



**[Promoting female
senior leadership
through job-share in
the UK Higher
Education]**

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Introduction

For the last two decades, many types of research have been carried on women and leadership (Morley, 1999) which lead to put changes at various levels, such as including robust national anti-discriminative and affirmative frameworks, gender equality frameworks at the organizational and institutional level and so on (White, 2011). Despite all these efforts, under-representation of women leaders in the higher education (HE) sector (Morely, 2013) still exists which lead to a series of multiple structural reorganizations (Parsons and Priola, 2010; Burkinshaw and White, 2017). Shepherd (2015) claimed that all these caused a negative impact on recruiting women in senior roles.

Literature Review

This article will critically review pieces of literature that proposed job-sharing as a pragmatic way to support women's leadership by retaining women skills and experiences, which in turn leads to the advancement of females into senior roles in HE sector and also enhances organizational effectiveness. Here, job-sharing means sharing the same single work position relationship between two or more individuals employed at the same position. According to researcher Burkinshaw and White (2017), programmes designed to increase women's agency should be redirected to 'fixing the University' to increase the number of women in leadership roles across HE sectors.

Firstly, the literature will review the representation of women leaders in the UK and international HE sectors and then it will refer to UK private sectors. The

private sectors are considered because of three main reasons. Within late 20's the job-share holders in private sectors were promoted to higher leadership positions (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019), the private sectors are usually open to innovations and advancement in organizational culture (Leslie et al. 2016) and from 1999, private sectors have published females working in senior managerial/leadership roles due to the reporting requirements in Financial Times Stock Exchange (FTSE) (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019). This paper will also review the benefits of job-sharing in the representation of women leaders in all sectors while specifically focusing in the HE sector. It will analyse the findings (through existing literature) from job-sharing experiences.

Theoretically, the new culture of modern universities should have wiped out the established old organizational structures and culture, leading to increased public accountability and representation of women leaders- the need of the current financial complexities and related numerous restructuration (Acker, 1990; White et al. 2011; Burkinshaw and White, 2017), but in reality, it has only re-strengthened the gender inequalities within the organizations instead of reducing it (Parsona and Priolo, 2010; Burkinshaw and White, 2017). Along with it, women who manage to get into leadership positions encounters long working hours, no work stability and an age-old picture of male dominance in leadership community, making women conscious with self-doubt for getting any opportunity in that community which only further shrinks down the population of women leaders (Burkinshaw and White, 2017; Shephard, 2017, Morley 2014).

Women leaders in the HE sector

The detailed report by Jarboe (2018) consists of a full analysis of women representation in leadership roles collected across 173 universities in the UK.

The report has highlighted the increase in the topmost senior leadership roles, however, it also has mentioned a decline in the roles from where women would have get promotion to future leadership roles (Jarboe, 2018). The rise in the female population in topmost senior leadership roles includes an increase in percentage from 19% to 27% and from 22% to 27% as Governing bodies and Vice-Chancellors respectively, within a period between 2016 and 2018 (Jarboe, 2018). It also mentioned that women represent 40% of the governing members (Jarboe, 2018). Most of the governing bodies are becoming gender-sensitive by having 40% to 60% of female representatives (Jarboe, 2018). However, the percentage of females as academicians or school faculties remained stagnant at 31% from 2016 (Jarboe, 2018). In the academic year 2016-2017, only 26% of professors were women, which has increased slightly to 26% in the 2017-2018 academic year (Higher Education Statistical Agency). It is a matter of huge concern, as, without the background of research and subsequent professorship, one cannot be promoted as a Vice-Chancellor (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019). Another major concern is the lack of diversity. In UK universities, there are only twenty-five women professors who are black (Rollick, 2019). The similar situation was observed in 2017 across Europe, having only 24% of women in professorial leadership roles (The Gender Equality Taskforce, 2018). The report has also mentioned the number of female professors in few European countries for the year 2016 as following: 21% in Switzerland, 23% in Germany, 24% in France and for Norway it was 29% in 2017 (The Gender Equality Taskforce, 2018).

Even if the geographical boundary gets extended, the picture remains the same. In Australian universities, only 25% of women constitutes the level E professors (Jarboe, 2016). According to the study of the American Council for Education,

the number of women professors in America is 32% which is a little higher than European universities (Johnson, 2017).

The report findings highlight that academically qualified and skilled women leaders are available, but mainly working as low-level faculty members or academicians and they struggle to get into the senior leadership positions which are related with increased status, wealth and power (Johnson, 2017). The dearth of lucidity in recruitment, advancement and retention is one of the major causes for under-representation of women professors (Van den Brink, 2009; Morley, 2014; Acker, 2014), irrespective of having equality and diversity policies in universities (Fitzgerald and Wilkinson, 2010). For instance, Picardi's quantitative data analysis (2019) demonstrated despite the existence of neutral and meritocratic criteria for recruitment and career growth how Italian academia have designed a measuring mechanism for recruitment by segregating gender in specific forms to evaluate glass door index. It indicates, that even in progressive institutions, irrespective of showing commitments to the maintenance of gender equality, both glass ceiling index and glass door index exists, resulting to discrimination of talented youths based on their gender (Picardi, 2019). UK's Athena SWAN (Scientific Women's Academic Network) have started to scrutinize under a microscope the diversity and equality policies (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019). The UK university departments that were awarded Athena SWAN Gold Department Awards for promoting commitment towards gender equity has arguably failed to identify the impact of the commitments (Barnard, 2017). Manfredi et al. (2018) highlighted that how the leaders for the role of executive selection firms (ESFs) are hired in HE, across the universities in the UK, Australia and Austria, with no transparency within the recruitment process. The knowledge company and the de-regulated labour market gave birth to ESFs- the centre of modern bigoted paradigm (Manfredi,

Hathway and Cousens, 2018). The authors highlighted that at least twelve ESRs (Education for Social Responsibility) are collaborating with the UK HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) in the recruitment of senior leaders (Manfredi, Hathway and Cousens, 2018). The research work included interviews from twenty-nine stakeholders associated across the recruitment process and found out the prejudiced operations are still exercised under the authority of ESFs, for instance, re-strengthening 'new boys' network, classifying the labour market and ideal candidate by gender, recruiting applicants through 'social matching' and so on (Manfredi, Hathway and Cousens, 2018). In addition to it, disciplinary differences make it more challenging for women to undertake leadership positions because academicians from STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) are preferred over the other departments to get promoted in leadership positions in HE (Bagilhole and White, 2008; Jarboe, 2018).

However, few authors mentioned that the likelihood of experiencing discrimination at work and scientific organizations are more for women professors compared to low-level faculty women academicians (Popp et al., 2019), but Santos and Stephanie (2019) disagreed with this view. O'Connor (2017) came up with a different argument by questioning whether an increase in representation of women professors in HE is enough to bring in a cultural change. He stated that such developments can only let the institutions to satisfy the organizational legitimacy with no change in the dominant paradigm (O'Connor, 2017). According to Burkinshaw (2015), the increased number in representation women leaders does not matter; what matter is there should be feminist women and men in the leadership community. Having more female professors is symbolically important, but the numbers alone are not enough itself, the gender should also be embedded into the organizational nature and purpose (O'Connor, 2018).

The symbolical importance of having more women professors as leaders have a huge impact on other women who hesitates to apply for higher leadership positions due to their perception of being less eligible and not meeting up the necessary and preferred criteria required for the job position (Times Higher Education, 2019). The self-doubt may happen due to the scarcity of female role models as successful leaders and also because of the masculine hegemony that exists in most of the universities worldwide (Times Higher Education, 2019). According to the Times Higher Education (2019), the success rate of converting the same leadership role is half for women compared to men having similar talent and skills.

Women leaders in the UK Private Sectors

Under-representation of women senior leaders with a drive towards gender balance is not limited to the HE sector (Jarboe, 2018). The permeability between HE, the private, public and voluntary sectors has increased due to the rise in influence and assignation of the civic university roles (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019). In this sector, the professional experience is generally enhanced by teaching, research and exchange of knowledge (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019). As a result, it is advantageous for the UK private sectors to differ from HE by having more female leaders at senior roles (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019). Last year, the FTSE Board Report showed concerns for the first time over the under-representation of women leaders in the FTSE 250 results (Vinnicombe et al., 2018). The findings of the report have identified the positive growth in the number of women leaders from 27.7% to 29% on FTSE 100, however, over the same time frame, the growth rate is little when it comes

to FTSE 250 boards where women leaders' representation has increased only to 23.7% from 22.8% (Vinnicombe et al., 2018).

Within the UK FTSE 100 boards, there is a remarkable improvement in terms of women representation as board members. On 29th October in 2015, it was a historic moment, when men only boards were abandoned (Sealy et al., 2016). However, the scenario is different for FTSE 250 companies, where instead of renouncing men-only boards, the numbers have significantly increased in 2018 (Vinnicombe et al., 2018).

Although FTSE has an aim of achieving 33% of board members as women within 2020, the lack of female representation in senior managerial roles in HE in the UK may make the plan unsustainable (Vinnicombe et al., 2018). The researchers proposed that the target should be widened, not limited to board members and should incorporate a skilled pipeline to extend and support actual gender balance (Vinnicombe et al., 2018). In the contemporary managerial universities, to maintain gender representation, job sharing is a pragmatic way to deal with the men dominated leadership community, which will allow retaining women qualifications and skills and will lead to broadening of the talent pipeline headed by women (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019).

Benefits of Job Sharing

The voluntary apportion of the same job role, of a full-time position, between two or more people, is known as job sharing. In a job-sharing role, each individual sharing the same job role keep hold of all the job benefits associated with job role as a full-time position, which is not available in part-time roles (Walton, 1990).

Organizations that value flexibility at work can avail the job sharing approach to recruit more women (and men as well) at senior managerial positions, enabling more women at senior level workforce, especially for women who cannot work long hours for taking care of their babies or family members or studying part-time or any other reasons (Daniels, 2011; Saunders and Bassett, 2017).

The job sharing allows more people to hire for the same position which gives the benefits of having two minds (heads) instead of one; having advantages at a wider context, such as, enhanced team diversity, productivity, creativity in HRM practices, process management and so on (Working Families, 2007). The Job Share Project contemplated how job sharing at senior managerial positions could be executed at an organizational level by retaining all the benefits (Daniels, 2011).

The findings from Working Families and Job Share Project reports have indicated that albeit in recent years job sharing applications have increased, but the number of candidates opting for it is low. One of the reasons for such low adoption rate is due to tokenism of employers who offers job sharing posts entitled to family-friendly friendly policies, but because of legislation, it is becoming hard to implement it in practice (Gatrell and Swan, 2008). Even though when women manage to execute job shares, the promotional pathways remain complex and struggle some (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Gatrell and Swan, 2008; Taylor, 2013). Job sharing with flexible hours can lead to unequal outcomes, change to career pathways and drive them towards career-cul-de-sacs (Barrett and Barrett, 2011). Till date job sharing at an upper leadership role is rare (Saunders and Bassett, 2017). The job-sharing set-up starts by fragmenting the job role into its inputs and outputs, to analyse whether it is suitable for job sharing or not (Sidaway and Wareing, 1992). Generally, the

technical and more task-oriented roles pass the job sharing suitability test, as mostly it has clear sets of role inputs from the employees which generally direct towards the pre-settled outputs (Sidaway and Wareing, 1992). For such posts, individuals having the required technical skills and experience are employed (Sidaway and Wareing, 1992). However, in case of a managerial role, it is more complex because of the nature of the role, which has no fixed definite set of working approach and more dependent on the networking circle having personal relationships with the senior-level leaders and HRM officials (Sidaway and Wareing, 1992). Job roles which lack role clarity, accountability, responsibility, hand over time and so on struggles in passing the job sharing suitability test (Sidaway and Wareing, 1992; Saunders and Bassett, 2017).

In a research work, where 2500 working women were asked what change/support they want to have get minimise their career growth, around 54% of the respondents replied that they want flexibility in their work (Talking talent, 2015). Another similar research work with 7000 working families echoed the same, where 57% of working fathers are also looking for flexible working hours (Talking Talent, 2018).

Although, many qualitative kinds of research have identified job sharing as a key, due to non-availability of such options at higher leadership positions, due to family and personal commitments many women remain in lower-level jobs against their will that provides the option of job flexibility (White, 2017; Mathews, 2019). However, Padavic et al., (2019) stated that even flexible hours at higher positions alone cannot change the deep-rooted patriarchal hegemony unless the gender relation between women with family, men and work does not change.

Moreover, women compromise with the gender pay gap also, just to avail the benefits of flexible working hours (WGEA, 2018). There is a significant gender pay gap, worldwide in HE sector, for example, the median gender pay gap in the UK HE in 2018 was 13.7%, which was 9.1% higher than the national wage (WGEA, 2018). Furthermore, there are several UK institutions where the gender pay gap is double the average, for example, in the Queen Mary University of London, the mean pay gap is 21.7% and the median bonus gap is 50% (including the National Clinical Excellence Awards) (QMUL Gender Pay Gap Report, 2018).

To enhance the female pipeline, at first, the barriers need to be understood along with its subsequent consequences on the managers for extending the required support. It requires an in-depth understanding of the complexities of implementing the practice of flexible work culture by job share in reality and how it is advantageous for the organization to increase its productivity (Alves, 2016). However, in recent research, it has been found that by changing the value of people working in different styles can reduce the expenses on workforce costs by 3% to 13% and it also improves the sales revenue up to 11% (Cannon and Elford, 2017). Watton et al. (2018) argued that although job sharing can increase women representation as leaders, due to inefficient models of job-sharing at senior levels it is not promoted while hiring for these roles, which can lead to gender inequality.

To summarise, the effectiveness of maintaining gender equality and diversity is undoubtable, with commercial proof of enhanced productivity (Vinnicombe et al., 2018). The Chief Executive of Chartered Management Institute, Anne Francke, stated a gender-balanced executive team is one of the important productivity-enhancing driver which worth up to 100 billion per year (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019). The contextual aspects of the UK HE sector and

similar internal HE sectors has been previously discussed with data from UK private sectors. The Job share approach is key to enhance the female talent pipeline in senior leadership positions is highlighted while discussing the obstacles faced by women to come to leadership positions in the UK HE sector. Along with the benefits, the dilemma and difficulties of setting up the job share model in the UK universities are also discussed in this paper. Despite all of the issues and uncertainties of job share in a senior-level position, it is still considered as a valuable approach to increase the representation of female senior professors.

In the next section, one of the research paper will be critically reviewed in terms of research philosophy, ethical considerations, reliability and validity.

Background of the Researchers

The paper “How Job Sharing Can Lead to More Women Achieving Senior Leadership Roles in Higher Education: A UK Study” (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019) is used to review critically. The article is written by two female researchers who worked jointly at a senior job share role for three years in a UK university.

Research questions of the mentioned paper were:

1. How job share can be implemented for leadership roles?
2. What are the organization implications to promote job share at a senior position?

Ontology

The foundation of research philosophy is based on three distinctive pillars- Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology.

Ontology deals with the philosophical study of nature being (Saunders, 2009). 'Being' includes everything that exists in nature. Ontological studies lead to questioning of what entities exist and how they can be grouped and related within a hierarchical system and be subdivided based on similarities and dissimilarities (Saunders, 2009).

The researchers took up the job share positions for three years to identify its benefits and problems in assisting leadership roles in contemporary managerial universities. They lived and performed within the real organizational environment and identified 76 items which they grouped into themes based on similarities and dissimilarities (check appendix A) with relation to the organizational implication of a leadership job share.

Epistemology

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge concerning to its methods, validity and scope and a scientific distinction between justified belief and opinion which shapes the research formation (Saunders, 2009). It has three basic conditions- truth, belief and justification to uncover what is known and how it is known which explains why human minds relate to reality and how these relationships are either valid or invalid (Saunders, 2009).

In the reviewed paper the qualitative data had been collected to find the association between job share and leadership, through which the researchers identified various issues in effective implementation of job share in HE. The literature suggested gender inequality, biases toward female leaders and incapability of current job share models as few of the factors responsible for under-representation of women leaders at senior levels. The researchers

conducted their research systematically in a scientific method by designing research questions around their assumptions, beliefs and opinions to understand the reality and to identify the relationship between job share and leadership.

Axiology

Axiology is the study of the nature of value and valuation which includes all kinds of things that exist in nature and are valuable, which can be categorized in ethics and aesthetics (Saunders, 2009). Ethics looks after the rightness and wrongness of actions and aesthetics deals with feelings, judgements or standards of beauty and related concepts (which includes a judgement of sense, taste and emotion) (Saunders, 2009).

The researchers jointly studied the value of job share at senior-level leadership position for three long years before reaching to any conclusion, based on their aesthetical values and ethical considerations.

Research Philosophy

The core area of the research work is the association of job share with leadership. Leadership is concerned about human interactions and emotions which is composed of social establishments, for instance, consciousness, language and shared meanings (Morehouse & Maykut, 2002). Data was collected using the narrative inquiry research strategy- a qualitative research strategy which is associated with the Interpretivism research philosophy. The data analysis was discussed in three levels- exploring the phenomenon of leadership as a job share, policy implications and the role of observational

learning through a leadership role. The measurement of the above mentioned three levels requires the understanding of various social parameters, for example, socio-cultural context and social opportunities which are hard to measure numerically as they are subjective in nature.

The Interpretivism research philosophy suits the research context as it views human beings over and above a physical entity and represents their 'connotations' (Husserl, 2012). Interpretivism supports in elucidating those 'connotations' (Husserl, 2012). However, these representations can change with people from various cultural background, in various situation, in different time periods, directing towards multiple social realities (which are different from each other) and experiences, not leading towards a universal 'law' or fixed outcome as asserted by Positivism research philosophy that views the world objectively (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2015).

The complex nature of the research findings that tried to interpret the various insights of leadership with job share is hard to fit into certain fixed laws to able to generalise it. The complicated nexuses of human behaviour with leadership can be acknowledged by Interpretivism as it values what is meaningful to the research participants; giving importance to language, culture and history (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Interpretivism, unlike Positivism, does not interpret from the superficial viewpoint of the world by gathering realistic knowledge where people are living in. Rather it values the social realism by accepting the continuous shift within the nature of every person (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2011) which suits to understand the contemporary leadership issues in a job share.

Reliability and Validity

Initially, the data collecting and analysing methods mentioned used by the researchers will be discussed, later it will be critically reviewed in light of reliability and validity testing.

Data collected and data analysed in the reviewed paper's context

Both the authors wrote and shared a series of nine letters mentioning their personal experience story in an autobiographical format, which allowed them to detail out a small slice of time and significant events; also embroidered contextual aspects of their life such as family, life, education, parental influences and values (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). It enabled the writers to exercise a reflexive dialoguing process between them for a period of three years through the continuous process of writing, reading and replying each other, which let them to make sense of their lived experiences (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000), making it into a form of co-constructed autoethnography (Kempster and Stewart, 2010). This letter sharing process between each other also helped them to build an informal relationship between them (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). Due to the trust into the relationship, the letters they wrote to each other had a personal tone, making it easier for them to share and interpret each other's experiences (Watton, Stables and Kempster, 2019).

The thematic analysis used to analyse the data. Both of them independently searched for patterns to generate themes. Later, they meet physically to compare their dominant themes, which were almost similar with few differences in the identification of themes and the way they coloured it using their pre-discussed colour codes. Initially, as a group, they came up with 76 significant items (check appendix B), which were later reduced to six core themes and the frequency of repetition of the themes appeared were calculated.

Reliability Test

In ethnographic research, reliability lies in both external and internal design problems (Hansen, 1979). The external reliability looks for similarities in each independent researcher's discovery of phenomena or constructs within the same research setting, whereas the internal reliability addresses the degree to which the research data matches with the 'used' research constructs designed by the original researcher (LeCompte and Goets, 1982).

In this case, it can be interpreted that the external reliability has met, as the themes and items generated by each writer were almost similar with few differences here and there. However, the internal reliability is not clear. The authors have failed to mention the research framework they have followed and the similarity they have achieved within the data. In the case of coming up with own research construct, the researcher still needs to show the evidence of reliability and validity of the research work.

Validity Test

Validity deals with the accuracy of the scientific research findings (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). The validity test demands for the representation of the empirical reality through the conclusions (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It also assesses the constructs designed by the researcher to evaluate whether it can effectively represent various categories of human experiences that happen (Hansen, 1979; Pelto and Pelti, 1978). Similar to the reliability, it also has internal and external validity testing. Internal validity evaluates the degree of accuracy of representing the reality using scientific observations, whereas external validity

checks to what extent the representation of reality remains the same across various groups (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The research work does not give enough evidence of doing the validity test. Although the paper gives a feel of representation of realism accurately as it matches with the literature review, however, it is not enough to prove validity.

Issues and Concerns with Reliability and Validity Testing in Qualitative study

The researchers explicitly did not perform reliability and validity maybe because of having similar beliefs as Stenbacka (2001) who stated that reliability and validity are two quantitative research instruments; according to whom the purpose of reliability testing in quantitative study is for 'explaining' and in quantitative study it is for 'generating understanding'. Due to the differences of the purpose of reliability between quantitative and qualitative studies, Stenbacka (2001) mentioned that a qualitative study which is conducted with reliability as a criterion, the outcome is rather that the findings will be of no use, as reliability deals with measurement which is irrelevant to evaluate the quality in qualitative study.

Patton(2001) mentioned that to evaluate the quality of the research work in each paradigm, it should be assessed by its own paradigm's terms. Therefore, in quantitative studies, reliability and validity should be replaced by qualitative paradigm terminologies, which are Credibility, Neutrality/Confirmability, Consistency/Dependability and Applicability/Transferability to evaluate the quality of qualitative work (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Research Biases

Both the researchers were women working together at the same job role as a job share and later on they shared a good informal relationship, having the same shared objectives. A small background of the host university was also mentioned, where it showed the university had a higher percentage of women representation both at the board and senior management levels than the average of HE sectors-which was 62% and 77% respectively, showing an inclination for maintaining gender equality within the university. This may also indicate that university was less biased towards women employees, which may not represent the true nature of the HE sectors in the UK which are highly dominated by men at senior leadership positions.

Positionality

Within the researcher group there were no male representative, or someone else from different age group, or other job share representatives and so on. With similar family backgrounds (as mentioned in the paper) and similar kind of thought process, believes and opinions chances are there that the researchers had a positionality with the social and political context of the research focus (Chavez, 2009), that is the organization where they were working and their colleagues and managers with whom they were communicating for more than three years. Both of them worked in the same organization for long five years before they jointly decided to work as a job share, where they worked for another three years as a job share in the same organization- collecting deeper insights about the people, place and event. This could have held a biased position that may have interfered with their ability to observe and interpret. However, it can be argued that a researcher from outside may lead to imposing of the researcher's values, beliefs and perceptions on the lives of the research

participants which may direct towards positivistic representation and interpretation (Chavez, 2009). Nevertheless, in both cases, in social research biasness exists at different levels based on the researcher's background and her relationship with the organization (Chavez, 2009).

Reflexivity

The act of reflexivity systematically by the researchers with the context of knowledge construction at every step of the research process ensures the credibility of the social research results by reducing the chances of the researcher's biases by making the researcher aware of their values, opinions and experiences that they may have used in the research work without realising it at the first place (Chavez, 2009). The first step towards reflexivity is acknowledging the positionality and consciously working towards it (Chavez, 2009). The researchers worked independently and later discussed together. In every step of doing thematic analysis, both the writers kept on mentioning about their perspective, about their relationship and so on. It indicates they practised reflexivity at every step to keep the research bias-free as much as possible.

Research Ethics

Ethical consideration is one of the major requirement for conducting any scientific research work other than some exceptions. While conducting the research, ethical requirements need to be met in its every steps (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). A researcher must be open, honest and promote precision by circumventing misstate or biased/restricted sharing of any data findings to maintain integrity and objectivity of a good researcher (Saunders,

Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). It also includes avoidance of favouritism, duplicity, dishonest promises and thoughtless fidelity (Bell & Bryman, 2011). In case of any conflicts of interests or rise of any commercial association, it needs to be declared (Bell and Bryman, 2011)- exactly the way researchers in this paper mentioned that there were no conflicts of interests between the researchers and the host university.

The rights of the participants involved in the research work should be acknowledged and the participants should be dignified by the researchers (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). The researchers should also ensure that the research work will not cause any kind of harm or put the participants into any potential risk of harm which includes any risk or threat to emotional well-being, mental health, physical health, social or group cohesion by using certain kind of research methods which may cause harm in anyways, such as embarrassment, discomfort, stress, pain, conflict, mental pressure, social pressure, harassment, discrimination or violation of any confidentiality and anonymity (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015).

As per the agreed contract of privacy and confidentiality between participants and/or the host organization, the researcher should maintain it (Bell and Bryman, 2011). A researcher should always take informed consent both from the participants and the host organization before organizing the research (Bell and Bryman, 2011). Both the host organization and participants should be told about their rights of withdrawal of participation at any point of time if they feel uncomfortable or fail to continue it for any reasons (Bell and Bryman, 2011). It also includes taking permission before taking any recordings or pictures or any written notes for the research purpose (Bell and Bryman, 2011). A good researcher will always document the process of consent taking from the

participants and the host organization to avoid any miscommunication and maintain transparency between both the parties (Bell and Bryman, 2011). Both host organization and participants should have access to the research findings, however, anonymity still applies towards the organization and within the participants (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015). A good researcher should be well informed about the host countries' legal restrictions and regulations with research work and data where the research is performed, as it may vary from country to country (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2015).

In this reviewed research paper, informed consent was taken before conducting the research work and full anonymity of the host organization and managers/leaders/staffs with whom the researchers worked as a colleague has been maintained. As mentioned in the paper, the results were first shared with the host university and no one had any issues/complaints/threat/harm regarding this research work.

Appendices

Appendix A

Appendix A. Full List of Themes and Core Themes

Informal Items of Significance	Themes
Identification of a potential job share partner	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Honesty over previous experience both good and bad	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Self-sacrifice for the benefit of the other person and the team	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Initial discussions of why need to be realistic and honest	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Acknowledgment of the benefits of having two people doing the job in terms of well-being.	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Acknowledgment that working on your own was problematic and working with the right person in a dual leadership role would solve that.	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Office set up—shared office, desks re-organised to face each other.	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Benefits for each individual needs to be clear	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Recognise individual strengths	1. Play to one another's strengths at an individual and organisational level.
Working hard for each other	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Important to both of us to do a good job	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Benefits for each individual needs to be equitable	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Lists created to help communication and progress reporting	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.

Informal Items of Significance	Themes
Foundations of trust built (implicitly) at early stages because of commitment to doing the hand over correctly	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Awareness of each other's feelings and a determination to support each other	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Awareness of the benefits and support in a job share relationship	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Shared values and understanding of what is right and what is wrong	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Sense making of an ethical dilemma leading to a significant shift our confidence to deal with the necessary response	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Making time to re-group and reflect key to sense making	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Shared lived work experience enabled a critical friend at a time of need leading to reflection and growth	1. Play to one another's strengths at an individual and organisational level.
A greater confidence in raising concerns and issues	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Two respected female voices having a greater power than one isolated voice.	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Recognition of our own and each other's ability, competency and experience gained validity	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Having each other to deal with a difficult senior manager enabled us to handle the situation more calmly, rationally and with less potential emotional damage.	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Combined previous experience meant we could handle a difficult senior member of male staff who used bullying behaviour to enact his decisions.	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Similar thought processes and decision making	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Complete trust in one another to make the right decision	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
People couldn't tell us apart! We stopped correcting people when they got our names wrong!	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Utmost respect for one another, similar work experience, similar ethics	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
We looked out for one another and were confident and went out of our way to promote one another (not being confident to do this for ourselves).	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Played to one another's strengths (Sarah—finance and detail, Emma—ball park finance and written reports, presentations)	1. Play to one another's strengths at an individual and organisational level.

Informal Items of Significance	Themes
Shared presentations and workshops built confidence e.g., balanced scorecard and Henley Conference	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Re-applied for role and shared skill set enabled the job share partnership to meet all criteria	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Division of tasks was done around knowledge of each other's skill sets without discussion.	1. Play to one another's strengths at an individual and organisational level.
Never tried to outdo one another and always approached the situation with a view to it being equitable	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Never competed with each other	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Never let each other down as it was important to do it for one another	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Pushed ourselves to do new things	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Received the VC award for excellence as recognition	1. Play to one another's strengths at an individual and organisational level.
Comfortable talking about job sharing with media reports, research students etc.	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Lots of laughs usually at own expense to de-stress	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Sufficiently attuned and relaxed to show vulnerability and weaknesses	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Approach any situation with humility and humour	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Giant lists were created and ticked off together	5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability.
Huge amounts of loyalty and respect	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Acceptance of who we are and being comfortable with that	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Emma wanted job share for work-life benefits mainly health related and perhaps the potential for self-employment	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Sarah received slot in of role because of maternity leave which was a benefit for Emma	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Maternity cover role was hard, recognition that a job share was a benefit.	4. A job share can make a role tenable.
KIT days at Sarah's house at kitchen table demonstrating an early permeability between work and home for Sarah and Emma	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Emma chose to have coaching as a way of maintaining balance	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.

Informal Items of Significance	Themes
Did not choose to make a formal complaint because we managed the situation	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Utmost respect and the importance of the work-life balance added to the bond we had	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Discussed the end of the job share and the continuity of our friendship from the beginning	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Emma understood that job share needed whilst Emily was a baby	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Chicken pox cover demonstrated how we covered for each other when additional support was needed for home	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
We were rarely ill, which was a good sign that we were both healthy and our well-being was good.	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Social activities and helping one another out of work 10. Self-denial and humility	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Emma made Sarah's children's Easter bonnet's for their school competition	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Sarah's children started to inadvertently call Emma 'Mum'!	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
After [name of first child] Sarah needed to work for financial reasons—could not face working full time as she had done after first child	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Feeling of failure as Sarah realised she could not work full time after [name of second child]	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Determination to work at a senior level and be a good parent	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Sarah did Emma's washing when her water ran out	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Sarah keen to ensure that the benefits for Emma were as recognised and in place from the beginning	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Enabled to have career and years with children	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Process of understanding what was valued most, throughout all that children are a priority.	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Shared how we were feeling constantly this changed afterwards	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Previous experience of ending a job share had been painful which lead to an early discussion of how this might end	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.

Informal Items of Significance	Themes
The end started through a combination of factors external to the job share	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
Both applied for a job share role at Cumbria which was delayed	4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.
Promised to tell me first about LUMS job out of loyalty and respect	6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.
Didn't meet up much over the summer	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
The last few weeks were a pragmatic denial of what was about to happen	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.
A year later felt less guilty, didn't go back for a year	2. Create the right environment physically and emotionally to perform to your best.
Divorce was at least an amicable separation	3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.

Appendix B

Table 1. Analysed theme titles and rank order.

Themes in Rank Order	Frequency of Occurrence in the Data
1. Play to one another's strengths—leverage the benefits of a job share at an individual and organisational level.	5
2. Create the right environment both physically and emotionally in which to perform to your best.	21
3. Establish solid foundations up front about setting up and ending the job share.	12
4. A job share can make a senior leadership role more tenable by shouldering responsibility and complexity with another person.	10
5. Having empowerment, trust and faith in one another's ability to complete tasks individually whilst at the same time having sufficient knowledge to be able to pick up work for one another when needed.	15
6. Being humble whilst at the same time being one another's biggest fans.	12

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