of women (See Chapter II), gender awareness is still legged behind. All China Women's Federation (ACWF) was established as an organization as early as 1949, however the empowerment is quite limited. From Mao's advocate of "Iron Girls" ( See Chapter V) to ten years' of turmoil Culture Revolution ( 1966-1976), gender sameness were emphasized and gender differences denied. Gender equality is not gender sameness (See Chapter III & V).

> *"For many women as for men, living through the ten years of turmoil ( 1966-1976) resulted in an equation between attempts at radical social and political change and chaos and suffering, Deng Xiaoping's restoration of order and of the natural order were met with relief. Women welcomed the chance to move away from the masculine-style asceticism of the Maoist era and to enjoy the pleasure of femininity" (Jacka, 1997:41).*

As of the root of gender beliefs in China, Li (1994) argues that gender beliefs in China were dictated by male party leadership, not created by women's movements as in western countries. It is fundamental to Chinese women's dilemmas (Li, 1994). CIDA researchers also stated that there are not many independent and authoritative sources of feminist ideas in China, and "the party's view of gender equality was not incorporated into the belief systems of most Chinese people" (Gaskell, Eichler, Pan, Xu & Zhang, 2004:514). Therefore to raise

gender awareness, to achieve gender equality as well as have feminism movements in China is a long way to go.

In summary, I conducted study concerning academic women's life cycle and career patterns in higher education in China based on primary research questions, interviewing a small number of academic women and men, and explored their life courses regarding institutional, cultural and personal challenges they face in light of social, cultural and personality systems constructed in theoretical framework. A gender gap in this limited study was revealed. In addition, questions concerning gender awareness, gender equality and feminism were explored. Because of the limited numbers in the study, it is difficult to make generalizations, but the study could be used as a basis for further investigations.

## 6.4 Implications for Policies & Practice

My study emphasis has been on female faculty members, but I look at students enrollment to see the pool, especially there is limited pool at doctorate level ( See Chapter V). Compared with other countries, the pool of China academic women is small, female doctorate students percentage is low. According to UNESCO statistics, in 2003,female PhD students only accounts for 28.1% of total PhD students. While in western countries the percentage is much higher, Botswana 55.5% in 2002, U.S. 51.3% in 2005, Australia 49.8% in 2005, UK 44.3% in 2005 (UNESCO, www.unesco.org and Lie & Malik, 2008 forthcoming). Among the 17 countries studied in the statistics on female enrollment in PhD level, China ranked the 16th out of 17, only a little higher than Iran (Iran 25.5% in 2005). Therefore the trend of gender gap in higher education in China is expending. Although China has a large population, the number of female doctorate students is still low. The future is not that positive because of this limited pool, where academic women are already disadvantaged in higher education reforms because of the trends in Globalization, as has been earlier documented by western researchers from the very beginning.

Furthermore, as the "one-child" policy continues, a potential crisis on gender balance hints. The sex ratio (Note 1) in China is continuously high, which means there are more male than female in China. According to UNICEF report and ABC news, in 2005, there were 118.6 boys born for every 100 girls, and those figures are expected to increase with China's population( www.unicef.org, www.abcnews.go.com ). From February 2004 to April 2006,

more than 300 scholars in China compiled a national population development strategy research report. According to the report, by 2020, there will be 30 million more Chinese men between the ages of 20 and 45 than women ( Women of China, www.womenofchina.org ). Decreasing female population will lead to low percentage of female students in all levels of education. Therefore, unless special policies are introduced, there's a danger of enlarging the gender gap in higher education in China.

What kind of policies can China learn from others to promote gender equality especially in higher education? I shall briefly introduce implementations of promoting gender equality in Hong Kong, Japan, and Norway respectively.

In Hong Kong, gender mainstreaming was clearly established as a global strategy for promoting gender equality. There is a specific Women's Commission of HK established in 2001, which has been pursuing gender equality in all areas and at all levels, especially in the design and implementation of government policies (Liu & Yangluo, 2007). "This commission has effectively advanced gender equality and sustainable development in Hong Kong. This method of promoting gender equality is a useful reference for the strengthening and improvement of the national mechanism for promoting gender equality in mainland China" (Liu & Yangluo, 2007: 37). HK Women's Commission is a successful example of implementing gender equality policies within higher education.

In Japan, women consist of 50.8% of the total population,48 % of them attend university or college (Mariko Bando, 2006).Similar to ancient China, Japan was also under Confucianism influence in history. Japanese women's labor force participation rate usually shows an M-shaped curve, with their participation declining due to marriage, childbirth and childcare. In recent years, the curve is not as significant as the past. ( www.gender.go.jp). Governments efforts contributed to the progress. Since the mid 20th century, the Japanese government stipulated gender equality in terms of education by launching Constitution and a serious of laws. In 2001, the Council for Gender Equality was established and the Headquarter for Gender Equality was enhanced (内閣府 男女共同参画局 Gender Equality Bureau Cabinet Office) . The chief Cabinet Secretary appointed a minister responsible for gender equality. The Cabinet Office's Gender Equality Bureau has the secretariat for the headquarter and the council for gender equality, launches Gender Equality White Paper annually (男女共同参画白書ダンジョキョウドウサンカクハクショ   White Paper on Gender

Equality). Therefore a national machinery for Gender Equality promotion was formulated (内閣府 男女共同参画局, www. gender.go.jp ).

In Norway, a high proportion of women have been participating in society and work for many years and rank top in Europe. According to UNDP and Norway official report, the UNDP Human Development Index 2003 ranks Norway second only to Iceland in terms of its economic and political gender equality (www.undp.org www.norway.org ). "Norway's main strategy in achieving gender equality has been to strengthen women's economic independence through increasing their labor market participation. The welfare system in Norway is to take care of all of the country's inhabitants "from the cradle to the grave". The system is gender neutral and guarantees most basic needs"(www.gender.no ). Thus Norway is an excellent example in women empowerment. Though there are still large salary differences between men and women. A highly parents-friendly social welfare system which ensures child care and parental leave lessens women's burden. Quota policies in favor of women in the labor force and enterprises were implemented. On January 1st 2006 the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud was established. One of the Ombud's tasks is to enforce the Norwegian Gender Equality Act. In addition, to enforce the anti-discrimination regulations in the Working Environment Act (http://test.seria.no/likestillingsombudet.no/english/ ) As I study at the University of Oslo and also conduct the first Chinese language teaching in Høgskolen i Oslo , I am personally impressed by the popularity of seminars, debates concerning gender equality, and the work environment for academic women in Norway. If China could launch similar national policies, open discussions and debates, and develop a more mature social welfare system, women's participation, whether in academic career or other domains, would be strengthened.

One phenomenon that worth noting is that, affirmative policies in favor of women may cause different voices from men. According to a recent report of Norway newspaper Universitas (http://www.universitas.no), there're male professors against such policy as " female quota" in university professorship. This debate happened in Norway. Therefore I assume that in China to implement affirmative policies in favor of women will encounter more obstacles.

## Conclusion

From the establishment of P.R. China to the 21st century, Chinese universities have made great progresses concerning gender issues and hence a significant participation of women in faculty member level was observed. It is a good beginning. However, there is still much to be improved, and open discussions and researches concerning gender equality and women in higher education in China should be further advocated. At the basic level, gender awareness in both academic men and women in China should be raised, and feminism movements can be put into agenda in the near future. While there is a debate in every women's movement about "difference" and "sameness" as ways to approach gender equality (Snitow, 1990), actions should be taken to tackle the problems academic women in China face today. Only in this way, the life cycle and career patterns of academic women in higher education in China today could be less complicated compared with their male colleagues, and pave way for future progress.

Note 1. Sex ratio is the ratio of males to females in a population. The primary sex ratio is the ratio at the time of conception, secondary sex ratio is the ratio at time of birth, and tertiary sex ratio is the ratio of mature organisms. Under normal circumstances the sex ratio should be just above or just below 100. In humans the secondary sex ratio is commonly assumed to be 105 boys to 100 girls (which by convention is referred to as a ratio of 105) In human societies, however, sex ratios at birth or among infants may be considerably skewed by sex-selective abortion and infanticide.

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**APPENDIX**

Field Work Interview Form   University of Oslo   CIE   Zhao Ke

Part I   Demographics

| Respondent Number | | Gender | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name | | Date of birth | |
| Occupation        (at university) : | | | |
| Marital Status (year) | | | |

Part II    Family Background

| Family of origin SES | | Upbring | | Present Family SES   Married | | | | Single | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | Spouse | | Children | | | |
| Parents' age: | Mother: Father: | Do you have siblings/ cousins | | Spouse's age | | How many | | | |
| Parents educational | Mother: Father: | Did you get the | | Spouse's educationa | | Child/ Children's        age | | | |

| level | | same encourage ment | | l level | | (date of birth) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Parents' occupation | Mother: Father: | Did you attend extra school courses | | Spouse's occupation | | Child/ Children's Education | | | |

**Open questions I. - Tell me about the importance of education in your family of origin -**

1. **When you were a child, what were your parents' expectations for your future ?**
2. **If you have siblings/cousins, did you get the same encouragement for pursuit of study ? if not, why ?**
3. **Did your parents invest in extra educational courses for you such as after-school courses? Could you tell me about them?**
4. **Did the extra educational courses help you with your becoming a female faculty member?**

Part III Educational Profile

| Educational Attainment | |
|---|---|
| Educational field of study | BA __ MA __ PhD__ ☐ <br> ☐     ☐ <br> ON-job training __    ☐ <br><br> Other_____(specify) |
| When and how long did it take for you to achieve | BA __ MA __ PhD__ <br> ☐     ☐     ☐ |

| above degrees (dates) | ON-job training __ ☐<br><br><br>Other_____(specify) |
|---|---|

**Open questions:**

1. **During your educational period, have you felt you have been discriminated against because of your gender?**
2. **Would you like to tell me some specific memories or experiences?**

**Occupational profile before becoming an academic**

| Have you taken other jobs before | No ☐<br>Yes ☐ | | | | Duration ☐ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Educational period & type of work | Work area | | | | Full-time | Part-time |
| | I.T. | Business | Training | Other (specify) | | |
| BA | | | | | | |
| MA | | | | | | |
| PhD | | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | | |

**Open question –**

**Have you had other jobs before becoming an academic ? During above work period, have you felt you have been discriminated against because of your gender? Would you like to tell me some specific memories?**

Part V   Career as academics- Progression in academic career

| Time | Position | Length (years) | Policies/ recruiting restrictions | Publications-title and place of publication |
|------|----------|----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Past |          |                |                                   |                                             |
| Present |        |                |                                   |                                             |
| Future |         |                |                                   |                                             |

**Open questions:**

**--- <u>Attitude/ Choice</u>**

**Why did you choose to become an academic instead of, for instance, a business professional?**

**--- <u>Career</u>**

**--- Recruitment Policies**

1. **What are the basic requirements for faculty recruitment at your university?**
2. **Are there recruiting policies in universities to prevent discrimination against female faculty members to enter academe ? Yes/ No  --please explain**

**--- Mentoring**

**Mentorship is derived from Greek mythology which implies a relationship between a young adult, and an older more experienced adult that helps the younger individual learn to navigate in the adult world and the world of work.**

1. **Does your university have a policy of mentorship for young faculty members ?**
2. **Did you have a mentor to help you to get to know the "rules of the game in**

**academia"?**

3. **If not, do you expect to have a mentor? and what kind of support do you expect from your mentor?**

4.

--- **Career Networking – Networking has been considered a crucial ingredient of success in any professional career. What was the path that you took to become a faculty member?**

**1. Have you been included in the information networks of your university ?**

**2. Can you tell me to what extent you were connected to the collegial network in your university?**

**3. Do you belong to any women faculty member groups ? If yes, would you name some of the groups?**

--- **Publication and Promotion – "Publish or Perish", is it the same or similar situation in China ?What are the basic requirements academic promotion at your university? What is the most important ?**

1. **One criteria for promotion is the number of publication one has. Are there any obligations for publishing in your university? what are they ?**
2. **Do you think male and female faculty members publish about the same level? If not, why?**
3. **A number of studies in this field has shown that male faculty producing rate ( number of articles and books) is higher than those of female faculty members. Do you think that is true also for China universities? If so, why?**
4. **What are your publications ( books , articles) ?**

--- **Discrimination experiences**

1. **In many faculties in Chinese universities, there are more males in academic positions than female. Is it the situation in your faculty ?**
2. **Why is this so according to you ? Are there any reasons that account for the feminization of low positions in the academe ?**
3. **Have you felt discriminated against as a woman academic ? - Please explain**
4. **In your opinion, what kind of policies should universities introduce to aid female academics in their careers ?**
5. **Is there limited promotion or quotas for female academics to full professor/senior administrative positions on the faculty ?**
6. **The retirement age for women is 55 and for men it is 60, what do you think of this? Does this cause any problems ( in your career) ? what effect does it have on your future pension ?**

**Balance- Describe how you balance teaching, publishing and administrative duties combined with family life ?**

**Do you think male faculty members are more able to combine the above tasks and duties compared with female faculty members? Why or why not ? please explain**

**Part VI        Organization of Family Life**

**Open questions: ..- Even when both members of a couple have careers, there're obligations to be done at home. Tell me about how your career influences your family life and the work in the home?**

1. **What role does your spouse play in the care of the children when they were small?**
2. **How would you or did you balance?**
3. **In some countries, the grandparents share childcare responsibilities, is it the same in your family?**
4. **If you had the choice, would you rather be a home-maker full-time or have a job?**
5. **What's your dream of an ideal life and family? Any future expectations?**

**Organization of Family Life Table**

| Household chores | | Child rearing duties | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Who is mainly responsible for- | | In your family, who does the majority of- | |
| Planning of household | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others _____( specify) | Feeding children<br><br>When they were small | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others _____( specify) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Food preparation | Myself ☐ <br><br> My spouse ☐ <br><br> Share equally ☐ <br><br> Grandma ☐ <br><br> Grandpa ☐ <br><br> Others _____( specify) | Playing with children | Myself ☐ <br><br> My spouse ☐ <br><br> Share equally ☐ <br><br> Grandma ☐ <br><br> Grandpa ☐ <br><br> Others _____( specify) |
| Cleaning | Myself ☐ <br><br> My spouse ☐ <br><br> Share equally ☐ <br><br> Grandma ☐ <br><br> Grandpa ☐ <br><br> Others _____( specify) | Pick-up children from school | Myself ☐ <br><br> My spouse ☐ <br><br> Share equally ☐ <br><br> Grandma ☐ <br><br> Grandpa ☐ <br><br> Others _____( specify) |
| Washing | Myself ☐ <br><br> My spouse ☐ <br><br> Share equally ☐ <br><br> Grandma ☐ <br><br> Grandpa ☐ <br><br> Others _____( specify) | Take children to Extra-curricular courses/activities | Myself ☐ <br><br> My spouse ☐ <br><br> Share equally ☐ <br><br> Grandma ☐ <br><br> Grandpa ☐ <br><br> Others _____( |

|  |  |  | specify) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Daily shopping | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others _____( specify) | Help with study and homework | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others _____( specify) |
| Pay family bill | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others _____( specify) | Attend parents' meetings | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others |
| House maintenance | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others _____( specify) | Send children to hospital when they were ill | Myself ☐<br><br>My spouse ☐<br><br>Share equally ☐<br><br>Grandma ☐<br><br>Grandpa ☐<br><br>Others ( specify) |

Pregnancy and Childbirth-leave

| Policies | | Facts/ Considerations | |
|---|---|---|---|
| What are the policies in China you are aware of concerned with maternal leave? | | When did you decide to have the first child? | |
| Does your university have favorable policies for female faculty members regarding pregnancy and maternal leave?<br><br>What are they? | | What were the considerations you took in planning to have a child | Social and cultural tradition ☐<br><br>Grandparents expectations ☐<br><br>Husband's expectations ☐<br><br>My own wish to become a mother ☐<br><br>Peer pressure ☐<br><br>Family life ☐<br><br>Financial ability ☐<br><br>Other_____ |
| After childbirth, how long can a female faculty member stay at home? | | After childbirth, how long did you stay at home? | |

**Open questions:**

1. **Did /would childbirth leave affect your career ? how?**

2. **If so, how to combine family and career development?**

3. **What do you think about the social changes taking place in some western countries ( for instance, Norway ) regarding women rights, sharing child care and household chores?**

4. **Equal responsibility by men and women for child rearing and childcare is the policy in some western countries where men also take paternal leave. Have you heard of it ?**

5. **Now you have heard of the above policies, what do you think of these policies**?

6. **Do we have similar policies in China ? Yes--- No---- Other---**

7. **What are the policies in China you are aware of regarding family and childcare ?**

8. **Do we have favorable policies for female faculty members regarding childcare in your university?**

9. **What do you think about the above trends and their possible impact in the context of China today ?**

**Part V.III  Society    Have you heard of feminism ?**

1. **Are you a feminist ? Why or why not ? ---please explain**

2. **In your opinion, how does feminism play itself out in China context ?**

3. **Do you belong to any organizations which helps women ( to improve female's situation)? If yes, would you name some of the groups?**

**Part IX        Additional**

1. **Do you feel that being involved in this research- answering these interview questions and looking back of your life – could affect your experience or attitude of being an academic women in China in any way ?**

2. **Would you like to draw a life-line ? Do you have anything to add ?**

**Thank you for your participation !**