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Work-Family Conflicts of Female Academics in the UK and Nigeria

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Candidate Declaration

I, Mansur Kayode Opakunle, hereby affirm the following statements regarding my Ph.D. thesis:

1. I have not been enrolled for another award of the University or other academic or professional organisation, while undertaking my research degree.

2. None of the materials contained in this thesis have been submitted previously in any application for an academic award.

3. I certify that this thesis is my own work. The use of all published or other sources of material consulted have been properly and fully acknowledged.

4. All research activities undertaken as part of this thesis have been conducted in strict compliance with the Sheffield Hallam University Principles of Integrity in Research and the Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Policy and Ethics approval has been granted for all research studies in the thesis.

5. The total word count of the thesis is **82, 421** words.

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Abstract

This thesis investigated work–family conflict (WFC) among female academics in the UK and Nigeria, critically drawing on Sylvia Walby's patriarchy theory that identifies six institutional structures (paid work, household production, culture, sexuality, violence, and the state) through which patriarchy operates. Walby later developed gender regimes theory to address the different configurations of gendered power across the public and private spheres. This research is further enriched by intersectional feminism and African feminist critiques. These theoretical perspectives underscore how gender intersects with culture, ethnic and class, particularly within African socio-institutional realities.

Using a comparative mixed-methods case study design, this research collected data through semi-structured online surveys distributed to eighty female academics across four case universities in Nigeria and the UK, spanning various disciplines and career stages. The findings shows that WFC is exacerbated by: (1) neoliberal marketisation of higher education which increases workloads and reduces work–life balance in female academics, especially in the UK; (2) established patriarchal norms and cultural expectations assigning unpaid domestic and caregiving responsibilities to women, particularly in the Nigerian context; and (3) lack of implementation of family-friendly institutional policies, with participants in the UK often encountering inconsistent access, and those in Nigeria facing systemic absence of support. These structural and cultural factors systematically reduce job satisfaction, productivity, and organisational commitment among female academics in both countries. In the UK, despite the availability of formal policy frameworks, career progression among female academics is delayed by unstable policy enforcement and longtime gender role biases. In Nigeria, societal expectation and pressure to prioritise family over career, compounded by financial insecurity and weak institutional backing, leads to job dissatisfaction.

Theoretically, the study contributes to how public patriarchy and private patriarchy intersect to produce specific WFC patterns in the two countries. Intersectional and African feminist lenses further enhance these insights, underscoring how structural forms of oppression are experienced differently across geopolitical and cultural context, calling for the necessity of context-specific policy interventions.

This thesis therefore calls for: (a) the development of culturally rich institutional policies in Nigeria to support female academics; and (b) more rigorous enforcement and equitable

implementation of family-friendly policies in the UK. These recommendations are essential interventions informed by theoretical models of patriarchy, gender regimes, and intersectionality.

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<h1 align="center">Chapter 1</h1>

1.0   Introduction

In recent times, higher education institutions in global north and south have attempted to implement work-life balance strategies to mitigate work-family conflict (WFC) of the employees (Avolio *et al*, 2024). Despite these initiatives, female academics continue to be underrepresented in the academic hierarchy, a trend seen across many national and cultural contexts (Avolio *et al*, 2024). The identified underrepresentation has led to investigations on the structural and cultural elements affecting women's career paths in academia, especially the impact of WFC. The level of sociocultural and policy impact in terms of similarities and differences of WFC on the female academics between continents, such as Africa and Europe, remains a largely unexamined subject of academic research. Female academics have distinct challenges at different career stages (early, middle, and late), influenced by varied normative and institutional contexts (Lewin, 2019). The cultural expectations on gender roles and family responsibilities in Nigeria markedly contrast with those in the UK. These disparities could affect the unfolding of WFC and its effects on job commitment and career advancement of the female academics. Cross-nation comparative research is essential to establish the dynamics of WFC among female academics across the global north and south and to offer practical insights for policy solutions.

Most literature on WFC primarily used mono-method approach to evaluate WFC (Boyar *et al, 2008*). These methodologies frequently fail to encapsulate the intricacies and profundity of WFC, especially in multi-national settings. This study employs a mixed-methods case study research approach, utilising semi-structured questions through survey and interviews which was followed by document analysis to produce comprehensive, contextually relevant information for WFC analysis. This design helps in getting adequate sample size and depth of understanding required to analyse the interaction of work and family dynamics among female academics in the UK and Nigeria. This study put into consideration the limits of similar research, such as limited sample numbers and an excessive dependence on data-gathering methods, which may hide the lived experiences of female academics. A quantitative and qualitative mixed-methods approach to establish the fundamental causes of WFC and its effects on job commitment and career progression in the female academics is appropriate. The methodological rigour used enhances the generalisability and applicability of the findings, providing a strong framework for tackling gender disparities in academia.

Sylvia Walby's (1990) notion of "patriarchal relations of production" in feminist theory and gender reform framework offers a comprehensive perspective for the evaluation of the structural and cultural factors influencing WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria. The research seeks to assess the applicability of Walby's theory in establishing the intersection of patriarchal norms and institutional practices that influence the work-family experiences of female academics in the two countries. It also explores the intersectionality of career stages (early, middle, and late) and how

factors such as caregiving obligations, workplace policies, and societal expectations impact WFC at certain periods. To address the shortfall of Walby, this research also draws on African feminism theory to address the cultural and postcolonial critiques of gender dynamics. Contrary to western feminism of Sylvia Walby that basically adopts individualist and liberal paradigms, African feminism emphasises community influences and collective responsibilities, relational identities, and motherhood (Nnaemeka, 2004). This perspective is important to understanding how the UK and Nigerian female academics navigate WFC career challenges along deeply embedded family responsibilities. Using Walby's theoretical concepts of patriarchy and gender regimes with critiques from feminist intersectional and African feminist perspectives, this thesis synthesised the two theories to enable cross-cultural comparisons while acknowledging the distinct realities of female academics live experiences in the UK and Nigeria.

This research addresses major gaps in theory and literatures thereby enhancing the understanding of WFC among female academics and providing evidence-based recommendations to promote gender equality in higher education in the global north and south. Recent studies highlight the imperative of these initiatives, especially as institutions endeavour to cultivate more inclusive and supportive cultures for female academics globally (Williams *et al*., 2005).

1.1   Personal background

My impetus for investigating WFC among female academics originated from the observations I made during my undergraduate studies in Nigeria, where I earned my Bachelor of Science degree (B.sc). During this period, I noted a significant disparity in the work habits and family demands of my university female lecturers compared to their male counterparts. Numerous female lecturers seemed to struggle with academic commitments which conflict with their family obligations which sometimes affected their availability in class, engagement with students and colleagues, overall performance output and career progression at work. This pattern persisted in my later professional experiences, where I observed similar work-family challenges among women across diverse sectors, underscoring a concern that appeared to impact their job performance, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. While pursuing my master's degree in one of Nigerian government universities, the WFC became increasingly evident among my female colleagues which suggest that numerous female lecturers frequently encounter challenges in relation to balancing work and family demands, including difficulties in adhering to established timetables, and recurrent requests to reschedule lectures due to family responsibilities which creates the conflicts. Societal expectations, cultural norms, and religious beliefs in Nigeria markedly influenced these challenges, resulting in enduring impacts on the professional life of the female academics.

These observations inspired me to look beyond my corporate work in 2019 to back into academics to concentrate on the research that would investigate these matters comprehensively. My objective is to research the impact of WFC on female academics in the UK and Nigeria for comparison in view of the cultural and economic differences. I plan to contribution to the required gender reforms debate and to make some recommendations that could assist in the gender reforms globally. I relocated to the United Kingdom to undertake a master's in research (MRes) in Social Sciences, offering a comparative analysis of the experiences of female academics across various contexts. During my studies at a UK university, I noted the persistence of work-family issues among the female academics in the university, despite the presence of institutional and cultural frameworks in the UK that seemed to have mitigated some of these conflicts. This reinforced my determination to examine the effects of WFC in both developed and developing countries.

In my MRES research project, I examined the influence of work-family dynamics on job satisfaction and organizational commitment among young academics in the university, I discovered that female academics in the university encountered WFC, particularly during the early stages of their careers and while nurturing young children. It was observed that the younger their children, the more the intensity of their WFC escalates, adversely affecting their job satisfaction and commitment. My research enhances the literature on WFC by elaborating on Walby's (1990) concept of "patriarchal relations of production," specifically concerning the effects of unpaid caregiving duties on women's professional trajectories. This research shows that WFC is a common experience among female academics in the global north and global south, albeit with varying manifestations influenced by cultural and institutional factors.

Considering that the UK is a globally respected hub for higher education and Nigeria possesses the largest number of universities in Africa, a comparative analysis between these two countries presents a significant opportunity to comprehend how WFC influence the academic profession across diverse socio-cultural environments. To further this study and make a significant contribution to academics, I have delineated essential research issues that will direct my efforts such as what are the principal sources of WFC encountered by female academics in both global and local contexts. Is there a notable disparity in the form and degree of WFC encountered by female academics in developing countries compared to developed countries. What is the strength of the association between WFC and job commitment among female academics in a multi-country context. This research seeks to offer insights that will guide institutional policies and cultural factors to assist female academics in effectively managing their professional and family obligations. The research outcome will enhance the broader dialogue on gender equality and career sustainability for women in academia.

1.2   The context for the research

WFC has received a lot of attention among researchers globally. Researching the impact of WFC on employees is a continuous phenomenon as employees have work duties which often clash with family responsibilities. Employees experience a lot of work-related and family-related conflict due to changing workplace dynamics and family demands (Mukanzi & Senaji, 2017), female academics globally are also affected in this scenario. If work and family roles are not well balanced, it could negatively impact the employee interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships in the organization resulting in WFC, thus decreasing employee commitment (Casper, Martin, Buffardi, & Erdwins, 2002). Ellinas, Fouad, and Byars-Winston (2018) affirm that WFC among females in UK high-learning institutions result in increased staff turnover (Ellinas *et al*, 2018). Such predicaments have been responsible for low job satisfaction, productivity, and commitment among females' academics (Milledzi, Amponsah & Asamani, 2017). According to literature, females face WFC associated with parenting role (Howe-Walsh & Turnbull, 2016); there is institutional misunderstanding of females' work-family issues as demonstrated by lack of gender-sensitive policies (Pacheco & Webber, 2016); lack of flexible work environment (Bani-Melhem, Zeffane & Albaity, 2018; Lambert, Qureshi, Klahm, Smith & Frank, 2018); excess workload coupled with social obligations (Macfarlane & Burg, 2019). On the other hand, female academic performances are optimized when work-family issues are kept at a minimum (Gaio Santos *et al*, 2008).

Most females face conflict between their career progression and family responsibilities (Kahkha *et al*., 2014). The challenge of being spouses, mothers, spiritual role models, and at the same time employees is a challenge embedded in Nigerian females (Eze, 2017). Kahkha *et al*., (2014) further established that females in Nigeria face multiple functions of motherhood, wives, and breadwinners and this limits their full commitment to work which in a way creates a vacuum at work that needs to be filled for effective organizational development (Kahkha *et al*., 2014). Cultural beliefs about gender, such as the belief that females are primarily responsible for domestic roles, preclude females 's entrance into full workforce participation in Nigeria, particularly in managerial roles (Eze, 2017). Worthy of note are the cultural beliefs and the communal disposition of females which are often biased against females because the communal model is perceived as a poor fit with managerial criteria (Eze,2017). One problem hindering this development is that females are not well represented in the policy-making process, especially on issues of business and manpower development (Kahkha *et al*., 2014). The arguments point out the need to investigate further the causes and peculiar effect of WFC amongst female academics in the UK and Nigeria particularly the married ones that are most likely to have live-in families. However, a careful examination of relevant literature on this topic shows that many studies are set within the global north. Most of the studies examined one or more European countries (Hagqvist *et al*, 2017) while studies from global south like Nigeria are limited. Meanwhile, with the

change in the work environment due to the last Covid-19 pandemic, especially as academics increasingly had to work from home (irrespective of their location), it becomes a strong basis to study the phenomenon both in the global north and global south country contexts.

1.3   Research aims.

The study aims to compare WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria. Specifically, it intends to:

1. To assess and compare the experiences of WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria, specifically identifying cultural, institutional and societal factors influencing their challenges and strategies for achieving work-life balance.

2. To investigate the effect of WFC on job satisfaction/commitment of female academics in two countries with different socioeconomic, political and cultural backgrounds.

This study aspires to unravel fact-based implications essential for the cultivation of relevant national and institutional work-life balance policies for female academics as well as broaden academic discourse on feminist theory.

1.4   Research Questions

From the above-mentioned research justifications, it is important to find answers to the following questions:

1. What are the various sources of WFC faced by female academics in Nigeria and the UK? Is there a significant difference between conflicts experienced by female academics in different types of universities?

2. What is the relationship between work-family conflicts and the job commitment of female academics in their institutional contexts?

3. Is Walby's theory of feminism and gender regime and African feminism applicable in establishing the intersection of patriarchal norms and institutional practices that influence the work-family experiences of female academics in the two countries.

## 1.5	Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organised in ten chapters, each contributing to the broad aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter 1: Introduction This provides an insight into the personal background of the researcher as well as the context of the research. It defines the research questions, aims and objectives of the study, providing a basis for the investigation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review This chapter reviews the existing literature on WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria. It discussed the theoretical framework underpinning the study. The first part examines family structures, gender roles, the higher education system, and government policies on employee well-being in both countries contexts. The second part focuses on feminist and gender regime theories and their implications for understanding gender roles. This chapter highlights the differences and peculiarities of WFC from the perspectives of developing and developed nations, addressing gaps in the literature on female academics in the global north and south.

Chapter 3: Methodology This chapter outlines the study approach, research design, data gathering and analysis procedures. It describes the practical scholarly framework, which informs the choice of a multiple embedded exploratory comparative case study. The chapter justifies the use of a mix-method research approach to address the research questions and achieve the study aims. It details the strategies for selecting cases and participants, collecting diverse data in the field, and analysing the same. Ethical considerations and limitations of the research approach are also discussed.

Chapter 4: Survey Data Analysis This chapter focuses on the critical analysis of survey data. It examines arguments arising from cross-tabulated analysis of participants' responses to the questionnaire. The findings provide understanding of the rationale behind WFC in the four case institutions and its impact on participants' work commitment and satisfaction.

Chapters 5 to 8: Case Studies These four chapters present data collected from the case study institutions. Each chapter begins with an overview of the institution, followed by an analysis of survey findings and interview data. These chapters provide the context for inter-case and intra-case cross – tabulated analysis offering a detailed exploration of WFC in these selected institutions.

Chapter 9: Comparative Discussion This chapter provides a comparative analysis of the four case studies. It harmonizes the findings across the cases, identifying patterns, contrasts and key insights into WFC among female academics in Nigeria and the UK.

Chapter 10: Conclusions The final chapter addresses the research questions and summarizes the primary contributions of the study. It discusses the research limitations while providing recommendations for policy, practice, and future study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.0   Introduction

The increasing involvement of female academics in higher education globally has shown the persistent challenges of balancing academic duties with family life responsibilities (Misra *et al*, 2012). Work-Family Conflict (WFC) for female academics is not an individual challenge but a structural and cultural phenomenon shaped by institutional norms and societal expectations. This chapter critically review the existing literatures on WFC among female academics in two contrasting national contexts by using Sylvia Walby's gender regime theory (1990, 2004) and African feminist perspectives as the guiding theoretical frameworks.

Sylvia Walby's gender regime theory provides a robust analytical view for understanding how societal structures such as family dynamics, organisational practices, and state policies supported gendered inequalities. Walby distinguishes between private patriarchy, predominant in domestic domain, and public patriarchy, prevalent in the institutional setting. In the UK, majority of public patriarchy is evident in institutionalised gender norms and 'glass ceiling' barriers that continue to limit women's full participation in academia (Walby, 2004). Nigerian female academics on the other hand, face the combination of both private and public patriarchies, compounded by deep-rooted socio-cultural and religious norms that dictate gender roles and family responsibilities (Onyenwere, 2017).

In addition to Walby's structuralist approach, this research also draws upon African feminism, to offer cultural and postcolonial critiques of gender dynamics. Unlike Western feminism that most time adopts individualist and liberal paradigms, African feminism emphasises community influences, relational identities, motherhood, and collective responsibilities (Ntseane, 2011). This perspective is important to understanding how Nigerian female academics navigate WFC career challenges and deeply embedded family responsibilities.

By comparing the UK and Nigerian female academics, this literature review aims to elucidate how cultural expectations, institutional policies and gender regime shape the live experiences of the female academics. This comparative analysis contributes to the growing body of research calling for intersectional and context-sensitive approaches to gender equality in academia (Carbado *et al*, 2013; Morley, 2013). It also identifies critical gaps in the literature, particularly the underrepresentation of African contexts and the need for theoretical pluralism in WFC studies.

2.1.   Family Structures in Nigeria and the UK

Family formation influence WFC encountered by female academics in Nigeria and the UK. Gender roles, socio-economic factors, and cultural expectations significantly affect the dynamics of WFC in the two countries. This study investigated the empirical literature to assess the two countries family

structures and their influence on female academics regarding family responsibilities, career advancement, empowerment, and leadership dynamics at home and at workplace. Nigeria and the UK have divergent family structures and related challenges.

Nigeria's traditional family structures is a patriarchal setting with gender roles that are rigidly established, with cultural norms urging women to prioritise family responsibilities over their professional obligations (Nzegwu, 2012; Eze, 2017). The extended family system is a crucial element of Nigerian households, placing supplementary caring duties on women (Ugiagbe *et al*., 2017). Female academics frequently balance professional responsibilities alongside caregiving for ageing parents, in-laws, and dependents in family structure in Nigeria thereby exacerbating WFC (Ajiboye, 2011). Empirical research indicates that women with enhanced decision-making autonomy experience less WFC, as they are more adept at negotiating roles and responsibilities (Ukandu, 2024). In contrast, women in conventional family structures, characterised by male-dominated decision-making, face limited options and increased stress (Ukandu, 2024). Carrying out domestic chores in Nigeria tend to be major responsibility of women, with them disproportionately shouldering childcare and household duties too (Ajiboye, 2011). Dual-career marriages, particularly those with both partners working over 40 hours per week, are more common among female academics in Nigeria, despite this, woman are still expected to bear household responsibilities (O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005). In addressing these huge societal expectations on women, Nigerian female academics often utilize paid domestic helpers (known as housemaids) to mitigate WFC. These housemaids can be live-in, live-out, or part-time maids and they are meant to assist with household tasks and childcare. The housemaid arrangement provides a commercial solution for the female academics to enable them balance professional and domestic responsibilities (Aluko, 2009). However, reliance on domestic assistance may not resolve the fundamental causes of WFC, including patriarchal norms and the deficiency in institutional support.

In the UK, monogamous family structures dominate alongside an increasing acknowledgment of varied family forms, such as same-sex and single-parent families (Ogueji & Okoloba, 2022). WFC continue to be a serious issue, especially among female academics in the UK (Forster, 2001). Female academics in the UK who have family and serve as primary carers frequently encounter significant WFC (Ogueji & Okoloba, 2022). Inadequate institutional policy regarding work-life balance exacerbates WFC challenges, resulting in isolation and burnout among female academics (Ibegbulam & Ejikeme, 2021; Shadrack 2023). The composition of family structure affects the distribution of resources within households in the UK (Kok *et al*., 2011). Conversely, single-parent homes encounter diminished childcare support and heightened caring responsibilities (Burden, 1986). The increasing prevalence of cohabitation as a substitute for marriage often results in reducing household dynamics, as cohabiting relationships are generally less stable and more transient (Di Giulio *et al*., 2019). The involvement of women in the workforce and the prevalence of dual-income households is increasing

limitations on childcare availability in the UK homes. Robust marriages foster stability and specialization in homes (Hill, 1988), but single-parent families encounter more caregiving conflicts (Walker & Hennig, 1997). Institutional assistance, such as parental leave policies and subsidized childcare in the UK, are often inadequate for female academics, thereby hindering their ability to balance professional and family responsibilities effectively (Maxwell *et al.*, 2019).

Although family dynamics in Nigeria and the UK differ, both contexts reveal societal beliefs and institutional shortcomings that exacerbate WFC among female academics. In Nigeria, women contend with deeply embedded patriarchal norms, cultural expectations, and the burden of extended family responsibilities, all of which heighten their domestic load and limit career advancement (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2011). On the contrary, in the UK, female academics face institutional deficiencies, such as inadequate childcare infrastructure, limited flexibility in academic work (Forster, 2001), and the pressures associated with diverse family arrangements, including single parenthood and dual-career households (Mauerer, 2018).

Across both settings, there is clear need for stronger institutional and policy interventions to support work-family balance and promote gender equity in academia (Lewis & Humbert, 2010).

2.2   Gender Roles in Nigeria and the UK

In Nigeria, gender roles are embedded in the traditional and cultural norms. The society has historically exhibited a patriarchal framework that has sustained systemic inequities (Makama, 2013). Gender roles in this context are controlled by traditional customs, religious beliefs, and colonial histories that have perpetuated male dominance in the country political, economic, and social domains (Salaam, 2003). Nigerian women, despite this challenge make substantial contributions across the Nigerian society's multiple sectors, including education, leadership, and community development. Nigerian women dual functions in reproductive and productive circumstances highlight their vital contributions to society's advancement (Onyenwere, 2017). Gender roles in Nigeria have systemic obstacles that are associated with widowhood, female circumcision, inequities in female roles in a family, and polygamy (Salaam, 2003). These underscore the oppressive aspects of patriarchal norms in Nigerian society (Aina, 1998; Oyewumi, 1997). Colonialism also promoted gender inequality by establishing patriarchal norms inside religious belief and governmental frameworks. Christianity and Islam established gender roles that limited women's liberty, promotes and perpetuate male dominance (Salaam, 2003). This religious belief restricted women to second fiddle in the society, reducing their access to leadership roles, political engagement, and economic resources (Benebo *et al*. 2018).

African feminism challenges the binary gender classifications by pointing out the historical and cultural nature of African social systems, which most times does not follow Western gender norms. This is specifically evident in indigenous practices such as the concepts of the "male daughter" and the

"female husband" among the Igbo people of Eastern Nigeria (Amadiume, 2017). These practices show how African societies has always employed flexible, pragmatic gender roles to adapt to socio-economic and lineage-based needs. The term "male daughter" refers to a female child who is appointed to perform duties and roles traditionally reserved for sons, especially in a family or families where a father does not have male offspring. In such situation, the daughter in such family is with patrilineal responsibilities, such as inheriting family properties and perpetuating the family name. This role reassigns social and legal status to gender rather than altering biological identity, highlighting the performative and contextual nature of gender roles in some African cultures such as Nigeria (Amadiume, 2015). Similarly, the concept of "female husband" entails a woman marrying another woman, for the purpose of securing the family lineage continuity when there are no male heirs. The "female husband" takes the social and economic responsibilities of a husband, which includes paying bride price and integrating the wife into her family. This practice does not reflect sexual orientation, rather it shows how a social arrangement peculiar to Africa prioritizes lineage and inheritance (Oboler, 1980; Amadiume, 1987). These gender-flexible arrangement illustrate how African feminism differ from Western feminist model by emphasizing the intersection of gender with cultural traditions, kinship structures and economic systems. African feminist scholars such as Oyěwùmí (1997) and Ifi Amadiume, 2015 argue that African gender systems cannot be fully understood through Western binary frameworks such as Walby's gender role and feminism theories, as they are often non-essentialist and functionally constructed within western cultural contexts.

The traditional believe that defined men as superior gender and family providers and women as nurturers have come under growing scrutiny. Recent research shows a shift towards more equal labour distribution particularly in the UK family setting (Lewis & Campbell, 2008). The ongoing existence of gendered inequalities, especially in unpaid domestic work and caregiving, highlights the partial character of these changes (Beukens & Smith, 2024). Sexuality and gender dynamics have also progressed in the UK (Rahman & Jackson, 2010). The increased varied sexual orientations and behaviours in the UK has confronted conventional norms (Rahman & Jackson, 2010). However, enduring disparities in sexual health education and cultural criticism of women's sexual autonomy underscore continuing issues on gender relations. The UK has experienced substantial alterations in gender roles, propelled by societal developments, legislative reforms, and cultural attitude adjustments (Hammersley *et al*, 2023).

Walby's framework of public and private patriarchy (1990) offers a perspective to examine these transformations, as the shift from private patriarchal systems (domestic authority) to public patriarchal (institutionalized bias) has influenced modern gender relations. Women's engagement in the UK labour market has risen, accompanied by notable progress in access to education and work prospects (Morgan, 2022). Despite this development, the "glass ceiling" of women in career progression in organisations

persists as a significant obstacle, with women inadequately represented in senior roles across several sectors (Goodall, 2024). Structural elements include gender bias, work-life imbalance, and discriminatory behaviours that persist in hindering women's professional advancement (Thelma *et al*., 2024). The increase in dual-income households and changing family dynamics further illustrate transformations in gender roles. Although fathers in the UK are progressively participating in caring, conventional norms continue to impose an unequal burden on women, as women work shorter hours to their men counterpart which is more pronounced for parents, and this is to enable women accommodate family responsibilities (Tang, 2005). Legislative initiatives, including comprehensive parental leave regulations, seek to rectify these discrepancies; nonetheless, cultural and institutional obstacles remain.

2.3   Higher Education System in Nigeria and the UK

The history of higher education in Nigeria shows the country's efforts in addressing societal needs and demands as the country develops. The Nigeria population growth, educational need and dynamics of the global education has prompted the need for the country education reform (Saint, Hartnett & Strassner, 2003). Nigeria's higher education system has gone through many reforms due to the need to increase citizens access to education for the country long time sustainable development. However, the education sector continues to experience challenges such as poor funding, infrastructural inadequacy and systemic inefficiencies that has led to the reforms over the years (Saint, Hartnett & Strassner, 2003).

The Nigerian government established more universities to decentralize education and promote citizen access to education by the late 1970s, including federal, state, and specialized universities (Obasi, 2007). However, the economic downturn of the country by 1980s, coupled with political instability, brought about major changes in the country higher education system. Education faced funding cuts, deteriorating infrastructure, and brain drain as qualified academics sought opportunities abroad. These challenges prompted government policy reforms to tackle the required education quality and sustainability (Saint, et al 2003). The country's Structural Adjusted Programs (SAPs) in the 1980s and 1990s was the turning point in Nigerian higher education. SAPs pointed to Nigeria government cost recovery and reduced overall spending which led to reduced government funding for higher education (Independent Evaluation Group, 2017). To address the funding gap, Nigeria government in 1993 endorsed privatization policies that enabled the establishment of private universities in the country (Iruonagbe, Imhonopi & Egharevba, 2015). This starts the dual educational system of government and private higher institutions in Nigeria that provides more option to students to access higher education (Iruonagbe, Imhonopi & Egharevba, 2015). Globalization has enabled dynamics to Nigerian higher education, with institutions motivated to competing in the global knowledge sector. The increase in international collaborations, and rankings has made Nigerian universities to align with global

educational standards. The education sector still encounters challenges in retaining talent and solving the infrastructural decay in the various universities (Milton, 2018). The Nigerian government has been encouraging gender inclusion and participation, particularly the underrepresented groups such as women (Eboiyehi, Fayomi & Eboiyehi, 2016). Policies promoting gender equity and social inclusion has witness progress, although significant disparities persist (Eboiyehi, Fayomi & Eboiyehi, 2016). Muoghalu and Eboiyehi (2018) argued that most Nigerian higher education institutions have patriarchal inclinations that demonstrate the subordination and classification of females as inferior members of society. The reduced female representation, especially in leadership and other high-ranking roles in Nigerian universities, is readily apparent (Eboiyehi, Fayomi & Eboiyehi, 2016). Odejide, Akanji, and Odekunle (2006) observed that although gender is not directly addressed in the Nigerian universities, university life is a profoundly gendered experience. Notwithstanding the presence of qualified females for top management positions in the Nigerian government sector, including the higher education sector, there is still a reluctance to accept them. The Nigerian economy is characterized by a significant amplification of norms, traditions, and cultural stereotypes that are employed to rationalize the exclusion of females from negotiation tables (Porter, 2007). Therefore, it is highly unlikely that females are adequately represented in leadership positions within the Nigerian university system. Ogbogu (2011) reported that females in Nigerian institutions occupy 35% of academic positions, particularly in lower and intermediate-level roles. She also noted that their representation compared to men declines at higher levels. Aina *et al* (2015) ascribed the under-representation of female professors and female senior lecturers at the highest level to the inadequate representation within the management hierarchy. This claim is substantiated by the fact that out of the 138 federal, state, and private universities in Nigeria, only twelve females have held the post of university vice-chancellor since the founding of the first university in 1948 (Akinwale, 2022). Besides a few universities, men have also been predominantly represented in other managerial roles such as college provosts, deans, department heads, directors, registrars, bursars, and librarians (Abiodun-Oyebanji & Olaleye, 2011). Systemic challenges that have detrimental impact on females in higher education sector in Nigeria includes discriminatory hiring and promotion practices, lack of policies for female participation, and limited opportunities for management coaching focused on females (Maürtin-Cairncross, 2014), posted that societal belief and norm put masculinity above femininity, and this is evident in the Nigeria society. Rice (2012), further said, to progress in high-level professions, males use the male advantage to put themselves forward, thereby enabling them to effectively develop these qualities using their inherent abilities, available resources, and the systemic advantage. This, therefore, suggested that the systemic elements such as the existence of a strong commitment to gender equality within the organization, effective mentoring systems, sustainable programs for the development of female employees, transparent procedures for hiring and promoting females, support services specifically designed for females, access to data technology, and flexible work schedules can

significantly impact female participation in organisation. Scholars such as Smulders (1998) and Bassey & Archibong (2012), have researched the cultural elements that support gender disparity in management systems in Africa. This empirical literature focused on the social construct of gender in organizations, which entails the allocation of roles, duties, and expectations to females. Specifically, Smulders (1998) proposed that gender-based roles, which are not specific for the workplace, are perpetuated and maintained in the workplace. Although there is a global movement towards an increased presence of female professors in universities, females are still not adequately represented at higher education sector in Nigerian institutions. Most female academics are in the lowest ranks within the Nigerian university system (Ogbogu, 2011). This confirmed public patriarchy in Nigeria universities.

Higher education in The UK is progressing, and it is characterized by notable reforms designed to enhance accessibility, raise quality, and synchronize the sector with socio-economic objectives of the country (Sanderson, 2020). The UK higher education system has historically exemplified an elitist paradigm that emphasized academic performance (Sanderson, 2020). Over time, cultural shifts, economic pressures, and political imperatives prompted a shift towards a mass education paradigm, radically transforming the higher education system in the UK. The Education Reform Act of 1992 marked the change in UK higher education system as it eradicates the distinction between polytechnics and universities. Institutions that are historically known as vocational education centre or polytechnics were upgraded to university status, resulting in the emergence of "post-1992 universities." while earlier universities are known as pre-92 universities (Carpentier, 2018). This reform has enhanced the number of higher education institutions and has expanded access to local and international students (Scott, 2018). This era also aligned with the rise of a market-driven approach to the governance of higher education. Universities were encouraged to diversify their funding sources, resulting in heightened dependence on tuition fees, government grant and other support. The implementation of tuition fees in 1998, signified a substantial transformation in the funding paradigm, highlighting student financial commitments to educational expenses (Brown & Carasso, 2013). The 21st century has been marked by the increased commercialisation of higher education. The 2004 Higher Education Act permitted universities to impose variable tuition fees, which were subsequently raised to £9,000 annually in 2012 and later modified according to inflation rates. This action ignited extensive discourse over the accessibility and affordability of higher education in the UK, especially for students from underprivileged backgrounds. Acknowledging the significance of higher education in mitigating social disparities, the UK government concurrently implemented initiatives to amplify inclusive participation (Scott, 2020). The UK's departure from the European Union in 2020 had gone ahead to present notable issues for the higher education sector, especially in the areas of research collaboration, student mobility, and funding. The termination of access to EU research initiatives like Horizon Europe has

compelled the research of alternative funding sources (Scott, 2020). Within the context of a marketized and corporatized university system, the research culture and capital of individual workers are integrated into the operation and management of the university. In 1992, The UK Department of Education and Employment presented data indicating that the number of females entering higher education as undergraduates has exceeded the number of males entering higher education for the first time in the country's history. This trend since 1990 has been consistent with young females achieving higher educational standards than their male counterparts at the undergraduate level in The UK (Fletcher *et al* 2007). Akobo and Stewart (2020) stated that organisations must consider the accommodation and social control of female employees by examining their cultural behaviours, values, knowledge, and identities. Moreover, females have made significant progress in entering highly specialized professional fields and have greatly disrupted, if not eliminated, the barrier to advancement in several professions, including the field of education (Forster, 2000).

According to Forster (2000), the examination of both the "new" (post-92) and "old" (pre-92) universities reveals that female academics continue to be inadequately represented at all levels within the academic hierarchy. Statistical data from the Hansard Society Commission Report (1990) indicates that females have endured long-standing prejudice in academics, with minimal changes in recent times (Forster, 2000). Additional research revealed that females are predominantly allocated to junior research roles and fixed-term contract grades (Forster, 2000). Furthermore, even after securing permanent positions, females tend to receive less promotion compared to men, resulting in their continued concentration in less senior positions (Forster, 2000). In the UK, female academics receive lower salaries than men in same organisation, and there are still observed socio-cultural and structural obstacles to female advancement in UK higher education (Forster, 2000). Significantly, the number of females employed in higher education institutions is steadily rising as gender equality and fairness progress (Burkinshaw & White, 2017). Research has indicated that a significant proportion of these females have various work-family challenges that manifest in many ways. The situations have been responsible for diminished levels of job satisfaction, productivity, and dedication among female researchers (Milledzi, Amponsah & Asamani, 2018). Consistent with existing literature on public patriarchy, females encounter work challenges associated with institutional misconceptions regarding female work-family issues due to the absence of gender-sensitive policies (Pacheco & Webber, 2016); absence of a flexible work environment (Bani-Melhem et al, 2018; Lambert, Qureshi, Klahm, Smith & Frank, 2016); excessive workload, not to mention social responsibilities (Macfarlane & Burg, 2019).

2.4 Position of females' employment in the HE Sector in Nigeria and the UK

There exist divergent perspectives between Nigeria and the UK on the status of female academics inside their respective universities. Cultural background, institutional status, and societal impact determine the position of females in academia. Both nations are confronted with gender equality

challenges in the higher education sector. In Nigeria, the progress of female academics is hindered by their minority status, cultural expectations, and deficient institutional support (Nwaka *et al*. 2016). However, the UK has witnessed progression in terms of female representation and support in work organisations, although gender inequality continues to exist particularly in leadership positions and in wage gap (Angervall, P. 2018). The effective resolution of these concerns necessitates continuous policy interventions, cultural transformation, and institutional dedication to gender equality in the UK and Nigeria. There exists a notable lack of female representation in the Nigerian higher education system, namely in high-ranking academic and administrative roles. Despite deliberate efforts to champion the cause of gender equality, prevailing cultural norms and institutional obstacles incessantly impede the progress of female academics. Females constitute a small percentage of the academic faculty especially in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields, where their involvement is notably scanty. In Nigeria, gender discrimination, limited access to funding and narrow prospects for promotion are common issues encountered by female academics (Ogbogu, 2011). Gender salary disparity is a concern in Nigeria's higher education sector. Aderemi & Alley (2019) examined gender pay disparities in Nigeria's government and private sectors and concluded that these disparities needed to be closed by encouraging females to work in positions that are conducive to their gender in the private sector.

Gendered regimes within institutions have been used to analyse females' status in the UK's higher education sector. A conceptual framework was created by Kaymakcioglu and Thomas (2024) to shed light on gendered regimes in higher education in the UK. The study emphasised the need for reform and awareness by highlighting the pervasive gendered inequities that still exist in these organisations. The proportion of females in higher education in the U.K. has shown considerable progress, as seen by the growing presence of female academics across all academic levels. However, gender inequalities persist, especially in high-ranking positions such as professorships; (Kaymakcioglu & Thomas, 2024). The UK higher education sector faces a notable gender pay disparity, where females earn lower salaries than their male colleagues in comparable positions (Chevalier, 2007). Although legal frameworks aim to promote equality, the existence of structural biases and the sluggishness of institutional reform contribute to this inequality. This research emphasised the necessity to address gendered inequities, the diversity of experiences, and the persistence of discriminatory practices in the higher education organisations in Nigeria and the UK.

2.5 Debates about WFC among female academics in Nigeria and the UK

The WFC poses a huge challenge for female academics in both the UK and Nigeria. Striking a balance between professional and family responsibilities can be daunting in academia given the conventional long work hours, demanding performance expectations and the need to achieve professional set goals

(Nwagbara, 2020). There is growing challenges faced by female academics in Nigeria when dealing with WFC. A study conducted by Adewumi & Duma (2021) examined the perspectives of female academics in Nigeria concerning WFC during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study revealed the specific hardships faced by female academics during the epidemic, including their increased workloads, absence of support systems, and constraints in managing childcare responsibilities. The present study contributes to the ongoing discourse on the necessary policies and procedures to support female academics in Nigeria who are encountering WFC. There is an established connection between the issue of institutionalized sexism and the challenges faced by Nigerian female academics in achieving a balance between their career and personal lives (Nwagbara, 2020). This study emphasizes the need to address gender inequalities and institute a more unbiased work environment for female academics in Nigeria.

Considerable attention has also been given to the discussions around WFC among female academics in the UK. A comparative study was conducted by Tammelin *et al*. (2016) to examine work schedules and WFC among dual earners in Finland, the Netherlands, and the UK. Analysis revealed a positive correlation between increased WFC and extended working hours as well as decreased job satisfaction in all nations. The study contributes to the ongoing discourse among female scholars in the UK regarding the impact of working conditions on WFC. Gender role and WFC have also been the subject of debate. A study conducted by Chen *et al*. (2022) examined the correlation between attitudes regarding gender roles and WFC. It indicated that individuals with more conventional beliefs on gender roles were more prone to experiencing conflicts between their professional and parenting responsibilities. This conversation underscores the need to challenge dominant gender norms and promote more egalitarian perspectives to support female academics in the UK who are managing both career and family responsibilities. Moreover, there has been debate over the role of organizational support and policies in successfully addressing WFC.

Balogun et al; 2018 examined how employment expectations and resources moderate the impact of WFC on employees. The study revealed a greater possibility of rise in WFC among employed mothers with highly demanding occupations and limited finances. The primary objective of this discourse is to examine the potential of resources and organizational support in mitigating WFC among female academics in the UK. The issue of WFC is a significant issue that impacts female academics in both The UK and Nigeria. Various factors such as the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, entrenched patriarchy, gender role attitudes, working conditions, and organisational support are examined in relation to this subject. These conversations underscore the need to implement institutional changes, cultural adaptations, and supportive laws to address WFC and promote work-life balance for female academics in both countries. According to Macfarlane & Burg (2019), any occupational activity that disrupts family responsibility of employee is expected to reduce their degrees of organizational

commitment. A further study confirmed this hypothesis by demonstrating that inadequate work-life balance among females has been identified as a factor contributing to decreased organizational commitment (Torp *et al*, 2018). The study conducted by Fontinha, Easton, and Van Laar (2019) reveals that female academics working in institutions in the UK experience decreased productivity due to the interference of overtime demands on their social lives. Furthermore, Doyle & Hind (1998) argue that burnout caused by excessive workload is expected to reduce the organizational commitment of female academics in the UK. Another study conducted by Ellinas, Fouad, & Byars-Winston (2018) stated that the challenges faced by female academics at higher education institutions in the UK result in increased employee turnover.

Based on cultural perspective, females are influenced by complex societal norms and ideas that govern their behaviour, which tend to them wanting to leave the job (Lips, 2016). In their study, Asiedu-Appiah *et al*. (2017) show that while turnover is associated with a wide range of factors, lack of work-life balance greatly raises the likelihood of turnover. Feminist perspective on inadequate remuneration has been linked to a strong intention to leave the firm due to unhealthy organizational relationships (Rubery & Hebson, 2018). Therefore, significant findings confirm that the turnover of female academics is closely linked to reduced organizational commitment and the high prevalence of work-family conflict (Kinman & Jones, 2008; O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005). Moreover, the implementation of family-friendly policies such as flexible working hours, parental leave, and on-site childcare has been shown to enhance organizational commitment and increase retention among female academics by demonstrating institutional support for work-life balance (Gappa, Austin, & Trice, 2010; Wise & Bond, 2003). Ackers & El-Sawad (2006) assert that the implementation of family-friendly operational rules in the higher education sector of the UK increased the rate of female staff retention. According to Eliyana, Ma'arif & Muzakki (2019), the implementation of flexible terms, such as guaranteed paid maternity leave, by the university had the potential to enhance employee retention among female staff. Significantly, the study conducted by Pedersen & Minnotte (2017) specifically examined the consequences of family-friendly policies in the educational sector of the UK. This study demonstrates that institutions that prioritise the incorporation of females' desires and requirements in their operations are more likely to maintain their employees. The range of such endeavours is somewhat extensive including flexible operating hours. Furthermore, there is a reported increase in the preference for remote working among female academic staff due to its ability to help them manage their family obligations (Alsulami *et al* 2022)

2.6 Government Policies aimed at supporting working parents in Nigeria and the UK

Policies aim at supporting working family women in Nigeria and the UK is a right step towards resolving gender imbalance in public and private sector organisations, most importantly the issues that relate to family. The policies are to mitigate WFC for the improvement of employee better job

satisfaction and organisational commitment. Despite the efforts to develop and implement these policies, challenges persist in the proper implementation and maintaining these measures (Pedersen & Minnotte 2017). Policies are formulated and executed with attention to cultural norms, institutional work policy, and national guide on labour rules (Pedersen & Minnotte 2017).

In Nigeria, the government has put in place measures such as the National Policy on Gender in Education, to promote gender equality in both education and employment (Ejumudo, 2013). However, the effectiveness of this policy is impacted by societal expectations that classify women as responsible for taking care of the home (Ejumudo, 2013). Although maternity leave is legally binding in all organizations in Nigeria, the implementation of the policy by various universities in Nigeria has been individualised, which often result in significant difficulties and challenges for female academics particularly in the private universities (Ohia *et al*., 2016). The rigid work hours arrangements in most organizations in Nigeria promotes the challenges experienced by working women in Nigeria. These women most times must manage the situation alongside household responsibilities (Adisa *et al*., 2016). According to Nigeria's National Policy on Education, the implementation of family-friendly policy is very important in projecting work-life balance among the employees (Skinner & Chapman 2013). The implementation of the family-friendly policy in universities in Nigeria has been found to be limited due to poor enforcement and insufficient funding. The private institution as a commercial organization have financial constrains hence focus on revenue generation than implementing family focus policies that could hinder the organization objective (Masum *et al*., 2015). The lack of implementation of these policies could be due to the absence of government enforcement and regulatory supervision in private universities in Nigeria (Jacob *et al*., 2021).

The UK government has work policies that support working parents to have work life balance (Lewis & Campbell, 2008). The UK maternity leave policy allows females to have a maximum of 52 weeks of leave with payment, and this enable employee mother not to return to work after childbirth (Lewis & Campbell, 2008).. Also, the implementation of shared parental leave allows both parents to jointly carry out childcare responsibilities as men are also entitled to paternity leave (Lewis & Campbell, 2008)..

2.7 Theoretical Framework

To explore WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria, intersectional feminist theory is a cohesive and robust theoretical framework that helped to examine how gender, class, race and nationality shaped lived experiences and access to resources by the female academics. Applying Sylvia Walby's theory enables deep understanding of how sociocultural expectations and structural inequalities affects female academics in both countries. African feminist perspectives were also used to give all-encompassing view on WFC in female academics in the UK and Nigeria. African feminist

theory rejects monolithic feminist model often related to Western feminist model. The theory emphasized on context, socioeconomic and community dynamics (Amadiume, 2015; Oyěwùmí, 1997). By applying Walby's theoretical concepts of patriarchy and gender regimes with critiques from feminist intersectional and African feminist perspectives, this thesis synthesised the cross-cultural comparisons while acknowledging the distinct realities of female academics in both countries.

2.7.1 Sylvia Walby's feminism theory

This research used Sylvia Walby's feminist theory as the guide for analysing work family conflict among female academics in both the UK and Nigeria. Walby (1990) presents patriarchy as a system of social structures in which men dominate, exploit and oppress women. She offers a multidimensional lens to analyse the institutionalised inequalities that contribute to WFC using her six-dimensional model of patriarchal relations in household, the state, paid work, sexuality, cultural institutions and violence. Walby's work look beyond individualistic explanation of gender inequality by stating the influence of institutional structures and cultural expectations on gendered divisions of labour across both the private and public sectors. In the UK, gendered divisions in labour, motherhood responsibilities and limited institutional backing for women illustrate the consistent patriarchal structures in academia (Acker, 1988), while in Nigeria, deeply rooted patriarchal norms, traditional believe and poor resourced institutional support exacerbated the challenges of WFC experienced by female academics (Aluko , 2015). Walby's integration of patriarchy with capitalism shows a persuasive critique of how women's unpaid domestic duties subsidise capitalist production, while also restricting their access to economic and professional advancement (Walby, 2013). In both countries, academic institutions operate capitalist systems that value consistent availability and high output practises that disadvantage women, especially mothers, who must juggle domestic caregiving and academic responsibilities (Aluko, 2009). Walby's theory of private and public patriarchy (1990) represents a structuralist feminist framework intended at providing a universal model for understanding how patriarchal structures are perpetuated and reproduced across different societies. Her model distinguishes between private patriarchy, found in the household and family, and public patriarchy, that operates through formal institutions such as the workplace and the state (Walby, 1990; Abbott, Wallace, & Tyler, 2005). This theoretical clarity allowed Walby to highlight the shifting but persistent nature of gendered power relations in both domestic and institutional contexts. The universality of Walby's structuralist framework is valuable in cross-cultural comparisons, because it reveals both shared and context-specific dimensions of WFC. However, she applied this across historical periods mainly in Europe.

The UK feminists focused on formal workplace and institutional policies while African and Nigerian feminists basically emphasised the interplay of colonial legacies, culture and religion in shaping women lived WFC experience (Aina, 1998). Feminists from Global South, such as Imas and Garcia-

Lorenzo (2023), call for an expansion of Walby's theory to include religious believe and community perspective often overlooked in Global North analyses. The materialist aspect of feminist theory, as developed by Walby (1990) and others such as Kramarae (1992), expressed that gender oppression is structurally embedded in economic systems. In Nigeria, where empirical data is limited, scholars have noted that women are often channelled towards low-paying academic roles and are burdened with unpaid domestic caregiving responsibilities (Aina, 1998). These dual responsibilities result in what DeCruise (2020) famously termed the "second shift," limiting women career progression and perpetuating their economic dependency.

Walby's theory also touched on radical and postmodern feminist perspectives. While radical feminists such as Firestone (1972) argue that women's oppression is entrenched in reproductive duties, postmodern feminists shift attention to the discussion on construction of gender and position of language in validating inequality (Walby, 2016). Walby (2020) critiques these approaches for not looking at institutional structures and the material realities that sustain gender hierarchies, particularly in relation to family system and the economic. In Nigeria, WFC is exacerbated by patriarchal norms, state neglect and religious ideologies. African postcolonial feminist as Aina (1998) emphasized how colonialism and patriarchy created entrenched gender inequalities. Unlike the UK, where gender equality is at least formally enshrined in workplace policies, Nigerian institutions frequently lack the regulatory frameworks and cultural will to support female academics. Although Walby makes a convincing case for patriarchal structures of the society, she was unable to explain why men still dominate women in the present day.

2.7.1.1 Critiquing Sylvia Walby's Theory of Gender Regimes and Structuralist Feminist Approach

Sylvia Walby's structuralist feminist framework, particularly her theory of gender regimes, provided a compelling platform for analysing systemic gender inequalities. This is useful for analysing the WFC experienced by female academics in the UK and Nigeria. Her construction of patriarchy and its institutional role has been widely influential. However, critical review of her theory shows some limitations in the context of this discussion, and it has been evident when applying her theory to comparative socio-cultural contexts like Nigeria and the UK. Evaluating the key critiques of Walby's work, consider her responses to these critiques, and positioning them in relation to this research, this research was able to contribute to a more contextually grounded, intersectionally informed, and globally attuned feminist framework. The following were the basic areas of Walby's critique.

2.7.1.1.1 Rigidity in Early Patriarchal Model

Walby's (1990) earlier theory conceptualised patriarchy as a relatively fixed system that composed of six key structures: paid work, household production, the state, male violence, sexuality, and culture. While this structure show clarity between private and public patriarchal model, it lacked historical

dynamism. Anthias (1998), argued that this rigid system underestimated the fluidity of gender relations and the transformative potential of social movements, legal reforms, and economic challenges. The static nature of the model inhibited its capacity to explain temporal shifts in gendered power dynamics.

In response, Walby incorporated historical transformation in her later work through the concept of gender regimes (Walby, 2020). She said "Gender regimes are the patterning of gender relations in particular institutions. This revision distinguished between private and public patriarchy, which allow for the analysis of transitional and non-linear trajectories in gendered institutional set up. However, Walby's review still maintained some limitations when applied cross-nationally. In analysing WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria, this research views the historical effects such as the legacies of colonialism, religion and socio-economic reforms to distinguish between public and private patriarchy norms. In Nigeria, for example, the co-existence of traditional household norms and evolving institutional structures generates hybrid gender regimes that are not easily captured by Walby's binary framework.

2.7.1.1.2 Insufficient Engagement with Intersectionality

An important gap in Walby's theory lies in the limited engagement with intersectionality. Though Walby centralised gender as a key aspect of inequality, she initially treated it in isolation from other intersection such as class, race, sexuality, ethnicity, and migration. However, Davis (2014), underscore that gender cannot be dissociated from these intersecting systems of power. Although Walby (2007) later introduced the idea of "mutually shaping regimes of inequality," this remained conceptually underdeveloped compared to the richer analytical apparatus of intersectional and postcolonial feminism. Her framework still view gender as a universal category, lacking the nuance necessary to address the heterogeneity of women's experiences.

In contexts like the UK, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) female academics face compounded racial and gendered exclusions (Stockfelt, 2018). Similarly, in Nigeria, WFC is shaped by intersecting ethnic, religious, and socio-economic structures (Aina, 1998). This research in addition to Walby theory adopts African feminism as an explicitly intersectional lens to expand the discussion on WFC, accounting for the multifaceted realities that influence female academic and domestic live experiences in the UK and Nigeria.

2.7.1.1.3 Eurocentrism and Limited Applicability to the Global South

Another important critique of Walby's work is its clear Eurocentrism. Her theoretical constructs were developed mainly within the context of Western liberal democracies and assume linear trajectories of gender reform based on Euro-American models. Feminist scholars from the Global South have criticised this as marginalising non-Western epistemologies, socio-historical specificities and postcolonial traditions (Sprecher, 2011). In Nigeria, gender relations are shaped by contemporary state

and institutional arrangements and layered influences such as precolonial norms, colonial impositions, and current global capitalist structures. The extended family, informal labour economies, and religious institutions play a significant and active role in shaping women lived experiences, particularly in non-western contexts dimensions that Walby's original model of patriarchy does not fully theorise (Oyěwùmí, 1997). While Walby (1990) offered a structuralist framework centred on Western institutional arrangements, her model does not adequately account for the intersection of culture, kinship systems, and religion, which are central to understanding gendered power relations in many parts of the Global South. Applying her gender regime theory in Nigeria thus requires significant modification to accommodate these culturally embedded structures. This study contributes to this endeavour by grounding feminist theory in locally specific practices and epistemologies hence a good coverage of the gap in Global south.

2.7.1.1.4 Neglect of Colonial and Postcolonial Legacies

Walby's work fails to fully engage with the enduring impact of colonialism on gender regimes in postcolonial societies like Nigeria. Oyěwùmí (1997) and Aina (1998) show how colonialism disrupted indigenous gender systems, replacing them with Western patriarchal structures that persist in contemporary legal, political, and educational systems. In Nigeria, these legacies manifest in gender-biased legal dualisms, educational disparities, and structural exclusions within academia. This research incorporates a postcolonial feminist analysis to expose the historical continuities that shape current WFC experiences. Walby's omission of colonial legacies limits her framework's explanatory power in these contexts.

2.7.1.1.5 Binary Conceptualisation of Gender

Walby's structuralist model relies heavily on a binary male/female conception of gender, a stance increasingly challenged by contemporary feminist theorists. Judith Butler's (2015) theory of gender performativity, for example, critiques essentialist understandings of gender and instead highlights its constructed, fluid, and performative nature. Although Walby later acknowledged the social construction of gender, her model remains constrained by binary assumptions. This limits its utility in contexts where non-binary and LGBTQ+ individuals face unique institutional exclusions, including in academic spaces. While this study recognised cisgender female academics, it advocates for the inclusion of non-binary perspectives in future research on WFC.

2.7.1.1.6 Underestimation of Female Agency

Walby's structuralist orientation has also been critiqued for underestimating female agency. Her earlier work often presents women as passive subjects shaped by patriarchal institutions. Feminist scholars like Acker (1988) and Anthias (1998) stress the importance of recognising women as active agents who resist, negotiate, and transform oppressive structures. Walby later introduced a more dialectical

understanding of agency and structure, acknowledging that women operate within and against gender regimes. However, her analysis of agency remains underdeveloped, particularly in Global South contexts where everyday acts of resistance and adaptation which are crucial survival strategies for women. This research addresses this shortcoming by highlighting the strategic, creative and collective responses of female academics to WFC in Nigeria and the UK. It integrates structural constraints with individual and collective agency to offer a more holistic understanding.

2.7.1.1.7 Limited Engagement with Feminist Media, Cultural Politics, and the Third Wave

Walby's conceptualisation of feminism's future remains firmly anchored in macro-level structural change particularly through the apparatus of civil society, the state, and transnational governance (Walby, 2011). While this reflects her social-democratic orientation, it largely overlooks the increasingly significant role of media, cultural politics, and digital feminist practices in shaping contemporary feminist discourse. Walby gives limited attention to the rise of third-wave feminism, which foregrounds issues of identity, representation, and intersectionality within popular culture and everyday life. Moreover, her analysis tends to conflate third-wave feminism with post feminism, without fully acknowledging post feminism as a complex cultural formation that both appropriates and displaces feminist ideals (Budgeon, 2011). This conceptual blurring downplays the political significance of mediated expressions of feminism such as online activism, body positivity movements, and critiques of neoliberal femininity thus underestimating the cultural dimensions through which gender ideologies are reproduced and contested in the contemporary era.

2.7.1.2 Summary of Sylvia Walby's Critique

In a Contextually grounded and inclusive Feminist Framework for WFC in female academics in the UK and Nigeria, Walby's theory of gender regimes remains a foundational contribution to this research context. However, this study integrated the perspectives in constructing a feminist framework that is analytically rigorous, empirically grounded, and attuned to local and global complexities. The reworking of Walby's theory considering these critiques assist in providing a richer understanding of WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria, it also contributes to broader debates about the direction of contemporary feminist thought.

2.7.2 African Feminist Theory

African feminist critically engaged with Western feminist frameworks, particularly as they universalize gendered experiences without considering the cultural, historical and social contexts of African societies. Some scholars argue that colonialism introduced rigid gender binaries and Western patriarchal structures, which disrupted pre-existing, more fluid and complementary gender relations in many African and Indigenous societies (Oyěwùmí, 1997; Amadiume, 1987; Lugones, 2007). These imposed frameworks replaced more flexible and often non-binary systems of social organization,

leading to the institutionalisation of western gender grading and the marginalisation of women's roles and status in postcolonial contexts. African feminists challenged some of these assumptions and do not assume that patriarchy operates in same way across different societies. They point to the importance of colonialism in introducing gender binaries and imposing western gender categories and concepts of patriarchy on the global south. Oyewumi (1997) contends that in precolonial Yoruba society, social organization was based on seniority and lineage rather than gender. She argues that the imposition of western gender categories during colonialism redefined social roles, subordinating women and restructuring societal hierarchies along gendered lines. Amadiume (1987) research on the Igbo society reveals that gender roles were historically flexible, with instances of women assuming roles typically associated with men, such as "female husbands" or "male daughters," indicating a non-binary understanding of gender (see 2.2; Gender Roles in Nigeria).

African feminists stress the importance of community, family, and collaboration in their activism. These concepts are integral to African societies and are seen as avenues for collective empowerment rather than individualistic pursuits. For instance, Opara (2024) stated that negotiation and compromise are strategies employed by African women to navigate patriarchal norms, emphasizing the role of community and relational dynamics in feminist praxis. The challenges such as domestic responsibilities, limited educational achievements, and discriminatory wage policies are everyday challenges that underscore the need for feminist approaches that are attuned to the lived realities of African women. These principles challenge the applicability of Western feminist models, such as Walby's gender regime theory, in African contexts. While Walby's framework provides insights into structural gender inequalities, it may not fully capture the complexities of African societies, where gender roles are often fluid and influenced by a multitude of intersecting factors. Therefore, incorporating African feminist perspectives is crucial for a more nuanced understanding of gender dynamics, particularly in comparative studies involving countries like Nigeria and the UK.

2.7.2.1 Criticisms of African Feminism

Though African feminism attempted to address the Eurocentric feminist theories in the issues of feminism and African context by emphasizing contextual, cultural, and historical specificities, it is not without its criticisms. A major critique is in the over emphasising the notion of community, family, and solidarity as central to African feminist thought. Even though these cultural values such as kinship obligations, traditional belief and communalism are foundational within many African societies like Nigeria, they can simultaneously function as structures that perpetuate gendered labour exploitation, particularly by normalising women's unpaid domestic and caregiving roles (Amadiume, 1987; Nnaemeka, 2004). Women's unpaid or underpaid domestic and caregiving labour continues to sustain the family institution, often without adequate recognition or compensation (Nnaemeka, 2004). In this

way, appeals to solidarity and community may obscure the asymmetrical power relations that exist within these egalitarian spaces.

African feminist discourses have also been critiqued for underemphasizing intra-community violence and gender-based oppression that are not directly attributable to colonial legacies. Although colonialism introduced rigid gender binaries and reinforced patriarchal norms (Oyěwùmí, 1997), not all forms of gender-based violence or marginalization can be traced solely to colonial histories. Patriarchy in many African societies predates colonial rule and has evolved in ways that are both independent of and intertwined with colonial structures (Lewis & Simpson, 2017). Therefore, a more nuanced understanding of local patriarchies and internal gender hierarchies is essential for a comprehensive feminist analysis required for WFC in female academics in Nigeria.

The expansion of educational opportunities for female in Nigeria, including increased representation in universities, may appear as signs of progress. However, these institutions most times promotes gendered hierarchies under the guise of meritocracy and equality (Nnaemeka, 2004). Females in academia frequently encounter the dual burdens of work duties and domestic responsibilities, a dynamic intensified by public and private patriarchal expectations (Docka-Filipek *et al*, 2021). This duality is often exploited by neoliberal institutions, which benefit from women's willingness to balance caregiving with career progression, without providing structural support for work–life balance (Aluko, 2009).

While African feminism emphasised on contextual analysis, it must also contend with contemporary forces of global capitalism and neoliberal governance. These forces shape women's lives through exploitative labour conditions, austerity measures, and precarious employment, all of which disproportionately affect women (Federici, 2012). Therefore, it is necessary to complement African feminist theories with intersectional political economy frameworks that can better account for both local and global structures of gendered exploitation.

2.7.3 Synthesising of African and Western feminist theories（Contextual Feminist Theory of WFC)

The use of Sylvia Walby and Africa feminism integrated framework tend to address the limitations of both universalising Western structural feminism and romanticised notions of community in African feminism. It emphasises that multiple patriarchies exist across both Global North and Global South contexts, that intersectionality is essential, and that female agency and cultural context need to be at the centre of any analysis of WFC. By combining Walby's structural insights with African feminist emphasis on history, culture, and pragmatism, this framework offers a more flexible, pluralistic, and contextually grounded approach to feminist theorising in comparative research.

2.7.4 Summary

This chapter has reviewed the literature on WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria, developed through the theoretical framework of Sylvia Walby's gender regime theory and African feminism. As female academics in both national contexts face noted challenges in balancing their dual roles at work and home, the sources, manifestations, and coping strategies for WFC differ due to cultural and traditional specificities.

In the UK, WFC is largely shaped by organisational factors such as limited representation at the senior level, disproportionate application of family friendly policy and expected caregiving responsibilities (O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005). These are reflective of Walby's notion of public and private patriarchy. Meanwhile, in Nigeria, the combination of socio-cultural norms, institutional challenges and rooted patriarchal family structures leads to a more complex entanglement of public and private patriarchy (Aina, 1998). African feminist theory provides a rich and culturally resonant framework for understanding how Nigerian women use support network and show resilience in the face of WFC.

This comparative study highlights the critical need for context-sensitive policy responses. For the UK, interventions might include organisational reforms such as gender-sensitive tenure policies and better support for childcare. In Nigeria, effective strategies must also account for cultural dimensions, community dynamics, and normative expectations around femininity and motherhood.

By integrating Western and African feminist theories and comparing Global North and South contexts, this research contributes to literature by countering the Eurocentric limitation of Walby's theory, together with African feminism, these theories allowed for a contextual, intersectional understanding of WFC on gender and academic labour. It calls for a more inclusive and globally responsive reforms that recognises diverse experiences and fosters equitable academic environments for women worldwide.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses a critical component of the research framework outlined in four different sections. The first section talked about the philosophical foundations that justifies the study through the provision of an exhaustive narration of the epistemological and ontological bases that pilot the research approach. This is followed by a comprehensive discussion of the methodology and methods used for the data collection including my positionality, self-awareness and the power structure ingrained in the interview session. The third section of this chapter centres on an encompassing discussion of the ethical considerations associated with the study, as well as the limitations of the methodological approach used and ended with a summary.

3.1 Philosophical Foundations

According to Saunders and Thornhill (2009), a comprehensive philosophical framework for the understanding of methodical design of research procedures requires the following steps: Research philosophy, Research approach and strategy, and Time horizon. This pattern is widely acknowledged and used across various disciplines due to its ability in assisting researchers develop integrated and methodologically meticulous studies (Lewis, 2015).

3.1.1 The Research Philosophies

Ontology and epistemology are vital to carving the methodological direction of social science research. Ontology examines the nature of reality whether it is objectively external or subjectively constructed (Gill & Johnson, 2010). This study mainly adopts a subjectivist ontology positing that reality is socially constructed and context dependent. Epistemology on the other hand explores the nature and limits of knowledge, addressing how knowledge is gained and substantiated (Gill &Johnson, 2010). In addition to the interpretivist epistemology which emphasizes on comprehending the subjective interpretation that individuals assign to their experiences, this study also used positivist approach to collect objective data, therefore mix-method case study approach was employed to gather both subjective and objective views of the participants. Such epistemological position is particularly appropriate for exploratory social science research, as it helps achieve representation to some extent whilst prioritizes the complexities of human perception and interaction (Holden & Lynch, 2004). This perspective aligns with this study's aim to explore WFC among female academics within the unique socio-cultural contexts of Nigeria and the UK.

3.1.1.1 Justification for Positivism and Interpretivism

Positivism is based on the epistemological premise that social reality can be objectively observed, quantified, and evaluated (Maksimovic & Evtimov, 2023). This research seeks for participants

contribution to WFC live experiences through questionnaire which was distributed as survey without influencing or interfering in the research process (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2017). Positivism's merits include clarity, precision, rigour, standardisation, and the potential for generalisability (Ernest, 1994). However, it is limited in its capacity to consider unpredictable human behaviours which includes emotional expression and the interpretations of individuals experiences which could be subjective (Creswell, 2017). Positivism most times perceives individual as natural phenomenon, overlooking their definitive characteristics (Ernest, 1994), and its measurement methodologies which sometimes conflict and detached from practical situations (Bryman, 2008). Given the subjective and context-specific nature of WFC, interviewing some of the participants after the survey, facilitates an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of female academics in Nigeria and the UK. Unlike the survey (positivism) which prioritises objectivity and quantifiable outcomes, the interview (interpretivism) allows for exploration of the socio-cultural and organizational dynamics that influence WFC. Interpretivism allows individuals' ideological and cultural belief to shape their understanding of the reality (Hussain, Elyas, & Nasseef, 2013). Interpretivist researchers acknowledge their essential role in the research process (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). Interpretivist interpretations are situated within established theories and literature to assist better understanding of what is researched (Bryman, 2008; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). However, interpretivism has its limitations. The research phenomenon is sometimes exaggerated by individual opinion, and it seems to diminish the significance of generalisability (Potter, 1996).

3.1.2 Research Approach and Strategy

According to Saunders et al. (2019), research strategies may follow three principal orientations:

- ➢ **Mono-method**: Relies exclusively on either qualitative or quantitative data collection and analysis.

- ➢ **Multi-method**: Employs more than one method (qualitative or quantitative) without integrating the datasets, allowing for independent analysis of each component.

- ➢ **Mixed method**: Involves collecting, analysing, and integrating both qualitative and quantitative data to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

This research adopts a mixed-methods case study design, combining supplementary quantitative data (survey) with qualitative (interview) data, in line with the research's philosophical grounding, objectives, and analytical demands. The aim and objective of this study is to understand how female academics in both the UK and Nigeria experience and negotiate WFC, with a particular emphasis on

their agency in diverse institutional and cultural settings. This necessitated the integration of mix-method to allow for both depth and breadth of understanding.

Employing a mixed-method design is not simply a pragmatic choice but is theoretically and analytically justified. Yin (2003) and Stake (2006) argue that case study approach can accommodate a variety of data sources and methods to produce a nuanced and multi-faceted understanding of a phenomenon. By combining in-depth qualitative interview with broader survey data and documentary analysis, this research captures both individual agency and structural context, aligning with the theoretical framework that draws from Sylvia Walby's gender regime theory and African feminist thought (Aina, 1998; Walby, 2004; Nnaemeka, 2004). This methodological pluralism reflects the complexity of gender relations in academia, which are shaped not only by institutional norms and national policy frameworks but also by women's own interpretations, strategies, and lived experiences. As such, the mixed-methods case study design enhances the validity, depth, and comparative robustness of the study, providing a richer account of how WFC is understood and managed in distinct cultural and institutional environments. The mixed method design is particularly suitable for generating in-depth findings that could provide empirical data for analysis and reports. Case studies are particularly suited for researching complex phenomena within real-world contexts (Yvonne Feilze, 2010). This approach enables the collection of rich, contextual data from participants while minimizing the researcher's influence on their responses. The case study primary strength is in its ability to incorporate triangulation of data collected (Yin, 2009), enabling evaluation of a phenomenon from multiple perspectives through different data collection methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2008). Data triangulation enables deeper understanding of emerging themes within a study, and it amplifies the reliability and validity of research findings through the consolidation of multiple sources of evidence, thereby corroborating results (Yin, 2013).

3.1.2.1 Rationale for Mix-Method Case Study

A critical decision in case study design involves choosing between a single case and a mix-method case approach (Yin, 2003). Given this research objectives, a mix-method case study was deemed most appropriate for gaining analytical insights into contemporary WFC phenomena in real-life contexts (Green, Camilli, & Elmore, 2012). This design leverages data from four universities in Nigeria and the UK to allow for greater variability and robustness. The rationale for employing a mix-method case study in this research includes the following:

1. To Mitigation the Limitation of Single-Case: A single case has been criticized for its limited illustration within a given context. Mix-method case approach overcomes this limitation by incorporating data from multiple contexts (Thomas, 2011).

2. Improve Reliability and Robustness: Data gathered from multiple cases (four universities from Nigeria and the UK) is more captivating as its present better reliability, thereby strengthening the overall study (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). This approach enables data triangulation, allowing for the confirmation of the findings across different data sources (Donkoh & Mensah, 2023).

3. Comparative Crosstab Analysis: A mix-method, multiple case study enables meaningful comparisons between case study centres for the identification of patterns of differences and similarities across the four case universities.

4. Reduce Bias: Collecting data across different institutions context reduces the chances for research bias coming from the researcher's personal and professional experiences.

3.1.2.2 Inductive and Deductive Approaches

In this study, both inductive and deductive reasoning strategies were employed to underpin the research methodology, reflecting a pragmatic approach to theory development and data interpretation within WFC research. The inductive approach is basically associated with exploratory inquiries, ii is usually appropriate in contexts where existing theoretical frameworks are either insufficient or underdeveloped to explain the complexity of the phenomena under investigation (Stake, 1995; Thomas, 2006). Inductive approach facilitates the development of patterns, categories, and conceptual insights directly from the empirical data, thus enabling the construction of ideal theoretical understandings grounded in participants lived experiences (Charmaz, 2014). In this study, the inductive process was particularly instrumental in capturing the nuanced and gendered dynamics of work–family interplay, drawing upon feminist theoretical orientations to frame and interpret participants' narratives. This allowed for the co-construction of meaning between the researcher and participants, aligning with interpretivist paradigms often used in WFC research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Conversely, the deductive approach was also integrated to assess the applicability and explanatory power of existing WFC theories and constructs (Ashforth et al., 2000) within the specific sociocultural context of the study. This approach enabled the research to test, refine, and extend established theoretical propositions by juxtaposing them with empirical insights.

The combination of inductive and deductive approaches reflects a methodological triangulation that enhances the depth, credibility, and theoretical contribution of the study, ensuring for both data-driven discovery and theory-informed validation (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

3.1.2.3 Selection of the Four Case Universities

The primary aim of this case studies is to explore the diversities and dynamics of the different case universities across the UK and Nigeria. This research involved the selection of four universities, two from Nigeria and two from the UK, using some certain criteria that aligned with the study's objectives.

In Nigeria, one government funded university and one privately funded university both from same geographical location were selected. Similarly, in the UK, the selection included one pre-92 university and one post-92 university, both situated within the same geographical region to ensure contextual comparability, as shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 (Summary of institution profile)

Type of University	Government (Case Study 1)	Private University (Case Study 2)	Pre-92 University (Case Study 3)	Post-92 University (Case Study 4)
Country	Nigeria (Africa)	Nigeria (Africa)	The UK (Europe)	The UK (Europe)
Geographical Location	South-South Region	South-South Region	Yorkshire	Yorkshire
Funding	Nigerian Government	Nigerian Private Investors	Government Funding Student Tuition Fees Endowments and Philanthropy Commercial Income Competitive Grants EU and International Funding	Government Funding Student Tuition Fees Commercial Income. Competitive Research Grants Regional Development Funding

3.1.2.4 Access to the Case Study Universities

Access to the four selected universities was facilitated through gatekeepers and professional networks in both countries. In Nigeria, designated gatekeepers coordinated survey schedules and interview arrangements while in the UK, my academic affiliations and relationship with some academic staff in a post-92 university enabled my access to both the pre-92 university and post-92 university. Throughout this research, I maintained a neutral position to preserve the integrity of the data and mitigate potential role duality concerns.

3.1.3 Time Horizon

This an important part in the research design framework outlined in the "Research Onion" developed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019). It refers to the temporal dimension that the research is conducted and provides a framework for deciding whether the study examines a time or a process of change over time. Saunders et al. (2019) distinguish between two principal types of time horizons,

cross-sectional and longitudinal. A cross-sectional time horizon involves the collection of data at a single point in time or over a short duration, to study a particular phenomenon as it exists in each moment (Bryman, 2016). It is associated with surveys or semi-structured interviews and used to test relationships between variables or explore perceptions at one time. This research used cross-sectional time horizon. Longitudinal Time Horizon involves collecting data from the same subjects over an extended period.

3.2 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The primary data collection methods used included the collection of data from university document, surveys, and semi-structured one-on-one interviews. These tools were used to collect data from female academics across all career stages in the selected universities in Nigeria and the UK. The data collection process was conducted sequentially, comprising the following steps:

i. University Documents

ii. The use of Survey.

iii. In-depth interviews of volunteer participants.

3.2.1 University Documentary

To provide insight foundation knowledge into the institutional policies that influence the work-family dynamics of female academics in Nigeria and the UK, the universities profile documents were sourced. Information about work policies was sourced from the four universities websites and institutional documentations. In Nigeria I used my established contact at the case universities to evaluate and appoint a gatekeeper (from the government university) who could assist in the data collection from the two Nigerian universities. The appointment was based on the gatekeeper's established connections with the two Nigerian case universities. In the UK, the gatekeeper used was appointed through the contacts I made during my master's program at a post-92 university in the UK. The gatekeepers were instrumental in my uncovering key internal insights in the four universities beyond selection of departments and participants for the research. The four case universities published on their websites, various work policies which included diversity, equality and flexible working policies. However, the level of the policies application, the effectiveness of the policies experienced by female academics requires further investigation. The possible gap between the various universities policies and practice is a common concern in higher education institutions (Bagilhole & White, 2011). Even though institutional documents provided valuable insights into the various universities policies, they are often drafted for the universities good image hence may not accurately reflect actual practices (Bell & Bryman, 2007). The document analysis is challenged by limited availability and accessibility of documents. The possibility for discrepancies between policy and implementation in the universities cannot be overlooked. To mitigate these limitations, the document analysis was supported with survey

and interview of female academics in each university to provide contextual understanding of WFC issues.

3.2.2 The survey

The survey offered structured, standardised instruments that allow for the collection of comparable, quantifiable data from a larger sample. The survey was designed to assess broad participants in WFC which (the interview in) qualitative method cannot provide. The survey contributed to the complementary layer of evidence, helping to contextualise the quantitative findings and explore variations across the national and institutions settings to arrive at the discourse around gender and work-life balance. Data collected adds a contextual and institutional dimension to the analysis, further illuminating the structural landscape in which female academics operate.

An online survey was administered via Qualtrics, a widely used platform for academic survey. Questions for participants was drafted into questionnaire (Stone, 1993) and were distributed to female academics at the four case universities using created survey links on Qualtrics and broadcasted to participants through emails provided by the gatekeepers. The survey targeted female academics in different departments and faculties. Selected participants were based on employment history/career level and individual with family care responsibilities. These participants were considered well-positioned to provide experience view about WFC due to their dual responsibilities at work and home. This research survey initially had 81 respondents who gave their consent, however, 1 respondent failed to continue hence the survey got responses from 80 participant.

In Nigeria, 32 respondents from a government university and 9 respondents from a private university took part in the survey while in the UK, 33 respondents from a pre-92 university, and 12 respondents from a post-1992 university did the survey. The use of Qualtrics offered several benefits but also with its limitations. The online survey help reduce potential costs associated with printing, postage, and data entry. It also simplifies and organises the data collection and processing, allowing for quicker turnaround times (Fleming & Bowden, 2009). The software enables participants to complete the survey at their convenience, thereby encouraging the increase in response rates and accommodating diverse opinion (Zhang *et al.*, 1999). Qualtrics allow for the research anonymity which reduced bias and encourage more honest responses, particularly on sensitive topics, due to the anonymity (Miller *et al.*, 2020). However, the online survey also presents with some challenges. Participants access to the online Qualtrics and limited familiarity with digital tools varies, particularly participants in Nigeria where telecommunication network and IT development are epileptic which could affect the generalizability of results (Couper & Miller, 2008). It was observed that without my supervision, some participants misinterpreted one or two questions and therefore provided less thoughtful responses which impacted data reliability in some question areas. The questions that requires deeper explanation or that were not well answered in the survey were taken to the interview session for in depth responses.

3.2.3. The interview

Participants for this research interview were recruited from the survey. At the end part of the questionnaire for the survey, participants were asked to volunteer for the interview if interested in taking part. The two Nigerian universities and one of the UK (post-92) university had six volunteer participants each while one of the UK (pre-92) university had only two volunteer participants who took part in the interview. After collating the volunteers list from the survey, participants were contacted, the interview time and venue were set and agreed with each volunteer. During the interview, the interviewees were reminded of their right to discontinue the interview at any point and about the anonymous nature of the interview. The interviews explored female academics' experiences with WFC in relation to sources of their conflicts, the impact on their job satisfaction and commitment. The participants were interviewed face to face in the various university's premises. Each interview was recorded through an audio recorder and was later transcribed using Teams transcription software.

3.2.3.1 Power Dynamics in the Interview

Interview is a recognized method in qualitative research for gathering detailed data (Nunkoosing, 2005). As Kvale (1983) explains, interviews do not only provide opinionated information, but it is also meant to capture participants lived experiences and their perception of the issue being researched. However, interviews most times involve imbalance power dynamic in which the interviewer may hold interpretative authority over the interaction session (Kvale, 2006). As a male researcher interviewing female academics in the UK and Nigeria on WFC, I was aware of the possibility of perceived power imbalances. To mitigate these dynamics, I adopted measures such as listening skills and allowing for the interviewees to freely express themselves to downplay my perceived positional authority in the interview session. This allowed for the participants to express themselves freely, preventing time constraints, and ensuring that questions were answered without any influence. Tang (2002) work on female interviewer-interviewee dynamics, highlighted how differences in social, cultural, and personal backgrounds can shape power relations during interviews. In Nigeria, the female academics initially viewed me, a male researcher as a component of the patriarchy norm being researched and were not fully comfortable to discuss the gender relation issues. This was managed as I assured them that as a researcher, I maintain unbiased position in all issues being investigated. In the UK, female academics positioned me as simply a PhD student who is less experienced in research than themselves. This was well managed with my clear and simple questions.

The concerns made me respect individual cultural presentation during the interview. Similarly, MacLean & Mosley (2013) stated that power dynamics in an interview is determined by the interviewer and the interviewee ability to control and restrained each other's communication and contributions throughout the interview session. In view of this notion, I was able to implement

seamless communication without any bias. These dynamics were considered throughout the interviews, with my efforts to ensure an egalitarian approach that respected participants' perspectives.

3.2.3.2 My Positionality and Reflexivity

In an interview, the researcher plays a critical role in uncovering knowledge situated within the interactions between the researcher and participants (Thomas, 2017). The researcher's positionality greatly impacts all stages of the research process, including data design, data collection, and interpretation of data as a knowledge (Madge *et al* 2014). Moreover, the researcher's behaviour impacts participants' responses and, afterwards, the findings ((Madge *et al* 2014). Positionality refers to "the positioning of the researcher in relation to the social and cultural context of the study, the participants institution, and how they perceive the researcher" (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014). To ensure the qualitative research integrity and trustworthiness, it is essential for researchers to continually analyse the impact of subjective and intersubjective dynamics throughout the research process (Madge *et al* 2014)). Reflecting on my positionality, I position myself in a variety of contexts. As a Nigerian pursuing a Ph.D. at one of the post-92 universities in the UK, my positionality was influenced by my academic and life experiences in the UK, in addition to my cultural, and historical background in Nigeria. In this research, I drew on the work of others, particularly Walby's gender regime theory and African feminism theory to conceptualize my research positionality in relation to the value that I have that could influences the research while trying to be objective. I also remained cautious of how my gender, race, and cultural background might influence the participants perception of me and the data collection process. Conducting research on WFC among female academics, spanning black-and-white contexts in Nigeria and the UK required deep reflexivity. The intersection of these identities presented potential power dynamics and interpretive challenges. For instance, participants might perceive me through the lens of my positional authority as a male researcher, particularly when addressing sensitive issues surrounding gender and work-family roles. To navigate these dynamics, I prioritized fostering trust and creating a space where participants expressed their perspectives without any hold back. This required deliberate strategies, such as adopting a neutral position, using non-leading questioning techniques, and ensuring participants had the freedom to guide discussions by critically reflecting on all my questions and actions.

Reflexivity is a methodological tool that encompasses "thoughtful, analytic self-awareness of researchers' experiences, reasoning, and overall impact throughout the research process" (Råheim *et al*., 2016). It has been used in interpretivist research to show researchers' values and to reflect on their influence on the research (Madge *et al* 2014)). Reflexivity is also a means for valuable data collection which enable researchers to observe their positionality and the dynamics at play in the research process (Corlett & Mavin, 2018). Furthermore, reflexivity facilitates a deeper understanding of how knowledge is constructed (Hertz, 2006). I believe that my background as a morally brought-up individual with a

high level of integrity, and social and cultural values shaped my dealings with the participants objectively despite being a male student in a female domain based on the research topic. In my research, it was important to regularly reflect on my positionality in the survey and interview data collection. I adopted a reflexive approach, consciously acknowledging the influence of my position in the research design and data collection.

3.2.3.3 My Outsider Role

There has been considerable debate regarding the insider-outsider position in research. Merton (1972) defines insider researchers as those who share certain characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, or culture, with the participants, while outsider researchers lack such shared attributes (Mercer, 2007). Researchers' identities are influenced by socially recognized differences and commonalities (Cui, 2014). In the context of my research, I positioned myself as an outsider researcher. I had no prior relationship with the participants in any of the case study institutions in Nigeria and the UK.

Drever (1995) stated that the information participants provided influenced by their perceptions of the researcher and the research. Across all the four case studies, my outsider status was shaped by the lack of a pre-existing relationship with participants in the four case institutions. Before commencing fieldwork, I acquired general information about the case institutions through the gatekeepers and publicly available resources, such as the institution's websites, but I had no personal knowledge of individual participants hence I was an outsider to all participants. Participant recruitment was facilitated through gatekeepers and professional contacts I had established during my master's degree program in the UK. The gatekeepers and professional contacts gave a list of female academics' email address for distribution of the survey links to various female academics in various departments within the case institutions, with an appeal to the female academics to forward the links to other female academics who might not be in the gate-keepers distribution list. Initially, participant responses were slow, but my persistent follow up made the responses improve. In Nigeria, the private university, being a newer and smaller institution, yielded fewer survey responses. Similarly, while pre-92 in the UK had a robust survey response rate, this did not translate into a proportional number of interview participants as only two participants volunteer to take part in the interview. During the interviews, participants appeared comfortable providing candid responses due to my outsider status and the assurance of anonymity. My outsider position also proved advantageous in providing rich and detailed information that might have been inaccessible to an insider researcher due to concerns about being identified after the interview in relation to their responses.

3.2.4 Data Analysis

The study analysed empirical data on the multidimensional view of WFC experienced by female academics. The data comprises of survey responses, interview transcripts, and relevant institutional profile contents.

The collected survey data were analysed using SPSS Statistics, a robust software for statistical analysis. The analysis involved:

1. Data Cleaning: The generated data were checked for incomplete responses, outliers, and inconsistencies. This was required to ensure the data accuracy

2. Descriptive Analysis: The data descriptive analysis was done by summarizing the data to understand the sample's characteristics.

3. Themes categorization for the data

Advantages of SPSS offers several strengths (Bryman & Cramer, 2011):

1. It is user-Friendly as its intuitive design allows for complex analyses of the data without extensive programming knowledge.

2. It is a comprehensive statistical tool which provides a wide range of statistical procedures that is suitable for this survey analysis.

3. The software facilitated the efficient handling of the survey data size.

The interview analysis was manually analysed thematically, Braun and Clarke (2006). This approach is described as a process of "separation, classification, and relinking of data" (Grbich, 2012). This offered flexibility is required for multiple case study design as it allows for exploration of participants' diverse perceptions across cases, leveraging on the theoretical framework for detailed examination of the research contexts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Themes were defined from the interview transcribed data and colour coded for thematic analysis. To enrich the analysis, and discussions, both code counts, and case counts were used. This helped in providing a richer perspective and deeper insights into the recuring themes/codes

Data analysis took:

1. Familiarization with the data by reviewing the interview transcripts for necessary mapping and classification.

2. Coding to identify meaningful content by applying both pre-existing categories from the empirical literature review and codes derived inductively from the raw data. Manual coding

was conducted due to the manageable volume of twenty interviews, ensuring an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

3. Theme generation by collating related data extracts and grouping them into relevant themes and subthemes in line with the interview questions. At this stage, main themes were identified and tied to the research questions.

4. Theme review; using (Olivera et al, 2022) principles of internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity for coherence and clarity among the themes. Emerging themes were manually filtered through comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

5. Defining and refining themes to establish interconnections and relevance of it to the research questions.

6. Report writing using illustrative quotes from participants to substantiate identified themes and validate the data analysis process. Beyond the theme presentation, findings were discussed in relation to the research questions.

The data analysis adhered to Yin's (2003) principle of a "case study chain of evidence," ensuring traceability from research questions to findings. Consistent comparison of participants' responses, as recommended by Bogdan and Biklen (1997), facilitated data analysis across individual and Institutional contexts (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were rigorously upheld throughout this research to ensure integrity, respect for participants, and compliance with institutional guidelines. All secondary sources were appropriately cited to maintain academic integrity and avoid plagiarism. Survey and interview questions were carefully designed to avoid bias, ensuring the collection of valid and reliable data. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, with the participants provided with detailed information sheets specifying the research objectives, procedures, and their rights. Informed consent was obtained before participation, with participants informed of their ability to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Research briefings, participant information sheets, and consent forms were embedded in the survey questionnaire (see Appendix). Surveys were disseminated via email to female academics in the four case universities using gatekeepers and professional networks. Participants agreeing to interviews completed a consent section confirming their willingness to participate.

3.3.1 Privacy and Confidentiality

To safeguard participants' privacy, strict measures were implemented to anonymize their data. Coded identifiers were allocated to participants and the case institutions to ensure that no identifying information appeared in transcripts, questionnaires, or research outputs. Details that could potentially

reveal participant or institutional identities were either removed or concealed in the research documentation and reporting. Participants were assured that anonymized data would not be shared with other researchers, and all of them were given the option to opt out at the end of the questionnaire if they were not interested in further interview. The interviewed participants had the opportunity to review and verify their transcripts. Primary data, in both paper and electronic formats, were securely stored following the university ethical guidelines. Data were initially stored on the university's cloud system and subsequently transferred to a password-protected device for analysis. No data were shared with third parties, and access was strictly limited for my use.

3.3.2 Ethical Approval and Adherence to Ethical Guidelines

This research received formal approval from the Research Ethics Committee at Sheffield Hallam University before the commencement of fieldwork (see Appendix). The ethical framework followed three critical principles: informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality. These principles were foundational to the data collection phases. Throughout the research process, I adhere to the ethical guidelines ensuring the protection of participant rights, data integrity and credibility of the research outcomes. By following this process, this research upheld the highest ethical standards necessary for rigorous academic research.

3.3.3 Methodological limitations

Despite the robust design of this mix-method comparative case study, certain methodological limitations were encountered during the research. One notable limitation was the small sample size for both survey and interview participants. This is one of the outcomes of using dual data collection methods, which presented challenges in recruiting large participant pool across the four case institutions. The data collection process was time-consuming, as it required solving various challenges of logistics and administrative processes in multiple institutions setting while ensuring ethical and methodological integrity needed for comparative research. In addition, synthesizing data information from the four case institutions was complex, particularly considering the diversity of the case institution and participant responses.

The data analysis provided several levels of methodological intensity which includes carrying out cross-tabulation analyses of the survey data, triangulation of the findings with interview data, and aligning the findings with existing empirical literature and the theoretical framework. While these processes are significant and ideal for promoting the generation of robustness outcome, they demanded considerable time, effort, and methodological perfection. These limitations, while challenging, underscore the inevitable complexity of conducting a mix-method comparative case study. Nonetheless, they also pointed to the need for careful and effective planning, reflective ethos and adaptive strategies in navigating and addressing such challenges.

3.4 Summary

This research adopted a mixed method case study approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative semi-structured interviews, to explore the causes, nature, and contextual variations of WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria. The research design was structured as a comparative case study, using four universities (two from each country) selected for their diversity in institutional type and geographical location.

The quantitative phase involved the distribution of structured questionnaires to capture general patterns, prevalence, and correlation of WFC while the qualitative phase employed in-depth interviews to explore participants lived experiences, mitigating strategies, and institutional responses to WFC. This sequential design allowed for triangulation and a deeper contextual understanding of WFC. Reflexivity was integral to the research process, particularly during interviews, where I maintained awareness of my positionality, power dynamics, and cultural sensitivity throughout data collection and interpretation. Ethical approval was obtained from my university (See Appendix). Participants were assured of their anonymity, and informed consent was secured prior to data collection. Interviewees were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw at any point without consequence, ensuring voluntary participation and adherence to ethical research standards.

Chapter 4 The Survey

4.0 Introduction

In the past, higher institutions globally have attempted to implement work-life balance to improve work-family conflict (WFC) of their employees (Ramon, 2020). Despite these initiatives, female scholars continue to be underrepresented in the academia, a trend that persist across many countries (Avolio *et al*, 2024). This underrepresentation led to investigations of the cultural and structure affecting women's career paths in academia, especially the impact of WFC. The level of sociocultural and policy impact in terms of similarities and differences of WFC on the female academics between continents, such as Africa and Europe, remains a largely unexamined subject of academic research. Female academics have distinct challenges at different career stages (early, middle, and late), influenced by varied normative and institutional contexts (Lewin, 2019). The cultural expectations on gender roles and family responsibilities in Nigeria markedly contrast with those in the UK. These disparities could affect the unfolding of WFC and its effects on job commitment and career advancement of the female academics. Cross-nation comparative research is essential to establish the dynamics of WFC among female academics across the global north and south and to offer practical insights for policy solutions.

This research mix-method case study used quantitative survey to investigate the dimensions of Work-Family Conflict (WFC) among female academics and the prevalence in the UK and Nigeria. As earlier discussed in the literature review, socio-cultural and institutional contexts significantly determine how female academics experience and navigate WFC. This chapter provides empirical data to support these influences.

The rationale for using a survey arises from the need to capture broader pattern of WFC across national and institutional settings. As explained in the methodology section, survey methods allow for the systemic comparison of family responsibilities and work demands along with the mitigating strategies among a diverse population (Creswell, 2017). The Global North and Global South focus reflects this thesis commitment to cross cultural analysis addressing the gap in existing literature which is basically Western centric (Adisa, Gbadamosi, & Osabutey, 2017).

Drawing on Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) view of WFC, the survey operationalises conflict as bidirectional; family interfering with work or work interfering with family and it investigates the effect of factors such as workload, family structure, institutional support and socio-cultural expectations on WFC. Comparing responses from the UK and Nigeria academics enable the exploration of how gendered academic environment intersects with national cultures to form the female academics WFC experiences.

This chapter focuses on quantitative survey data analysis to substantiate the qualitative insights from the case studies presented in the later chapters to foster better understanding of cultural and structural determinants of WFC. The thesis therefore contributes to the aim of bridging the Global North and Global South gap and advancing context-sensitive framework for tackling gender inequality in academia.

The case universities in this research are classified as displayed below.

- ➢ Nigeria Government University is classified as case study 1 (CS1)

- ➢ Nigeria Private University is classified as case study 2 (CS2)

- ➢ The UK, Pre-92 University is classified as case study 3 (CS3)

- ➢ The UK, Post-92 University is classified as case study 4 (CS4).

In the socio-demographic details of Nigerian and UK female academic respondents, all the respondents are married, and they have family that live with them.

This survey was analysed through national and institutional context by looking at respondents work history/career level and family dynamics to establish the female academic experience of conflict (if any) between family and work in the female academics.

In this research, work history/career level has the designations "early-career," "mid-career," and "late-career" used for clear distinct phases to classify the female academic career progression in academics. These phases are defined according to the duration of an individual's experience in the higher education sector. These career stages are assumed to align with the global trends but may vary due to some factors such as local institutional grading and structural influences. In this research, Nigeria early-career female academics are defined as academics who has recently obtained or are currently pursuing their Ph.D. and are in the early years of their academic careers, ranging from within 1 to 5 years in the higher education sector even if they have spent more years in another professional sector before crossing over to the higher education sector. While in the UK, they will be defined as those that are within 1-5 years of their postdoctoral academic careers in the higher education. Mid-career female academics in Nigeria and the UK are classified as those who have spent 6-15 years in academia after completion of their Ph.D. This research classified those who have accumulated 16 years and above experiences in the academic sector as late-career.

Furthermore, in this thesis, a live-in family refers to the immediate family and or extended family members such as spouses, children, parents, in-laws and domestic workers who reside in same household with the female academic. The live-in family depend on the female academic's family for their sustenance but with some of them contributing to the shared caregiving or domestic

responsibilities. This is definition is relevant in the cross-cultural comparison of the WFC in the two countries context. In Nigeria, live-in family often include extended family due to rooted collectivism, cultural caregiving norms and family expectations in the country (Aycan, 2008) while in the UK, household is more commonly consisting of nuclear families, with fewer extended family members living under the same roof (Sanders, 2019). The differences in the two countries influence the nature and impact of WFC. Even though live-in relatives may offer practical support for childcare or household support, they may also increase the financial and domestic responsibilities including emotional labour, particularly for women, due to gendered expectations of care. Thus, in this study, "live-in family" is used to examine how household composition influences the experience of WFC. When evaluating WFC among female academics in Nigeria and the UK. It is important to find out if the female academics have live-in families or not and how this impacts their living.

4.1 Country Level Comparison

This section looks at the national demographic of the female academics of the two countries with the view to knowing the numbers of respondents in each work history/career level and their family dynamics.

4.1.1 Respondents Work History/Career Level

Table 4.1 presents the employment history and career stages of female academics in Nigeria and the UK. In Nigeria, 40.4% of the respondents were found to be in their early career stage, 40.4% in mid-career and 19.2% are in late career. In the UK, 15.2% are early career, 54.5% are mid-career and 30.3% are late career. This shows that a significant percentage of respondents in both countries had considerable work experience that will provide them with the understanding required to address WFC issues. The high percentage of mid- and late-career academics in the UK suggests a more seasoned workforce, which may influence institutional policy regarding work-family balance. The equal distribution of early-career and mid-career academics in Nigeria suggest a workforce that is steering career progression along with family responsibilities which could result in increased WFC. These findings point to the importance of career stage in influencing the degree of WFC experienced by female academics in both countries.

Table 4.1 (Respondents Career Stage)

Characteristic	Classification	Nigeria	Nigeria	The UK	The UK
Years	Career Level	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
1-5	Early Career	19	40.4	5	15.2
6-15	Mid-career	19	40.4	18	54.5
16+	Late Career	9	19.2	10	30.3
Total		**47**	**100**	**33**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.1.2 Family Dynamics

Family dynamics in this research is the pattern of emotional bonds, interaction, roles and communication in a family that influence and are influenced by the interaction between family roles and work. These dynamics determines how individuals experience and manage WFC. For instance, a strong family cohesion and supportive spousal relationships can alleviate WFC while rigid or poor communication could exacerbate it. Understanding family dynamics is essential as they mediate the effects of job demands and family responsibilities on individual well-being and organizational outcomes (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Allen et al., 2000).

4.1.2.1 Live-in Family

This survey result showed that most respondents in Nigeria, (85%) have live-in family and in the UK, (79%) confirmed that they have live-in family as shown in Table 4.2. The high percentage of live-in family in the UK, contrary to earlier literature review (2.1; Family Structures) that established monogamous family structure in the UK, could be because of some participating female academics in the two universities who are from ethnic minority/African family background who could be having extended family member live with them. Family-orientation is one of the criteria required to answer this study's research questions.

Table 4.2 (Live-in Family)

	Nigeria	**Nigeria**	**The UK**	**The UK**
Live-In Family	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Yes	40	85	26	79
No	7	15	7	21
Total	**47**	**100**	**33**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.1.2.2 Childcare and other care responsibilities

Childcare and other care responsibilities were common to most respondents. 'Other care responsibilities' captures the care for elderly parents, and care for other members of the family. 85% of the respondents in Nigeria said they have childcare and other care responsibilities while in the UK, 79% of the respondents have childcare and other care responsibilities, Table 4.3. This finding gives credence to questions on how childcare and other care responsibilities might interface with WFC.

Table 4.3 (Childcare and other care responsibilities)

	Nigeria	**Nigeria**	**The UK**	**The UK**
Childcare	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
Yes	40	85	26	79
No	7	15	7	21
Total	**47**	**100**	**33**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.1.2.3 Family size

Table 4.4 below, shows that most respondents in Nigeria have many children. In this research, family size was classified as: Respondents with 1 to 2 children as having small family size, those with 3 to 4 children as moderate family size and respondents with 5 children and above as having large family size. In Nigeria, the data shows that most of them have between 1 to 5 children. This indicate that most female academics in Nigeria universities have more childcare responsibilities with potentially large family sizes compared to female academics in the UK where 42.4% of the respondents have maximum of 2 children which implies that majority have smaller family size. Family size will have significant

effect on those who could, if at all, encounter conflict between job and family, and this supports queries about potential interactions between childcare, family care and WFC.

Table **4.4 (Family size)**

Characteristic	Nigeria	Nigeria	The UK	The UK
Number of children	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
0	7	14.9	7	21.2
1	6	12.8	6	18.2
2	9	19.1	14	42.4
3	10	21	6	18.2
4	7	14.9	0	0
5	8	17	0	0
Total	**47**	**100**	**33**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.1.2.4 Other Family Responsibilities than Childcare

Table 4.5 shows that most of the respondents from Nigeria have other family obligations outside of childcare. The family responsibilities outside childcare that are most recognized, among Nigerian female academics as stated in the survey were taking care of live-in relatives and extended families (61.7%), paying family members' school fees (6.4%), assisting spouse in paying rent (6.4%), and doing house chores (19.1%). Taking care of live-in/extended family (61.7%) is a significant other family responsibility embedded in Nigerian female academics that could affect their professional career and in effect increase their WFC. In the UK, 12.1% of respondents stated that caring for live-in relatives, doing home chores (3%), and caring for pets including dog walking (18.3%) are family responsibilities beyond childcare that they do. Important to know is that 42.4% of the UK respondents did not disclose other family responsibilities beyond childcare that they do. This might indicate that the context of the question did not sit well with the respondents, or they chose not to disclose in the survey.

Table 4.5 (Other family responsibilities)

Characteristics	Nigeria	Nigeria	The UK	The UK
Responsibilities	Respondents	%	Respondents	%
None	2	4.3	7	21.2
School fees/feeding	3	6.4	0	0
Spouse rent	3	6.4	1	3
Care for living/extended family	29	61.7	4	12.1
Domestic chore	9	19.1	1	3
Dog walking/pet care	1	2.1	6	18.3
Do not disclose	0	0	14	42.4
Total	**47**	**100**	**33**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.2 Institutional Differences

The analysis of the distribution of work experience/career level and their family dynamics among female academics in universities in Nigeria and the UK provides valuable insights into the composition of the academic workforce at the institutional level and its impact on WFC.

4.2.1 Work History/Career Level

Table 4.6 shows the respondents institutional career level for the four case institutions. The survey analysis shows that majority of CS1 respondents were mid-career and early-career female academics, this suggests that majority of them will have broad work experiences which is important for their ability to make valuable contributions to the conversation on WFC. In CS2, majority of the respondents were early-career female academics and few of them were late-career female academics, suggesting a tendency towards a younger academic staff in the university. In CS3, most of the respondents were in their mid-career and late career level which show that more experienced respondents in the institution took part in the survey, this could assist in providing a robust understanding of WFC from the view of respondents with broad work experience and institutional knowledge. The survey results in CS4 suggested that the institution has a substantial number of

respondents in their mid-to-late career stages, whose considerable experiences will be essential in providing answers to WFC issues.

Table 4.6 (Career Stage by Institution)

Employment History	Nigeria				The UK			
	CS1	%	CS2	%	CS3	%	CS4	%
1 – 5 years (Early Career)	13	34.2	6	66.7	3	14.3	2	16.7
6 – 15 years (Mid-Career)	19	50	0	0	10	47.6	8	66.6
16 + (Late Career)	6	15.8	3	33.3	8	38.1	2	16.7
Total	**38**	**100**	**9**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**12**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.2.2 Family Dynamics

The family dynamics of female academics in each institution of the four case studies was evaluated to know how individuals experience and manage WFC.

4.2.2.1 Live-in family

The findings in CS1 and CS2 suggest that the two Nigerian institutions have similar family responsibility as majority said they have live-in families, providing solid platform for comprehending WFC challenges, Table 4.7. In the UK, most of the respondents also indicated having live-in families which is a good parameter for them to share their WFC experiences.

Table 4.7: (Live-in family)

	C1	%	C2	%	C3	%	C4	%
Yes	31	82	8	89	16	76	11	92
No	7	18	1	11	5	24	1	8
Total	**38**	**100**	**9**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**12**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.2.2.2 Childcare and other care responsibilities

Childcare and other caregiving responsibilities are important when considering the effect of WFC on the respondents' family life and career progression. These responsibilities vary by institutional type. As shown in Table 4.8, 16% of respondents from CS1 and 11% from CS2 reported not having childcare responsibilities at the time of the survey. This shows that over 80% of the respondents from CS1 and CS2 are with active childcare or caregiving duties, underscoring the relevance of exploring how childcare and other responsibilities impact WFC. In the UK, 71 % of respondents from CS3 and 92% from CS4 reported having childcare and other caregiving responsibilities. However, there is a slightly higher percentage of respondents without caregiving responsibilities in CS3. This raises the question of whether caregiving responsibilities have ended for some respondents in the institution who might be done with childcare or have older children who does not need care responsibilities, which could influence their experience of WFC. Responses from the four case institutions provided the foundation for exploring WFC among female academics with caregiving responsibilities across different career stages and institutional contexts.

Table 4.8 (Childcare responsibility)

	CS1	%	CS2	%	CS3	%	CS4	%
Yes	32	84	8	89	15	71	11	92
No	6	16	1	11	6	29	1	8
Total	**38**	**100**	**9**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**12**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.2.2.3 Family size

The impact of family size on female academics is a considerable factor that could affect WFC of female academics in both countries. In CS1 as shown in Table 4.9, most of the respondents have moderate to large family size while in CS2, majority of the respondents have large families. The influence of family size on female academics in CS3 and CS4 in the UK shows a contrast with the situation in CS1 and CS2. as most respondents oversee smaller and moderate family sizes.

Table 4.9 (Family size)

Number of children	CS1	%	CS2	%	CS3	%	CS4	%
0	7	18.4	0	0	6	28.6	1	8.3
1	6	15.8	0	0	4	19	2	16.7
2	7	18.4	2	22.2	6	28.6	8	66.7
3	7	18.4	3	33.3	5	23.8	1	8.3
4	6	15.8	1	11.2	0	0	0	0
5	5	13.2	3	33.3	0	0	0	0
Total	**38**	**100**	**9**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**12**	**100**

Source: Researcher's field survey

4.2.2.4 Other Family Responsibilities than childcare

The survey report suggests that female academics in CS1 and CS2 often carry extended family responsibilities in addition to their primary caregiving roles in their nuclear family, Table 4.10. The data shows that 71% of respondents in CS1 said taking care of live-in family and house chores responsibilities as their other family responsibilities beyond childcare, this reflects the cultural norms and family structures prevalent in Nigeria which align with the literature on family structure in Nigeria where gender roles are well established in conjunction with cultural norms that women should prioritise family responsibilities over their professional responsibilities (Eze, 2017). Other Family responsibilities in CS2 cut across caring for extended family, domestic chores, and financial support of spouse in paying rent and school fees. As established in the empirical literature review, CS2 distribution of other family responsibilities is proportionate with the society culture that women unfairly shoulder family responsibilities and household duties thereby exacerbating WFC (Eze, 2017).

In CS3 and CS4 many of the respondents reported additional caregiving obligations that contribute to their WFC. Worthy of note is that 14% of respondents in CS3 reported not having additional family responsibilities. Furthermore, 14% in CS3 and 25% in CS4 reported obligations associated with pet care and dog walking as addition family responsibility they do. The reported pet care as an important family duty by many of the respondents in the two UK institutions shows the wider societal foundation and norms about pet care and this is backed by strict animal welfare regulations in the country. The data also shows that 57% of the respondents in CS3 did not respond to the question about their other family responsibility issues concerning WFC. This is a concern that the survey was unable to address.

Table 4.10 (Other family responsibilities)

Characteristics	CS1	%	CS2	%	CS3	%	CS4	%
None	0	0	2	22	3	14	4	33
School fees/feeding	2	5.3	1	11	0	0	0	0
Spouse rent	2	5.3	1	11	1	4.8	0	0
Care for live-in relatives/extended family	27	71	2	22	2	9.5	2	17
Domestic chores	7	18.4	2	22	0	0	1	8
Dog walking/pet care	0	0	1	11	3	14	3	25
Do not disclose	0	0	0	0	12	57	2	17
Total	**38**	**100**	**9**	**100**	**21**	**100**	**12**	**100**

4.3 Crosstab Analysis of the Four Case Studies

The crosstab analysis serves to cross analyse the varying impact and the effect of workload and family demands on WFC, direction of WFC and WFC management on the female academic experiences.

4.3.1 Workload and Family demands

The impact of workload and family demands on WFC was evaluated in the four case studies. Factors such as the extent of workload, effect of workload on childcare and other care responsibilities, impact of workload on family responsibilities, experience of family obligations during term time were investigated.

4.3.1.1 Extent of workload

The extent of academic workload on female academics in the four universities were investigated. In this research, the workload is classified as frequently, quite often, often and rarely.
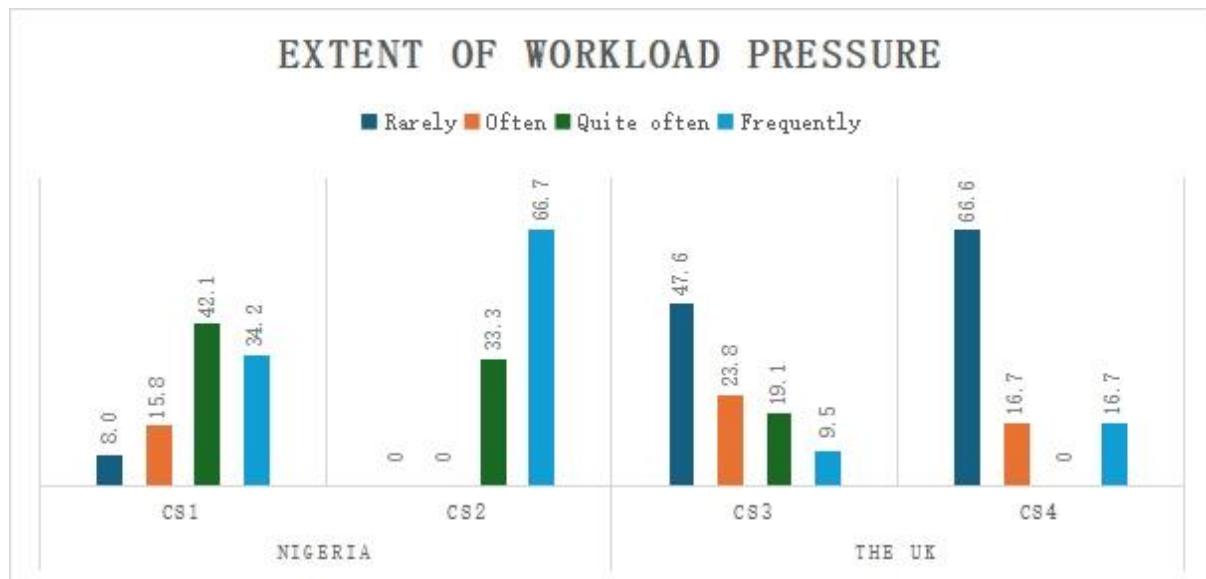
Figure 4.3.1.1: Extent of workload pressure

Case Study 1: In CS1, 34.2% of respondents said they frequently experience academic workload while 42.1% said they quite often experience workload pressure. This suggest that a high number of respondents in CS1 faces persistent challenges of workload which validate that workload pressure is one of the factors responsible for WFC among female academics in CS1.

Case Study 2: All the respondents said they either frequently (66.7%) or quite often (33.3%) encountered workload pressure. As shown in Figure 4.3, many respondents in CS2 are in their early-career and late career stage and they have large family sizes, this along with the workload could exacerbate WFC in the female academics of the university.

Case Study 3: Most respondents (47.6%) said they rarely experience workload pressure. As established in section 4.2.1, higher number of respondents in CS3 are in their mid-career/late-career stages and with small family sizes, this could be the reason for the respondents rarely experiencing workload pressure. Most respondents therefore possess more relevant experience to address WFC issues.

Case Study 4: 66.6% respondents said they rarely experience excessive workload, indicating that workload pressure is less common in the institution compared to the Nigerian universities. Notably, none of the respondents indicated frequent occurrence of workload pressure, showing that workload challenges in CS4 could be less frequent. However, this was better clarified with an in-depth explanation of the frequency of workload in the interview. These statistics suggest that although workload pressure is experienced in CS4, it is not as severe as in CS1 and CS2 in Nigeria but closely compared to CS3 in the UK.

4.3.1.2 Causes of Workload:

Respondents were asked about the causes of the workload often experienced. Factors such as teaching, conducting examinations, teaching along with admin work and shortage of staff were identified as the main causes of the workload.
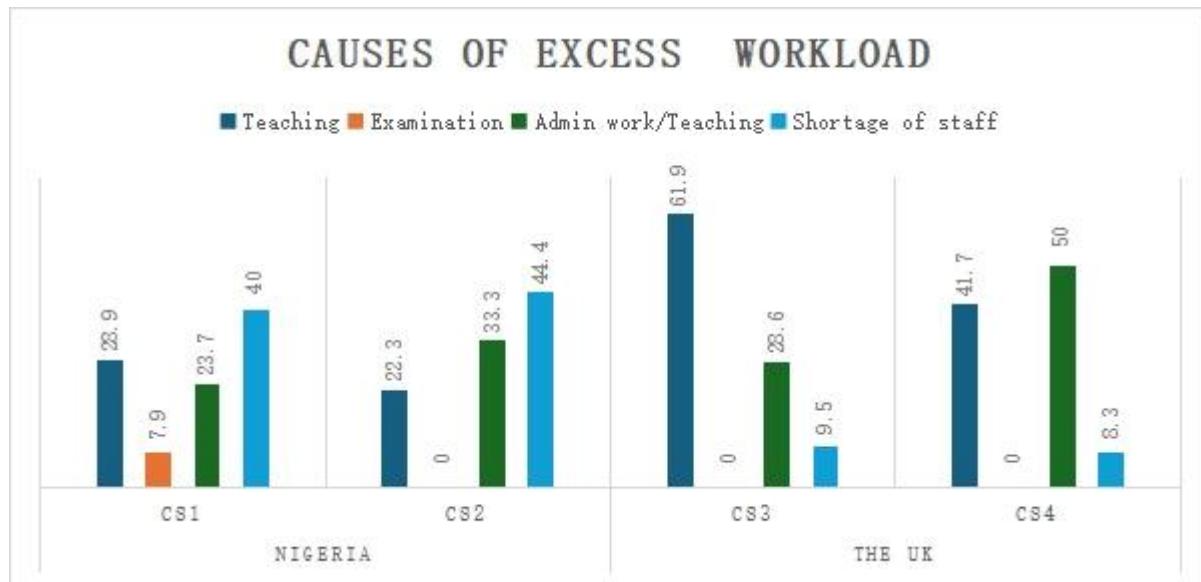
Figure 4.3.1.2: Causes of excess workload

Case Study 1: The result shows that 28.9% of respondents stated that teaching constitutes a proportion of their workload while 23.7% of the respondent's identified combination of administrative duties and teaching as one of the factors causing their workload. Staff shortage was noted as the main cause of workload by 39.5% respondents, the poor staffing confirms the position earlier stated in the literature about Nigeria higher education poor funding, inadequate staffing and deteriorating infrastructure. (Saint, Hartnett & Strassner, 2003). All these factors exacerbate WFC among female academics in CS1.

Case Study 2: Teaching was reported as one of the sources of workload by 22.3% of respondents, though this is lower than CS1, this percentage is nevertheless noteworthy. As stated in the demographic (section 4.2.1), most of the respondents are in their early career stage and may be expected to carry out more of teaching to show their teaching abilities which could add to their workload burden. However, none of the respondents said examination activities cause extra workload which suggest that the institution (a private university) might be better automated for examination activities compared to CS1. Administrative tasks along with teaching was also identified by 33.3% of the respondents as a source of workload, this is a high contributor to their WFC. Considering that most of the respondents are in their early-career and being saddled with additional administrative responsibilities as part of their job duties could be burdensome. The major cause of workload pressure in CS2 as stated by 44.4% of the respondents is shortage of staff. This is a greater percentage in comparison to CS1 where academics are frequently assigned excess duties because of inadequate staffing which is related to Nigeria's education poor funding (Saint, Hartnett & Strassner, 2003).

Case Study 3: This survey revealed that 28.6% of respondents identified administrative duties along with teaching as a factor contributing to their workload pressure. Worthy of note is the 61.9% of the respondents that said teaching is the main contributor to their workload pressure. This high percentage can be related to the intricate teaching and researching culture of the institution. However, none of the respondents said their workload pressure was from examination activities. This could also mean that the responsibilities associated with examinations in CS3 could be that CS3 has better administrative system compared to CS1 and CS2 in Nigeria.

Case Study 4: 41.7% of the respondents said that teaching has been a leading factor contributing to their workload, this is lower in CS3. This phenomenon may be attributed to the higher numbers of mid-career female academics in the university (as stated in section 4.2.1), who may be saddled with higher teaching responsibility. Like CS3, none of the respondents in CS4 said that examination process contributed to their workload pressure. This could be that the institution examination process is more systemic compared to CS 1. The main source of workload for 50% of respondents in CS4 was identified as a combination of administrative duties and teaching. This significant figure indicates that female academics frequently handle both teaching and administrative responsibilities which exacerbate their WFC.

4.3.1.3 Effect of workload on childcare/other care responsibilities

The effect of the workload on female academic's childcare and other responsibilities were investigated.

Figure 4.3.1.3: Effect on child/other responsibilities

Case Study 1: Childcare and other responsibilities were the two main family responsibilities mostly impacted by workload pressure in CS1. 39.5% respondents reported that workload pressure considerably affects their childcare responsibilities. Also, 36.8% of the respondents said workload pressure impacts their ability to perform regular household chores. This is in line with the gender roles, cultural norms and societal expectations on women in Nigeria (Aina, 1998).

Case Study 2: 33.3% of respondents in CS2 pointed out that their childcare and caregiving obligations are impacted by workload. According to this survey demographics, CS2 has more female academics in their early stages of careers and have large family size. This suggest that they could be more susceptible to encountering increased WFC, as they are likely to manage several responsibilities both in their personal lives and in their professional context. 11.1% of the respondents said workload affects their ability to provide care for their extended family members. Respondents affected by such obligations could face challenges in managing their family role with their work responsibilities. It was also noted that 33.4% of respondents said that workload pressure impact them during pregnancy, which is a greater proportion compared to CS1. This phenomenon suggested that CS2 has younger respondents who are in their early-career and childbearing stage. This could make them to encounter more challenges in managing their job responsibilities alongside inherent health issues associated with pregnancy. The influence of the university policy on staff wellbeing during pregnancy was further investigated in the interview.

Case Study 3: In the university, 42.9% of the respondents reported childcare and caregiving responsibilities as considerably affected by workload while 19% of respondents reported that care for extended family members was affected by workload. This perhaps points to the expectations placed on

academics in the middle and latter stages of their careers, who may also be having responsibility of caring for their elderly parents or other family members. This survey further revealed that 14.3% respondents reported that workload affect their ability to carry out domestic chores. These huge responsibilities on women align with the ongoing debate about gendered inequalities in the UK, most especially in unpaid domestic task and caregiving responsibilities (Xue & McMunn, 2021)). Also noted was the impact of workload on 19% respondents for the care of their pet which includes dog walking. This phenomenon suggest that pet ownership and care is a prevalent WFC issue in CS3 academics.

Case Study 4: Most respondents (58.2%) reported childcare and caregiving responsibilities as strongly affected by workload, this is greater than CS3. The survey further revealed that 16.7% respondents said workload has an impact on their care for extended family members, which is lower compared to CS3. Also, a total of 16.7% of respondents stated that their workload affects their capacity to handle domestic tasks, this is higher compared to the situation with CS3. None of the respondents from the university said their workload pressure impacted them during pregnancy, which is consistent with the findings from CS3. Pet care and dog walking were noted to be part of the lifestyle among female academics in CS 4 as 25% respondents indicated that pet care and dog walking duties are affected by their workload. This percentage is more compared to CS3, suggesting that the academic staff of the two institutions have distinct lifestyle dynamics.

4.3.1.4 Impact of workload on family relationship

Female academics were asked about the impact of workload on their family relationship such as conflict with spouse, distancing from children, inability to perform family obligations and attending to family responsibilities.
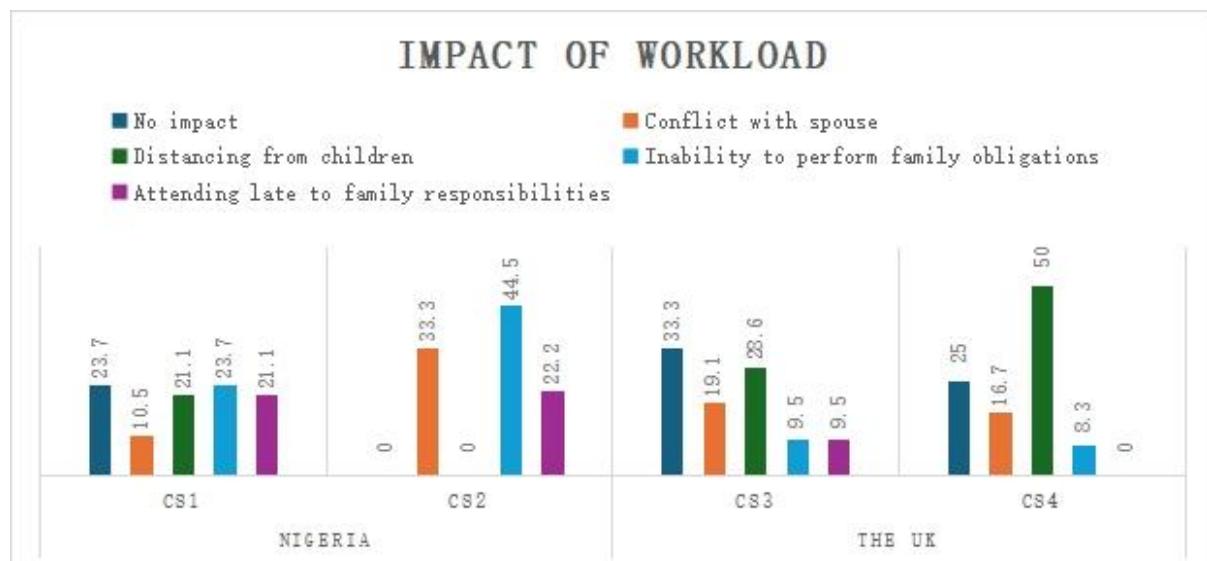
Figure 4.3.1.4: Impact of workload

Case Study 1: Among the respondents was 23.7% who reported that workload does not affect their relationship with family. These findings suggest that these academics may possess coping strategies to WFC. However, 21.05% of the respondents reported that workload cause them detachment from their children. This observation was further investigated in the interview.

Case Study 2: All the respondents in the institution reported impact of workload on their family relationship, suggesting that female academics with bigger family size could face considerable pressure in managing workload and family relationship. A high proportion (33.3%) of the respondents said workload pressure often led to conflict with their spouse which is higher compared to CS1. Significantly, none of the respondents in the university said that they were physically detached from their children because of workload. The percentage of respondents in CS2 who were unable to fulfil their family responsibilities, owing to workload, was 44.5%, which is notably higher than the CS1. This finding highlights the prevalent difficulty in coping with possible frequent workloads.

Case Study 3: 33.3% of respondents reported that the workload did not affect their family relationships. This suggest that a significant number of academics in different stages of their career might have successfully devised methods to handle WFC. Also, 19.1% of respondents said that their workload led to conflicts with their spouses. This is lower than that observed in CS1 and CS2 in Nigeria. A significant proportion of respondents, 28.6%, said that their workload resulted in a sense of detachment from their children.

Case Study 4: 25% of respondents said workload does not impact their family relationships. This percentage is lower compared to the CS3. It suggests that despite the pressures of workload, a good number of academics in the university are still able to largely fulfil their family obligations. Conflict with spouses was reported by 16.7% of the respondents, which is lower than the rate at CS3 and this could be attributed to younger academics in the university who might still be managing younger family dynamics while progressing their career. Meanwhile, 50% of the respondents reported that workload resulted in a sense of detachment from their children which suggest that majority of female academics in the university feel disconnected with their children based on work duties which could stimulate job dissatisfaction.

4.3.1.5 Experiences of family obligation during term time

Respondents were asked about their experience of workload (during school terms) on their family obligation.
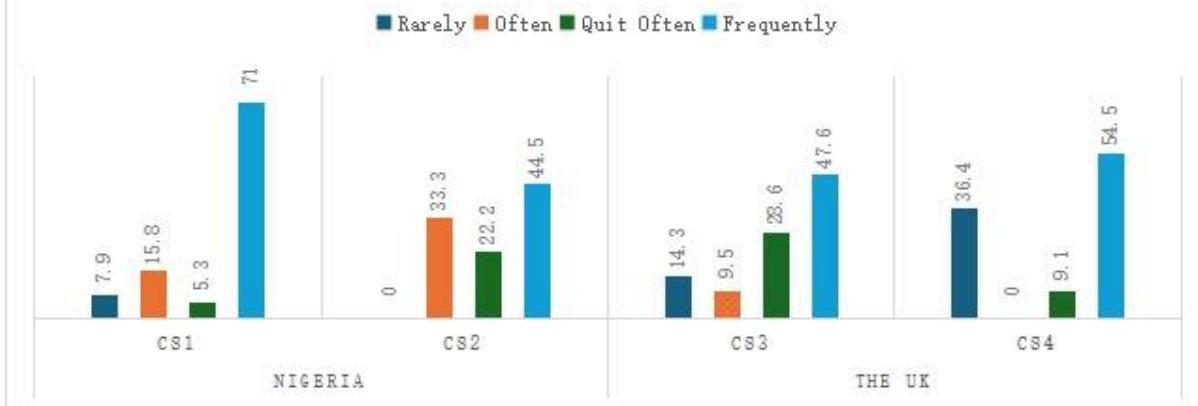
Figure 4.3.1.5: Experience heavy family obligation during school terms

Case Study 1: 7.9% of respondents reported rare cases of heavy family responsibilities during the academic terms. This suggests that family commitments were persistent with most respondents as 71% said they were frequently affected by family obligations during school terms, highlighting the huge impact of family pressure throughout the academic year which influence WFC.

Case Study 2: 33.3% of respondents said they experience significant family task during academic term time, which can be ascribed to the demands of work and growing family. 44.5% of the respondents said they frequently experience heavy family responsibilities during school term, suggesting that about half of the respondents regularly encounter significant family demands during academic session which could exacerbate WFC.

Case Study 3: 47.6% of respondents reported frequent family responsibilities during academic term, suggesting that family pressure is an ongoing and prevalent challenges for many CS3 female academics. Also, 14.3% of respondents indicated that they rarely experience significant family obligations, a higher percentage compared to CS1 and CS2 in Nigeria. This suggests possible improved institutional support and family dynamics in the UK compared to Nigeria.

Case Study 4: 36.4% of respondents said they rarely experience heavy family obligation during academic term and 54.5% of respondents said they frequently experience heavy family obligation during school term, suggesting that many of the female academics' experience significant family obligation during academic session. This was further explored in the interview for a deeper understanding of the situation and what they use in mitigating the challenge.

4.3.2   Direction of Conflict

Evaluating WFC require the need to know the direction of the conflict and where the conflict is more experienced. While some respondents might not experience WFC, the direction could be family related, work related or both for others.
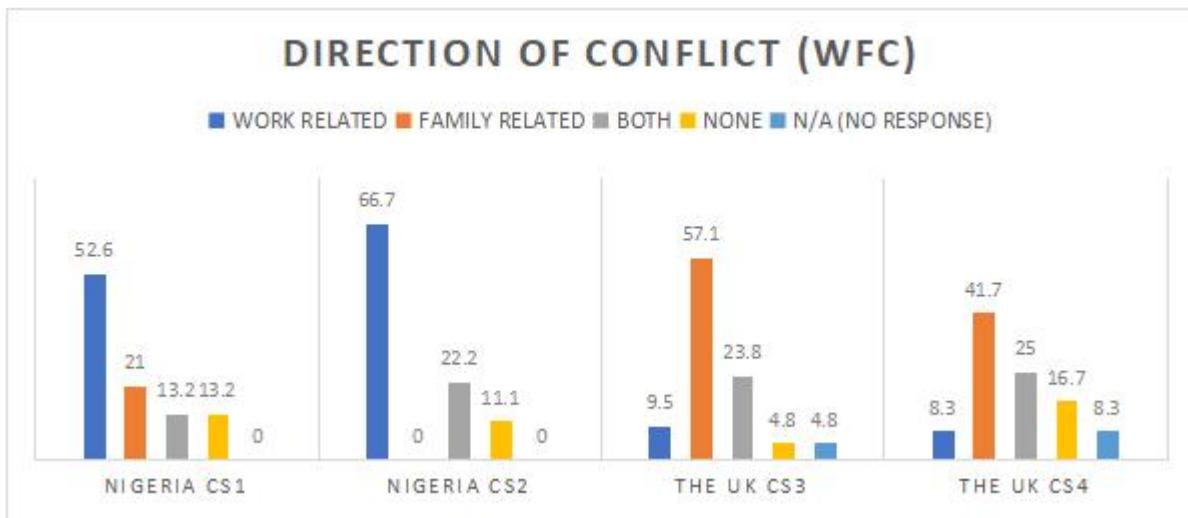
Figure 4.3.2: Direction of Conflict

Case Study 1: 52.6% of respondents reported that their WFC has been more work-related. This phenomenon could be linked to the academic and administrative requirements faced by the early-career and mid-career female academics who constitutes in CS1 as stated earlier in the demographic. Meanwhile, 21% of the respondents reported WFC as more family-related which could be influenced by their moderate/large family size and the huge, expected family obligations on the female academics. 13.2% of respondents said their WFC is both work and family related, suggesting a small number of respondents face dual direction of conflict in CS1.

Case Study 2: A greater number of respondents, 66.7%, said their WFC is more work-relate than family-related which is higher compared to CS1. This could be attributed to the demanding workload that female academics in the institution face as a private institution. Also, none of the respondents said the direction of their WFC was family related. 22.2% of respondents reported the direction of WFC in both work and family direction, suggesting the difficulty of balancing the demands of managing large family sizes with work obligations.

Case Study 3: In CS3, only 9.5% perceived WFC as work-related, which is lower compared to CS1 and CS2 institutions. 57.1% of respondents reported the direction of WFC as more family related than work related. This phenomenon can be attributed to many reasons, clarified in the interview. 23.8% of respondents reported experiencing WFC in both directions, suggesting dynamic nature of direction of conflict.

Case Study 4: 8.3% of respondents reported the direction of conflict as work-related. This low percentage suggests that the work demands at CS4 are more manageable compared to CS1, CS2 and CS3. Family duties continue to be a major cause of conflict in CS4 as indicated by 41.7% of respondents who said the direction of conflict was more family related. A quarter of the respondents reported the direction of conflict to be both work and family direction.

4.3.3 WFC Management

Work-Family Conflict management in this survey looked at respondents work dynamics which points to their work flexibility expectation, reality of the expectation and the mitigation.
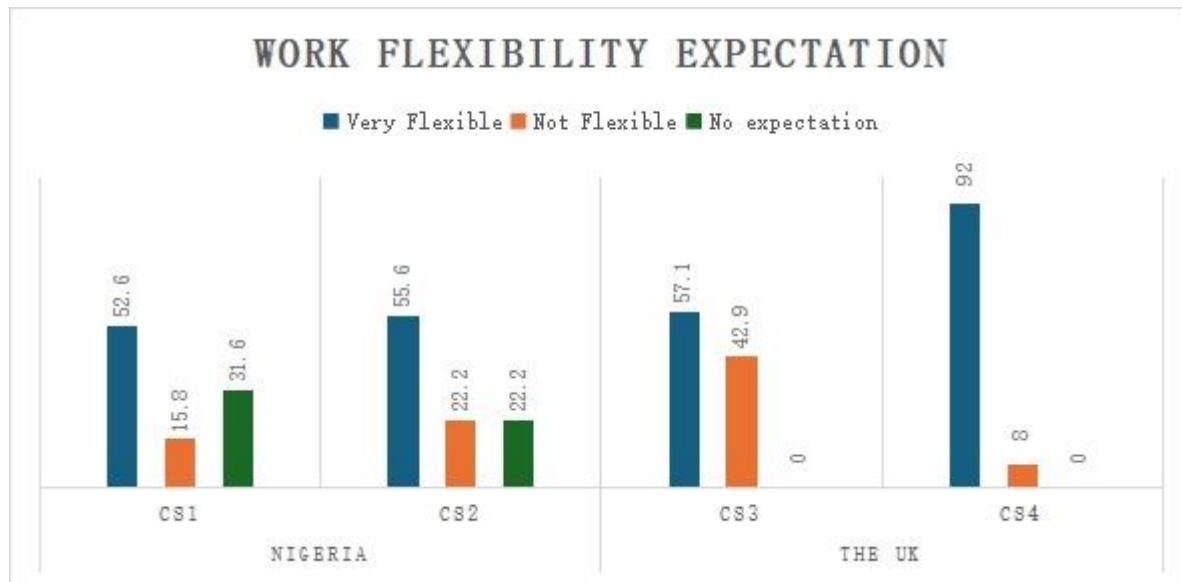
Figure 4.3.3.1 Work flexibility expectation

4.3.3.1 Work Flexibility Expectation

Case Study 1: 52.6% of respondents in CS1 said they expected their job schedule to offer a high degree of flexibility when employed to enable them to manage their WFC. Only, 15.8% of the respondents said they expected it not to be flexible. This may indicate that the respondents doubt their institution's capacity to provide flexibility, in view of the heavy demands of academic work. A total of 31.6% of the respondents have no expectations which could be those who were unaware of the work policy.

Case Study 2: 55.6% of respondents in the university expected their job would offer a high degree of flexibility, while 22.2% of respondents expected it not to be flexible, which could be coming from those who believe that the private sector provides more regulated working conditions.

Case Study 3: 57.1% of respondents anticipated a high level of flexibility in their jobs when employed, suggesting an expected flexibility policy because of institutional and national policy that guide labour working conditions in the UK. 42.9% respondents said that they do not expect any work flexibility.

Case Study 4: 92% of respondents anticipated their job would be highly flexible, showing a strong work flexibility expectation among the female academics who are facing both work and family responsibilities. Only 8% of respondents expected their work not to be flexible, suggesting that some of the female academics perceived their work environments as providing no flexible conditions.

4.3.3.2 Reality of work flexibility
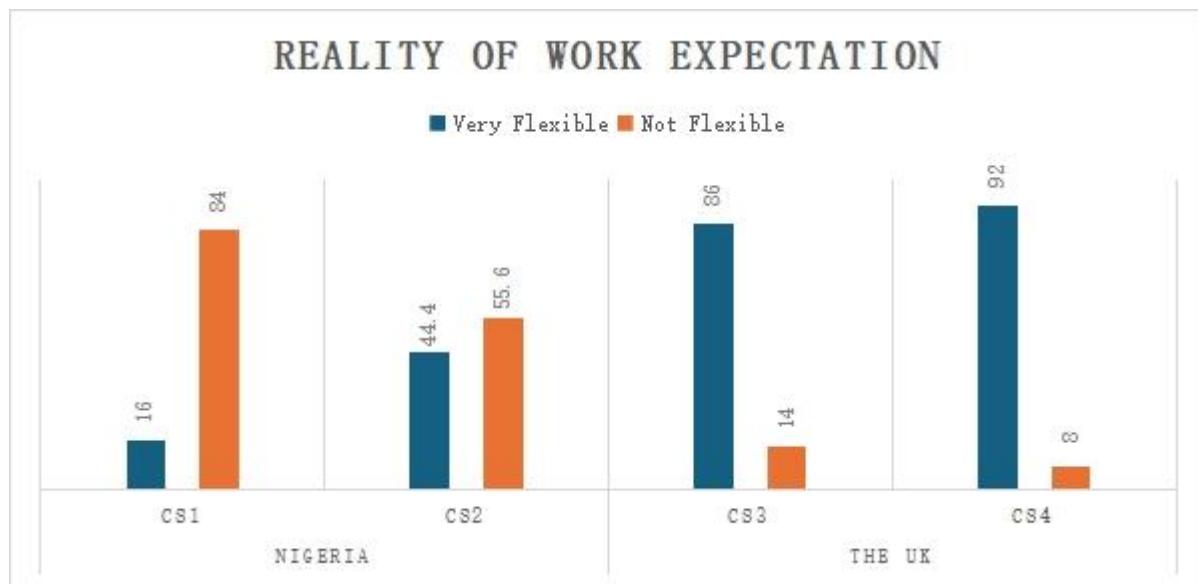
Figure 4.3.3.2: Reality of Work expectation

Case Study 1: 16% respondents said their expectation of work flexibility were met, while overwhelming majority, 84%, stated that their expectations were not met. These findings show a significant disparity between the anticipated and actual situation. This outcome suggested a widespread absence of institutional backing for flexible work arrangements in Nigeria which could affect their job commitment and satisfaction.

Case Study 2: A significant number of the respondents, 44.4%, said that their work flexibility expectations were met, whereas more than half of the respondents, 55.6%, said that their job flexibility expectations were not met.

Case Study 3: Majority of respondents, 86% expressed satisfaction with the level of flexibility provided by the institution as their expectations were met. Just a few of the respondents reported that their expectations were not fulfilled.

Case Study 4: The majority of participant, 92%, said that their expectations of work flexibility were met. These findings suggest that the institution provides work settings that are more suitable for female academics in the institution. Very few respondents reported that their expectations were not met.

4.4 The Research (Survey) Findings

The results of the crosstab analysis shows that there are notable variations in WFC of female academics in the four case studies. The triangulation of the survey themes (workload and family demand, direction of WFC and WFC management) is essential to arrive at each case study findings:

4.4.1 Case Study 1
4.4.1.1 Workload and Family Demand

This survey results shows that most of the respondents in CS1 are early- to mid-career female academics living with their families/extended families and they are noted to be responsible for family primary caregiving duties. The overlapping workload and family demand directly impact the female academics. This is in line with Walby's (1990) concept of *gender regimes* which points to the dual burdens placed on women in both the public and private domains. In CS1, the workplace address gender issues less, it rather reinforces patriarchal norms. It also pointed to the cultural norms that expect women to prioritise childcare and caregiving responsibilities, regardless of their academic status, this aligns with Walby (1990) position on patriarchy as a system of social structures that enable men exploit and oppress women.

In relation to family demand, a few respondents stated that workload did affect their family relationships, however, majority of the respondents mentioned the emotional detachment from their children as a major concern in WFC, this contrasts with African feminist stand that communality and negotiation are part of mitigation women in Africa use to address WFC (Nnaemeka, 1998).

4.4.1.2. Direction of WFC

A significant number of respondents identified the direction of conflict as primarily work-to-family, mainly due to academic teaching and administrative obligations. This could be because traditionally, Nigeria family system has rigid gender roles with cultural norms that make women to prioritise family role over their work duties (Eze, 2017). A smaller number reported family-to-work conflict, which may be linked to their large family sizes and persistent caregiving expectations. A few respondents experienced bi-directional conflict, facing WFC from both directions simultaneously shows the dynamic nature of the direction of WFC. These results confirm Walby's position that workplace structures most times fail to accommodate women's roles outside the professional circle thereby creating gendered inequalities (Walby, 2012) and it reiterates African feminist standpoint on women's domestic labour within traditional gendered frameworks that view caregiving as natural and non-negotiable for women (Adu-Yeboah, 2019).

4.4.1.3. WFC Management

Most of the respondents reported anticipated flexible working schedule when entering academia, with the hope that such flexibility would support their WFC management. However, the reality differs as they found the institution working schedule not as flexible as they expected. This disparity between expectation and the reality illustrates Walby's critique of the gender-blindness of organizational design, where organisational policies appear neutral but in practice disadvantage women (Walby, 2012). The

interview section dogged deeper to know other WFC managements strategies beyond flexible work used by female academics in the institution.

4.4.2   Case Study 2

4.4.2.1. Workload and Family Demand

The demographic profile of respondents shows that most of them are early-career female academics, with a few in their late-career stage, suggesting a younger workforce within this institution. Most respondents live with their families and are primary caregivers, often overseeing childcare, extended family responsibilities, and household financial contributions to support their spouse with house rent and children school fees. This confirms the extended family system in Nigerian households that place caring duties on women (Ambe, 2022) There is clear interaction between the respondent's family responsibilities and work obligations particularly within large family structure as earlier noted in the demographic. As stated, earlier in the literature review (section 2.1: Family Structures in Nigeria) women are required to balance their work responsibilities alongside family obligations which exacerbated their WFC (Ambe, 2022)

Workload pressure was widely acknowledged by most of the respondents as one of the causes of WFC. They claimed that the workload is because of staff shortage and additional administrative responsibilities. Although teaching was cited as a less frequent cause of workload than in CS1, early-career academics in CS2 could be under pressure to prove their competence in academia which further add to their workload. However, no participant reported examination-related workload, which may reflect greater institutional automation. Significantly noted were pregnancy-related issues that put pressures on the female academics. This was further explained in detail in the interview part of the research.

Some of the respondents also noted the challenges in fulfilling childcare responsibilities and caring for extended family members. All respondents further acknowledged the negative effect of workload on their spousal relationships. However, none reported physical detachment from their children, a contrast to CS1. These results suggest deep relationship challenge, particularly for women balancing motherhood, marital expectations, and work performance. This aligns with Walby's (1990) gender regime theory, which highlights how institutional arrangements perpetuate gender inequality. Likewise, African feminist theory critiques the socio-cultural expectation that women are bound to childcare and caregiving responsibilities, even when engaged in formal employment. These dual frameworks expose the structural and cultural layers reinforcing WFC for African women in academia.

4.4.2.2. Direction of Work-Family Conflict

Most of the respondents said direction of WFC was work-to-family. Most respondents attributed this to workload pressure, particularly administrative and teaching duties. Notably, none of the respondents reported a family-to-work conflict, indicating that work encroaches upon their family life as woman are expected to carry out domestic obligations irrespective of their career (O'Laughlin & Bischoff, 2005). A smaller group identified bi-directional conflict, reflecting the struggle to meet domestic and professional demands at the same time. These findings reiterate Walby's position on public patriarchy that the workplace is gender bias and it is designed around male-centric assumptions of male workers being free from caregiving duties. African feminist perspectives further validate Walby's position on private patriarchy that women are expected to endure and perform domestic care under any circumstances (Ambe, 2022)

.4.4.2.3. WFC Management

Over half of the respondents expected job flexibility when joining the university, hoping it will enable them to manage WFC, however it was reported that these expectations were unmet. While some respondents did experience the flexibility they had hoped for, the gap between expectation and reality remained significant. African feminist emphasized that women's agency in WFC contexts is often curtailed not only by institutional failings but also by community and family norms that resist cultural change in gendered responsibilities (Nnaemeka, 1998). Other WFC management strategies used by the female academics were further discussed in the interview section.

4.4.3 Case Study 3

4.4.3.1. Workload and Family Demand

The demographic composition of the respondents is largely made up of mid-career to late-career female academics showing respondents with extensive institutional knowledge and deep family life insight to give experience into long-term WFC dynamics. Most respondents live with their families, providing a robust framework for examining the interaction between academic duties and domestic responsibilities, this confirms the family structure in the UK as discussed in section 2.1. Many of the respondents reported having no childcare responsibilities at this stage of their career. This suggests that some of the respondents' childcare burdens may have ended. Some other respondents said pet care/dog walking is a caregiving burden to them, this reflects a societal norm rooted in the UK animal welfare legislation and the emotional attachment to pet values, indicating a culturally specific expansion of what constitutes 'care work.'

Most respondents reported that they rarely experience excessive workload pressure while a few said they do frequently experience heavy workload. This contrasts sharply with CS1 and CS2, where workload was frequently reported by most respondents. The primary cause of workload in this case institution was identified as teaching, whereas examination activities were not seen as a burden which is likely due to greater administrative efficiency in the institution or efficient academic automation in the UK institution. Furthermore, domestic responsibilities, care for the elderly were stated as being affected by workload. This aligns with findings that unpaid domestic labour continues to be gendered and undervalued in most family homes in the UK Walby's gender regime theory provides critical insight into the public patriarchy that exist in the UK universities while African feminist theory, while less directly applicable to CS3, reminds us that gender inequality is not merely cultural but structurally embedded, and may be softened in contexts where there is greater state-supported care infrastructure, as seen in parts of the UK.

4.4.3.2. Direction of Work-Family Conflict

There is a distinct pattern in the perceived direction of conflict in CS3. Unlike CS1 and CS2, where work-to-family conflict dominated significantly, CS3 respondents identified the direction of their WFC as primarily family-to-work. This suggests that the institutional framework in the UK has impact on workload related pressure being better managed by the respondents, allowing family demands (including care for pets, elderly, or household management) to become the more prominent source of conflict. A smaller proportion of respondents described WFC as bi-directional, indicating a fluid and context-dependent interplay between work and family demands. Only a few respondents saw work as the dominant source of conflict, a sharp contrast to the Nigerian-based CS1 and CS2 findings. This reversal was investigated through Walby's framework, which distinguishes between domestic and public patriarchy in the interview section.

4.4.3.3. WFC Management

Over half of the respondents in CS3 expected their academic roles to offer high levels of flexibility when taking the job which may likely be influenced by both UK institutional culture and labour laws, they mostly met it. While many of the respondents reported dissatisfaction with their university's job flexibility policy, a majority expressed satisfaction with actual job flexibility. This suggests a good interplay between institutional policies and lived realities, and this were better expressed and addressed in the interview section.

4.4.4 Case Study 4

4.4.4.1. Workload and Family Demand

The demographic structure shows a predominance of mid-career and late-career female academics as respondents. The robust academic work histories and accumulated institutional knowledge provide valuable insights into the respondents lived experiences of WFC. A significant number of respondents reported having caregiving responsibilities, particularly childcare and pet care/dog walking. Some of the respondents said they occasionally care for live-in or extended family members. This report also shows that most respondents have smaller to moderate families, a structural factor that may shape the intensity and direction of family-related demands. Despite these caregiving roles, majority of the respondents indicated that they rarely experience excessive workload.

Teaching emerged as the primary cause of workload for nearly half the respondents, importantly, teaching combined with administrative responsibilities was reported by many as a compounding factor of workload pressure. This suggests that female academics often bear a dual administrative-teaching load. Many of the respondents reported that workload affects their caregiving duties, especially childcare. However, half of the respondents reported that workload gives them a sense of detachment from their children, underscoring the emotional consequences of WFC and its potential to reduce their job satisfaction and family bonding. The findings affirm that while CS4 exists within a public patriarchy, female academics continue to encounter gendered labour divisions where caregiving, domestic, and job excellence are simultaneously expected (Walby, 1990; Abbott, Wallace, & Tyler, 2005).

4.4.4.2. Direction of Work-Family Conflict

Half of the respondents perceived the direction of conflict to be family-to-work, suggesting that caregiving demands rather than job duties are the dominant source of their conflict. An additional quarter of respondents identified WFC as bi-directional, acknowledging that both family and work responsibilities are the causes of WFC.

4.4.4. 3. WFC Management

The respondents largely reported high expectations of work flexibility, suggesting that institutional culture and national policy (such as UK employment law) have influenced perceptions of work-life balance. Importantly, many respondents stated that their work flexibility expectations were met, indicating that practices of flexible working are largely effective within this institution. However, while structural flexibility is evidently present, it does not fully insulate respondents from WFC.

4.5 Summary

This survey showed clear patterns in the experience of WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria which reinforces the main argument of this thesis that WFC is shaped not only by institutional structures but also by gendered and cultural norms (Walby, 2004). The findings shows that the UK respondents reported high levels of institutional workload pressure which is particularly related to research expectations and administrative duties while Nigerian respondents reported a deeper intensity of conflict originating from family thereby reflecting deeply rooted socio-cultural expectations around women's caregiving roles.

One of the important findings was that many Nigerian female academics, despite experiencing economic constraints still had to understate additional income-generating responsibility outside their academic roles to afford the overhead cost of the extended family living with them and the payment for the required domestic help. These mitigating strategies were most times negotiated with their spouses which is a way to manage the patriarchal norms (Adisa et al., 2016). However, this additional external financial role also adds further burden which add to their overall WFC rather than relieving it. The various issues raised challenge the more optimistic views in African feminist theory which strongly emphasize the supportive role of the extended family networks in Africa (Nnaemeka, 2004).

In the UK, respondents basically depend on institutional policies or formal childcare while experiencing WFC. The direction of WFC experienced was more work-to-family and less entangled with extended family expectations. These variations suggest that while institutional workload plays a role in work-to-family and Family-to work contexts, the direction, intensity, and WFC management are mainly shaped by cultural norms around family, gender, and domestic duties.

This survey therefore illuminates the cultural and structural dimensions of WFC and sets the thematic framework for further qualitative interviews of the four case studies which probe deeper into how these women confront and manage WFC. Whilst the survey as quantitative part of the case studies helped collect demographic data and comparable data to explore WFC issues at the country and institutional levels, the next case study chapters focused on the qualitative interview analysis which revealed the lived experiences of the female academics and the hidden costs of their coping strategies at the individual level. Combining both quantitative and qualitative elements in the case studies further contributes to the theoretical argument that the existing theoretical frameworks on Walby's patriarchy and African feminism need to be critically approached to adequately capture the lived realities of academic women in different patriarchal contexts.

Chapter 5 Case Study 1

5.0   Introduction

All the case study chapters of this research present the qualitative aspect of the study which is based on an in-depth interview conducted with female academics in the UK and Nigeria. Leveraging on the research findings from the survey discussed in the previous chapter, case study chapters deepen the understanding of the cultural and structural views of WFC by exploring how women experience, interpret, and negotiate various pressures in their daily family and work lives. While the survey revealed cross-national differences in the intensity and direction of WFC in the two countries, Nigerian female academics are found to be more burdened by work-to-family conflict and the UK women more impacted by institutional workload. The four case study chapters present an analysis of the interviews to provide the required deep understanding of the reason these patterns emerge and how the female academics responded to them. This research interview is the qualitative aspect of this study, necessary to develop the thesis's central argument: that WFC is not just an outcome of individual or institutional pressures, but it is also shaped by rooted patriarchal norms embedded in both academia and the family structures.

The case studies' interview analysis was guided by Sylvia Walby's (1990) theory of private and public patriarchy, which helps in pointing to how family and institutional structures maintain gender inequality, and how African feminist critiques (e.g., Nnaemeka, 2004), pointed out negotiation in patriarchal contexts. However, the experience of Nigerian female academics negates the assumption of the African feminist, that extended family structure are certainly supportive, rather many participants pointed that the extended family obligations and expectations increase their financial burdens.

Nine key themes structure these case study chapters. The themes discussed are participants' work history/career level, family dynamics, perception of academic institution, sources of work WFC, academic workload and family demand, direction of conflict, WFC mitigation, perception of national and institutional work policies/recommendation and success/challenges experienced. Together, these themes allow for a fuller and more nuanced understanding of WFC among female academics in the four case universities, highlighting how patriarchies and gender regimes intersect with institutional cultures and national norms. The survey data in Case Study 1 provided a broad overview of patterns, frequencies, and interface of WFC. However, surveys alone may not fully capture the contextual and lived experiences of the female academics on WFC. By integrating the interview findings, which offer in depth, narrative-based insights to WFC by the participants, this research moves beyond surface-level correlations to explain why and how these patterns occur within the institutional and cultural setting of case study universities. Synthesizing both data sets enables methodological triangulation, which

strengthens the validity and credibility of the findings (Decrop, 1999). When both survey and interview data converge on similar themes, this reinforces the robustness of the conclusions drawn. However, variation between the two sources can show important tensions, contradictions, or unexamined variables, prompting deeper critical analysis. Survey responses may indicate the extent of WFC, but interviews help contextualise these results within specific academic environments (e.g., policies, department cultures, leadership support). For example, the survey data suggested high WFC situation in the case study institutions, the interview narratives further clarified the sources of the WFC to whether be from institutional workload norms, cultural gender expectations, or lack of support mechanisms

5.1   Overview of Case Study 1 (CS1) Government University, Nigeria

Case study 1 focuses on a government-owned institution located in southern Nigeria. Established in 1975 as a campus of a prominent Southeast Nigerian University, it gained autonomy in 1979. The university has made some important growth over the years of establishment, offering a wide range of courses in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Their commitment to academic excellence is well known. The University student population as of 2024 is approximately 40,600, making it one of the biggest government institutions in Nigeria in terms of enrolment. Presently, the university units are: 1 postgraduate school, 1 college, 20 faculties, 3 academic centres, 3 institutes and 116 departments. These units deliver diverse academic programs covering the Arts, Sciences, Engineering, Law, Medicine, Agriculture, Social Sciences, and Management Studies. Specialized faculties, such as Biological Sciences, Allied Medical Sciences, and Oceanography, are particularly well-regarded for their contributions to research. To support this diverse student body, the university offers extensive facilities and resources, including academic advising and mentoring programs and access to well-equipped research libraries. The University is academically ranked in the top 30 Nigerian universities, and top 150 ranking in Africa, around 5000 globally. These rankings reflect its competitive positioning within Nigeria and on the broader African continent. The University prioritizes practical and professional education, equipping graduates with the skills necessary for success in various endeavours with a focus on promoting leadership, innovation and community engagement which has affirmed its reputation as a cornerstone of Nigeria's educational landscape (World Scholarship Forum, 2024). The university operates within a context marked by significant political and economic challenges, including frequent industrial actions by unions such as: Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Non-Academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU) and Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU). These industrial actions by the university staff often comes from grievances related to: Unpaid salaries, inadequate university funding and government's failure to fulfil welfare agreements, for instance, in 2022, ASUU initiated a prolonged strike to demand for better university funding and improved academics working conditions, highlighting systemic issues

within Nigeria's higher education sector (Chukwudi and Idowu, 2021). Similarly, NASU and SSANU strikes over unpaid salaries, and discriminatory practices have disrupted academic activities, underscoring the urgent need for comprehensive reforms. Despite interventions, these challenges remain largely unresolved, signalling the potential for future disruptions.

Government universities in Nigeria, typically provide better job flexibility for academic staff compared to private universities. According to Wallace (2003), flexibility depends on actual work practices of the academia in the institution and how they undertake flexibility of the working hours, where the work takes place and conditions. CS1 participants stated that this flexibility enables them to allocate time for research, professional development, and work-life balance (Eletu, 2023). Publicly available information on gender equality and work-family balance initiatives specific to the University is limited. However, CS1 generally aligns with Nigeria national policies promoting gender inclusivity. These include: The National Gender Policy which aims to eliminate gender-based discrimination and foster equal opportunities and international agreements, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (Babawale and Tadese, 2023). At the institutional level, the National Universities Commission (NUC) encourages universities to adopt gender-sensitive policies (Adepoju, 2022). While detailed internal policies for the University are not readily available, we can safely conclude that the institution aligns with these frameworks to try to create an inclusive environment. The University serves as a vital case study for understanding the complexities of Nigeria's higher education sector. Its history, scale, and role in addressing national challenges provide valuable insights into the dynamics of government universities in the country.

5.2   The Interview Analysis

This section examines thematic analysis of the interview data using the themes that arose from the interviews held with six (6) female academic staff of the university who indicated their interest in taking part in the interview session.

5.2.1   Work History/Career Level

Out of the six participants interviewed, four of them identified as early-career academics with less than 4 years of work experience. The remaining two identified as senior academic staff with a longer work experience in academia. One of the early-career researchers, although new to academia, holds membership in some professional bodies while another has prior career experience in academia through contractual employment at a foreign private university before joining the government university. The mix of early-career and senior academics, coupled with diverse experiences such as professional memberships and prior contractual roles, highlights a heterogeneous group with unique perspectives on academic work, professional growth, and institutional dynamics. This diverse

experience enriches the study's insights into academic experiences and professional trajectories in a government university setting.

5.2.2 Family Dynamics

One of the themes that arose from the interviews was family dynamics. Some participants said they married early hence they have older supportive children, and they also have relatives living and depending on them. This is echoed in the response from Participant 4 (Ln 26-28) which reads:

> *"Wow! Family life? Just let me say a little, my family of about maybe four. Total, two adults, two dependents. And it's okay, a beautiful one, a good one for me anyway. So, I think I'm okay with it. I'm very fine with it. Actually."*

Similarly, other participants interviewed maintained that they have supportive spouses, and their family life is interesting and exciting, even though one of the participants decried being in a challenging child-care/husband situation. In the words of Participant 5:

> *"I'm married. Yes. Married. I have two kids. Two very demanding kids. They're like 100 percent. The workload at home, even though I have two kids, it's very demanding, very demanding, because I have a demanding husband as well, who wants things to be done in a particular way. And if it is not done, in the way that he likes, you know, he will feel very uncomfortable. So, I will just say, my family life is demanding (Ln 48-52)".*

This implies that the participants generally have family lives characterized by early marriages, supportive relationships, and dependents. Participant 5 view aligns with Walby's concept of "private patriarchy" which states that women face distinct private or domestic constraints within their houses in the context of gender production (Walby, 1992).

In many Nigerian homes, conventional gender norms continue to underscore a woman's principal responsibilities in child-rearing and domestic duties which limits her availability for professional obligations. Most participants expressed satisfaction with their family situations, citing cooperation from older children and spouses. However, there are instances where the family dynamic is more demanding, as evidenced by Participant 3, who described the challenges of balancing childcare and a spouse with high expectations.

> *''One, because I didn't have help. Is not easy for a career person not to have help. But in my case, I didn't have. So, I have to do and the kids are still small. So, I had to do all those house chores all alone. And it doesn't give me time to do, apart from the fact that I have to teach. It has affected my research aspect of life. Because at times after the house chores, and teaching, you're tired, you cannot stay up again. In short, psychologically, you're drained''.*

Participant 3 expression confirm the institutionalized sexism and challenges Nigerian female academics face between balancing their professional and personal lives (Nwagbara, 2020). There is the need to investigate the gender inequalities in Nigeria and establish a more equitable work environment for female academics in Nigeria.

Family financial needs require regular and assured income which means there is a need for job security. However, the data revealed that these women do engage in side-line money-generating businesses, such as [consultancy work, high school home teaching], emphasizing pressure and over reliance on their salaries. The need to earn extra money to support their families highlights the financial pressures faced by female academics in CS1. This context underlines the importance of a stable income to manage their family responsibilities effectively, particularly given the early marriages and extended family dependencies that characterize their lives.

5.2.3 Perception of Academic Institution

Most of the participants explained that they had not worked for a private university; even though some of them expressed a willingness to transfer their services to private institutions due to frequent industrial strike often experienced in the government institutions in Nigeria. The effect of the strike is eroding some of the importance of working for a government university such as, steady income, work-time flexibility, and structured environment. In the words of Participant 3:

> *"But because of what is happening now in Nigeria, the strike and you know, a lot of acting negative impacts that are affecting government institution. If you ask me now presently, I'll prefer a private institution (PU3 Ln 57-59)."*

In the same way, some of the participants believed that academic work at their university is demanding and time-consuming even though it comes with little pay. To buttress this point, Participant 5 maintained that:

> *"Well, for me, I'll say it's demanding because there's a lot of female academic, you know, tends to do these days, you know, you do one thing and then before you know it, they're exposing you to new things. So, the demand is always there. The demand is always there. So, I'll say it's demanding (PU5 Ln 68-70)."*

This quote by Participant 5 underscores the participants' perceptions of academic work as highly demanding and under-compensated, emphasizing the constant and evolving workload faced by female academics, which creates a persistently high demand for their time and energy. As established in the survey (Chapter 4.3.1.1), 42.1% of the respondents reported that workload pressure impacts their ability to perform regular household chores. This view aligns with the cultural norms and societal expectations on women in Nigeria (Aina, 1998). The constant labour strike that disrupts academic

calendar and the workload pressure which is seen to be less in the private university suggests that some female academics in CS1 prefer the private university due to their perceived stability and reduced disruptions. Together, these perspectives reflect the challenging dynamics of academic work in Nigerian government universities, marked by heavy responsibilities, insufficient pay, and systemic issues in government institutions. The perception of academic institution aligns with the literature review which stated that higher education institutions in Nigeria have been witnessing deteriorating infrastructure, and brain drain as qualified academics sought opportunities abroad due to the higher education challenges (Saint, Hartnett & Strassner, 2003).

5.2.4 Sources of Work-Family Conflict

The data reveals that most of the interviewed participants in CS1 undergo a pervasive conflict between their work and family roles, such as the conflict between childcare and academic responsibilities like doctoral commitments. According to Participant 3:

> *"Apart from the striking thing, every time, because I need to be at the office, I need to carry out research. The research, that you know, we carry out research almost every day of our lives. As academics, as female academics in the university we need to research to teach the students, we need to research for documentation purposes so that we can be promoted. We need to just keep researching and then it's hectic when you want to marry it with the family life. Because you need to cook for the children, you need to be there for them, you need to drop them off, you need to pick them up where you don't have a school bus because I'm not too okay with a stranger picking up and dropping them (PU3 Ln 68-74)".*

The viewpoint of Participant 3 suggests that research is a central and multifaceted responsibility for female academics regardless of discipline because it shapes both their professional and personal lives. Academic research is described as an indispensable activity required for teaching, documentation, and career progression, emphasizing its pivotal role in the academic profession. However, participants highlighted the challenges of balancing these research demands with family responsibilities. This dual burden underscores the inherent tension between the professional expectations placed on female academics and their societal roles, illustrating the complexity of work-life integration in academia. The participants' account also reveals a sense of responsibility in managing their family life, further compounding the pressures of academic research. The participants further decried that they are having to deal with too many responsibilities both at the workplace and with family, which culminates in substantial conflict. In the words of Participant 5:

> *"Basically, when I started my Ph.D. program, yes, I thought I was balancing properly until the Ph.D. program started and I discovered that there's a lot, you know, that I need to put into the PhD to be able to succeed. So, I'm right now and I'm finding it very difficult to balance my*

work life, and family life like, I am a Christian, a devoted Christian. But right now, I've noticed that my Christian life is dwindling because of the PhD, I used to work into the night, you know, then my workload as a teacher in the university, as an exam officer, all of that, combined, makes it very demanding (PU5 Ln 78-83)".

In this viewpoint, Participant 5 expresses significant concern over how the overwhelming demands of her Ph.D. program, coupled with her workload as a university lecturer and exam officer, have adversely affected her religious faith, which she described as central to their identity. She highlights the intensity of her academic responsibilities, particularly working late into the night, which leaves her with little time or energy to engage in spiritual practices, leading to what she described as a "dwindling" Christian life. This viewpoint reflects the emotional strain of trying to balance multiple demanding roles such as academic, professional, and personal while grappling with the guilt and frustration of not living up to her spiritual commitments. The participant's experience illustrates the broader challenge of role conflict, where the pressures of professional and academic life disrupt deeply valued aspects of personal identity, such as faith, underscoring the need for institutions to consider holistic support mechanisms that address spiritual and emotional well-being alongside academic and professional expectations. It also aligns with African feminism's view on African culture and customs emphasis on motherhood as an essential component of African society for sustainability of cultural, economic, and religious existence (Amadiume, 1987)

5.2.5 Academic Workload and Family Demands

The type of workloads experienced by female academics was discussed. From the interview, teaching, examination invigilation, script marking and grading, and research writing were identified as the most prevailing forms of academic workload female academics encounter on the job. This is in-line with the survey (Chapter 4.3.1.2) respondents that stated that workload pressure teaching (28.9%) and administrative work (23.7%) responsibilities (such as committee membership, admin duties, exam officer, and meetings) are dominant forms of academic workload they must bear in their work. Participant 1 buttressed this by maintaining that:

"But then, apart from the studying aspect, the workload was having to teach. Yeah, having to, of course, invigilate examinations, mark them, and try to submit results during specified periods. Because you're always given a deadline to do certain things. And mostly other activities from the different committees I was added to, almost every time there's a grant the committee is trying to apply for and I'm like, yeah, more like the focal person (PU1 Ln 96-97)".

Increasingly, senior academics take on additional significant responsibilities such as research administration, and leadership positions. They do this because the structural and systemic challenges within Nigerian government universities, including underfunding, administrative inefficiencies, and a

lack of dedicated administrative personnel, often necessitate the delegation of administrative and leadership responsibilities to senior academics (Saint, Hartnett & Strassner, 2003). This corroborated the literature review on funding crisis in Nigerian government universities which stated that Nigerian higher education institutions utilise academics in administrative roles while relying on tuition fees and external grants to subsidise the government funding (Akinyemi, Ofem & Ikuenomore, 2012). Participant 3 expressed this viewpoint by maintaining that:

> *"If you're talking about extra workload, we have an extra workload that also eats into our time, that's like the some of the administrative work that is been assigned to academic staff. For example, we have an examination officer, and quality assurance officer, of which I'm also a part. At times, we are being called to make sure records are, you know, in place and intact (PU3 Ln 111-114)".*

The combination of these duties often results in a heavier workload, with time demands from both academic and non-academic tasks and Family workload that is also significant, leading to a multifaceted and often overwhelming professional burden. The interviews revealed that besides child/husband care, female academics shoulder several other family obligations such as financial responsibility, house chores (making meals, washing), prayer leading/counselling, and assisting children in learning after school. These family obligations are viewed as demanding coupled with the workload at the office which includes several academic and non-academic responsibilities. In the words of Participant 4:

> *"Ah, family obligations, of course, I have obligations to my husband, I have obligations to my kids (PU 4 Ln 133).*

> She further explained that: *"For me every other thing comes secondary because I believe that if I succeed with these kids, I think even if I don't do any other success, I will have peace of mind. It's appalling to hear, oh these kids turned out wrongly because the Parent didn't do a good job or this kid turned out right, because the parent did a fantastic job (PU4 142-145)".*

The viewpoint by Participant 4 explained that childcare and support is a critical family obligation for female academics in CS1, particularly of societal and cultural expectations in the country which mandate parents to tend to their children and seen as a hallmark of parental success. This is in line with the literature that established Nigeria as a patriarchal society with rigid gender role and cultural norms where women must prioritise family responsibilities along their professional obligations (Adisa *et al, 2019*). This position was further corroborated by participant 1 who said:

> *''I didn't have help. Is not easy for a career person not to have help. But in my case, I didn't have. So, I have to do and the kids are still small. So, I had to do all those house chores all*

alone. And it doesn't give me time to do, apart from the fact that I have to teach. It has affected my research aspect of life. Because at times after the house chores, and teaching, you're tired, you cannot stay up again. In short, psychologically, you're drained''

Hence, female academics in CS1 usually place childcare and family responsibilities over other obligations, sailing the twofold pressure of societal expectations and cultural norms that place successful parenting and personal and professional development on the same pedestal, which can further aggravate their WFC. These obligations, especially when combined with their academic and non-academic workload at the University are demanding.

These experiences can be likened to the burden of the "second shift," wherein domestic workload such as house chores are coupled with professional teaching acting like a second job. The pressure of the second shift often forces academics to prioritize immediate and deadline-driven tasks at the expense of longer-term commitments like research, which, despite being crucial for career advancement, lacks the urgency to compete with more pressing daily demands. In other words, the dual burden of managing household responsibilities and fulfilling teaching duties compels academics to sacrifice research activities, as these lack immediate deadlines and are often deprioritized in favour of tasks that require urgent attention or have more immediate consequences. This aligns with Walby's understanding of private patriarchy through "production relations in the household." where women in Nigeria are expected to undertake unpaid domestic chores and responsibilities (Walby 1997). The combination of both family and academic workloads doesn't only effect women's career development by curtailing activities which aide promotion. It also effects women's satisfaction with their home lives. Family obligations was a major subject in the interviews. The recurring theme emerging from the interviews is "inadequate time for the family". This means that due to excessive workload at the office, female academics in CS1 cannot commit sufficient time for their family obligations. This is encapsulated in the viewpoint of Participant 1, who maintained that:

"There's always work to do. There's always, always work to do and that definitely creeps into maybe time I should spend with my son or my husband. You know, fulfil other sexual responsibilities. You're tired, because it's been a hard day at work. You still need to wake up at night and work. And so, yeah sometimes it affects one's sexual life and one's family life as well. I think, maybe where it hits me that this was really, really becoming intense was when my son would just you know, he wakes up every morning and he sees me on the desk, it became a routine for him. He wakes up, he can't wake up and see me on the bed with him. He wakes up, and he knows I'm at the desk, you know, with my computer (PU1 Ln 150-151)."

Female academics find themselves facing challenges such as difficulty in fulfilling marital obligations, missing out on family recreational activities and the need to work long night hours, which negatively

affect their overall family dynamics. The exhaustion from their workloads also slows down their personal and professional progress, highlighting the strain on their family life and well-being. This assertion goes along with patriarchal gender roles with cultural norms that request women to put familial responsibilities ahead of their professional obligations (Adisa *et al, 2019*).

5.2.6 Direction of work-family conflict

The direction of WFC encountered by female academics in CS1 was observed to be both work-related and family related. Factors such as unconducive work conditions/policies and home environment sociocultural challenges/expectations contribute to work-family conflict by compelling participants to transfer family pressures to work. In the words of Participant 4, an early-career academic:

> *"I think the conflict, the conflict come from the family here because those things don't have timing. Those things don't have timing. But work, work has season, work has time. We are not marking scripts all through. We're not marking we're not teaching all through. We don't even do this research all through the year (PU4 225-228)".* The participant also added that: *"But I would say I think the whole thing comes more from the family side (PU4 234)."*

Other Participants, such as Participant 1 maintained that the conflict also comes from work-related factors:

> *"It's work-related. Actually, it's more of the work affecting the family. Yeah, I have say, if my life was to say is 100%. How many percent is work and how many is family? I would say 80% is work (PU1 Ln 172-173)."*

This implies that with respect to the direction of WFC encountered by female academics in CS1, the conflict arises from both family-related and work-related factors. Some participants, such as Participant 4, emphasized that family pressures are due to their unpredictability and lack of timing, often spill over into work responsibilities. On the other hand, others, like Participant 1, pointed out that work demands, particularly the intensity of academic responsibilities, take a dominant role in creating conflict, significantly affecting family life. The balance of work and family pressures varies, with some viewing family as the primary source of conflict, while others see work as the main contributor.

5.2.7 Work-Family Conflict Mitigation

CS1 Participants expressed how they navigate WFC which includes various act of negotiation and planning. The methods used are delegation, building a support system, proactive planning, drawing on lessons from the pandemic. In the survey (Chapter 4.3.3.1) , work flexibility has been what 52.6% of them were expecting to use in managing WFC. However, only 16% respondents said the expectation of work was met, while majority, 84%, said their expectations were not met (Chapter 4.3.3.2). The female academics in CS1 therefor result to collectivism for mutual collaboration to ensure the efficient

running of the house which is a common occurrence in African society (Mikell, 1997). This social interaction remains important in Nigeria as it shapes African feminists view on the dynamics among female homes. Delegation, negotiation and compromise are often used by African women to address the patriarchal norms with focus on the role of community dynamics in helping women in WFC mitigation (Nnaemeka,1998)**.** Delegation, including house chores scheduling and the employment of a domestic worker/ family member was the most dominant strategy popular among the participants. As earlier stated in the literature, Nigerian female academics often utilize housemaids to mitigate WFC. These housemaids are paid domestic workers (Taiwo & Ajayi, 2013), and they assist with household tasks which are delegated to them by the female academic.

In the words of Participant 1, an early-career academic:

> *"Well, I think my major strategy has been to delegate. That's been the major strategy I use, delegate. At work, I tried to figure out who could handle certain tasks. So, if I'm given something to do, I usually, you know, try to look out for someone in the group who maybe I can just train to show, Oh! do this (PU1 Ln 73-75)".*

Along with delegation, Participant 4 emphasized the value of building supportive interpersonal relationships with other parents in dealing with this conflict by maintaining that:

> *"Yeah, I seriously try and still find a way of asking for help when the need arises. And that's why it's important that as young parents, whether in academics or wherever, it's important that you should always have someone who can say okay, my kids can stay with you and it's safe. Now it's very important that you're sure of the persons involved. Like because I've had times that I can run to meet up with getting them from school and I'm like, okay, please, this person helps me pick this kid. Let them stay with you till about 4 pm-5 pm, and I'm rest assured that they will eat lunch, they'll probably have a bath before I get to them (PU4 Ln 100-106)."*

The quote by Participant 4 entails that managing childcare responsibilities while working in academia or other demanding professions often requires seeking external assistance from a trusted support system. The significance of having reliable individuals within their social network, such as family members, close friends, or housemaids, who can provide temporary care for their children in situations where the women are unable to fulfil these responsibilities personally emphasizes the importance of being confident in the trustworthiness and dependability of the person offering support, underlining the essential role of social networks in balancing work and family life. This assertion aligns with the African feminism that address the practical and everyday family issues of African women (Cruz, 2015) and the challenges along with the strategies used to surmount them through their initiatives (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994).

Participants were also asked to comment on the strategies they found effective in reducing WFC. Forward planning and being proactive are some of the most dominant strategies popular among female academics in CS1. In the words of Participant 4:

"You need to know what is urgent and important. We have a whole lot of other things that are also important. But those things that are urgent and important, just get it done, which is to get back to the other important things. So sincerely. Getting things done in record time really gives me a lot of joy. Because I believe when I do that, I also have some good timing to myself to enjoy my life (PU4 331-335)."

Participant 3 also found daily planning a useful coping strategy. By training her children to rise early she has been able to reduce tensions:

*"Okay, what has been helping me this far, it's my, is the fact that I have a to-do, a daily to-do list. Yes, I set out the time I need to drop them, off first the time I need to wake because if I don't meet that time, they may end up going to school late, because I, as a person I tried teaching them that early to rise thing right from now (PU3 Ln*Other useful strategies applied include doing nothing outside their control, doing what is convenient for them and not taking office work back to their homes. Participant 6 emphasized this point by maintaining that:

"I have an office now. What I do is, I try not to bring my work home. Apart from my personal work, like that's my PhD work, and my thesis I don't bring anything work-related home. So, once I'm home, I know that I'm just going to focus on my family life. And then when I'm at work, it's just work. So that's how I've been able to address that issue (PU6 Ln 151-154)."

This implies that for the strategies adopted by female academics in CS1 to mitigate the prospects of WFC, careful planning and prioritization play a significant role. Female academics often focus on completing urgent and important tasks to manage their time effectively, as emphasized by Participant 4. Additionally, they tend to establish clear boundaries between work and family life, such as refraining from bringing office work home and engaging only in tasks within their control. This approach helps them maintain a balance between professional and personal responsibilities, as seen in Participant 6's strategy of dedicating home time exclusively to family.

Participants discussed the strategies they applied to balance teaching and research activities during the pandemic era which continued to be useful. The interview data shows that most of the participants refrained from teaching and research activities during the pandemic period, while others resorted to online teaching and virtual meetings to continue these activities. In the words of Participant 2:

"During the pandemic, we were not teaching. In short, just like in the Western country, they used online, they made provision to teach their students online. But as Nigeria is nothing, we closed up everything. We closed up everything (PU2 Ln 204-206)."

Also, Participant 3 emphasized the role of internet and virtual systems during the pandemic and the continuing benefits of virtual communication. to

"The use of ICT was more that's high standing e-virtual learning, and the school even sponsored, I'll give a plus to the school decision for that, they even sponsored a lot of academic staff to encourage the virtual learning as a result of the pandemic. I was one of the beneficiaries to that. So, it has helped me, helped my students, even till date, we still have that platform active, they ask question, I drop, drop comments and all that. So that's one (PU3 Ln 320-324)".

5.2.8 Perception of National and Institutional Work Policies and Recommendation

Female academics in CS1 expressed the fact that they enjoy a more flexible work schedule than their private university counterparts. The participants tend to enjoy greater work schedule flexibility than their CS2 counterparts. As captured by participant 1:

"I think working for a government establishment, you have a little more time to yourself, is not that much time consuming when you compare it with your counterparts in the private establishment, not only university, private establishments. So, I prefer working in a government place (PU2 Ln 48-49)".

This entails that CS1 female academics have the liberty to control their time. Deciding when and how to fulfil their professional obligations, such as attending lectures without facing stringent oversight or fear of reprimand. Participant 1 highlights that in government universities, there is less emphasis on rigid adherence to schedules, allowing academics the freedom to manage their work-life balance more flexibly. This flexibility could be seen as an essential coping mechanism considering the considerable pressures female academics face such as managing study-work tension and navigating the institution policies. As established in the survey, 84% of the respondents said their work flexibility expectations were not met (Figure 4.3.3.2). This pointed to the absence of institutional backing for flexible work arrangements in CS1 which could have impact on their satisfaction and job commitment.

Furthermore, participant 2 reinforced this perception by comparing the less demanding time commitments in government institutions with the more intense expectations of private establishments. This flexibility is viewed as a significant advantage, especially in helping female academics maintain a balance between professional responsibilities and personal commitments that might otherwise be compromised in private settings. The participants maintained that work policy implementation is not in

existence as there is no national policy awareness on this issue even as most of the policies are masculine-centred and unfriendly to females. This is buttressed by the viewpoints of Participant 4, who maintained that:

> *"But apart from that, basically, I don't know of any financial assistance, extra remuneration for female workers, I don't know of any extra, in fact the same thing that worked for the male people are the same thing that work for the other people, the only difference most times is the maternity leave that I have actually seen (PU4 Ln 274-277)".*

On this same issue of masculine-centered policies, Participant 4 further stressed that:

> *"That's why I say that apart from maternity leave, I don't see any other thing that basically any policy that helps the women so much both in the government and private institutions. I don't see any (PU4 Ln 405-407)."*

Consequently, the participants believed that existing policies concerning work policy in government are unfair to female academics, thereby contributing to work laxity. In the words of Participant 1:

> *"So that's why you come to the government university, you see how things are. But you can't try that in the private university because it's someone's [private] business. And you have to treat it as such (PU1 Ln 242-244)."*

In this government university, there is little awareness of national policies that support female academics, and existing policies are seen as identical to those for men, with the only notable exception being maternity leave. Participants expressed that these policies are unfair and contribute to a lack of motivation among female academics. This aligns with the literature discussing that Nigeria government has limited flexible work policies which put burden on female academics (Obayelu & Chime, 2020).

Regarding the effect of institutional policies on work-family balance, the data reveals that the institutional policies relating to work-family balance for female academics are not adequate and effective, because they are too rigid, selective in nature, and do not offer substantial resources to support them. When questioned about the adequacy of the current institutional policies in her institution, Participant 5 responded:

> *"No. They are too rigid."*

Also, Participant 4 decried that:

> *"I don't think there's any daycare that is in close proximity of any office space. I will not feel comfortable to have to travel five minutes driving now not even walking to go places my six-*

month old baby in a creche of five-month-old baby in a day-care, I would have felt more comfortable that in this block of building, maybe two storey where my office is located. We don't have that. It makes people this is why we have a lot of having some mothers have to carry their babies into the office, which of course it's not healthy too. But it's more like what should I do? I have to do something just to help the situation (PU4 Ln 364-373)".

Participant 4 implies that the lack of accessible and proximate day-care facilities within CS1 compels many female academics to bring their children to their workplaces, despite the challenges this poses. She expressed discomfort with the idea of traveling even short distances to a day-care facility, particularly with a young baby, highlighting concerns about convenience and safety. This situation is further complicated by broader issues such as insecurity which may make having children closer feel like the safer option. Her statement,

"I would have felt more comfortable that in this block of building...we don't have that,"

underscores the pressing need for onsite childcare facilities to support working mothers. This absence leaves female academics with no choice but to juggle their professional responsibilities alongside caregiving, a practice she acknowledges as being unhealthy but unavoidable given the current circumstances (PU4 Ln 364-373). Similarly, Participant 6 stressed that:

"The only institutional policy I know that could be adequate for work-family life is that of the maternity leave, which not every female academic enjoys because you have people who have already finished having their children. The policy still doesn't cover people who are…So the policy does not consider…or let's say women who are who have finished having children who or who have passed childbearing age cannot enjoy that policy (PU6 Ln 269-270)"

This implies that for the effect of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics in CS1, the existing policies are inadequate and ineffective. The policies are considered non-flexible and selective, and unable to provide significant support for work-family balance. For instance, mothers with young children are forced to bring their babies into their workspaces due to a lack of accessible day care facilities close to academic offices and this is neither ideal nor conducive. Furthermore, while maternity leave is one of the few supportive policies, it does not benefit all female academics, particularly those who have completed their childbearing years. Thus, the policies are not comprehensive or inclusive enough to address the diverse needs of female academics.

During the interview, the participants were asked to offer policy recommendations for female academics' work-family balance. The interviews shows that several recommendations have been offered by female academics including that females should work a smaller number of days/hours than males; institutions should be considerate in allocating responsibilities to females; the establishment of

staff clubs for female lecturers; the establishment of childcare facilities for working mothers to bond with their kids; among others. Overall, participants recommended that the work environment for female academics in CS1 be improved, allowing for more leave policies, timely communication of deadlines to allow ample time for compliance, and the exclusion of females from weekend/early-morning lectures. According to Participant 3:

> *"If a policy like three times working, three times working days for the female academics, then five times for the male. It'll be fine (PU3 Ln 289-291)".*

Also, Participant 6 emphasized that:

> *"If the management can do something about that, just to allow female academics more time, maybe the time, the number of hours they put in at work should be less than what their male counterparts put in. It will help (PU6 Ln 286-287)."*

Similarly, Participant 4 added that:

> *"One, if we can get a day-care, at least in proximity, for instance, my institution is a big one, I'm not expecting that we get just one day-care at least in different angles. Let's just have a day-care. So, that a mother is not like saying, oh, I can't come to school today because I need to take care of my kid. And then tomorrow, you see her as incompetent (PU4 Ln 414-418)."*

This implies that there is a strong call for gender-sensitive policies concerning the policy recommendations for female academics' work-family balance CS1. Female academics advocate for reduced working days or hours compared to their male counterparts, more thoughtful allocation of responsibilities, and the establishment of supportive structures such as staff clubs and childcare facilities. Additionally, participants highlighted the need for flexible leave policies, timely communication of deadlines, and exclusion from the weekend or early-morning lectures to accommodate family responsibilities better. These recommendations aim to create a more supportive and inclusive work environment for female academics in CS1.

The expectation to balance work and home roles without adequate government and institutional support contributes to the increase in WFC. Walby's framework of public and private patriarchy (1990) offers a perspective to examine the private patriarchal systems (domestic authority) and how it influenced modern gender relations. However, there are some limitations to earlier Walby's theory (1990) when applying her theory to comparative socio-cultural contexts like Nigeria. One of the gaps in Walby's theory was the limited engagement with intersectionality, even though she centralised gender as a key aspect of inequality but she initially treated it in isolation from other intersection. African feminists afterwards challenged these assumptions by stating that patriarchy operates in

different way across different societies such as in Nigeria (Oyewunmi, 1997). African feminists in addressing Walby's limitations pointed to the importance of family, community relation, and collaboration in supporting women in their daily domestic responsibilities. These collective empowerments assist career women like the female academics in CS1 in WFC.

5.2.9 Success and Challenges Experienced

Participants also talked about the success experienced as female academics in CS1. The interview data shows that the completion of doctoral studies on schedule and grants acquisition appear to be the highest form of success experienced and valued by female academics. Also, psychological satisfaction (manifested in form of compliments/award from students), the ability to solve students' academic problems are other forms ofsuccess these academics experience. In the words of Participant 4:

> *"But I think eventually what pleased me was that I could finish my schoolwork in record time. And it's really very pleasing most times that even when we have a timeline to achieve a particular task, and that time it seems like, oh, so much struggle short timing to do something, but we eventually get it done (PU4 Ln 323-326)."*

Participant 1 added that:

> *"Okay, maybe it's having to always win certain grants or win certain funded opportunities, and then, you know, meet the school and tell them, okay, "I'm going here to represent UniXX in this this this". And then yeah, they find you some funds, then I'll go. Yeah, something like that. So it's, it's been, it's been awesome, because somehow that has made me to like to stand out in the department and in the institution (PU1 Ln 251-255)."*

For Participant 1, the personal recognition and reputational standing she gets from work makes her proud and can be a source of success. This implies that concerning the success experienced by female academics in CS1, timely completion of doctoral studies and the acquisition of grants are seen as the most significant achievements. These accomplishments not only mark professional milestones but also bring psychological satisfaction, such as recognition from students, successful government action records, and the ability to assist students academically. Personal narratives from participants highlight that overcoming challenges to meet deadlines and securing grants enhances their sense of accomplishment and helps them stand out within their institutions.

For female academics in CS1, negligence of family and unfair deadlines to complete tasks are the most pressing challenges they experience. Other pressing challenges include the difficulty in combining teaching with comprehensive examinations, and constant management requirements. These challenges greatly contribute to the prevalence of lack of work-life balance experienced by these academic staff. In the words of Participant 4:

"Yeah, that was a bit of a struggle. Oh, my family suffered that time. Yeah, you know, you can't always eat your cake and have it. My family had a bit of a heat that times, it was a bit of a heat for them (PU4 Ln 322-323)."

Participant 5 also added that:

"I will attribute it to being an exam officer in my university, especially with the new VC, she came up with certain policies, you know, that doesn't suit, especially female lecturers, you know, all we saw were deadlines, deadlines, deadlines, no lifeline. You'll be given a certain time, on short notice to complete a certain task as if you are not a human being as if you are a robot. In fact, that period was really very challenging for me. I developed headache because of trying to meet up with deadlines, and most of these deadlines, you know, were not actually my fault, but some of the examiners brought their results late and I was still given the short time to post these results. So, I'll say that period of trying to post results and ensure we meet up to the VC's deadline was my most challenging time (PU5 Ln 243-251)".

This implies that, for the challenges encountered by female academic in CS1, the combined pressures of family obligations and immense professional deadlines significantly disrupt their work-life balance. Participant 4 described the toll this imbalance takes on family life, noting that her family *"had a bit of a heat,"* emphasizing the strain placed on personal relationships (PU4 Ln 322-323). Similarly, Participant 5 highlighted the intense stress caused by short-notice deadlines, particularly in her role as an exam officer, where she faced constant pressure to meet rigid timelines set by institutional policies. She recounted how these demands, often exacerbated by delays from other examiners, left her feeling dehumanize and physically unwell, stating,

"I developed headache because of trying to meet up with deadlines" (PU Ln 243 -251).

These accounts underscore the dual burden of professional and personal responsibilities that disproportionately affect female academics, making it challenging for them to sustain a healthy equilibrium between their work and family lives.

5.3 Summary of CS1 Research Findings

The findings of this research confirm that female academics in CS1 experience significant workload pressure due to teaching, research, and administrative duties. Consistent with literature on increases in academic workload (Houston *et al*., 2006), Participants stated that government and institutional underfunding, staff shortage, and increased student enrolment were primary contributors to workload pressures in the institution. The findings also emphasise the expectation for women to undertake additional unofficial work such as consulting and academic teachings outside their institution which increases workload challenges (Barrett & Barrett, 2011). It was also reported that workload pressure

directly affects family life including childcare and other caregiving responsibilities, reinforcing findings from studies on work-life balance in academia (Schiebinger & Gilmartin, 2010). Participants in CS1 reported the challenge of balancing workload with family responsibilities, a challenge compounded by the absence of institutional childcare support as expressed in the interviews and by the wider literature (Henderson *et al.*, 2019).

Work-to-family conflict remains the dominant pattern in CS1, with institutional expectations frequently disrupting personal and family time. This finding supports previous research on WFC indicating that the academic profession inherently fosters work spill over into personal life, particularly for female staff (Burke & Mattis, 2007). However, some participants also reported bidirectional conflict, reinforcing findings that WFC can manifest in multiple ways depending on cultural and institutional contexts (Frone *et al.*, 1992). As the interviews revealed, the CS1 participants were very aware of societal and cultural expectations in Nigeria which judge them as mothers and in particular their management of the household and their tending to children. They did not expect help from their husbands and unquestionably acceded to their demands. This is in line with the literature that describes Nigeria as a patriarchal society with rigid gender norms and roles, in which women must prioritise family responsibilities regardless of professional obligations (Makama, 2013)

In the face of unassailable private patriarchy and an absence of structured institutional support, CS1 female academics reported adopting various coping mechanisms. Their mitigating actions illustrate the need to explore carefully the intersections between Walby's private and public patriarchal theory since their relationship is culturally and locally determined. Strategies which participants described include outsourcing domestic responsibilities, leveraging extended family support, and implementing time-management strategies. These findings shows that women in academia often rely on personal and informal strategies to navigate WFC in the absence of effective institutional policies (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). These findings align with African feminism concept of 'situationality' which states that relationships are managed and influenced by persons involved and the situation at hand (Oyewùmí, 1997, p. 13). Also, Lewis *et al* (2007) observed that in the absence of structured workplace interventions, female academics develop individual and community-based coping mechanisms to balance work and family responsibilities (Lewis *et al.*, 2007; Adisa, Gbadamosi, & Mordi, 2014). However, coping strategies may be unsustainable in the long term if institutional and cultural changes do not occur (Emslie & Hunt, 2009). In contrast to African feminism's assertion of community support as the means to navigate patriarchal norms (Nnaemeka,1998), community support comes with a cost to reciprocate, which serves to maintain rather than alleviate pressure. In addition, to secure access to informal family support (e.g. housemaids) women may be required to engage in unofficial work to generate the required funding of the informal arrangement, which puts more burden upon them (Federici, 2012).

Another important theme that emerges from CS1 is the disconnect between flexible work expectations and the realities of it with female academics. Most of participants said their expectation of work flexibility was not met. While some policies exist to promote work-life balance, the inconsistent implementation of these policies limit their effectiveness. This assertion demonstrated that formal work-life balance policies in academia most times remain symbolic rather than transformative due to cultural and structural barriers (Lester, 2015)

This research seeks to identify the direction of WFC among female academic in CS1. Most participants in CS1 said the direction of WFC is work-to-family, reflecting findings in existing WFC literature (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Adisa *et al*., 2019). Participants reported that academic work responsibilities frequently interfere with their family role which is due to tough academic schedules and performance expectations. This interference must be managed so that family life is unaffected. However, some participants said they experience bidirectional conflict, where family responsibilities and work duties are both responsible for the conflict. This confirms the contexts of traditional gender roles placing disproportionate domestic responsibilities on women (Emslie & Hunt, 2009; Mokgele & Rothmann, 2014).

The synthesis of CS1 interview and survey findings and comparison with existing literature confirms that WFC among female academics is deeply embedded in institutional and cultural belief and influences. This research findings shows how increase in workload, rigid academic expectations, and limited formal support mechanisms contribute to WFC, necessitating reliance on informal support system. These findings underscore the need for institutional reforms, including more inclusive policies and structural changes, to mitigate WFC and enhance work-life balance for female academics in CS1.

Chapter 6 Case Study 2

6.0   Introduction

This chapter presents CS2 overview, female academics interview analysis in which nine key themes (participants' work history/career level, family dynamics, perception of academic institution, sources of work WFC, academic workload and family demand, direction of conflict, WFC mitigation, perception of national and institutional work policies/recommendation and success/challenges experienced by the participants) were addressed, and the survey findings synthesised with the interview findings to arrive at CS2 conclusion. The CS2 survey findings in the previous chapter helped in building required foundation for the interview to provide deeper understanding of the live experience of the female academics on WFC guided by Sylvia Walby's (1990) theory of private and public patriarchy and African feminism theory.

6.1 Overview of Case Study (CS 2): Private University, Nigeria

The university is one of the private universities established in Nigeria. The university started its operation in 2016, and it is the first private university in the state which is in southern Nigeria. The university student population is about 800 (Times and offers a wide range of courses across various disciplines. Some of the university's notable programs include Accounting, Computer Science, Business Administration, Political Science, Biology, Public Health and Law. The university awards certificate and diploma in fields like Information Technology, Tourism management, Hospitality and Security Studies. The university has been expanding the academic programs offered to students and increasing its workforce to enable coverage of the applied programs, including midwifery.

Being a privately own university, the students as of the year 2024 pay tuition fees ranging from N350,000 to N1.2 million annually for undergraduate tuition depending on the course and student's nationality. The university is relatively affordable in the Nigeria private university context. The university's working days generally align with the standard university schedule in Nigeria as academic staff are required to teach and carry out all assigned duties. The teaching responsibilities typically include lecturing, tutorials, and assessments. The school follows a normal two semester system with each lasting for a 16-to-18-week period. The academics are required to lecture for three to five hours a day depending on the workload. Academics in the university often manage multiple courses and, in some cases, they may teach between two and four courses per semester. They may oversee several students' projects, supervise, assess and handle grading which involve team teaching especially in interdisciplinary programs like Public Health and Law. The university however does not allow for any labour unionism.

The university has airconditioned lecture rooms, modern laboratories and bespokeg administrative offices, thereby ensuring a conducive environment for both teaching and learning. However, the university is located far from the urban city, located off the city highway about 20-30 minutes' drive from the state city centre. Hence staff, who live off the university campus, battle with commuting and other safety issues daily. The university maintains a relatively secure campus with on-site security personnel, while it is not directly on a major highway, the institution is accessible and generally considered safe, although occasional concerns about the broader security situation in the state have been raised.

The university gender equality and work-family balance specific policies could not be found available on the school website. The university insists on high achieving staff. The website stated that the lecturer's entry level to be graduate assistants must be first-class first-degree graduates, assistant lecturer position requires a master's degree while higher levels of academic's staff require at least a Ph.D. with extensive research experiences.

6.2 The Interview Analysis

This section presents case study 2 interview analysis with a focus on the lived experiences of six female academics who volunteered to participate in the interview from the survey session. Through the in-depth exploratory qualitative interview, this case study identified the key themes that illustrate the unique WFC challenges and opportunities females in academia faces. The survey responses were synthesised with the interview responses for the conclusion of findings in case study 2.

6.2.1 Participants' Work History/Career Level

Six participants were interviewed, four described themselves as early career academics, when asked about previous work experiences, two of the four participants had previously held senior leadership positions in a clinical field outside of academia but were relatively new to the academics hence they will be considered early career. The other two participants are in their late career stage.

The four early career academics were all at various stages of working towards a Ph.D. Although their clinical training has been sufficient to secure them a lecturing position at the university, to progress further they need the Ph.D. qualification. Moreover, most of the participants were in science disciplines (nursing and midwifery, microbiology). The late career participants work in management, teaching business administration and entrepreneurship. This shows that the recruitment process in CS2 favours candidates with substantial practical-based experience, particularly in applied and clinical fields such as nursing, midwifery. The university ensures that female academics bring practical, real-world knowledge to the classroom thereby enhancing the applied learning experience for students. However, the female academics, despite having practical and leadership experiences in a clinical role

in their previous work, are expected to continue their academic development to maintain a trajectory development in the academia.

6.2.2 Family Dynamics

The interview findings (Appendix 2B) revealed that all the female academics interviewed have been married. Four of the participants said they were married at the start of their career whereas two got married and started a family after starting their careers. This could be attributed to the cultural and religious beliefs of early marriage and childbearing within wedlock that is common in the Nigerian society (James, 2010))

> *"And also, most time, there will be some expectation that will not be met. Like the children always want you to be around, your husband always wants you to be around, like the other day, my husband was saying, look my wife, this your thing is too much for going to this place going to this place. Going to do this, going to do this. You don't have enough time to perform your traditional roles as a wife and mother. I was trying to say, I'll try to adjust. So that's in the negative aspects (PR5 Ln 155-159)."*

In Nigeria society, women are expected to prioritize marriage and family life over personal ambitions, including their careers, with societal norms often placing pressure on them to fulfil their roles as wives and mothers at an early age, which can affect their professional development and commitment. This finding aligns with the literature review on gender roles and cultural expectations in Nigeria (Nnubia, Ibeanu and Okechukwu, 2025).

Two participants, who bore children before the start of their academic careers, had older children supporting them to manage household responsibilities, while one participant had dependent relatives living with her family. Notably, participants who had supportive spouses and other family members in their households emphasized the role of family support in energizing and reinforcing their academic endeavours. One of the participants mentioned that:

> *".......my family have been a very strong backup, you know, for me. Yeah. So I was able to pass through my academics with my children. So, for now that I'm in the institution working, I do not have a problem, because they're all grown up (PR2 Ln38-40)."*

Furthermore, the participants acknowledged the challenge of progressing both family and career at the same time but observed that though younger children could be troublesome older children had and did step into their shoes at home to enable them to be absent from the home, at work. To illustrate this, a participant noted that:

> *"......the children too, you groom them, so that even when you're not there, they should know what to do (PR1 Ln176-177)".*

6.2.3 Perception of Academic Institution

Most of the participants interviewed would rather seek employment in a government university than continue in a private university due to the heavy workload, inadequate staffing, and the lack of flexibility in private institutions. Living in a rural area can increase the chance of all forms of flexibility (Wallace, 2003). Despite CS2 being a rural area of the state, its practices do not follow this assertion, and this makes working in the university without work flexibility more difficult for the female academics as this perceived and actual difference exacerbates work-family conflicts. Also, it can negatively impact their organizational commitment, reduce job satisfaction, and limit their ability to thrive in both their personal and professional lives. One participant maintained that:

> *"Working in the university, I won't tell you that if I have the opportunity to work with a public university, I'll say no, I will actually say a big yes. But the reason why I'm in a private university because that is where I see the opportunity. And then definitely I compare myself with my colleagues in the public university, the workload in a private university is a serious matter. When you have a lecturer having to attend to lots of courses, unlike in public university, maybe a lecturer can share three lecturers can handle a course. But here you will see a lecturer alone, handling like five courses alone or more, that is what is applicable in a private university (PR1 Ln48-53)."*

Considering this situation, most of the participants perceived working in private university as 'charity' work as they worked for many extra hours which are unpaid. They maintained that they ended up in such a university due to the unavailability of viable employment opportunities in the public sector.

One participant noted that:

> *"I decided to work for a private university, because I see the passion that our chancellor has for his people, you know, I decided to come in here to contribute my quota to humanity. That's why I came here. You know, that's, that's why I work with passion (PR2 Ln51)".*

The participants maintained that their decision to work at a private university was driven by a lack of better opportunities, so they took the available offers from the private university. Participants explained that they were always very aware that they worked for an owner-led business. They equated this to the lack of consideration given to staff wellbeing in terms of having enough staff to cover the students recruited, keeping workloads down and manageable, allowing research time, and making the work flexible. As one participant explained:

> *"Well, the academic workload is having to teach too many courses, one. But, like, in my case, you are the secretary, you are the admin staff, you are the exam officer, you are the lecturer,*

you are the researcher, you do virtually everything, unlike in the public sector, where we have secretaries, we have messengers. We have examination officers, you know, we have people that assist the HOD, here the HOD has no assistant, the HOD does virtually everything that his/her assistant is supposed to do (PR1 117-121)".

Another critical issue pervading the work environment in private university is that female academics have to endure long work hours complicated by restrictive monitoring (such as rigid attendance policies, excessive administrative oversight, or micromanagement), which undermines their productivity. According to one participant:

"So, there's a shortage of manpower, and they're expecting you to put in a lot of hours working, you know, there's so much monitoring even when it has to do with official issues (PR4 Ln 44-45)".

In addition, participants decried the absence of adequate numbers of staff and investment in staff academic development which would have helped in addressing the excess workload female academics experience. This situation exacerbates their WFC by increasing the pressure to manage excessive work responsibilities without sufficient institutional support, leaving female academics with less time and energy to fulfil family obligations, ultimately straining their ability to balance both work and family life effectively.

Another participant stressed that her teaching workload meant that she was unable to complete her research:

"Like most of us here, we have some of us that have been running a PhD for 4, 5, or 6 years, they have not yet completed it, because there's no time. The system doesn't give you time for even research (PR3 Ln 174-176)."

The threat of being sacked for underperformance does not solely affect female academics, but women are often more likely to be judged as underperforming than their male colleagues due to Nigeria's societal and institutional biases, which arise from gender stereotypes that hold women to higher standards, expecting them to excel both in their academic roles and in fulfilling domestic responsibilities (Nnubia, Ibeanu and Okechukwu, 2025). This double burden can result in women's work being scrutinized more harshly, especially when balancing professional demands with household duties. In such an environment, female academics often face heightened pressure to meet unrealistic expectations, balancing professional duties with family responsibilities, which can further undermine their perceived underperformance. This creates a climate of uncertainty, limiting female academics' ability to fully engage in their roles, resulting in emotional strain and diminished organizational commitment. As one participant observed:

"Well for me I will say that if you have your way in a country like Nigeria just go and work in a government establishment because private, like, there's no job security, it's not fun because you will over work even like your salary, like and you're not sure if you'll be sacked the next moment. if I have my own way, federal or another place (PR6 Ln 37-38)".

Considering these challenges, participants often compare themselves with friends and counterparts in CS1, who enjoy greater autonomy, flexibility, and less workload, and are supported by an adequate number of staff to carry out their work. The participants believe that government university have better working conditions because of the collective influence of trade unions like the Academic Staff Union of Nigerian University (ASUU), and the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian University (SSANU), which contend to promote staff welfare. Additionally, in Nigeria, a majority of the country's population are trained in public university, hence they are often more focused on providing accessible education and ensuring a balanced work environment for academic staff, unlike their counterparts in private institutions where profitability and efficiency often drive higher workloads and stricter performance expectations. As Participant 3 explained:

"I spent up to 7 years working under someone, a professor in (a government university), for example. So, he has time for everything, he has time for research, he has time for everything. For that he was able to set up a lab, he has things in the lab, he has lectures there, he has time to even attend conferences. And so, I think, for me, the government sector is a little bit organized in terms of flexibility and then ensuring that it gives you time for family life too. But this one is more of a business, someone's personal business (PR3 Ln 192-196)".

6.2.4   Sources of Work-Family Conflict

CS2 interview participants showed a range of family dynamics and career stages hence they reported different levels of conflict accordingly. The life-course stage can significantly influence the work-family experiences of female academics in CS2. Participants with dependent children said they encounter increased challenges. Conversely, participants whose children are no longer dependent find some alleviation in family obligations; however, they may still contend with the enduring consequences of career interruptions. As caregiving responsibilities diminish, there is an opportunity to reallocate time and energy towards professional pursuits. One of the participants whose children were no longer dependent, and had matured enough to fill in gaps in domestic chores described her situation as:

"I'm trying to look at conflict, because I don't have, that's because I have support…the support system is strong. So, I don't bother, even when I have to work overtime, okay, you know, going back home, the food is prepared for you. So you don't really go into the kitchen, or to have your food prepared. So, you have people around you are supporting you to be successful. So no

conflict, and I'm able to schedule my family work and my academic work so it doesn't conflict (PR2 Ln66-69)."

Participants with dependent children, such as new-borns, toddlers, or school-age children, said they sometimes encounter substantial work-family conflicts arising from the concurrent obligations of carrying pregnancy, doing childcare, and domestic duties. In Nigeria, where extended family support structures remain prevalent, numerous women may possess some type of domestic assistance. These relationships are managed and influenced by both the individuals involved and the circumstances (Oyewùmí, 1997, p. 13). Nonetheless, this does not always alleviate the burden of rigorous demands of academia (teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities) with the caring obligations at home. In the words of Participant 3:

> *"Well, for me, yes, when I experienced it most was when I was pregnant. You know, at that time, even with my condition, I don't think anybody looked at it that way. Handling up to 16,17,18 courses wasn't funny for us. And I couldn't just balance the way I was at that time and workload. So, I was always finding myself exhausted sometimes I could hardly eat even when I go back (PR3 Ln 58-62".*

A participant's childbirth experience with the university was not a good one because in CS2, there is often a lack of formal maternity arrangements or supportive policies (Ezeani & Udenta, 2025), which significantly influences female academics' decisions on when to return to work. Without adequate maternity leave, flexible scheduling, or institutional support (Ezeani & Udenta, 2025), women are forced to navigate intense workloads shortly after childbirth, as seen in the experience of Participant 3. This lack of institutional support escalates the work-family conflict, as these women are often expected to resume full duties, including teaching large numbers of courses, even while recovering from childbirth.

Furthermore, CS2 regular managerial appraisal for staff attendance and performance often create underlying job insecurity and this discourages female academics from taking extended time off, fearing it might impact their career progression or job stability. As a result, they are pressured to return to work earlier than ideal, further contributing to physical exhaustion and emotional strain. This creates a challenging environment where female academics must constantly juggle their professional responsibilities with family obligations, often without the institutional flexibility needed to maintain a healthy work-life balance. This is buttressed by Participant 1, who described that:

> *"You know, most private institutions, when a woman is pregnant during maternity, they don't pay salary. So, the woman will have to, the woman will have to stay at work for those three months without pay, when she resumes, if at all she still comes back to meet the job, if it has not*

been overtaken by somebody else, she can now start receiving salary. You know that is a very big challenge, when it comes to work setting and the family (PR1 Ln197-199)".

To add emphasis, Participant 1 further reiterated:

"Like I said earlier in the private university, since they are more profit conscious, and then their funds don't just come in, like in the public university, they tend to be very, very strict with their policies. Like the maternity leave I mentioned earlier, no work, no pay, although it's maternity, it should be, it should be an entitlement to every woman or a female worker. But in the public university, of course, our female counterparts, when they go on maternity leave, they are still paid (PR1 222-223)".

Another potent source of work-family issues for female academics in private university comes from having to indulge in long absences from family and family obligations due to work commitments. In the survey (Chapter 4.3.1.4), 33.3% respondents said workload pressure has led to conflict with their spouse and 44.5% respondents said they were unable to fulfil their family obligations, this highlights the difficulty in coping with the frequent workloads. The situation can be problematic in a Nigerian setting, where women play highly pivotal roles (such as childcare, informal child education, cooking, doing the dishes, tending to the household, and providing motherly direction) in running the family, while husbands mostly play the bread-winner role (Akanle and Nwaobiala, 2020), meanwhile the demands of the job in private university often require significant time commitments, which undercuts their attention to household duties. Some other Participants highlighted conference attendance, daily commuting and overtime workload as examples of sources of WFC. Societal expectations still position women as primary caregivers, responsible for childcare, household management, and nurturing family bonds. As such, interviewed participants stated that when women are frequently absent from family functions, or their role goes unfulfilled or tasks are reluctantly delegated, this strains relationships with spouses and children and creates feelings of guilt or inadequacy in the women themselves. This conflict is especially pronounced because of the academic and work culture of the university which offers less flexibility compared to the government university, further complicating the balance between professional and family obligations. In the words of Participant 3:

"It has taken a toll on me. I have to be sincere. Because before now, I used to feel that this is the one profession that would give you time for you to actually spend time with your family like that, but coming to the private sector, you find out that you don't have time even for yourself. Most of the jobs you take it home, you do most of the work at home. The time you are supposed to spend with your family… the time, you are supposed spend with your young child or baby, I use it to work (PR3 Ln 128-132)".

Participant 5 also decried that:

> *"And also, most time, there will be some expectation that will not be met. Like the children always want you to be around, your husband always wants you to be around, like the other day, my husband was saying, look my wife, this your thing is too much for going to this place going to this place. Going to do this, going to do this. You don't have enough time to perform your traditional roles as a wife and mother. I was trying to say, I'll try to adjust. So that's in the negative aspects (PR5 Ln 155-159)."*

As is the case in government university in Nigeria, female academics in private university must fulfil the requirement of conference attendance and participation to rise through the ranks in their career. This necessitates time away from the household. In most cases, these women are under the direct authority of their spouses and must seek/obtain consent before embarking on any travel, even official trips. This can be particularly difficult given the significant family obligations and commitments that Nigerian women execute daily. As such, the trade-offs between family commitments and participation in academic conferences can introduce tensions that undermine both professional advancement and family cohesion for female academics in private institutions. These tensions can also contribute to a perception of limited career opportunities for female academics, who may feel constrained by societal and cultural expectations, ultimately affecting their organizational commitment and long-term career progression.

Participant 4 captures this sentiment by revealing that:

> *"I remember a time when I needed to get something sorted out, and my husband said, no, you can't travel, because you have been travelling all the time. And now I need you because ehh, me too, I need to travel, they have to be somebody at home, it was almost beginning to be very serious issue that I was taking time, too many times out of the family (PR4 Ln 69-72)".*

This quote highlights the negotiation or approval process that many Nigerian women academics must navigate within their households to pursue academic opportunities. Such restrictions often stem from traditional patriarchal structures, where a husband's role as the head of the household involves decision-making authority over family dynamics (Okafor *et al*., 2022). Studies show that such cultural expectations place additional burdens on women, often requiring them to prioritise family obligations over professional growth, which can lead to missed opportunities and slower career advancement (Ademuyiwa *et al*., 2022). This underscores the need for institutional support and advocacy to address gendered barriers in academia.

One of the daily challenges female academic staff face in CS2 is the difficulties in commuting to work because the school is in a rural area with poor road infrastructure. Participant 4 shared that:

"If you have a car, the bad roads are a nightmare. You're constantly spending on repairs, and the long travel time just wears you out. But if you don't have a car, it's even tougher. Finding public transport on time is such a hassle, and it just makes the whole commuting thing a lot harder (PR4 Ln 21-24)."

This entails that for those who can afford to own private cars, the deplorable road conditions not only increase vehicle maintenance costs but also lead to prolonged travel time and physical exhaustion, further compounding their work-life balance challenges. For those who do not own a private car, the difficulties in getting public transportation on time compound the challenge of commuting. This is because of the limited availability of buses or taxis, coupled with long waiting times, which means that participants reported they often arrive at work late, stressed, and fatigued. Also, the irregular and often unreliable nature of public transport in rural areas forces them to adjust their schedules, cutting into time that could be spent on household or academic responsibilities. Consequently, this affects their productivity and adds further strain to their work-life balance. As Participant 3 said:

"We resume here by nine and we leave here by four most of us live at the outskirts of the town, and you're not mobile you have to walk around to see that you get on time and then even when you're going back, sometimes you have to wait by the roadside for hours to get a vehicle to where you are going, so it's always a nightmare (PR3 Ln 75-78)".

6.2.5 Academic Workload and Family Demands

In CS2 women had to take on extra work responsibilities to support their progression (such as administration duties, examination coordination roles, etc.) in addition to teaching many courses and supervising research students. Most often, the extra work is taken home, and it leads to overtime which is unpaid for by the institution which also reduces their household involvement. This further undermines the degree of flexibility the women enjoy, instigates work-family strain, and denies these women the ability to spend quality time with family. According to Participant 6:

"I take 11 courses so that's already enough to make you mentally unstable. Okay. Number two, aside from taking that, I'm the exams officer for my department. Um, minus that, there are other things that you would have to do, ensuring that okay, you mobilize students for NYSC all those things, so it's a lot. It's a whole lot (PR6 Ln 83-86)".

To make up for the work spill over, the participants suggested the implementation of financial incentives such as additional pay, paid leave packages, and retirement benefits that will boost their morale to continue shouldering this burden. The importance of extra pay for female academics to address the work spillover issue lies in its ability to alleviate the burden of excessive work responsibilities, which often leads to work-family strain. By providing financial incentives, female

academics can better manage the pressures of their dual roles in academia and family life as they will be able to pay for household help and support their families financially to make up for their unavoidable absence. These incentives will not only boost their morale but will also serve as a form of compensation for the extra administrative, supervisory, and coordination duties they shoulder.

As Participant 4 suggested:

> *"So, my opinion is that if the institution wants to make meaning and get job satisfaction for their staff, they should be increased in renumeration, and then they should also be a welfare package, they can float in a welfare package like a, you know, retirement benefit for those working here, saving for them in their future. Because for me, now, jobs, even outside the public service are very rare. So, if you can make such a provision for staff of the private university, it will go a long way to motivate them to work even more than expected (PR4 Ln 45-50)".*

The workload of female academics in Nigeria significantly contributes to WFC, as the demands of academic life such as teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities are exacerbated by traditional gender roles and insufficient institutional support. In the survey (Chapter 4.3.1.2), teaching was also reported by 22.3% of respondents as one of the sources of workload. Administrative tasks with teaching were also identified by 33.3% of the respondents as a source of workload. However, the major cause of workload pressure in CS2 by 44.4% of the respondents is staff shortage. From the interview, participants added that the dominant types of academic workload experienced by female academics include teaching many courses due to inadequate staffing. Female academics in CS2 are often burdened with the responsibility of teaching numerous courses, which imposes significant stress on their professional and personal lives. In the words of Participant 4:

> *"Honestly, the workload here is overwhelming because we don't have enough staff. As a female academic, I find myself having to teach so many courses, and it's just too much. It's not just about preparing for lectures—you're marking scripts, supervising students, and handling all these administrative duties on top of everything else. And then there's the personal side of it. By the time I get home, I'm already so drained, but there are still family responsibilities waiting for me. It's stressful, and it feels like there's no room to breathe or focus on personal development. Sometimes I wonder how long one can keep up with this kind of pressure without burning out (PR 4 Ln 67-73)."*

This demanding schedule requires extensive preparation for lectures, managing administrative responsibilities, and supervising students, all of which can become overwhelming. The participant further noted that the stress does not end at work; balancing these professional duties with personal and

family obligations creates a persistent strain on their overall well-being. The constant juggling of roles leaves little time for rest, self-care, or professional growth, creating a cycle of exhaustion that can hinder long-term career progression and personal fulfilment. This reflects a broader issue within CS2, where the insufficient academic workforce places undue burdens on female academics, compromising both their professional growth and work-life balance.

Given the shortage of staff, female academics are compelled to perform multiple roles to help the institution achieve efficiency, even at the expense of employee well-being. As Participant 4 explained, balancing various roles leads to an overwhelming workload:

> *"There is a lot of academic workloads. Like I speak now I am the administrator I do a lot of administrative work. Before I came to work this morning, I had to pick a waybill from Cross Lines Park. I'm not mobile, because now I don't have a car any longer. So, I had to go there, pick a parcel and there was so much hold up on the route today. That is administrative, I have to do a lot of things. As I speak with you, I was supposed to have a meeting with the VC before I came out. But I have to cut that short. So that at the end of this interview, I'll be meeting him. I have to administer exam by 1pm today, which will end by four. So, you see there are plenty of administrative work and my own academic work" (PR4 Ln 103-109).*

These responsibilities often go beyond what is outlined in job descriptions, with women stating that such tasks are essential for career advancement, as they allow them to showcase leadership and multitasking abilities.

For female academics in CS2, clinical teaching, supervising students, and grading examinations (even at night hours) constitute a major type of academic workload, altering the work-family balance. Some of the participants, particularly those working in the institution's healthcare department must carry out applied teaching along with administrative and regulatory duties. This is because these roles extend beyond regular working hours, often requiring additional time and attention outside the office. Female academics take on multiple responsibilities, from preparing exam questions to marking papers and supervising students, leaving little room for flexibility. As Participant 2 highlights, after family duties, she spends late hours reviewing scripts, ensuring marking accuracy:

> *"...the workload is much, you know, supervising the students' projects... after having my exam, going back home, finishing the family activities at home, before I go to bed, I sit down look at my script, have I properly marked well, and then see how I can do my marking, using my marking scheme" (PR2 Ln 89-93).*

This juggling of responsibilities, alongside family life, demonstrates a multiple-job role situation, where academic and personal obligations overlap, leading to intensified work pressure. According to Participant 5, the demand for clinical instruction adds to the workload complexity:

"You teach these children in the class, you also go out for clinical instruction, examine them... setting the exam... Like what we used to do MCQ... preparing marking scheme, you also mark and there is always a deadline to submit question" (PR5 Ln 91-99).

The lack of flexibility in academic schedules, coupled with the pressure to meet deadlines, compels female academics to work at odd hours to remain time efficient and avoid falling behind. This intensifies the challenges of managing academic workload while fulfilling family responsibilities.

In CS2, external pressure from the university management to the academics to speed up the institution's academic calendar due to incessant safety reports (from Nigeria security bodies) constitutes a major type of workload experienced by female academics. This pressure manifests in arbitrary changes to academic calendars and expectations, which can significantly disrupt the planned workload of female faculty members. According to Participant 3:

"We used to have so much pressure from management, they could design…maybe they could say okay, this session is going to last for so so number of months, then they can just wake up in the middle of nowhere and say, okay, because of security alert, we are going to make this session or semester to last for 2, 3, 4 months, and that puts a lot of pressure on you to round up. Just like this one. I have final year students I am supervising the project work. I also have other courses I'm taking other levels. Two weeks ago, they said there was a security alert and we have to close this week. Their exams they were supposed to write in two weeks' time, we had to bring them down. And then my project students work is on my throat. So, it's like everybody's multitasking to ensure that we meet up with the time and it's really not been easy (PR3 Ln 85-95)".

As highlighted by Participant 3, management decisions often impose sudden alterations to semester lengths in response to external factors, such as security alerts. This unpredictability forces female academics to juggle multiple responsibilities within condensed timelines, including supervising final year projects and conducting classes across various levels. Such abrupt changes not only heighten stress levels but also compromise the quality of education they can provide, as the pressure to complete syllabi and fulfil administrative obligations leaves little room for thorough engagement with students. Moreover, the struggle to meet these intensified deadlines can create a precarious situation for female academics regarding their job security. With the looming threat of performance evaluations often tied to the successful delivery of courses and student outcomes, female academics may find themselves in a

vulnerable position. This is because failure to meet management's expectations, particularly when faced with external pressures, can lead to negative evaluations or even job loss. Participant 3's experience underscores this reality, illustrating how the simultaneous demands from project supervision and course management create an unsustainable workload. As a result, the combination of external pressures from management and the inherent challenges of balancing multiple responsibilities not only exacerbates stress but also jeopardizes the career stability of female academics in these institutions.

The pressure from doctoral studies emerged as a major type of academic workload for female academics in CS2. This is because there is no institutional funding for the programme as candidates must sponsor themselves against the backdrop of insufficient remuneration from their institutions. Additionally, full-time PhD programs in private institutions require full-time commitment from students in terms of course work and research obligations. Whereas part-time programmes offer a bit of flexibility but take longer to complete (between 6-10 years) and cost significantly higher than the full-time option. Candidates who do not complete their programmes within the stipulated time are compelled to pay extra tuition. This further speaks to the commercial-oriented nature of private institutions who are more inclined towards profit maximization than service delivery. Given this context, female academics in these institutions face enormous pressure trying to complete their doctoral studies while multi-tasking, dealing with excess workload and managing family obligations almost concurrently. In the words of Participant 4:

> *"And then my PhD programme is also tasking on me. I have spent like this is my fourth year in my PhD, and they seem to be no near graduation soon, because the times I would have needed to meet my supervisor at University of Nigeria, there is no time (PR4 Ln 110-112)."*

From the participant's viewpoint, it is evident that the challenges associated with pursuing doctoral studies in private university significantly complicate the already-demanding workload faced by female academics. Participant 4's experience highlights the difficulty of balancing research obligations with institutional demands and family responsibilities, as she struggles to find time to meet with her supervisor despite being in her fourth year of the programme.

This unit presents data on the type of family obligations undertaken by female academics in Nigerian private university. According to the data (Appendix 2G), domestic responsibilities (such as house chores, making meals, apportioning tasks to grown children and home safety); childcare and sharing of financial responsibilities are the most dominant types of family obligations borne by female academics in CS2.

Meeting their domestic responsibilities (including chores, making meals, sharing tasks to grown children and supervising them) are major family obligations undertaken by female academics in Nigerian private university. From a Nigerian cultural context, these domestic responsibilities are predominantly reserved for the women, whose absence due to work commitments would alter the delicate family balance they provide. Participant 2 emphasized this by maintaining that in discharging family responsibilities, she:

"Prepare the food Do menu for the day, what do we have? And then the children divide, share work, division of labour, I have all boys. And so they can cook, they can go to the market. So we share duties for all, I share duties for them. And then our morning devotion we also have a timetable. Who did this who did that? You know, you don't allow the workload to be on you. You share the duties and then supervise (PR2 Ln 101-104)".

A similar viewpoint is shared by Participant 6, who revealed that:

"So for me, when my husband was around, anytime he's around, I you know, like very early in the morning by four, I wake up by four, so whatever I do 10 o'clock I need to shut down. I wake up by 4am because you know there are men that they don't know how to do anything themself. So, I wake up by four, ensure that his breakfast and lunch is ready. And you know if you're hungry, or if you want more, you can go and microwave or you want to eat and it's cold. So, I just do it and then by 730 I'm out. And then before I come back, at least, I know that I've already sorted you out for breakfast and lunch (PR6 Ln 92-99)".

The viewpoints from Participant 6 entail that the patriarchal organisation of family life in Nigeria often places most domestic responsibilities on women (Falola *et al.*, 2020), even when they are engaged in demanding professional roles. Despite being a working academic, Participant 6 described waking up as early as 4 a.m. to prepare meals and ensure her husband's needs were met before leaving for work. This reflects a societal expectation that women must prioritise household duties, irrespective of their professional obligations. Such arrangements are rooted in traditional gender roles, where men are often exempt from participating in domestic chores, reinforcing their dependence on women for basic household tasks (Akanle, Adesina and Nwaobiala, 2018). The participant's account also underscores the internalisation of these norms, as she takes on the role of ensuring her husband's comfort, even at the expense of her own rest and well-being. These dynamic highlights the enduring influence of patriarchal structures in Nigerian family life, where women are expected to seamlessly balance their careers with substantial domestic responsibilities, often without reciprocal support.

Another type of family obligation borne by female academics in Nigerian private university is taking care of children and other dependents within the household. This is critical because in Nigeria, a

woman married into the family has an obligation to extend care to other family members beyond the nuclear circle. A woman finds herself making meals and taking care of relatives, in-laws, nephews and nieces from both her family and her husband's, especially when they inhabit same household. To this end, like Participant 6, Participant 1 explains that her primary family obligations include:

"Taking care of the family, the children, not just the children the husband as well. Making sure that the meals are there (PR1 Ln128, 137)".

Participant 5 further acknowledged the presence of dependents by saying that:

"The family obligation that has impacted is many dependents; you have too many people to take care of. So, our type of a family and extended family when they come around, you're expected to take care of...you feed them so when they come like that, give food so most time, even when you don't have enough you have to think of how to cater for them (PR5 Ln 119-122)".

These viewpoints underscore the intricate web of family obligations that female academics navigate, highlighting the cultural expectation in Nigeria for women to provide care not only for their immediate family but also for extended family members. This expectation places a significant burden on women, as they often find themselves juggling multiple roles cooking, feeding, and attending to the needs of in-laws, nephews, nieces, and other relatives who may reside in the same household. The viewpoints of Participant 1 and Participant 5 reflect the reality that, despite their professional commitments, these women are often compelled to prioritize family responsibilities, frequently sacrificing their own needs and resources. The notion of hospitality, deeply rooted in Nigerian culture (Ukagwu, 2022), further complicates their responsibilities, as they feel obliged to accommodate relatives even during times of scarcity. This dynamic not only impacts their personal well-being but also their academic productivity, illustrating the challenges female academics face in balancing their professional and family roles within the context of a demanding societal framework.

Beyond making food, allocating chores and serving the needs of her husband, a woman's family obligations also extend to ensuring the safety of the family, especially the children. She does this by maintaining a secure and nurturing environment, monitoring the well-being of her children, and instilling safety-conscious behaviour in them. She educates them on potential dangers, both within and outside the home, while ensuring that the home itself is free from hazards. Additionally, she fosters open communication so that her children feel comfortable reporting any concerns or threats. This extends to safeguarding their emotional and psychological health by providing support and guidance, helping them make safe choices in all aspects of their lives.

The participants also mentioned that their family obligations extend beyond family safety to include sharing the financial responsibilities with their spouses. This is critical because, even though men are the primary breadwinners in Nigeria, women are increasingly stepping up to share the burden, which is why the concept of 'working class wife' is gaining traction in the Nigerian society. In the words of Participant 4:

> *"I have to take care of my family, you know, making sure that the home is safe. Even in my children's education, I still have a contribution to make. In fact, oftentimes I even make more contribution than my husband. You know, so but that is one of the things I pay a lot too in the family. Even to my children, two have graduated as medical doctors, but I don't look up to them for anything. You know, I see play my role for the younger ones, I still give them what they want in school, like the one who is in this institution, I pay; when my husband has money he pays, even though sometimes we combine (PR4 Ln 121-122)".*

This participant's viewpoint underscores the evolving dynamics of financial responsibility within Nigerian households, highlighting a shift towards shared contributions between spouses. As Participant 4 illustrates, the traditional notion of men as the sole providers is increasingly being challenged by women's active roles in both financial and educational support for their families. Her emphasis on the duality of her contributions both in terms of home safety and her children's education which reflects a broader societal change where women are not only nurturing their families but also playing major roles in financial stability. Furthermore, the participant's commitment to ensuring her children's educational needs is met, regardless of her husband's financial contributions, illustrates the depth of her dedication and highlights the importance of collaboration in maintaining family welfare.

6.2.6 Direction of work-family conflict

These unit presents data describing the direction of work-family conflict encountered by female academics in a CS2. The data (see Appendix 2J) shows that most participants hold the view that much of the work-family conflict they experience comes from work-related dynamics, characterized by an excess of responsibilities.

According to Participant 1:

> *"But in the real sense, it is the work affecting the family, because the family is the background, the family is where you're coming out from, the family is where you owe utmost responsibility (PR1 Ln160-162)".*

Participant 4 buttressed the foregoing viewpoint by asserting that:

"Work related, for me, they are mostly work related, because like I'm combining so many things at once, and I need to meet up so that I'm not, you know, sanctioned for not doing what is expected. So, I have to give more time to my workplace challenges than my family challenges (PR4 Ln 160-162)".

This position by the participants was corroborated in the survey (Chapter 4.3.2) by 66.7% respondents who also believe that the direction of conflict is more work related. On the other hand, another participant expressed a contrary view on the direction of work-family conflict, arguing that it is family-related, because most times, female academics transfer family pressures to work, hence causing conflict. In the exact words of Participant 1:

"……there are times when the family pressure would so pressure you that when you get to the office, you go and be acting, the family instead of acting what you are supposed to act in the office. It takes emotional intelligence to control yourself at that point (PR1 Ln 203-205)".

From this analysis, it is evident that the participants' perspectives on the direction of work-family conflict vary based on their individual experiences and priorities. In some countries such as Nigeria, women have to make severe compromises or trade-offs between employment and family demands (Tang, 2004). While the majority identified work-related factors as the primary source of conflict, citing issues such as excessive workloads, the need to meet professional expectations, and the physical toll of poor infrastructure, there are varied differences among them. For example, Participant 1 emphasised the foundational role of family and the inherent responsibility owed to it, suggesting that work-related challenges inevitably disrupt family life. Participant 4 highlighted the strain of multitasking and the fear of workplace sanctions, which necessitated prioritising professional demands over family task. Meanwhile, Participant 6 brought a unique perspective, focusing on the physical and logistical challenges of commuting, which she attributed to severe work-related stress and even potential health risks like miscarriage. In contrast, the minority view, also represented by Participant 1, acknowledged that family pressures could sometimes spill over into the workplace, creating a reverse dynamic where personal issues interfere with professional responsibilities. This divergence illustrates the complexity of WFC and underscores the influence of individual circumstances, roles, and coping strategies in shaping these experiences.

6.2.7 Work-Family Conflict Mitigation

The work-family coping strategies adopted by female academics in CS2 from the data presented in Table 6.5 (Appendix 2E) shows that participants resorted to strategies such as diplomacy and politics, avoidance of direct confrontations with their spouses, timely provision of essentials for family, and getting assistance at home, to cope with work-family conflict. In Nigeria, the patriarchal culture places significant authority on the male as head of the household, with the family structure often being

governed by the traditional belief that a man's authority over his wife and family is closely tied to his sense of masculinity and how society perceives him as a man (Imo *et al*., 2020). This expectation creates a dynamic where deference is shown to men, particularly in decision-making processes that involve family matters. Participant 1 navigates this cultural context by strategically appealing to her husband's role as a generous and fair man to secure his support for her continued employment. She approaches him diplomatically, recognizing the need to acknowledge his position while also subtly offering financial contributions to the household as a gesture of goodwill, essentially buying his favour to ensure his approval. Despite the challenges of balancing her professional responsibilities with family life, she emphasizes the importance of making her children happy and managing their expectations. By providing for their needs and addressing their concerns about her absence, she carefully maintains harmony at home, ensuring her husband's cooperation and understanding of her work commitments. This diplomatic balancing act allows her to continue pursuing her career while maintaining family obligations.

In the words of Participant 1:

> *"So, you have to strategically look at how the atmosphere is so that you will now come in diplomatically, I like putting, using politically, also because this politics no be here, come in diplomatically. Then for the children, you try as much as possible to make everything available for them, because, no doubt there are times they will tell you, your own every time you're out, you don't even have our time but just try and do those things and make them happy (PR1 Ln77, 106,107)".*

Also, Participant 4 navigates this dynamic by strategically appealing to her husband's role as the provider while subtly using financial contributions as leverage to secure his approval for her continued professional engagement. She explicitly offers a portion of the money she earns from her work to her husband, framing it as a reward for his support, while requesting to keep the rest for herself. This transactional approach allows her to "buy his favour" and gain his consent to maintain her work-related movements. By doing so, she creates a balance, recognizing his authority while using financial independence to strengthen her position. This strategy, as she notes, proved effective, as the financial contribution not only helped smooth over potential conflicts but also served as a form of negotiation that allowed her to continue working with her husband's endorsement.

In the words of Participant 4:

> *"And then when the monies come too, I bring to the table I said, all these movements I've been doing this the money that has accrue from such, please take something and leave the rest for me. And of course, it helped (PR4 Ln 94-96)".*

In addressing WFC in CS2, the interview analysis revealed that CS2 participants also implemented various strategies to manage WFC, including adhering to well-structured schedules that helped them balance professional and domestic responsibilities. These schedules typically covered key professional tasks such as teaching, grading, research, and service commitments, alongside personal and family obligations like childcare, household management, and family bonding activities.

Participant 2 emphasised the importance of a well-planned work schedule in mitigating this conflict by maintaining that:

> *"I have a work plan, you know, in the field, as a government health specialist already we work with work plan, you know, so you have your daily work, your week work plan, and your daily work plan, you schedule it, and then you go through it (PR2 Ln79-81)".*

Participant 2 highlighted the use of detailed daily and weekly work plans as a mitigation strategy, demonstrating the value of a structured approach in maintaining a balance between her duties as a health specialist and personal life. Additionally, many participants transferred organizational and time management skills from their clinical settings to their academic roles, enabling them to prioritize tasks effectively and allocate time efficiently. For example, the ability participants had developed to work under tight timelines, manage patient care, and coordinate with healthcare teams were skills they re-leveraged to organize their academic and personal lives, ultimately reducing stress and enhancing work-family balance. These transferable skills were critical in helping participants navigate the complex demands of both their professional and familial responsibilities.

Essential strategy female academics adopt to manage their work-family issues is to avoid procrastination in task completion, even though much of their work is taken home for completion, which further strains family commitments. This does not mean that these women do not seek relaxation time for themselves and time with family, but the demands of their jobs often deny them such privileges. They therefore face the task and complete immediately it rather than assign time later for the task to be done. Participant 3 explains that she strives to avoid postponing tasks, whether academic or family-related, to prevent the buildup of responsibilities. As she puts it:

> *"I try not to defer...what I can accomplish in the morning...If there's anything I feel should be done, I love to do it immediately. Because if you leave it to evening or tomorrow morning, you may end up not doing it because of the time you have" (PR3, Ln 71-75).*

This indicates that timely task completion, the avoidance of 'procrastination' is a critical tool for managing workload and freeing up time for family and personal life. Similarly, Participant 6 adds that avoiding procrastination allows her to maintain a clear boundary between work and home, helping her stay fully engaged in both areas.

She says: "if you now say I'm not doing it today is it when you go home that you want to do it? when you're supposed to have time with your family...if I'm at work, I'm at work. If I'm at home, I'm at home" (PR6, Ln 65-71).

By setting clear boundaries between work and home, individuals can effectively manage WFC, leading to improved well-being and productivity. Research indicates that boundary management strategies significantly affect WFC, burnout, and certain aspects of work engagement. Implementing such strategies allows individuals to be fully present in each domain, reducing role interference and enhancing overall satisfaction (Kashive, Sharma and Khanna, 2023). In this context, by completing work within the scheduled hours, Participant 6 ensures that she can be present at home, not just for her family but also for herself. This balance is critical in helping female academics navigate the competing demands of work and family life without compromising either area.

For female academics in CS2, resorting to housemaids/nanny has significantly helped them balance work and family commitments. The nature of academic work, which often extends beyond school hours into the home, creates a conflict between professional responsibilities and family duties. Hence, many female academics rely on housemaids to bridge this gap, particularly in managing household chores and childcare, enabling them to be absent from the family house or duties while working.

For instance, Participant 3 in the interview noted how academic duties encroach on family time, stating:

"Most of the jobs you take it home, you do most of the work at home. The time you are supposed to spend with your family… the time you are supposed to spend with your young child or baby, I use it to work, so I have to source for the services of a nanny" (PR3 Ln 130-133).

This illustrates how the use of a nanny is necessary for her to meet both her academic and familial responsibilities. Similarly, Participant 5 highlighted the strategic role of housemaids or helpers, adding that:

"I make sure I take care of the home, taking care of their meals, trying to get maybe a helper… If I've tidied that, by the time I come back, most times I sit late in the night to do my work" (PR5 Ln 79-83).

This shows how the presence of a housemaid or helper ensures that essential household tasks are handled, allowing her to focus on academic work after returning home. Given the burden of WFC, many female academics employ domestic help to manage household and caregiving responsibilities (Taiwo & Ajayi, 2013). This informal support system plays a vital role in enabling women to maintain their professional commitments while fulfilling culturally entrenched domestic roles (Adisa et al.,

2019). Similar trends across sub-Saharan Africa reflect how paid domestic labour serves as an essential coping mechanism for academic women (Taiwo & Ajayi, 2013).

6.2.8 Perception of National and Institutional Policies on Work-Family Conflict

The effect of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics in Nigerian private university was reviewed. According to the data (see Appendix 2P), most participants dispute the existence of a current policy governing work-family issues in the university. In the views of Participant 3:

> *"I don't even think if there's, a policy as such that ensures work-family balance in the establishment. I don't think so. I don't know if they exist. The only one that exists for me, if I know, is the one that ensures the proper running of the institution. But if it has to do with work and family balancing? Unless maybe it has not been enforced? That is why I don't know about it I don't know (PR3 Ln 255-258)".*

Also, when asked about the effectiveness of the university's policies in ensuring work family balance for female academics, participants emphasized that for private university, business needs are put first and foremost as staff are disposable and replaceable. According to Participant 6:

> *"it's not, it's not encouraging, the workload, you know, the insecurity, you are not sure, am I going to get sacked today? Am I not going to get sacked? You know that kind of thing. You're not sure you're praying to God I beg o (PR6 Ln 259-263)".*

However, participants suggested that if effective wellbeing policies are in place and enforced vigorously, the work-family issues constantly encountered by female academics would be mitigated. They suggested for the implementation of policies such as encouraging teamwork across all levels of staff; providing school for mothers with children; maternity and paternity leaves, sabbatical, meaningful retirement; adequate monetary incentive, and workshops. In the views of Participant 5:

> *"And things like after we do some exams, after marking you can be paid to some incentive to try to give some incentive. If there is need for workshop, they can send you for workshop, like in our profession, we do examiner's workshop, for Nursing and Midwifery Council, they send us for workshop. So, some of those workshops, you can be given a little incentive. But I think they would have done more if there are resources from above (PR5 Ln 281-285)".*

In respect of the impact of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics in Nigerian private university, most participants believe such policies either do not exist or are ineffective. Participant 3 expresses uncertainty about the presence of policies designed to support work-family balance, indicating a lack of awareness or enforcement. Similarly, Participant 6 highlights the

discouraging nature of the current institutional environment, citing excessive workloads and job insecurity. The participants generally agree that if work-family balance policies were implemented and enforced, issues faced by female academics could be alleviated.

The data analyzed (see Appendix 2Q) shows that several recommendations have been offered by female academics including paid maternity leave (spanning a number of months) should be enforced for them; childcare facilities (like creche) should be provided to nursing mothers; adequate welfare packages (such as better remuneration, good retirement plan, sabbatical, study leave) should be offered. Similarly, the participants suggested that private institutions should periodically host sensitisation workshops on work-family balance to raise awareness and encourage responsible behaviour among female academics. Moreover, the participants advocated for the provision of equal opportunities at the workplace for all genders, while ensuring more flexibility for job schedules for females in addition to the employment of more lecturers to lessen their burden. In the words of Participant 1:

> *"Okay, if I'm to recommend based on what I have said, the challenge with a private university, like this maternity leave, they should incorporate pay, even for the females even during even when they're undergoing maternity leave. So equal opportunities that are been given to the men should also be given to the women to justify it, it should be a 50/50 physical 50/50, not where all the men, it will be 9 to 1% or 8 to 2. Let it be 50/50. Evidently 50/50, do you understand and then the women should be supported fully when you are giving these opportunities (PR1 Ln 313, 319-322)".*

Participant 4 also added that:

> *"So, my opinion is that if the institution wants to make meaning and get job satisfaction for their staff, they should be increased in renumeration, and then they should also be a welfare package, they can float in a welfare package like a, you know, retirement benefit for those working here, saving for them in their future. Because for me, now, jobs, even outside the government service are very rare. So, if you can make such a provision for staff of the private university, it will go a long way to motivate them to work even more than expected (PR4 Ln 46-50)".*

This implies that the policy recommendations for female academics' work-family balance in private university in Nigeria, are strong with emphasis on creating supportive work environments through specific interventions. Additionally, participants advocate for the organisation of sensitization workshops to promote awareness of work-family balance and the adoption of policies that ensure equal opportunities for both genders. They also suggest greater flexibility in job schedules for female academics and the hiring of more lecturers to reduce their workload. These recommendations

underscore the importance of gender equality and adequate support systems in fostering job satisfaction and commitment among female academics.

6.2.9 Success and Challenges Experienced

Despite the challenges, participants in the Private university were nevertheless proud about what they have achieved. They spoke about their contributions to the growth of the school (for instance, building the entrepreneurial unit, achieving accreditation for department, among others). In the words of Participant 2:

> *"The most successful story for my one year in this institution, is our accreditation, it's our success in accreditation in government Health Department. We got our accreditation, you know, just recently. So that's, that's a success story for me within one year in this institution. Another success story is that last month, is it last month or early this month, I was given an award by the Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences. So that's something that God has done that baffles me. You know, the little that I have contributed it's been seen it, it's been noticed (PR2 Ln 213-214)".*

Recognition from their employers (in form of awards) and mentoring students to understanding and graduation were also perceived as parameters of success for female academics in private university. To buttress this point, Participant 3 maintained that:

> *"Well, I will say when I started lecturing here, you know, I came in at a time when I met these two girls in year two and at that time, there was no government health related lecturer that was taking them, so I just met them. According to them, it was supposed to…they were taking general courses, if you follow the NUC benchmark you realise that they will need to drop three courses that they were supposed to take in year one which they did not do. So, I met them at the middle of nowhere. So, seeing them now graduating, they are able to pick up one or two things they're able to write their project on their own, I am only guiding, I think, for me, the most impactful success I could actually think of (PR3 Ln 211-217)."*

In addition to the academic gains they have made, participants also pride themselves on being able to transform students' behaviours for the better through mentorship, which constituted some psychological success for them. This is critical because education is not just about intellectual transfer, it also involves shaping character, values, and behaviours, which are crucial for holistic development. For female academics in Nigerian private university, balancing their academic workload with the additional responsibility of mentoring students becomes a vital part of their role. Mentorship provides these academics with the opportunity to influence students' personal growth and professional ethics, thereby contributing to society beyond the classroom. By helping students navigate personal

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challenges, develop soft skills, and adopt positive attitudes, female academics find psychological fulfilment in their work, despite the demands of their roles, such as administrative duties, clinical teaching, and supervising students. This success in shaping well-rounded individuals underscores the broader impact of education, reflecting the deeper purpose of their commitment to teaching and mentorship. According to Participant 1:

> *"Well, seeing those students coming in, who came in at the beginning of their university years, hundred level, as very local children, unpolished, naive, you know, feeling very frustrated, no direction. And then the most, the worst of it, is their parents just left them, as if the parent just dumped them in the school and abandoned them there. So they're like children that have no direction. And then at the end of the day, you're able to talk to them, build them, mentor them, counsel them, and watch them grow under your mentorship to become very strong, vibrant, and agile children or youth. You know, that's a very, very, that's one of the success story (PR1 Ln 238-244)".*

Other forms of success experienced by female academics include being able to develop a marketable curriculum vitae through adequate experience, contributing to students' research, gaining visibility through publication, and answering students' questions to their satisfaction. Female academics contributions to institutional growth, such as achieving departmental accreditations, are viewed as significant accomplishments. Recognition from employers, like receiving awards, and mentoring students towards academic achievements, are also important markers of success. Additionally, these academics value the opportunity to enhance their professional profiles through curriculum development, research contributions, and publishing. Their ability to guide students effectively, both in research and general academic development, further highlighted their perceived success in these institutions.

The private university suffered huge losses during the pandemic due to movement restrictions and lockdown measures imposed by the government. To address this economic setback, they had to seek ways to continue academic activities during the pandemic since students paid fees and expected educational services. To that end, the participants noted that their institution introduced innovative teaching modes (such as online teaching) and virtual communications software such as Google Meet, voice note and Skype to facilitate the continuity educational services. At the same time, participants saw the need for online teaching and aligned with their institution to adopt such technology at the time. According to Participant 1:

> *"So even when the pandemic came, and there was need for us to do online teachings and the rest of it. It wasn't a big deal, because I already had that all planned out. I prepare my courses in modules right from when I was employed into the school. So what I had in modules, I just*

them to slides send to the students, if we do zoom meeting at times, and it's not clear to them, or some of them are not online. At other times, we'll fix WhatsApp meetings where we have to, they have to bring up the topic, we have to bring up topics, from the course outline and we tackle (PR1 Ln 273-278)".

A similar point of view is shared by Participant 5, who maintained that:

"Yes there was a great change during the pandemic. One of the changes that was imbibed was the method of teaching. Using online, we're using online, we used voice notes, whatsapp voice note, we also used audio and some audio teachings we send to the students they view it like our own profession, some of the demonstration that are being done, like demonstration how to give a patient injection, how to do this, we do it, download it online, send to them, then back it up. Give them a voice note. They should prepare if they have any question is to get back to us. Also used a google meet and google room and also used skype. It was very innovative, because we learned new things (PR5 Ln 265-271)".

This implies that strategies adopted by female academics of private university in Nigeria to balance teaching/research activities in the face of COVID-19 pandemic, was a significant shift towards innovative and flexible teaching methods.

6.3 Summary of CS2 Research Findings

As discussed earlier in chapter 5 (introduction), CS2 interview and survey findings have been synthesized to produce robust conclusion. The findings from CS2 highlight high workload pressures faced by female academics, this is consistent with broader research on WFC among academic labour in private higher institutions (Adisa *et al.*, 2019; Ogbogu, 2021). CS2 participants reported high and excessive teaching schedules, additional unpaid administrative responsibilities that often lead to work spill over into personal and family time. Unlike the government university, where work flexibility allows for personalised work schedules, the private university implement rigid work schedules, creating challenges in balancing work and family roles (Smart *et al*, 2020). The lack of job security in CS2 due to weaker contractual conditions and exposure to market pressures exacerbates WFC, as female academics frequently feel enforced to carry out the institutional demands without questioning them (Farley,1996). Institutional inefficiencies, such as staff shortages and logistical difficulties due to university locations, further compound the intensity of workload pressure in CS2. The policy of "no work, no pay" during maternity place women in disadvantage, forcing many of them to return to work prematurely or risk financial instability or total loss of the job. These findings align with research literature on poor institutional policy in Nigeria indicating that unsupportive institutional policies heighten WFC, which leads to increased work pressure and reduced job satisfaction among female academics (Bailyn, 2003).

During term time, it was established that female academics in CS2 experience increased WFC due to overlapping deadlines, grading and student supervision duties. This is made more complex by the expectation of fulfilling family responsibilities. Studies confirm that academic term time disproportionately affects female academics, as they frequently bear the dual burden of work and home responsibilities (Adisa *et al*., 2019).

In CS2, the predominant direction of WFC identified by most of the participants was work to family. Most of the participants said workload interfered with their family life which reinforce findings in WFC literature (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Minority of the participants said they experience bidirectional conflict, an opinion which may relate to career stage and family circumstances.

Female academics in CS2 reported struggling to manage, childcare, domestic duties with high workload heightened their WFC. The strict enforcement of presenteeism in CS2 by the university management further reduced their ability to attend to family obligations because they are unable to determining their own schedules. Employees are expected to prioritize institutional duties above family needs (Adisa, Gbadamosi, & Mordi, 2014) creating consistent conflict between work and personal life, particularly with spouses (Lewis *et al*., 2007).

In the absence of formal institutional support, participants in CS2 adopt various personal and informal strategies to manage WFC. These include delegating household responsibilities, hiring domestic workers, leveraging extended family support, and engaging in diplomatic negotiations with spouse within patriarchal family structures (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). The dependence on informal support mirrors findings in broader research, where female academics in the global south on many occasions depend on social and family networks more than government or institutional policies to balance work and family obligations (Emslie & Hunt, 2009).

The implementation and enforcement of rigid management practices in CS2 threatens career and professional development. Work spillover characterized as *'working for charity'* by the participants often leads to job dissatisfaction. Literature on institutional cultures and gender biases (Probert, 2005; Wolfinger *et al*., 2008) supports this finding in which local market forces shape the form of public patriarchy which these women experience (Walby 1990).

The synthesis of CS2 findings with existing literature underscores the institutional and systemic challenges, female academics in CS2 face in managing WFC. Increase in workload, rigid institutional policies, lack of job security and support for development contribute to WFC. Using Walby's gender regime theory in CS2 requires modification to allow for African cultural norms. This CS2 findings contributes to this endeavour by grounding feminist theory in locally specific practices and epistemologies of the Global South. This research integrates structural constraints, individual and

collective approach to offer a more robust understanding of WFC management in CS2. The direction of conflict is predominantly work-to-family. In the absence of effective institutional support, female academics rely on family and informal arrangements and their own ingenuity to mitigate WFC challenges, confirming the need for policy reforms in CS2 to promote work-life balance and gender inclusivity in the institution.

Chapter 7 Case Study 3

7.0   Introduction

This Chapter presents the CS3 overview. This consists of the interview analysis (qualitative) aspect of this study, summary of the survey findings and synthesis of the survey and interview analysis to arrive at findings.

In the interview analysis, nine key themes were addressed; respondents work history/career level, family dynamics, perception of academic institution, sources of work WFC, academic workload and family demand, direction of conflict, WFC mitigation, perception of national and institutional work policies/recommendation and success/challenges experienced by the participants.

7.1 Overview of Case Study 3

The UK, Pre-92 University was officially founded in 1905, initially established as a prominent college, the school has evolved to a well-respected research university known for its academic excellence and dynamic research centre. The institution, a distinguished member of the Russell Group is recognised for providing a diverse range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs in fields like arts and Social Science, Art and Humanity Engineering and Medicine. The university offers specialized programs in emerging sectors such as artificial intelligence, renewable energy and public health, appealing to students with varied academic and professional interests.

The Russell Group universities are committed to maintaining internationally leading research standards, delivering outstanding educational experiences, and cultivating great relationships with business and governmental entities. The Russell Group collectively push for government assistance in sustaining their research institution, obtaining two-thirds of the UK research funding. The financial assistance allows the Group universities to provide substantial top-level academics, build quality research intensive culture and contribute economically to the country.

CS4 university has a sizeable student population of about 30,000 comprising local and international students who enhance the university's multicultural environment. The university tuition prices fluctuate based on student program and residency status. Home students' annual tuition fee currently stands at £9,250 while international students pay elevated fee that range from £18,000 to £30,000. The home students are open to public financial assistance alternatives including government loans, scholarships, and bursaries.

The university recognises and is obligated to the national Equality Act 2010 to promote equality, cultivate inclusive culture and prevent discrimination among students and staff. The Act safe guides

factors such as gender, ethnic, age, disability, religion and sexual orientation (Equality Act, 2010). It promotes diversity and inclusion assuring fair access to education and professional development opportunities. The university adheres to a national equality accreditation scheme, the Athena Swan Charter, which advocates gender equality in higher education especially in STEM fields. This has led to improved female participation in the senior positions and enhancement support for under-represented groups.

The university website claims that the institution has flexible work arrangements to meet the varied demands of employees, particularly those with caregiving responsibilities. The university acknowledges the significance of childcare by providing on-campus facilities and offering information on nearby commercial day-care options. These policies seek to mitigate the difficulties encountered by staff and students with young children.

7.2 Interview Analysis

Case Study 3 presents analysis of a pre-92 University in the UK, focusing on the lived experiences of two female academic staff members who were the only female academics from the survey that offered to be interviewed.

The interview began with a set of introductory questions designed to elicit demographic details and initial reflections on their roles as female academics, providing a foundational understanding of their backgrounds and perspectives (see Appendix 3A-C). For ease of identification, they were coded as PRE-92-1 (for Participant 1) and PRE-92-2 (for Participant 2).

Participant 1 is an academic researcher and lecturer at a CS3. She is a black African woman who is married with children and now lives in the UK with her husband. Her academic background comprises a BSc degree in accounting, after which she obtained an MBA degree in Business and Financial Management in the UK. After completing her MBA program in the UK, she proceeded to a doctoral program in the social sciences. Before coming to the UK to study and work, she had worked extensively in several organizations in her country and several capacities such as diversity management staff, administrative assistant, and business executive. She describes herself as an early-career researcher in academia.

Participant 2 is a lesbian who identifies as cis-gender with a wife and a five-month-old baby. Her academic background qualifies her as a mental health nurse; she has a master's degree in clinical research and is currently enrolled in a PhD program in the field of nursing. Before the university employment, she worked as a mental health nurse in the UK. She was employed while studying for her PhD at the same university. She is on the verge of completing her PhD studies as she just recently

submitted her thesis, signalling the culmination of her research. Like Participant 1, Participant 2 is an early-career researcher who is new to academia.

7.2.1 Work history/Career level

The participants represent diverse academic and professional backgrounds, offering a contrast in both career trajectory and field of expertise. These differences may influence how each participant balances academic responsibilities and personal commitments, given their distinct work histories, subject areas, and the fact that one participant is in a same-sex partnership.

7.2.2 Family Dynamic

Participant 1 got married early and started a family before or at the start of her academic career. Whereas participant 2, indicated that she was experiencing a hectic family life characterized by difficulty in balancing work, research, and family obligations. Female academics in the UK frequently face challenges in balancing family responsibilities with work duties thereby exacerbating WFC (Zhang *et al.*, 2020). Participant 2 mentioned that:

> "*I live in XYZ with my wife and we have a five-month-old baby and the rest of our families, hers are in xxx and mine are in down South near xxx. So, it's just us here really (PRE 92-2 Ln 31-32)*".

As a result, the couple navigates the challenges and joys of parenting largely on their own, without the direct support of nearby relatives, relying on each other in their day-to-day life.

The other participant, Participant 1 mentioned that:

"Hmmm, I would say it's hectic because balancing work and then research and family life, it's challenging because you have to give 50/50, not 20/80. They don't want to know if you are tired or are not tired, you just have to make out time for your children and husband too. When you have one and they don't want to know how busy you are during the day. They just want when they want your time, they want your time and they want it when they want it. So, it's hectic balancing that one off (PRE 92-1 Ln 38-43)".

Unlike Participant 2, who shares caregiving responsibilities with her wife, Participant 1 appears to face the challenges of managing her children and husband's needs largely on her own, regardless of how busy or tired she may be. Her children expect her attention on their terms, highlighting the intense demands on her time and energy as she juggles multiple roles. The strain of maintaining this balance creates a more challenging family dynamic, where work and family life compete for her attention without the luxury of significant outside family support (Zhang *et al.*, 2020).

In the survey (Chapter 4.2.2) a wider range of family situations were captured, for example respondents in CS3 confirmed that they have live-in family, childcare and other caregiving responsibilities, they also reported having small family size. Dog walking and pet care were part of the family dynamics noted by CS3 respondents in the survey

7.2.3 Perception of Academic Institution

Participants were asked to compare the dynamics of academic work in both the pre-92 and post-92 universities as female academic staff. The emerging themes are discussed distinctly. In the survey (Chapter 4.3.1.1) respondents maintained that there are better working conditions in CS3 because the workload is less, which translates into reduced work strain for female academics. These conditions are favourable for female academics with family obligations, because the non-commercial nature of CS3, cushioned by national research income, reduces the pressure to generate revenue, allowing them to focus more on academic duties without the added strain of meeting financial targets. With a lesser workload, female academics experience reduced work strain, which helps them better manage their professional and personal responsibilities. The absence of revenue-driven pressures enables more flexible and balanced working conditions, giving them the time and mental capacity to address family obligations without the constant tension of overwork. This balance contributes to minimizing WFC, making it easier for female academics in CS3 to maintain both roles effectively. In the words of Participant 1:

"Working for a pre-92 university is easier because there you are not under the pressure of generating income for the university as you know, post-92 university is more commercially driven. And also, we are not given so much workload as a post 92 university because many post 92 universities in the UK are more private (PRE 92-1 Ln 47-50)"

In the interviews the issue of ethnic equality was raised as this was pertinent to one of the participants. Universities are beholden to the Equality Act 2010 in which both ethnic and sexual orientations are protected characteristics. As a publicly funded organization, CS3 have a 'duty' to promote equality and hence implement appropriately the equality policies in place. However, implementation does not always follow. While it appears that Participant 2 has not been experiencing discrimination around her sexuality (she is working in a feminized area, and her difference is not apparent unless she chooses to discuss her (wife), Participant 1 claimed to be having a tough time both as a woman in a male-dominated area and as a black woman in the department.

As captured by Participant 1:

"This question boils down to ethnicity and diversity. Now if you are working in a pre-92 university, majority of them are not as diverse. Now working as a black person, not a black British but a black.

Even if the company or the school have policies in place that they say maybe for working females that have family or single females that are not married, it boils down to skin and ethnicity because sometimes there might be a little bit of leeway for the ethnic majority than it would be for the ethnic minority because when you are not a white person the rule seems different. And when you want to relate with your superiors, they sometimes give you a cold shoulder in most situations because they will not understand your concerns. And I would like to put it this way, whatever they do for the ethnic majority, they have to do for the ethnic minority, but at the time it is not like that (PRE 92-1 Ln 145-153)."

Despite the presence of policies such as the Equality Act of 2010 designed to support female employees, such as those balancing family responsibilities, these policies may not be equally applied. Participant 1 highlights a disparity in treatment, where she claimed that ethnic minority staff, may experience less understanding and support from their superiors compared to their ethnic majority counterparts, indicating a deeper challenge beyond formal policies. However, this might not be the general situation as her position is more subjective.

In terms of comparison, CS3 is renowned for its commitment to impact-driven research (a key revenue stream) geared towards bringing solutions to societal problems. Their commitment to research extends beyond the immediate academic context to encompass a broader societal impact, demonstrating a deep engagement with solving real-world problems. In the survey (Chapter 4.3.1.2), respondents agreed that teaching and researching are the culture of the university but has come with heavy workload. CS3 has cultivated a reputation for prioritizing research that delivers tangible outcomes. According to Participant 1:

"As for the pre-92 universities, they are under the Russell Group, and when under the Russell Group like that they focus more on research so they expect you at every point if not every year or every two years, you have to publish a paper and that paper will touch on things that is needed in the country that will make an impact not just from the university (PRE 92-1 Ln 50-53)".

As Participant 1 noted, the university maintain rigorous expectations for continuous scholarly output, with academic staff often required to publish impactful research every year or two. This research is not merely theoretical; it is designed to address critical issues facing the country, thereby ensuring that academic contributions have a direct and meaningful influence on societal development. The emphasis on generating knowledge that can drive innovation, inform policy, and improve social conditions solidifies the role and reputation of CS3 as leaders in fostering research that serves the public good. However, it can also be draining for female academics as they often struggle to balance research commitments with teaching duties.

Participant 1 describes this difficulty by maintaining that:

"Also in the Pre-92 university, balancing research with lecturing work is not easy (PRE 92-1 Ln 54)".

This could yet be a potent source of work-family conflict for female academics because the intense pressure to consistently produce high-quality research for promotion, coupled with their teaching responsibilities, creates significant demands on their time and energy. In CS3, where there is a heightened expectation for academic staff to publish research that addresses critical national issues to qualify for promotion, female academics are often caught in a cycle of balancing rigorous research activities with the delivery of lectures, supervision of students, and administrative duties. The need to engage in research that influences policy and drives societal development adds to the intellectual and emotional load, as the research must not only be original but also impactful. For female academics who may also have family responsibilities, the challenge of meeting these institutional demands while managing household duties can lead to conflicts, as they are expected to excel in both spheres without compromising either. This strain, compounded by the dual expectations of professional and family roles, escalates WFC, potentially leading to burnout and reduced overall well-being of female academics (Zhou *et al.*, 2021).

7.2.4   Sources of Work-Family Conflicts

Several of the survey respondents highlighted the challenge they faced balancing family responsibilities and professional development activities. Some of the challenges are conflicts with their spouses, detachment from their children and inability to carry out pet care, dog walking as desired. From the interviews conducted, participants decried that a major source of work-family issues for female academics in CS3 is the difficulty in managing work commitments, family obligations, and post-graduate studies. Given that all these activities are time-demanding, both participants reported having a hard time maintaining a delicate balance between work and family demands. In the exact words of Participant 1:

"Well, let me just say starting my master's program, you know, that's a though academic work. So then you spend more time reading and I was always in the library and then as someone that has a family and when you are pregnant, it's really stressful. Balancing pregnancy, stress from family and stress from academics, that's when I would say was very, very challenging for me because at some point, you don't know what to do with yourself. You can't stop your academics halfway because of family life (PRE 92-1 Ln 59-64).

The viewpoint of the survey respondents and interview participants revealed that female academics in CS3 face significant challenges in balancing the multiple roles they are required to fulfil simultaneously. Participant 1 highlights the intense time demands of pursuing a career development

program while dealing with family responsibilities, such as pregnancy and childcare, which compound her stress. She emphasized the difficulty of maintaining equilibrium between these roles, particularly in academic environments where the pressure to succeed professionally coexists with personal obligations. This situation reflects the broader struggle many women in academia face, where they are expected to excel in their careers while also managing family duties, leading to a sense of being overwhelmed and unsure of how to navigate the competing demands.

Participant 2, who was a professional nurse talked about the difficulty she experiences trying to combine academic work (teaching, marking scripts, examination coordination, supervising students) with her family commitments. According to her (Participant 2):

"I think it was before my daughter was born and when I was doing my PhD and also teaching, meanwhile I continued to work as a nurse. It was trying to do too much at once and You know, although you might have to do 2-hour lecture or two hours teaching meanwhile I'm quite new to it, so I would need to do about 10 hours prep for a two-hour lecturing session (PRE 92-2 Ln 50-54)".

The participant identified this clash as a major source of WFC for her because she was juggling multiple demanding roles simultaneously. As a professional nurse, she continued to practice while also working towards her PhD before finally taking up academic teaching. Responsibilities such as lecturing, marking scripts, coordinating examinations, and supervising students were identified as pressures she never envisaged to impact her family responsibilities. The additional challenge of being a new lecturer required extensive preparation, with her needing about 10 hours of prep time for a 2-hour teaching session. This overwhelming workload, combined with her family commitments, especially after the birth of her daughter, made it difficult for her to effectively manage her time and responsibilities. The strain of balancing these roles highlights the intense pressure female academics in CS3 often face in managing both professional and family obligations, which can significantly contribute to WFC.

7.2.5 Academic Workload and Family Demands

The survey (Chapter 4.3.1.2) respondents mentioned that their academic workload revolves around teaching and research. As female academics, they are required to put in hours teaching students while also publishing high-impact, issues-based research articles in reputable journals, which can be physically and mentally draining.

This finding was echoed by Participant 1:

"My academic workload, like I said, I'm a tutor, so it's 50% research, 50% teaching, and then 50% working part-time. If you want to so imagine in a semester you are given like 4 different modules and I tutor in all those modules and it's spread out during the week. Now you have to look for a way to

balance that teaching with your research because they can't clash because your supervisors might give you a deadline, say in three months you are required to submit whatever task you are given (PRE 92-1 Ln 79-94)".

From the viewpoint of Participant 1, it is evident how the workload from teaching and research can alter the work-family dynamic of female academics in CS3. Specifically, the intensive split between teaching responsibilities and high-stakes research output, both of which require constant attention and commitment, creates a strain that extends beyond the university setting. With Participant 1's description of managing "like 4 different modules" across the week, balancing these modules and adhering to strict research deadlines leaves little room for personal or family obligations. This workload not only consumes substantial physical and mental energy but also requires scheduling flexibility that may not easily accommodate family needs, particularly when tasks must be completed within non-negotiable timelines. Additionally, the intense expectation to publish high-impact research adds pressure, as meeting these demands is crucial for career progression, and failure to do so may impact professional stability. Such factors contribute to a challenging work-family dynamic, as the pressures to fulfil academic duties often encroach on personal time, creating an imbalance that complicates the management of family responsibilities alongside academic demands.

Kenny and Fluck, (2022) identified the significant 'hidden' workload undertaken by academics. This is because it is difficult to accurately estimate with certainty exactly how much time to allocate for their different activities and the official actual time the work takes to complete. Hence, there is always the possibility of a time spillover, where female academics find themselves spending much more than their time for the department than they originally scheduled (Uwannah *et al*., 2021). In the interview the response to question academic workload by participant 2 suggests that unseen work is a widespread problem which many women face.

As Participant 2 described it:

"So yeah, it's more about the hidden workload I think, which is the problem with the lecturing, and then the marking as well, like you'd never know how long that's going to take. Do you know? I mean, you allocate some time, but it might just take you a bit longer, or it might take you less amount of time than you thought. Whereas in nursing, you know, you're going to be on shift from 7:00am till 3:00pm. But whereas in the university, you don't know how long your workload is going to take, you know roughly it will take me about, 30 minutes to mark this one 2000-word assignment, that could take longer if you're not sure you want to discuss it, you know, so it's all the hidden work time. Really. I think that gets on top of you (PRE 92-2 Ln 95-106)".

This hidden workload can be a monumental cause of WFC for female academics because it introduces unpredictability and time spillover into their schedules, making it difficult to maintain a clear boundary between work and family responsibilities. However, there is often extra remuneration for female academics who put in extra work in CS3. The participant described that putting in extra work hours in things like prepping for lectures can be rewarding because the universities offer some sort of payment to encourage academics. In the words of Participant 2:

"But xxx University has been quite good about that and they will pay you for the prep that you do, so you get paid for it, which is fine, but I think you know, you lose your time because you don't anticipate that so yeah, well, they give it to you in money, you lose sort of 10 hours of your time for a 2-hour thing (PRE 92-2 Ln 85-86)"

University remuneration acts as a form of recognition even if it does not recompensate for all the hours required, it nevertheless reinforces women's commitment to the job and reducing the sense of being overworked and exploited. Although they may sacrifice personal time, the financial compensation offers a sense of balance, easing the pressure of conflicting family responsibilities. By offering payment for tasks like lecture preparation, CS3 not only motivates female academics to deliver high-quality work but also helps them manage their work-family balance better. This mitigates stress, as the reward sort of justifies the time invested, creating a more positive outlook on workload management and ultimately fostering a stronger sense of organizational commitment.

Responses in the survey where 76% female academics in CS3 said that taking care of their children constitutes a family obligation for female academics. When they are not at work doing academic tasks, they are at home tending to their children and making sure they are well taken care of.

Participant 1 elaborated saying:

"Family obligations. It boils down to the kind of family and how large the family is, I have three children and those three children, I have to take care of them and they are spread out in different ages. They have to go to school, I have to do school runs, make sure that they are well fed, and sometimes you take them for shopping before school resumes. Take them to hospitals for check-ups, meet doctor's appointment (PRE 92-1 Ln 90-94)".

Participant 2 also described her childcare situation by stating that:

"Yep, so at the moment my wife is doing the full maternity, but she goes back this week and then we will need to share that. So, who needs to share the childcare we will be popping her into nursery two days a week, but I will have to look after my child two days a week from now on instead of working five days I'll be working three days (PRE 92-2 Ln 113-119)".

From the viewpoints of both survey respondents and interview participants, it can be concluded that the demands of childcare can encroach into the work commitments of female academics and introduce conflict in their ability to manage and prioritize both spheres effectively.

For Participant 1, the extensive demands of parenting, such as transporting her three children to school, coordinating appointments, and ensuring they are well-cared for, become intertwined with her academic responsibilities. This blending of work and family roles intensifies as she juggles school runs, medical check-ups, and essential tasks like shopping, all of which require significant time and energy. Similarly, Participant 2 faces childcare responsibilities that demand a restructuring of her work schedule: with her wife returning from maternity leave, she must take on an increased role in childcare, necessitating a reduction in her workdays from five to three. She now works long, 10-hour shifts on those three days, creating a physically and mentally exhausting balance between nursing duties and child-rearing. The constant transition between roles not only limits her work availability but also reduces the time and focus she can devote to her professional responsibilities, highlighting a significant WFC for female academics striving to meet both family obligations and career demands.

The effects of family obligations on career progression are felt differently by the interview participants, though not less significantly. For one participant, due to heavy family obligations, her career progression had to be halted for at least one year to enable her to meet the demands of maternity. The other participant had to ponder over the dilemma of choosing between career progression and family commitment at a time when the demands of both were overwhelming for her and her husband. Participant 1 shed some perspectives of the issue by stating that:

"From the obligations, let me say during the time I was pregnant because that's at some point and when I was on maternity, you have to take like about six months for this. The most difficult was during my pregnancy and delivery, it's a normal delivery, it's easier, but when it's true, yes, you have to take time to recover. So, I have to take like one year off my career progression. Childbearing Put a stretch not just in my academic life but my career life because that one-year stretch tells a lot. One year away from a career will take another year to recover from the one year that you have lost. So, it's really hard to balance it up, especially as a female (PRE 92-1 Ln 100-106)".

Participant 2 also expressed their unique circumstance by revealing that:

"Well, I think I'm at that point now. Really, we're at a point where my wife and I have to face the reality of work and family conflict. We're thinking who's going to be the one to progress at this time. And the other person is probably going to take a bit of a delay. And so we're just going to work out who that's going to be by weighing up our opportunities (PRE 92-2 Ln 125-128)".

Taken together, the unique perspectives of both participants mirror the difficulties they experienced in balancing family obligations with work commitments, underscoring the impact these responsibilities have on career progression for female academics in CS3. For Participant 1, the demands of pregnancy and childbirth necessitated a year-long break from her career, which she noted not only halted her progression but also extended the time it would take to regain momentum in her academic and professional life. The stretch caused by childbearing was described as a setback that required considerable effort to recover from, emphasizing how family obligations can create a prolonged gap in career advancement (Nnubia, Ibeanu, and Okechukwu, 2024). Similarly, Participant 2 highlighted the shared burden of family responsibilities between herself and her spouse, revealing that they were at a crossroads where one partner would have to prioritize career progression while the other delayed theirs to manage family commitments. This situation exemplifies the dynamics of career and family responsibilities in same-sex partnerships, contrasting traditional gendered expectations in heterosexual couples where the wife's career often takes a backseat to support the husband's advancement. For this couple, both women faced the challenge of balancing family obligations with career aspirations, necessitating equitable compromises rather than defaulting to conventional gender roles. Unlike heterosexual couples where societal norms frequently dictate that wives bear the greater burden of career sacrifices; this partnership highlights how mutual negotiation, and shared decision-making can redefine the approach to managing work-life balance.

The survey (Chapter 4.3.1.3) data reveal how academic workload intensifies conflicts between career demands and family obligations, especially for female academics in CS3. For example, 14% of the respondents noted that carrying out pet care such as dog walking, domestic responsibilities, and care for the elderly have been factors that exacerbated their WFC. Similarly, Participant 1 reflects on the struggle of resuming her career shortly after childbirth, emphasizing the tension it created within her marriage. Her husband perceived her return to work as a form of neglect toward family duties, which underscores the pressure on women to achieve a delicate balance between career and family. This strain highlights how women in academia, who are often expected to quickly re-establish their careers post-childbirth, face additional societal expectations to fulfil traditional family roles. For female academics like Participant 1, the challenge of balancing high academic workload with family responsibilities can be amplified by the lack of understanding from their partners, which may exacerbate feelings of guilt and responsibility for family well-being. In her exact words, Participant 1 explained:

"It shortly after birth, rushing to pick up my career life where I left off. This put a strain in my marriage because my husband did not understand at that point that I had to complete what I'd started. He didn't really see stuff from my own perspective. It was as if maybe no, I was neglecting one side to

push up the other side where in fact you are trying to find a balance. It was really a challenging time for me (PRE 92-1 Ln 110-114)."

Participant 2 also elucidates her own unique experience in her own words:

"I've had jobs in the past where you don't finish on time and that puts quite a lot of pressure on my wife because she sort of looking for me to come back home for a bit of a break and a bit of help. And, yeah, and sometimes it has to be stuck at work and I'm a bit worried about that going forward in terms of, you know, I can't be running over because I've gotta be picking the kid up from school (PRE 92-2 Ln 141-145)".

Participant 2's experience illustrates how extended working hours interfere with family time, placing additional strain on her partner, who relies on her to share in family and childcare duties. She expresses concern about work, she often running late to work, creating tension as her wife anticipates her help at home, which she is frequently unable to provide. This reflects a common dilemma faced by female academics, where long or unpredictable hours compromise their ability to meet family obligations consistently (Naseem, Faiz and Asad, 2020). Overall, the viewpoints from both participants imply that the effects of workload on female academics' family obligations can be profound, as the intense academic demands not only strain their ability to balance career and family but also contribute to relationship tensions and feelings of inadequacy in fulfilling both professional and domestic roles.

7.2.6   Direction of Conflict

The direction of conflict in CS3 is found to be situational and dynamic, both survey respondents and interviewees acknowledged that conflict could emerge from either family-related issues or work-related issues; hence neither side is vindicated. For example, survey (Chapter 4.3.2) 57.1% respondents identified the direction of WFC as primarily family-to-work while 23.8% said both family and work were the direction of WFC.

The interview participants gave a clearer picture of the complex sources of conflict they were handling. According to Participant 1:

"As a junior lecturer you are answerable to the head of your department or the head of your division and also the dean of that particular department, and imagine if the dean or head of your division is a male, not a female and in most cases his family doesn't live close with him, so majority of them do not understand the fact that you're living with your family at this time. They don't understand that as a junior lecturer there are a lot of things that you need to do so as not to have the conflict. Most of the time the conflict is work related, not family related (PRE 92-1 Ln 119-124)".

Participant 2 also stated that:

"At this moment my family obligation is affecting my work. I'm at this point I'm in transition, so really, you know, I'm flexible. So you know, I'm working around the family at the moment so I think my conflict is in that direction at the moment because I have the ability and my current job is flexible. And so that is why I let my family dictate what I'm working at the moment? (PRE 92-2 Ln 156-160)".

This means that the WFC is not one-directional but rather a dynamic challenge shaped by both external expectations and individual circumstances. Participant 1, for example, highlighted how the hierarchical structure within academia and the often male-dominated leadership complicate matters for junior lecturers, especially women who may have significant family responsibilities. She pointed out that superiors who lack similar family commitments may struggle to empathize with the needs of employees balancing professional obligations with domestic roles, leading to a work-centric conflict where pressures and expectations emanate primarily from the workplace. This pressure to conform to work obligations at the expense of family obligations can deepen WFC, particularly when the work environment lacks a family-oriented understanding.

In contrast, Participant 2 describes a family-centric direction of WFC, where her family responsibilities are currently influencing her professional engagement. Her position in transition allows for a flexible work arrangement, enabling her to prioritize family needs over work demands. This arrangement, while reducing the immediate pressures from her professional environment, creates a family-first conflict direction, where the flexibility of her current job allows her to structure her professional efforts around her family's needs (PRE-92-2 Ln 156-160).

Thus, the direction of work-family conflict varies, influenced by factors such as role flexibility and hierarchical expectations, suggesting that work-family dynamics for female academics in CS3 are both situational and deeply affected by structural and cultural contexts within the university setting. This implies that addressing WFC for female academics requires rethinking institutional policies and leadership practices to create more empathetic, equitable, and adaptable work environments that accommodate diverse family responsibilities.

7.2.7 Work-Family Conflict Mitigation

In the survey (Chapter 4.3.3.1) respondents used a range of strategies to mitigate sources of conflict, these included job flexibility which allow them to navigate between work duties and family responsibilities. 86% of the survey respondents acknowledged job flexibility availability in the university. Both interview participants use strategies that are very familiar and well established in the UK labour market: part-time hours, external private childcare providers (nurseries outside the home), and a network of friends. In this research, participants experienced WFC in different ways, each participant had distinct strategies for coping with the issue. For Participant 1, creating fruitful

interpersonal relationships with people and keeping the children busy served as a useful coping strategy. According to her:

"The strategy I use is that I kind of like to make a lot of friends. So sometimes when I'm at work, I know that I have people that will help me look after my children. But then when you finish, you have to get the children back a7nd then keep them busy so that you can be busy (PRE 92-1 Ln 70-72)".

In doing so, she can mitigate WFC by leveraging a support system through interpersonal relationships. By cultivating friendships, the participant ensures that there are reliable individuals available to assist with childcare when work obligations arise, reducing the stress of managing both work and family responsibilities simultaneously. This delegation allows the participant to focus on work duties with greater peace of mind, knowing that their children are well cared for. Additionally, by keeping the children engaged in activities upon returning home, the participant creates an environment where both work and family commitments are managed effectively, allowing for a smoother transition between roles and minimizing the overlap that often causes conflict.

Conversely, for Participant 2, planning and time management play a fundamental role in helping her cope with the pressures of work-family conflict. According to her:

"It's basically planning and time management really. And another good thing is that I always overestimate the time things will take me so I'm never in a position where I'm not sort of meeting deadlines or I'm not as prepared as I want to be good organisation around my time management and how long I need to prepare myself and things I need to do and that's usually on a week by week basis, I'd say I plan out my week and how I'm gonna spend my time to make the most out of everything (PRE 92-2 Ln 73-78)" .

In doing so, she mitigates the pressure from WFC because effective planning and time management provides her with a structured approach to balance her dual responsibilities. By overestimating the time required for tasks, she creates a buffer that helps her avoid last-minute pressures, ensuring that deadlines are met and that she is well-prepared. This proactive strategy minimizes stress and reduces the likelihood of unexpected work crises spilling over into family time. Additionally, planning on a week-by-week basis allows her to allocate time more efficiently and ensures that she can focus on both work and family responsibilities without feeling overwhelmed. This organized approach fosters a sense of control over her schedule, which is essential in managing work-family conflicts.

Concerning dealing with WFC, both interview participants relied on a similar strategy to address the conflict: communication and dialogue both at work and home.

According to Participant 1:

"If it's something that you can speak to other female lecturers, even if they're not married, to tell them ohh this clash, this module will clash with something I need to do. Can you please swap with me so that I can meet up with this? Some of them would agree and then sometimes you can speak directly to the Dean and say is there a way you can push in all my Lectures for the week, to make it like in three days so that in three days you can work from Monday to Wednesday lecturing morning to evening and then Thursday and Friday you are free (PRE 92-1 Ln 129-134)".

Participant 2 also added that:

".......and communication with my employer. You know, letting them know my circumstance and and seeing if we can work around it. And again same with being at home, who's gonna progress, who's gonna do what, we weigh it up. It's just open communication with everybody really (PRE-92-2 Ln 171-174)".

Through dialogue at home with spouses and at work with superiors, both participants used clear communication to manage their WFC effectively. Participant 1, for example, shared how she actively engages with colleagues and superiors to alleviate scheduling pressures. She explained that speaking to other female lecturers, even those without family responsibilities, allowed for flexibility, such as swapping teaching sessions when personal obligations arose. When adjustments with colleagues were not feasible, Participant 1 approached her dean to request that all her weekly lectures be condensed into three intensive days, creating additional family time for the remainder of the week. Similarly, Participant 2 emphasized the importance of transparency both at home and in the workplace. She maintained clear communication with her employer to negotiate workable schedules that considered her family obligations, and at home, coordinated with her spouse to determine who would manage specific responsibilities. This open and clear dialogue approach allowed both participants to navigate their professional and personal demands by leveraging workplace support and family collaboration.

The question of transitioning to online educational platforms for teaching and grading students was an experience only asked of the interview participants. It had become a substantial strategy that enabled them to balance teaching and research activities during the pandemic. Central to the success of this transition was institutional support, which ensured the facilities, resources and strategic direction were available to ensure the full-scale adoption of this technology. In the views of Participant 1:

"The new normal is working from home because I remember half of the time, majority of us that were lecturing in the university were told to come and get our work computers. We took the computers to our houses, the IT department came and set it up so that we can deliver lectures (PRE 92-1 Ln 204-206)".

Beyond the ability to balance teaching and research, Participant 2 further acknowledged that her confidence in presentations was enhanced through the adoption of these online educational systems. In her own words:

"I really appreciated the swap from physical face-to-face to virtual platform. The move to go in online is really appreciated particularly for me, because I think doing Electronic online is much better for my anxiety. I didn't worry as much but I'm more confident behind the screen, at least I couldn't see all the faces (PRE 92-2 Ln 235-239)".

These participants' viewpoints entail that the shift to online educational platforms during the pandemic was not only a strategic adaptation but also a critical support system for balancing academic responsibilities. The insights reflect that institutional backing, including the provision of resources such as work on computers and IT support, was instrumental in enabling academics to maintain the quality and continuity of education remotely. Participant 1's experience underscores how institutional measures facilitated this "new normal," allowing lecturers to work effectively from home reducing commuting time and minimizing disruptions in family schedules. Moreover, for Participant 2, this shift offered psychological benefits by easing anxieties associated with in-person teaching and enhancing her confidence in presentations through the virtual medium. The availability of these platforms allowed for more flexible interactions, providing a comfortable environment that improved her engagement with students. Collectively, these reflections highlight how comprehensive institutional support and flexible online systems contributed significantly to sustaining academic performance and personal well-being during a period of global disruption.

7.2.8 Perception of National and Institutional Work Policies and Recommendation

The participants were asked to express their opinions on the national and institutional work policies implemented in CS3 for female academics. Participant 1 maintained that in her perception, CS3 welfare benefits were based on tackling ethnic inequality, but female academics could benefit from these policies, even though the childcare policies were not well defined. And they enjoy flexible working conditions in the universities. Another work policy offered by CS3 is maternity leave which goes beyond the UK statutory provision offering better benefits. However, respondents questioned how it was implemented which suggests these benefits were not clearly communicated. For example, participant 1 perception is that ethnicity could have a role to play in staff's ability to get leave. In the words of Participant 1:

"So there are policies for working females. But again, it boils down to ethnicity. It depends on your colour in my opinion. They give maternity leave, half of the time it might be paid, and half of the time, It might not be. I think there is a stretch where it is paid and then there is a stretch where you get paid half. Other work policies like childcare is not well defined (PRE 92-1 Ln 170, 171-173)".

The notion is her perception of the university policy. Flexible working time and the reconciliation of family and work life have been central issues of current work policy and academic debate in Europe for more than two decades (Tang, 2004), however, the mere existence of flexible working conditions does not automatically reduce WFC; the effectiveness of such policies depends on how they are implemented and the broader cultural and institutional contexts within each country (Tang, 2004). This implies that while flexible work conditions can provide female academics in CS3 with opportunities to balance family obligations and professional responsibilities, the effectiveness of this flexibility is contingent on how institutional and cultural contexts shape its use. In this case, even though most female academics work full-time in CS3, they do not necessarily work the same hours every day; they have some autonomy to decide when to work their contractual hours across the week, which affords them a degree of flexibility to take on family obligations or other activities.

According to Participant 2:

"Again, the policy is just around flexible working condition, and they have made it so that I can, you know, still sort of work almost full time, but in less amount of days. So, I can extend my hours on certain days so that I don't have to work full days since I have childcare. So, they're just flexible. They have been very understanding knowing I share parental responsibility with my wife (PRE 92-2 Ln 199-203)".

Through such a flexible work condition, female academics can devote some of their time to family obligations such as childcare, and other domestic responsibilities, without sacrificing their professional responsibilities. Flexibility in working days and hours allows them to rearrange their schedules to better accommodate family demands. For instance, by working longer hours on certain days, they can reduce the number of days they spend at the university, which creates more time for personal or family matters. This arrangement alleviates the strain of balancing work with home life, as it allows for essential tasks, such as transporting children to school or attending important family appointments, to be managed without conflict. Participant 2's experience exemplifies this benefit, as the university's understanding of parental responsibility enables her to maintain a nearly full-time commitment while also sharing childcare duties. In such an environment, female academics experience reduced WFC, fostering greater overall satisfaction and allowing them to sustain their engagement in both roles without significant compromise. The interview participants felt that the employee work policies are continuously under review to enable improvements to meet the changing needs of staff. According to Participant 1:

"Yes, because like I said earlier, the institution's work policies that they have are reviewed all the time. So when they know that lecturers or their doctoral researchers complain about certain things, they go back and then review the policies to see how it can suit. And yeah, working females at the end of the

day because at the end of the day, you want your employers to be happy and when they are happy, they deliver the required results that you want from them (PRE 92-1 Ln 230-234).

This entails that CS3 prioritizes adaptability and responsiveness within their employee work policies to accommodate the evolving needs of their staff. The continuous review process indicates a proactive approach to policy management, where institutions address feedback from academic and research staff, particularly concerning challenges faced by female employees balancing work and family responsibilities. By considering employee concerns, the university aims to create a supportive work environment that enhances employee satisfaction and well-being. Participant 1 highlights that the goal is to foster happiness and job satisfaction among staff, which, in turn, encourages productivity and the delivery of desired outcomes, aligning institutional goals with employee welfare. This policy responsiveness reflects a commitment to fostering a positive workplace culture that values both personal and professional development.

In CS3, female academics post-covid-19 have the liberty to work from home or from a location that they prefer, as long as they are meeting their goals. This provides them with the flexibility to conveniently perform job roles, while addressing immediate family obligations requiring their physical presence, thereby helping them mitigate conflict between the two.

In the exact words of Participant 2:

"I've got a supportive team that really pushed the wellbeing policies and improving the work-life balance policies of the university. So I think that yeah, I'm fortunate enough but yeah I can't speak for other departments. What I know is that the university always try to help with staff wellbeing and work-life balance and through flexible working time (PRE-92-2 Ln 265-269)".

This entails that female academics in CS3 benefit from flexible working arrangements, which significantly contribute to their ability to balance professional responsibilities with family obligations. The provision to work from preferred locations, such as home, alleviates the physical presence requirement and enables these academics to manage their workload efficiently while attending to family needs. Participant 2 highlights the value of a supportive team and policies that prioritize staff well-being and work-life balance, acknowledging a positive impact on her role specifically. The university's efforts to foster a supportive work environment and flexible schedules reflect an institutional commitment to reducing WFC, which in turn can enhance job satisfaction and organizational commitment among female academics, who often navigate complex family responsibilities alongside their careers.

Caring for children, especially new-borns can be a major source of WFC for female academics in CS3. This is because the demands of caregiving, such as attending to the physical, emotional, and

developmental needs of young children, often overlap with professional responsibilities. As such, female academics in the university may face challenges in balancing teaching, researching, and administrative duties alongside childcare, particularly in a context where flexible work arrangements and support systems may be limited. Additionally, societal expectations around gender roles in the UK can escalate the pressures on female academics to prioritize family over career, leading to increased stress and potential career stagnation. In Participant 2's own words:

"At the moment my wife is doing the full maternity, but she goes back this week and then we will need to share that. So, who needs to share the childcare we will be popping her into nursery two days a week, but I will have to look after my child two days a week from now on instead of working five days I'll be working three days. Yeah, I'm gonna try and make those three days count hence I can only do 10-hour shifts in my nursing work. So I can only do three days of 10 hours (day shift) and then looking after my baby 2 days (PRE 92-2 Ln 113-119)".

This viewpoint underscores the difficulty that female academics undergo in trying to balance work commitments with childcare duties. This is why the participants indicated that despite their professional responsibilities, they must adjust their work schedule to accommodate childcare demands. The necessity of sharing childcare responsibilities with a partner, especially after maternity leave, highlights the challenges of balancing a full-time career with parental duties. In this case, one of the participants mentioned cutting down their workdays from five to three, resulting in longer shifts, as a compromise to manage both work and family. This reflects the sacrifices and adjustments often required of female academics, who must navigate these dual responsibilities, often at the expense of their career progression or job efficiency. Such situations may also impact their organizational commitment, as work flexibility is key to maintaining a balance between professional and personal lives.

7.2.9 Success and Challenges Experienced

The ability to mobilize, organize, and collectively bargain for positive change in their institutional policy reflects a significant achievement for female academics because it demonstrates the power of solidarity in addressing systemic challenges within the university. As described by Participant 1:

"The most successful story is working in a department where we the female staff jointly requested for a change in a working condition and it was achieved. There was a year most of the females were not only studying but we're also doing part-time, so all of us worked together in writing a concern letter to the head of the division at that time, that we all were going through an issue of concern and if there was a way the department can work around our concern so that we can work effectively well and they agreed, it's not really coming from just one person, just one. It was coming from a collective group of people, even if it was from different ethnicities. So, they agreed. And they walked around our time,

even if it's not something that they've done before, but they know that these people, they are efficient and they are effective and they are very, very hardworking (PRE 92-1 Ln 177-185).

The collective action described by Participant 1, where female staff worked together to request improved working conditions, underscores how women's voices when unified can make a meaningful impact. This instance of collaboration is particularly noteworthy because it shows that female academics, despite their diverse backgrounds, successfully articulated shared concerns and secured adjustments that respected their dual roles as both students and part-time staff. Their effort was met with institutional recognition and accommodations, showing that collective bargaining can effectively bring forth policy shifts, even in settings where such flexibility is uncommon. Moreover, this success story highlights the value of collective advocacy in legitimizing the presence and contributions of women in academia. By ensuring their concerns were acknowledged and addressed, these female academics not only improved their immediate working conditions but also set a precedent for future advocacy. The department's willingness to adapt, despite no historical precedent, affirms the effectiveness and value the institution places on its work. This action goes beyond individual benefits, as it reinforces the importance of creating inclusive policies that account for diverse needs, paving the way for an academic environment where female staff, across varied backgrounds, can thrive professionally.

Achieving funding for a PhD can be a profound milestone for female academics, especially in the context of CS3, which is traditionally research-intensive and has a long history within the academic landscape. Participant 2 highlights this by describing her funding success at the university as a key achievement in her academic journey. She reflects on the journey with a sense of fulfilment, acknowledging both the challenges and the culmination of her efforts with the submission of her thesis and approaching viva. This experience resonates as a success story not only because it marks a personal achievement but also because it reflects the broader systemic challenges that female academics often face in securing financial support and recognition in competitive, historically male-dominated research environments. In her own words:

"I think my successful story is achieving the funding for my PhD at the University of xxx. I think getting on to that was a big success and not thinking that now it's coming. Now it's come to an end and I've submitted and am about to do my viva and stuff (PRE 92-2 Ln 212-215).

This implies that for female academics, securing funding is not only a validation of their scholarly merit but also a testament to their resilience in overcoming both implicit and explicit biases within academia. The success of Participant 2 signifies a breakthrough in these historical barriers, as funding often enables greater visibility, resources, and opportunities that are critical to advancing one's research and career. In CS3, where the focus on research can heighten competition for limited funding,

her achievement becomes even more significant, underscoring the importance of recognizing and supporting female academics in these rigorous spaces. For women in academia, stories like these exemplify the persistence and excellence needed to navigate institutional challenges and establish a foundation for future female scholars.

The interview participants acknowledged going through some challenges as female academics in CS3. While Participant 1 faced challenges surrounding her post-graduate studies in the institution, Participant 2 had difficulty in being assured of job security in the academia in view of her background as a senior nurse in NHS who chose to leave the career for academics.

Participant 2 also maintained that:

"So, I think the biggest challenge comes now really getting a sort of more permanent Job in academia because I think with PhD you get a load of opportunities to teach and lecture (PRE 92-2 Ln 220-222)". For Participant 2, this means that while holding a PhD opens numerous opportunities for more senior roles in teaching and lecturing, the main challenge lies in securing a more leadership and stable position within academia, indicating a need for a top leadership ceiling and long-term career stability in her new field as academia.

Participant 1's experience highlights how institutional expectations during post-graduate studies can overlook personal circumstances like marriage or pregnancy, placing pressure on female academics to conform to rigid academic timelines irrespective of personal or family commitments. This suggests a lack of support for women balancing academic and family responsibilities, likely escalating gender disparities in post-graduate retention and progression. For Participant 2, the struggle lies in securing a permanent position, despite the abundance of teaching opportunities available during doctoral studies. This reflects a possible structural barrier where women may be offered temporary or adjunct roles but encounter difficulties transitioning into stable academic positions. Together, these perspectives underscore how structural rigidity, limited permanent roles, and lack of institutional support create a compounded set of challenges for female academics, potentially hindering their career advancement in CS3.

7.3 Summary of Survey Findings:

To achieve a rich CS3 findings, summary of CS3 survey finding is needed to enable the synthesis of it with the interview outcome. The summary was discussed under WFC parameters of; Workload pressure and causes, Direction of the conflict and WFC management strategies.

7.3.1 Workload Pressure and Causes

The survey reveals that 23.8% female academics in CS3 still experience significant work pressure due to intense academic job responsibilities (Chapter 4.4.3.1). Research-intensive institutions often demand high publication output and administrative engagement, which adds to existing pressures (Taylor, 2006). Key factors contributing to workload pressures in CS3 according to the survey include heavy teaching and research expectations along with administrative duties as 28.6% expressed this concern. Female academics in CS3 noted that institutional ethos frequently place huge expectation on them to take on mentoring and administrative tasks, reinforcing findings from studies on gendered workload distribution in academia (Schiebinger & Gilmartin, 2010; Acker, 1992). The respondents further said that workload demands frequently limit their time for childcare, household chores, and personal well-being. This makes the female academics adjust their academic schedules, including reducing working days or working parttime, taking extended maternity leave, or accepting to slow down on academic progression to enable family demands. Female academics often sacrifice career progression due to caregiving responsibilities (Wolfinger *et al*., 2008; Bailyn, 2003). In the survey 47.6% Female academic said family responsibilities are often impacted during academic term time, which creates more stress and exacerbate WFC. Many of them had to navigate WFC, especially during important academic periods such as research grant deadlines and examination marking time. Studies confirm that term-time workload deeply affects female academics, as they are responsible for primary caregiving responsibilities in most homes (Hochschild & Machung, 2012; Henderson *et al*., 2019).

7.3.2 Direction of Conflict

57.1% of respondents in CS3 survey said that most families said WFC direction is more family related than work related conflict. This highlights the role of societal expectations and gendered family dynamics in shaping WFC, as female academics are often expected to prioritize family over career (Damaske, 2011; Lewis *et al*., 2007).

7.3.3 WFC Management Strategies

Respondents adopted a range of self-directed coping mechanisms, including structured time management, social support, and flexible work arrangements. These findings align with broader research on self-regulated WFC management in academia (Emslie & Hunt, 2009; Sallee, 2013). However, the reliance on informal support systems rather than institutional policies underscores the need for stronger workplace interventions. Despite existing policies promoting gender equality, respondents reported inconsistencies in policy implementation, particularly regarding maternity leave and childcare support. The perceived ethnic bias in welfare benefits further complicated access to institutional resources, highlighting structural inequalities in academia (O'Connor *et al*., 2015; Adisa *et al*., 2019).

Participants acknowledged the role of technological advancements in mitigating WFC, particularly during the pandemic, when online teaching and grading provided greater flexibility. Institutional support for digital tools allowed academics to balance work and family more effectively, aligning with research on technology's role in promoting work-life balance (Schiebinger & Gilmartin, 2010

7.4 Summary of the chapter - Synthesis of CS3 Research Findings

The findings from CS3 present significant contributions to the understanding of WFC among female academics and existing theoretical frameworks on gendered inequalities in academia globally. While the findings align with existing studies on academic workload pressures and hidden responsibilities (Acker & Armenti, 2004; O'Connor et al., 2015), this research advances the debate on WFC by situating these patterns within Walby's theories of public and private patriarchy and gender regimes. Walby (1990) distinguishes between private patriarchy, where women's subordination is moderated primarily through the private, and public patriarchy, where institutions, such as families and universities, systematically reproduce gendered hierarchies through policies, cultural norms and practices. CS3 demonstrates the interaction of these two forms of patriarchy. On one side, female academics face persistent private patriarchal norm pressures from domestic chores, family care and societal expectations on women to prioritize caregiving roles which continue to act as the primary dictator of WFC, particularly among those with young children or eldercare responsibilities. On the other hand, this research data reveals strong public patriarchal norms within academia as reported by heavy, gendered workloads, hidden administrative duties, and mentoring responsibilities disproportionately assigned to women without recognition or formal workload consideration. This dual positioning highlights a hybrid gender regime where private and public domains intersect, validating systemic inequalities across both spheres. However, CS3 findings also challenges traditional patriarchal theory, which most times assumes a unidirectional model of women's subordination centered mainly on the family sphere. Rather, these research findings demonstrate that institutional structures, managerial metrics, and academic performance now play a more central role in shaping gender inequalities than traditional household-based challenges alone. For example, CS3 emphasis on research output exacerbated WFC by creating conflicts between family duties and work obligations, despite the university flexible work policies. This underscores the shift from private to increasingly institutionalized, performance-driven forms of public patriarchy that are embedded within neoliberal university regimes.

Furthermore, there research findings reveal heterogeneity within gender regimes, particularly for early-, mid-, and late-career female academics and those in non-traditional family structures, such as same-sex partnerships as in participant 2 in the thesis These experiences illustrate that the cause of WFC is not uniform but determined by intersecting factors such as career stage, caregiving roles, and family dynamics (Damaske, 2011). Importantly, coping strategies such as open dialogue, reliance on informal

support networks, proactive planning, and flexible scheduling reflect a form of individualized mitigation to both private and public patriarchal norms. However, the long-term career challenges associated with these strategies, including slower research productivity, reveal the limitations of relying on personal coping mechanisms in the absence of structural reform.

By mirroring these findings with Walby's gender regimes framework (2011), CS3 research findings shows that the academic sector represents a segmented gender regime in which workplace norms, institutional policies, and social expectations interact to shape women's live experiences. While female academics might have achieved impactful educational and financial independence, institutional practices continue to perpetuate hidden inequalities that sustain gendered divisions of labour.

In conclusion, the findings from CS3 advances theoretical understandings of WFC by demonstrating that female academics operates at the intersection of private and public patriarchy, where both family and institutional structures perpetuate gendered burdens. By identifying the mechanisms through which institutional policies, managerial cultures, and hidden workloads generate new forms of inequality, these findings contest traditional patriarchal models and point toward a more nuanced, multi-layered understanding of gender regimes. To address these challenges, universities must move beyond surficial flexibility policies and enact structural reforms including equitable workload distribution, real recognition of mentoring and administrative contributions, and comprehensive childcare support to tackle the entrenched institutional barriers and build a genuinely inclusive academic environment where standard implementation of policies are entrenched.

Chapter 8 Case Study 4

8.0   Introduction

This Chapter presents the findings from Case Study 4 (CS4), focusing on a post-92 UK university. The case study combines findings from the qualitative interview data with a summary of the quantitative survey findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of WFC among female academics in this institutional context. Through an integrative approach, this Chapter synthesizes individual experiences and institutional dynamics, offering a deeper exploration of how academic structures, gendered expectations, and individual situation interact to shape female academics' professional and personal lives.

CS4 offers a unique lens because the post-92 university operate under different academic structural, cultural, and managerial frameworks compared to older, research-intensive institutions (Shattock, 2012; Locke, Whitchurch, & Marini, 2018). CS4 is typically characterized by teaching-intensive workloads, market-driven performance metrics, and heightened managerialism (Tight, 2014; Deem, 2004). The structural features have significant implications for gendered academic experiences, particularly regarding WFC (Morley, 2013; O'Connor, 2018).

The interview analysis draws on data collected from six female academics at different career stages to capture the diversity of experiences within the segmented gender regime (Walby, 2011). Nine key thematic areas emerged from the interviews, providing a structured framework for understanding the interplay between institutional policies, academic workloads, family responsibilities, and individual coping mechanisms. These themes are work history and career level, family dynamics, perceptions of the academic institution, sources of WFC, academic workload and family demands, direction of conflict, mitigation strategies, perceptions of national and institutional policies and successes and challenges

8.1 Overview of Case Study 4

Established in 1843 as the School of Design. The school evolved over years into a reputable university renowned for its strong industrial ties and practical learning approach. Providing a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs in sectors like business, arts and humanities, engineering, health and social care, and education, the school is known for its comprehensive and career-oriented education. Specialized programs in fields such cybersecurity, digital media, and sustainable development attract students hoping to gain highly sought-after talents.

With over 30,000 students, the University welcomes a varied student body including a sizable proportion of international students that improve the global environment of the campus. Although

abroad students' fees vary from £14,500 to £17,000 year, depending on the program of study they choose tuition prices for UK students usually run at £9,250 annually (University Website, 2023).

The University is committed to advancing throughout its community equity, diversity, and inclusion. Notwithstanding protected traits such gender, colour, age, disability, sexual orientation, or religion, the institution conforms with the Equality Act 2010 by giving fair access to opportunities for all staff members and students. The policies of the institution actively support diversity and fight prejudice, therefore creating an environment fit for the development of every person. Particularly in the progress of women's professions in STEM and other under-represented sectors, the institution actively supports gender equality in higher education by means of the Athena SWAN Charter. Initiatives emphasizing mentoring programs, leadership development, and techniques to close the gender pay difference show its commitment to reach gender parity. Through policies stressing equity, diversity, work-family balance, and staff well-being, the University fosters an open and supportive environment that helps its members to flourish both personally and academically.

To help employees in juggling personal and professional responsibilities, the university has set flexible working policies. Offering to satisfy different demands include remote work, part-time schedules, and job-sharing agreements. To assist staff and students with young children, the university offers on-campus childcare facilities as well as information about surrounding daycare providers. These initiatives aim to remove challenges from parents and guardians so they may fully engage in their academic and professional obligations.

8.2 Interview Analysis

This case study presents an analysis of a post-92 University in the UK, focusing on the lived experiences of six female academic staff members from the survey respondents that offered to be interviewed. The insights from the interview offer meaningful perspectives on the work-family conflict experienced by the participants. The interview started with a series of introductory questions aimed at gathering demographic information and preliminary insights regarding participants' experiences in CS4. This approach helped to establish a baseline understanding of their backgrounds and viewpoints (refer to Appendix 4A-C).

8.2.1   Work history/Career level

The details (Appendix 4A) entail respondents' employment history and career level. Out of the six participants interviewed, four identified as early-career academics in the university while the other two identified as late-career and senior academics with many universities teaching experiences, including serving as course/module leaders in the past. Concerning participants' academic background, one participant had a background in music and volunteering experience with the Red Cross and an admin staff position. One participant had an academic background in internationalization, while another's

background is in engineering. This shows that the participants came from a range of academic and professional backgrounds, providing a broad spectrum of perspectives for this study. Including participants at different stages of their academic careers from early-career researchers to seasoned academics with leadership experience. This enhances the diversity of insights gathered, especially with challenges, expectations, and contributions within academia. Furthermore, the varied educational backgrounds in music, internationalization, and engineering allow for a more comprehensive understanding of how distinct disciplines influence work dynamics, stressors, and academic responsibilities. Studying such a varied participant pool is essential, as it enables the research to capture both unique and shared experiences across various fields, helping to uncover general trends while respecting the specificities of each discipline.

8.2.2 Family Dynamics

All the participants are married women working in academia; two got married early before or at the start of their careers while the other four got married after the start of their careers. Two participants mentioned that they have dependents family members living with them. However, while four of the participants acknowledged having supportive spouses, one identified as being divorced with a growing daughter. Also, one participant reported experiencing a challenging child-care situation with an autistic child, and another participant indicated that she led a disappointing family life due to her inability to balance family demands with work pressure. This interview data analysis revealed that the family dynamic of the participants in CS4 is characterized by varying marital experiences, caregiving roles, and challenges associated with balancing academic careers and family responsibilities. These circumstances underscore a family dynamic that is both diverse and complex, shaped by marital situation, caregiving responsibilities, and the challenges of balancing career and family roles. Respondents in the survey (Chapter 4.4.4.1) expressed similar family dynamics as over 70% have small family size, 76% have live-in family, childcare, other family caregiving responsibilities and dog walking and pet care as responsibilities they carry out.

8.2.3 Perception of Academic Institution

In this unit, participants were asked to assess their experiences as female academic staff in CS4 and compare them to their counterparts in CS3. While assessing their experiences in CS4, most of them maintained that the university is commercial oriented as they are driven largely by the desire to maximize revenue from their operations so much so that academics must scout for grants to fund their own research projects. In the exact words of Participant 1:

In my view we are more commercial oriented. We are driven by revenue generation while also putting out quality academic work. We have to keep looking for grant and money for the project you are working on. In my department, one is expected to carry out academic responsibilities and also get

grants for your research activities. I am not sure how it works in Pre 92 Universities (POST 92-1 Ln 14-19).

This opinion is also shared with Participant 2, who indicated that:

"I think universities like this, like where I am is a highly commercialized, you know, unfortunately education obviously is the goal, but I think that goal is alongside the financial aspect and it's my understanding and my experience, I think that financial drive largely affects the decisions that are made, you know, in terms of who, you know, how it impacts staff, as well as how it impacts students. I think the financial drive takes priority. In my opinion my experience I haven't been here for too long but I think that is what you see in modern universities (POST 92-2 Ln 48-54)".

Again, another participant (Participant 6) shared a similar viewpoint by stating that:

"...Our university is focused on making money from the students out of their master's program. And so that's it pretty much. It's like you focus on this and it doesn't matter (POST 92-6 Ln 82-84)".

As such, she likened the university to a private university by stating that:

"it's a private university. It acts like a company. I shouldn't expect someone who doesn't have his mind at rest to be in charge of my well-being, and my family (POST 92-6 Ln 187-188)".

From the viewpoint of participants, it appears that CS4 are somewhat commercial oriented, prioritizing revenue generation alongside academic goals. In the survey (Chapter 4.4.4.1), respondents stated that the workload in CS4 is intense because of the perceived commercial nature of the university which put pressure to generate revenue on the academic staff. With high workload, female academics experience increased work pressure which exacerbate WFC. The interviewed participants emphasized that the university is driven by the need to maximize income, often expecting academics to independently secure funding for their research projects. Participant 1 expressed this explicitly, describing the university's financial focus, which places academics in a position where they must consistently pursue grants and other funding sources to support their research efforts, on top of fulfilling teaching responsibilities (POST 92-1 Ln 14-19). This sentiment was echoed by Participant 2, who remarked on the strong commercial emphasis within their university, suggesting that financial priorities often overshadow educational goals, impacting decisions that affect both staff and students (POST 92-2 Ln 48-54). Similarly, Participant 6 observed that the university operates like a private company, where profit generation, particularly through programmes like master's degrees, is prioritized. She likened the institution to a private entity, expressing concerns that the corporate nature of the university might compromise staff welfare and well-being (POST 92-6 Ln 82-84, Ln 187-188).

Even though CS4 tend to generate money from student's school fee, the financial standing is so much volatile. While some UK universities have solid financial background, others confront a near-bankruptcy situation dealing with huge financial crises. To shed more perspective on this theme, Participant 4 explained thus:

"Post 92 university, resource wise is very solid which means they are financially robust relatively. But not all, because some universities are in trouble as well, some of them have nearly gone bankrupt and some other universities have huge financial crises (POST 92-4 Ln 61-64).

The volatile nature of the financial status of CS4 could be attributed to varying institutional resources and financial management practices, as highlighted by Participant 4. Despite CS4s' tendency to generate significant income through student fees, much like private institutions, their financial stability is inconsistent. Participant 4 noted that while some post-92 universities maintain solid financial resources, making them "financially robust," others struggle with severe financial challenges, with some nearing bankruptcy (POST 92-4 Ln 61-64). The competitive pressure to invest in infrastructure, student services, and staff remuneration may further strain resources, leading some universities into financial crises while others remain stable. This financial instability within CS4 suggests that their reliance on variable income streams, coupled with inconsistent resource allocation, significantly contributes to their volatile financial status and work pressure on the academic staff.

Despite the financial pressure on CS4, the university still offers considerable financial support to their staff, especially to enable them to participate in academic conferences twice a year. This gesture of financial support and commitment to staff career progression stands out as a remarkable motivational factor for female academics working in these institutions. According to Participant 4:

"Post-92 universities support their staff, for example, when I was a junior lecturer, I was supported to attend international conferences at least twice a year, so the budget is very generous. Whenever I want to attend a conference, my boss will say yes. We will give you the money to go which is good (POST 92-4 Ln 79-82)".

The resultant effect of such financial support on employee morale is that it fosters a profound sense of appreciation and dedication among female academics within CS4. This support, particularly in funding conference attendance twice a year, reinforces their sense of belonging and value within the institution, thus enhancing their commitment and motivation. Participant 4 highlighted how this budgetary generosity allowed her, even as a junior lecturer, to attend international conferences regularly. Such opportunities, perceived as validation of her professional worth, "were very generous" and freely accessible, as her boss consistently encouraged her participation (POST 92-4 Ln 79-82). This recurrent endorsement of career progression not only strengthens morale but also motivates female academics to

strive for greater contributions within their institutions, knowing their growth and expertise are prioritized.

Most of the CS4 participants perceived CS3 (pre-92 university) to be more research-oriented than their institution. They tend to prioritize the conduct of meaningful research with real-life impact on society, which is why they require their staff, including female academics to publish their research regularly in reputable academic journals. When asked about her opinion on pre-92 universities, Participant 3 responded:

"It depends on individuals, for me, I feel that this section of the university is pretty much better. I never worked for such Pre 92 university where research is the major focus, there is the pressure of grants. Some of my friends are working for such universities, so every side of the coin you know has some pros and cons. You know what I mean? I just shared my viewpoint. If you are good enough, you can switch to a research-based institution. If you're good at teaching side, you can go for teaching only, hope that is detailed enough (POST 92-3 Ln 27-32)"

This entails that participants in CS4 perceived CS3 as prioritizing a research-intensive approach, which, as they noted, emphasizes impactful research with societal benefits and requires frequent publications in reputable journals. According to the interview participants, there appears to be a unique institutional pressure in CS3 to secure research grants and maintain high research standards. Participant 3 highlighted that this setting, while beneficial in fostering research productivity, may also come with inherent pressures, stating that "every side of the coin...has some pros and cons" (POST 92-3 Ln 30). This comment suggests that CS3 might offer stronger support for research, but the commitment to high publication and grant standards can also place increased demands on academic staff. She pointed out that such an environment may not align with every academic staff's strength, mentioning that individuals proficient in research can "switch to a research-based institution," while those focused-on teaching may prefer a teaching-centric role (POST 92-3 Ln 31-32). This dynamic view underscores participants' awareness of the differentiated academic paths within CS3 and CS4 and the specific expectations placed on female academics in CS3 regarding research and publications.

Pre-92 universities are perceived by respondents as globally competitive compared to post-92 universities. This is because pre-92 universities better attract excellent local students, international students, and research staff, which improves the quality of their workforce and public ranking. This is critical because the ability of pre-92 universities to attract top-tier students and research talent creates a virtuous cycle that continuously elevates their academic reputation and institutional prestige. As these universities attract excellent local and international students, they enhance their academic community's diversity, intellectual capital, and innovation potential, which, in turn, strengthens their global standing. The higher quality of faculty and research output also makes these institutions more competitive in

securing research grants and partnerships, further reinforcing their public ranking. This perceived global competitiveness of pre-92 universities not only appeals to prospective students and faculty but also draws investment and funding from industries and government bodies, which recognise the value of associating with globally respected institutions. Consequently, this reinforces the gap between pre- and post-92 universities, making it challenging for newer institutions to catch up. In the words of Participant 4:

"But in general, if I look at the big Picture Pre 1992 University is well placed in the market. That just means they can attract more Excellent local students. More excellent international students and research staff are more research active than staff in the post-1992 university. Yeah, I think the university ranking and student marketing are quite different, and also research activities, these two types of universities are very different (POST 92-4 Ln 64-68".

CS4 participants noted that there is an issue of internal competition among CS3 staff, which may not be healthy for those who dislike competition in the workplace. Such internal competition may be driven by the intense pressure to publish research, secure grants, and earn promotions, which are often seen as essential for career progression in academia. In CS3, where established reputations are upheld by research excellence, this environment can foster a competitive culture that prioritizes individual achievement over collaborative success. This dynamic can create tension among staff, particularly for those who value cooperation or feel uncomfortable with competition, leading to stress and potentially diminishing job satisfaction. Moreover, the emphasis on measurable outputs, like publication counts or funding acquisition, can discourage teamwork and result in a fragmented organizational culture. As a result, some staff members may struggle to thrive or fully engage, feeling unsupported by a system that rewards competition over shared growth and collegiality. Participant 4 clearly describes the situation by stating that:

"Also, the competition among colleagues in pre-92 is tough. Especially at XXX University, my impression is that every colleague is very provocative. He's very good at presentation. Not promoting themselves but everyone looked very confident and very argumentative. And so I did feel a lot of pressure. You know, as a young person very young at that time, not very experienced. I felt a lot of pressure and there was a colleague who sometimes made me feel I didn't do good enough. So that is the impression (POST 92-4 Ln 82-88)".

The adverse effects of such an internally competitive work environment for female academics are profound and multifaceted, particularly for those who are uncomfortable with workplace competition. Participant 4 describes an intense atmosphere at CS3, noting that colleagues seemed overtly confident, often presenting their ideas provocatively and argumentatively. This display of confidence and assertiveness created considerable pressure, especially for a young academic who was still gaining

experience. The participant recalls feeling inadequate due to a colleague who, perhaps unintentionally, made them feel their performance was subpar. This perceived lack of accomplishment or confidence among less experienced staff may intensify within such competitive environments, leading to stress and self-doubt. For female academics, especially those newer to the academic field, this kind of atmosphere could worsen feelings of imposter syndrome and discourage open collaboration, as individuals may focus more on personal achievements rather than shared goals or support networks. Thus, while some may thrive in these settings, others might feel overwhelmed and unsupported, which could ultimately impact their professional growth and sense of belonging within the institution.

8.2.4 Sources of Work-Family Conflict

As female academics in CS4, there is often a real clash between lecturing jobs and pursuing doctoral studies. Participants decried that their job roles as academic staff involve too much time commitment in preparing for lectures, and handling many modules within short, allotted timeframes, which often results in physical and psychological breakdown. According to Participant 3:

"Teaching requires a lot of time commitment. So, you know if I must perform well, I must prepare enough. So, something I hate to be taken care of by somebody else. To perform well, and deliver it well, I must give all my time, and this sometimes brings work-family conflict (POST 92-3 Ln 40-43).

Participant 3 further describes how the academic workload, and her doctoral studies negatively impacted her health by stating that:

"When I mentioned that these are the problems I'm going through to the university, that I have some health issues, and that I'm not feeling well. You know the answer I got, that I don't have any other option. This was the answer (POST 92-3 Ln 57-59).

The clash between work and post-graduate studies for female academics in CS4 has profound implications for their overall well-being and productivity. As participants described, balancing academic responsibilities with doctoral studies imposes intense time and emotional strain. The job roles of academic staff demand substantial preparation for lectures and managing numerous modules within limited timeframes, which often leads to physical and psychological exhaustion. Participant 3 elaborated on the demands of teaching, stating that the role "requires a lot of time commitment," especially to maintain high performance, which results in her dedicating all her time to academic responsibilities. This commitment, however, creates a WFC, worsening her struggle to balance her career and personal life (POST 92-3 Ln 40-43). Furthermore, Participant 3 shared how these competing demands and her doctoral studies have taken a toll on her health. When she reported her health issues to the university, the response she received was dismissive, leaving her with "no other

option" but to continue under the same conditions, thus underscoring the institution's limited support for staff dealing with such overwhelming challenges (POST 92-3 Ln 57-59).

There is also a perceived problem of heavy teaching workload in CS4. Since they cater to a large population of students around the globe, female academics also have challenging role to play in lecturing this population. Participant 4, recounted that:

"So, my impression was that the workload was very heavy because I was a lecturer and I think the workload for a lecturer is always very heavy and it was my first time teaching, you know, as a lecturer in XXX, so I felt quite a lot of pressure and I spent most of my time preparing for the lectures to be delivered, communicating with the students (POST 92-4 Ln 74-77)".

The statement infers that female academics in CS4 face a significant teaching workload that extends beyond conventional lecturing to involve extensive preparation, student engagement, and administrative responsibilities. Participant 4, who had first-hand experience as a lecturer in such an institution, described the overwhelming pressure tied to managing these demands, particularly given the vast, globally diverse student population in the university. Her account highlights the time-intensive nature of preparing for lectures, underscoring the added responsibility of ensuring high-quality delivery in a competitive academic environment. Additionally, Participant 4 reported that her workload involved consistent student communication, which required even more time, as she navigated inquiries and managed academic concerns in real time (POST 92-4 Ln 74-77). This constant pressure to balance teaching and engagement efforts captures the challenging reality for female academics, whose responsibilities often span well beyond their scheduled hours, impacting both their professional and personal commitments. This aligns with the survey finding (Chapter 4.4.4.1) as 61.9% respondents also pointed to teaching as the primary cause of workload. Some others said teaching combined with administrative responsibilities was the compounding factor of workload pressure they experience. They further noted that the workload often affects their childcare and other caregiving duties. However, 28.6% of the survey respondents said workload gives them a sense of detachment from their children.

In the interview there is also the constant dilemma of either advancing one's career progression or committing time to family. This dilemma is compounded by the heavy workload academics face and the limited flexibility at work which denies them ample time to carry out family obligations. As Participant 2 describes:

"I got offered this fantastic role to become a collaborative course leader for a particular institution in China that has partnership with XXX university, a fantastic role, fantastic opportunity obviously with a lot of money. I have the opportunity to travel on that kind of leadership role but then can I take the role

if I got offered the role? But then when I thought about it critically, I had to realize that first, as a woman I have three daughters, you know, that role means travelling back and forth. Secondly, who are my leaving my husband for? Thirdly as a woman more often than not, you have to measure your progress against your husband's progress, you want to grow, you want to achieve, but then you want to think, oh my husband, and we have this man, I don't know if it's an African mentality, I don't know. But as he's, my husband, you want him to be the head of our home. He's not just in the house and bringing money. It's also the reputation that he carries (POST 92-2 Ln 72-82)."

In confronting the dilemma between career progression and family obligations, other participant like Participant 4 chose to sacrifice personal and family life to advance their career goals. This can be a profoundly difficult decision for a married female academic with kids because it entails prioritizing career aspirations at the expense of time with family, which can lead to personal sacrifice and emotional strain. In addition, the societal expectations placed on women to balance both family responsibilities and career advancement create added pressure, especially in academic environments where promotions and professional development often require significant time and energy. As Participant 4 highlighted, the 'harsh reality' is that female academics who take time for family obligations may face career stagnation, underscoring a systemic issue in academia where family commitments can inadvertently hinder long-term professional growth.

In Participant 4's own words:

"I think from my very first job and I felt If I want to develop my career, I have to sacrifice my family life. That's my personal life. Otherwise, I wouldn't be able to find the time and energy to do it. And I've seen quite a lot of colleagues who have got families, especially female academic staff, they got pregnant, have children, then their career slowed down. And also, they wouldn't be able to get promotions for years. So I think that's the harsh reality (POST 92-4 Ln 108-112)".

This reality mirrors the conflict experienced by participant 6 who decried their inability to give their partner/family attention due to too much work and study activities. According to Participant 6:

"I don't give my partner the attention that I wanted to, you know because I work too much, or sometimes I'm stressed because of work. You know, sometimes he does things that I have to pick up without asking me (POST 92-6 Ln 22-24)".

8.2.5. Academic Workload and Family Demands

In the survey (Chapter 4.4.4.1), 28.6% respondents noted that they often bear a dual administrative-teaching workload which affects their family needs and responsibilities while in the interview many of the participants also reported that workload impacts their family responsibility role. Nevertheless, as is the case in modern universities with large student populations, the issue of workload for academic staff

is prominent. Participants decried a situation where they must carry out multiple responsibilities such as lecturing, conducting examinations, grading students, supervising students' research, and administrative duties, which fuels work-family crises. In the words of Participant 4:

"When I was a lecturer, I complained about the workload that was very high, and even when I progressed to Professor, I still find the workload very high. Because people give you more responsibilities, your boss gives some, but some are the responsibility I have to take on for example, I do a lot of jobs for free. I help colleagues and mental health colleagues from different universities, and sometimes I help people to write articles for free. And I review journal articles for 20 journals. Some journals sent me three or four articles a week, Sometimes I said no, but you know, sometimes I'll do my best to help. And also, I do ground reviewing for different societies. And I joined the British Educational Research Association as a committee member and I did a lot of work for free there and a lot of external examining. You know, this kind of job, the external jobs plus the internal jobs I think is heavier and it is piling up, so it's never reducing, it's always increasing (POST 92-4 Ln 90-100)."

Another participant (Participant 6) added that:

"I mean, I've been working crazy hours in February and January. It's like my workload is not even distributed, so in terms it doesn't help massively (POST 92-6 Ln 84-86)".

These participants' viewpoints entail that the workload in CS4 for female academics is both intense and multifaceted, leading to significant work-family tensions. Participant 4 reflects on the persistent, high demands placed on her at various career stages, from lecturer to professor, illustrating how responsibilities not only fail to decrease but escalate as academic careers progress. She highlights her involvement in extensive unpaid work, such as providing informal mentorship, supporting mental health colleagues, assisting in article writing, and reviewing journal articles for numerous journals, often receiving three to four articles weekly. Additionally, she undertakes ground reviewing for societies and serves on committees like the British Educational Research Association, adding substantial external commitments to her internal workload. This accumulation of tasks exemplifies how, despite rank progression, academic responsibilities continuously multiply. Meanwhile, Participant 6 expresses the challenges of an irregularly distributed workload, working "crazy hours" during peak months such as January and February, indicating a lack of consistent scheduling support that exacerbates workload intensity. Together, these perspectives underscore the unrelenting and expansive nature of academic duties in CS4, where both core and auxiliary tasks increasingly converge, creating ongoing pressures that impact work-life balance.

Being an academic institution, the most common type of workload experienced by female academics in CS4 revolved around teaching, research, assessment, academic presentation, and writing. These key

academic roles must be executed at least daily by female academics to keep the academic operations of CS4 running. In the words of Participant 1:

"I got full day from Monday to Friday which is about 12 hours plus every day. I have to spend six hours researching what I will be teaching, so the rest of the time is for assessment and preparing presentations. So, I can say that I am always fully awake most of the time, from Monday to Friday, sometimes, I have to spend some weekends maybe a couple of hours, doing editing and researching together. So, in effect, the workload is tough but manageable (POST 92-1 Ln 44-49)".

Also, Participant 4 added that:

"My key role as an academic is doing research like writing articles, you know, generating research grounds and working with the people to develop research projects. And I think that's my key role here (POST 92-4 Ln 33-35)".

Academic staff (including females) must carry out other ancillary responsibilities in addition to teaching and research. These responsibilities typically include course/module leadership, external examiner/reviewer duties, informal mentorship roles, and administrative tasks such as program coordination, student advising, and committee participation. Academic staff, including female members who may already face additional pressures related to work-life balance, often engage in time-intensive roles that support the institution but may not be formally recognized in terms of career progression. For instance, they may organize events, support outreach initiatives, and foster community relationships that strengthen institutional visibility and impact. Additionally, female academics often contribute to the internal governance of the institution, taking on roles in academic quality assurance, and curriculum development. Balancing these diverse responsibilities while maintaining the expected output in teaching and research can strain the resources and time available for scholarly advancement, making it critical for institutions to recognize, support, and possibly alleviate some of these burdens to foster an environment where all academic staff can thrive. In the views of Participant 3:

"As I mentioned, I work in multiple different positions. I should say I'm a course leader for data analytics, banking, and finance now though I just took over and apart from this I'm also a module leader, I already worked as a course leader. I worked, so I never find any sort of difficulty from the office front (POST 92-3 Ln 104-107)".

Also, Participant 6 decried how the excess workload and lack of appreciation by the institution have compelled many of her colleagues to leave the university. She also hinted at a possible scenario in which she could exit her employment in the university due to the multiple job roles, workload, and lack of acknowledgment by the university. In her own words, Participant 6 explained that:

"I'm a course leader for 120 students and I'm a module leader as well. There are new members of staff who have no idea, no induction about what they're doing, and it's not their fault. There should be some mentorship in place. And sometimes I try to pick this up on top of everything that I do. We do a lot of work and it's not rewarding because our efforts are not acknowledged by the university at all. At the same time, the university complains that they are understaffed and they don't have skilled people, meanwhile, I see colleagues of mine leaving the university because of workloads and the workload might make me leave eventually (POST 92-6 Ln 121-128).

From these participants' viewpoints, it is evident that although female academics in the university carry on extra job responsibilities in addition to their academic roles, they have not been adequately appreciated and acknowledged by the school management. This oftentimes leads to a situation where these academics feel undervalued and only a tool for institutional output, rather than respected contributors whose multifaceted roles support the university's core mission. The strain of fulfilling numerous duties without recognition fosters a sense of being overlooked, particularly when their contributions to community outreach, mentorship, and governance are vital yet remain invisible in formal appraisals or career advancement metrics. As a result, the lack of adequate acknowledgment and support not only erodes their morale but also contributes to a high turnover rate, especially among female staff who may already face additional pressures related to work-life balance. Without meaningful institutional changes to recognize and compensate for these essential but often overlooked efforts, many dedicated academics may feel compelled to leave for positions where their work is valued more holistically.

Domestic responsibilities remain a core type of family obligation undertaken by female academics in CS4. These domestic roles typically include house chores like making meals, cleaning, planning and organizing home-running activities. According to Participant 5:

"Family obligations, whatever obligations are there I have created them and I only have to manage them. Because we need food to eat, so I have to basically cook the food I have to clean my house. I have to see that my daughter is given ample time for recreation and entertainment. I also have to see that she studies well and if she is talking with her friends so she should not go out of the way (POST 92-5 Ln 216-220)".

Even though they are career women in academia, female academics' roles in addressing their domestic responsibilities are crucial to the well-being of their families. As Participant 5 indicated, domestic responsibilities continue to play a significant role in the lives of female academics in post-92 universities, revealing a critical layer of dual roles that these women manage. Despite the demanding nature of academic careers, which often require long hours of research, teaching, and administrative duties, these women find themselves equally committed to managing home-related responsibilities.

Also, the efforts invested in organizing and maintaining a smoothly functioning household underscore the invisible labour that female academics provide, a role that, while seldom recognized in professional circles, remains essential for family stability and well-being.

Female academics in post-92 university are also expected to support their families financially. This is because the burden of catering for the family can be significantly lessened when both spouses provide financial support. These finances go a long way to ensure the stability and well-being of the family by ensuring that the needed resources (like food, water, education, entertainment, and other essentials) are available to keep the home. Participant 1 emphasized this substantially by revealing that:

"Oh, contributing to the economy, in the family. I realized that the after-school clothes could be expensive, my girl is dancing, in school. She is playing violin and taking a piano lesson. My boy is now in secondary school. He is doing a trial for a cross-country sport, and he is also doing swimming in ABC, so I have to accommodate all these responsibilities. Also, keeping track of school activities can be challenging. There is a lot of activities to manage, my husband, and I, have a healthy relationship and this has been helping. We share responsibilities all the time (POST 92-1 Ln 51-57)".

Another participant (Participant 5) added that she is responsible for supporting her family, particularly her daughter whose upbringing is paramount to her. She explains that:

"Because we need food to eat, so I have to basically cook the food I have to clean my house. I have to see that my daughter is given ample time for recreation and entertainment. I also have to see that she studies well and if she is talking with her friends so she should not go out of the way (POST 92-5 Ln 217-220)".

These participants' viewpoints suggest that supporting their families financially is an essential obligation for female academics in CS4. This is because, as Participant 1 highlighted, the costs associated with children's educational and extracurricular activities such as after-school clothing, dance lessons, and music classes like piano and violin can be significant, particularly when compounded by expenses for additional pursuits, such as sports and swimming. Managing these costs becomes a shared responsibility that strengthens family stability and cohesion, allowing both partners to contribute to a balanced household. Participant 5 echoed this sentiment, noting that her role includes not only preparing meals and maintaining a clean home but also ensuring that her daughter has access to recreation, social engagement, and proper study habits, underscoring the need for financial contributions that support the overall wellbeing and development of the family. Together, their accounts illustrate the extent to which financial support from both spouses, alongside practical involvement in their children's lives, serves to create a supportive and stable family environment, thereby balancing professional and domestic responsibilities effectively.

Even as all the other participants were confronted with family obligations to bear, one participant had nothing to worry about in this regard. This is because all dependents living with her were adults who could take care of themselves without directly bothering her. This could be considered as one of the benefits of early marriage and childbearing for female academics intending to have long careers in academia. As such, having children early means they would be all grown up and independent by the time their mothers are high in the academic cadres executing heavier work responsibilities. Participant 6 expressed this notion better by observing that:

"I have a nephew and an adopted sister but I don't see it as an obligation because it's family. It's not like biological family and we are grown up and we talk about it, so I don't manage obligations per se because when you have an adult family relationship and you have open communication and you can say I'm working, I can't see you now. You know families whenever you need them, they are there. So, I'm lucky in that aspect (POST 92-6 Ln 136-141)".

For female academics like Participant 6, the work-family dynamics would be more easily managed, especially because the dependents living with her are adults capable of self-sustenance, relieving her of direct caregiving duties that often burden women in academia. Participant 6's experience underscores how open communication and a supportive family dynamic enable her to set boundaries around her academic responsibilities without facing conflict or resentment from family members. Additionally, having an adult family relationship marked by mutual understanding, as she mentioned, fosters an environment where her career demands are respected, and any need for family support is met with minimal friction. Essentially, Participant 6's reflections reveal how being in a situation where family support is available "whenever you need them" and obligations are limited to simple, open communication reduces her work-family strain. This setup contrasts with that of other participants, who navigate both career demands and active caregiving, underscoring the relative ease with which Participant 6 manages her work-family dynamics.

For the effect of family obligations on female academics' career progression in CS4, one participant maintained that there is no clash between family obligations and her career progression. In her own words, Participant 5 stated that:

"In terms of the personal time to my daughter, I don't feel that there is any gap in that because I try to sometimes create time for her. What I do is when I do not have lectures, I work from home. So whenever my daughter comes back from school, it's the time that we are interacting with each other so that when we are not interacting we know that we are there for each other (POST 92-5 Ln 236-240)".

Participant 5 has managed to avoid a clash in her career progression emerging from family obligations because she makes ample time to spend with her family to bridge the gap that her work introduces to

her family life. However, the situation plays out differently for other respondents who constantly try to oscillate between family life and work responsibilities. Participant 1 describes her difficulty in addressing these dual responsibilities by stating that:

"Well, most times when I have to spend more time in my research area because there is something new, I have to keep reading and exploring new technologies and sometimes I don't have enough time, then there come the extra responsibilities, for example, open days for the children or when there is need for the children to present projects in school at a specific time. These conflicting responsibilities can be challenging and impacting on my one's career if not well managed (POST 92-1 Ln 60-65)".

Furthermore, Participant 6 attributed her ability to manage the competing demands to having a supportive spouse and family. In her words:

"Hmmm, not really. I mean, they're very supportive. Though I can say I'm not in touch massively with my family, I mean my biological family. So yeah, my relationships here stay here, however, my family relationships here are very supportive (POST 92-6 Ln 149-151)".

From the viewpoints of these participants, the effect of family obligations on female academics' career progression is varied, showing both manageable and challenging aspects. Participant 5 demonstrates that balancing family obligations with career progression can be achieved by strategically structuring her schedule to maintain a consistent presence in her daughter's life. By working from home when she is not teaching, she can spend meaningful time with her daughter and feels no significant gap in her time with family, suggesting that flexible work arrangements can facilitate a work-family balance. However, Participant 1 describes a more challenging experience, noting that the demands of research, combined with attending school events for her children, sometimes create conflicting responsibilities that impact her career. She feels that these challenges could hinder career progression if not carefully managed, reflecting the strain of balancing professional growth with family obligations. Meanwhile, Participant 6 attributes her ability to balance these demands to a supportive spouse and family relationships within her current environment, even though her extended family is less involved. This support network allows her to manage both work and family responsibilities effectively, highlighting the importance of a strong support system in navigating the demands of academia and family life. Together, these experiences illustrate that family obligations can have a varied impact on career progression for female academics, depending on individual support systems and work arrangements.

The participants stressed that the academic workload they experienced in CS4 is damaging to family unity and development. This is because it forces them to live outside of their values denying them time to spend with their partners. Most times, they work late at night despite challenges to their physical and mental health. In the words of Participant 1:

"Oh, the effect I can say is progressive elaborating, that if not the supportive husband that I have, the impact can be damaging to my family unity and development. Many times, it is difficult to pay attention to the children's homework, their self-care, and even the home chores but on many occasions, my husband fills in the gap (POST 92-1 Ln 68-71)".

Also, Participant 6 added that:

"Hmmm. I'm not sure it goes deeper than that. Now, I think it's the lack of time for my partner. Maybe it's sometimes too much of my engagement and commitment to work. For example, I have had a real health challenge recently, I'm still unwell and my partner had to wake me up in the morning because I was marking until late so I'm not able to call the doctor, then go to work all that. So, I think that my workload added more work to my partner because I was unwell and on top of that I was working while unwell (POST 92-6 Ln 158-164)".

Moreover, Participant 2 described how her habit of working late into the night causes nascent tension with her husband, which threatens the peace. In her words, Participant 2 indicated that:

"As I said earlier sometimes, I have to stay active at night because I have to prepare for my lectures while in bed. How do you think my husband would feel? You know, he may not say anything so that I will not feel he is not supportive and if it was my husband as well, you know, I would do the same (POST 92-2 Ln 189-192)".

These participants' viewpoints reveal that the effect of workload on the family obligations of female academics in CS4 is profound, often threatening family unity and well-being Some participants express how excessive work hours interfere with their ability to fulfil essential family responsibilities. For instance, Participant 1 notes that the demanding workload has made it challenging to prioritize her children's needs and household tasks, although her supportive husband alleviates some of the strain. Likewise, Participant 6 describes the physical toll of working late, recounting a recent health issue that led her partner to assume additional responsibilities at home, including waking her up after nights spent marking assignments. Similarly, Participant 2 illustrates the emotional impact of staying up late to prepare lectures, which causes unspoken tension with her husband, potentially undermining family harmony. Collectively, these insights underscore the considerable sacrifices female academics in CS4 make in balancing professional demands with family obligations, resulting in physical, mental, and relational strains that risk compromising their family relationships.

8.2.6   The Direction of Work-family Conflict

The direction of conflict in CS4 is said to be dynamic, the survey respondents and interviewees stated that conflict could come from either family-related issues or work-related issues. For example, in the survey (Chapter 4.4.4.2) 41.7% respondents identified the direction of WFC as primarily family-to-

work. The interview participants gave deeper and clearer explanation of the complex sources of conflict. In the words of Participant 2:

"It is definitely work-related; my family doesn't impact my work. It is my work that impacts my family. For instance, I'm not bringing my husband or my children to the office. I won't say I have a childcare issue hence I won't teach today. What you need to understand is that my work impacts more on my family. We always make the sacrifice of family to make sure that you perform on the work end. And the work follow you home not the family following you to work (POST 92-2 Ln 201-206)".

Another participant (Participant 5) shared similar viewpoints on the direction of work-family conflict by stating that:

"I think work affects family the more because family always try to adjust with the work and this used to happen when I was back in India and this is happening right now as well. We both know that my work is important because we are here and we are trying to basically settle down here and we may have in the long run a good quality life, though we are enjoying this life as well. But yes, overall work affects the family more (POST 92-5 Ln 252-257)".

Participant 4 explained that workload and the performance expectations of her university substantially affect her work-life balance. In her own words:

"I think the key thing that disturbs academic work and life balance is the workload and that is the expectation from the university. I'm not saying XYZ only particularly because the other universities are having the same trouble, even including the pre 1992 university. Academics are constantly being put under pressure to perform. This means you must perform. You have to justify your worth on the job. So I think that's a huge trouble. I think it's the work culture in the university sector in the UK in general and it is getting worse. It doesn't really benefit academics (POST 92-4 Ln 173-179)".

Furthermore, one participant revealed that for her, the work-family conflict flows from both directions (work and family). She explained the difficulties experienced in trying to find a balance between both. In her own words, Participant 1 explained that:

I would not want to say it is work-related or family related because I have been trying to maintain a balance between the two responsibilities. I mean, I cannot stop being a mother when I'm academic and I can't stop being academic because I'm a mother. So, I'm trying to do all the things required of me. Where for example in the swimming lesson with my child I try to find something to do during the time of his lesson (POST 92-1 Ln 73-77).

This participants' viewpoints revealed that the direction of WFC for female academics in CS4 is primarily from work impacting family life. Four participants emphasized that the demands and

expectations of their academic roles affect their family lives significantly. Participant 2, for instance, highlighted how the responsibilities of her academic position create sacrifices within her family life, noting that *"work follows you home, not the family following you to work"* (POST 92-2 Ln 201-206). Similarly, Participant 5 echoed this sentiment, describing how her family continually adjusts to her work obligations, a situation that persists across contexts and even countries, as she noted, *"work affects the family more"* (POST 92-5 Ln 252-257). Participant 4 pointed to the pressure of meeting university performance standards, which intensifies the work-family conflict; she expressed that academics face a constant demand to *"justify [their] worth on the job,"* leading to stress and an imbalance in her personal life (POST 92-4 Ln 173-179). Although most respondents identified work as the primary source of conflict, Participant 1 shared a unique perspective, describing a dual-directional conflict as she strives to balance her roles as a mother and an academic. This needs to adapt to both realms underscores the complexity of work-family balance, as she explains how she actively tries to combine these responsibilities, even by working during her child's swimming lessons (POST 92-1 Ln 73-77). Together, these insights suggest that work predominantly drives the conflict, though some participants experience a bi-directional strain as they attempt to navigate both roles.

8.2.7 Work-Family Conflict Mitigation

In dealing with issues relating to WFC, female academics in CS4 have adopted several mitigating strategies. 92% respondents in the survey (Chapter 4.4.4.3) stated that their work flexibility expectations were met and that flexible working are largely effective in their WFC management. However, participants in the interview were able to give deeper explanation to their WFC management and how they can cope with the mounting strain of WFC, the participants said they resorted to building and harnessing the assistance of support networks such as groups affiliated with their race. According to Participant 1:

"Okay, I often have to rely on the Latin American community here in XXX. There is a big Latin American community mostly in the University of XXX. There is a Latin, American, student union there, and students with their families. The group provides welfare support for each other. We do this and family reunion meetings periodically. We support each other with childcare and any family support when the need arises, for example, if I have a conference, to present a paper, I find a good friend in the group who can support me and take care of my children for a day or two (POST 92-1 Ln 32-38)".

By relying on ethnic support networks for assistance, female academics in CS4 mitigate some of the work-family issues as the communities provide culturally aligned, flexible, and readily accessible support. For example, Participant 1 finds critical childcare support within the Latin American community at her university, highlighting the practical role of these networks in managing conflicting work-family demands. Specifically, this participant describes turning to friends within the Latin

American student union for essential tasks like childcare during conferences or academic obligations, alleviating the immediate pressures of balancing professional and family responsibilities. This network also offers more than childcare by creating opportunities for family-focused gatherings, it cultivates a shared understanding of the dual pressure that female academics experience, enhancing a sense of community. Thus, these ethnic support networks become integral to coping strategies, functioning as a culturally cohesive resource that extends support not only for individual needs but also for collective resilience.

For junior-level female academics, turning to a mentor for help can be a useful coping strategy to address work-family conflict. This is because mentors can offer tailored guidance, support, and practical advice drawn from their own experiences, helping junior-level female academics navigate the unique challenges of balancing professional responsibilities with family demands, ultimately fostering resilience, career growth, and a sense of belonging in academia. As such, participants (like Participant 2) acknowledged the role that mentorship relationships played in helping her achieve visibility and navigate her way around work-family conflict. In her own words:

"Thankfully, I have people that I will refer to as mentors that I can easily ask questions. So in my profession here, I go to them and say this is what I'm thinking, what are their thoughts? And they tell me what they feel and that has helped me. It's been a bit easy for me to know how to navigate my way around. So, for example, this thing I'm talking about roles, roles, roles, and visibility is such a big thing here in the UK. If they see you as a visible one, having all those nice titles, leader of this, leader of that, senior lecturer that, you're the one that is most likely to keep getting the promotions and all the accolades in the sense but you need to just be trying to get into the circle (POST 92-2 Ln 123-130)".

From this participant's perspective, it is evident that by relying on a mentor, she can draw on experienced guidance to make strategic decisions regarding her roles and visibility within her institution. Mentors offer her critical insight, helping her navigate the complexities of role expectations and, as she noted, the importance of being visible in leadership roles a factor she recognized as key to professional advancement and recognition in UK academia (POST 92-2 Ln 123-130). This mentorship not only provides reassurance but also equips her with a clearer path to meeting work demands without compromising family responsibilities. By discussing her ideas and challenges with mentors, she gains valuable feedback that has "helped [her]" manage her workload and secure leadership roles that enhance her career profile, all while remaining balanced in her responsibilities outside of work. As her account suggests, the mentorship relationships serve as a buffer, easing her ability to navigate the demands of academia and mitigating the work-family conflict many junior females' academics face.

Collaborating with colleagues through teamwork, and shared responsibility can help reduce the workload in academic settings and afford academic staff some level of flexibility in tackling family

obligations. This is because collaborative teamwork fosters an environment where tasks are distributed according to individual strengths, allowing academic staff to manage their workload more effectively, reduce burnout, and accommodate personal responsibilities without compromising productivity or the quality of educational outcomes. This coping strategy was applied by Participant 3, who maintained that:

"...For example, I should say the deadline for marking is ahead and some of our colleagues are sick from the same team. Two colleagues are sick now, so suddenly you know there is some extra load, which came on me. I must complete it and I could not say I have some family commitments. I can't do that because it can happen to anyone at times it might be possible, I might be sick too. So, my other colleagues will be there to help me too, that is, teamwork and collaboration help in managing work commitment (POST 92-3 Ln 81-86)".

The participant's viewpoint reveals that teamwork and collaboration among female academics in CS4 function as essential strategies for managing work-family conflict. Through a shared sense of responsibility and mutual support, colleagues can help one another balance professional and personal commitments. For example, as expressed by Participant 3, when two colleagues were unexpectedly absent due to illness, additional marking duties were distributed among the team, underscoring a collective approach to managing the increased workload (POST 92-3 Ln 81-86). This mutual assistance fosters resilience, as each team member recognizes the potential for personal obligations or health issues to affect anyone in the group. By stepping in for one another, academic staff can not only maintain productivity and meet deadlines but also alleviate the stress of balancing family responsibilities with work demands. Such collaborative practices thus provide flexibility, as responsibilities are shared according to individual strengths and capacities, ultimately reducing burnout and promoting a supportive, cooperative environment.

There is a critical role that family members can play in alleviating the burdens of work-family conflict for female academics in CS4. As such, participants mentioned that they had to rely on the assistance of their family members by delegating and sharing tasks to lessen the burden on them. According to Participant 3:

"Now looking into the strategy I'm using in managing my family commitment, as I said, my husband, my daughter, 14 years old, and my son who is 9 years old all know what our task. My son is the younger one and he has the easiest task, for him, his task is that he should make sure everything is in place, and he is taking care of that. And my daughter, she's helping me with cooking because, from an Asian background, cooking is important, and it requires a lot of things, and you need to cook to keep the family happy. So, when I know I have classes till 7:00 or so. I just make sure that she cooks everything we need and that it is well-prepared so that once I come back, I do not need to cook

anything. You know something, I use planning to make life easier for myself. And for my husband, he used to take care of my children. So, he knows at what time he has to drop them off and at what time he must pick them up and any other extracurricular activities or anything. So, he's taking care of all the stuff. And even he helps me with, some other household chores, for example, whatever is his responsibility, he takes care of it, like cleaning and all sorts of things while cooking is my responsibility (POST 92-3 Ln 87-99).

From the extensive viewpoint of Participant 3, it is evident the essential roles that family members can play in supporting female academics tackle work-family conflict. The participant illustrates a practical system where family roles are divided, reflecting a cooperative strategy aimed at balancing work and household demands. By assigning her husband, daughter, and son specific tasks within the household, she eases her burden and manages her responsibilities more effectively. This delegation allows Participant 3 to plan her academic schedule with fewer interruptions, enabling her to concentrate on work commitments, even those extending into the evening. Her son, though younger, contributes by handling simple tasks to ensure the household remains organized. This thoughtful distribution of tasks, adapted to each family member's capacity, exemplifies how a family-centered coping strategy can effectively mitigate work-family conflicts for female academics, particularly in demanding environments like post-92 universities.

The participants themselves would have to double down and intensify their efforts to be able to complete job tasks and devote some time to family roles. This would often involve female academics staying up late at night and working on weekends, which indirectly deprives them of time for family obligations, and this is also expressed by 8.3% respondents in the survey (Chapter 4.3.1.4). This reveals the delicate nature of this coping strategy in the sense that it pushes respondents, particularly female academics, into a relentless balancing act where professional and family roles increasingly conflict. This double burden not only requires intensifying work efforts but also makes it challenging to sustain personal well-being and family connections. By stretching their workday into late nights and weekends, these academics attempt to fulfil professional duties, but this strategy can inadvertently reduce the quality and quantity of time spent with loved ones. As a result, rather than achieving harmony between work and family life, they often face a cycle of fatigue, guilt, and diminished fulfilment as discussed in the literature (Chapter 2.5) Such a strategy, while seemingly adaptive, can mask deeper structural issues within academia and family dynamics, where expectations of productivity and caregiving often collide, disproportionately affecting women and challenging their long-term career satisfaction and family relationships. Nevertheless, participants (like Participant 4) find this strategy useful in coping with their WFC. In her own words:

"I'm sure when you get home you have a lot of things to do. To make the environment OK, to prepare your food, prepare yourself. Make your home clean and everything. I'm not sure it's a strategy, but what I would do is to stay up late at night and also work on the weekends because when the deadline comes, for example, I have to finish our article, I have to apply for research grants. I sometimes don't sleep till 1:00 or 2:00 a.m. On the next day, I'll work normally, and on the weekends. I worked nearly every weekend (POST 92-4 Ln 128-134)".

Through personal organization and planning, participants can organize their schedules and activities in advance. This proactive organization helps to manage responsibilities and reduce stress. Also, arranging reliable childcare in advance is part of planning to balance work and family. Written decisions to help memory is also key because writing down major decisions supports the organization and reduces cognitive load, making it easier to manage multiple tasks. Also, the participants would plan and dedicate some time, especially weekends to family. By setting aside dedicated time for family, they can foster strong family connections, which helps manage family responsibilities. Commenting on this strategy, Participant 1 maintained that:

"… You really have heavy schedules but it's better to get organized in advance to avoid this conflict when you are marking and doing a lot of assessment and the children are stumbling around because they don't have any activity to do. So yeah, it's better to have the balance and try to be organized (POST 92-1 Ln 85-88)".

Commenting on the effectiveness of the strategy of having written plans and schedules, Participant 3 emphasized that:

"Now I have learned some strategies. I don't just talk about my actions; I ensure I write them in an e-mail. Sometimes people may feel that you are rude, but it's better to let them learn Instead of suffering later, so these are some skill sets that everybody should learn (POST 92-3 Ln 144-146)".

The participants' viewpoints demonstrate how personal organization and planning help female academics in post-92 universities to better manage their work-family conflict. By organizing schedules and activities in advance, they can manage responsibilities more effectively and reduce stress. For instance, Participant 1 highlighted the importance of early organization to avoid conflicts during high-stakes academic periods, emphasizing that without such preparation, she said:

"children are stumbling around because they don't have any activity to do," which disrupts the ability to focus on marking and assessments (POST 92-1 Ln 85-88).

Planning also extends to arranging reliable childcare, ensuring that the demands of work do not interfere with family obligations. In addition, using written reminders, such as emails, supports better

memory and reduces cognitive load. Participant 3 discussed how keeping written records of decisions has proven to be an effective strategy, noting that while some may find this direct communication style too assertive, she said:

"it's better to let them learn instead of suffering later" (POST 92-3 Ln 144-146).

Moreover, setting aside time, particularly on weekends, allows these respondents to foster family connections, thus balancing professional and personal roles. This structured approach not only provides clarity but also builds a framework for a healthy work-family balance, illustrating how intentional personal organization and planning can support female academics in managing the demands of their dual roles effectively.

Another useful strategy for reducing WFC involves seeking support and collaboration from others such as colleagues, and superiors at work. Reaching out for support from colleagues can help female academics distribute work responsibilities and provide emotional support. Also, attempting communication with a manager highlights the effort to seek understanding or accommodation in the workplace for balancing work and family. Participant 2 said:

"For those of us with childcare in the university why can't we work out a plan with people with no childcare that will allow them to accommodate taking care of our children for the period some of us will be busy? For instance, there was a day I had to call up my friend when I had childcare needs as my child's minder was not available. I told her; can I come to drop my children off with you for some hours I'll be working and I will send you a message once I come back from work, I had two classes that day. I was in my first class of the day, when my phone started ringing, lo and behold it was my friend who wanted me to come to pick up my children. I had to manage to finish the first class to go and pick them (POST 92-2 Ln 222-224)".

Commenting on the fruitlessness of the strategy of seeking support from their superiors, Participant 6 decried that:

"I spoke to one of the managers at work on the issue of my work-family conflicts some time ago but You know, talking resolves nothing from my end. I did that whatever I could. According to the Union notebook, you need to notify the school early if you require support in possible childcare, but you know I can't expect that to solve my lack of time for my partner's issue (POST 92-6 Ln 182-186)".

These viewpoints from participant 6 revealed both the potential and limitations of seeking support and collaboration as a strategy for managing WFC among female academics in CS4. Participant 2's experience illustrates how reaching out to colleagues for support can provide temporary relief, particularly in emergencies where childcare responsibilities interfere with work commitments. Her

account shows that this type of peer collaboration, while helpful, can be unpredictable and may even add stress, as seen when her friend requested her to pick up her children before her teaching obligations were complete (POST 92-2 Ln 222-224). This demonstrates the reliance on informal, often unstable support systems that female academics frequently turn to due to limited institutional assistance. In contrast, Participant 6's experience highlights the challenges faced when seeking formal support from superiors. Although she attempted to communicate her W to her manager, she found that institutional policies, such as the requirement to notify the school early for childcare assistance, fell short of addressing her specific needs, particularly the issue of managing time with her partner (POST 92-6 Ln 182-186). These accounts underscore how informal peer support, while valuable, is inconsistent and that formal channels of support often fail to meet the practical realities of work-family integration, leaving these academics to navigate complex personal challenges with limited institutional backing.

8.2.8 Perception of National and Institutional Work Policies and Recommendations

Some of the participants stated that there are no clear policies to support work-life balance for female academics in post-92 universities. This is because there is no information about such policies, and the university is often slow in granting permissions for staff to participate in these policies. Other participants maintained that even though some of these policies (like flexible work time, and equity) exist, they are not robustly implemented. This is because the universities lack a clear institutional/departmental structure to enable female academics to obtain the support they require to mitigate the burdens of academic workload. In the words of Participant 1:

"I am not sure if the university have clear policies that support work life balance. There are no clear rules about staff well-being that I know (POST 92-1 Ln 92-93)".

Also, Participant 6 added that:

"First of all, I didn't know if they existed as no one informed me of any work policy. All I know is that I have to book and fill out a form to seek medical leave for my health condition. I was informed by my colleagues that I need to take some time off for health reasons because of my presentation. They assisted me in putting the paperwork together before I could achieve this. I joined the university in November 2011, I didn't know about this until September 2012. By this time, I had missed sessions of my treatment. I feel it's not only about the lack of information, the university system is also very slow, you need to move to inform the university a minimum of six months in advance for you to get management approval for basic staff welfare needs. Well, they don't even let you know that this exists (POST 92-6 Ln 215-224)".

Participant 2 also describes the vagueness and non-implementation of national work policies in post-92 universities by stating that:

"I am not sure about the national policy but as per my institution, there are some policies I can say are being experienced. Things like flexible work time. I've been reading the policies; you know I feel like there's a lot of brainwashing in terms of what they say they would do or they are doing about work policies but it's all just documents. What will be the implication of that application you know yourself? I will say the policy is there but implementation is questionable (POST 92-2 Ln 237-242)".

The broader implication of this status quo to the work-family balance of female academics in post-92 universities is that they continue to experience significant strain in managing their dual roles, leading to potential impacts on their overall well-being and career progression. The lack of transparent, accessible, and actively communicated policies undermines the institutional support needed for female academics to balance work demands with personal responsibilities effectively. The absence of a streamlined structure within these university means that existing policies, even when present on paper, fail to deliver practical support, often leaving female academics dependent on informal networks to navigate essential processes like medical leave. This lack of a proactive approach to policy implementation not only creates additional stress for female academics but also fosters a culture where equity-related commitments feel performative rather than actionable. As participants highlighted, the inconsistency between policy and practice creates an environment where academics are forced to take on the burden of managing bureaucratic hurdles themselves, which can escalate feelings of frustration and isolation. Consequently, this undermines the purpose of work-life balance policies, limiting their positive effects and perpetuating a workplace culture that does not actively support or retain female academics, particularly those with family or health-related obligations.

Although there are support policies for staff such as maternity leave, flexible work arrangements, and sick leave, these policies are generally considered unfair to female academics. This is because oftentimes, married women are treated the same as men despite additional family roles. In addition, it is difficult to obtain official approval to go on vacation. According to Participant 2:

"But then my second semester, I thought I sent an email to the course leader. The Leader asked is it possible for them to give me hours? You know not later than 3pm because of school runs and children pick up and all of that which is obviously in this country men and women do it. But oh you know it is more of a woman's role than anything else so they said oh yeah they'll put that into consideration but when the timetable came out pretty much the same thing I'm having classes every day up until 6:30pm in the evening you know and even as a full-time lecture. Okay we'll see what we can do but mind you we are not time table team. The timetable team are the ones who do that, we'll put our word for you

but we'll see what will happen. So I'm going to tell you, remember, this is a 9am to 7pm role that you took on (POST 92-2 Ln 96-105)".

Also, Participant 3 added that:

"In my case, when I just mentioned my need to travel to the school all they say is that you can plan it for some other time. But if I'll plan some other time, there will be a penalty from the school because, you know, we have to plan that holiday between mid of July to August, when the schools are closed. And at that point in time, If I try to adjust everything for three weeks and I can go there and come back, it's really difficult if you're visiting your country after two years or so and you can't stay over there. You know, when you get to your country you will have some jet lag and before you get to know, 10 days have gone by. So, I feel if they will change the policy and can understand these things, so we'll be able to have some leverage to travel (POST 92-3 Ln 170-178)".

These institutional bottlenecks make it difficult for female academics in CS4 to balance professional responsibilities with family and personal obligations, despite the existence of policies that ostensibly support work-life balance. Policies such as maternity leave, flexible work arrangements, and sick leave, while in place, often fall short in practice, failing to account for the unique family roles women are more likely to navigate, particularly in dual-earner households. For example, as noted by Participant 2, requests for accommodations to manage childcare responsibilities during specific hours are frequently disregarded, leaving women to handle full-day schedules that extend late into the evening. These decisions are attributed to rigid departmental structures, where the task of scheduling and organizing timetables remains removed from individual faculty needs, making it nearly impossible to adjust working hours even when leaders express their understanding. Furthermore, as Participant 3 highlights, the bureaucratic rigidity in approving vacations not only limits opportunities for meaningful family time but also imposes penalties for scheduling travel at less favourable times, which becomes a barrier to maintaining transnational family connections. This rigidity not only adds stress but also inadvertently reinforces a culture of inequity, where the needs of family life and caregiving duties are insufficiently recognized, burdening female academics and impacting their ability to engage fully and equitably in their careers.

Regarding the effect of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics, two respondents agreed that the university has good policies (such as flexible work arrangements) that support female academics adequately. Expanding on her view, Participant 1 maintained that:

"I think my institution has done a good job of supporting females that are working in academics. Female academics are well represented in terms of policies in the university policies (POST 92-1 Ln 118-119)".

Participant 4 also added that:

"So, all I know is there is a flexible working policy, either stage I haven't been confronted to drag me to the office after I explained it to my manager, say the train travel is a hazard for me. I couldn't cope with that, So I'm allowed to work from home (POST 92-4 Ln 262-264)".

By supporting female academics to carry out their roles, CS4 helps them balance work-family life, thereby promoting both professional growth and personal well-being. These policies, such as flexible work arrangements, allow female academics to manage family obligations and mitigate challenges like commuting stress, which can be particularly demanding. Participant 1's positive view on representation within university policies reflects an institutional awareness and prioritization of gender equity, which plays a vital role in empowering women in academia. Furthermore, Participant 4's experience with remote work accommodations demonstrates the adaptability of CS4 to individual needs, helping female academics maintain productivity without compromising personal health and family responsibilities. Such flexibility not only boosts morale but also fosters a more inclusive, supportive work environment that values diverse professional contributions.

Though the institutional policies of CS4 were perceived by some participants as supportive, others described them as inadequate, especially toward female academics with kids. They argued that the policies were not well fitted to meet the divergent needs of female academics who have children to raise. In her own words, Participant 2 explained that:

"Definitely not enough and I am advocating for consideration for that specific role of women with children, you know, married women with children, even single women with children who are not teenagers. There should be specific policies catering to them, I mean look at the whole issue of LGBTQ and I'm not homomorphic in any way, now everyone is screaming LGBTQ rights and we are another group or category, who is screaming or advocating for us? because it then means you start giving women limited choices. You now have women who are saying they don't want to have kids in other to progress their career, which means you have to lose something to gain something but then you are making it easy for other groups of people (POST 92-2 Ln 306-314)".

This implies that more institutional effort will be required to advocate for policies that cater to the dynamic needs of married female academics with children. This is because existing policies may unintentionally reinforce structural barriers that limit these women's choices, constraining both their personal lives and career progression. As Participant 2 suggests, female academics face a unique duality: they balance substantial caregiving responsibilities with professional roles in highly demanding environments, yet they often lack institutional support that acknowledges and accommodates their specific needs. Unlike policies supporting other groups such as LGBTQ+

inclusion, which have gained significant attention and led to targeted measures policies addressing the work-life dynamics for female academics with children appear to remain underdeveloped. This gap has prompted some women to contemplate forgoing family life entirely to advance their careers, highlighting a troubling trade-off. To foster a genuinely inclusive academic culture, CS4 may need to re-evaluate these policies with a broader lens, understanding that meaningful inclusivity requires support tailored to diverse life experiences, including those shaped by motherhood and caregiving.

The institutional policies in CS4 equate men and women on the same professional pedestal, which may not align with the cultural norms of certain groups of employees, particularly immigrants. The cultural standards of immigrants from regions like Africa elevate men over women in terms of work responsibilities, so men should do a harder load than women. In CS4, immigrant female academics are having a hard time communicating their well-being issues which could lead to work challenges to superiors who are male and from different cultural backgrounds. As Participant 3 explained:

"In this country, there is no difference between males and females, however. For people like me who are immigrants, I mean we won't feel comfortable sharing some issues as a female with a male. If my line manager is a male and I'm going through some gynaecological issue I won't feel very comfortable discussing such issue with him, so I need someone whom I can go to straight away to share what I'm going through and people will understand. I strongly believe having proper induction will help (POST 92-3 Ln 255-260)".

This implies that, while institutional policies in post-92 universities strive for equality by placing men and women on equal footing professionally, they may inadvertently overlook the diverse cultural differences that impact how immigrant employees experience the workplace. For many immigrant groups, especially those from regions where gender roles are more traditionally defined, cultural expectations suggest that men handle more demanding tasks, whereas women are often seen as having different, sometimes lighter, work responsibilities. When immigrant female academics encounter personal issues particularly sensitive health matters within a male-dominated management structure, they may feel uncomfortable seeking support, as illustrated by Participant 3's experience with gynaecological concerns. This cultural dissonance reveals a gap in institutional support mechanisms, where the lack of culturally sensitive communication channels and understanding of personal challenges unique to women, compounded by cultural background, can create isolation for immigrant female employees.

Some of the participants suggested that the work policies in CS4 should feature more inclusivity by encompassing the unique needs of female academics with children. By instituting more inclusive policies, the university can better accommodate flexible working hours, parental leave that aligns with the academic calendar, and on-campus childcare services, making it possible for these scholars to

thrive professionally while meeting family obligations. Inclusive policies can also help retain talented female academics, enhance productivity, and contribute to a more supportive work environment where diverse perspectives are valued. This approach not only promotes gender equity within academia but also signals to students, staff, and society that these institutions are committed to supporting all members of their academic community, irrespective of personal circumstances. In the views of Participant 2:

"First of all, there's this need to be an understanding and acceptance of the fact we have a specific category of women, married or married with children, that have bespoke needs that need to be catered. The way that it would look in practice will be things like flexible working but as I said, is brainwashing. When I say flexible working, it should be such that women who are lecturing will have a career path that doesn't involve visibility. That can involve research, I know we have that. That can involve them working from wherever they find comfortable but not measuring them on the amount of time or hours they put in or their visibility at work (POST 92-2 Ln 331-338)".

There is also the need to make work more flexible for female academics in CS4. In addition to this, participants suggested that the workload for female academics should be reviewed downward to reduce the physical challenge for women. By increasing work flexibility and downwardly reviewing workload for female academics, CS4 can cultivate a more equitable and supportive environment that recognizes the unique challenges faced by women in academia. Such adjustments not only alleviate physical and emotional strain but also empower female academics to balance personal and professional commitments more effectively, ultimately enhancing their productivity and overall well-being. Flexibility in work arrangements such as adaptable hours, options for remote work, or manageable teaching loads allows women to navigate the demands of academia alongside caregiving or other personal responsibilities, which they often disproportionately shoulder. Furthermore, a reduced workload can foster more time for research, collaboration, and innovation, leading to a more diverse range of scholarly contributions. By implementing these measures, CS4 can retain and attract talented female academics, bolster job satisfaction, and promote an inclusive academic culture where all staff can thrive equally.

Participant 6 expressed this more comprehensively by maintaining that:

"I think the university should be more flexible regarding time allocations, especially towards the physically challenged or people who have dependents. I'm mentioning those two categories because they are vulnerable, I'm very aware that the two are not the only categories that exist. These are not the only people who need flexibility, but this is the category that I can think of. I think I'm biased because I'm physically challenged. I want more flexibility because otherwise taking care of me falls to my partner and this adds workload on him. I know that people who have dependencies Probably have

conflicts happen to them, so maybe the university as it is should be more flexible and try to schedule the timetables to be more flexible. The university should also review the workload on female academics, for example, the course that I'm teaching, has like 120 students. The university wants to accept to fill the class to the brim so that they can make a lot of money because we have a lot of international students (POST 92-6 Ln 300-312)".

To improve the work policies of CS4, participant suggested that these institutions should improve the welfare of female academics by providing more financial support. Specifically, participants suggested that institutions should channel some of the money they make from international students to improve female staff welfare. This could be in the form of financial support for childcare, paid sick leave, maternity leave, and sabbaticals. By doing this, CS4 would enable female academics to better manage their work-family conflict, creating a more equitable and supportive work environment that recognizes the unique challenges faced by women in academia. Financial support for childcare and paid sick leave, for example, would alleviate some of the burdens associated with balancing personal and professional responsibilities, particularly for those with young children. Moreover, offering well-structured maternity leave and regular sabbaticals would allow female staff to pursue both their academic goals and family aspirations without compromising one for the other. This approach would not only retain talented female academics but also attract more women to these institutions, which could ultimately improve diversity and strengthen research and teaching capabilities.

8.2.9   Success and Challenges Experienced

One of the success milestones of female academics in CS4 is the ability to achieve professional growth and recognition. This includes factors related to career advancements and achievements that contribute to personal and professional growth such as graduating from a PhD program, promotion to the rank of professor, and reception of awards. These success dimensions symbolize educational attainment essential for career progress; recognition in one's field and professional accomplishment for female academics. In the view of Participant 2:

"Successful stories will definitely be when my examiners say you have passed your Ph.D. You know that was a kind of a win for me as it took me about five years to complete, it took that much because I'm a married woman with Kids, that is my successful story because my children did that as it's not easy to manage that with my family (POST 92-2 Ln 268-271)".

In another view, Participant 4 maintained that:

"And I think the moment I was quite happy if I could remember is I got my first job. I got the first job offer after my PhD, straight within a month. And I think, wow, that's quite amazing. I kind of like it Partly because I felt excited about things I known to me and I don't know what kind of working

experience be like in the UK, so I was quite excited and the second stage I was really pleased was four years ago when I got a professor offer, you know, in the other university and I was probably the youngest professor (POST 92-4 Ln 200-205)".

These viewpoints suggest that professional growth and recognition are parameters of career success for female academics in post-92 universities. This is because milestones like completing a PhD, securing employment, and achieving promotion reflect not only professional but also personal triumphs in balancing family responsibilities with academic aspirations. For Participant 2, passing the PhD examination after a lengthy five-year journey, challenged by the demands of motherhood and marriage, marks a significant achievement and represents resilience and dedication to personal development (POST 92-2 Ln 268-271). Similarly, Participant 4's recollection of securing a job promptly after completing her PhD was a defining success, giving her the confidence to navigate a new professional environment in the UK. Moreover, her subsequent promotion to professor within a few years highlighted the recognition of her contributions and expertise, fulfilling a key ambition and bringing pride in achieving such a status as one of the youngest professors in her field (POST 92-4 Ln 200-205). Both experiences illustrate that professional growth and recognition serve as cornerstones of career success for female academics in post-92 universities, symbolizing both external validation and the overcoming of personal challenges in their career journeys.

The ability to build supportive infrastructure and networks from their roles as female academics in CS4 can also be perceived as a success parameter. Participants described that their job allows them the opportunity to obtain a permanent work visa and proximity to the workplace as well as a strong professional reputation that affords them acceptance wherever they would apply for a job. In addition, the ability to maintain contact with former successful students from the university demonstrates ongoing influence and a network of successful relationships at the disposal of these female academics. According to Participant 1:

"I eventually got the job but the mental stress was huge. The most successful time was when we got our permanent work and leave to remain in the UK (POST 92-1 Ln 105-106)".

Also, Participant 3 observed that:

"My workplace was always close to or next to my house, that is how this was a blessing for me, I should say. And wherever I applied, my resume was short-listed, and my interview was through. That is why I have a fantastic track record so I can call it a success story. Also, whichever role I go for I got it at once, be it a corporate role, be it in any specific position in academics I performed well. All of my students are in touch with me, some of my students are working as a CEO of companies, and some of my students are in administrative services, I feel proud enough that I have given something to society. I

feel happy that when they passed out, they were still messaging me on teachers' day. I am going to call this a success story. Yes, it is. It is because you've been able to build people who have become somebody, and you are still in their minds. I really appreciate that (POST 92-3 Ln 203-213)".

All these dimensions can be considered a success because they highlight how supportive infrastructure, and networks significantly contribute to the career achievements of female academics in CS4. Participant 1 describes the attainment of a permanent work visa as a milestone of success, recognizing the visa as a tangible outcome of her role that alleviated the stress of job insecurity and provided long-term stability (POST 92-1 Ln 105-106). This stability is complemented by the proximity of her workplace to her home, which Participant 3 reflects on as a unique advantage that enhanced her quality of life and overall job satisfaction. Additionally, the strength of Participant 3's professional reputation has enabled her to be shortlisted for interviews and secure roles across various positions with ease, showcasing how reputation and career progression are deeply interconnected in her academic journey (POST 92-3 Ln 203-213). Beyond this, Participant 3's continued relationships with former students who have reached influential positions illustrate her enduring impact and the network she has cultivated within her field. This sustained influence reflects her role as a mentor and her contribution to society through the success of those she has guided. For Participant 3, receiving gratitude from these former students further reinforce her perception of success, as her contributions resonate meaningfully beyond the classroom, extending into the lives of individuals who continue to honour her influence.

One of the major challenges encountered by female academics in CS4 revolves around work-life balance and personal commitments. The respondents indicated that this challenge comprises issues such as managing doctoral studies alongside full-time work and childcare responsibilities, maintaining a marriage amidst PhD demands, and lacking institutional support during times of personal need (e.g., nursing or family obligations). These challenges highlight the need for flexible scheduling, emotional support, and institutional policies that accommodate personal and family responsibilities for female academics in CS4, especially during intense periods of study or early career stages.

Participant 5 provides more insights into the challenge by revealing that:

"Ohh 2012 to 2014 when I was about to finish my PhD, but my personal life was also on toll and I had to finish my PhD and I had to focus on my personal life as well. But I was unable to do so and. You may say that I chose my PhD in the end. So, my family life as a married woman was sacrificed (POST 92-5 Ln 337-339, 340)."

Participant 6 further described this challenge by adding that:

"As for my challenging time, my manager when I started working as a lecturer told me that they never heard anything good about me, despite my being nominated for the Inspirational Teaching Award.

That is. I emailed them and said, I'm talking at the conference. It's that silence from my manager and even the institution that is demoralizing. And the hardest of the challenging times as an academic is students threatening me. I had students threatening me. Though they will report me if I don't, you know look at them. They want me to give them an unfair advantage because that's what it was about. They were asking for an unfair advantage. So, I was threatened. That would be reported for whatever reasons but I didn't have support from the top management of the institution, this killed my morale for a while (POST 92-6 Ln 232-242)".

Another form of challenge encountered by female academics in CS4 revolves around institutional and structural barriers. The participants described this challenge to include issues such as lack of support from line managers or the institution, academic politics, and absence of mentorship (especially during the pandemic). These challenges underscore the importance of supportive institutional structures and mentoring systems to guide career development. This is because institutional barriers can hinder growth and morale, making structured mentorship and supportive management critical for the professional success of female academics.

Participant 3 offers more insights to this challenge by stating that:

"The initial days were very difficult because at the time I joined my institution, I was the only person who joined the organization and you need someone to guide you. And everything was online, so I had to struggle. I had to find out everything on my own (POST 92-3 Ln 220-222)".

Participant 4 further shed light on the issue of academic politicking, which has crept into academia by maintaining that:

"I think there is another thing that is quite interesting is the politics, I think in the university there is a lot of politics, whichever university people are working, whichever university I worked in, I could. also, feel the politics and I felt like half of the managers are decent, very nice people, human beings to work with, but the other half of the managers, sometimes they behaved terribly, and I don't understand why they're behaving that way. A lot of decisions are political decisions (POST 92-4 Ln 223-228)".

Another category of challenges encountered by female academics in CS4 is pressure from professional academic requirements. Participants identified this challenge to include issues like workload demands, pressure to secure research grants, and managing conflicts with students. Addressing these issues requires resources for workload distribution, conflict management training, financial and administrative support for research activities. However, that is not yet the case in this university. Participant 4 sheds insights into this challenge by maintaining that:

"The workload requirement and also the workload pressure happening in every university I worked because you know, once you finish something fast enough, the line manager will give you something else and you have to do it. The more you are fast at your work, the more job you're going to get So I think that's frustrating because you know, I like to do my job very efficiently. I don't delay things. I always do things on time, so that's my merit. But sometimes I feel like ohh my goodness, you know what am being giving more jobs. Because I've finished it long time. I finished it quickly. So, I think that's really frustrating for me (POST 92-4 Ln 207-214)".

Participant 6 remarked on the challenge of dealing with threats from students by stating that:

"The hardest of the challenging times as an academic is students threatening me. I had students threatening me. Though they will report me if I don't, you know look at them. They want me to give them an unfair advantage because that's what it was about. They were asking for an unfair advantage. So, I was threatened. That would be reported for whatever reasons but I didn't have support from the top management of the institution, and this killed my morale for a while (POST 92-6 Ln 236-242)".

During the pandemic, respondents were able to balance teaching and research activities through the inclusion of online teaching, lectures, and seminars. This innovative approach to teaching ensured that female academics in CS4 were able to continue delivering essential educational services to students and their institutions without compromising their health. One participant explained that the pandemic helped her to make choices that freed time for leisure. In her own words, Participant 3 mentioned that:

"But once it was subsided, and so the new norm popped up, which means that you need not come to the university every day, you can choose your days. If there is a teaching, then only you have to come otherwise, as long as you can answer the emails and attend the meetings from home, we are fine with it. So, I truly believe that's a blessing. So, because you know you get some time wherein you can manage everything in between in office. If I get time, I'll just roam around to go out to get some fresh air. And here, you know, it saved my traveling time. I can utilize that one hour somewhere else (POST 92-3 Ln 227-233)."

Another participant viewed the pandemic era as the most productive period in her career. In her own words, participant 4 explained that:

"You know, we had the national lockdown period for several months 2020-2021. I loved it because that's the most productive period. I wrote ten articles in one year because I could concentrate, there was no disruption and there was no one coming to visit me in my office, chat, having coffee with me so I could use the majority of my time. Get some concentration on the research activities. So, I was highly productive. And I was quite disappointed when the national lockdown ended (POST 92-4 Ln 251-256)".

Even though the transition to online teaching during the pandemic was generally considered as a positive outcome, some participants indicated that it was stressful and difficult to decipher the body language of students when teaching online. This was due to the virtual nature of the teaching environment on which lecturers had no control but only relied on students for cooperation. In the words of Participant 5:

"OK, so during the pandemic I should say that I doubt if everything was online, but still it was stressful because I feel that when I deliver my lecture, I actually get to know from the faces of my students whether they have understood whatever I'm teaching or not. So uh, it was stressful and it was basically like that. I'm teaching in a vacuum when where nobody's present, or if he or she is present, whether he's sleeping or not. So, it was basically difficult to gauge the reaction of the students at that time (POST 92-5 Ln 368-373)".

8.3 Summary of the Survey Findings

Summary of CS4 survey finding is essential to enable the synthesis of the survey with the interview outcome. The summary was discussed under three WFC parameters of; Workload pressure, Causes and Family Demand, Direction of the conflict and WFC management strategies.

8.3.1 Workload Pressure and Causes

41.7% respondents identified teaching and research responsibilities as source of workload while 50% said teaching with administrative obligation as the main sources of their workload. Dual responsibilities of teaching and administration exacerbate WFC (Acker, 2006; Probert, 2005). In addition, some of the respondents stressed on the university financial drive often led to increased teaching and student support which in effect increase their workload pressure (Burke & Mattis, 2007). The findings about the effect of workload on childcare and other care responsibilities (58.2%) shows that workload pressures significantly affect respondents' ability to meet family responsibilities, including childcare, domestic chores, and extended family care. The emotional strain of WFC manifests in reduced quality time with children and spouses, increased relational tensions, and, in some cases, feelings of parental absence. As established in the literature, female academics frequently experience increase pressure when trying to balance their job duties and family obligation which often led to work-to-family spill over impact (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The challenge of managing live-in relatives burden contributes to 92% respondents WFC. Adisa *et al* (2019) stated that additional family responsibilities contribute to WFC among female academics in the UK. This position was corroborated by Hochschild & Machung, (2012) and Lewis *et al* (2007) with the position that 54.5% female academics respondents in CS4 frequently experience increase in family obligation during term time as female academics have less time for childcare and house management. This suggest that

academic term time impact female academics due to the primary role of managing their homes (Sallee, 2013)

8.3.2 Direction of Conflict

41.7% respondents indicated that the direction of their WFC is rather more family related than work related. This is similar to CS3 finding which align with the societal expectations and gender role in shaping WFC in which females are often expected to put their family first over their career (Damaske, 2011; Lewis *et al*., 2007).

8.3.3 WFC Management Strategies

92% respondents noted that they rely on work flexibility in managing their family and work responsibilities. They also mentioned good personal planning; these strategies align with research on self-structured planning on ideal work life balance which show one of the ways female academics mitigate work workload challenges (Adisa *et al*., 2019). However, they stated lack of clarity in getting adequate information and access to institutional family friendly policy, highlights systemic inequalities in CS4 (O'Connor *et al*., 2015; Adisa *et al*., 2019).

8.4 Summary of the chapter - Synthesis of CS4 Research Findings

The survey and interview findings from CS4 survey respondents and interview participants are similar. The main causes of workload in CS4 were identified as heavy teaching, research responsibilities and administrative duties. This is consistent with the literature that female academics frequently experience huge workload from institutional demand, gendered expectations, and unrecognised administrative task. (O'Connor *et al*, 2015). CS4 funding type also put additional workload pressure on female academics in CS4 with66.6% frequently experience the pressure as they are expected to teach and secure external fund for research activities of the institution without the institution assistance (Adisa *et al.*, 2019).

The primary direction of conflict for most CS4 respondents and participants was family to work (41.7%) while 25% of others said the direction is bidirectional. Direction of conflict reflects a complex interplay between work and family conflicts (Damaske, 2011; Scheibinger & Gilmartin, 2010). The view about WFC direction to be bidirectional suggests that CS4 female academics face the challenges of balancing family duties alongside workload pressure thereby increasing WFC (Emslie &Hunt, 2009).

CS4 survey respondents and interview participants acknowledged that their institution has institutional and national work policies to assist female academics in balancing work life balance. However, they pointed to the poor implementation of the policies. Equity policy and flexible work schedule were identified as being used by some others but are poorly communicated and inconsistently applied. The

variance between reality of work policy and the work policy intentions is well noted in past research as it was noted that institutional work policy has failed to make the required meaningful impact on female academics (Bailyn, 2003; Adisa *et al*, 2019). The improper institutional backing has left many female academics in CS4 not feeling supported and this lay credence on the findings that universities most often put balancing work and family responsibilities on individuals instead of the system (Kinman & Jones, 2008)

The outcome in CS4 align with Walby's position that the challenges women faced in balancing work and family responsibilities go beyond individualistic explanation of gender inequality by pointing to the influence of institutional structures and cultural expectations on gendered divisions of labour in both the private and public sectors. As established in CS4, gendered divisions in labour, family and domestic responsibilities with limited institutional support for women shows the established patriarchal structures in academia (Aluko, 2009)). However, CS4 findings also challenge the traditional public and private patriarchy theory by manifesting academic women's active agency in empowering themselves in the higher education system which does not favour women academics, as in the case of Participant 6 and 5 who explored and established useful academic supporting networks**.**

Chapter 9 Discussion

9.0 Introduction

This chapter is based on triangulation of the survey and interview findings in all the four case institutions. The chapter presents a comparative analysis to explore how policy contexts, cultural and socioeconomic informed the female academics experiences of WFC. The discussion is framed around the study's dual aims: (1) to compare the WFC experiences of female academics in the two countries, and (2) to analyse the impact of these conflicts on their job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Furthermore, this chapter integrates insights across country-level dynamics, institutional contrasts and individual level female agency to provide a detailed understanding of how systemic factors, organizational structures, and individual challenges intersect to influence work-family outcomes among female academics in Nigeria and the UK.

9.1 Country level comparisons

The extended family, informal labour economies, and religious institutions play a more active role in shaping women lived experiences, particularly in Nigeria, which Walby's theory of patriarchy did not fully account for. Applying her gender regime theory in Nigeria thus requires significant modification to accommodate these culturally embedded structures. As discussed in the literature review (Chapter 2), Walby's theory was limited in its engagement with intersectionality. She initially treated gender regimes in isolation from other intersectional experiences arising from class, race, sexuality, ethnicity, and religion. Although Walby (2009) later introduced the idea of "mutually shaping regimes of inequality," this concept remains underdeveloped particularly in empirical studies of the Global South. Also, in the UK, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) female academics face ethnic and gendered inequalities (Rollock, 2019) which have not been fully accounted for. In this research, WFC is shaped by intersecting religious, and socio-economic structures (Aina, 1998). In view of the gap in Walby's theory in relation to intersectionality and WFC, African feminism has been adopted in addition to Walby's theory to enrich our awareness and understanding of the multifaceted realities female academic may be facing in the two countries. However, African feminism has its critics, notably its insistence on the importance of cultural values such as extended family support and communalism in ameliorating women's lives (Bayu, 2019). Findings in this study reveal that these values can also function as structures that perpetuate gendered labour inequality, by increasing the pressures on women to excel in their domestic and caregiving responsibilities (Amadiume, 1987; Nnaemeka, 2004; Mama, 1995).

In the survey (Chapter 4.5), the findings pointed to a definitive pattern in the way female academics in Nigeria and the UK experience WFC which validates this research position that WFC is shaped by

institutional structures, cultural expectations and gendered norms (Walby, 2004). The findings further shows that the UK respondents reported high levels of institutional workload while Nigerian respondents reported a deeper WFC from the family reflecting a deep-rooted socio-cultural expectation around women's caregiving roles. The survey therefore elucidates the cultural and structural scope of WFC. For instance, Nigerian female academics uses various strategies such as the use of house maid and live-in extended family to address WFC. They seldom had to do additional unofficial income-generating work to be able to afford the cost of maintaining the extended family living with them and payment for the required domestic help. These mitigating strategies on many occasions were negotiated with their spouses in order to manage the patriarchal norms (Adisa et al., 2016). However, the coping strategies may be unsustainable in the long term if institutional changes do not occur (Emslie & Hunt, 2009). Also, in contrast to African feminism's assertion of community support as the means to navigate patriarchal norms (Nnaemeka,1998), community support comes with a cost to reciprocate, which serves to maintain rather than alleviate pressure and this puts more burden upon them (Federici, 2012).

The findings of this research underscore the significant socio-economic and institutional disparities that shape WFC experiences of female academics in Nigeria and the UK, as suggested in the following table.

In Nigeria, female academics encounter challenges from socio-economic limitations and inadequate institutional support systems. Consistent with the existing literature, the findings reaffirm that Nigerian universities suffer from higher educational underfunding (both from the government and private sectors), poor staff remuneration, and irregular salary from unionised strikes. These systemic issues exacerbate WFC in Nigeria, as female academics are often forced to navigate their career demands and family expectations within a context of financial uncertainty and limited organizational support. The reliance on informal systems of childcare in Nigeria clearly shows the institutional failure to provide essential support system in the form of family friendly practices and this often leads to reduced job satisfaction in the female academics, for example Participant 4 (Chapter 5.2.7) pointed to the value of building supportive interpersonal relationships with live-in family and neighbours in dealing with this conflict. These are methods used by African women to address the patriarchal norms with emphasis on the role of community dynamics in assisting women in WFC management (Nnaemeka,1998). This aligns with the findings from Adisa et al. (2019), which suggested that institutional structural deficiencies contribute to the female academics reduced job satisfaction.

In contrast, UK female academics face relatively fewer financial challenges. This enables a better sustained focus on professional development. However, they still experience WFC, especially in high-performance environments where research output is heavily scrutinised (Chapter 7.2.3), thereby

reinforcing career pressures (Morley, 2006). Female academics in the UK benefit from a more supportive institutional and socio-economic framework, national and institutional policies such as statutory parental leave and access to on-campus childcare services. This provides impactful support for managing work and family roles (Lewis et al., 2007). However, some of the participants in the interview while acknowledging the availability of WLB policies still simultaneously questioned their consistent and standard application. The implementation of flexible working arrangements, for instance, was described as uneven, with part-time and fixed-term staff frequently excluded from full access to these benefits (Bluesci, 2023). These disparities in policy implementation mirror the findings by Henderson et al. (2019), who stated that systemic gender bias and institutional cultures continue to undermine the effectiveness of gender-equitable policies. Findings from this research further revealed that, despite the formal presence of these supportive policies, female academics in the UK still encounter WFC issues, particularly due to the intensification of academic labour under market-driven reforms in higher education (Ejekwumadu, 2017). The expectation to achieve high research outputs and teaching excellence in CS3 (post-92) often leads to heightened WFC among the female academics in the university.

Table 9.1 below summarises the different contexts which have influenced academic women's experiences in Nigeria and the UK.

Table 9.1 Country level Comparisons

	Nigeria	UK
Home context	Large family size (children 4+) Live-in relatives Private patriarchy norm, men excused from housework Expectation on women to manage the home Use of housemaids, wider kin network and friends for domestic labour Women engaged in paid work outside academia to supplement household running costs and buy goodwill.	Smaller family size Relatives external to nuclear family, tension providing care Gender norms persist Women want to mother, but husbands share more household chores Use of commercial childcare, and wider family friend networks Women do not engage in paid work outside contracted work as institutional policy does not allow
Institutional context	Clear distinctions between public and private institutions affecting nature of pressure experienced: Unionisation, job security and conditions of work, work-loading Academic progression depends on achieving metrics – e.g. PhD and publications, creating pressure Issues of safety, due to threat of hostage taking Issues of transport to work (particularly rural-urban settings)	No clear distinctions between pre-92 and post-92 institutions. The two institutions are guided by standard national policies Academic progression depends more on achieved research and publications Better safety and infrastructure in the institutions
Experience of conflict	Women's intensive work demands have to be managed so they do not impact household	Women's family needs are often managed so as not to affect work demands

9.2 Institutional level comparisons

In Nigeria, the country context manifests in gendered educational disparities, and structural exclusions within academia and other employment sectors. This research incorporates a postcolonial feminist analysis to expose the historical continuities that shape current WFC experiences. Walby's omission of colonial legacies limits her framework's explanatory power in these contexts. In Nigeria, gender inequalities embedded in religious belief through colonisation promoted patriarchal norms and continue to perpetuate male dominance in domestic and public domain (Salaam, 2003). The established religions in Nigeria also restricted women in many roles that limit their accession to leadership position in institutions and political positions, in turn validating private patriarchal norms (Benebo *et al.* 2018). Walby's (1990) work on public and private patriarchy argues for a modern shift from domestic authority (private patriarchal norms) to institutionalized control (public patriarchal norms). In Nigeria this shift is far less apparent than in the UK as discussed in the work of African feminists, Oyèrónkẹ́ Oyěwùmí (1997) and Ifi Amadiume (1987). In the UK, public patriarchal norms mean that "glass ceiling" continue to hinder UK women's career progression and inadequate representation in senior roles across several sectors (Johnson, 2023). When comparing institutional support mechanisms across the four institutional contexts, the contrast is evident. While the UK universities have formalised WLB provisions, Nigerian universities, particularly CS2 lack the basic infrastructural or policy-level frameworks to support female academics effectively (Ejumodu, 2013; Adisa et al., 2019). Consequently, female academics in Nigeria reported greater reliance on informal support, delegation, negotiation and planning as coping strategies and they exhibit lower levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Osayekemwen, 2021). While in the UK, despite the inconsistency in the policy implementation, female academics generally report higher job satisfaction which is attributable in part to more reliable salary structures, formal support, proactive planning better institutional provisions (Sloane, P. J. & Ward, M. E, 2000). While both the UK and Nigerian female academics face WFC, the underlying causes and mediating structures differ significantly. In Nigeria, WFC is driven by socio-economic hardship and institutional neglect, while in the UK, it is more closely tied to performance expectations and inconsistent policy implementation. These findings suggest that while policy frameworks are critical, their practical implementation and the broader socio-cultural context ultimately shape the lived experiences of female academics across national settings.

The two universities in Nigeria experience increase in workload with CS2 experiencing higher workload pressure due to the university's commercial orientation. This and the absence of gender friendly policies has made most female academics to be dissatisfied with their jobs hence express less organisational commitment (Christiana, 2013). This research findings shows that female academics in government university face regular labour strike which affect their regular salary payment (Chapter 5.2.3). In the private university, unionism is not allowed which enable regular salary payment. Set

against the organizational policy context are the differences in female academics' family responsibilities (Chukwusa, 2020), Nigerian academics have more dependents living with them, both in the number of children and extended relatives. Managing children's schedules and ensuring childcare is in place is challenging in larger families. Some of the women explained that these challenges can be seen as being alleviated or aggravated by the presence of extended family members living in the home (Chapter 4.5). Some extended family members and housemaids may assist in childcare whilst others require care and surveillance themselves. In the private patriarchal structure in Nigeria, meeting spousal expectations becomes an oncoming concern of academic women to effect the smooth running of the household and for some to bring in additional money to supplement and ease family life so their absence is not missed.

In contrast in the UK, spouses were more supportive of their partners' careers and undertook domestic chores and childcare. The smaller family size made negotiations easier although the care of relatives living external to the family home and pet care appeared to be shaped by gendered expectations (Henz, 2010).

9.2.1 Nigerian Government and Private Universities Comparison

Comparing Nigerian government and private universities show some similarities and differences. The Nigerian government university even though sponsored by the Nigerian government is said to be underfunded and operates with limited family-friendly policies such as accessible childcare facilities located in the university premises, restricted official work flexibility and inequitable female representation at top management (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018). The limited institutional support and the societal cultural belief in gender roles make it difficult for female academics to manage their job duties alongside family obligation (Gaio & Cabral-Cardoso 2008). This made it difficult for female academics in government university (CS1) to manage their professional role simultaneously with their family roles (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018). In the survey (Chapter 4.4.1), most of the respondents in CS1 are early- to mid-career female academics with moderate to large family and they have their extended families living with them. They are the family primary caregiver which put the burden of balancing workload and family responsibilities on them. The respondents WFC and lack of institutional support put a gap and emotional detachment between the female academics and their children. The female academics expectation of adequate work flexibility prior to employment in the university that could make them have time for their family, particularly their children was not met. They therefore see the direction of WFC as work to family. In the interview, participants prefer to continue to work in the university because of the marginal work flexibility opportunities despite the constant industrial strikes' actions, uncertain salary, and inadequate institutional support.

The Nigerian private university on the other hand is funded by private investors therefore the university is profit-driven and commercial oriented. Because of these, female academics face

operational challenges such as staff shortage and high workloads such as teaching and administrative duties (Houston *et al*., 2006). The university operates with strict and rigid work policies that ensure compulsory staff attendance in the university campus with fixed work time every workday (Chapter 6.2.4). Female academics in the university also face limited maternity leave period which is lesser than the national policy on maternity leave. This situation makes them work at ''no work, no pay'' after the limited maternity period (Chapter 6.2.4) and this often increase their sense of job and financial insecurity (Houston *et al*., 2006). In the private university, most female academics appreciate the steady salary as the university does not allow for industrial strike, however, the lack of job security (hired and fired on performance), the poorly paid standard maternity leave and the excessive workload due to the commercial nature of the university has made many of the female academics express a wish to work in a government university. In the survey (Chapter 4.4.2), most respondents are early-career female academics, and they have extended family living with them. They are noted for having large families.

9.2.2 The UK, Pre-92, and Post-92 Universities Comparison

Female academics in pre-92 university often face huge pressures of ensuring research success alongside teaching and additional administrative responsibilities. The university puts research and publishing pressure on female academics including those who are returning from career interruption due to childbirth and maternity leave (Morley, 2021). The university also expects international collaboration through individual research and conferences (Chapter 7.2.5). This creates conflict for female academics with caregiving responsibilities, thereby increasing WFC (Bhopal, 2022). The survey report (Chapter 4.4.3) for CS3 established that most respondents are mid-career to late-career female academics with small family. They are supported by family friendly policy of the university. However, most of them do not have childcare duties anymore suggesting that their childcare burdens have ended. They rather saw pet care/dog walking as a major caregiving concern; this shows a cultural difference between institutions in Nigeria and the UK which is based on societal norm rooted in the two countries animal welfare legislation.

Post-92 university female academics face reduced research demands, this could alleviate some pressure, but the teaching workload creates another challenge (Smith & McBride, 2021). Female academics are often assigned additional administrative responsibilities, often seen as feminised roles, such departmental management and student advising which require more time and increase workload (Griffin *et al*, 2011). Despite the challenges, female academics in the university benefit from family friendly work policies which help minimise the WFC (Archer, 2023). Work-family balance policies are more accessible in the university, however, teaching, and administrative workload continue to present WFC challenges, as stated in the survey, flexible work policy in the university can mitigate some of the pressure (Chapter 4.3.3.2). Female academics in pre-92 university prefer the teaching

focused culture of post-92 university and would prefer to work in the university to avoid the burden of research intensity of the university (Chapter 7.2.3). On the other hand, Post-92 university female academics prefer to work in Pre-92 university because of the opportunity for faster academic progression like Pre-92 university due to the research and publication exposure in the higher education sector (Chapter 8.2.3). In CS4 survey (Chapter 4.4.4), most of the respondents are mid-career and late-career female academics. They have small to moderate family with caregiving responsibilities. Most of them are also particular about the impact of WFC on their pet care such as dog walking. They also care for live-in extended family. Teaching with administrative responsibilities pressure was stated as the primary cause of workload pressure. The main institutional differences between academic women's experiences are summarised in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2 Institutional Level Comparison

Scope	CS1: Government	CS2: Private	CS3: Pre-92	CS4: Post-92
Family Dynamics	Moderate–large; live-in family → daily care and housework	Large; live-in extended kin; heavier daily care	Small; extended family	Small; extended family
Child/Other care	Moderate childcare/other caregiving	Heavy child/extended care	Childcare and eldercare managed	Childcare and eldercare well noted
Workload and Source	High; Staff shortages; large classes; feminised admin	Higher; Staff shortages; long days; strict on-site presence	High; Teaching and admin; research culture; admin burdens	High; Heavy teaching and rising publication pressure
Organizational Policy	National maternity policy; weak flexible work	Minimal maternity; low autonomy	Rich policies, but inconsistent application	Rich policies, inconsistent application
WFC management	Informal support; negotiation, planning	Informal support; delegation, planning	Formal support; Proactiveness	Formal support, planning
Rights and Security	Strikes affects income	Hire-and-fire norms; weak staff protections	Flexible work pattern allowed	Flexible work pattern allowed
Transportation and Safety	Transport issues lead to burden	Safety and Transport challenges	Generally safer, better organised	Safer and better organised
Job Satisfaction	Pressure from home and public patriarchy; low job satisfaction	Obvious private, public patriarchy; low job satisfaction	Robust policy; public patriarchy; moderate–high job satisfaction	Established policy; public patriarchy; moderate job satisfaction

9.3 Individual level – women's agency

It has been pointed out previously that Walby's structuralist view initially underestimated female agency. Her work portrayed women as passive individuals influenced by patriarchal institutions. Acker (1988) and Anthias (1998) on the contrary stated the importance of accepting women as active agents who are involved in negotiation of family and work practices, and when necessary, resistance, pushing back on their operation to transform oppressive structures. Walby later introduced a more considered understanding of women agency and structure (Walby, 2009), She agreed with some feminist scholars that women operate within and against gender regimes. Despite her updated view, the analysis of female agency remains underdeveloped most especially in Global South contexts where everyday examples of adaptation are survival strategies for women. In Nigeria, most women have extended family members live with them to support in caring responsibilities and house chores (Adebowale *et al*., 2016)**.** Domestic chores, childcare and caring for live-in family were recognised as major responsibilities women in Nigeria shoulder as societal expectation (Adebowale *et al*., 2016) which validate the presence of private patriarchy in the country. To address this huge burden, female academics use paid domestic helpers (known as housemaids) to mitigate the responsibilities (Chapter 2.1). These housemaids are meant to assist with household tasks, childcare and any other responsibilities assigned to them (Housekeeper.com). This circumstance could be perceived as a commercial solution devised by the female academics to balance domestic responsibilities and work requirements.

According to these research findings, female academics in Nigeria rely on friends' support system, proactive planning, delegation, negotiation and compromise to address the patriarchal norms with focus on the role of community dynamics in helping women in mitigating WFC (Nnaemeka,1998)**.** This position is contrary to Walby initial position on female agency but aligns with African feminism concept of 'situationality' which states that relationships are managed and influenced by persons involved and situation at hand (Oyewùmí, 1997, p. 13). Also, Lewis *et al* (2007) observed that in the absence of structured interventions, women develop individual and community-based coping mechanisms to balance work and family responsibilities (Lewis *et al*., 2007; Adisa, Gbadamosi, & Mordi, 2014). However, this research also suggests that such coping strategies may be unsustainable in the long term if institutional changes do not occur (Emslie & Hunt, 2009). In contrast to African feminism's assertion of community support as the means to navigate patriarchal norms. (Nnaemeka,1998), community support comes with a cost to reciprocate, which serves to maintain rather than alleviate pressure. In addition, to secure access to informal family support (e.g. housemaids) women may be required to engage in unofficial work to generate the required funding, which puts more burden upon them (Federici, 2012). In the UK, female academics make use of institutional policies and commercial childcare options to free them from domestic duties. Their spouses also

contribute to family duties, easing their contribution. Nevertheless, they are still involved in a proactive planning to ensure these different childcare options and family arrangements are successful. Like their Nigerian counterparts, women experience regret at being absent from family life and their children (Chapter 4.4.4.1). The extent to which work spills over into the family sphere depends on each individual women's circumstances and ambitions. This is much more likely in the Nigerian context. Some female academics sacrifice their own rest time, when they have no other family duties, to undertake academic work (Baker, 2010). Table 9.3 outlines and compares the mitigation strategies that academic women in Nigeria and the UK have taken.

Table 9.3 Academic women's agency

	Nigeria	**UK**
Mitigation strategies - home	Reliance on network of other parents for childcare. Use of housemaids. Income generation to pay for extra support Delegation- advance planning	Depend on individual and immediate family for childcare. No external revenue generation contractually allowed. Proactive planning
Mitigation strategies - institutional	Use of institutional policies if offered	Adequate systemic family friendly policies in place
Personal experience	Often sacrificing sleep. Regret at not being present with children. Working a 'second shift' without help from spouse. Role of family 'manager' delegating and undertaking housework is mentally exhausting. Deferring PhD study to accommodate home.	Pressure for research success alongside teaching and administrative responsibilities Regret at not being present with children

9.4 Summary of Findings

At the country level, extended family and gender norms, and religious institutions have structured women's educational access and opportunities. They continue to play a more active role in shaping women's experiences in post-colonial Nigeria. In Nigeria these legacies uphold private patriarchal authority around which female academics must negotiate their paid work and career development. In the UK, Walby's theory (1990) of a shift toward public patriarchy is more fitting, revealing the significance to women's careers of legal and policy commitments to family friendly institutional practices, but also showing the persistence of 'glass ceilings' to women's progress within institutions. In households, husbands are reported to be supportive of their partners' careers and undertake a share of domestic duties and childcare. At country level, these findings point out the importance to understanding the "mutually shaping regimes of inequality" (Chapter 7.2.2) in which gender including reproductive norms around family size, as well as race and class come to structure women's circumstances and opportunities.

At an institutional level, the university sector in the UK and Nigeria are both subject to global academic standards around research and publication output, which are felt by participants in all case study institutions. In Nigeria, salary insecurity, circumstantial on the type of university, affects women's career planning and contributes to their high work output to prove themselves and to advance. In the UK, increasing workload and requirements to build academic reputation, rather than financial uncertainty. Female academics in the Nigerian government university experience institutional challenges (strikes), alongside higher family demands due to family size and complexity exacerbate the course and degree of conflict women are attempting to navigate.

At a personal level, women in both countries and all institutions regret the time spent away from their children and some experience dissatisfaction with their university and career progression. Despite this, women are active in managing and trying to ameliorate their individual situation in contrast to structural theory assumptions. All participants relied on proactive and detailed planning to free themselves from family duties. In Nigeria there was greater emphasis on meeting spousal expectations and in drawing on relatives, friends and the system of housemaids to do this, though these informal systems sometimes added rather than relieved pressure. There was discussion of personal sacrifice. In the UK female academics adeptly organised institutional policies and commercial childcare, aided by their husbands to reduce WFC, though supporting older relatives living externally was noted as a struggle.

The UK female academics rely on and benefit from systemic family friendly policies but still battle with gender bias and inconsistent implementation of these policies. In Nigeria, socio-economy challenges, cultural expectations, weak family friendly institutional policy and poor gender policy

often exacerbate WFC in the female academics. The research findings about academic women's experiences of WFC at three different levels further demonstrate that the gender regimes are shaped under the influence not only from the national structural issues but also from local policy contexts and diverse gender and intersectional inequalities that academic women confronted individually.

Chapter 10 Conclusion

10.0   Introduction

This research provided a comparative perspective that underpin the triangulation of cultural expectations, individual experiences, and institutional policies on WFC in female academics in the UK and Nigeria. The influence of gendered higher education policy, institutional framework, socio-economic context, and organisational ethos on WFC was highlighted with recommendation for cultural change, organisational and national reforms in the two countries in the global north and south. In the UK, the academic institutions have in operation comprehensive organisational policies such as flexible work time, maternity leave and childcare support system that alleviate WFC. However, these policies are inconsistently implemented. In the UK universities especially the pre-92 university (a research-intensive institution), female academics often experience selective implementation of the gendered policy. Contrary to the UK universities, the Nigerian universities have huge policy gap as comprehensive organizational policies are limited or non-existent. This makes most female academics rely on informal support systems (the use of extended family members, employment of housemaid and social networks)

Cultural expectations in both the United Kingdom and Nigeria continue to reinforce gendered division of labour in contextually distinct ways. In Nigeria, female academics encounter more of societal and family pressures to prioritise domestic and caregiving responsibilities, most times at the expense of their career progression. In contrast, female academics in the UK face fewer explicit cultural demands in relation to their family roles; however, they contend with more of institutionalised challenges such as gendered expectations in academic duties and unequal access to leadership opportunities. These differences point to the context-specific development of WFC. It also showed the shared structural nature of gender inequality in the two countries. The theoretical framework of this research draws significantly on Sylvia Walby's conceptualisation of patriarchal norms and gender regimes (Walby 1990, 2020). The theoretical framework provides a robust analytical lens for examining how gendered power structures operate across the two countries institutional, cultural and economic domains. Walby's framework is specifically important in revealing how the four universities, as gendered organisations, exhibit inequality through both formal and informal practices. This research also used African feminist theory to address the intersection of gender with socio-cultural, historical, and postcolonial dynamics specific to African contexts (Nnaemeka, 2004; Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994). This perspective enriches this research findings by highlighting the significance of extended family obligations, cultural norms around women as main carer in the household, and the broader societal constraints that shape Nigerian women's academic career that may not be properly captured by Western feminist models alone. Through this case study research involving surveys and semi-

structured interviews, key themes that emerged gave insights to better understanding of WFC among female academics in the UK and Nigeria, particularly within comparative cross-cultural frameworks of the two countries. However, this research has its limitations, and this includes major reliance on opinionated data that could be subject to social desirability bias, and the relatively small sample size, that put a challenge to the generalisability of the findings. Also, while the comparative design enables identification of both shared and context-specific gendered challenges, this research may not fully capture intra-country diversity (like, differences in discipline or ethnicity). Furthermore, the application of Walby's and African feminist theories, while analytically valuable, is inherently interpretive.

10.1 Thematic Contributions

This research thematic contribution evolves by integrating intersectionality of the common themes and practical experiences of female academics on WFC (Raina & Cho 2024) which points to the role of workload pressure on WFC, sources of WFC, direction of conflict and WFC management to generate the thematic contribution. This mix-method comparative case research contributes to the limited literature on female academics' experience of WFC in global north and global south by answering the research questions:

> Research Question 1: What are the various sources of WFC faced by female academics in Nigeria and the UK? Is there a significant difference between conflicts experienced by female academics in different types of universities?

In Nigeria, female academics face WFC due to excessive workloads spanning teaching, administrative work, patriarchal cultural norms reenforcing the expectation that women must balance their primary caregiving responsibilities with their career (Lee & Tang 2015), limited national and institutional work and gender policies. The female academic's WFC are exacerbated by institutional systemic inefficiencies such as underfunding, industrial strike actions, and irregular salary payments which intensify job dissatisfaction and reduce organisational commitments. The absence of institutional support mechanisms such as flexible work policies and childcare facilities in or within proximity to the universities premises further compounds these challenges forcing the female academics to depend more on informal networks to mitigate WFC. In the Nigerian private university, source of WFC is influenced by the commercialised academic nature of the institution which is characterised by profit-driven work policies (such as staff presenteeism, ''No Work, No Pay'' maternity leave, and no labour unionism) which creates sense of job insecurity among the female academics. The university security concern due to remote location of the school and the challenge of staff commuting add to the source of WFC among female academic in the Nigerian private university. In the UK, sources of WFC span from heavy teaching responsibilities, intense research ideology, societal expectations of female and

inconsistence application of work and gender policies. Pre-92 university female academic experience significant WFC due to the pressure of research-intensive culture. The drive for publishing within a set period disproportionately affects those who take career breaks for family responsibilities. In post-92 university, female academics emphasis teaching over research and this presents a different set of challenges to them. Heavy teaching and administrative workloads in the post-92 university limits work-life balance in the female academics.

This research identified specific differences in the experiences of female academics in the four institutional types. The Nigerian government university and the UK post-92 university offer more established work flexibility but with impose significant workload pressure, whereas the Nigerian private university and the UK pre-92 university impose stringent performance target on the female academics due to the commercial nature of the former and research nature of the later, this exacerbate WFC among female academics in the two institutions.

> Research Question 2: What is the relationship between WFC and job commitment among female academics.

The relationship between WFC and job commitment can be view by institutional context. The female academics in Nigerian government university face systemic challenges such as regular strike and irregular payment of salaries, however job flexibility in the university assist in their work life balance and job satisfaction. However, the financial instability due to irregular salary payment weakens the female academics organisational commitment, prompting their desire to work in private university instead. The commercial nature of Nigeria private university often leads to tough work and unfriendly policy such as rigid schedule, lack of paid maternity, heavy teaching load and job insecurity. This often leads to job dissatisfaction and lack of organisational commitment in the female academics. In the UK, Female academics in pre-92 university experience heavy WFC because of intense research expectations, international collaboration demands and competitive publishing pressure. This along with inconsistent implementation of the institutional policies prompt job dissatisfaction and reduced organisational commitment. In the post-92 university, intense teaching and limited career progression opportunity encourage job dissatisfaction and reduce organisational commitment.

10.2 Theoretical Contributions

The theoretical contribution evaluates the theory that support this mix-method comparative analysis of WFC in female academics in Nigeria and the UK. This research findings answer the third research question:

Are Walby's theory of feminism and gender regime and African feminism applicable in establishing the intersection of patriarchal norms and institutional practices that influence the work-family experiences of female academics in the two countries.

This research findings align with feminist theories, with the focus on Sylvia Walby's theory of patriarchy and gender regimes and African feminism theory to give better understanding of the cultural and systemic challenges female academics in the global north and global south faces. The intersection and interrelation of institutional structures, cultural norms and neoliberal policies in shaping the experiences of the female academics in the two countries helped to integrate the various perspective. This section assists in bridging the gap between theoretical view and real live practice that offers insight to institutional strategies, policy reforms and future research recommendation.

10.2.1 Sylvia Walby's patriarchal norms and gender regimes

Sylvia Walby's (1990, 2020) concept of feminism and patriarchy highlights a rich platform for understanding the cultural and systemic factors leading to WFC that can be related to Nigerian and the UK female academics experiences. Walby stated that patriarchal norms exist in private and public domain which impact on female's work and family responsibilities. Private patriarchy as earlier discussed in the literature is male dominance over female with the expectation of females taking the burden of domestic duties. This is more evident in the Nigerian universities particularly in the government university (CS1). It was established that female academics bear the burden of household responsibilities which shows the deep-rooted patriarchal cultural norms in Nigeria (Ogunode *et al.*, 2023). This exacerbate WFC in the female academics and it impacts their career progression. Private patriarchy exists in the UK but not as pronounced as in Nigeria. This is because the UK have a stronger legal system, gender equality policies and broader females now participating in labour. For example, Equality Act 2010 protects women against domestic discrimination, and it promotes workplace equity while the country's social services and welfare systems provides additional support for women who might be coming out of abusive domestic relationship.

Public patriarchy is evident in both Nigeria and the UK universities. However, the UK universities show more of public gender regimes as they promote gender equalities but neoliberal policies and organisational culture most times counter the policy thereby exacerbating WFC. Female academics in the UK often face the pressure of meeting the high professional standard because of higher education marketisation and managing required family responsibilities, mirroring world trend in gendered academic labour (Acker & Armenti, 2019). In Nigeria, both universities face limited or absence of gender-sensitive policies as they are often discriminated in leadership roles and lack of family friendly policies, these reinforced public patriarchy in both institutions.

Walby's theory critique neoliberal economic framework that prioritise profits over staff welfare. This is evident in the Nigerian private university (CS2), where profit-driven models exacerbate WFC through high workloads and restrictive maternity policies. In the UK, pre-92 university (CS3) culture of intensive research put pressure on the female academics to publish and secure funding, and this reinforces patriarchal capitalism's role in shaping work-family dynamics. In Nigeria private university, gendered division of labour was an important issue as female academics bear the pressure of excessive workload due to understaffing. The lack of gender-sensitive policy in the institution perpetuate WFC among the female academics and act as a barrier for their career progression (Mweta *et al., 2024*). In the UK, female academics in pre-92 university experience hierarchical and male dominated work system despite the gender equality policy. They mentioned systemic barriers to academic leadership positions in the institution, and this validates the theory's critique of male dominance in organisational structures. However, inconsistent policy implementation in institutions in both countries is a challenge. Even though the UK universities have paid maternity leave and work flexibility, the practical use of it varies in different faculties. In Nigeria, the lack of structured and standard gender equality policies often shows the gap in institutional reform between the global north and global south.

10.2.2 African Feminism Theory

African feminism theory highlights the experiences of Nigerian female academics in this research as it emphasises the collectivist approach to tackling gender inequality in Nigeria (Gouws, 2017). In contrast to western feminist models, African feminism theory highlights the integration of the community, family, and professional duties in shaping women empowerment. In the two Nigerian universities, female academics depends more on family network (which includes use of extended family members and older children), domestic workers (housemaids) and social groups in managing WFC. This aligns with African feminist holistic approach that emphasis on the use of social and family support systems to address gender inequality. The situationality context of African feminism was also evident in the Nigerian private university (CS2) as female academics in the institution often face challenges of the unique systemic barriers such as unpaid maternity leave, inadequate institutional support of females and job insecurity. The challenges on the contrary does not exist in the UK where formal welfare policies are in place but are not well implemented due to inconsistent implementation and workplace culture. Furthermore, African feminism theory noted the intersection of female economic independence and gendered labour society, campaigning for institutional reforms to accommodate females in the organizations. This research established the need for the reforms as most female academics in the two case studies in Nigeria often engage in other businesses outside their official academic work to supplement their professional income, a situation rooted in the Nigerian economic necessity and gendered expectations (Odejimi & Okeke-Uzodike, 2022).

10.2.3 Summary of theoretical contributions

This synthesis of Walby's and African feminism theoretical frameworks highlights the interplay of gender regimes, patriarchy, and feminist view in shaping WFC experiences of female academics in Nigeria and the UK. While both context present distinct challenges, the overarching theme remains the persistence of structural barriers that limit female career growth. The insights drawn from this research underscore the necessity of intersectional and context-sensitive approaches to policy and institutional reforms, ensuring a more equitable academic environment for female academics globally. Drawing from Walby's patriarchy and gender regimes theories and African feminism, this research makes an original contribution to the literature on WFC by offering comparative, intersectional analysis of female academics' experiences in the UK and Nigeria. It demonstrates how WFC is not a product of universal patriarchal structures as initially proposed by Walby, but rather deeply shaped by the interplay of cultural, institutional, economic, and socio-religious dynamics across different national contexts.

It further critiques Walby's (1990) structuralist theory of patriarchy by showing her limited ability to account for women's agency and the complexity of their negotiated responses to WFC. Walby's framework presented women as passive subjects constrained by fixed structural regimes, not considering how academic women actively mitigate, reshape and resist these constraints within diverse socio-cultural settings like the UK and Nigeria. More so, her early position of gender regimes in isolation from other identity markers neglects the intersectional realities of women's lives. Although Walby (2009) later came up with the notion of "mutually shaping regimes of inequality," this remains theoretically underdeveloped and empirically underexplored, particularly within Global South contexts.

To address these theoretical gaps in this research, African feminism was adopted alongside Walby's framework to capture the contextual specificities shaping Nigerian female academics WFC experiences. African feminism's emphasis on cultural values, such as extended family support and communalism (Bayu, 2019), enriches our understanding of alternative WFC coping strategies. However, this research also offers a critical contribution by showing that these same cultural practices could act as structures of constraint, reproducing gendered divisions of labour and intensifying women's dual burdens in work and domestic spheres (Amadiume, 1987; Nnaemeka, 2004; Mama, 1995).

By positioning WFC within a comparative, intersectional framework, the four case studies illustrated the significant impact of intersectionality of race, class, sexuality and how multiple social and cultural structures influence female academic live experience of WFC in global north and global south. This research therefore advances theoretical debates on patriarchy, women agency, and gender inequality. It challenges the universality of Walby's model and demonstrates the need for greater integration of intersectionality into analyses of WFC, and it calls for a nuanced, context-sensitive understanding of

how cultural norms and institutional ethos shape female academics lived realities across diverse societies.

10.3 Methodological Contributions

This research used mix-methods case studies in the comparative contexts across global north (the UK) and global south (Nigeria). The case studies adopted surveys and interviews in four universities to generate empirical data. Evaluating this approach, this research was able to contribute to the research world through the following:

1. Robust mix-method techniques: The use of diverse institutions in two different countries with cultural and economic variation enabled institutional multitype and multisite analysis for enriched WFC experiences.

2. Intersectional Framework: By incorporating intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1992), this research highlights the impact of career stage, marital status, and institutional culture on WFC, contributing to feminism and gender regimes discussion.

3. Data Triangulation: The use and synthesis of survey and interview data enhances data reliability, and it also assists in addressing mix-method limitations (Herriott & Firestone, 1983; Yin, 2009).

4. Positionality and Reflectivity: My background as a black African academic with diverse educational background which span Nigeria and the UK, provides an outsider perspective in research positionality, thereby ensuring a balanced reflective analysis that minimised bias and enhanced credibility.

10.4 Original Contributions to the Knowledge

This research contributes and advances existing research on WFC in the global north and the limited research in the global south. By integrating the intersectionality of female academics in Nigeria and the UK, this research highlights the impact of cultural norms, family size, live-in extended family on WFC experience in female academics in the UK and Nigeria. The following should be considered in the discussion of WFC globally:

1. **Cultural Norms:** Societal, cultural belief and institutional expectations on gender role disproportionately put pressure on female academics in the four case institutions. Patriarchal norms are major challenges for Nigerian female academics while the UK based academics face gender bias and societal expectations.

2. **Institutional Role:** The four case universities in Nigeria and the UK has been ineffective and inconsistent to different extent in the implementation of their existing family friendly and

gender policies and this impacts WFC. In Nigeria, Private universities lack gender equality and family friendly policies while the government university have gender policies in line with Nigerian national policies, but they are poorly applied. In the UK, the disparity between policies being in place and its practical application exacerbate WFC.

3. **Workload Dynamics:** Sources of workload can be dynamic with different institutional context. The commercial culture of Nigeria private university, ensure heavy workload for female academics while in the UK, pre-92 university, the culture of intense research and publishing create distinct stressor that contribute to WFC.

4. **Intersectionality Impact:** This research underscores how each female academics background such as marital status, family size, career stage, intersect to shape their WFC experience. In Nigeria, younger and early-career female academics encounter higher WFC due to mentorship role, vertical segregation at the leadership position. Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) female academics in the UK universities reported compounded challenges such as marginalisation and career stagnation.

5. **Live-in Family Influence:** Live-in families such as extended family, older children or aged parents have an influence on shaping the experiences of female academics on WFC. The financial need to support relatives often put pressure on female academics in Nigeria

6. **Family Size:** This research found that family size plays significant role in the experiences of female academics on WFC. Nigerian female academics have bigger family size hence more WFC compared to the UK where female academics have smaller family size hence reduced WFC.

7. **Commuting Challenge:** Long commuting time from home to school by female academics particularly in the Nigerian private university exacerbates the time constraints and stress level and this significantly influences their WFC.

8. **Financial and Institutional Support:** Regular and stable income and institutional support are important factors for the mitigation of WFC.

10.5   Intervention and Reforms

This research findings call for localized context-sensitive intervention and reforms to mitigate WFC among female academics in global north and south. The recommendations are:

1. **Cultural Shift:** The Nigerian society need cultural shift in relation to gender role and patriarchal norms that placed primary childcare and domestic responsibilities on women.

Universities also need to improve and promote gender sensitive leadership and equitable career progression pathway.

2. **Institutional Reforms:** Nigerian universities need to put in place work, family friendly and gendered role policies such as flexible work, childcare support, paid maternity leave for equity in all academic roles. All the four case universities need standard implementation of national and institutional policies to create truly inclusive work environment.

10.6   Limitations of the Research

Despite the strength of mixed-methods case study research approach, this research acknowledges the following limitations.

1. **Sample Size:** This research was unable to have very large sample size for the interviews particularly in pre-92 university as participation was voluntary. Small sample size limits the cross-case triangulation.

2. **Time Constraints:** This research limited time duration restricted longitudinal analysis of WFC with long time career effects.

3. **Comparability Challenges:** The institutional context and differences between Nigeria and the UK require a careful reconciliation of varying norms, policies and participants responses.

10.7   Recommendation for Future Research

This research enriches academic discourse on WFC and bridges the gap between the global north and global south on female academic experiences of WFC and advocating for tailored institutional reforms on equity and inclusive policies that recognise diverse realities of female academics. To build on the success of this research, the following are recommended for future research.

1. **Need for Longitudinal Research on WFC:** Researching long term effects of WFC on female academics' career trajectories with their organisational commitment would provide deeper insights into the female academic career progression and retention pattern.

2. **Comparative Case Research Expansion:** Future research should include more country context from global north and global south to enhance generalizability of the findings.

3. **Culturally sensitive Interventions:** There is a need to explore research-informed policy rooted in African feminism and intersectionality to create gender equitable academic environments globally.

10.8 Research Final Statement

This research has provided deep analysis of WFC among female academics in Nigeria and the UK offering the comparative analysis of the experiences of female academics at different career stages who are navigating their academic careers in two different sociocultural and institutional contexts. This research integrated feminism, gender regime theoretical framework, empirical literature findings and various national and institutional policy to contribute to the growing body of research on gender, work life balance and academic labour dynamics. Systemic, institutional and cultural barriers were used to highlight how structural constraints, gendered expectations and institutional policies intersect to shape female academic lived experiences. It revealed that while the UK institutions generally offer more structured policies such as flexible working, parental leave and childcare provisions to support work life balance, the effectiveness of these policies is often undermined by rigid institutional cultures, ethos and implicit gender biases. In Nigeria, formal policy support is found to be limited or inconsistently implemented thereby enabling female academics to rely heavily on informal networks to balance their work and family responsibilities. This comparative analysis underscores that despite differing socio-political landscapes of the two countries, female academics of the two countries face persistent challenges from institutional cultures.

10.9 Key Learning and Contributions

This research made several contributions to the academic discussion as follows.

1. **Advancing Feminism and Gender Regime Theoretical Understanding:** By incorporating intersectionality, feminism patriarchal norm, gender regime and African feminism, this research broadens the discourse on WFC. These views challenge the applicability of existing western-centric feminist theories and call for more context sensitive frameworks.

2. **Empirical Insights:** The use of mixed-methods comparative case research provides deep insight into how WFC manifests across different types of universities in Nigeria and the UK. This research highlights variation in female academics' WFC experiences in different institutional context.

3. **Bridging Global North and Global South Gap:** This research compared WFC in two countries with distinct socio-economic and cultural differences. The research findings contribute to the global discourse on gender equality in academia and bridge the gap between the global north and global south on gender regimes and feminist discussion and policy differential. Cultural norms, gendered divisions of labour, and institutional expectations remain persistent barriers to achieving work life balance. This research findings advocate for a more

inclusive, intersectional, and institutional context approach in designing ideal intervention for female academics globally.

By addressing systemic gaps, academia can take steps towards achieving gender parity to ensure female academics can thrive in their family life and professional career. This research helps to amplify the voices of female academics navigating WFC and contributing to shaping future policy design that will promote equity and sustainable work life in the higher education sector.

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Appendix A Pre-Research Notification Email to Female Academics Provided by Gatekeeper

Dear Madam

I am a PhD student studying at XXX University in the UK. I would like to invite you to take part in my PhD research: Work-family conflicts among female academics in the UK and Nigeria. Please read the following description of the research before you decide whether to take part.

I am conducting an online survey and a follow-up interview about work-family conflicts o female academics in the UK and Nigeria. The goal of this research is to examine the experiences of female academics in the UK and Nigeria in terms of work-family conflicts (WFC) and its impact on job satisfaction and commitment in two nations with contrasting social, economic, and cultural backgrounds

The XXX University Research Ethics Committee has approved this project. You are invited to participate in the research as a female academic.

Below is a link to the online survey. You are not required to record your name, residency, or legal status, and the information you provide will be confidential. The information you provide will be accessible only to me and my supervisors; and will be used only for the research. By completing this survey, you have given your consent to be part of the research. Participation is voluntary. You can choose to withdraw at any time by closing your browser window.

From your responses to the survey, an in-depth interview could be conducted to gather further information about important issues that might have been raised by the survey questions with the aim of getting deeper thoughts and viewpoints. This interview is optional too.

Finally, may I ask if you could assist me by sharing this email amongst your female academic colleagues in the university? If you are unable to do this, I would be most grateful if you could forward this email to anyone who could help distribute the survey link.

Thank you for your support in my research.

For more information, contact: mansur.k.opakunle@student.shu.ac.uk.

Appendix B: Research Survey Questionnaire

Pre-qualifying questions:

Where is your university located?

a. Nigeria

b. The United Kingdom

What type of university are you currently working in?

For Nigeria:

a) Government University

b) Private University

For the United Kingdom:

a) UK CS3

b) UK CS4

Respondent's Socio-demographics

1. How long have you been working in your current institution?

2. How long have you been working in the Higher Education sector?

3. Do you have an immediate family you are living with? Yes/No

4. Do you currently have childcare or other caring responsibilities? Yes/No

5. If you have childcare responsibilities, how many dependent children do you have?

6. If you have other caring responsibilities, what are they?

Part A. Sources of Work-Family Issues

1. How often do you experience excess academic workload in a typical teaching semester?

2. Have there been points in your career where your academic workload has been excessive? What caused your work to become so demanding?

3. How often do you experience heavy family obligations in a typical teaching semester?

4. What kind of family obligations have largely impacted your career progression as a female academic? Could you please give an example?

5. What effects has your workload had on your ability to meet your family obligations looking back over your career to date? Could you please give an example?

6. What can you say about the direction of the conflicts? Are they more likely to be work-related (Work to family conflict) or family-related (Family to work conflict)? Why? And with who?

Part B. Effects of Work-Family Issues on Institutional Commitment

1. When you first started out as an academic, what were your expectations from the job in terms of the following:

   i. Flexibility of working environment through national and or institutional policies, please briefly describe.

   ii. Job demand in relation to working hours, workload, research publications etc, please briefly describe.

2. Currently, do you feel your initial job expectations were met? Yes/No

3. To what extent does your current work-family situation affect your ability to fulfill your academic work responsibilities? Has this changed over time? In what ways?

Part C. Impact of National and Institutional Policies on Work-Family Issues

1. In your opinion, are the current government policies adequate in ensuring work-family balance for female academic? Please give reasons for your answer.

2. In your opinion, are the current policies of your institution adequate in ensuring work-family balance for female academic? Please give reasons for your answer.

3. Are there flexible working policies (national or institutional or departmental) that have positively impacted your career progression? Please name them.

4. If you were to advise your institution on work-family balance policies to support female academics, what would you recommend?

Interview Selection Question

Would you like to be contacted for a detailed discussion (interview) of your responses? Please provide your email address (This would not be reported in the research. It is solely to contact you):

_____

 Thank you for your time!

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Interview Questions

General Question:

1. Could you please introduce your work history/academic background?

2. How would you describe your family life?

3. What is your opinion of working for a private or Government University (pre or post 92 university) and how that is different from pre 92 university like XXX University the other option?

Part A. Sources of Work-Family Issues

1. At what point in your life did you mainly experience work-family conflict as a female academic? Could you please give an example?

2. Please describe the strategies you use to manage work commitments and family commitments

3. What type of academic workload do you experience and can you please give examples?

4. What are the types of family obligations you are managing, can you please give examples.

5. What kind of family obligations has largely impacted your career progression as a female academia? Could you please give example(s)?

6. What effects have your workload had on your family obligations? Could you please give an example?

7. What can you say about the direction of the conflicts? Are they more likely to be work-related (Work to family conflict) or family-related (Family to work conflict)? Why?

8. What actions have you taken to reduce conflict?

Part B. Effects of Work-Family Issues on Organisational Commitment

1. Can you describe your experience of national and your institutional work policies in relation to your working conditions such as flexible work time, maternity leave, and child/parent care hour? How do you view application of these policies in government universities as against private universities (Pre-92/Post-92?)

2. What are the most successful stories and most challenging time in your academic life with examples?

3. Were there changes to your teaching/research arrangements (in the pandemic) that assisted you in the balancing act? What were they?

Part C. Impact of National and Institutional Policies on Work-Family Issues

Do you think your current institutional policies are adequate enough in ensuring work-family balance for female academics? Please give personal stories of how you have been tackling the family responsibilities alongside your work responsibilities.

 Thank you for your time.

Appendix D: Participant Consent Form

TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY: Work-Family Conflict Among Female Academics, Nigeria and the UK

Please answer the following questions by ticking the response that applies

	YES	NO

1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me.

2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.

3. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within the time limits outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences to my future treatment by the researcher.

4. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet.

5. I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

6. I consent to the information collected for the purposes of this research study, once anonymised (so that I cannot be identified), to be used for any other research purposes.

Participant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Participant's Name (Printed): _____

Contact details _____

Researcher's Name (Printed): _____

Researcher's Signature: _____

Researcher's contact details:

(Name, address, contact number of investigator)

Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.

Appendix E Institutional Level Crosstab

Table 4.1

Frequency			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4
Frequency of workload pressure	Rarely	Count	3	0	10	8
		%	8	0	47.6	66.6
	Often	Count	6	0	5	2
		%	15.8	0	23.8	16.7
	Quite often	Count	16	3	4	0
		%	42.1	33.3	19.1	0
	Frequently	Count	13	6	2	2
		%	34.2	66.7	9.5	16.7
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100	100	100	100

Source: Researcher's field survey

Table 4.2

			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4
CAUSES OF WORKLOAD	Teaching	Count	11	2	13	5
		%	28.9	22.3	61.9	41.7
	Examination	Count	3	0	0	0
		%	7.9	0	0	0
	Admin work/Teaching	Count	9	3	6	6
		%	23.7	33.3	28.6	50
	Shortage of Staff	Count	15	4	2	1
		%	39.5	44.4	9.5	8.3
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100	100	100	100

Source: Researcher's field survey

Table 4.3

			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4
Effect of workload on children/other responsibility	Childcare	Count	15	3	9	7
		%	39.50	33.30	42.90	58.20
	Care for Extended family	Count	3	1	4	2
		%	7.9	11.1	19.0	16.7
	House Chores	Count	14	1	3	2
		%	36.8	11.1	14.3	16.7
	Pregnancy	Count	4	3	0	0
		%	10.5	33.4	0.0	0.0
	Business outside official work	Count	2	1	1	0
		%	5.3	11.1	4.8	0.0
	Pet care/Dog walking	Count	0	0	4	1
		%	0	0	19	8
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100	100	100	100

Source: Researcher's field survey

Table 4.4

			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	**CS2**	**CS3**	**CS4**
Impact of Workload on family relationship	No impact	Count	9	0	7	3
		%	23.70%	0.00%	33.30%	25.00%
	conflict with spouse	Count	4	3	4	2
		%	10.50%	33.30%	19.10%	16.70%
	Distancing from Children	Count	8	0	6	6
		%	21.10%	0.00%	28.60%	50.00%
	Inability to perform family obligation	Count	9	4	2	1
		%	23.70%	44.50%	9.50%	8.30%
	Attending late to responsibility	Count	8	2	2	0
		%	21.10%	22.20%	9.50%	0.00%
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Researcher's field survey

Table 4.5

			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4
Experience family obligation (School term)	Rarely	Count	3	0	3	4
		%	7.9	0	14.3	36.4
	Often	Count	6	3	2	0
		%	15.8	33.3	9.5	0
	Quite often	Count	2	2	6	1
		%	5.3	22.2	28.6	9.1
	Frequently	Count	27	4	10	6
		%	71.0	44.5	47.6	54.5
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100	100	100	100

Source: Researcher's field survey

Table 4.6

Direction of Conflict (WFC)			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4
Direction WFC	Work-related	Count	20	6	2	1
		%	52.6%	66.7%	9.5%	8.3%
	Family-related	Count	8	0	12	5
		%	21.0%	0.0%	57.1%	41.7%
	Both	Count	5	2	5	3
		%	13.2%	22.2%	23.8%	25.0%
	None	Count	5	1	1	2
		%	13.2%	11.1%	4.8%	16.7%
	N/A (no response)	Count	0	0	1	1
		%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	8.3%
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Researcher's field survey

Table 4.7

WFC Management			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4
Work Flexibility Expectation	Very Flexible	Count	20	5	12	11
		%	52.6%	55.6%	57.1%	92.0%
	Not Flexible	Count	6	2	9	1
		%	15.8%	22.2%	42.9%	8.0%
	No Expectation	Count	12	2	0	0
		%	31.6%	22.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Researcher's field survey

Table 4.8

			Nigeria		The UK	
			CS1	CS2	CS3	CS4
The reality of work Expectation	Very Flexible	Count	6	4	18	11
		%	16.0%	44.4%	86.0%	92.0%
	Not Flexible	Count	32	5	3	1
		%	84.0%	55.6%	14.0%	8.0%
Total		Count	38	9	21	12
		%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Researcher's field survey

Appendix F: Interview codes for Nigeria Public University

(A) Table 5.1: Work history/academic background (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Early-career academics/researcher (4 years, 1 year)	4	4	PU1 Ln19; PU4 Ln 19-20; PU5 Ln 22-25; PU6 Ln 21-27
2.	Senior academic lecturer	3	2	PU2 Ln 23-24; PU3 Ln 21-22, 29-31
3.	Member of professional bodies	1	1	Pu5 Ln 26-29
4.	Career experience (contract at a foreign private university)	1	1	PU1 Ln 42
5	Departmental resource person	1	1	PU1 Ln 105

(B) Table 5.2: Type of family life (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
1.	Married early (before or at the start of career)	3	3	PU1 Ln26; PU4 Ln 26-28; PU5 Ln 48
2.	Dependent relatives	5	3	PU1 Ln 26-27,33-34, 81; PU2 Ln 86-87; PU4 Ln 134-135
3.	Challenging child-care/husband situation	2	1	PU5 Ln 48-52, 160-161
4.	Older supportive children (bore children before starting an academic career)	4	3	PU2 Ln 30; PU3 Ln 23, Ln 44-46; PU6 Ln 181
5.	Supportive spouse	4	2	PU1 Ln 117; PU4 Ln 176-178, 179-182, 192-194
6.	Interesting and exciting	1	1	PU6 Ln 33

(C) Table 5.3: Perception of academic work (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
1.	Preference to work in private institutions due to frequent strikes	1	1	PU3 Ln 57-59,
2.	Have not worked for a private university	3	3	PU1 Ln 41; PU4 Ln 34; PU5 Ln 59-60
3	Too much time for less pay in a private university	1	1	PU6 Ln 47-48
4.	Demanding	1	1	PU5 Ln 68-70
5.	Need for more time	1	1	PU6 Ln 45-47

(D) Table 5.4: Timeline of work-family conflict as a female academic (Q1)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Too many responsibilities	4	2	PU1 Ln 57-58, 61, 62-65; PU5 Ln 78-83
2.	Pervasive conflict between work & family	3	3	PU2 Ln 59-60; PU3 Ln 68-74; PU4 Ln 377-386
3.	Child care v. academic conflict	2	1	PU4 Ln 62-65, 70-73
4.	During doctoral studies	1	1	PU6 Ln 57-61

(E) Table 5.5: Work-Family Coping Strategies (Q2)

S/N	Theme	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1	Delegation	7	1	PU1 Ln 73-75, 81, 82-83, 121-122, 164-165, 179, 187-189
2.	Homework scheduling	6	3	PU2 Ln 69-72; PU3 Ln 81-84, 200-201; PU4 Ln 85, 86-88, 93
3.	Multi-tasking	1	1	PU2 Ln 72-73
4.	Building inter-personal relationships that provide support when needed	3	1	PU4 Ln 100-106, 254-259, 260-262
5.	Employed a domestic worker	3	2	PU5 Ln 90-92, 186-187; PU6 Ln 68-73
6.	Help from older children	1	1	PU6 Ln 74

(F) Table 5.6: Type of academic workload experience by female academics (Q3)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Teaching, exam invigilation, script marking and grading, research writing	8	6	PU1 Ln 96-97; PU2 Ln 80-81; PU3 Ln 100-102, 109-111; PU4 Ln 115-120, 126-127; PU5 Ln 99-103; PU6 Ln 81
2.	Extra work responsibilities (committee membership, admin duties, exam officer, meetings)	4	4	PU1 Ln 98-100; PU3 Ln 111-114; PU5 Ln 106-107; PU6 Ln 82

(G) Table 5.7: Types of family obligations undertaken by female academics (Q4)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Child/ husband care	4	2	PU 2 Ln 85, 94; PU 4 Ln 133, 142-145
2.	House chores (e.g. making meals, washing)	2	2	PU2 Ln 101; PU5 Ln 111-112
3.	Assist children in learning after school	1	1	PU6 Ln 90-94
4.	Prayer leading & counselling	2	1	PU5 Ln 113, 114-116
5.	Financial responsibility	4	2	PU1 Ln 114-117, 137; PU3 Ln 120-130, 131

(H) Table 5.8: Effect of family obligations on female academics' career progression (Q5)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Low salary level	1	1	PU1 Ln 139-142
2.	Lack of time for research writing	1	1	PU2 Ln 102-104
3.	Mentally draining	1	1	PU2 Ln 111-114
4.	Positive effect-Children doing well academically	1	1	PU3 Ln 140-141
5.	None is challenging	2	1	PU4 Ln 165-167, 183-185
6.	Inability to give the children's attention	1	1	PU5 Ln 123-125
7.	Family background of teachers	1	1	PU6 Ln 100-107

(I) Table 5.9: Effect of workload on female academics' family obligations (Q6)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Insufficient time to fulfill task at work	1	1	PU4 Ln 200-203
2.	Inadequate time for the family	4	2	PU1 Ln 150-151, 153-159, PU3 Ln 161-166, 279
3.	Exhausted to fulfill marital responsibilities	2	1	PU1 Ln 151-152, 153
4.	Long night hours at work	2	1	PU1 Ln 152, 160-161
5.	Slowing me down	1	1	PU5 Ln 161-168
6.	No more recreational events with family	1	1	PU6 Ln 113-120

(J) Table 5.10: Direction of work-family conflict (Q7)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Work to family conflict (Work-related)				
1.	Work-related conflict	4	2	PU1 Ln 172-173; PU3 Ln 173, 181, 187-190,279-280
Family to work conflict (Family related)				
1.	Transferring family pressures to work	1	1	PU5 Ln 178-180
2.	Both work and family related	4	2	PU4 Ln 210-217, 225-228, 234; PU6 Ln 129-135
3.	Unconducive work & home environment (no light & internet)	1	1	PU2 Ln 123-128

(K) Table 5.11: Strategies for reducing work-family conflict (Q8)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Training and re-training	2	1	PU1 Ln 181-183, 185-187
2.	Do nothing, outside my control	1	1	PU2 Ln 135-139
3.	Do what is convenient for me	2	1	PU4 Ln 246-248, 394-400
4.	Planning ahead	3	2	PU3 Ln 201-202; PU4 Ln 249-253, 331-335
5.	Not taking office work home	1	1	PU6 Ln 151-154

(L) Table 5.12: Perception of national and institutional work policies for female academics (Q1, Q2)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Perception of work policy implementation in government university (Q2)				
1.	Flexible work schedule	10	5	PU1 Ln 44-48, 203-206, 235; PU2 Ln 48-49; PU3 Ln 55-57, 227, 252-256; PU4 Ln 35-37; PU6 Ln 191-193, 196-199
2.	Adaptable maternity period	5	3	PU1 Ln 210-213, 215-217; PU2 Ln 150-153; PU3 Ln 212-214, 215-216
3.	Unfair policies (childcare support, crèche, lecture fixture)	5	3	PU1 Ln 223-225; PU2 Ln 154-158, 165-168; PU3 Ln 229-232, 239-242
4.	Masculine-centred policies	3	1	PU4 Ln 274-277, 278-290, 388-394
5.	Work laxity	2	1	PU1 Ln 237-241, 242-244
6.	Job security/latitude	3	1	PU4 Ln 42-44, 46-51, 311-313
7.	Accommodating	2	1	PU4 Ln 155, 308-310
8.	Equal expectation of responsibility execution and achievement	1	1	PU4 Ln 373-377
9.	No national policy awareness	1	1	PU4 Ln 272-273,
10.	No female-friendly policies	2	2	PU4 Ln 405-407; PU5 Ln 209-212
11.	Maternity policy okay, but new policy not implemented	1	1	PU6 Ln 182-185

S/N		Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
	Perception of work policy implementation in private university (Q2)			
1.	Few existing policies are more applicable in government institutions	2	2	PU4 Ln 300-301; PU6 Ln 206-211
2.	Unfair regulation on family planning issues by some private university	2	1	PU4 Ln 301-303, 306-308

(M) Table 5.13: Success experienced as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Psychological satisfaction (compliments from students/award)	1	1	PU 5 Ln 227-231
2.	Grants awardee	2	1	PU1 Ln 251-255, 260-261
3.	Completion of doctoral studies on schedule	3	2	PU2 Ln 181; PU4 Ln 321, 323-326
4.	Publications	1	1	PU3 Ln 265-266
5.	Solving student's academic problem	1	1	PU3 Ln 266-270
6.	Easy doctorate due to being a lecturer	1	1	PU6 Ln 224-227

(N) Table 5.14: Challenges encountered as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Study-work tension	2	2	PU1 Ln 259-260; PU6 Ln 243-246
2.	Combination of teaching with Comprehensive exams	1	1	PU2 Ln 189-192
3.	Constant publication	1	1	PU3 Ln 277
4.	Negligence of the family	2	1	PU4 Ln 322-323, 327-329
5.	Unfair deadlines	1	1	PU5 Ln 243-251

(O) Table 5.15: Strategies for balancing teaching/research activities (Q4)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Online teaching	2	2	PU1 Ln 268-270; PU3 Ln 320-324
2.	Virtual meetings	1	1	PU1 Ln 271-273
3.	No teaching/research took place	4	4	PU2 Ln 204-206; PU4 Ln 341-342; PU5 L260-263; PU6 Ln 253-258

(P) Table 5.16: Effect of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics (Q1)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Satisfactory policies (Maternity leave, flexible working hours)	2	2	PU1 Ln 288-290, PU6 Ln 266-268
2.	Undiscounted (Unreduced fees)	1	1	PU1 Ln 290-293
3.	Lack of promotion (non-Ph.D. holders)	1	1	PU1 Ln 295-297
4.	Provision of good work environment	2	1	PU2 Ln 216, 217-220
5.	No facility for child care (crèche, etc.)	1	1	PU4 Ln 364-373
6.	Too rigid	1	1	PU5 Ln 272
7.	Selective policy (only for child-bearing age)	1	1	PU6 Ln 269-270

(Q) Table 5.17: Policy recommendations for female academics' work-family balance (Q2)

S/N	Themes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Establish childcare facilities for working mothers to bond with their kids (crèche)	1	1	PU4 Ln 414-418,
2.	Subsidise cost of education	1	1	PU1 Ln 305
3.	Establish staff club for female lecturers	2	1	PU1 Ln 308-311, 320
4.	Leave policy (days off)	1	1	PU1 Ln 213-215
5.	Improvement of work environment	1	1	PU2 Ln 229-231
6.	Females should work less number of days/hours than males	3	2	PU3 Ln 289-291, 349-352; PU6 Ln 286-287
7.	Be considerate in allocating responsibilities	2	1	PU4 Ln 420-425, 468-473,
8.	Timely communication of deadline to allow ample time for compliance	1	1	PU5 Ln 280-287
9.	Exclude females from weekends/early morning lectures	1	1	PU6 Ln 282-283

Appendix G: Interview codes for Nigeria Private University

(A) Table 6.1: Work history/academic background (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Leadership position (e.g., HOD; Head of an institution)	2	2	PR1 Ln23; PR4 Ln 16-17
2.	Early-career academics/researcher (4 years, 1 year)	5	4	PR1 Ln30; PR2: Ln26; PR3 Ln 15, 16-17; PR6 Ln 22-23
3.	Science Field (e.g., nursing)	5	3	PR2 Ln20; PR4 Ln 15-16; PR5 Ln 21-22, 28-29, 36-37
	Volunteering experience in family-related field	1	1	PR2 Ln28,
4.	Management Field (Biz Admin/Entrepreneurship)	1	1	PR1 Ln23

(B) Table 6.2: Type of family life (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
1.	Married early (before or at start of career)	4	4	PR1 Ln36; PR2 Ln36; PR3 Ln 25; PR6 Ln 29-30
2.	Challenging Child-care situation	1	1	PR1 Ln37
3.	Older supportive children (bore children before starting an academic career)	2	2	PR2 Ln38-40; PR4 Ln 24-25
4	Dependent relatives	2	1	PR5 Ln 43-45, 81
5.	Supportive spouse	1	1	PR1 Ln39
6.	Career-focused	1	1	PR1 Ln38

(C) **Table 6.3: Perception of academic work (Q3)**

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
Private Universities				
1.	Heavy workload (e.g courses, admin)	5	2	PR1 Ln48-53, 117-119; PR3 Ln 32-36, 44-47, 59-60
2.	Not flexible (not employing more lecturers, time for being in school)	2	2	PR1 Ln54; PR5 Ln 200-205
3.	Commercial-oriented	3	2	PR1 Ln54; PR3 Ln 171-172, 196-197
4.	Taken up due to few employment options	3	2	PR1 Ln47-48; PR6 Ln 36-37, 39
5.	Similar to charity/volunteering work	1	1	PR2 Ln51
6	Course outline must be completed	1	1	PR3 Ln 177-178
7	No time for research	1	1	PR3 Ln 174-176
8.	Shortage of staff	1	1	PR4 Ln 41-43
9.	Longer work hours/monitoring	1	1	PR4 Ln 44-45
10.	Positive: Good experience (no incessant strikes)	1	1	PR5 Ln 52-58
11	No job security	1	1	PR6 Ln 37-38
government Universities				
1.	Fewer workload (due to shared responsibilities)/time for research	4	2	PR1 Ln50, 119-120; PR3 Ln 43-44, 172-174
2.	Flexibility/time	1	1	PR3 Ln 192-196

(D) Table 6.4: Timeline of work-family conflict as a female academic (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	When the work demands leaving early and returning very late	1	1	PR1 Ln72-73
2.	No conflict (due to strong support system and healthy schedules, grown children)	2	2	PR2 Ln66-69; PR4 Ln 58-60
3.	During pregnancy	2	1	PR3 Ln 58-59, 61-63
4.	Balancing constant work travels with family presence	1	1	PR4 Ln 69-72
5.	Home chores/child care	1	1	PR5 Ln 68-72
6.	Strain from separation from spouse due to work	1	1	PR6 Ln 46-51

(E) Table 6.5: Work-Family Coping Strategies (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Diplomacy and politics	3	1	PR1 Ln77, 106,107
2.	Avoid direct confrontations with spouse (e.g. Discussion)	3	2	PR1 Ln98-99; PR4 Ln 75-76, 87-90
3.	Make everything available for the kids/husband before leaving for long hours/days	3	3	PR1 Ln107-108; PR4 Ln 90-92; PR5 Ln 78-80
4.	Getting help at home	3	3	PR1 Ln147, PR3 Ln 132-133; PR5 Ln 81-82
5.	Work with a schedule/work plan	2	2	PR2 Ln79-81; PR5 Ln 83-84
6.	No procrastination	2	2	PR3 Ln 71-75; PR6 Ln 65-71
7.	Make adjustments (reduced trips)	1	1	PR4 Ln 74
8.	Share the proceeds	1	1	PR4 Ln 94-96

(F) Table 6.6: Type of academic workload experienced by female academics (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Teaching too many courses	4	3	PR1 Ln17; PR3 Ln 85-95; PR6 Ln 77, 83-84
2.	Taking on extra work responsibilities (e.g., admin duties, exam officer)	4	3	PR1 Ln 18; PR4 Ln 103-104, 106-109; PR6 Ln 84-86
3.	Teaching, clinical, supervising students/grading exams (even at night)	2	2	PR2 Ln89-90; PR5 Ln 91-99
4.	Pressure from management	1	1	PR3 Ln 87-95
5.	Doctoral studies	1	1	PR4 Ln 110-112

(G) Table 6.7: Types of family obligations undertaken by female academics (Q4)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Childcare	2	1	PR1 Ln128, 137
2.	Do House chores (e.g making meals, share tasks to grown children, make home safe)	5	5	PR1 Ln128, 137; PR2 Ln101-102; PR3 Ln 101-104; PR4 Ln 120; PR6 Ln 92-98
3.	Supervise house chores	1	1	PR2 Ln104
4.	Share financial responsibilities	2	1	PR4 Ln 121-122, 124-126
5.	Financial responsibility towards children/dependents (fees, skill acquisition, capacity building)	1	1	PR5 Ln 105-110;
6.	Too many dependents	1	1	PR5 Ln 119-122,

(H) Table 6.8: Effect of family obligations on female academics' career progression (Q5)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Positive effect: Support from family	3	2	PR2 Ln28, 125-126; PR3 Ln 115-120
2.	Inability to defend doctoral dissertation	1	1	PR5 Ln 132-137

(I) Table 6.9: Effect of workload on female academics' family obligations (Q6)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Insufficient time to fulfill task at work	2	2	PR1 Ln146; PR4 Ln 148-153
2.	Children taking up care role for parent	1	1	PR1 Ln150-152
3.	No effect (as there are no conflicts)	1	1	PR2 Ln134
4.	Inadequate time for family because of taking work home/doing too many things	2	2	PR3 Ln 128-132; PR5 Ln 155-159
5	Insufficient time to travel and see my spouse	1	1	PR6 Ln 134-138

(J) Table 6.10: Direction of work-family conflict (Q7)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Work to family conflict (Work-related)				
1.	Yes, work (an external factor) affects the family which is the foundation	5	4	PR1 Ln160-162, PR3 Ln 141; PR5 Ln 169, 175-176, PR6 Ln 145-148
2.	Too many responsibilities	1	1	PR4 Ln 160-162
Family to work conflict (Family related)				
1.	Transferring family pressures to work	1	1	PR1 Ln203-205

(K) Table 6.11: Strategies for reducing work-family conflict (Q8)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Take solace in spirituality	1	1	PR1 Ln174,
2.	Reduce procrastination	2	2	PR1 Ln179-180; PR6 Ln 157-158
3.	Train children to take up roles at home	2	2	PR1 Ln176-177; PR4 Ln 172-177
4.	Avoid confrontation with spouse	1	1	PR1 Ln177,
5.	Making time to discuss/interact with the children	1	1	PR2 Ln157
6	Put best effort and wait for better opportunities	1	1	PR3 Ln 147-153
7.	Organisation of work and assignment of responsibilities	1	1	PR5 Ln 182-189

(L) Table 6.12: Perception of national and institutional work policies for female academics (Q1, Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Perception of work policy implementation in government universities (Q2)				
1.	Paid maternity leave	2	2	PR1 Ln223-224, PR2 Ln201-202
2.	Helpful policies (e.g. casual leave, annual leave, maternity leave, study leave)	3	2	PR2 Ln188-189; PR5 Ln235, 236-237
3.	Welfare policies better in government institutions than private	1	1	PR6 Ln 195-199
Perception of work policy implementation in private universities (Q2)				
1.	Unfair policies (e.g Unpaid maternity leave, short maternity leave, risk of losing job while on maternity leave)	4	2	PR1 Ln197-199, 222-223; PR5 Ln 235-236, 237-239
2.	Witch-hunt (Overbearing supervisors, no repercussions)	1	1	PR1 Ln210-213,
3.	Stricter policies due to profit-conscious mindset (maternity leave)	2	2	PR1 Ln220-221; PR4 Ln 187-189
4.	Longer working hours	1	1	PR1 Ln224,
5.	Helpful policies (e.g casual leave, annual leave, uncompulsory maternity leave, study leave, work from home, ward waiver)	3	2	PR2 Ln175-176, Ln204-206; PR4 Ln 215-220
6	No welfare policy (Leave without pay, journal allowances, no job security, etc.)	5	3	PR3 Ln 164-165, 167-171; 178-179; PR4 Ln 191-194; PR6 Ln 36-39

7	No flexibility	3	2	PR4 Ln 201-203, 207; PR6 Ln 184-186
8.	No room for comparison between policy implementation in private/government institutions	1	1	PR4 Ln 230-234
9.	Partial in judgement against lecturers	1	1	PR6 Ln 172-175

(M) Table 6.13: Success experienced as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Psychological success (e.g., Transforming students' behaviour through mentoring)	1	1	PR1 Ln243-244
2.	Contributing to the growth of the school (e.g., building the entrepreneurial unit; achieving accreditation for department)	2	2	PR1 Ln250-254, PR2 Ln213-214
3.	Recognition from employer (e.g., awards)	2	1	PR2 Ln175-176, 216-217
4.	Mentoring students to understanding/graduation	2	1	PR3 Ln 211-217, 227-229
5.	Marketable CV/experience	1	1	PR4 Ln 261-265
6.	Graduation from studies	1	1	PR5 Ln 255-258
7	governmentation and student's defence	2	1	PR6 Ln 206-208, 215
8.	Answering student's questions to their satisfaction	1	1	PR6 Ln 215-218

(N) Table 6.14: Challenges encountered as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Cultural challenges (Difficulty accepting students' lifestyle and sexual inclinations/orientations)	1	1	PR1 Ln256-258,
2.	Working as a team during accreditation exercise	1	1	PR2 Ln219-221
3.	Getting students to understand the rudiments of the course	1	1	PR3 Ln 224-226
4.	Shortage of Professors to supervise graduate students in nursing	1	1	PR4 Ln 244-251
5.	Combining school and work	1	1	PR5 Ln 248-254
6	Bad road to school	2	1	PR6 Ln 225, 227-229
7.	Workload/insufficient staff/ job security	1	1	PR6 Ln 229-230

(O) Table 6.15: Strategies for balancing teaching/research activities (during the pandemic) (Q4)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Adopting innovative teaching modes (e.g., Online teaching)	6	6	PR1 Ln273, PR2 Ln231-233; PR3 Ln 240-247; PR4 Ln 278-281; PR5 Ln 265-266; PR6 Ln 245
2.	Google meet, audio, skype, voice-note	1	1	PR5 Ln 265-271

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(P) Table 6.16: Effect of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Inadequate policies for WLB	1	1	PR1 Ln297
2.	Human-friendly policies (encouraging teamwork across all levels of staff)	1	1	PR2 Ln251-253
3.	Availability of high school for mothers with teenage children	1	1	PR2 Ln263
4,	No policy	2	2	PR3 Ln 255-258, PR6 Ln 259-263
5.	Inadequate policies (maternity, paternity, leaves, sabbatical, retirement, etc.)	1	1	PR4 Ln 295-300
6.	Adequate policies (monetary incentive, workshops	2	1	PR5 Ln 279, 281-285

(Q) Table 6.17: Policy recommendations for female academics' work-family balance (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Enforce paid maternity leave/number of months as in government institutions	3	2	PR1 Ln313; PR3 Ln 275-276, 277
2.	Equal opportunity to be given to both gender in the workplace	1	1	PR1 Ln319-320
3.	Establish childcare facilities for working mothers to bond with their kids (e.g creche)	3	2	PR2 Ln271; PR6 Ln 271-276, 279-281
4.	Review work time for flexibility	1	1	PR3 Ln 265-270
5.	Employ more lecturers	1	1	PR3 Ln 279-280
6.	Welfare packages (e.g. increase remuneration, retirement plan, sabbatical, study leave, etc) as in government institutions	2	1	PR4 Ln 46-50, 307-310
7.	Sensitization workshop on work-family balance	1	1	PR5 Ln 294-302

Appendix H: Interview codes for CS3, The UK

(A) Table 7.1: Work history/academic background (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Early-career academics/researcher (4 years, 1 year)	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 21
2.	Science Field (e.g nursing)	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 16-19
3.	Been in practice before academics	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 28-33
4.	Management Field (Accounting)	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 24

(B) Table 7.2: Type of family life (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
1.	Married early (before or at start of career)	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 31-32
2	Hectic (difficulty in balancing work, research and family)	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 38-39

(C) Table 7.3: Perception of academic work (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
Pre 92 Universities				
1.	Not under pressure to generate revenue for the university	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 47-48
2.	Fewer workload	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 49
3.	Focus on impact research	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 51-53
4.	Balancing research and lecture is difficult	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 54
5.	Majority of pre 92 are not diverse	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 145-146
6.	Inclusive and has good reputation	2	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 42-43; 188
7.	Pay for hidden hours of preparing for lecture and marking scripts	3	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 85-86, 95-97, 99-101
Post 92 Universities				
1.	Commercially driven	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 48
2.	Private in nature	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 49-50

(D) Table 7.4: Timeline of work-family conflict as a female academic (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Master's degree studies (balancing pregnancy, stress from family and academic)	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 59-62
2.	Combination of lecturing, working as a nurse and doing a doctoral programme	2	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 50-54, 64-65
3.	Caring for their new born	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 113-119

(E) Table 7.5: Work-Family Coping Strategies (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Created a fruitful inter-personal relationships with people	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 70-72
2.	Keep the children busy	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 72
3.	Planning and time management	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 73-78

(F) Table 7.6: Type of academic workload experience by female academics (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Teaching and research	2	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 79-81, 81-82
2.	Time spent in preparing for lectures	3	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 85-85, 95-97, 99-101

(G) Table 7.7: Types of family obligations undertaken by female academics (Q4)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Childcare	2	2	PRE 92-1 Ln 90-94; PRE 92-2 Ln 113-119

(H) Table 7.8: Effect of family obligations on female academics' career progression (Q5)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Discontinuation of my career due to child birth	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 100-106
2.	Dilemma on who should delay career progression for child care (undecided)	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 125-128

(I) Table 7.9: Effect of workload on female academics' family obligations (Q6)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Rushing to pick off my career where I left off	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 110-113
2.	Doing house chores and picking their child from school	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 141-145

(J) Table 7.10: Direction of work-family conflict (Q7)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Work to family conflict (Work-related)				
1.	Yes, work (an external factor) affects the family	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 124
Family to work conflict (Family related)				
1.	Family related conflicts	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 156-160

(K) Table 7.11: Strategies for reducing work-family conflict (Q8)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Dialogue for a swap with staff and the Dean	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 129-134
2.	Open communication with wife and employer	2	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 167-168, 171-174

(L) Table 7.12: Perception of national and institutional work policies for female academics (Q1, Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Perception of work policy implementation in Pre 92 universities (Q2)				
1.	Welfare benefits based on race	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 146-150
2.	Helpful policies (e.g. maternity leave)	2	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 170, 171-172
3.	Child care policy not well defined	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 173
4.	Get paid for preparing lectures	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 91-94
5.	Flexible working conditions (full time but less number of days)	2	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 199-202, 203-206

(M) Table 7.13: Success experienced as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Successful collective bargaining	2	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 177-178, 182-185
2.	Achieving funding for PhD	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 212

(N) Table 7.14: Challenges encountered as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Master's degree studies period	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 191-192

S/N				
2.	Getting a permanent teaching job	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 220-222

(O) Table 7.15: Strategies for balancing teaching/research activities (Q4)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Adopting Online teaching/grading, with institutional support	3	2	PRE 92-1 Ln 204-206, 212-213; PRE 92-2 Ln 235-237
2.	Online teaching increase my Confidence	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 235-239

(P) Table 7.16: Effect of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Work policies are continuously reviewed to meet the changing needs of staff	1	1	PRE 92-1 Ln 230-233
2.	Flexible working (work from home or choose where you want to work)	3	2	PRE 92-2 Ln 265-269
3.	Staff wellbeing is taken seriously	2	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 258-260, 263-267

(Q) Table 7.17: Policy recommendations for female academics' work-family balance (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Training and supervision for new (part-time) lecturers	2	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 292-301, 302-306
2.	Induction orientation period for full-time lecturers	1	1	PRE 92-2 Ln 314-316

Appendix I: Interview codes for CS4, The UK

(A) Table 8.1: Work history/academic background (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Early-career academics/researcher (4 years, 1 year)	5	4	POST 92-1 Ln 4-7; POST 92-2 Ln 28-31; POST 92-3 Ln 12; POST 92-6 Ln 13, 72
2.	Background in Music & volunteering experience with Red Cross, admin staff	3	1	POST 92-2 Ln 12-14, 18, 20-21
3.	Course leader/module leader	2	2	POST 92-3 Ln 11-12; POST 92-6 Ln 121
4.	Senior academic (senior lecturer, Professor)	2	2	POST 92-4 Ln 17-18; POST 92-5 Ln 43
5.	Multiple university teaching experience	2	2	POST 92-4 Ln 8-15; POST 92-5 Ln 26-30
6.	Background on internationalization	2	1	POST 92-4 Ln 23-25, 29-32
7.	Background in engineering	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 11-13

(B) Table 8.2: Type of family life (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
1.	Married early (before or at start of career)	2	2	POST 92-1 Ln 24-25
2.	Challenging Child-care situation (autism)	3	1	POST 92-2 Ln 160-161, 165-166, 230-231;
3.	Older supportive children	3	3	POST 92-2 Ln 39-42; POST 92-3 Ln 19-20; POST 92-5 Ln 241-245
4.	Supportive spouse	9	4	POST 92-1 Ln 9-10, 56-57; POST 92-2 Ln 114-115, 177-179; POST 92-3 Ln 21-23, 43-44, 71-73; POST 92-6 Ln 20-21, 30-31
5.	Dependents	2	2	POST 92-2 Ln 43-44; POST 92-6 Ln 136
6	Disappointing family life	3	1	POST 92-3 Ln 39-44,48-49,54-56
7.	Divorced, with a growing daughter	1	1	POST 92-5 Ln 71-72, 99
8.	Living with a partner	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 19

(C) Table 8.3: Perception of academic work (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript Reference
Post 92 Universities				
1.	Commercial oriented	4	3	POST 92-1 Ln 14-19; POST 92-2 Ln 48-54; POST 92-6 Ln 82-84; 187-188
2.	Financial drive affect decision	2	2	POST 92-2 Ln 50-52; POST 92-4 Ln 107-108
3.	Pressure on grants	2	2	POST 92-3 Ln 29; POST 92-6 Ln 56
4.	Volatile financial background	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 61-64
5.	Gives financial support to staff for conferences twice a year	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 79-82
6.	Heavy workload	2	2	POST 92-4 Ln 90-100; POST 92-6 Ln 84-86
7.	I am new, no opinion	1	1	POST 92-5 Ln 130-131
8.	Supportive line manager, but modules challenging	2	1	POST 92-5 Ln 145-146, 147-154
9.	Private university	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 186
Pre 92 Universities				
1.	Not sure	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 18-19
2.	Focus on research	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 27-32
3.	Attract excellent local students,	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 64-68

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
	international students and research staff			
4	Heavy teaching workload	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 74-77
5.	Competition among colleagues is tough	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 82-88

(D) Table 8.4: Timeline of work-family conflict as a female academic (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Working and doing doctoral studies	2	1	POST 92-1 Ln 23-24, 25-29
2.	Dilemma in choosing between advancing role opportunity and family	2	1	POST 92-2 Ln 63-65, 72-82
3.	Too much time commitment in preparing for lectures, many modules & short allotted time	2	1	POST 92-3 Ln 40-43, 49-52
4.	Managing serious health challenge and still giving in same amount of time at work	3	1	POST 92-3 Ln 57-59, 65-66, 68-69
5	Sacrificed personal life to develop career	3	1	POST 92-4 Ln 108-109, 110-112, 114-122
6.	Unable to give my partner/family attention due to too much work/studies	3	2	POST 92-6 Ln 22-24, 32; POST 92-5 Ln 162-168

(E) Table 8.5: Work-Family Coping Strategies (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Dependent on the racial support group	2	1	POST 92-1 Ln 32-36, 37-38
2.	Deepening mentor-mentee relationship to achieve visibility and navigate way around.	2	1	POST 92-2 Ln 123-126, 146-148
3.	Team work and collaboration in managing work commitment	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 81-86
4.	Shared responsibility with husband and children	2	1	POST 92-3 Ln 87-92, 95-99
5.	Stay up late at night and work at weekends	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 128-134
6.	Freed weekends for bonding with daughter	1	1	POST 92-5 Ln 177-181

(F) Table 8.6: Type of academic workload experience by female academics (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Teaching, researching, assessment, presentation & writing	6	4	POST 92-1 Ln 44-49; POST 92-2 Ln 135, 144-145; POST 92-4 Ln 33-34; POST 92-5 Ln 193-197, 200-202
2.	Other responsibilities (course and module leader)	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 104-107
3.	External examiner and reviewer	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 95-100
4.	Informal mentor to new staff apart from teaching	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 121-128

(G) Table 8.7: Types of family obligations undertaken by female academics (Q4)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Do House chores (e.g making meals, cleaning)	2	2	POST 92-2 Ln 113; POST 92-5 Ln 216-218
2.	Financial responsibility	2	2	POST 92-1 Ln 51-55; POST 92-3 Ln 121-122
3.	Planning and organizing	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 157-159
4.	Not relocating close to the university in spite of distance and financial reasons	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 158-164
5.	Oversee daughter up-bringing	1	1	POST 92-5 Ln 217-220
6.	No obligations as dependents are adult	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 136-141

(H) Table 8.8: Effect of family obligations on female academics' career progression (Q5)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Spending much time in a particular research area	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 60-62
2.	Attending open/project days in the children's school	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 60-65
3.	Down-playing my influence/intelligence to accommodate my husband state of mind	3	1	POST 92-2 Ln 175-176, 180-183, 184-185
4.	No effect on career progression	1	1	POST 92-5 Ln 236-240
5.	Partner/adult family members are supportive	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 149-151

(I) Table 8.9: Effect of workload on female academics' family obligations (Q6)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Damaging to family unity and development	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 68-71
2.	Forced to live outside the orbit of one's values	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 115-119
3.	I often work at night	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 189-192
4.	Positive: Not accepting responsibility outside plan	2	1	POST 92-3 Ln 127-131, 133
5.	Lack of time for my partner	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 158-164
6.	Still working in spite of health challenges	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 160-164

(J) Table 8.10: Direction of work-family conflict (Q7)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Work to family conflict (Work-related)				
1.	My work impact my family	5	4	POST 92-2 Ln 201-206, 204-206; POST 92-3 Ln 139; POST 92-5 Ln 252-257; POST 92-6 Ln 173-176
2.	Workload and university expectations affect work-life balance	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 173-179
Family to work conflict (Family related)				
	Both work and family related			
1.	Been trying to maintain a balance between both	3	1	POST 92-1 Ln 73-76, 77, 80-82

(K) Table 8.11: Strategies for reducing work-family conflict (Q8)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Be organized in advance	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 85-88
2.	Hire childminder	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 215
3.	Ask assistance from colleagues	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 222-224
4.	Written decisions to help the memory	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 144-146
5.	Dedicate weekend to daughter/open communication	2	1	POST 92-5 Ln 263, 270-275

6.	Dialogue with manager yielded no result	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 182-186

(L) Table 8.12: Perception of national and institutional work policies for female academics (Q1, Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
Perception of work policy implementation in POST 92 universities (Q2)				
1.	Married women are treated the same as men in spite of additional family role	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 96-105
2.	No institutional/departmental structure to enable females work around their academic workload	2	1	POST 92-2 Ln 105-106, 109-113
3.	No clear policy to support work life balance	2	2	POST 92-1 Ln 92-93; POST 92-6 Ln 204-206
4	Maternity leave policy well implemented	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 93-94
5.	Policies exists but not implemented (e.g. flexible work time, equity)	3	1	POST 92-2 Ln 237, 241-242, 243-246
6.	Flexible work policy exist (sick leave, work from home)	4	2	POST 92-4 Ln 188-191; POST 92-5 Ln 302-308, 309-314, 323-325
7.	Getting to go on vacation is difficult	3	1	POST 92-3 Ln 170-173, 174-178, 179-185
8	No information about policies/university slowness in granting permissions	3	1	POST 92-6 Ln 215-219; 221-224, 281-283

(M) Table 8.13: Success experienced as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	When we got our permanent work visa to stay in the Country	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 105-106
2.	When I successfully graduated from my PhD programme	3	2	POST 92-2 Ln 268-270; POST 92-5 Ln 337, 339
3.	Proximity of work place to my house and acceptance anywhere I applied for a job	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 203-208
4.	Former students are still in contact and are successful	2	1	POST 92-3 Ln 208-211, 212-213
5.	When I got my first job and also raised to the position of a professor later	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 200-205
6,	Got an award	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 231

(N) Table 8.14: Challenges encountered as a female academic (Q3)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	When searching for a job after PhD programme	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 97-100
2.	When I had only one month to finish my doctoral studies	2	1	POST 92-2 Ln 281-281, 286-287
3.	During my doctoral studies, full time work and nursing a child	2	1	POST 92-3 Ln 190-192, 193-195
4.	Workload requirement and pressure	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 207-214
5.	Generating research grants	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 214-221,
6.	Academic politics	3	1	POST 92-4 Ln 223-224, 225-228, 232-233
7.	Lack of a mentor during pandemic	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 220-222
8.	Conflict between PhD and maintaining marriage	2	1	POST 92-5 Ln 337-339, 340
9.	Lack of support from the line manager/institution	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 232-242
10.	Threat from students	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 236-242

(O) Table 8.15: Strategies for balancing teaching/research activities (Q4)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Online teaching, lecture and seminar	2	2	POST 92-2 Ln 292-293; POST 92-3 Ln 218
2	Pandemic helped us to make choices that freed time for leisure	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 227-233
3.	The most productive period	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 251-256
4.	Stressful/difficult to decipher the body language of students when teaching	2	1	POST 92-5 Ln 368-373

(P) Table 8.16: Effect of institutional policies on work-family balance for female academics (Q1)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	The university has got a good policy to support female academic	1	1	POST 92-1 Ln 118-119
2.	It does not meet the needs of female academics with kids	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 306-314
3.	Cultural differences inhibits personal disclosure to male line managers	1	1	POST 92-3 Ln 255-260
4.	Flexible work policy	1	1	POST 92-4 Ln 262-264
5.	Too new to know	1	1	POST 92-5 Ln 399-404

(Q) Table 8.17: Policy recommendations for female academics' work-family balance (Q2)

S/N	Codes	Code Count	Case Count	Transcript References
1.	Policies that meet the needs of female academic with kids (flexible time, not counting number of hours of visibility	1	1	POST 92-2 Ln 331-338
2.	Make working more flexible for female academics, physically challenge & provide childcare support financially	3	2	POST 92-4 Ln 282-282; POST 92-6 Ln 300-302, 307-308
4.	Review of workload on female lecturers	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 309-312
5.	They should channel some of the money they make from international students to female staff welfare	1	1	POST 92-6 Ln 315-316

Appendix J: Ethics Approval

Work-family Conflicts of early-career female academics in the UK and Nigeria

Ethics Review ID: ER40639585

Workflow Status: Application Approved

Type of Ethics Review Template: Very low risk human participants studies