

Experiencing an Opposite Gender Boss: A Phenomenological Study of a Private Organization

Faryal S. Sheikh¹

¹ Management Sciences, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science & Technology (SZABIST), Pakistan

Correspondence: Faryal S. Sheikh, Management Sciences, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science & Technology (SZABIST), Pakistan. E-mail: faryal.shahabuddin@gmail.com

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Abstract

The increasing trend of the employed female workforce, subsequently, augment their work associated with the employed male workforce. Hence, it provides a significant basis to undertake a research study for exploring employee working experience with opposite gender boss. The present qualitative research is based on ontological philosophical assumption having social constructivism as an interpretive framework and uses a phenomenological approach to extract the essence of employees lived working experience with an opposite gender boss. A semi-structured interview of not more than an hour was conducted with each of the 5 {Females (3) and Male (2)} employees of private higher education institute. The research reveals instead of boss's gender the employee working experience is based on Boss's Personality, Leadership Style and Professionalism. Further, the "Work Efficiency" and "Professionalism" of both male and female subordinates' increases while working with opposite gender boss. However, in terms of "Career Development" male bosses concentrate on developing subordinate's knowledge while female on the position. Also, Boss's personal conduct i.e. his/her age, dressing, and schedule don't contribute to subordinate's development. The research findings amplify knowledge base of employee working experience with opposite gender boss that can also be used to conduct further studies and solidify the subordinate-supervisor relationship.

Keywords: working experience, employment relationship, opposite gender, private organization

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Work is a series of activities directed towards a particular objective (Okhuysen, Lepak, Ashcraft, Labianca, Smith, & Steensma, 2013). Everything that is produced or provided in this world is the by-product of this process. For example, a firm manufactures clothes to earn money, whereas, individuals who are assigned the task of converting threads into usable clothes perform this job in exchange for a salary. This clarifies that working is a fundamental concept through which jobs are created in this world. Further, a series of defined, specific and paid assignments, activities, duties, and responsibilities associated with an identified position of a particular domain is called a job. Jobs are an integral part of the working concept, however, their offering and completion are dependent on the existence of Employer and Employee.

According to the study conducted by Kasuso (2015), the organization or individual that hire people to perform a particular job and pays remuneration or reward under the employment contract are termed as Employer. On the contrary, people who perform the identified jobs and avail the associated benefits, rights and compensation through the employment contract are called Employees. On the employment level, jobs can never be materialized in the absence of the aforementioned parties. This means in order to gain maximum benefit from a particular job a considerable employment relationship exists between Employer and Employee.

Further, the Employment Relationship is a legal link that binds the concerned parties through employment contract which determines the extent of Employers' and Employees' rights and obligations towards each other. Similar to the basics of any other relationship, among others, the connection between Employer and Employee is based on respecting the hierarchical difference between the two positions. Also, this relationship is formed as a result of two-way dependency, therefore, it is very essential that a candid personal communication exists between the two parties. In addition, the smooth conduct of this relationship suggests that the involved parties should limit their relation to care, support and professional development.

Further, the Employment Relationships foster in various types of organization operating in the world. At present, in Pakistan, three kinds of organizations i.e. government, semi-government and private organizations operate and provide employment opportunities. The example of three organizations in the higher education sector: Governmental (UoK), Semi-Governmental (IBA), and Private (SZABIST). The growth patterns of three type of organization as certain that private organizations are relatively more successful. Hence, it can be inferred that the government is focused on privatization of organizations for better growth and economic development of the country. Also, following the implementation of a democratic regime in the country, enhanced feasibility of conducting business, and improved security conditions considerable number multinationals are expanding their businesses in Pakistan. At present, due to the increased trust, the franchises of almost all food chains as well as branded clothes of the world are operating in Karachi. The benefits of this development include: increased number of private organizations, augmented employment opportunities, improved employment regulations like the meticulous application of equal employment opportunities, and enhanced employment relationship.

One of the most important factors that greatly contribute to the success of a private organization is the quality of professionals recruited by these companies. Nayab, Asrar, Younes, & Chisfti, (2015), identified that while selecting a school for their children, among other factors, parents preferred private over public schools because they have better-qualified teachers and staff members. Private companies recruit professionals with higher education at all hierarchical levels because the competent human resource has become the intellectual property of organizations and they are making a huge investment to polish their skills and retain them. Thus, the country's improved literacy rate has significantly enhanced the number of opportunities for both gender citizens. This is endorsed by the Awan, Malik, Haroon, & Waqas, (2011), as per their study, the earning potential of people of Pakistan has considerably increased with the attainment of education at various levels. The progress can be well judged by the current country's employment statistics. In 2013, the number of employed people in Pakistan was 63,649,201 which is 16.42% more than the employed population in 2008 which was 54,672,354 (World Bank, 2016).

1.2 Problem Statement

Further, the availability of higher employment opportunities for both gender has open doors for people to improve their living standards. Also, women empowerment and gender discrimination theories have considerably reduced gender inequality in these organizations. This fact is endorsed by the increase in a number of a female employed labor force of Pakistan, from 2010-2013, by 2.37% (from 19.75% to 22.12%) (World Bank, 2016). The gradual increase in the number of the female employed labor force, subsequently, amplifies their interaction with the male labor force. Now, in an organizational setting, both genders perform their assigned jobs in close coordination. Previously, significant research {Hasan, Zahid, & Subhani, (2011); Herrera, Duncan, Green, & Skaggs, (2012); Katić, & Skledar, (2014) & Lester, (2015)} is conducted on various aspects of employment such as job satisfaction, productivity motivation, employee relationship with employer, however, a notable component i.e. experience of working with an opposite gender boss is not much considered. Therefore, the present study is designed to explore the employment experience of a private organization employee while working with an opposite gender boss with augments; how would you define the experience of working with an opposite gender boss in a private organization? What factors account for working experience? What factors do not account for working experience? What role does the boss's gender play in employees' working experience? What are the positive and negative aspects of working with the opposite gender boss?

Further, the time to conduct this research was very limited hence, an only private organization of Karachi has taken into account and the finding are not applicable to government or semi-government organizations of Karachi. Also, interviews are conducted with academic employees due to feasibility and accessibility of the identified domain. Thus, the research findings are not applicable to the private corporate organization of Karachi. Moreover, to maintain the focus of the study only the perspective of the academic employees working with opposite gender boss is considered and the boss's perspective is not taken into account. Also, the results of this study reveal the employment experience of employees working with the opposite gender boss in a private higher education institute of Karachi and thus, the research findings are applicable to the particular institute in consideration.

1.3 Literature Review

Over the years, the notable increase in employed female population persuades the researchers and Management of the organization to investigate the similarities and differences between male and female employees' working relationship, productivity, performance, job satisfaction, and other factors. For instance, the research conducted by Paustian-Underdahl, Walker, & Woehr (2014) identified that generally male and female leaders do not differ in perceived leadership effectiveness. Also, Greenhaus, & Parasuraman (1993) concluded that the job performance

of women is less incognizant with their capability than the performance of men. From the considerable available literature boss's gender, it is ascertained that an employee's work experience with an opposite gender boss combination of various ingredients such as Job Satisfaction, Interpersonal Skills, Leadership, Mentoring, Performance Evaluation, Discrimination, Working Relationship, and Teamwork.

Job Satisfaction

Generally, the term job satisfaction is used to define a person's contentment with his or her work. There could be several reasons acting as a base of this gratification. It could be the nature of work, supervision, compensation, rules and regulation of jobs and the like. A study on job satisfaction and gender segregation (Bender, Donohuey, & Heywoodz 2005) discovered that extra earnings are a positively reinforces job satisfaction of male employees and not of female employees. Also, long working hours have a negative correlation with job satisfaction of both gender workers. In addition, Chen, Friedman, & Simons, (2014) in their study determined that a positive relationship exists between female middle manager and their agreement with supervision provided by their bosses, as well as, supervision provided by them to their subordinates.

Interpersonal Skills

Further, a productive work environment is a source of an organization's success. In order to create and maintain a productive environment, employees are required to have, among others, good interpersonal skill. The term interpersonal skills are a mixture of a larger number of abilities and skills including verbal and non-verbal communication, listening skills, problem-solving and decision making and the liked. The study conducted on verbal and non-verbal communication styles of male and female managers clarified that female managers are more proficient while communicating with their bosses and subordinates, whereas, male managers effectively communicate with their peers. This infers that a substantial link exists between the gender of the speaker and the position of the person spoken to (Sleekier, & Rosenthal 1985).

Leadership

Furthermore, the leadership phenomenon can be defined in various ways. The simplest definition could be the process of persuading subordinates to do the right thing. Using the identified dimension of the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) research program it was ascertained that, in an organizational setting prefer participative leadership i.e. considering and involving others in decision making and their implementation, whereas, male prefer self-protective leadership i.e. ensuring security through face-saving and status improvement (Herrera, Duncan, Green, & Skaggs 2012). Moreover, Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen (2003) via a meta-analysis on variant leadership styles depicted that, as compared to male leaders, female leaders greatly engaged in transformational leadership style. A style that accounts for aspects such as respect, optimism, development, values, problem-solving and the like. On the other hand, male leaders engage in Laissez-Faire and transactional (only active and passive aspect) styles. The styles constitute a reactive approach, avoiding critical situations and overcoming followers' mistakes.

Mentoring

Moreover, the process of guiding or supporting the subordinate either through the experience of the field or using positional influence is called mentoring. From the study conducted by O'Brien, Biga, Kessler, & Allen (2010), it was disclosed that male bosses are more inclined towards becoming mentors than female bosses. Also, through mentoring compared to female bosses, male bosses underpin subordinates focus and enhance the prospects of career development. Whereas, female bosses use their mentoring skills more efficiently in proving psychosocial support to subordinate compared to male bosses.

Performance Evaluation

Further, performance evaluation is one of the most important aspects of employment. Every employed individual wants and likes to receive positive evaluations in their careers. In 1980, Gupta, Beehr, & Jenkins, Jr. stated that bosses gave a high-performance rating to the subordinate having opposite gender as compared to subordinate having the same gender. Also, subordinates have a fondness for female managers compared to male managers.

Discrimination

The literal meaning of the word discrimination suggests negative connotation because it describes the act of being unfair to a category of people based either on their race, age, or gender. While investigating the gender role on personal decision making Rosen, & Jerdee, (1997) concluded that male bosses when it comes to promotion, professional development and leadership in their personal capacity discriminate against the female subordinate. Similarly, Balgiu (2013) specified that male gender whether they are employed or not does not support the idea of

having female managers, for them, managerial positions belong to men. Moreover, a substantial majority i.e. 69.5% respondents of the study conducted on male employees having female bosses working in some of the organizations of Ghana revealed that managerial positions are associated with masculinity and they preferred working under a male boss (Perko, 2012). Contrastingly, one of the studies (Ali, Khan, & Munaf, 2013) determined that, in Pakistan, women are regarded with greater respect at a managerial position by both male and female gender.

Working Relationship

Moreover, relationships exist between two individuals due to their work commitments. These relationships are encouraged to achieve the desired results efficiently. The working relationship includes the involvement of subordinate in various managerial functions. As per a study (Hasan, Zahid, & Subhani, 2011) in the considered boss and subordinates gender is directly linked with bosses' preference of involving subordinate in core managerial functions such as planning, organizing, controlling and motivating. The results of the study further revealed that both male and female bosses tend to involve male subordinate more in all managerial function.

Teamwork

Furthermore, Teamwork is defined as a process in which individuals working together ensure collective proficiency and cooperation to achieve a common goal. According to Katić & Skledar (2014) study, male and female managers concentrate on variant factors to ensure teamwork. The male boss focuses on team synergy, efficient usage of skills, innovations and common goal, whereas, female bosses emphasizes on effective utilization of material resources and quality. Also, male bosses are more appreciative of their team success than female bosses.

Thus, the aforementioned researches have specified certain aspects of the study in consideration; however, not much research is conducted to infer the lived experience of employees working with opposite gender boss in a private organization. Thus, to conduct an in-depth analysis of employee lived working experience with an opposite gender boss the qualitative phenomenological approach was adopted as it provides the rich description of the lived experiences. The same approach was adopted by Kevin & Sone (2015) to describe the lived gender experiences of female soldiers in the Cameroon Army. Also, a similar approach was embraced by Lester (2014) while studying the experiences of women executive in cross-gender mentoring.

1.4 Research Design

The current research is qualitative in nature because the aim is to gain complete knowledge of the respondents' experience a feature not available in quantitative research. Further, the research study was based on ontological philosophical assumption having social constructivism as an interpretive framework to understand each respondent's interpretation of their working experience. Also, the research was conducted using a phenomenological approach because the intent was to extract the essence of employees lived working with an opposite gender boss. The approach is endorsed by Giorgi (2008), who clarified that when the aim of the study is to extract the meaning of the participant's explanations of the situation based on their own perception and the lived experience, we use phenomenological research method.

2. Method

The research gauged the employment experience of the respondents at a particular time; therefore, the cross-sectional technique was more appropriate for this study and not longitudinal technique because this particular technique measures the attitudinal change over a period of time. Further, in order to collect detail oriented answers about respondents' experiences semi-structured interviews of not more than an hour was conducted with employees of higher education institute in consideration working with opposite gender boss. This data collection technique was more appropriate as compared to the focus group because the later has the tendency to extract skewed information due to the dominant speaker. In addition, to obtain maximum information on the subject under consideration interview process was aided by a checklist consisting of series of question to be asked in no particular order and answers to all the questions was recorded in isolation.

2.1 Sampling Procedures

the non-probability sampling technique i.e. Convenience sampling is preferred for this research because, given the time constraint and practicality, it is impossible to touch the entire population. Also, the sample size is restricted to 5 employees of higher education institutions under consideration. The reflected sample size is clearly acceptable because it is over and above the recommended sample size by Giorgi (2008) which is three participants. In addition, the selected sample is found to be at ease because all the participants are colleagues of the interviewer. Furthermore, the accessibility of the participants assures the completion of this research in a timely manner.

2.1.1 Integrity

The integrity of this research was maintained by using ethical guidelines. This involves avoiding deception, receiving informed consent, harm and maintaining confidentiality. Each of the participants was provided an information sheet consisting of all the relevant research study information, hence there was no deception in the current study. Further, the participants were aware of the required information verified through a signed informed consent form. Moreover, the participants were voluntarily participating in the study and retain the right to withdraw from the study at any time; hence, they were protected from any harm. Furthermore, in order to maintain the confidentiality pseudonyms were used for the participants.

2.1.2 Data Collection Procedure

The reliability of the research study was ensured by following a detail data collection procedure consisting of Distribution of Information Sheet, Receipt of Consent Form, Following an Audit Trail and Maintaining Documentation. The primary data collection process of the research study was initiated by making personal calls followed by dispatching information sheet explaining the purpose of this project to the 13 potential participants of the considered higher education institute. The gender distribution of the potential participants was 8 females and 5 males. Out of the 13 contacted participants, only 5 (3 females and 2 males) agreed to be the participants of this research study, while, the remaining 8 potential participants refused to take part in the study because either they were busy at the time when the interview was supposed to be conducted or they were not comfortable by recording of their provided responses.

After creating basic awareness about the research project, a consent form was shared with the respondents to ensure their inclusion in the process. Following the receipt of the participant's agreement through a consent form, the interview was conducted. Considering the ease of the participants the interviews were conducted in the offices or conference room of the interviewees and the interviewer of the considered higher education institute. All of the interviews were conducted on one to one basis in isolation by the first researcher. During the interview, in order to maintain the focus of the study, the respondents were asked to respond to all the questions of the prepared checklist but precisely to the following questions: Can you mention factors that make professional experience? How would you define working with opposite gender boss? What are the positive aspects of working with the opposite gender boss? What are the negative aspects of working with the opposite gender boss? Does the boss's gender play any role in employees' working relationship? Further, the entire interview of all the participants was recorded using the recording application of the cell phone. Subsequently, the recorded interviews were then transcribed using conversation style and a thorough audit trail was developed to methodically maintained interview records. In the end, the analysis process was precisely documented.

3. Results

Following the objective of the study i.e. the extraction the essence of the employee lived experience with an opposite gender boss the five-steps phenomenological method, as explained by Giorgi (2012), of analyzing participants' transcript was employed. For accurately analyzing the primary data collected through interviews the following five steps were performed under this method. In the first step, the entire interview of all the participants was read to get an understanding of the employee working experience with the opposite gender boss. In the second step, the entire data went through the process of Horizontalization i.e. highlighting significant statements and quotes mentioned by the participants. In the third step, the meaning was extracted from the relevant statement and quotes and a cluster of meaning was developed to form themes. In the fourth step, on the generated themes a textual description was written. Also, using the description of the same theme of context or setting was written as an imaginative variation or structural description. In the fifth step, a composite description was written defining the essence of the phenomenon.

3.1 Data Analysis

The thematic analysis of the current research study is based on 5 verbatim transcripts. From the 5 transcripts, 179 significant statements were withdrawn. The significant statements were then assigned a meaning. After arranging the formulated meaning into clusters 12 themes were developed. The developed themes are explained below:

3.1.1 Efficient Working

The participants while explaining their professional experience with the opposite gender boss highlighted that efficient working is an important component of the working experience. Also, working with opposite gender instigates a sense of professional equality. As highlighted by the female participant having 21 years of work experience mostly with opposite gender bosses.

“South Asian women based on their culture always want to prove their male bosses that they are as good professionals as men. Thus bosses gender act as a motivating factor to increase female subordinate efficiency level”.

Also, the 26-year-old male participant having more than 2 years’ experience define working with opposite gender boss as more effective through the following description.

“Male bosses and female bosses have a difference in viewpoint about various situations. The focus of male boss is numbered however female boss goes with numbers and creativity”

3.1.2 Career Development:

In this cluster, the respondents were focused on their professional development while working with any gender boss. Professional development was explained as enhancement of knowledge and skills through attending conferences, and improvement of position and qualification. Interestingly, all the female participants of the study elaborated that they progressed under the opposite gender boss. One of the 44-year-old female participants of the study stated:

“I was sent for a Master’s program to Columbia University and I think had it not been my male boss I wouldn’t have gone to the World’s best teacher education university”.

Another 34-year-old female participant explained her boss’s intention of human development as

“Dr. Alex had, you know, had this thing he wanted to develop his employees in the best possible manner he was very keen to send us on workshops and to train us in every possible manner”.

Further, female participants gave mixed responses about career development while working with the same-gender boss. The same 34-year-old female participant highlighted the attitude of her previous female boss towards human development as:

“She was really not interested on sending people abroad or nationwide because she felt it was a waste of money and resources of the organization, so I believe if u ask my opinion on that I believe that giving regard to the human development factor, she doesn't have a lot of ideas on how to improve human resource at any given organization”.

This one 30-year-old female participant mentioned her career development under same gender boss as

“I am very grateful to my female boss because she gave me the opportunity that I am currently working for, my current position I owe that to her, she saw the potential in me and she offered me you know this position”.

As far as male participants are concerned they didn’t mention anything about career development while explaining working experience either with the same or opposite gender boss.

3.1.3 Professionalism:

In this theme, the participants focused on the development of the skills expected to do in their jobs as well as their professional conduct. Further, the majority of the participants highlighted that they develop variant skills while working with an opposite gender boss.

One of the male participants at the officer position elaborated his skills development under female boss as:

“I started to know how to write a professional email (laughs) the very first thing because I didn't use to write emails before, yeah she really taught me how to do that still I do make mistakes but I am still learning”.

Another female participant at the managerial position described her developments as:

“I think my general work ethic I would say my professional writing skills (0.2) yeah I think just having a good work ethic is something that matters a lot.”

3.1.4 Organization Culture and Practices:

Participants mentioned the necessity of following the organizational culture and how employer and employee behaviors are affected by the policies being practiced at organizations.

One of the male participants said following the organizational culture increased the comfort with higher management and colleague, his words were:

“See Culture over my previous organization was whenever we use to come we used to greet everyone who so ever was on the floor then usually we used to go for breakfast together so that was something we learned to mingle. So that sort of brought the bond, the bonding and we sort of gelled in, so at a time when I felt difficult when I felt I couldn't be like up to the target, up to the requirement I could directly approach to GM I can tell him”

Another female participant explained that working environment should be politics-free, according to her:

“Environment, where there is no fear of consequence, where you are not afraid or scared of the fear of the consequence of even speaking up for the right thing, is I think what the positive working environment and a good working environment entails and where critical thinking is encouraged”

One of the female participant's stated that the implementation of organizational culture is dependent on the Boss's gender. The gist of the statement given by her is male bosses encouraged departmental interaction for work purposes but female bosses don't.

3.1.5 Teamwork:

The participants demonstrated that having a supportive boss and colleagues can have a positive impact on your working experience. As one of the female participants describing support provided by her male boss and colleagues during one of the crucial time in life stated that:

“I had a male Head of the Department that was a time when my daughter was undergoing a huge medical problem you know I had to be in and out of the university. The kind of support I got from him and from other colleagues there were males and there were females also you know I was at the point of quitting my job I didn't want to jeopardize my department and the kind of commitment, he is the one who said you know this is the problem that you are not responsible for this is the problem that is just where we will support you so you go ahead look after your daughter and then you can manage your time”.

On the other hand, a male participant implies that opposite gender superior and subordinates tend to make good team whereas, same-sex superior-subordinate don't, he stated:

“Oh! You should always have opposite gender boss, (Laughs)...Because they get to know you, they can understand you and this something (aaa) you know, what can I say a nature (haha), a gift of nature, opposite sex they understand, they try to understand each other, instead you know they just try to make their things right and others you know wrong, they understand, they work on it together, where else, if there are the same sexes, there are conflictions, you know the other might feel that oh! The person is letting me down and he is trying to be a boss and all stuff. This kind of thing does exist in such circumstances”

3.1.6 Leadership Style

In this theme, the participants elaborated various leading and managing style of opposite and same gender bosses and how these style impact on employees in different ways. A very important abstraction here is a female participant was more comfortable while working with opposite gender boss as compared to the same gender.

The 30-year-old managerial level female participant compared male and female bosses as:

“When I started working under her, you know I felt there is a lot of politics going on which was something I was not used to because my previous two bosses were males so there was no politics over there so I felt that they were very open straight forward about things it was easier to work with them as far as my female boss is concerned I was always in a fix I don't know what is going on in her head she used to change her attitude from time to time so there was a lot going on and later on I found out there was a lot of politics so she would listen to what people are saying and then react and then you know, so that has big role in how she was treating me as a subordinate or as an employee”.

Another 34-year-old managerial level female participant stated about her male and female boss:

“Male bosses tend to retain employees, they tend to groom employees, they want to you know to take the maximum productivity out of an employee, female bosses, on the other hand, make an enemy out of an employee they just want the employee to leave I feel”.

Further, male participants gave a mixed opinion about the leadership style of the same and opposite gender bosses:

A 24-year-old male participant explained the leadership style of his opposite gender boss very negatively as:

“It's like, it's not her fault it's her personality type. You know certain people they need to be bossy and they won't work, they take all the credit. I told you no proper appreciation, no guidance, certainly not someone to look up to and then no good skills of managing people, no good skills of managing stress, no good skills of team responsibility, no good skills of team ownership”.

The other 26-year-old male participants praise the leadership style of his opposite gender boss and not very appreciative of the leadership style of the same gender boss as:

“Female bosses are very cooperative, that’s for sure (hmm) They will listen to you, if you tell them they will listen to you what you are trying to explain to them but you know with male boss, there is always a conflict is mostly like I am the boss and I am always right”.

3.1.7 Mentoring

Through this theme, the participants explained guidance provided by their bosses. Interestingly, female participants were found to be satisfied with mentoring provided by their opposite gender bosses. However, male participants were not satisfied with mentoring provided by their opposite gender bosses. Further, one of the female participants described mentoring provided by her male boss as:

“I was reporting to Director IR\QEC and (aaaa) he was a he was a very professional man and he was very kind-hearted and he used to guide me with, on a lot of assignments, whenever the need arose and used to guide me on a lot of things and he used to counsel me”

On the other hand, male participants described mentoring provided by her female boss as:

“She doesn't give required support to her subordinates and doesn't suggest a solution of the problems in time of need. In short, my experience with her was not up to mark nor did I learn anything from her. I think I won't be learning anything in future as well”.

3.1.8 Interpersonal Skills:

Participants here elaborated how easy it is to communicate with the opposite gender boss, understand the instructions provided and accessible the boss is.

A female participant highlighted that her motivation is affected by the level of interaction she had with male and female bosses. About male boss she stated:

“Dr. Alex used to meet me almost every now and then I mean I can’t put a day or time or an hour to it he used to meet me, hence, he was aware of the problem since he was talking to us directly we never had much of an issue because we knew he was listening somebody is there who was listening to our concerns, somebody is there who is addressing our concerns”

On the other hand, about female boss she stated:

“Madam White now she never met me I worked under her for more than a year I believe. She doesn't have a lot of ideas about how motivated an employee feels after being personally in touch with the boss that means a lot to an employee, if the boss takes up you know some interest in what the employee is doing and how she's coping and what is what are personal issues because every employee is different, every employee has different needs”.

Another male participant elaborated that level of interaction due to boss’s gender creates hurdles in the creation of informal bonding, he stated:

“See over here at this institute, I hardly interact with my boss but at previous organizations we used to meet daily even as I told you we used to have breakfast together that was different yah we used to joke with him and again certainly there is gender difference you have to be careful, again with certain sort of jokes”.

3.1.9 Employee-Employer Relationship:

In this theme, the participant explained their employee-employer relationship with reference to the boss’s personality.

A female respondent described her female boss personality being not so empathetic and thus does not have a very positive relationship with her, she explained

“Madam White again I would say does not know what an employee-employer relationship actually should be because she never met me she doesn't know me she didn't know me even when she finally got to know me (aaaaa) she wasn't really that interested in solving the issues, so to be honest in my opinion an employer-employee relationship has to be in which the employer knows what the employee wants, he knows what the concerns are, the needs are, and how he can reach out to an employee to get things done”.

Another female respondent elaborated that employee's personality plays a great role in building this relationship, she stated:

“If I am doing my job well then and I hold personal accountability for the things I do then I think the people who are working with you had no problems with you it only starts when you have a compromised position yourself problem starts from there so if you try your best not to trouble others then I think that why would other people sort of taking it on you, so I think it is a two-way thing.”.

Job Satisfaction:

In this theme, the participants highlighted that employee job satisfaction is dependent on various factors like recognition, compensation, and the boss's attitude towards implementing employee retention policies.

A 34-year-old female participant at the managerial position stated:

“I am really not satisfied with the current Management because I feel that my needs are not being addressed too, every time I approach Management with the certain request, (aaa) I am very rudely given a shut up call. It's really unfair after giving so much of my time and effort to an Institute”.

Another 30-year-old female participant at the managerial position stated:

“Compensated in terms of what other competitors are offering obviously that matters a lot money matter a lot and obviously by money I just don't mean money I am talking about the overall compensation; the benefits are also included in it. All sorts of benefits, the benefits which organizations usually provide so they are all included in it, that doesn't need much explanation money matters”.

3.1.10 Discrimination:

Here the participants define the negative implication of working with an opposite and same gender boss.

A 34-year-old female described discrimination as:

“The institute should really pay concern to the employees rather than hiring people on references, they should hire people on Merit, they should address the concerns of the current employees not fulfill issues of people they are hiring on references. I think there is a lot of discrimination going on at the moment at this higher education institute”

Another 44-year-old female stated

“I am working in a key position or any women who are working in a key position sometimes it is very difficult to realize the parallel role that women are playing you know she is professional, she is a mother, she is a wife , she has to look after a house, so her work is divided among all these realities so sometimes you see once the fabric is shaken , only one strand is shaken the rest of the strands are shaken too, since in our part of the world males do not look after all the realities some of them may just be doing a job and not looking after the other so there may be kind of misunderstanding in terms of not understanding the other gender who is playing so many roles at the same time”

3.1.11 Boss's Personal Conduct:

Participants here identified aspect that does not contribute anything in the employee personal and professional development while working with the opposite gender boss.

A 44-year-old female at a higher managerial position stated that

“The kind of personality that your boss has it really doesn't count, and kind of work routine that your boss has again it doesn't affect your own work”.

Also, a 24-year-old male at an officer position stated:

“Her dressing, I mean whatever she wears, her age keeping in mind my manager then whatever she wears and her looks, I mean in my experience, in my condition Yah it doesn't count”.

4. Discussion

This research study is conducted to contribute to the understanding of employees lived working experience with the opposite gender bosses. It is important because the previously conducted researches like Kevin & Sone (2015) and Lester (2014) were concentrating on a single gender whereas the present study has taken into the consideration the lived working experience of both gender subordinates with the opposite gender bosses. Further, it should be noted that this research study does not provide revolutionary insights, however, the statements provided by the participants elaborate aspects that were either enhanced or deteriorated while working with the opposite gender boss. Through this study, it was ascertained that male bosses engaged in transformational leadership style, whereas, female bosses engage in transactional style. This insight is in contrast to the research study conducted by Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen (2003). Further, this study infers that job satisfaction of female employees is positively related to the compensation and benefits which is inconsistent with the research conducted by Bender, Donohuey, & Heywoodz (2005) in which extra earning is positively related to job satisfaction of male employees and not females. Also, unlike the study conducted by Rosen, & Jerdee, (1997) in which they concluded that male bosses discriminate against female subordinates in terms of promotions this study reveals that instead of gender employees are discriminated on the basis of their association with the Senior Management. The possible reasons

for the difference in my findings and the previous literature could be: the employees under consideration had contrasting experiences with the male and female bosses, the study is conducted on employees of just one organization, and the exposure of the participants were largely limited to a particular industry.

Moreover, the study discovered that male bosses provide mentoring, whereas, female bosses don't. This insight is consistent with a study conducted by O'Brien, Biga, Kessler, & Allen (2010) in which they declared that male bosses like being mentor compared to female bosses. In addition, it was determined that while working in team male bosses believes in developing team cooperation, effective utilization of skills by subordinates, whereas, female bosses tend to work together with the subordinates for doing the right thing. This revelation is also in accordance with the study conducted by Katić & Skledar (2014) in which they identified factors considered by male and female managers to ensure teamwork. The probable reasons for the consistency of my findings with the available literature could be that the relevant findings are not affected by any other factor except gender or the findings remain similar for employees of all the industries.

Some of the exclusive discoveries of this research include: Efficient Working both male and female subordinates endorse that their work efficiency enhances when they work with the opposite gender boss as compared to working with the same-gender boss. Also, in terms of working towards Career Development of the subordinates, male bosses were found to be more inclined towards enhancing subordinates' knowledge and qualification, however, female bosses were found to be developing subordinates in terms of their position but not with reference to the enhancement of knowledge. Further, both male and female subordinates identified that their Professionalism increased while working under the opposite gender boss. Moreover, the new aspect of Employer-Employee relationship was realized in this study i.e. irrespective of the gender this relationship is greatly dependent on the subordinate and boss's personality. Furthermore, Boss's personal conduct i.e. his/her age, dressing, the schedule does not have any impact on subordinate's development.

5. Conclusion

After the in-depth analysis of the participants lived working experience with the opposite gender bosses it can be concluded that participants generally want to work with opposite gender boss as evident from the following responses: One of the female participants stated "Male bosses are preferred" and another male participant said "It's best to have an opposite gender boss". Further, the type of organization does not have any connection with the working experience.

Also, the factors that make a professional experience include: "Efficient Working", "Career Development", "Professionalism", "Organizational Culture and Practices", "Team Work, Leadership Style", "Mentoring", "Interpersonal Skills", "Employee-Employer Relationship", "Job Satisfaction", and "Discrimination".

On the other hand, the factors which do not account for working experience include "Working Hours", and "Boss's Age, Dressing, and Schedule".

Moreover, for female subordinates, the positive aspects of working with the opposite gender boss include: "Efficient Working", "Career Development", "Professionalism", "Team Work, Leadership Style", "Mentoring", "Interpersonal Skills", "Employee-Employer Relationship", and "Job Satisfaction". Conversely, the negative aspects of working with the opposite gender boss include: "Interpersonal Skills" in terms of sharing of personal issues, "Discrimination" through not realizing women in the parallel role.

In addition, for male subordinates, the positive aspects of working with the opposite gender boss include: "Efficient Working", "Professionalism", "Team Work, Leadership Style", "Interpersonal Skills", "Employee-Employer Relationship", and "Job Satisfaction". Conversely, the negative aspects of working with the opposite gender boss include "Mentoring" and "Interpersonal Skills" in terms of sharing of personal issues and work-related accessibility.

One of the most prominent revelations of this study, which is also unanimously supported by all the participants, is the boss's gender does not play any role in employee working relationship or experience. The factors that actually make working relation or experience are "Boss's Personality", "Boss's Professionalism", and "Boss's Leadership Style".

On the basis of the analysis conducted and the findings of this study, it is recommended that the same study should be conducted in a public sector to identify whether boss gender has an association with employee working experience. Also, the same study could be conducted in a different industry to understand the working experience with the opposite gender. In addition, the unique aspects of the study should be further either within the same context or a different context to solidify their association with employee working experience.

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Appendix

Interview Protocol Form

Research Study: Experiencing a Cross Gender Boss: A Phenomenological Study of a Private Organization

Demographics

Interviewee: _____	Organization: _____
Location: _____	Department: _____
Title: _____	Date: _____
Time: _____	Gender: _____
Interviewer: _____	

Thank you for your participation. I am confident that your input will provide useful insights for this research and assist in maintaining and enhancing the working relationship with a cross-gender boss in a private organization.

The interview will take about an hour in which the confidentiality of your responses is guaranteed. The interview will tend to focus on feelings, attitudes, expectations, and employment experience of a private organization employee while working with a cross-gender boss.

Warm Up

To begin, can I ask for some details about you?

1. What is your highest academic qualification?
2. How old are you?

Professional Experience

3. How many years of professional experience you have?
4. What type of organizations you have worked to gain this professional experience?

Probes:

- What are the similarities and differences of working in the different type of organizations?
5. Can you mention factors that make professional experience?

Probes:

- How would you describe each of the identified factors?

Association with the Organization

6. Since how long you are associated with the organization?
7. What attracted you to join this organization?

Probes:

- What were your initial excitements and impressions when you joined the company?

Prompts:

- You said your association with the organization last for ____ years, so has your initial impression improved or worsen? and how?

Professional Experience with Cross-Gender Boss

Take me back through the history in your career

8. Which gender bosses have you mostly worked within your entire professional life?

Probes:

- Please define your experience with those bosses?
9. How would you define working with the cross-gender boss?

Probes:

- Is working with cross-gender boss different from the same-gender boss?
10. What are the positive aspects of working with a cross-gender boss?

Probes:

- Then what are the negative aspects of working with a cross-gender boss?
11. What is the experience of working with the cross-gender boss in a private organization?

Probes:

- Is working with opposite gender boss in private organization similar to working with them in any other type of organization?
12. Can you identify factors that contributed to your personal and professional development while working with the cross-gender boss? And how?

Probes:

- Then what will be the factors that have not contributed to your personal and professional development while working with the cross-gender boss?
13. Does the boss's gender play any role in employees' working relationship?

Probes:

- What is that role?
- Can you please relate that role with overall working experience?

Closure

14. Is there anything else you think is important for exploring working experience with a cross-gender boss of private organization employee?
15. Please allow me to contact you for member check verification and to follow-up on an important feature of the collected data.

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