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## **A portrait analysis of the academic leadership of female researchers in Chinese universities**

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**Abstract:** With the increasing number of women researchers in Chinese universities, more and more women become academic leaders. Their academic leadership becomes an important driving force to promote the reform and development of universities. Through data mining and analyzing on the performance factors of their academic leadership, this paper will form the portrait of their academic leadership and explain the factors that construct their academic leadership and promote their individual cognitive and group identity. It requires revealing individual value, optimizing the structure of academic organization and builds group of women academic culture during the dynamic process of specializing the woman researchers in universities, so as to form and develop the academic leadership of women researchers by achieving the goals of individual and group value.

**Keywords:** Chinese university; female researchers; academic leadership; portrait analysis

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The Outline of the National Medium- and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) clearly stated that the reform of China's higher education system has made achievements in implementing and expanding school autonomy, improving the internal governance structure of universities, etc. Certain results, but still have not played their due role in enhancing academic leadership. Therefore, enhancing the academic leadership of universities is an important task to accelerate the construction of modern universities. University academic leadership is concentrated in the process of university teachers' teaching, scientific research, participation in social activities, and critical inheritance and innovation. With the continuous expansion of the female faculty in universities and the in-depth research on academic leadership in universities, focusing on female researchers is a new way to refine the research on academic leadership in universities. In this study, the deans and deputy deans of 46 normal colleges of education (or referred to as the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Education Sciences, etc., hereinafter collectively referred to as the Faculty of Education) on the 2020 normal university ranking list are used as examples. Each university's official website and other means to investigate the performance of scientific and teaching achievements of the dean and deputy dean, and analyze the relationship between their academic leadership and the ranking of soft subjects and superior development disciplines of their colleges, and then outline the university's women's research Of the scholar's academic leadership.

### 1. Connotation of academic leadership of female researchers in universities

Before analyzing the connotation of female academic leadership, we must first clarify the concepts of "academic", "leadership", "academic leadership" and "academic leadership". In the "Modern Chinese Dictionary", "academic" refers to systematic and specialized knowledge. "Leadership" has two meanings: one is to act as a verb to lead and guide, and the other is to refer to a person as a leader. Here "academic leadership" can be interpreted as leading and directing systematic and specialized research<sup>i</sup>. Regarding the concept of "academic leadership", some scholars define it from the perspective of participating subjects: a way to lead and guide the multiple subjects of the university to form a common academic vision through participation, interaction, and coupling, and promote university members to continuously achieve the common academic vision Forward influence<sup>ii</sup>. Some scholars define it from the perspective of the operation of their organizations as both: the amount of radiation, attraction, and motivation generated by their members as a university academic organization in the course of operation, and the individual and group of university teachers in the "academic profession". The cohesive force of excellent individual leadership and mutual promotion of professional groups generated during the performance of duties <sup>ii</sup>. The academic leadership of female researchers mentioned in this article refers to the amount of radiation, attraction, and motivation generated by female university researchers in participating in

academic research, and the influence of this power on individual or group academic achievement improvement.

## 2. Academic Leadership Performance of Female Researchers in Universities

This research selects 46 normal universities involved in the list from the 2020 national normal university ranking list, and retrieves the deans and deputy deans of their education colleges as research objects from online platforms such as CNKI. Statistic data of all the deans and deputy deans of the past 10 years, the number of graduates with graduates and the latest soft rankings of the colleges announced in 2020, and reflect the female researchers of Chinese universities from quantifiable data Academic leadership.

### 2.1 Personal academic leadership performance

#### 2.1.1 Research performance

The scientific research performances of the deans and deputy deans of the 46 colleges of education in the country are mainly reflected in the quantity, quality and citation of published papers. In terms of volume of publications, the total number of papers published by the dean and deputy dean is 6,533, of which the total number of papers published by female researchers is 1,105, accounting for 16.91% of the total volume of papers published; 3838 articles, of which 637 articles were published by female researchers, accounting for 16.60% of the total articles published by core journals; in terms of paper citations, the total number of paper citations was 76701 times, of which papers published by female researchers The number of citations is 13,706, accounting for 17.87% of the total citations of the paper. From the above data, it can be seen that the total amount of papers published, the quality of papers published, and the amount of papers cited by female researchers all show that their research influence is weak.

#### 2.1.2 Teaching performance

The teaching performance is mainly reflected in the number of master students they bring. From the CNKI, the total number of graduated master students held by the dean and associate dean of 46 normal colleges of education in the country is 4,248, including women There are 595 graduate students who have been graduated by the researchers, accounting for 14.01% of the graduate students. From the above data, we can see that the academic leadership of female researchers in teaching is generally weak.

### 2.2 Performance of group academic leadership

#### 2.2.1 Proportion of female researchers

Among the 46 presidents and vice presidents of the 46 normal universities surveyed, there are only 5 female presidents, accounting for 10.87% of the total number of presidents; among the 177 presidents and vice presidents, female presidents and vice presidents There are 38 people, accounting for 21.47% of the total number. It can be seen from the above data that the number of female researchers in universities is small, and the proportion of people holding major positions is small, and their academic leadership in the academic group of the

college is weak.

### 2.2.2 Ranking of soft subjects

From the 2019-2020 national pedagogical rankings, we can know the soft school rankings of the National Normal University School of Education. By assigning 1-9 to the soft ranks A+, A, A- to C-9, the colleges that have not entered the ranking The assignment value is 10. According to the accumulated soft ranking, the total value of the soft ranking of the National Normal University School of Education is 989, and the average ranking is 5.58. The total ranking of the female researchers' colleges is 195, and the average ranking is 5.27. According to the smaller assignment, the higher the ranking, the higher the average value of the soft subject rankings of the college of education of the female researcher is smaller than the average value of the soft rank of the college of education of all the researchers. It can be seen that the academic leadership of the female researchers' college is stronger, but a specific analysis found that 7 of the 38 female researchers came from the Capital Normal University with a soft rank of A- and a value of 3, and many female associate colleges The long agglomeration has significantly lowered the average soft rank of female researchers' colleges, and academic leadership is reflected in the stronger overall strength of the education colleges where female researchers are located.

### 2.2.3 The research direction is consistent with the superior discipline of the college

Check the official website of each normal university with female dean and deputy dean for the superior development disciplines of their education colleges, and inquire the main research directions of female dean and deputy dean from CNKI. The research directions of the female dean and deputy dean of the college can be seen. Among the 38 female deans and deputy deans, 26 have the same research direction as the superior development discipline of the college, accounting for 68.42% of the total number of female researchers . It can be seen that the research direction of female researchers is greatly influenced by the superior development disciplines of their colleges, and the research done has a high degree of agreement with the superior development disciplines of their colleges.

## 3. Analysis of factors influencing the academic leadership of female researchers in universities

The formation and development of the academic leadership of female university researchers depends on the self-cognition of the group and the identity of the "other" group. The personal cognitive factors of this group are reflected in the stereotyped shackles of the gender culture and the choice of self-positioning in career planning. The influencing factors of the "other" group are reflected in the identification of the three groups of university administrators, university male researchers and university students .

### 3.1 Individual cognitive factors of female university researchers

#### 3.1.1 The shackles of stereotypes under the gender culture

Gender culture refers to the society's views and opinions on men and women and their interrelationships, as well as the gender norms and organizational structures that adapt to

them. According to the nature of human gender relations, human gender culture can be divided into equality type and inequality type, in which male status is higher than female is a typical type of inequality. University academic leadership also reflects the gender culture of strong men and weak women. Under this gender culture, the stereotype of the formation and development of the academic leadership of shackled female researchers has gradually emerged. More and more evidence shows that it is more difficult for women to succeed in the university field. Whether in administrative management or in a bureaucratic system controlled by academic resources, female teachers are still in a lower position<sup>iii</sup>. It is reflected in the majority of academic leaders, male researchers are preferred when selecting members of academic groups, important tasks are assigned by male researchers when academic groups are divided, and male researchers have more say when there are differences in academic group research. The stereotype that women are not as good as men in the gender culture will even be recognized by university female researchers themselves. This subtle gender culture has restricted female university researchers' participation in academic groups and affected the self-identity and scientific research confidence of female university researchers.

### 3.1.2 The choice of self-positioning in career planning

Career planning refers to a continuous and systematic planning process for career and even life, including three elements of career positioning, goal setting and channel design. The biggest disturbing factor in the career planning of female researchers in universities is how to balance family and work. After entering the industrialized society, it has an impact on the division of labor between the traditional male and female families, but the main force in actually caring for the family and raising children is still women. After the implementation of the national comprehensive opening up of the second child policy, the family burden of university female researchers Exacerbated. University female researchers are at the age when they are about to have children or have children, and they need to consume time and energy to take care of their families, while female researchers who are also the main subjects of university academic research need time and energy to focus on academics. When there is a conflict between the allocation of time and energy in work and family, whether there is a holistic, long-term, and basic problem in thinking about one's own career planning, and can accurately judge their own career development demands, and timely adjust the stage goals of career planning also affect An important factor in female academic leadership in universities.

## 3.2 Group identity factors of university academic researchers

### 3.2.1 Recognition by university administrators

The administrative power has a certain influence on the generation and development of the academic leadership of university teachers. The administrative power determines the rules and regulations of university development and clarifies the details of university academic research. As the core team of university administrative power, university management has a greater say in the generation and development of female researchers' academic leadership. The identification of university management can enhance the enthusiasm of female researchers to participate in the academic community and obtain opportunities for academic leadership training. This kind of active administrative force intervention can positively guide

the generation and development of the academic leadership of female researchers in universities.

### 3.2.2 Recognition by male university researchers

Discussing the emergence and development of female researchers' academic leadership cannot evade the importance of identifying male university researchers. First of all, male university researchers have their gender advantages in the research process of academic groups, such as sorting and logical analysis of academic group research tasks, which have greater learning and reference value for female researchers. Secondly, university academic groups emphasize the coordination and cooperation among members, which requires trust and cooperation among members of various academic groups. In short, the identification of male researchers is an important factor that enhances the confidence of female researchers in academic leadership and promotes the generation and development of female researchers in academic leadership.

### 3.2.3 Recognition by college students

Interactivity is the primary characteristic of university academic leadership<sup>iv</sup>. Participating in college course teaching and leading college students to carry out research on topics is a way for female university researchers to generate and develop academic leadership in the interaction with college students. In the teaching activities, university female researchers, on the one hand, conduct academic discussions with college student groups to promote their own expression skills, communication skills, and problem-solving skills. On the other hand, thinking about the generation of college students in teaching feedback and summary is a test stone for testing the resilience and knowledge reserve of female researchers. In leading and instructing a group of university students to conduct research on topics, female university researchers need to divide tasks according to students' expertise, guide students to write written materials, and grasp the progress of research on topics as a whole. Therefore, obtaining the recognition of the college students is crucial to the generation and development of their academic leadership.

## 4. The growth prospects of the academic leadership of female researchers in universities

The growth prospects of the academic leadership of female researchers in universities can be portrayed from three aspects: highlighting the individual value of female researchers, optimizing the academic organization structure of universities and building the academic culture of female groups.

### 4.1 Highlight the individual value of female researchers

#### 4.1.1 Awaken the self-awareness of female researchers' academic leadership

The reasons for the weak academic leadership awareness of female researchers in universities can be divided into two aspects: subjective and objective. The subjective aspect is reflected in the lack of confidence in the academic leadership of the female researchers themselves, and their self-positioning in the subordinate position during the process of participating in the academic community. Actively express opinions and bear heavy burdens; the objective aspect is reflected in the imperfect university academic management system,

which needs to be strengthened in encouraging and supporting female researchers to participate in academic groups. Therefore, the academic leadership awareness of female researchers should be awakened from both subjective and objective aspects. Subjectively, the first is that members of the academic community should listen to the views and opinions of the female researchers and evaluate the academic achievements of the female researchers in a fair manner. Objectively, universities should encourage and guarantee the academic leadership of female researchers from the institutional and management levels.

#### 4.1.2 Provide female researchers with academic leadership experience opportunities

The training content of university teachers in academic research practice focuses on teaching theory and practical skills, and ignores the training of teacher management and leadership<sup>v</sup>. The training of female researchers' academic leadership should be carried out in the process of combining theory and practice. In addition to regular theoretical training, competing for administrative positions or actively participating in academic groups can enhance the academic leadership of female researchers in universities. In addition, female researchers can try different roles in the academic community to enhance their academic leadership in the process of completing different divisions of labor.

### 4.2 Optimize the academic organization structure of the university

#### 4.2.1 Detailed grouping and division of academic groups of universities

Grouping and division of labor is the preparation work done by the academic community of the university before the formal launch of research work, and it is also an important step in the generation and development of the academic leadership of female researchers in universities. As far as academic groups are concerned, university academic groups should actively involve outstanding female researchers, and they should not be excluded because they are in a special period such as pregnancy, pregnancy, or breastfeeding. They should come from a long-term perspective, the professional background, professional qualities, and comprehensive abilities of female researchers are used as criteria to determine whether they are suitable for joining academic groups; as far as the division of labor in academic groups is concerned, female researchers have genders that are attentive, patient, good at communication, and more affinity. Advantages, in the process of division of labor, they can be assigned to research and liaison, field interviews, data processing, material proofreading and other positions according to their wishes and areas of expertise, to give full play to their gender advantages, and to enhance the academic leadership of female researchers in this process.

#### 4.2.2 Strengthen the coordination and cooperation of university academic groups

The requirements for high-quality and efficient completion of the tasks of university academic groups put forward higher requirements for university teachers' ability to participate in the cooperation of academic groups. The cooperation of university academic groups no longer stops at the simple division of labor among team members, but emphasizes the complementarity among participating members. For the complexity of the participation of academic groups, female university researchers can make breakthroughs in the following

three aspects in strengthening the coordination and cooperation of academic groups. First, based on the requirements of the current multidisciplinary integration and development of universities, university female researchers should enhance their own interdisciplinary knowledge accumulation and enhance the ability of individuals to participate in academic groups. , Coordinate various participants of the academic community, and create a good atmosphere for academic research; Third, tap the communication and attention distribution capabilities of female researchers, deal with different task groups at the right time in the academic research process, and promote the smooth progress of the tasks of the academic community.

### 4.3 Creating an academic culture for female groups

#### 4.3.1 Build an academic and cultural platform for women

With the continuous deepening of university education, there are many academic exchange platforms with disciplines, research fields, and academic leaders as the core. Academic exchange platforms of various forms such as academic salons and education annual conferences continue to emerge and operate systematically. However, from the perspective of female researchers, there are only a handful of organizations that focus on women. International women's organizations and women's federations are common. There are few academic cultural platforms for female researchers in academic circles, and they are mainly concentrated on the academic exchange platforms built by female academic leaders. The capacity development and improvement of academic leaders such as heads of internal research and teaching institutions, chief experts, key teachers, etc. is the central task of the university's academic leadership<sup>vi</sup>. Building an academic and cultural platform for domestic and international female groups can actively mobilize multiple academic leaders To achieve the goal of developing more female academic leaders and building an academic cultural platform for more female groups.

#### 4.3.2 Deepen the research on the academic leadership of female groups

The main analysis of academic leadership in the existing research focuses on three principal theories of university principals, university teachers and multiple subjects<sup>vii</sup>. The study of academic leadership is an important measure to refine and perfect the subject of academic leadership. It can attract more scholars to pay attention to the generation and development process of academic leadership of female researchers from the aspects of developing female academic leadership leaders, improving the path of female academic researchers' academic leadership, and improving the university female researchers' academic leadership system.

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