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**Research Topic: The Organizational Logic of Family:
Gender and Management in a Large Organization in
Thailand**

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Supervisor: Professor Patricia Lewis and Dr. Madeleine Wyatt

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the
University of Kent (Canterbury Campus)

Kent Business School

University of Kent

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Declaration

I, Miss Nayika Kamales, declare this thesis is my own work in original version under the supervision of Professor Patricia Lewis with Dr. Madeleine Wyatt. (2nd supervisor) This thesis never has been submitted previously for awarded of any academic degree.

Some contents of chapter 4 and chapter 6 were in my conference paper of British Academy Management (BAM- Annual conference 2019) at Aston University for the title of Gendered Networking in a Thai State Enterprise, and in the track of Gender in Management.

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Abstract

This study applies Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations to Thai Utility, a large domestic utility infrastructure and service organization in Thailand. Thai Utility was selected for the research because of its noticeable lack of female management and leadership participation, as its senior and executive ranks are dominated by men and it has never had a female Governor (and only one female Deputy Governor). The study investigated the gendered organization and its effects on women's advancement prospects at Thai Utility, with a focus on formal and informal networking activities as a form of gendered interaction.

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with junior, middle, senior and executive managers in different departments and in the regional and headquarters units (n = 72). The interviews investigated the career progression, relationship formation and experience within the organization. Personal networking maps were also produced that identified important relationships within the organization.

Analysis revealed that there are gender divisions at Thai Utility, especially job-role and department-based divisions. Gendered symbols and image and gender identities are also identifiable. The gendered interaction processes, particularly in relation to networking, were an important focus of the analysis. Here, it was revealed that interaction is highly gendered at Thai Utility, with male managers more rapidly moving away from their initial, limited networks and developing broad and deep organizational families and relationships with more powerful people. Women, however, were more reliant on their family of origin and marital family. Furthermore, these family relationships were used to deny women access to organizational family, with subtexts like 'women's place is in the home' and 'divided loyalties' used to continually force women back to their family of origin and/or marital family. The implication of this is that Thai Utility, though nominally gender-neutral, is in fact heavily gendered, and women do not have equal access to the organizational families that are crucial for career advancement.

Keywords; A theory of gendered organization, Career advancement, Gender and management, Gender division, Symbol and image, Gender identity, Gender interaction, Gender subtext, Organizational logic of family.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

This thesis investigates networking as a gendered organizational practice, as a way to better understand the gendered organization in the Thai context. The research takes place at Thai Utility, a large company in Thailand that operates in public infrastructure and services. In Thailand, as in elsewhere, utility infrastructure and services remain a traditionally ‘male’ field, even though women provide the multitude of administrative and support services that enable it, as they always have done. Today, Thai Utility, like most large companies, publicly recognizes the importance of female workers and takes a public and policy position of gender neutrality in hiring and promotion. Even so, the managerial workforce at Thai Utility continues to be overwhelmingly male, not just at upper levels (which could be explained by recent changes to policy) but also at the lowest levels of management. Why does this situation persist in the face of supposedly gender-neutral policies? This thesis turns to Acker’s (1990, 1992) theory of gendered organizations to explain the situation.

While the last century has been in many ways revolutionary for women’s rights around the world, there are still many areas where equality and justice have not been attained. One of these areas is in participation in organizational leadership, especially at the higher levels of management. According to Catalyst (2021), a global non-profit working to improve organizations as workplaces for women, only 46.9% of women participate in the global workforce, compared to 74% of men. This is a reduction from 1990, where 51% of women participated (Catalyst, 2021). This significantly lower participation extends to participation in management roles, as well. At the uppermost level, there were only 13 female CEOs of Fortune 500 companies (representing the 500 largest companies in the world). Furthermore, while women made up 47% of support staff (approximately the rate of workforce participation) and 42% of professional staff, they comprised only 37% of manager, 29% of senior managers and 23% of executive-level managers. Women were also underrepresented in high-paying technical fields in science, technology, engineering and medicine (STEM), where only 35% of workers are women and research and development (R&D), where women make up just 29.3% of the workforce (Catalyst, 2021). Thus, despite a century of progress toward women’s participation in the workforce, it has in no way achieved equality with men.

There is no shortage of explanations for why women are underrepresented in top management in organizations. Historically, these explanations have focused on individualist reasons, for example lack of career experience and opportunities for women and stereotypes held by men (Baker, 2014; Oakley, 2000). These theories, while they may explain individual occurrences, are inadequate to understand the widespread phenomenon of underrepresentation of women in management positions. It does not explain, for example, why large-scale statistical analysis reveals that organizations seem to have a set, though informal, ‘quota’ of women in management positions (Dezsö et al., 2016) or why women fail to achieve top leadership roles even when their knowledge, skills and experience are equivalent to or better than their male colleagues (Baker, 2014). In this research, I take the position that individual explanations for the widespread phenomenon of exclusion of women from top management roles are inadequate: it is clear that there are structures and processes that underlie this systematic exclusion. This research looks for these structures and processes.

1.1.1 The position of women in corporate leadership in Thailand

The research is situated in Thailand. On the whole, Thailand is somewhat better for women in corporate leadership than the global average. According to one recent report, in 2020 around 32% of senior leadership roles in mid-market Thai companies are held by women, compared to an Asia-Pacific average of 26% and a global average of 27% (UN Women, 2021). This report also states that only 14% of Thailand’s mid-market companies have no women in senior management, compared to a regional average of 20% and a global average of 17%. Around 24% of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) roles, in Thailand is held by a woman along with 43% of Chief Financial Officer (CFO) roles. The UN Women’s Office (2021) reports that this means Thailand has more female CFOs than any other country in the world, and the third-highest percentage of female CEOs. However, this does not mean that women are not underrepresented, either in corporate leadership positions or in non-corporate public leadership roles. As of 2020, just 23.9% of senior civil servants and 16.2% of Members of Parliament are female, and there is only a single female Provincial Governor (UN Women, 2021). Thus, even though Thailand performs well in the corporate world compared to the Asia-Pacific region, and in fact the world, it is still lagging in terms of overall representation and equity for women.

1.1.2 The research setting

The research is situated in Thai Utility. Thai Utility (a pseudonym for the company) is a state-owned enterprise that is one of the largest utility service providers in Thailand. The company, which was formerly a government department, is now overseen by the Ministry of the Interior. Thai Utility's core activities include construction and maintenance of utility grid and services and provision of services to end consumers.

Thai Utility has a hierarchical and departmentalized organizational structure. Operations are divided into regional operational units in Thailand's Middle, North, South, and Northeastern regions, along with a central administrative and managerial Headquarters division. The regional units are primarily tasked with engineering and construction services, including field engineering and design, with departments including Engineering and Service and Operations and Maintenance. The Bangkok Headquarters comprises engineering management and centralized administration units for Legal, Accounting and Finance, Human Resources, and other support activities. Additionally, the top management of the organization, including the Governor (equivalent to the CEO position of a private firm), Deputy Governors, and top departmental managers, operate from the Headquarters. Thus, there are strong divisions within Thai Utility both in terms of hierarchical structure and in terms of the geographical location of employees.

Thai Utility has around 40,000 employees, of whom an estimated 8,608 held a managerial role at the time of research. The overall distribution of female to male managers is around 1 to 2, with 2,892 female managers and 5,716 male managers. However, it is notable that female managers are poorly represented at the top levels of the organization. Around 28.1% of junior managers (whose roles are essentially supervisors for small teams or senior technical positions) were female. Women were best represented at the rank of middle manager (who lead larger teams or projects), but even here only 46.7% of middle managers were female. Representation of women is worst at the senior and executive level, where only 25 of 153 managers – or 16.3% - were female.

In addition to this poor representation of women at the upper levels of the organization, there are signs that women are limited in terms of access to which managerial positions they can hold. The research revealed that women are well represented in the administrative departments (including legal and human resources) and the accounting and finance department, and most of the senior managers in the company work in these positions. However, women are

not at all well-represented in Engineering or Operations departments. In fact, in the Engineering department there has only been one woman who has ascended as far as middle management. Interviews with male Engineering managers, conducted as part of this study, revealed that even this appointment was controversial, and it was mainly through support from a senior male that she was promoted. Although there have been a few women in senior departmental leadership positions, there has never been a female Governor or Deputy Governor appointed at Thai Utility.

Thai Utility does not have any formal policies that would prevent women from gaining positions in senior management in the firm. In fact, its policies – unlike some other former government offices that have been privatized – are stated as gender-neutral, even though organizational roles can be seen to be gendered. Neither can it be stated that women simply have not been working for the company for long enough to gain senior roles. There have been women working in administrative and lower management roles since at least the 1980s, according to some senior informants I spoke to during the course of research preparation. Instead, women at Thai Utility face a glass ceiling of advancement above the middle management level. It is not that they are unprepared, unwilling or even unavailable, or that they are explicitly barred from these roles. Instead, they simply remain outside of senior management roles, even if they spend their entire career in the organization. This research is intended to investigate why the stated policy of gender-neutrality is so observably out of step with the reality that Thai Utility's work roles and power are strongly gendered. Therefore, a key aim of the thesis is to problematize this claim of gender neutrality, using Acker's theory of the gendered organization, and show that Thai Utility is not a gender-neutral organization.

1.1.3 The researcher's family, access to Thai Utility and family structures

Large organizational research requires access to the organization, not just physically but in terms of the organizational culture (Symon & Cassell, 2012). My access to the organization for the research was provided by my parents, who prior to retirement were high-level employees within Thai Utility. My father was formerly a Governor of the organization, while my mother was a middle manager and, for some time, president of the Housewives' Association. Together, they held these positions for over 35 years, and their entire working lives were spent at Thai Utility as they climbed through the organization's ranks. With their existing social connections in the organization, it was possible for my parents to sponsor my research by providing contacts in the Human Resources department and upper management.

As will be explained in Chapter 4, these connections were critical for conducting the research. However, my parents' roles in the organization were about more than just instrumental network ties to facilitate the study. In many ways, Thai Utility *was* our family life, and the organizational environment influenced my own childhood and expectations of work and organization life. Thus, in studying Thai Utility, I study my own family's structure and relationships of power, control and caring viewed through a lens of organizational power and control.

1.2 Research Rationale

This research began with the perspective that structural not individual factors underlie Thai Utility's gendered hierarchy and exclusion of women at the upper levels of the organization. From here, the research rationale is built up through two levels: the nature of gendered organizations and the activity of networking within them, and previous research into the gendered organization in Thailand.

1.2.1 Gendered organizations and networking

This study uses a theoretical framework that incorporates Acker's (1990, 1992) theory of the gendered organization, which was expanded using the concept of gender subtext by Benschop and Doorewaard (1998, 2012). This theoretical framework is explained in full in Chapters 2 and 3. In chapter 2, I outline the substance of Acker's theory of gendered organizations and consider studies which have used it in the past. In chapter 3, I explain how I have used Acker's framework in this research. Briefly, the theory of the gendered organization holds that organizations create conditions of inequality for women through a silent process which Acker (1990) terms organizational logic. Within this process, gender divisions are set out, and cultural associations of gender (symbols and images) are commonly applied. This leads to the development of gender identities, which all in turn influence interactions between genders. These dimensions of the gendered organization serve to disadvantage female workers because, even though formal policies and organizational processes are expressly gender-neutral, they are formulated around assumptions of an 'ideal worker' who is inherently male. For example, the 'ideal worker' may be one who can devote long hours to the job, which women are viewed as being unable to do due to their family commitments. Women are therefore punished by the organization for not being (perceived as) able to meet these criteria,

through unequal pay, positions and access to power and resources (Acker, 1990). The exact nature of organizational logic is uncertain in Acker's (1990) model. This research adopts the concept of the gender subtext, which argues that these dimensions of the gendered organization 'add up' to a gendered organizational logic which structures and governs gender and its consequences within the organization (Benschop & Doorewaard, 1998a, 1998b, 2012).

This research is particularly concerned with gendered interactions, which are influenced cumulatively by the other dimensions of the gendered organization (Acker, 1990; Benschop & Doorewaard, 1998b). The specific form of gendered interaction this research investigates is networking, which is treated for the purposes of this research as a form of gendered practice. Networking can be briefly defined as a process of formal and informal interaction designed to create expressive (or emotion-based) and instrumental (or utility-based) relationships (Sozen, 2012). Networking is valuable to individuals in organizations because it affords them access to resources and power they could not otherwise reach, which they can then (potentially) use for their own purposes, such as career advancement (Sozen, 2012). Networking is commonly presented as a sort of value-neutral technical skill which can be learned and used equally well by anyone (Ozkazanc-Pan & Clark Muntean, 2018). However, research has revealed that this is not true – instead, networking in the context of organizations is highly gendered (Benschop, 2009). This means that whether individuals can actually engage in networking, and whether they can use it effectively, is influenced by their gender.

Briefly, it can be stated that women are either excluded from networking activities or, if formally included, do not achieve the same benefits. For example, women may be excluded from existing networks from an early point (such as university), limiting their access to organizational resources (Ozkazanc-Pan & Clark Muntean, 2018). There are also structural barriers to participation in networking activities (Greguletz et al., 2019). However, by far the most common explanations for women's lack of access to or ineffective use of social network connections are individualist. Authors have argued that women may be reluctant to use social connections instrumentally (Greguletz et al., 2019), use the wrong networking techniques (Forret & Dougherty, 2004), are not assertive enough or are too reluctant to network at all (Brands & Kilduff, 2014), or otherwise deficient in networking skill or knowledge (Giuffre & Webber, 2020). None of these explanations are effective at illuminating the hidden organizational structures of the gendered organization. Instead, they rely on the notion of individual deficiency of women, which could be corrected if they were taught to act like men (Giuffre & Webber, 2020). Essentially, such explanations buy into gendered organizational

logics that focus on individual women's failure to meet the requirements of the ideal worker, rather than a systematic and structural exclusion of women from the organization. This research rejects these individualist explanations, instead looking for explanations for the widespread lack of representation of women within Thai Utility.

There are some gaps in the literature on gendered organizations. One of the biggest gaps is that although a few authors have addressed this question explicitly (Benschop, 2009; Ozkazanc-Pan & Clark Muntean, 2018), it is not very common to evaluate the actual interaction practices that have limited the organization. Even in studies that do address networking as a gendered activity, these studies frequently take individualist explanations without considering the wider context and organizational and cultural pressures on gendered interaction.

Another gap in the literature relates to the use of the gendered organization model itself. One of the limitations of the model is that Acker's (1990) theory of the gendered organization does not explicitly spell out connections between the dimensions of the gendered organization and how they interact with each other to formulate an integrated whole. This is part of its complex, ambiguous and poorly focused framing, which has required more elaboration in later work (Dye & Mills, 2012). This research uses Benschop and Doorewaard's (1998a, 1998b, 2012) formulation of the theory, in which the dimensions of gendered structures, symbols & images, identities and interactions accumulate or 'add up' into one or more gendered organizational logics which can be identified. The other significant critique addressed here is that the gendered organization model is, as one author noted succinctly, frequently cited but rarely applied (Lester et al., 2017). In other words, while it is frequently used as a theoretical framework, it is not typically used as a tool for a comprehensive organizational analysis. This research is designed to address these critiques, first by focusing the theory through a broader theoretical framework (explained in Chapter 3), and second by using the framework for comprehensive organizational analysis.

1.2.2 Gendered organizations in Thailand

There has been limited research using the concept of gendered organizations in Thailand. One of these studies, which was conducted in the nursing profession, showed that even though Thailand is perceived as a female-dominated society, there are still strong gender divisions within professions (Kattiyapornpong & Cox, 2017). Specifically, nursing is viewed as a female profession, while medicine is viewed as a male profession. This strong division of gender imposes both gender identity assumptions and interaction limitations, as well as

creating hierarchies of power within the profession (Kattiyapornpong & Cox, 2017). Another study also identified strong gender divisions in professions, this time in the construction industry, which limited what work roles were available to women and how they could participate in the workplace (Hossain & Kusakabe, 2005). This study, which compared Thailand and Bangladesh, found that women were not strictly segregated in Thailand, as they were in Bangladesh. However, certain jobs and roles were not viewed as appropriate for women. Thus, there is evidence from a few previous studies that despite the cultural differences between Thailand and the Western countries where Acker's (1990) theory was formulated and has been tested, there are still signs of the gendered organization at work. What is less clear is the role that gender plays in networking in Thai organizations, as I could not find any previous research that addressed this question.

In summary, there is a theoretical rationale for undertaking this research (discussed in Section 1.2.1), which is that a full and integrated application of the theory of gendered organizations to networking has not been conducted in the literature previously. This offers the opportunity to advance the theoretical understanding of gendered organizations and how it affects interaction and networking in the organization. The empirical rationale for undertaking the research is that although there is evidence for gendered organizational structures and logics as outlined in Acker's (1990) theory in a few studies, these studies have not elaborated on the role of networking as a form of gendered interaction. They also have not fully applied the theory of gendered organizations, echoing the limitation of applications of Acker's (1990) theory above. Therefore, this research is intended to fill theoretical and empirical gaps, by using a specific lens of structural processes at the organizational level that guide and structure gendered interactions.

1.3 Research Aim and Questions

The aim of this research is to investigate networking as a gendered practice at Thai Utility and the role that it plays in women's career advancement, particularly into senior positions. The research questions that were investigated in the study were:

Research Question 1: In what way is Thai Utility gendered, and what is the impact of this on the career advancement of male and female managers throughout their career lifecycles?

To investigate this research question, I apply Acker's framework of gendered organizations to Thai Utility, a large organization in Thailand, drawing out gendered aspects of the organizational context. Using the lens of the gendered organization (Acker, 1990) and gender subtext (Benschop & Doorewaard, 2012), I investigate this research question by first evaluating the gender divisions, symbols and images, and identities that can be identified within the organization. This analysis illuminates how Thai Utility is gendered and how this is reflected in the career paths of men and women within the organization.

Research Question 2: In what ways is networking at Thai Utility a gendered practice?

In this study, networks are treated as a form of gendered interactions within Acker's framework. In this study, I examine interaction networks of managers at different levels of the organization, analyzing these networks to understand how networks and interactions differ between male and female managers, how networking practices emerge and what role they play in career advancement, and how the effects of networking change depending on the gendered context of interaction. I examine how key network contacts, organizational family relationships, formal and informal interactions and their effects are gendered and how men and women benefit differently from interactions. Here, I evaluate the different aspects of gendered interaction. This leads to the conclusion that it is not individual deficiency of women in networking skill, but an organizational logic of 'family' which excludes women's full participation in networking, that hinders their advancement on par with their male colleagues. Next, I examine gendered interactions through the lens of gendered networking (Benschop, 2009) to understand how managers of different genders have different network structures and effective use of these networks to achieve promotion.

Research Question 3: What gendered organizational logics can be seen emerging within Thai Utility? How do these gendered organizational logics affect the career advancement of male and female managers?

To address this research question, I use the 'additive' approach to gendered organizational logic, in which the gender divisions, gendered symbol and image, gender identities and gendered interactions 'add up' to one or more gender subtexts, or organizational logics (Benschop & Doorewaard, 2012). I identify gender subtexts, such as 'women's place in the home' and 'divided loyalties', that influence how female workers are perceived as different from, and therefore inferior to, the male ideal worker, and how these gender subtexts have a discernible impact on career paths and advancement of women compared to men.

These research questions are investigated through an in-depth interview and personal networking map (of each participants in managerial level) of Thai Utility, to address the areas of knowledge set out above. The scope of the research is set out below.

1.4 Scope of the Research and Limitations

Data was collected through in-depth personal interviews with managers during the research period (2019-2020). The data itself is reflective in nature, investigating both the present and future experience of networking and gendered interaction within the organization and their previous experience which has shaped their advancement. The analysis is based on an iterative analysis approach and compares between managers at different levels and of different genders to address the research questions.

The research takes place at dual levels of individual and organization. These levels are not truly distinct, but intertwined and interdependent – the individual manager’s experience of networking at Thai Utility is affected by the organization’s existing structures and practices, but individuals (especially high-ranking individuals) can also affect these organizational structures and practices. Thus, by investigating the experience of individual managers in the organization, it is possible to understand how networking influences career advancement and how gendered organizational logics emerge from these interactions.

The research uses a theoretical framework that incorporates the theory of gendered organizations (Acker, 1990, 1992a, 1998) and gender subtext (Benschop & Doorewaard, 1998b, 1998a, 2012) as its key components, as explained in Chapters 2 and 3. In Chapter 2, I outline Acker’s theory of gendered organization, explaining each of its dimensions and their relationships and considering some of the existing research which has drawn on her work. In Chapter 3, I outline how I use Acker’s framework, drawing from and locating my use of the framework and its dimensions within the context of the small number of studies which have used the framework in full. The research is also informed by the literature on networking practices within organizations and as a gendered practice. The implication of this theoretical framework, in addition to the use of gender as a lens to understand both networking practices and organizational advancement, is that individuals are not considered to be *deficient* or inadequate, instead, it is the structural conditions of networking within the organization, driven by gendered organizational logics, which are the focus of investigation.

The scope of the research is limited in several ways. The most important limitation is that it only addresses career advancement at the managerial level at Thai Utility. This means that, for example, it excludes workers who have not yet attained (or who may never attain) positions of supervisory and managerial authority or, in some cases, senior technical responsibility. To some extent, this is an elitist view of the organization, especially since, as will be explained in the findings, the individuals that ascend to management roles typically already have some level of network connections, such as family connections, that enable their initial hiring and advancement. Furthermore, this means that there may be different conditions in place within departmental organizations that are not addressed; for example, it may be more difficult for women to gain engineering supervision positions at all compared to administrative positions, which might be reflected in the cases where women have not achieved advancement. Another limitation is that although the research does reflect the historical experience of the managers it interviews, it does not take a historical perspective. This is different from some other studies using the gendered organization, which have used historical documentation to investigate a long history of organizational evolution and change (J. Lewis & Morgan, 1994; Manville, 1997; Parsons et al., 2012). However, this approach was rejected for the current study because I could not access documentation that reflected the historic position. The choice was made instead to focus on the organization's present, as a possible inflection point of change in the gendered organizational logic which has previously structured interactions. These limitations do not detract from the usefulness of the study, but they do limit what kinds of information are included in the study and mean that there are some perspectives that have not been represented.

1.5 Research Contributions

This research has three important contributions to make – its academic contribution, its managerial contribution for Thai firms, and its contribution to management policy at Thai Utility itself.

As noted above, there is an academic gap on gender and organizations (and gendered organizations) in Thailand. Therefore, the knowledge gained from this research will have significance for understanding the gendered organization specifically in Thailand. More generally, it will contribute to understanding of gendered organizations in non-Western cultures. One of the key critiques of the gendered organization model is that it does not, as

initially stated, address questions of intersectionality of gender, class, ethnicity and culture (Acker, 2012). This is not the only study to have investigated gendered organizations in non-Western organizational contexts, as it is one of the minor streams of research in gendered organizations (Nkomo & Rodriguez, 2019). However, the research on gendered organizations remains mainly situated in Western cultural contexts. There is also the problem of full application of the model, which as is explained in Chapters 2 and 3, is not very common. Therefore, this research can contribute to academic knowledge in several ways: in its situation in a large non-Western domestic company, in its theoretical application of Acker's framework in full, and perhaps most importantly in its investigation of networking as a gendered activity within the organization. Thus, the study will contribute both empirical knowledge and theoretical insight to the body of research on gendered organizations.

The second contribution is to managerial practice in Thailand's domestic organizations. The study addresses one of the problems that Thai organizations, like many others, struggle with, which is making the best use of its well-trained and well-educated female workers and overcoming inherent assumptions and biases against female employees. The research is intended to illuminate the gender subtexts of Thai Utility, which are expected to draw heavily on the gender subtexts inherent to Thai organizations generally. This is because gendered organizational logics and subtexts are not typically unique to organizations, but are instead adapted from the existing cultural environment (Beverley, 1998; J. Lewis & Morgan, 1994; North-Samardzic & Taksa, 2011). By investigating the gendered logics of Thai Utility, the study will provide knowledge for managers of other Thai domestic organizations that will allow them to investigate their own organizational cultures. As will be discussed in Chapter 7, whether this will actually lead to change is a fraught question that does not have a straight answer. It is my hope that the research will at least cause organizational leaders to begin to think about how gendered logics play out in their organizations.

Finally, the research has practical significance for Thai Utility itself. Even though its top leadership structure is male and to some extent, as the research will show in future chapters, there is limited impetus for change, at least some managers have recognized that there does need to be change in the gender balance of the organization. The findings of the study can be used to adapt Thai Utility's culture, for example by reducing the emphasis on engineering as the core activity of the organization or changing formal organizational activities to include women explicitly. As above, whether the study's findings are used to facilitate change in the

organization, or whether changing the organization's gendered logics outside of broader social change is possible, is uncertain.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

This study is founded on three key concepts. The first is the concept of gender itself, which in this study is proposed as a ‘doing’ gender perspective. The second key concept is the theory of the gendered organization, originally proposed by Joan Acker (1990). The third key concept is the activity of networking, or formation and development of a web of supportive social networks, as a gendered practice. Together, these concepts allow for investigation of Thai Utility as a gendered organization, with a focus on networking as an expression of gendered organizational practice. The reviewed theories also allow the research to be oriented to an organizational, systematic explanation for gendered differences in networking practices and outcomes, rather than the individualist explanations that have dominated previous studies. The literature review continues with the second of these key concepts – the gendered organization. First, the concept of gender and how it has been theorized is reviewed (Section 2.1). This section serves to define gender as it is used in this study and address the complexity of understanding what gender means. Second, an overview of the theory of gendered organizations itself, and a review of how other authors have operationalized this theory, is offered (Section 2.2). This discussion establishes how Acker’s (1990) theory can be used most effectively within organizational research, which is critical for the theoretical framework (presented in Chapter 3). It also provides a critical reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of gendered organization theory in this context. Next, the question of networking as a gendered organizational practice is evaluated (Section 2.3). The second section of the chapter begins with a brief overview of network theory and what is meant by networking in organizations. Then, a review of previous theories and empirical findings on gender differences in networking as an organizational practice is provided. This offers context for one of the more challenging aspects of Acker’s theory, which is examination of gendered interaction processes. The penultimate section of the chapter reviews previous studies on gendered networks and organizations. This study draws not on the individualist explanations that dominate much of the literature on gendered networking differences, but on organizational and structural explanations for gendered differences in networking and its outcomes. Many, though not all, of these studies have used Acker’s gendered organization theory, illustrating both its strengths and its weaknesses for investigation of networking as a gendered organizational practice.

2.1 Overview of Gender

2.1.1 Definition of gender

A basic definition of gender is that it is a binary social division of people into categories (men and women), based on the biological binary of sex (male and female) (Cranny-Francis *et al.*, 2019). This division is not merely a classification, but is instead a role assignment within a hierarchy, in which men/males are superior to male/females. This definition has the virtue of simplicity, but in many ways it is too simple, because it does not account for the complexities of gender and its interaction with sex.

Another definition of gender comes from Judith Butler, who defines gender as a performance, rather than a set of passive characteristics that make up an identity. Butler argues against what she views as a false dichotomy between socially constructed gender and biologically determined sex; instead, both sex and gender are socially constructed (Butler, 2011). The concept of gender performativity, derived from Butler's (1988) earlier work, argues that gender identity is made up of a series of repeated, somewhat improvised, performances in which the individual presents herself as a specific gender until the individual internalizes that identity. Based on the concept of the phenomenology of the body (Merleau-Ponty, 1972 cited in Butler (1988)), Butler argues that gender is an expression of "an active process of embodying certain cultural and historical possibilities" (Butler, 1988, p. 521) rather than a passive concept. Thus, for Butler, based on these theories of phenomenology and sexual being, gender is a series of performances, which are repeated naturally and become part of the individual's social identity. In Butler's (2011) view, performance of gender is not a radical act, but it is not voluntary either; instead, social processes of regulation (or regulative discourses) limit the range of expression of gender.

A related theory of gender is that of 'doing' gender, which is frequently used within organizational studies (Kelan, 2010). This perspective was originally proposed by Candice West and Don Zimmerman (1987), who argued that gender was not an inherent characteristic of the individual, but instead a set of actions or conduct that individuals chose based on their context and environment – as a "routine, methodological and recurring accomplishment (West and Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126)." This is a somewhat different statement from Butler's (2011) argument on performativity as a not-quite-voluntary act bounded by various constraints. The perspective of 'doing' gender also acknowledges the contextuality of gender, which varies between cultures and norms (as well as cultures-within-cultures, as in the gender expression of

Asian American women) (Pyke and Johnson, 2003). At the same time, logics of ‘doing’ gender are not divorced from Butler’s (2011) performativity view – instead, they are both founded in desire for acceptance and meaningful interaction with others (Kelan, 2010). Thus, the perspectives are related and do not necessarily conflict.

There are a lot of different ways to understand and theorize the ‘doing’ gender perspective (Nentwich and Kelan, 2014). Kelan (2010) notes that these including ethnomethodologically and discursive approaches, have led to different understandings of how to ‘undo’ the gender binary. (‘Undoing’ gender refers to the situation where gender categories are no longer relevant because of changes in the underlying structure or meaning of gender (Kelan, 2010).) This is one of the largest problems of using the ‘doing’ gender perspective, because there is a lack of consistency in how it has been developed and applied, leading to a sometimes vague meaning (Nentwich and Kelan, 2014). To address this concern, this study offers a specific definition of ‘doing’ gender, which is that it is the “routine, methodological and recurring” (West and Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126) practice of engaging in gendered behaviour in response to a specific environment.

This research focuses on the ‘doing’ gender perspective presented by West and Zimmerman (1987), rather than strictly on Butler’s (2011) performativity perspective, because it reinforces the idea that gender is something that the individual *does* in a specific context, rather than an integral part of the identity (or conversely a disguise). As explained by the theorists who originally proposed the term, “When we view gender as an accomplishment, an achieved property of situated conduct, our attention shifts from matters internal to the individual and focuses on interactional and ultimately institutional arenas (West and Zimmerman, 1987, p. 126).” Thus, the perspective of ‘doing’ gender is most appropriate for this research, which investigates gender not as an inherent property of individuals, but as an active, agentic response by individuals to their environment.

So far, this definition of gender has focused on the Western dichotomous model of binary gender, which raises the question of exactly how universal this definition is. Butler (2011) argues that gender is not a single identity or set of performances but is instead intertwined with race (or ethnicity), class and other intersectional dimensions of identity. However, this insight does not go far enough to acknowledge that the definition of gender as a dichotomy is, in itself, a regulatory discourse that limits the ways in which we can think about gender (and express gender) (Doan, 2010). As Doan (2010) points out, there is a small, though not negligible, portion of any population that transgresses gender binaries, either by adopting the gender performance of the ‘other’ binary sex or by rejecting gender performance altogether.

Thus, the definition of gender as a binary is itself exclusionary and restricts who can be considered within such an analysis. Another fundamental problem with the definition of gender as a set of binary relationships is that this is a social construction (in itself) that is not universal (Herdt, 1996). Instead, both biological sex and social gender may be constituted as two, three, or more categories in different times and places. Furthermore, there may be a stronger or weaker connection between sex and gender; in some cultures and times, sex entirely determines gender, while in others gender is role-based (or performance-based) without regard to sex (Herdt, 1996). In the contemporary world, Thailand stands out as a culture that in many ways explicitly rejects the Western gender binary model, instead maintaining its own internal classifications of gender and its relation to sex (Ocha, 2012). Therefore, for several reasons, accepting the dichotomous division of both sex and gender at face value provides an inadequate analysis of gender.

Given these varying and complicated interactions between theories and definitions of gender, an integrative definition of gender as a performance has been devised. This definition incorporates part of Butler's (2011) concept of gender as bodily experience through which a gender identity is presented. However, rather than following Butler's concept of performativity of gender (in which gender is a repeated and naturalised performance), the definition of gender incorporates West and Zimmerman's (1987) perspective of 'doing' gender, in which the performance of gender roles is specific to context. In other words, gender is a performance of a specific, contextual gender role, which becomes institutionalised, rather than a property of the individual. This aspect of the definition is chosen because my study explicitly rejects the individualist perspective on gender, instead arguing that it is systematic, organisational and to some extent externally imposed rather than chosen. In response to Cranny-Francis, et al.'s (2019) definition and the observations of Doan (2010), Herdt (1996) and Ocha (2012), this study does not insist that the social performance of gender is necessarily related to biological sex, or that biological sex follows a binary classification.

2.1.2 Theories of gender within organizations

There have been several efforts to theorize the role and actions of gender within organizations (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Ely and Meyerson's (2000) typology of gender within organizations identified four such approaches. One of these frames, which they title "fix the women", assumes that women are just like men, but lack specific skills in the workplace that prevent them from gaining workplace equity. Therefore, the envisioned 'fix' is to offer women

training and development to make up for these lacks. This is consistent with Butler's (2011) explanation of the traditional construction of gender as a *lack* on the part of women. The second frame identified by Ely and Meyerson (2000) is 'value the feminine'. In this frame, women and men are viewed as different, especially in terms of their skills and spheres of influence. In this viewpoint, the reason that women do not achieve equity in the workplace is because their strengths are not recognized and accepted, a problem that is addressed through diversity training and celebration of "women's ways" (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). The authors describe third frame as 'create equal opportunities'. Within this frame, the theory is that power structures and limited opportunity reduce women's access to and resources for participation in the organization. The solution for this problem is that policies can be used to eliminate barriers, for example implementation of flexible working or other benefits. The problem with all of these frames of reference is that they tend to erase or ignore the effects of continued inequality of women in the workplace (Kelan, 2008). Finally, Ely and Meyerson (2000) describe their fourth frame as 'assess and revise work culture'. Under this frame, the problem identified is that "social processes designed by and for white, heterosexual, class-privileged men appear neutral but uphold gender as fixed, ranked oppositions (Ely and Meyerson, 2000, p. 107)." The solution to this problem is not implementing individual policies, but to change the entire organization in order to critique and revise the organization through a process of experimental revision until gender is no longer one of the power dimensions of the organizational hierarchy. This is fundamentally different from the first three frames, where it is assumed that it is women, rather than the organization itself, that must be changed. While the Ely and Meyerson (2000) based this fourth category which is to assess and revise work culture on Acker's (1990) model of the gendered organization, other authors have since taken up development of the theory. This research draws on this fourth frame as the basis for its analysis.

2.2 Theory of the Gendered Organization

2.2.1 History and overview of Acker's theory of the gendered organization

Acker's (1990) theory of the gendered organization was among the first attempts to address organizations and power from a feminist perspective (Benschop and Verloo, 2016). While there certainly were earlier studies on feminism in an organizational context, in many cases these were case studies that investigated organizations concerned with feminist organizations (Iannello, 1992). Acker (1990) attributes this lack of attention to several causes,

fundamentally arguing that even when power and inequality in the organization was discussed, organizational sociology is grounded in the experience and perspective of men; therefore, the role of gender remained invisible. Furthermore, Acker's (1990) model of the gendered organization was among the first such models to suggest that it was the organization – rather than women themselves – that needed to change (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). The model has been revisited over time, with concerns such as intersectionality addressed (Acker, 2006, 2012). Therefore, even though the theory of gendered organizations is now about 30 years old, it is my opinion that it remains relevant to understanding how gender works within the organization, how this leads to gender inequality and how the organization must be changed in order to change the underlying hierarchies of gender that are present within the organization.

The foundational work of Acker's (1990) theory is particularly important, because it establishes many of the ways that early feminist theories failed to deal adequately with either gender or organizations. Acker (1990) begins her analysis by considering earlier treatments of gender in the organization. She points, for example, to the work of Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1977). In her analysis, Kanter argued that gender differences were structural, and that women are placed poorly within the organizational structure (Kanter, 1977). However, Acker (1990) notes that Kanter (1977) does not follow through with her analysis of gender as a component of the organizational structure. She then notes further developmental work, including the critique of bureaucracy as an organization of oppressive male power (Acker, 1990) offered by Kathy Ferguson (1984). This critique is trenchant, but as Acker (1990) points out, fundamentally flawed. For example, the author uncritically accepts the stereotype of the feminine as weak, powerless and passive, as well as the disembodiment and de-gendering of power (Ferguson, 1984). These earlier attempts at theorization all suffered from the same problem, which is that the very embeddedness of gender within the organization made it difficult to 'see' (Acker, 1990). Thus, Acker (1990) argued that it was time for a re-evaluation and theoretical examination of gender within the organization.

The core of Acker's (1990) theory is that the organization is not a neutral entity, but a gendered process that draws on specific social assumptions, interactions, processes and structures. She elaborates this point further, stating that:

“To say that an organization, or any other analytic unit, is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not an addition to ongoing processes, which cannot be properly understood without an analysis of gender...” (Acker, 1990, p. 146)

Britton (2000) elaborated on how an organization could be gendered. First, she noted that organizations could be gendered in that they were dominated by male or female workers (Britton, 2000). However, this definition is problematic, because it risks confusing sex composition (for example, share of female workers) with gender typing (whether work is 'coded' as being for male or female workers). She points to the 'Rosie the Riveter' stereotype and actual organizational situation, in which women were fulfilling men's roles without achieving any lasting redefinition of these roles as women's roles. This is an example of this problem. Instead, she argues that organizations become gendered through specific processes and discourses that either support or reject the gendering processes (Britton, 2000). This is a more satisfactory source for the definition of organizational roles than simply assuming they are gendered a priori, as it also acknowledges the difficulty involved in the redefinition of gender roles and sex roles.

The gendered organization is not a static entity, but a perpetual process of interaction and co-construction of meaning and symbol. Acker (1990) draws on earlier work (Scott, 1986) to identify five distinct, but interdependent, gendering processes. These processes result in the embedding of gender as one of the axes of organizational power and the obscuring of the importance of gender at the same time. This invisible embeddedness of gender can even be seen in the study of gender, which has been by default the study of women (Acker, 1992).

2.2.2 The processes of the gendered organization

2.2.2.1 Gender divisions

The basic process of the gendered organization is "construction of divisions along lines of gender (Acker, 1990, p. 146)." These divisions could be between jobs and tasks, organizational power, physical space, and behaviour. These gender divisions do not arise a priori within the organization; instead, they are based on existing divisions between gender roles, which become embedded in organizational assumptions and practice (Acker, 1998). Gender divisions are self-replicating in high organizational positions such as managerial level, who tend to be men, maintain and enforce divisions that retain power for themselves and other men (Acker, 1990). Furthermore, gender divisions can persist even if the jobs themselves or the technology used to do them change (Acker, 1990). An observation made by Acker (1990) is that introduction of technology can cause gender divisions to be reorganized, retaining high-value roles for men as use of technology is defined as "skilled". For example, the shift between

'typist' and 'programmer' reassigned keyboard work to men with its higher value shift towards computer programming.

2.2.2.2 Symbols and images

Following gender division is "the construction of symbols and images that explain, express, reinforce or sometimes oppose these definitions" (Acker, 1990, p. 146). These symbols and images can be both tangible and intangible; visual and non-visual. They can include everything from use of language to expressions of culture to communication channels, through which the gender division of the organization is communicated. These symbols and symbolic narratives are also important internally, because they are part of the sense-making processes of individuals (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Once again, images such as competence, skill and deployment of technology are associated with men as male symbols, and those in power (typically men) attempt to retain these symbols for themselves (Acker, 1990). Examples of such exclusion of women from symbols of power include the image of the corporate leader (a highly competent man) and the technically skilled programmer or engineer (typically male). As with gender divisions, symbols and images do not develop within the organization (though they may be specific to the organization), but instead are derived from social symbols and images that are used to represent gender (Acker, 1992). Thus, it is not just individuals within the organization (regardless of status level) that expect the CEO or lead programmer to be male; instead, this is a general perception within society that is reflected and reinforced within the organization.

2.2.2.3 Gendered interaction

The third process which creates the gendered organization is gendered interactions between men and women, including the differences in power create "patterns that enact dominance and submission" (Acker, 1990, p. 147). One of the most common types of gendered interaction is the conversation, or verbal communication between individuals (Acker, 1990). Differences in conversation have long been noted. For example, it has long been observed that men interrupt conversations more than women, which has been attributed by at least some authors as due to status differences (Anderson and Leaper, 1998). Simply, men assume that they have priority within conversations and do not hesitate to interrupt. Other authors have shown that men tend to dominate conversations in terms of talking time, even though it may be perceived that women talk for longer than they actually do (Karpowitz and Mendelberg, 2014). There are also differences in gendered interactions and implied meaning. Acker (1990)

argues that gendered interaction falls into a specific pattern, in which women represent emotion while men represent well action such as decision making. These interactions may occur within a formal framework of the organization, but they also occur as part of the everyday social interaction process (Acker, 1992).

2.2.2.4 Gender identity

The combination of gender divisions and the symbols and images that communicate about these divisions and gendered interaction creates the fourth process of the gendered organization, which is the construction of gender identity (Acker, 1990). In the specific context of the organization, Acker (1990, p. 147) defines gender identity as “choice of appropriate work, language use, clothing, and self- presentation as a gendered member of an organization.” Thus, this model of gender identity construction echoes Butler’s (2011) theory of gender performativity, where gender is something that the organization’s members do in response to social expectations as well as (or rather than) something that they are inherently. Also consistent with Butler’s (2011) model, the construction and expression of gender identity is not singular or universal. Instead, it varies depending on social class, race and other factors (Acker, 1992). At the same time, Acker (1990) positions gender identity as an active behaviour that occurs within the context of the organization, and which is based on perceived norms. This is consistent with the definition of ‘doing’ gender, in that it is a conscious and routine behaviour that occurs within the context of the organization and its specific norms (West and Zimmerman, 1987; Kelan, 2010). The practice of ‘doing’ gender is itself not static but instead dynamic, with what constitutes gender identity changing over time as work practices change (Connell, 2010). Therefore, gender identity is not considered as an unchanging aspect of the individual self, but it is a set of active practices that are specific to the organization itself.

2.2.2.5 Gendered organizational logic

The accumulation of gender divisions, symbols and images of gender, gendered interactions and gender identity serves to support the fifth process, which is the embedding of gender into organizational logics (Acker, 1990). Elements of organizational logic include written rules, policies and procedures, and processes such as job evaluation, in which individuals are assessed against a seemingly neutral standard. As Acker (1990) notes, organizational logics appear to be gender-neutral, but in fact is founded on gendered assumptions about performance, in which men are ‘normal’ and women are ‘other’. Furthermore, the abstract, disembodied nature of organizational logic (for example, the neutral,

impersonal nature of the ‘job evaluation’) clashes with the actually existing individual filling the job role.

One of the important insights initially offered by Acker (1990) is that the concept of the job is already a gendered construct, incorporating ideas about a specific kind of work (e.g. outside the home, engaged in what is frequently coded as the ‘male’ public sphere). As a result, the organizational hierarchy is also gendered, because it is based on assumptions about commitment and suitability to this form of work, which is inherently male. Thus, even though organizational logics are based on an assumption of a ‘universal’ individual, “the concept of a universal worker excludes and marginalizes women who cannot achieve the qualities of a real worker because to do so is become like a man” (Acker, 1990, p. 150). Thus, the outcome of the accumulation of the gendered processes of the organization is that the successful worker within the organization is by definition a man, participating in a male fashion in the male public sphere.

There are several examples of the organizational logics of the gendered organization extant in the literature that are highly relevant to gendered networks. For example, focusing on networks as one of the dimensions of Acker’s theory and understanding it as a gendered practice, I have made visible the organizational logic that attaches to gendered activities such as networking. The research, which have investigated recruitment and hiring practices have frequently found that despite claimed gender neutrality, in fact the ambiguity of hiring allows managers to rely on informal networks and personal referrals (Ibarra and Deshpande, 2007; Holgersson, 2013; Wreyford, 2015; Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018). This reliance enables managers to hire from their predominantly male networks, maintaining the status quo of exclusion despite no obvious barriers to women participating. Another example of a gendered organizational logic is career advancement paths which require a specific work-life balance which tends to exclude women. One common such logic is that of the international assignment, which may be reserved for male workers (Gress and Paek, 2014), but might be also only available to those who have no familial responsibilities or those with a mobile spouse without their own career concerns (Echelman, Fiber and River, 2013). Thus, these organizational logics may explicitly exclude women, but far more frequently they are structured in seemingly gender-neutral ways but in fact exclude women.

2.2.3 Consequences of the gendered organization

Acker (1990) initially pointed out several of the consequences of the gendered organization, which ultimately serve to marginalize and exclude women workers. One of these consequences is that organizational logics tend to promote ‘male’ cognitive and emotional practices (e.g., ‘rational’ decision making) while devaluing ‘female’ practices (e.g., emotionality and relational activities). Women’s greater involvement in the private sphere, for example more responsibility for the home and childrearing, is assumed to imply less involvement in the public sphere. The result of this is that women may be assumed to be less committed to the organization, and therefore they are denied opportunities available to men who are assumed not to have these responsibilities. Furthermore, gendered assumptions about women’s bodies, responsibilities and lives are used as an instrument of organizational control, while men’s bodies, responsibilities and lives are assumed to be the default and are not controlled (Acker, 1990). Thus, the accumulation of gendered processes within the organization means that unless these processes are checked, the characterization of the disembodied ‘universal’ worker privileges the embodied man and disadvantages the embodied woman. In other words, the gendered nature of the organization itself serves to reproduce the gender divisions on which it is based (Britton, 2000).

Another consequence of the gendered organization is that organizations, themselves, become gendered (Acker, 1992). As Acker (1992, p. 567) notes, “the law, politics, religion, the academy, the state, and the economy.... Are institutions currently dominated by men, and symbolically interpreted from the standpoint of men in leading positions, both in the present and historically. These institutions have been defined by the absence of women.” In contrast, only in the private sphere institution of the family have women played a role, and even in this role they remained subordinate to the largely absent male head of the household. Because these public sphere institutions, particularly economic institutions, hold outsized privilege in many countries (particularly the United States, where Acker’s work was based), this results in an even further imbalance of power among gendered institutions (Acker, 1998).

2.2.4 Advancements and support for the gendered organization theory

One of the most obvious facts of the gendered organization theory at the time of its initial proposal was that gender existed alongside class and race as an axis of organizational power (Acker, 1990, 1992). This limitation was joined by several other challenges of gendered organizations, including understanding how inter-organizational processes are gendered and

the historic, social roots of gender divisions and the other gendered practices (Acker, 1998). Therefore, it is worth considering what kinds of changes have occurred within the gendered organization model and how these concerns have been addressed.

One of the most important elaborations of the gendered organization theory is the explicit inclusion of intersectionality within its framework of power and hierarchical relations. Intersectionality refers to the fact that inequality and oppression occur in different ways for different groups, which together constitute a single personal identity (Smith, 2016). In the specific context of American racial politics, for example, this means that white, African American, native and Asian women experience gender oppression and discrimination differently. It is because of their different race (or ethnicity in broader terms) (Smith, 2016). Other identities that become relevant to intersectionality include social and economic class, sexual orientation, nationality, health and disabilities (McCall, 2005). As McCall (2005) notes, intersectionality can be an exceptionally complicated analysis question, particularly as each individual is likely to have a different intersectional identity. Thus, the most important takeaway from intersectionality is that the experience of ‘women’ in an organization is not universal but is instead complicated by multiple identities. The implication is that an individual may fall differently within the organizational hierarchy depending on her identity.

Acker (2006) used this complexity of studying intersectionality as the starting point for her ‘inequality regimes’ approach, which was a first effort at elaborating a methodology to study intersectionality inequality in the organization. An inequality regime can be defined as “loosely interrelated practices, processes, actions and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial inequalities within particular organizations (Acker, 2006, p. 443).” As she noted, while it is easy to identify inequality within organizations, it is not always as easy to see the foundation of this inequality. These regimes are not developed a priori within the organization. Instead, they emerge from the organization’s cultural and sociohistorical context. While all organizations have inequality regimes they vary depending on their bases of inequality (usually including race, class and gender, and sometimes including other dimensions), the shape and degree of inequality between groups, and the organizational hierarchies, recruitment and hiring, wage setting, supervision and other organizational processes that reproduce inequality (Acker, 2006). In a later discussion of inequality regimes, Acker (2012) argued that these inequalities persist even following organizational changes intended to reduce them. Therefore, she argued that even though it is simpler to analyse organizations only from a gender perspective, an intersectional perspective is still crucial for identifying and critiquing inequality regimes (Acker, 2012). Thus, considering gender not on

its own, but in the broader context of the organization's inequality regime, is supported as a crucial aspect of the context of gender inequality and gendered organizational processes. While recognising the importance of intersectionality in understanding the complex processes of inequality, this study focuses on gender only, using Acker's original gendered organisational theory framework. This decision was made for two reasons. First, Acker's framework has not been fully used in many studies (see Chapter 3). Therefore, while we are familiar with Acker's theoretical framework of gendered organisations, there are few studies which have truly investigated the gendered nature of organizations through its application. This study is one of the few which does apply the theory in full and is novel in its use of Acker's framework in Thai organisational context. Second, the organization this study was conducted in has never had a woman in a senior Governor position, and men have a nearly exclusive hold on senior and executive management positions in general. Understanding why this situation exists is the driving motivation of the research, and therefore the reason why the study concentrates on gender only, as it is self-evidently one of the predominant axes of inequality within the organisation.

Many of the advancements of the theory of gendered organizations are both necessary and useful and bounded by their own organizational context. The introduction of intersectionality, in particular, is grounded in American racial and ethnic hierarchies of status (Smith, 2016), and do not make sense much when applied directly to Thai organizations. This should not be taken to mean that there are no ethnic divisions in Thailand, but only that these are not as strongly delineated as in American organizations. Therefore, the expansion of the gendered organization theory can be recognized as useful and necessary, but also potentially not as applicable outside their original context. This research acknowledges these advancements, but the focus of the research remains on gender, in recognition of these differences.

2.2.5 Evaluation of the theory of gendered organizations

Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations has been subjected to extensive evaluation, which has pointed out the theory's strengths and its weaknesses. Here, a selection of these critiques which are particularly relevant to this research are considered. (Note that there were many advantages and benefits of the model addressed above, and these are not repeated.) These critiques, both positive and negative, offer a balanced view of the theory of gendered organizations and how it can be applied in the organization. It also offers insight into

what difficulties emerge when applying the theory of gendered organizations and how these problems need to be dealt with to have a clear perspective.

2.2.5.1 Positive evaluations of the theory of gendered organizations

One of the biggest advantages of the theory of gendered organization, it is oriented toward changing organizations, not the women within them (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). This was at the time a dramatic shift from earlier theories of gender and organizations, which tended to assume that women were in some way unsuited to the organization. Therefore, there was a need to either change women or to recognize differences without changing them. As Ely and Meyerson (2000) noted, these earlier theories did not challenge the assumption that it was the workers, rather than the organizational structure, that was at fault. Therefore, if any change was prescribed to improve organizational inequality at all, it was superficial and did not create long-lasting change. In contrast, the theory of gendered organization provides space for change within the organization. In fact, the logical inference of the theory is that if an organization is gendered, and this gendering of the organization creates and reproduces inequality, then the organization must change (Britton, 2000).

The gendered organization theory also encapsulated a shift towards institutions and organizations as the unit of analysis in studies of political and social power, which one author has termed the institutional turn (Kenny, 2007). Kenny (2007) focuses on a narrow segment of feminist political science literature in her discussion of gender and power and the institutional turn, but Acker's (1990, 1992) theory of the gendered organization and gender within institutions fits neatly into her framework of institutional power and control. Thus, the focus on power dynamics and control of the organization is aligned with this broader movement toward institutions, power and gender in political science and organizational studies (Kenny, 2007).

The theory of the gendered organization may be most important in today's time of postfeminist discourse, which argues that feminism has been 'done' and women's access is now equal within organizations (Lewis, 2014). Lewis's (2014) observation of female entrepreneurs and the feminine organizational subjectivity that emerges from their experience, for example the discourse of the 'mumpreneur', shows that, despite these claims, women have not achieved equal access or equity within organizations. Thus, there is still a need to investigate and critique evidence for the gendered organization and investigate its effects, since despite the apparent claims of postfeminism, the work of achieving equity has not yet been completed.

2.2.5.2 Critical evaluations of the theory of gendered organizations

A fundamental criticism of the gendered organization model is that it does not consider individual agency within its framework of gendered processes (Britton, 2000; Lester, Sallee and Hart, 2017). While ideal workers (i.e., men) have no motivation for change, if others (i.e. women) try to create change, this only reinforces attempts to control and regulate this deviant behaviour. In fact, it is part of Acker's (1990) core point that the individuals filling organizational roles are not considered. However, as Britton (2000) noted, this strips the individuals within the organization of any agency to create change, how is the organization to change, if no one within its boundaries can cause it to change? This limitation of the theory imposes restrictions, therefore, on users of the gendered organization theory, since it provides no clear route to change either through policy or internal action.

Another basic critique of gendered organizations theory is that, while it is often cited theoretically, it is applied directly only rarely (Lester, Sallee and Hart, 2017). Instead of a tool for comprehensive organizational analysis, for example, it is often used only for its definitions and/or applying only a few of the processes. (How Acker's theory has been fully applied, in the cases where it has, is discussed in Chapter 3.) One of the reasons for this is that the model itself is complex and unfocused, making it difficult to use as an analytical tool (Dye and Mills, 2012). The result of this incomplete consideration of Acker's (1990) theory is that it can lead to misinterpretation or simplification of the meaning of the theory. Another reason is that it is difficult to directly observe some aspects, such as power structures and flows, which may be invisible but are the key to gendered organization theory (Lewis and Simpson, 2012). Thus, in order to fully incorporate Acker's (1990) theory, it is important to consider all aspects, rather than applying it incompletely. Dye and Mills (2012) made an argument that it would be appropriate to use the organizational logic component (assumed to result from the accumulation of the other four gendered processes of the organization) to provide the focus that is needed. By doing so, organizational logics could be characterized as contextual, temporal and specific to the organization. Furthermore, the focus on organizational logics can enable analysis of the discourses of gendered processes, which can be clearer and less obscured than the processes themselves (Dye and Mills, 2012). Thus, even though applying Acker's (1990, 1992) model in its entirety can be complicated, it is not a challenge that cannot be overcome through careful evaluation and, as Dye and Mills (2012) suggest, focusing through the lens of organizational logics.

A critique that follows from the critique of standard definitions of gender (Section 3.1.1) is that the theory of gendered organizations assumes a dichotomous, sex-linked gender binary (Lester, Sallee and Hart, 2017). Gendered organizations have in practice dealt with challenges to gender binaries in different ways. For example, some women's colleges in the United States, which are typically reserved for only female students, have revised their admissions policies to include transwomen in the class of 'women' (Nanney and Brunnsma, 2017). Others, of course, have not done so, consistent with the still-controversial role of transgender people in American society. It cannot be assumed that this would also be the case in Thailand, which as noted has somewhat different gender role constructions than the United States (Ocha, 2012). However, the silence of gendered organization theory on the possibility of gender role construction that is not strictly dichotomous remains problematic. This is especially true in the face of organizational research that suggests that transgender women in the workplace are not, in fact, 'doing' gender in the same way that cisgender women do. But instead are engaging and interacting with a slightly modified set of gender identities, symbols and interactions (Connell, 2010). This also implies that there is no room for an organization to be anything but masculine, as even 'feminine' organizations (those with a majority of female workers, or which are oriented toward feminine concerns) are based on an image of the universal worker which privileges masculinity (Lester, Sallee and Hart, 2017). Thus, the assumption of a dichotomous, sex-linked set of gender roles and its reproduction within the organization has broader concern than just for the relatively small number of non-binary gender conforming workers who may not fit easily within either category. It applies to all organizations, including those established specifically to address women's concerns.

There are also a variety of other critiques that can be made of the gendered organizations model. One of these critiques is that there is inadequate attention paid to the connection between the gender processes of the organization and that of broader society (Martin, 2004). As Martin (2004) notes, gender exists independently of individual organizations, and individuals come to organizations with pre-formed gender identities and assumptions. Thus, while there can be some uniqueness of the gendered processes of the organization, they are ultimately derived from the associated processes of wider society. This is part of more general critique that the model does not take into account the context of gendered organizations adequately (Britton and Logan, 2008). Acker (1998) did acknowledge this problem in later work, and later extensions such as the inequality regime model to reflect these changes. Another such critique is that Acker's (1990, 1992) writings do not take into account sufficiently the complexity and ambiguity of gendered processes within the

organizations, which can themselves create seeming paradoxes when the theory is applied to specific organizations.

Although these are some serious critiques, they do not make the theory of gendered organizations unsuitable for organizational analysis. Instead, they call for the theory to be applied fully and critically, with awareness of its weaknesses and supported as far as possible by supplementary models for more robust analysis.

2.2.6 Empirical use and adaptation of gendered organization theory

It is important to investigate how authors have applied gendered organizations, to understand exactly both the advantages and the challenges of the model and to understand the extent to which its assumptions can be supported in empirical application. In Table 2.2, a summary is provided of all the studies reviewed in this section and providing information for comparison.

The first observation that can be made regarding the empirical application and adaptation of gendered networks is that the critiques of Dye and Mills (2012) and Lester, et al. (2017), regarding the relative frequency of application of the full gendered organization theory, are not wrong. Although many studies were reviewed for this research, only a relatively small number actually applied the theory extensively in a way that followed through with the implications of the model. Thus, even though Acker's (1990, 1992) theory may be widely accepted theoretically, there are a relatively small number of studies it applies to fully. An in-depth discussion of the few studies which have used Acker fully is provided in Chapter 3.

Another observation relates to the breadth of studies that led to the same conclusion. The studies covered a wide range of organizational domains. The majority of these domains were economic institutions such as banking and finance (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a, 1998b), entrepreneurs (Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia, 2019), high technology companies and STEM (Rhoton, 2011), white-collar executive work (Kelly *et al.*, 2010) and oil and gas companies (Williams, Muller and Kilanski, 2012). Other organizational contexts included universities (Kantola, 2008), the military (Taber, 2015), religious organizations (Manville, 1997; Whitehead, 2013), and public organizations (Mastracci and Bowman, 2015). As all of these organizations were in the domains ascribed as 'public', rather than within the home. Since the majority of these organizations have historically been coded as 'male' (Acker, 1990), it is not surprising that these organizations were also found to be gendered (male). What is more surprising is the organizations that one would expect to be coded as 'female' gendered

organizations due to the number of women working there or even the core mission of the organization, which were still gendered as 'male'. There were a few of these organizations, including the British marriage counselling charity Relate (formerly the National Marriage Council) (Lewis and Morgan, 1994), a domestic violence advocacy organization (Nichols, 2011), and the women's rights organization Stewardesses for Human Rights (Parsons *et al.*, 2012). Despite the fact that these organizations are either situated in the private domain of the home, which is typically gendered as a feminine space, or were explicitly intended to address concerns about gender inequality. These organizations were also gendered and promoted the male vision of the 'ideal' worker. Therefore, the first insight that can be gained through these studies is that even if an organizational domain would be stereotypically coded as 'feminine' there is no guarantee that the organization itself will not be 'masculine' gendered.

One of the weakest areas of Lewis and Morgan's (1994) study was applying the gendered organization model as a tool for change. The study pointed out, organizational change to reduce gender bias and discrimination is hard, especially when the organizers do not recognize the gendered nature of the organization (Lewis and Morgan, 1994). As a study on American retailer Best Buy's white-collar staff noted, simply making the organizational policy change is also inadequate to promote change itself (Kelly *et al.*, 2010). As these authors noted, even though the introduction of the policy (which eliminated arbitrary rules about working time or hours in favour of results-based evaluation) was popular, it did not result in a changed image of the 'ideal' worker (which remained the 'hard worker' who put in long hours that were incompatible with home or childcare duties typically filled by women). In other cases, though the authors did not address the question of change at all. For example, while Manville (1997) investigated the construction of the gendered organization in a religious congregation, she did not follow this investigation through to observation of change. Similarly, Kantola (2008) investigated the 'male' identity and interaction of the ideal political science student but did not evaluate how this ideal might be challenged or changed. Of course, the individual researcher may have limited opportunity and power to change, so if the organization does not change on its own, this could not be included. Another probability is that organizational change is in fact superficial and does not challenge gendered organizations, as is the case with many human resources policies (Mastracci and Arreola, 2016).

While most of the studies appeared to uncritically accept gender binaries, there were a few studies that explicitly addressed transgression of binary boundaries within the organization. Surprisingly, two of these studies were situated in religious organizations. One of these studies, which was in an Australian Anglican congregation, was primarily

observational (Manville, 1997). The author observed that while roles within the organization were gender-coded, with leadership assigned as 'male', women who were willing to take on male gender identities (for example being assertive and strong leaders) could be assigned these roles. However, the author did not follow this analysis through to the organizational logic by which she would be assigned such a role or what barriers she would face. Another study, also in a religious context, which is from traditional gender roles, investigating the interaction of gender and sexual orientation (Whitehead, 2013). This study found that religious congregations where power was less gender-dependent also were more accepting and inclusive of non-heterosexual congregational members (although these members were still discriminated against compared to their 'normal' straight male peers). Thus, there is some evidence that the gendered organization model can be used to evaluate how gender boundaries can be crossed, resisted and reassigned. Although this appears to happen relatively infrequently, it does suggest that despite previous critiques (Britton, 2000), there is room for individual action for change.

Another question that a few of the studies addressed is the change in organizations and their context over time. Dye and Mills (2012) pointed out that organizations are not static or ahistorical; instead, they change over time, in response to both internal challenges to the status quo and external context changes. Lewis and Morgan's (1994) historic study of Relate noted that there were attempted changes within the organization during the 1980s, which failed due to the failure to recognize the gendered organizational processes. Thus, this organization, which depended heavily on gendered interactions between volunteer counsellors (mainly female) and paid managers (mainly male), was placed at risk by its own failure to identify the need for change. A broader scope on external change and its effect on gendered organizations was provided by a study on changes in the oil and gas industry over time (Williams, Muller and Kilanski, 2012). These authors noted that the 'old economy' ideal image of the worker, an individual with a set and secure career path in exchange for company loyalty, was seemingly in conflict with the 'new economy' ideal image of insecurity, teamwork and networking-focused career path, seemed to be very different. At the same time, they observed that in fact these two images of the ideal worker were both coded as 'male' and were reproduced in much the same way over time. Another study observed the co-evolution of 'work-life balance' and 'work from home' policies in Canadian tech companies (Hari, 2017). This author noted, even though these policies are superficially similar, in fact they are gendered policies, and women engaged in home activities such as childcare during 'work from home' time may be subjected to regulation and control. A similar study, which compared part-time workers, showed that a discourse of 'ambition as a resource', associated with for example long working hours, was

seemingly gender-neutral, but in practice could only be achieved by men, disadvantaging women (Benschop *et al.*, 2013). Thus, the studies do reflect to some extent that changes in the organization over time could occur. But at the same time if these changes were not performed critically, they could continue to support gendered power structures and organizational logics. A very rare comparative perspective is provided by Taber (2015), who compared two different gendered organizations in which she had participated – the military and academia. This is a particularly valuable study because it explores the extent to which organizations draw on a shared set of gender divisions, gender symbols, gender identities and interaction to constitute their organizational logics (Taber, 2015). Another benefit of this study is that it also shows that organizations are to some extent co-constituting their gender interactions and gendered organizational logics. For example, she points out that militarism and its assumptions about gender identities and interactions have influenced the university, alongside other militaristic influences on the university setting. Thus, this perspective reminds us that gendered organizations do not exist in isolation. Instead, they are frequently interacting, and that they reproduce and reinforce gender identities and organizational logics among themselves. This is the basic idea behind not just organizations, but institutions, being gendered and interacting, as organizations are part of each other's broader context (Britton and Logan, 2008).

A final issue that needs to be addressed is the role that women play within these organizations in reproducing organizational logics that discriminate against women. This was a common theme in many of the studies, especially those which were focused on superficially female-gendered organizations. In some cases, the actions of individual women were at the heart of this reproduction of inequality. For example, the self-presentation of the female entrepreneur as a 'superwoman' able to balance both male and female roles harms other women who cannot achieve this (frankly unrealistic) goal (Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia, 2019). In other cases, individual women may engage in distancing from other women to support their right to access a 'male' position (Rhoton, 2011) or consciously or unconsciously act out 'male' interactions and organizational logics (Parsons *et al.*, 2012). In other cases, however, women are not deliberately acting toward the devaluation of others. Instead, broader culture and institutions such as neoliberal economic institutions may promote discourses of male supremacy, which are then incorporated into the organizational logics (Kantola, 2008). External institutional pressures may also result in organizations having male gendered power structures and organizational processes despite their explicit mission for women (Nichols, 2011; Parsons *et al.*, 2012).

Ultimately, many of the studies that have used the gendered organization theory proposed by Acker (1990, 1992) do show many of the flaws of the theory, but also show the strengths of the theory for identifying problematic and usually invisible structures of power that contribute to gender inequality within the organization. The focus on networking as a specific organizational practice in gendered organization theory provides some improved theoretical and empirical tools for understanding aspects that remain challenging and for making gendered interactions and organizational logics visible. Thus, filling some of the gaps and weaknesses left by empirical applications of Acker's (1990, 1992) model. Table 2.1 (below) summarizes the findings of the empirical studies that address this question.

Table 2. 1 Selection of empirical studies which have applied Acker’s (1990) gendered organization theory

Authors	Context	Summary of the Study
Benschop and Doorewaard (1998a)	Dutch banking organizations	This study investigated an apparent paradox in the gendered organization, where in perceptions of equality may increase over time even though gender inequality still persists. They noted that there were changes in organizational processes, discourses and gender subtexts which resulted in these changes; for example, the introduction of ‘token’ women in high-level roles, which preserved existing gendered organizational processes of exclusion and control while providing apparent evidence for equality.
Benschop and Doorewaard (1998b)	Dutch banking organizations	This study investigated gendered processes of Taylorist and team-based working. They showed that although these are superficially different, both rely on underlying gender identities, interactions and other gendered processes, based on a gender subtext of assumptions about gender roles. Thus, even though the ‘universal’ worker is envisioned differently in these two forms of work, both result in explicitly gendered organizational processes.
Benschop, van den Brink, Doorewaard, and Leenders (2013)	Dutch workers	This study investigated how workers were gendered in part-time roles. They noted that a discourse of ‘ambition as a resource’, along with task mastery, development and career mobility, were used to signify ambition. While all workers had access to most discourses, ‘ambition as a resource’ was a hegemonically masculine discourse that disadvantaged women in material ways; for example, it was associated with symbols such as long work hours, which were more easily attainable for male workers than female workers. This discourse was associated with continued inequality in the workplace.

Authors	Context	Summary of the Study
Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia (2019)	Entrepreneurs	This study examined perceptions of ‘role model’ women entrepreneurs. They found that the ‘superwoman’ entrepreneur, who takes on both male and female roles (e.g. leader and nurturer, businesswoman and mother), are the predominant role models, while those that work in collaborative or other ‘feminine’ ways are not held as role models. They argue that this ‘superwoman’ model serves to reproduce gender stereotypes and obscure both the practical challenges of entrepreneurship as a gendered role for women and the inequality regimes that the practice reinforces.
Hari (2017)	Canadian tech companies	This study examined the discourses of ‘work-life balance’ and ‘work from home’ as specific examples of gendered processes within organizations. These policies overwhelmingly separated the discourses of ‘work-life balance’ (presumed to be a concession to female workers to care for children) and ‘work from home’ (positioned as a convenience for male workers). The idea that they could be combined with ‘work from home’ explicitly excluding the possibility of combining work and childcare. Thus, these two policies were, in the author’s words, both heterosexist and gendered policies.
Kantola (2008)	University political science department	This study investigated the gendering processes of a university political science department, incorporating the full Acker (1991) gendered organizations model to investigate discrimination within the organization. This study found strong evidence for gendered processes, including gendered interactions between supervisors and students (exacerbated by the dominance of men in supervisory roles) and the symbols and images which represent political scientists as male. The result is that female political scientists are viewed as

Authors	Context	Summary of the Study
Kelly, et al. (2010)	White-collar organizations	<p>marginal, often expected to focus on ‘women’s’ political concerns and may struggle to meet the expectations of the ‘ideal’ student. This both worsen gender discrimination and resulted in a higher drop-out rate for female students, reproducing the discourse that male students are superior.</p> <p>This study investigated a specific policy implemented at American technology retailer Best Buy, which was a Results-Only Work Environment. This initiative was designed as a change initiative to challenge the gendered assumptions of work at the organizations such as specific work hours. The authors showed that although these initiatives did meet some success, there was a gendered response to the initiative with women being more accepting of men and less likely to resist the change. It also did not significantly shift the idea of the ‘ideal’ worker away from the long hours that previously revealed.</p>
Lewis and Morgan (1994)	Marriage counselling organization	<p>This study investigated British marriage counselling organization Relate. They identified several gendered processes within the organization, including explicit gendering of roles (e.g. ‘female’ roles like volunteer counsellors versus ‘male’ roles like paid managers). Furthermore, they noted that the organization’s role in marriage counselling (which belongs to the private sphere of the home) is inherently a women’s concern. The authors, who chose a historic perspective, noted that the organization’s failure to understand its gendered nature prevented effective change and led to the partial collapse of the organization.</p>
Manville (1997)	Religious organizations	<p>This study investigated an Australian Anglican parish, investigating how ‘male’ and ‘female’ domains were constructed within the parish. They found that a shared set of underlying</p>

Authors	Context	Summary of the Study
Mastracci and Arreola (2016)	Human resource management (HRM) functions	gender identities and interactions were present, even though parish members may disagree about other factors. This meant that “men are decision-makers and leaders, whereas women are nurturers, carers and servers (Manville, 1997, p. 25).” While women were not explicitly barred from leadership roles, as is sometimes the case in religious organizations, they only could access them by taking on these male attributes.
Mastracci and Bowman (2015)	Public organizations	This study argued that HRM practices are one of the organizational processes that reproduce the organizational logics of the gendered organization. These processes include both stereotypes of the ‘ideal’ worker (coded as male) and those of the ‘female’ worker (who does not meet the ideal). The study also noted that programs put into place by organizations designed to ‘support’ work-life balance, which are predominantly gendered (for example, providing on-site childcare, which is presumed to be needed by women) are not effective at rebalancing the gendered organization and do not result in persistent change.
Nichols (2011)	Domestic violence organizations	This study evaluated the theory of gendered organizations in the context of public organizations. They note that public organizations are distinct from others in several ways, including that such organizations often have an explicit objective of reducing gender bias within the organization. However, the insights from gendered organization theory are limited here.
		This study identified gendered processes in community organizations, which create challenges and barriers for domestic violence victim advocates.

Authors	Context	Summary of the Study
Parsons et al. (2012)	Women's rights organization	This study investigated Stewardesses for Human Rights (SFHR), a 1970's era organization intended to support women's rights. Their use of the gendered organizations theory showed that even though the organization's members were explicitly creating an organization by and for women, they still failure to identify the obscured image of the 'ideal' worker and external pressure led to the organizational logics being gendered (and male) despite the organization's intentions. For example, external pressure from funders required that the organization be hierarchical in nature, rather than collaborative while many of the 'women's issues' that were an initial concern were, as the authors described, 'organized out' and replaced with apparently gender-neutral considerations.
Rhoton (2011)	STEM organizations	This study showed that processes of gender division, symbols and images, and gender identity formation and expression began long before women entered science, technology, engineering and medicine (STEM) fields. These processes, which were then reproduced within STEM organizations beginning in university. This study also observed a process of distancing, in which women participants in STEM fields were forced to disassociate themselves from 'typical' female identities and support the male identities they were adopting. This ultimately reinforced barriers to participation in STEM fields, while at the same time making gender inequality within the field invisible.
Williams, Muller and Kilanski (2012)	Oil and gas firms	This study compared the processes of gendered organizations in the old economy (where the ideal worker could expect standardized career paths and job evaluations and long-term job security) and the new economy (where teamwork, networking and job insecurity

Authors	Context	Summary of the Study
Whitehead (2013)	Religious organizations	<p>predominate). The authors note that in both cases, the ideal worker is conceptualized as ‘male’, but that the mechanisms by which gendered inequality is reproduced in the new economy organization is different. Thus, even though organizations have changed, they continue to have gendered inequality.</p> <p>This study used Acker’s (2006) model of inequality regimes and (1990) gendered organizations to investigate gender and sexuality inequality within American religious organizations. Authors showed that these two axes of inequality were linked. Congregations which accept female religious leaders also show higher acceptance of homosexual congregation members.</p>
Taber (2015)	The military Academic institutions	<p>This study reflected on her experience within different organizations with different gendered core values. These organizations include the military and academic institutions in which she has worked. She observed that both institutions had distinct values and distinct ideal workers. Although she noted academic had been influenced by ‘increasing militarism’ over time as the two became more intertwined. Her analysis identified the gender identities, interactions, and symbols and images that led to gendered organizational logics. She noted that although the gendered organizational logics were distinct, they were founded on a shared gender division and similar assumptions about gender identity and interaction. This study is particularly valuable because of its comparative perspective, and because it reflects on how change can be made.</p>

2.3 Gendered Networking in Organizations

Previous sections of this chapter have focused mainly on theoretical concerns. This theoretical discussion began with an overview of gender and definition and how gender has been used in the literature. Following this, Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organization was reviewed, a process which included both the theory itself, its critiques and approaches to its operationalization. Here, the aspect of *networking*, specifically networking as a gendered practice within the organization, is brought into the review. To begin, a brief definition of exactly what is meant by networking is provided. The section continues with a brief overview of social network theory, which is the dominant theory used to explain networking in organizations. This discussion illustrates that social network theory-based explanations are inadequate for understanding gender differences. Attention then turns to gender differences in networking, and how they have been explained and their consequences. This shows that individualist explanations for gender differences predominate in the literature, with relatively little focus on gender as a structural aspect of the organization. The section closes with a review of those studies that have investigated networking as a gendered organizational practice, both those making use of Acker's (1990) theory and those that have used other explanations. This review illustrates that such organization-wide explanations provide a more complete explanation for gender differences not just in networking practices, but in outcomes, for individuals.

2.3.1 What is networking?

In the organizational context, networking can be defined as a proactive behaviour in which an individual develops and maintains relationships with others, typically for career reasons, such as finding a job or advancing in their careers (Forret, 2014). Networking is a process devoted to cultivating individual relationships, rather than larger relationships, although it is strongly affected by the organizational context (Gibson, Hardy and Buckley, 2014). Another way to understand networking as a practice is that it is intended to build the individual's social capital, or stock of social resources that the individual can draw on (Broadbridge, 2010). Social capital can include reputation, relationships with powerful people (both within and outside an organization), accumulated stocks of favours or other reciprocal

resources that the individual can draw on to achieve their own goals or promote the goals of others (Broadbridge, 2010).

There are several different ways to understand what networking is, exactly. Networking can be internal (within the individual's current organization) or external (outside the individual's current organization) (Wolff and Moser, 2010). Networking activities can include building, maintenance, and use of network relationships, each of which have a different type of relational activity associated with them (Wolff and Moser, 2010). Another definition of networking states that processes can include "maintaining contacts, socializing, forming coalitions, negotiating, and sharing or withholding information (Van den Brink and Benschop, 2014, p. 464)," among others.

Critically, networking is viewed as an individual, optional and self-motivated process, in which participation is determined by the individual's own motivations for career advancement (Forret, 2014). Furthermore, it is viewed as a crucial element of advancement in the so-called boundaryless career, where rather than career advancement being tied to organizations and determined by set career paths individuals are mobile between organizations, fields and positions and are dependent on relationships for success (De Janasz and Forret, 2008). Thus, in summary, networking is an individually driven, but organizationally bounded, process of relationship creation, maintenance and utilization, intended to accumulate social capital and contribute to career advancement.

Something that becomes obvious on investigation of the literature is that there is not much study on how, exactly, networking as a practice comes about. Networking as a practice is typically viewed as a skill that individuals can learn and be effective at, rather than an inherent trait (such as being personality-driven) (De Janasz and Forret, 2008; Casciaro, Gino and Kouchaki, 2016). Despite this framing as an individual skill, there are many indicators that in fact there are differences in ability to participate in networking activities. For example, De Janasz and Forret (2008) point to personality barriers, such as introvertedness and lack of confidence, but they do not address questions such as structural barriers to participation. Their exercises to improve networking skills address self-presentation and confidence, along with teaching about networking, but these activities are typically oriented toward initial relationship formation rather than understanding of what kinds of networking are useful. Casciaro, et al. (2016) address a different aspect of why networking can be difficult; specifically, the problem that instrumental use of social connections to achieve career goals can seem unethical or

“dirty”. However, rather than a critical evaluation of this position, they simply encourage the use of their chosen techniques (which like De Janasz and Forret’s techniques, rely on initial introduction and instrumental social capital use). Thus, even though these are two of the most frequently cited sources on learning how to network, there is little critical examination of how networking occurs or what non-individual barriers may exist.

Networking is posited to have positive effects on individual job and career advancement goals, although its effect within the organization is much less clear. Forret (2014) identified three so-called career competencies that networking supported, including “knowing why” (understanding their career purpose and how to achieve it), “knowing how” (gaining skills and experience essential for careers), and “knowing whom” (relationships with individuals that provide social and instrumental support and other resources for job advancement). These are viewed as reciprocal competencies that allow the individual to make contact with social supports, help them find jobs through their social networks, and come to the attention of powerful others for career advancement and promotion (Forret, 2014). For example, individuals who have networked intensively may have more visibility to others and more power (either of their own or indirectly through their networking contacts) (Gibson, Hardy and Buckley, 2014). This can lead to not just individual promotions, but also other career opportunities like enhanced training opportunities, high-profile assignments such as international postings, cross-training and other opportunities to improve their skills and social capital (Gibson, Hardy and Buckley, 2014).

In summary, networking in the context of organizations is the building, maintenance and use of relationships to contribute to individual career goals. Networking is positioned as an individual skill, whose use is both self-motivated and self-directed. Furthermore, its benefits are viewed as mainly individual, for example individual career promotions, increased visibility and power, and access to resources such as high-profile job assignments. However, as will be discussed next, networking takes place within an organizational context. Therefore, it cannot truly be said to be an individual activity – or at least, not only an individual activity. Furthermore, the literature on networking as an organizational activity is relatively shallow. Although it was identified as a social practice as early as the 1980s, by 2001 it was acknowledged that there had not been much research into the topic of how networking took place or its actual effects (Linehan, 2001). Although, as will be shown in later discussions, interest has picked up in the past two decades, networking remains an area that seems to have

higher practical or popular importance than empirical research would suggest. This could account for the relatively shallow theorizing surrounding networking in organizations.

2.3.2 Networking in organizations: theoretical insights and theoretical gaps

Most previous studies on networking in organizations have used social network theory, rather than focus on structural and gender explanations, in order to frame their discussion. One author argued that this was because even though there was not (yet) a consensus network theory of the organization, network theories in general, including social network theory, were a useful tool for evaluating organizational structures and processes such as exchanges of power, relationships, and other social concerns. (Galaskiewicz, 2007). Another study showed that at the individual relationship (dyadic level), social networking theory was useful for explaining structures and processes, but authors did not attempt to generalize this to any larger organization (Lizardo and Pirkey, 2014). A few other studies have focused much more intensively on the individualist explanations, such as studies which showed that self-monitoring, along with some big five personality traits, influenced in degree centrality and brokerage positions within their organizational social networks (Fang *et al.*, 2015; Landis, 2016). A third study at the individual level is among the most interesting of those reviewed, because it focused on negative relationships, which the authors called ‘social liabilities’ (Labianca and Brass, 2006). The authors showed that social network theory could model these negative relationships, including their tie strength and connections, in a similar way to the more commonly investigated positive relationships. Furthermore, they found that negative relationships could be more explanatory for organizational outcomes than positive relationships, especially when investigating organizational failures or poor outcomes. In addition to the actual findings of these studies, taken together their findings are important for refuting the critique that social network theory is unconcerned with the individual (Westaby, Pfaff and Redding, 2014). Instead, these studies show that social network analysis *can* focus on the individual level effectively. However, they do *not* illustrate that social network analysis, or social network theory on its own, make a valuable contribution to understanding networking as an organizational practice. This limits the application of social network theory as a useful tool in this particular study, which is primarily concerned with the organizational practices surrounding networking as an individual activity.

Other authors have investigated organizational processes at the group and inter-group level. One of these studies examined high-performing project teams, which are characterized by higher effectiveness and efficiency than average (Chinowsky, Diekmann and O'Brien, 2010). They showed that these teams emerged through a dual focus on efficiency-oriented performance management (the traditional tool of performance management in teams) and development and maintenance of a dense network of strong social ties in which the team and its members were centrally embedded. Another study investigated intergroup conflict in organizations (Nelson, 1989). They showed that high-conflict organizations were characterized by weak inter-group social ties, while low-conflict organizations had strong inter-group social ties. These studies highlight the importance of the social network in the organization's structure and processes, but they do not look at the process of networking itself, nor do they investigate variations in networking across the organization.

Finally, studies also investigated organization-level questions. One of these studies showed that implementation of organization-wide policies like human resource development (HRD) plans was dependent on social network structure and tie strength (Hatala, 2006). This research was primarily a case study, but it demonstrated that social network analysis is feasible at the organizational level. Another study demonstrated that participation in a voluntary organization was heavily dependent on the development of strong social ties, and that the structure of the organization changed dynamically as these relationships changed (McPherson, Popielarz and Drobnic, 1992). A third study, which is perhaps one of the most interesting, investigated the power structure of organizations as it relates to some of its most junior members (Sozen, 2012). These authors investigated a specific position, which is junior secretaries in 80 academic departments at a university. These individuals could be expected to yield little organizational power because of their low hierarchical position and relatively junior tenure. The authors showed that in fact these secretaries tended to have a high level of in degree centrality, particularly within expressive networks, and also leveraged a high degree of brokerage (influence). The implication of this is that despite these low positions in the formal hierarchy, in fact these organization members could wield significant organizational influence and power. Thus, when applied at the organizational level, social network theory can explain phenomena such as outcomes of training practices, changes in organization structure over time and even flows of power. However, there are clearly some opportunities that were missed in this research. For example, Sozen's (2012) study investigated a highly gendered occupation, but did not consider the implications of gendered organizational processes or logics – or even

brought up the issue of gendering within the organization. Thus, these studies do show that networking is an organizational practice, but they do not investigate the implications of this for gendered organizations.

In brief, the previous research into networking in organizations has several shortcomings, including its focus on individual or small-group relationships even in the context of much larger organizations and its failure to consider the dimension of gender as a potential influence on how networking plays out. Given that the focus of this research is on the genderedness of organizations, with particular attention directed at networking as a gendered practice, social network theory as such is inadequate for understanding networking within the gendered organization. Here, I present an overview of what networking is *as* an individual practice within the organization, beyond the general perspective of relationship formation. Next, we investigate how gender influences networking and how gendered organization theory can be applied to questions of networking.

2.3.3 Gender Differences in Networking

One question that social network theory does not address directly is whether there are gender differences in networking activities and, if so, what effect these differences have. This question is raised by one of the unresolved conflicts of women in organizations, which is that despite being often viewed as superior at communication and other network development and maintenance activities, women typically hold less power in organizations and can access fewer organizational resources through these dense networks (Rojo and Esteban, 2005). This raises the issue of why this conflict arises, and specifically whether it is due to differences in networking activities or outcomes between men and women or whether something structural is at work.

This question is addressed by investigating the literature on gender and networking, specifically in the workplace. Here, various themes of gender differences in networking are unpicked, considering primarily the social and organizational factors that create these differences, rather than the individualist and personality-based theories of gender difference that dominate the psychological literature on this topic.

2.3.3.1 Networking behaviour

The most superficial level of this problem is that of networking behaviour. Networking behaviour can be defined as activities devoted to developing and maintaining social ties (Forret and Dougherty, 2004). Forret and Dougherty (2004) identified five types of networking behaviour, including maintaining contacts, socializing, engaging in professional activities, participating in community activities, and increasing internal visibility. These authors investigated this behaviour in a study of MBA students. They found that only a few activities had a significant effect on career outcomes. Engaging in professional activities had a significant effect on total compensation and perceived career success, while increasing internal visibility influenced number of promotions, total compensation and perceived career success. However, these effects were more marked for male participants than female participants, with female participants only improving their perceived career success from increasing internal visibility (Forret and Dougherty, 2004). Thus, while many of the networking activities did not have a directly observable effect, it is notable that the effects of these activities mainly accrued to male participants.

2.3.3.2 Formal and informal networks

Another key distinction in gender differences in networking is that of formal and informal networks. The formal network (sometimes called the prescribed network) is defined as “a set of formally specified relationships between superiors and subordinates and among representatives of functionally differentiated groups who must interact to accomplish an organizationally defined task (Ibarra, 1993, p. 58).” Informal networks (also called emergent networks) are “discretionary patterns of interaction, where the content of relationships may be work related, social or a combination of both (Ibarra, 1993, p. 58).” Thus, while the formal network is assigned based on the organizational role within the organization, the informal network is a voluntary and self-selected set of relationships and interactions. One of the key differences in these networks is that while formal networks are role-based, informal networks are based at least in parts on various dimensions of homophily, or similarity between individuals (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019).

Several authors have argued that women tend to have weaker informal networks than men, which in turn has an effect on their outcomes such as promotions. For example, one study investigated female leaders of German corporations (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019). They showed that lack of homophily within existing informal networks limited women's networking opportunities, although other structural constraints such as work-family conflict were also noted. In other words, the women in question, despite their high organizational role and dense formal network, were not as well connected socially and voluntarily to others in the organization. Other studies have shown that the disadvantages for poorly connected women can start as early as the recruitment and selection stage, when they may not have referrals from highly placed organization members that would improve their chances for hiring (Ibarra and Deshpande, 2007). However, women's lack of access to informal networks is not necessarily attributable to a deficiency in women's networking activities (Linehan, 2001). Instead, women may be deliberately (if quietly) excluded from informal networks, both through direct refusal of men to associate with them and choice of informal networking activities that men know would be viewed as unsuitable for women. In other words, women are not inherently poor informal networkers or socially deficient. Instead, informal networks are structured and maintained in ways that exclude women, a process which includes the instrumentalization of pre-existing social restrictions on women to enforce their exclusion.

Lack of informal network ties and weak informal networks have serious implications for women in organizations. One study investigated the informal networks of white men and white and Black women in American organizations (McGuire, 2002). The author showed that even when women had informal social network ties within the organization, they received less work-related help from these network connections than did white men. She drew on status characteristics theory to explain this gap, finding that even if network members acknowledged ties, they viewed white men as higher-ranking than women (particularly Black women). Therefore, they were less likely to offer assistance than they would for white men. Another study has also noted this difference, focusing on high-potential managers (Ibarra, Carter and Silva, 2010). This study, which focused on differences in promotion between men and women, showed that women were actually more likely to have a mentor than men were. Despite this, female mentees were less likely to get promoted. Authors observed that this was because mentors of female mentees were less active than mentors of male mentees. In other words, they were more likely to use passive strategies (advice-giving) and less likely to advocate and directly promote their mentees (Ibarra, Carter and Silva, 2010). Other studies have shown the negative effects associated with this. For example, a study of performance evaluation in

Swedish organizations showed that women were disadvantaged compared to men in part because of their weaker network ties (Jonnergård, Stafssudd and Elg, 2010). Because women were more likely to be evaluated by those not in their professional networks, and with whom they had no opportunity to create or maintain network ties, they were less likely to gain positive performance evaluations. Therefore, it is not as simple as saying that women simply do not develop informal social networks. In fact, the social network ties they do develop may be weaker, not because of their own actions or agency but because of the explicit or implicit views of their network ties. In other words, it is the quality of the informal network ties, not just their quantity, that count.

2.3.3.4 Homophily, tie strength and status

Homophily and tie strength are fundamental and defining characteristics of social networks (Currarini, Matheson and Vega-Redondo, 2016). Homophily refers to the similarity of individuals within the network, which can take place in different dimensions, such as demographics (e.g. gender and age), experience (e.g. education and career interest) and other dimensions. Tie strength relates to the closeness of the relationships; weak ties represent distant relationships that are rarely maintained, while strong ties represent close relationships that are routinely maintained (Currarini, Matheson and Vega-Redondo, 2016). The centrality of these constructs means it is not surprising that they have been the focus of research into gender differences in networking. One such study showed that women have fewer network ties that

relate to information exchange (or information ties) and career contacts (or career ties) (Ibarra, 1997). Ibarra (1997) also found that men had more same-gender information and career ties than women, although she also found that high-potential women also had more same-gender ties. High-potential women were also more likely to have closer information contacts and a wider range of these contacts than high-potential men (Ibarra, 1997). This study indicates that there are some differences in the cultivation of different types of network ties between men and women, although Ibarra (1997) also indicated that these differences were not just a matter of gender, but also of career position.

Even in cases where it is possible to form homophilous networks with strong tie strength, women may still be at a disadvantage in their networking activities because of status differences between groups (McGuire, 2000, 2002). As McGuire's (2000, 2002) theory of status differences argues, different groups within organizations have different status levels that affect the overall access of the individual within the network to resources, power and control. For example, in American organizations, white men are likely to have higher status and power than others, while women and minorities have lower status. Therefore, even when women form dense informal networks, they may still struggle to gain access to organizational resources. Other studies on the so-called 'old boys' network' of white men (which is strictly limited by race and gender) showed that more social capital and other resources flow through these higher-status networks than through equally dense relationships of women and ethnic minority groups (McDonald, 2011). These networks are not limited only to the US, where McDonald (2011) studied. An investigation of European professional women showed that 'old boy's networks' predominated in professional fields, and typically held a high degree of power within organizations (Linehan, 2001). Linehan's study showed that exclusion of women from these networks was not incidental; instead, women reported that they were deliberately excluded from such networks by male colleagues, who preferred to keep such networks homophilous. Furthermore, as McGuire's (2002) research showed, women may have weaker ties to powerful informal networks and be able to draw on fewer resources from these networks than white men.

2.3.3.5 Instrumental and expressive networks

Another possible difference in networking by gender is the development of instrumental and expressive network ties. Instrumental networks are those that involve the exchange of work-related resources (for example, development assistance, advice or access) (Ibarra, 1993). In contrast, expressive networks are friendship-based or social in nature, and not focused on organizational or job resources. In practice, individuals can have both

instrumental and expressive ties. Furthermore, these ties can be one-way, particularly instrumental ties, depending on the relative resources of the individuals involved. Ibarra (1993) notes that recognizing both instrumental and expressive network ties is critical for research because of this multidimensional and potentially directed aspect, as otherwise there can be confusion of causality in networking.

Some studies have shown that willingness to use network connections instrumentally is a dividing line between men and women (Broadbridge, 2010; Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019). Broadbridge (2010) investigated networking by senior retail managers. Her study showed that both male and female managers were aware of the importance of networking, and worked to establish and maintain social ties and build social capital. However, the difference was in the type of ties they constructed and how they used those ties. Men were very likely to develop and use instrumental ties, while women were more likely to develop expressive ties and were more reluctant to use instrumental ties. This difference persisted throughout their careers. Greguletz, et al., showed that even women who were highly placed in organizations were less willing to instrumentalize their social ties, meaning that their informal networks tended to be weaker than those of men in equivalent positions. At the same time, expressive networks can be powerful tools for women in leadership roles, for example enabling them to develop strong client relationships (Echelman, Fiber and River, 2013). However, these networks may be barred or made less useful by organizational and structural constraints which discourage long-term strong ties (Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018). Thus, it is not correct to say that expressive networks have no value for women, but rather that women may use their social network ties in general differently than men do, thus changing their outcomes. Particularly, women may have more need use their networks and social capital expressively to address the emotional pressure of working in what Broadbridge (2010) identified as macho cultures (or in other words, those where overt expressions of masculinity were dominant). With limited social capital to draw on, women therefore had to prioritize either career advancement or emotional support, while men (who were supported by the macho cultures) were more able to use social capital on career advancement. To reiterate, therefore, it is *not* that women either do not know that instrumental use of their network ties would be advantageous or have an ethical objection or inability to use them that way. Rather, it is that women are faced with multiple, conflicting needs for social capital that men do not have, which influences their choices and reduces their overall potential use of network connections and social capital for career advancement.

2.3.3.6 Structural constraints

Finally, there are structural constraints within the organization that limit the use and effectiveness of networking for women compared to men. Some examples of such structural constraints include gendered work practices and work assignments, along with career advancement paths and promotional practices that cannot easily be used by women (Echelman, Fiber and River, 2013). One example of such a career path is the international posting, used in many organizations for high-profile promotion paths, and which depends on the individual either being single or accompanied by a mobile, non-career spouse. Since these postings are a rich source of network ties for future advancement, this could be a significant disadvantage for the majority of women who cannot take such a role. In other situations there are also problems of selection bias; for example, male administrators of start-up and accelerators who rely heavily on personal networks and unclear selection policies do not recruit female entrepreneurs, leading to exclusion of women's entrepreneurship from these supposedly gender-neutral organizations (Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018). A study on Dutch academics argued that in situations where recruitment is informal and heavily personalized, there is a 'gatekeeper' effect, where the initial entry into and advancement within the organization is determined by the preferences of key individuals (Van den Brink and Benschop, 2014). Thus, in environments like universities (in Van Den Brink and Benschop's study) or entrepreneurial incubators (as in Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean's study), there is a structural barrier to entry that is imposed by the recruitment strategy, as male gatekeepers tend to prefer male candidates (who are viewed as more like themselves or more appropriate for the role).

Ibarra (1993) notes that lack of presence of women, particularly in the upper management and senior roles of the firm, as well as gender-based role segregation, when combined with the effects of homophilous tendencies within networks, limit the opportunities of women to make and maintain meaningful network ties. Furthermore, the lack of representation in senior roles means that the homophilous network ties made by women are of lower positional power, and are likely to be less numerous. Another example of structural barriers are the processes and procedures used in the organization, for example for performance evaluation, which may prioritize men's network ties and priorities (Jonnergård, Stafssudd and Elg, 2010). However, Acker (2009) notes that these structural constraints do *not* only occur at the top levels of the organization, as suggested by the 'glass ceiling' metaphor. Instead, there are structural barriers to women's participation and advancement at all levels of the organization, which include not just gender-based barriers but also race and ethnicity based

and social class-based barriers. Thus, there is a funnelling effect, whereby even if the profession or industry as a whole is dominated by female workers, female participation and access will fall at upper levels of the organization and instead the dominant social class (typically, well-off white men) will also dominate higher level roles (Acker, 2009). This concept, which is formalized as the inequality regime (Acker, 2006, 2009; Whitehead, 2013), is a more useful understanding of how structural constraints limit participation in the organization than the glass ceiling metaphor.

Overcoming structural constraints is not as straightforward as simply engaging in disconfirming gender behaviour (Rudman and Phelan, 2008). As these authors explained, women who attempt this – for example, engaging in networking behaviour designed to improve internal visibility or attempting to form network ties in networks without homophily – can face a negative organizational and personal response. This negative response can include social responses, but it can also include negative effects on salary outcomes like hiring, promotion, salary, and performance evaluations (Rudman and Phelan, 2008). This can have a negative effect on women throughout their career and is not only limited to those in upper management.

In summary, it can be seen that there are differences in networking between women and men, beginning with individual differences in networking behaviour and moving through the characteristics of social networks such as informal network ties, tie strength, homophily and the relative status of network members, the development and use of instrumental and expressive network ties. However, gender differences in networking and the ultimate outcomes cannot be attributed solely to the individual's action and choice and cultivation of social network ties. Instead, the organization and its structural constraints, and the interaction between the individual and the organization, represent a serious barrier to effective networking for women. These organizational and structural barriers need to be considered seriously, since they underlie many of the seemingly individual problems like lack of high-profile organizational ties and weak instrumental value of network ties.

2.3.4 Gendered Networks and Organizations

The final question that this chapter addresses is: how may gendered networking practices in organizations be understood? One of the first insights from these studies is that gender in networking is an under-investigated topic, as noted by several authors (Benschop, 2009; Durbin, 2011; Kankkunen, 2014; Berger, Benschop and van den Brink, 2015). This is not the only area where organizational studies have not seriously addressed gender. For

example, one author argues that the role of gender in knowledge sharing has also not found much academic attention (Durbin, 2011). Another gap is in understanding how gender-based segregation influences access to networks (Kankkunen, 2014). The literature review and formulation of the theoretical framework in this research also supported the fact that gender has been a minor concern in organizational network research. Thus, investigation of gender and its role in organizational network is not just a question that is interesting, but one that is needed.

A review of studies shows that gendered networking practices can be viewed in two ways. First, gendered networking can be understood as individualized practice, through which women are less successful than men. Many such studies were reviewed in the previous section. Second, gender can be viewed as a characteristic of the network itself, which affects the outcomes of those connected to the network. This perspective is evaluated here. While studies discussed below deploy both perspectives to some extent, this research is more concerned with gender as a characteristic of networks (approached as gendered practice), rather than of people.

2.3.4.1 Emergence of gendered networking

An important insight of the literature is how homophily leads to gendered networks and gendered organizations (Benschop, 2009; Berger, Benschop and van den Brink, 2015; Holgersson, 2013). These studies demonstrated two key facts. First, social networks and structural networks both formed through a natural tendency toward homophily. Second, homophily is a factor in the exclusion and marginalization of organization members in underrepresented groups (Mehra, Kilduff and Brass, 1998). Homophily itself does not necessarily imply a gendered process. However, the broader concept of homophily is an important characteristic, especially when considering the different ways in which the individual can be privileged within or excluded from networks within the organization (Acker, 2012; McCall, 2005). One new gendering process that emerges from this review is homosociality, which refers to “men’s preference for other men (Holgersson, 2013, p. 1).” Homosociality can be regarded as a specific instance of homophily, which Holgersson (2013) notes is under-investigated in the literature. Nevertheless, it is a potentially important gendering process within the organization due to its real effects. For example, Holgersson (2013) observed that homosociality on the part of individual recruiters and hiring managers led to redefinition of competence (essentially, a restatement of the ideal worker) and hierarchical reinforcement that favoured men and excluded women when recruiting for top management roles. Another study showed that in Korean workplaces, there was a very strong gender-based segregation tendency

and preference for men among male organizational leaders, which limited the extent of access to resources and promotions for women (Gress and Paek, 2014). The concept of homosociality is an advance upon the broad concept of homophily because, although homophily can reflect many different similarities between members of a group (Mehra, Kilduff and Brass, 1998), homosociality is specifically a gendered association preference that privileges men. Thus, even though homosociality is not widely investigated as a gendering process as homophily is in social networks, it should not be overlooked as an important one.

2.3.4.2 Networks as a gendered structure

This research focused on studies that incorporated Acker's (1990,1992) gendered organization theory, which were several of those reviewed (Benschop, 2009; Durbin, 2011). However, other studies that were reviewed also used a structural perspective, in which gender was a characteristic of the structure rather than strictly an individual characteristic. Some of these studies used a structural theory of gender in organizations, which originated with Kanter's (1977) work (Campbell, 1988). Other theories included homosociality (Holgerson, 2013) and gender hierarchy (Kankkunen, 2014). Some authors used a general critical perspective on gender (Wreyford, 2015). Thus, it can be stated that although the theory of gendered organizations predominated, there were several other gender theories that were also used.

Research into networks and organizations reviewed here have identified three characteristics of gendered organizational networks, which can be considered as formality, hierarchy and access (and exclusion). Formal or structural networks are those that are represented in the formal structure of the organization, for example the organizational chart and formal positions and roles of members, while informal networks are those that emerge within the organization (Durbin, 2011). As studies on the old boy's network and exclusion from informal networks and their resources (Durbin, 2011) and reliance on informal networks for recruiting in contexts like entrepreneurial incubators and accelerators (Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018), software companies (Kirton and Robertson, 2018), artistic industries (Miller, 2016), and the film industry's recruitment of screenwriters (Wreyford, 2015) show, informal networks are not in any way less powerful or less meaningful in terms of organizational consequences or gender exclusion. In fact, these informal networks can be causes of persistent inequality in situations where organizational policies are nominally gender neutral (Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018). For example, a study on women's career experiences in software engineering showed that exclusion from informal networks began even before their formal entry into the workplace, as women often did not have network connections

to get access to high-profile internship positions while still at university (Kirton and Robertson, 2018). Thus, both formal and informal networks need to be considered.

Second, hierarchy was found as a gendered network characteristic (Holgersson, 2013; Kankkunen, 2014). Kankkunen (2014), who compared masculinized and feminized fields and organizations, showed that a formal hierarchy and its attendant strong social ties between levels, present in masculinized organizations and nearly absent in feminized fields, actually increased access to and resource flows from higher-ups in the hierarchy. In contrast, those in feminized organizations did not have access to managers at higher levels of the organization and were even rebuffed when they tried to gain access. Thus, access to higher levels of the organizational hierarchy can be considered to be part of the gendered network of the organization. In some cases, as shown in a study of Korean workplaces, women may be formally excluded from such networks by strict gender segregations and actively discriminatory workplace policies (Gress and Paek, 2014). However, as shown by Kankkunen (2014), there does not need to be formal discriminatory policies in place to lead to such hierarchy formation.

Finally, access to (and exclusion from) organizational resources, including both formal resources and informal resources like knowledge and power, were broadly found to be consequences of gendered networking in the organization (Berger, Benschop and van den Brink, 2015; Durbin, 2011; Gress and Paek, 2014; Holgersson, 2013; Kankkunen, 2014). In some cases, this exclusion was deliberate and active, as in the exclusion of women and minorities from 'old boys' networks' (Durbin, 2011) or the gender segregation of Korean workplaces (Gress and Paek, 2014). In other cases, it seemed to be a consequence of existing structures and context; for example, the short-term and risky nature of screen writing projects which led hiring managers to select from their informal networks of male screenwriters rather than giving female screenwriters an opportunity (Wreyford, 2015). Regardless of whether the policy was deliberate or inadvertent, however, it is clear that exclusion from formal and informal networks within the organization leads to exclusion from available resources. This research aims to make visible the gendered nature of the organization under study by 'reading' its structure, policies, procedures, and processes through the lens of Acker's theory of gendered organization. As part of this 'reading', attention is directed at networking as a gendered practice. In exploring networking as a gendered practice, the study will make clear the organizational consequences that result from networks which are infused with gender, contributing to different outcomes and experiences for men and women within the one organization.

Another characteristic of importance is the influence of external cultural, technological, and social context. A few studies pointed out that networks in the gendered organization are not specific to the organization as such, but instead are strongly connected to gender processes in wider society. For example, the gendering processes found by Benschop (2009) were not unique to the organization but were instead uncritically adopted from the broader cultural context. This was also true in scientific innovation networks (Berger, Benschop and van den Brink, 2015), in a teacher's union (Hartt, Mills and Mills, 2012) in university student social networks (Psylla *et al.*, 2017), and in the film industry (Wreyford, 2015). Perhaps nowhere is this more obvious than in a study of South Korean organizations, where gender discrimination and segregation is reported as endemic and systematic (Gress and Paek, 2014). Thus, the external context of the organization and the existing social norms of its members cannot be ignored.

A final question is what the studies say about the potential to change. This potential for organizational change is at the heart of Acker's (1990) theory of the gendered organization, as it is intended to question or even demand change within the organization. This is in fact what sets gendered organization theory apart from earlier structural or personal theories of gender in organizations (Ely and Meyerson, 2000). Although most of the studies were concerned with a specific area of concern, others did address the possibility of using gendered organizations and networks for change. For example, Benschop (2009) argued that network analysis of the gendered organization could be used to not just describe the organization, but to force change. Another study posited that organizational peer networks could be used as an avenue for change in academia, although such a change would also require structural and policy change (O'Meara and Stromquist, 2015). Thus, there is a strong argument for using a gendered network perspective to critique the organization and promote change. However, networking on its own is inadequate and unlikely to result in significant change.

Table 2. 2 Summary of evidence on networks in the gendered organization

Authors	Context	Findings
Benschop (2009)	Micro-politics in networking among Dutch account managers	This study argued that social networking was “a dynamic gendering process in organizations...” (p. 218) which has been under-investigated in organizational networking studies. She viewed networking as a dynamic process, rather than a static position. Processes including social accomplishment and political interaction are involved in the networking process. Despite the effect of homophily, networking did not by default create or reproduce gender inequality. Thus, she argued that networking could be used to change the gendered organization as easily as it could be used to reproduce it.
Berger, Benschop and van den Brink (2015)	University-industry innovation practices	This study used a model of ‘practicing gender’, defined as “the spatial-temporal accomplishment of gender practices, when people build, maintain and exit social networks (p. 556).” Their study, which took place in the male-dominated domain of university-industry innovation collaboration, showed that gender practices were un-reflexive and tended to be drawn from broader cultural practices of gender, rather than constructed within the network itself. They also showed that practicing gender occurred not just in highly visible environments, but also within micro-interactions, humour and other communications.

Authors	Context	Findings
Broadbridge (2010)	Retail senior managers	This study examined differences in social capital and network use among retail senior managers. It was shown that male and female managers were equally aware of the importance of social capital and networking. However, there was a difference in instrumental and expressive use of network ties. Men were very likely to use ties instrumentally, while women were forced to choose between instrumental use (for career advancement) or expressive use (for emotional support and dealing with the masculine organizational environment). The net effect was that female managers received less career advantage from their networks than male managers did.
Campbell (1988)	White-collar workers	This study compared social networks of men and women in white-collar jobs, positing that the differences between them could explain differences in job changing. The author found that on average women had smaller networks than men, and that these networks were less wide-ranging (including fewer members of different occupations). Children under six and changing jobs because of their husband's job mobility were identified as structural reasons for these gaps.
Durbin (2011)	Knowledge sharing	This study began with the observation that networking in organizations is explicitly a gendered process, as shown by the existence of the informal 'old boy's network', from which women are excluded by definition. She then investigates knowledge sharing

Authors	Context	Findings
Gress and Paek (2014)	Korean workplaces	<p>within formal and informal networks. She noted that although senior women typically have access to formal knowledge sharing networks, they are excluded from many informal knowledge sharing networks. This limits the ability of women to gain and exchange tacit knowledge, as well as equitable access to organizational resources and power that flow through these networks. While the effect of this exclusion depends on the characteristics of the network itself (e.g. network tie strength and relevance), it can have the effect of reproducing and even intensifying gender discrimination.</p> <p>This study found that Korean workplaces were deliberately segregated in terms of work and opportunities. Their survey showed that among other disadvantages, women in the workplace did not have access to formal or informal networks, leading to resource scarcity and unequal opportunities for advancement, in which informal networks figured highly.</p>
Hartt, Mills and Mills (2012)	Nova Scotia Teacher's Union	<p>This study investigated the historic role of networks of actors on the construction of gender. They showed that historical notions of gender influenced how gender was shaped and defined in the organization. However, they also noted the difficulty involved in relying on the partial historical accounts they had access to, since they noted many</p>

Authors	Context	Findings
Holgerson (2013)	Management recruitment in Sweden	<p>gendered practices and other information about gender and networks was never written down.</p> <p>This study investigated recruitment and hiring practices for top management roles in Swedish companies. Their network analysis showed that some male recruiters and managers had a heavily gendered network demonstrating homosociality (a preference for other men). Despite organizational policies of non-discrimination, these individuals may take actions including (but not limited to) redefining job roles and competence measures and enforcing hierarchy. This had the effect of excluding women from top management roles despite both organizational policy and explicit concern about discrimination on the part of hiring managers.</p>
Kankunen (2014)	Middle managers in gendered fields of work	<p>This study investigated networking and hierarchy in two gendered fields: feminized caring fields (e.g. nursing) and masculinized technical fields (e.g. computer programming). They found that communication networks were frequently hierarchical in masculinized fields, while hierarchical networks of communication were rare in feminized fields. The result is that while middle managers in masculinized fields typically had access to both higher-level managers and outside resources, in feminized fields managers did not have access to these resources. This led to lower recognition and</p>

Authors	Context	Findings
Kirton and Robinson (2018)	Women's career progress in software engineering	integration into daily and strategic communication for managers in feminized fields, reproducing discriminatory practices.
Mehra, Kilduff and Brass (1998)	Underrepresentation and marginalization in organizations	This study argued that homophily was one factor, but not the only factor, in the continued marginalization of underrepresented groups. A combination of exclusion from majority groups and affinity for within-group social ties meant that individuals within underrepresented groups often had weak out-group ties, limiting their access to resources

Authors	Context	Findings
Miller (2016)	Gender inequality in the arts	<p>held by the majority. This applies not just to women, but also to other racial/ethnic/cultural minority groups within a larger majority.</p> <p>This study investigated reasons for persistent gender inequality in the arts (particularly in visual arts). The author connected gender inequality to demands for entrepreneurial behaviour, including extensive networking and development of social capital. The analysis revealed a double movement leading to women's exclusion from these networks. First, artistic entrepreneurship networks tend to be informal, rather than formal, and external (crossing organization lines). Thus, while female artists receive similar support from formal networks within arts organizations, they are often excluded from these more important informal networks, through which the majority of hiring, promotion and direct purchase of art takes place. Second, the entrepreneurial artist archetype demands that in addition to making art, artists spend vast amounts of time promoting their art, typically through informal networking activities. This both assumes that artists do not have external responsibilities such as family (more likely to be true of male artists) and involves some social activities that are viewed as unsuitable for women. Furthermore, Miller points to various aspects of gendered culture, such as assumptions about gendered aesthetic, that disadvantage female artists and block them from full equality.</p>

Authors	Context	Findings
O'Meara and Stromquist (2015)	Academic peer networks	This study was specifically concerned with whether peer networks could be used as a change agent to promote greater gender equality within academia. The authors investigated several initiatives which were designed to promote women's career advancement within academic through faculty networking (along with other interventions). They found that deliberately including women in peer networks could both create opportunities for women to advance in their careers and challenge systematic exclusion from networking activities and relationships. Thus, they proposed that such peer networks could be one tool for change, although they also stated that policy changes and structural changes were also needed to create conditions of gender equality.
Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean (2018)	American technology sector	This study investigated how women in technology start-ups access incubator and accelerator resources through their networks. They found that women took a long-term relational approach to networking, which contrasted with the perception that men's networking was short-term and transactional. This provided social benefits to women, but was expressly discouraged by the incubator/accelerator environment, where only weak and transactional networking was encouraged. Despite policies of gender neutrality, incubator/accelerator managers did not approach women entrepreneurs for participation, even when women were actually present at the organization for other

Authors	Context	Findings
Psylla, et al. (2017)	University students	<p>reasons. Unclear selection processes which relied heavily on personal connections exacerbated conditions of female exclusion.</p> <p>This study investigated how gender influences social network formation and social ties in university student social networks. They showed that there were differences between male and female students in the formation, tie strength and associated behaviours differed. This study supports the role of pre-existing gender symbols and identities and associated behaviours in the formation of social networks.</p>
Van den Brink and Benschop (2014)	Academic positions	<p>Authors argued that male ‘gatekeepers’ posed a structural barrier to entry into academic positions, as these gatekeepers drew from their own homophilous (i.e. male) social networks when recruiting for posts and tended to prefer candidates more like themselves. Informal networking practices and opaque recruitment strategies thus created conditions where women were less likely to be contacted in the first place, and were less likely to meet gatekeepers’ conditions or image of the ideal worker. Thus, such opaque and informal recruitment practices created conditions of inequality from the start of academic careers.</p>

Authors	Context	Findings
Wreyford (2015)	British film industry	This study revealed a contradiction at the heart of recruiting screenwriters for the film industry. Although selection was verbally promoted as a meritocratic practice, in reality it depended heavily on informal network connections and referrals, with unclear and private selection criteria. As a result, screenwriter recruitment was heavily gendered, with few female screen writers being recruited through the supposedly egalitarian practice. The short-term contract structure of hiring further exacerbates the problem of hiring, with hiring managers selecting screenwriters they had previously worked with. This resulted in maintenance of the status quo rather than significant inclusion of women.

2.4 Chapter Summary

This literature review has addressed three questions of theoretical importance and investigated empirical studies which have supported it. The first question was how gender can be understood. In this study, the perspective of ‘doing’ gender is used – in other words, gender is an individual process which adheres to certain social rules, through which individuals engage in the expected actions and processes associated with one gender or the other. The second question was how gender can be understood in the context of organizations. Here, Acker’s (1990, 1992) theory of the gendered organization was presented. This theory is a structural explanation for gender in organizations, in which gender divisions, gendered cultural meanings (symbols and images), gender divisions and gendered interactions lead to a certain gendered organizational logic. Third, the question of how gender can be understood in the context of networking processes was addressed. As was explained, traditional theories of networking activity do not take into account gender, especially not at the organizational level. Instead, most of these explanations are individualist explanations, most of which propose that women have a ‘lack’ of something. This observation fits neatly with the observation of the theory of gendered organizations that women can never be the ideal worker in an organization because this role, though nominally gender neutral, is in fact defined by the male worker. Thus, the theory of gendered organizations can be used to understand networking as a gendered practice at the organizational level. In the next chapter, we will consider how Acker’s theoretical framework has been used to explore the way in which organizations are gendered and how networking as a gendered practice manifests. The chapter also highlights how Acker’s framework will be used in this study.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework

In the previous chapter, the literature review provided an overview and detailed analysis of Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations, which does serve as the basis for the theoretical framework of this study. One of the key criticisms of how Acker's (1990) theory has been employed is that while it is frequently cited, relatively few studies have used it in its entirety. This chapter focuses on the few studies that have employed the theory of gendered organizations in a comprehensive way, including the dimensions that have been studied, the internal relationships between the five dimensions of the gendered organization, and how these approaches differ and what that means for the theory itself.

The chapter begins with a review of the selected studies that have used Acker's framework of gendered organizations in its entirety. These reviews address how the theory has been employed, which dimensions were investigated and in particular how the authors viewed the dimension of gendered organizational logic in relation to the other four dimensions of gendered organizational structures, cultures, identities and interactions. These studies are then compared to understand how they are similar and different, and the approach used in this study is selected. This analysis establishes what will be used as the theoretical framework for the paper, or in other words how Acker's (1990) theory will be applied.

3.1 Previous Studies Employing Acker's Framework of Gendered Organizations

There were five studies selected to develop the theoretical framework, based on their completeness of application of Acker's (1990) theory. These studies range in age, from Lewis and Morgan's (1994) early work to Dye and Mills (2012) and Parsons, et al.'s (2012) relatively recent studies. The studies are typically case-based, focusing on individual organizations over longer time horizons and attempting to explain organizational outcomes and cultures. Here, each of the studies is discussed, focusing on what the studies focused on, what they found, and how they employed Acker's (1990) framework, especially how they imagined the relationships between dimensions.

3.1.1 Lewis and Morgan (1994)

The earliest study reviewed is that of Lewis and Morgan (1994), who investigated the British marriage counselling service Relate between 1948 and 1990. The authors were

motivated to study the organization because of the dichotomy between its public face (in which gender is often explicit and a source of conflict for its clients) and its private face (in which gender is omnipresent but not explicitly investigated). The authors used a combination of observation and interviews with the organization as it was at the time of research and historical research using the organization's documents (Lewis and Morgan, 1994).

While Lewis and Morgan did not spell out how they were going to use Acker's (1990) theory, it becomes apparent through their writing that they consider the dimensions of the organizational culture to be entangled and intertwined, rather than separate. Their analysis incorporated discussion of gendered roles and purposes and gendered divisions of labour and culture, which together made up a complex system of organizational gender incorporating gender structures and divisions, symbolic images and assumptions, and resulting gender roles. However, Lewis and Morgan did not explicitly apply Acker's (1990) dimensions separately. Instead, much of their work focused on the organizational logic as a dichotomy; e.g. masculine/feminine, professional/volunteer, paid/unpaid. Furthermore, their study points out the false basis of these dichotomies, for example the "volunteer" who is a professional counsellor. This is a useful model for understanding how organizational logics may create tension between the ideologically 'correct' role for individuals in the organization and their actual role. However, because they did not clearly identify the internal relationships within the organization, it is difficult to implement their approach to gendered organizational logic fully. Despite this weakness, the focus on organizational logic is actually different to that of Acker's (1990) work and that of Manville (1997), discussed next, where organizational logic is almost unspoken or assumed to emerge from the organizational context. Thus, this is a useful approach to organizational logic, even if it was not fully successful in this case.

Authors found that gender, particularly increasing awareness of the inequality of family structures and hierarchies within marriage, played a significant role in the organization's external-facing activities, including its counselling practices, advertising and public education campaigns. However, its internal structure remained hierarchical and based on traditional gender roles. For example, while paid managerial positions were typically filled by men, much of the voluntary work (the actual counselling) was provided by women. This emerged from a historical culture that relied on married professional women who were pushed out of the workforce in the 1950s and 1960s, along with a focus on women's role in the family (and especially their acceptance of it). While there was some organizational change during the 1970s and 1980s, particularly with regard to marriage counselling and underlying ideologies and

values that it used, this did not result in a change in the division of labour within the organization. The changes that were made, for example increasing professionalization of management, served to masculinize, rather than feminize, the organization.

3.1.2 Manville (1997)

Manville (1997) focused on gender divisions, symbols and images, identity and interactions in her investigation of an Australian Anglican parish and its function. The study took place in the Anglican Church of Australia in the early 1990s, drawing on anthropological fieldwork and interviews (Manville, 1997). As the author noted, the parish of the study had doubled twice during the previous decade due to its location in a rapidly growing suburban area. The parish members had a relatively homogenous cultural and socioeconomic background, primarily middle-class, white Australian and British.

Manville (1997) did not spell out the gendered organizational logics of her field site. Instead, her evaluation of the day-to-day interactions within the parish showed how these gender divisions, symbolic assignments and roles ‘added up’ to an organizational logic in which male and female were dichotomous, opposing and separate, with few opportunities for change. She also illustrated how these dichotomous boundaries existed regardless of individual gender ideologies. Thus, in her view, gendered structures, images and symbols, divisions and interactions were cumulative in nature, interacting collectively to create the parish’s organizational logic of gender boundaries and assigned tasks, identities, and ways of interacting.

Manville’s (1997) concept of organizational logic is similar to the approach of Benschop and Doorewaard (1998, 2012) where organizational logic is a form of ‘adding up’, resulting from the accumulation of the gendered structures, gender divisions and so on of the organization, rather than a distinct characteristic. It contrasts, however, with the approach of Lewis and Morgan (1994), who investigated organizational logic as a distinct characteristic of the organization (at least to some extent). This difference is one of the main differences in application of Acker’s (1990) gendered organizations framework and seems to present two different viewpoints: the organization as a directional force (as in Lewis and Morgan’s conceptualization) and the organization as the result of individual and group actions (as used by Manville and Benschop and Doorewaard). The difference could also be due to the sources of information. While Lewis and Morgan were limited by heavy reliance on documentary data, both Manville and Benschop and Doorewaard were able to collect data that reflected the

organization as it was at the time. The comparison of these studies makes it clear that there is ambiguity in the concept of organizational logic, which means there is no single best way to apply it. Instead, this would depend on the intention of the researcher and the availability of information.

In the case of Manville's research, religious norms had an inescapable force on the organizational logics of gender. As the author noted, the underlying ideology of the Australian Anglican religion toward gender is diverse, with at least five distinct gender ideologies present that relate man, woman and God, although not all of the parishioners had a clearly stated ideology. However, "regardless of their gender ideologies or theological views, St. Hale's parishioners constructed men and women as opposing Others and had an essentialist view of male and female (Manville, 1997, p. 27)." From this symbolic gender boundary of dichotomous separation flowed the parishioner's images of women as nurturers and men as providers, division of parish roles into 'female' support roles and 'male' leadership roles, and gendered dynamics of interaction in which certain roles were reserved for one gender. As Manville also noted, it was *possible* for women to cross these boundaries, but only if they were considered unusual for women in the first place; for example, women in parish leadership roles were often unmarried wage earners, a 'male' image. Furthermore, there were consequences for women (in the form of sexual teasing) if men were forced to fill 'male' roles, such as serving food. Thus, there was not just an organizational logic of dichotomous separation, but this organizational logic permeated both the official and unofficial activities of the parish.

3.1.3 Benschop and Doorewaard (1998, 2012)

Benschop and Doorewaard (1998) investigated different aspects of gendered organizations. In their study, they proposed the idea of gender subtext in the place of gendered organizational logics. They defined the gender subtext as "the opaque, power-based processes that systematically (re)produce the gender distinction via a set of arrangements (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a, p. 789)." These arrangements, based in part on Acker's (1992) gendered processes, included structural arrangements, cultural arrangements, interaction arrangements and identity arrangements. Each of these is roughly analogous to Acker's (1990) processes of gender divisions, symbol and image, interaction and identity. Furthermore, the authors added the concept of hegemonic power, or "[processes] (a) consisting of concealed processes of meaning formation, (b) uttered in (non)verbal expressions of common sense, identification, consensus and legitimizing rationalities... [which] (re)produce c) consent or compliance with

the dominant organizational discourse and the acceptance of day-to-day practices (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a, p. 790).” Thus, within their theoretical framework, Benschop and Doorewaard have taken Acker’s (1990) gendered organizational processes and explicitly connected them to the power-based processes that create and recreate them. In other words, Benschop and Doorewaard’s organizational arrangements ‘add up’ to a gendered organizational subtext, which is accepted because of the flows of hegemonic power throughout the organization. This ‘adding up’ approach is similar to the approach used by Manville (1997), where organizational logic was also conceptualized as resulting from the individual and group norms, actions and so on that influenced the organization. However, in terms of the actual dimensions of the gender subtext model, it is very similar to Acker’s (1990) framework, and can be considered analogous, with the acknowledgement of power flows. The ‘adding up’ approach to organizational logic is used in the present research as well, as it reflects the notion of organizations being constructed through the actions of individuals rather than imposed from above.

The authors applied their theoretical framework to a study of the Dutch banking sector, using an approach called subtext analysis, which is based on critical reading of texts to examine both the explicit processes (texts) and their underlying meaning (subtext). They identified three distinct subtexts of gender within the organizations they studied, including ‘show pieces’, ‘the mommy track’ and ‘the importance of being asked’. The ‘show pieces’ subtext relates to tokenization of women in high positions, especially those working in roles symbolically assigned to men. Typically, these women are well-accepted and viewed as exceptional workers, but they are also forced to fight for their position in ways that men are not (for example, being exceptional workers, leaders and so on). Furthermore, their individual boundary-breaking does not result in breakdown of the gendered processes of division, because they are regarded as exceptional in their ability to meet the masculine norms of the organization. The ‘mommy track’ subtext is about the part-time, peripheral positions assigned to women with familial responsibilities, who may be assumed to be less committed to or available to the organization as a result. Women may feel pressured into such limited organizational roles, or may put off having children to avoid being assigned to them. Finally, the ‘importance of being asked’ subtext is about being visible to higher members of the organization and being able to access higher positions. While there may not be explicit gender limitations on the organization’s assignment of such roles, female employees may not be considered equally qualified and may therefore not be invited to these higher positions. In all of these cases, underlying processes of

gendered structures, cultural assumptions and interaction norms, and gender identities serve to create a subtext that either excludes women or, if women do gain access, considers them the exception rather than the rule.

Benschop and Doorewaard's (1998) approach to gender subtext is a re-imagining of Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations, in which the gendered subtext emerges from and then serves to reinforce the gendered processes and structures that make it up. Thus, in this respect gender subtext is not a separate aspect of the organization but is instead part of a cycle of gendering that continues over time. The authors did re-evaluate their theory in a later discussion, which provides some nuance to the model of (re)production of inequality within the organization (Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012). This paper addressed, among other aspects, issues of intersectionality of gender, race and other hierarchies of the organization and the disappearance of organizational structure from the use of gender subtext. Perhaps most importantly, the authors addressed the problem of power within the organization, especially the difference between explicit and hegemonic power. They pointed out that power is often a hybrid of explicit (formal) and hegemonic power, not one on its own, and as a result is inherently contested. Therefore, evaluation of power also needs to consider issues of agency and resistance. These insights are useful additions and elaborations of understanding of the gendered subtext theory, as well as updates to organizational hierarchies in general. However, because it was not applied directly in an organization, it is unclear how these insights change the application of the gender subtext model.

Benschop and Doorewaard's (1998) 'adding up' approach to gendered organizational logic is particularly useful in the present study, because of its acknowledgement of hegemonic power which persists even in the face of explicit gender-neutral texts. Another aspect of their gender subtext model that is particularly useful is that it acknowledges that there can be multiple gendered subtexts within the organization, that work to preserve the status quo. In the research reported in this thesis, which looks at the gendered nature of Thai Utility, I make visible the organizational logic of family that permeates this organization. As we will see in the data analysis, this organizational logic includes a subtext of 'family responsibility' which manifests as 'women's place is in the home' and 'divided loyalties'. This subtext which is applied to all women, not just married women, assumes they have caring responsibilities for husbands and children which limit their participation in formal and informal social interactions. These subtexts are investigated in much more detail in Chapters 5 to 8, as they permeate the interactions and social assumptions of the organization.

3.1.4 Dye and Mills (2012)

Dye and Mills (2012) applied Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations to Pan American World Airways (Pan Am). The authors used a historical case study approach, deploying critical hermeneutics and critical discourse analysis to archival documents (Dye and Mills, 2012). This approach is now familiar from other authors, who have also drawn heavily on historical documents and used similar methods of critical analysis.

As the authors noted, there was little explanation of organizational logics in Acker's (1990) work, and this dimension was somewhat abandoned in later work and not much focused on. Thus, the question of how organizational logic 'works' is subject to interpretation. Dye and Mills conceptualized gendered organizational logic as one of five distinct gendering processes of the organization. Furthermore, these organizational processes are dynamic and to some extent interdependent, but not fully dependent on each other. Thus, in this study gendered organizational logics are investigated separately from the other gendered processes of the organization, but the authors also investigated the interaction and interdependence of these processes.

The authors applied Acker's (1990) framework to Pan Am over several decades, identifying several different cultural epochs in the organization where gendered processes were slightly different (Dye and Mills, 2012). They identified an underlying organizational discourse of *family* in the organization but did not focus on this aspect of the organizational culture in depth. They also found various gendering structures and practices within the organization, some of which persisted and some of which changed over time. Some of these were obvious (male dominance of the workforce), but others were less so (an expected relatively short tenure for female workers, whose careers were typically cut short by marriage). Gendered activities such as beauty contests, 'grooming and manners' expectations for women and 'management and leadership' activities for men, made the gendered organizational processes explicit. These gendering processes changed over time, particularly in the 1980s, when several different gender discourses emerged and new discourses of professionalism and managerialism replaced the older discourses of home and family. Thus, over time, women became less overtly sexualized within the organization, but the submerged hierarchy of gender inequality and masculine control of the organization persisted. Furthermore, many of the gender divisions, such as assigned roles (cabin crew versus flight crew, manager versus line worker) persisted. This case study illustrated how some aspects of the organization can change, such as the change

from family logic to managerial logic, while others remain less dynamic. Similar to Dye and Miller's (2012), in this research the organizational logic which emerges is one of family. However, there are two differences to the Dye and Mills' research. First, the approach taken to organizational logic follows the 'adding up' perspective of Benschop and Doorewaard (1998, 2012). Second, I expand how the notion of 'family' is understood to include 'organizational family' as well as 'social family'.

3.1.5 Parsons, et al. (2012)

Parsons, et al. (2012) applied Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations to a historic case study of a women's rights organization that was active in the 1970s, using a hermeneutic circle approach and archival evidence. The organization, Stewardesses for Women's Rights (SFWR), was established in 1972 to address women's rights in airline workplaces and more broadly to fight workplace gender discrimination (Parsons *et al.*, 2012). Unlike earlier studies, Parsons, et al. did specifically evaluate organizational logic and how it both emerged from the SFWR organization itself and the external expectations from donors and members. Perhaps more importantly, the authors considered organizational logic as a thing in itself, rather than the cumulative outcome of gender divisions, culture, identities and interactions. Thus, organizational logic is intertwined with other dimensions of organizational culture, but it also stands as its own observable phenomenon. While the present research does not do this, instead considering it as a phenomenon that is intimately intertwined with the other aspects of the gendered organization, it is valuable to consider how the specification of organizational logic as a distinct phenomenon can be done and what it adds to understanding. In the case studied by Parsons, et al., this was particularly important because it illustrated how gendered organizational logics persist even in organizations that are entirely female.

The authors' analysis of SFWR showed that despite its explicit focus on gender issues and women's rights, its actual organizational structure and activities can be identified as part of a pattern of 'male' organizational logics. As the authors explained, this was in part imposed externally, as the organization was gradually forced to change its internal processes, structures and hierarchies to comply with the external expectation of donors and other organizations. However, much of the imposition of gendered organizational structures and logics was internal – simply, SFWR did not “look like” a real organization to its members, because it did not follow the gendered logics of existing organizations. As a result, the organization was forced to adopt the structure and trappings of a “real” organization to meet these internal and external

expectations, and gradually took on the masculine characteristics of so-called “real” organizations. Throughout, it maintained the discourse of ‘gender neutrality’ which hides these gendered characteristics. SFWR became hierarchical, bureaucratized and ultimately folded due to inability to deliver on its organizational mission.

Parsons, et al. (2012) had some highly interesting findings, because they were able to illustrate convincingly that gendered organizational logics can and do emerge in the absence of alternatives – even if there is no male involvement in the organization, and thus no clear basis for emergence of a gendered hierarchy. Another key takeaway from this study is that the dimensions of Acker’s (1990) theory can be analysed individually, but still be considered as part of an interconnected, holistic phenomenon of the organizational structure.

3.2 Analysis

In the previous section, several different ways that Acker’s (1990) framework of gendered organizations have been applied were reviewed. One of the most obvious questions that emerges from this is how organizational logic should be understood. This is the first question of the analysis. Two additional questions include the approach this study takes to gender and what it means to have a ‘family’ organizational logic.

3.2.1 The nature of organizational logic

Comparison of the studies above show that the treatment of gender divisions (or structures), gendered symbols and images (or culture), gender interactions and gender identities are broadly consistent. These dimensions are typically adopted from Acker (1990), or in the case of Benschop and Doorewaard (1998) slightly adapted, and are applied as distinct but interrelated dimensions of the organization. However, there is no such consistency when it comes to organizational logics. This inconsistency can be traced to Acker’s (1990) work itself, as it does not focus on or explain very well what organizational logics are or how they relate to other dimensions (Dye and Mills, 2012). The earliest studies reviewed did not make an attempt to explicitly evaluate gendered organizational logic to any great extent, instead focusing on the four other structures/processes (Lewis and Morgan, 1994; Manville, 1997). In later studies, there are two approaches that can be identified, both of which have advantages and disadvantages.

One of these approaches, which was used by Benschop and Doorewaard (1998), is to consider gender subtext (their analogous construct to gendered organizational logic) as the cumulative result of the other gendered processes and hegemonic power, which is produced through and then reproduces these logics. This was expanded later to include formal power and hybrid power, not only hegemonic power, in the authors' reformulation of the gender subtext model (Benschop & Doorewaard, 2012). In other words, gendered organizational logics do not have an independent existence apart from these organizational processes and structures that shape and sustain them. This position acknowledges the interdependence and co-formation of gendered organizational processes that come together to form a holistic organization, and in which the organizational logic cannot be divorced from the processes that inform it. At the same time, this interconnectedness makes it difficult to differentiate or make explicit gendered organizational logics. Since these gendered organizational logics thrive as unspoken assumptions and naturalized practices (Acker, 1990), making it more difficult to spell them out in a critical analysis is a significant weakness in this authors' opinion. At the same time, it is possible to analyse hegemonic power, for example by analysing interactions and investigating flows of power and assumptions about gender, power and other aspects (Doorewaard and Brouns, 2003). Thus, it is not necessarily the case that this approach is inadequate; just that it requires more attention to explicit examination of hegemonic power flows within the organization and how such power flows affect the organizational logic.

The second approach, adopted by Dye and Mills (2012) and to a less explicit extent Parsons, et al. (2012), is to consider gendered organizational logics as a separate gendering process, which is independent of and embedded within the other four gendered organizational structures and processes. This solves the problem presented by Benschop and Doorewaard's (1998) conceptualization, as it makes it possible to analyse the gendered organizational logic as a thing in itself. However, it also makes it difficult to understand how gendered organizational logics *are* founded in the underlying gender structures and gendered processes of the organization, in this researcher's opinion. Instead, it promotes the notion that organizational logic is a distinct characteristic, when in fact these dimensions are all cumulative.

The basis for choice between these two approaches to organizational logic is not which is inherently better – both have strengths and weaknesses. Instead, it is which serves the purpose of analysis better. This research is intended as a holistic analysis of the gendering processes of an organization, including both the unspoken and spoken aspects of gender in the

organization and how it ‘adds up’ to a gendered organization. Thus, this study uses Benschop and Doorewaard’s (1998) approach, in which gendered organizational logics (or gender subtexts) accumulate as the result of gendered organizational structures and processes. This ‘adding up’ approach acknowledges that organizational logics are not superimposed, but instead emerge from the organization’s culture, norms, roles and so on; therefore, the organizational logic of gender is also intertwined with gender structures, symbols and culture, interaction and divisions. This also makes it more possible to understand how power influences the organizational logic and how the organizational logic of the family which is identified in this study can be seen through several distinct subtexts.

3.2.2 The organizational logic of family

The final aspect of the theoretical framework is the dominant organizational logic in use. This study focuses on the organizational logic of *family* as the dominant logic of the case firm, as this is the logic that is most explicit in both interviews and in the networking maps, produced by respondents. This organizational logic can be summarized as a gender hierarchy, in which the male role is that of public leadership and power, while the female role is that of followership and lack of power due to women’s perspective unbreakable connection with family and the responsibilities that attach to it. Acker (1990) points out that women’s work is frequently devaluated because it is assumed that their primary role is within the family, rather than in the organization. In other words, women have private roles, rather than public roles. However, the association of organization as family goes further than that, with familial roles assigned within the organization itself (Dye & Mills, 2012). This research will investigate how these family roles emerge in the context of Thai Utility.

Dye and Mills (2012), in their investigation of Pan Am as a gendered organization, identified many ways in which the organization’s logic resembled the logic of the family. Older men were positioned as ‘fathers’, whose role was to guide ‘sons’ (younger male workers) into positions of power that were their ‘inheritance’. Female workers, on the other hand, were assigned the subordinate role of ‘mothers’, ‘daughters’, or even the sexualized ‘mistress’, with nurturing and sexual attention as their main role within the organization. However, women were not assigned these roles *only* in the organization; instead, it was assumed that their time in the organization was limited, and that they would inevitably leave to take up the ‘real work’ of caring for their family (Dye and Mills, 2012). Some of these roles are obvious: for example, the division of gender symbols into female-nurturer and male-provider/leader, and the

subsequent division of labour to match this symbolic dichotomy. Other aspects of the organizational logic of the family are less obvious, but no less gendered. One of the most insidious of these aspects was the sexualization of female workers in Pan Am's organization, through both formal mechanisms like beauty contests and grooming and comportment requirements for female employees and informal mechanisms such as dialogues of explicit, submissive sexualization for female employees (Dye and Mills, 2012). Within these sexualized gender symbols, the hierarchy of the family, with the male managers and other senior employees playing powerful leadership roles and the female employees (typically in service roles with limited power) playing submissive, follower roles.

Other studies have also investigated the organizational logic of the family, often finding similar lines. In the Anglican parish, familial roles were strictly assigned, with the female role of wife/mother as firmly subordinate to the husband/father role and with less familial power (Manville, 1997). This was assigned a religious interpretation and served to limit the power of women within the church itself even in moderate congregations. Familial obligations were viewed as a barrier for women, but not for men, in fulfilling leadership duties (Manville, 1997). Thus, most of the women in such leadership roles were those that were unmarried. In both these cases, if women took on their familial role, they would be viewed as less suitable for their current positions. However, men faced no such constraints. Thus, the organizational discourse of "family" is an inherently limiting constraint for women, both in terms of their perceived role in the organization and their advancement potential.

3.3 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed how the theory of gendered organizations has been used in previous studies. It showed that the biggest gap in the application of Acker's (1990) theory is the relationship of gendered organizational logics to other organizational processes. Following Benschop and Doorewaard (1998), this study will consider gendered organizational logics as the cumulative result of gendered organizational structures and processes, which also serves to reproduce conditions for these gendered structures and processes. Furthermore, theoretical choices such as how Acker's framework is used and how organizational logic of the family is treated as and 'adding-up' of Acker's dimensions, was explained.

Chapter 4 Research Methodology

In Chapter 3, the theoretical framework of the research was presented. As was explained there, this research uses Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations as the main theoretical basis for the study. In this study, the gendered organization was investigated using a case of Thai Utility, a large company operating in Thailand's utility sector. The study does investigate the individual aspects of Acker's theory of gendered organizations, including structures and divisions, symbols and image, and gendered identities. However, the main emphasis of the study is on gendered interactions, particularly networking as a gendered practice, within the organization. To investigate networking as a gendered practice, the researcher uses a process of iterative qualitative analysis of data from a broad sample of managers at Thai Utility, including interviews and interaction maps.

The objective of this chapter is to present the methodology that was employed to investigate Thai Utility as a gendered organization. The chapter begins with an overview of the philosophical and methodological orientation of the study. As it explains, this research employs an interpretative qualitative research methodology. Within this methodology, the researcher moves back and forth between the data and Acker's theory of gendered organizations to examine the male and female experiences within Thai Utility, especially in relation to their networking practices. The chapter then continues on, explaining the practical techniques used for data collection and analysis and reflecting on the ethical issues of the study.

4.1 Interpretive and Iterative Approach

This study employs an interpretive and iterative qualitative research methodology. The research is based on the assumption that social reality is shaped by human experiences and social context. The study, which used interviews and interaction maps from a total of 72 participants, had a large and complex data set to work with, with multiple perspectives and viewpoints. An interpretive approach was therefore suitable for this study as the aim was to gain a deep understanding of individuals' experiences and the social and organizational processes, they engaged in.

The study was also iterative, in that the analysis process moved constantly back and forth between Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organizations and the data collected. The iterative approach to qualitative research helped to align the findings to the theoretical

framework without allowing the theoretical framework to dominate the findings. Thus, there was room for both novel insight and a rigorous application of the theory employed for the study.

There were several possible research philosophies that could have been selected, in addition to or instead of interpretivism. According to Ruan (2020) feminist research is defined by the research questions it addresses, the theoretical framework it adopts and the use of feminist research methodology. Taking this on board, my research appears to 'tick' two out of the three characteristics of feminist research. First, the research questions of the thesis are focused on women's organizational experiences and how these differ from men with a view to understanding why there is a persistent difference in the numbers of women in senior positions compared to their male colleagues. Second, it adopts a feminist theoretical framework i.e., Acker's theory of gendered organization. Given these two characteristics I could also have adopted an explicit feminist research philosophy and methodology. When embarking on this research, I did seriously consider the application of an explicitly feminist research paradigm but ultimately, I had serious concerns about how I could work with only a feminist perspective given my empirical site for a variety of reasons. First, while feminism is a recognized philosophical and political position within Thailand, it is not a mainstream orientation either generally or specifically within the research field of management and organization studies. In this regard it is similar to many other parts of the world. While feminism has gained some luminosity within the West through the mainstream acceptance of a moderated feminism which places an emphasis on women's individual empowerment (Lewis et al, 2019), the same trend is not fully evident in Thailand. So, taking the Thai context of my research into account, I had concerns about how an explicitly feminist research philosophy would be perceived by potential respondents. Following on from this, my second reason for not adopting an overtly feminist research philosophy is that while I consider myself to be a feminist, I did have to acknowledge that not all my interviewees (including the female respondents) would feel the same and may avoid participation in the research if it was openly presented as feminist. Given this, I believed that it was important to engage with my interviewees 'where they are' and to accept their positions, rather than enforce my own assumptions about power differentials connected to gender difference through the interview process. Third, and following Oakley (2016) I felt that it was important to acknowledge that the people who agreed to participate in my interviews (a time-intensive and sometimes distressing process) were giving me a gift of their time and attention. Acceptance of this gift is a critical exchange, and I was concerned that it may not necessarily fit comfortably within a feminist philosophical paradigm from the point of view of a number of my respondents.

Given these concerns, I chose to adopt the broader interpretivist philosophy as I thought this was more likely to align both with my own feminist position and the non-feminist position of many of my respondents. In making this decision I reflected on what a feminist research paradigm actually consists of

and how we can identify it. According to Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2013: 7), feminist research documents ‘...women’s lives and experiences, and concerns, illuminating gender-based stereotypes and biases, and unearthing women’s subjugated knowledge, feminist research challenges the basic structures and ideologies that oppress women’. As outlined above, my research aligns with this. Nevertheless, commentators such as Letherby (2004) through a review of the literature on feminist research paradigms argue that there are no demands for a specific, separate methodology to do feminist research. Instead, she suggests that ‘researchers need to be morally responsible...and recognize that the ‘objects’ of research (i.e., my interview respondents) are ‘subjects’ in their own right, and that what we do and how we do it clearly affects what we get’ (Letherby, 2004: 184). For example, this responsibility includes, acknowledging the role of power in interview interactions and how the researcher addresses these power differentials (Hamilton, 2020). An interpretivist position aligns with these accounts of feminist research as it is contextually laden and seeks to secure rich detail which facilitates examination of power both in the research process itself and within the research setting. Additionally, an interpretive research paradigm seeks to reveal the subtlety of a situation or experience, revealing important and hidden meanings. As an approach it is complex because it is concerned with interaction between individuals – the researcher and the researched, the respondent and their work context, the respondent and wider society, the respondent and their work colleagues. Interpretivist research seeks to embrace the complexity of the social world and gives a researcher the opportunity to view a research problem holistically, to establish connection with respondents, to enter into their worlds and realities and to provide interpretations of their understandings and experiences of a situation. ‘This is achieved by generating thick and rich descriptions of actual events in real-life contexts that uncover and preserve the meanings that those involved ascribe to them’ (Leitch et al, 2010: 70). These characteristics of interpretivist research align with the aims of feminist research and from my perspective was suitable for my research. I was able to connect to my own feminist positioning while also connecting with my non-feminist respondents in a way that did not hold the potential to alienate them.

4.2 Sample and Participants

This study is grounded in a specific organization. This organization is Thai Utility, a former government agency which has been restructured into a state-owned enterprise (SOE) overseen by the Ministry of the Interior as discussed in chapter one. Thai Utility is interesting because from the outside, it appears to be a classical example of a gendered organization, where apparently gender-neutral policies nevertheless results in low female attainment of higher-status positions (Acker, 1990). There are no formal barriers to female participation in

management or advancement into senior roles, as there are in some other Thai government agencies. Despite this, Thai Utility has few female senior managers or technical staff and has never had a female governor (or executive-level manager) before and has limited representation of women in the top ranks of the organization. Women in the organization are therefore evidently faced with a glass ceiling which limits their career advancement, even in the absence of formal impediments or bureaucratic structures.

Normally, gaining access to a large organization can be challenging for outsiders. In order to gain access to Thai Utility, I made use of brokers, or individuals who can use their own networks and reputations to facilitate access to the organization as discussed in chapter one (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Through brokers, was able to make key contacts in the Human Resources department, including the Assistant Governor and an HR Division Manager, who agreed to collaborate and use their own networks in the Headquarters and regional offices to facilitate the research.

To recruit participants, I worked with the HR Assistant Governor to email a study announcement to regional HR managers and contacted by phone too, explaining the study and what it would entail and asking for possible recruits. Following receipt of candidate lists and profiles, I worked with HR contacts to select participants based on the selection criteria. The selection criteria were intended to provide a broad sample of managers from the company, selecting from specified positions, levels, and gender distributions while maintaining diversity, as far as possible, in education, work experience, family background and marital status, and age. The recruitment process was also designed to select participants from a range of professional backgrounds and organizational units (e.g. engineering, accounting,

administration, legal, and so on). This variation was intended to provide rich data, which offers a lot of depth and breadth for theoretical investigation and analysis (Given, 2008).

When constructing a sample, inclusion and exclusion criteria must be decided upon and in making decisions about who to include in or exclude from the research, there is always the potential for the creation of bias in the study. This study was conducted in a very large organization as discussed above, and as it is a qualitative study, the size of the sample in relation to the size of the organization is small but on the larger size for qualitative research. Decisions had to be taken regarding where the focus of the data collection should lie, and I decided to concentrate my research on individuals within Thai Utility who were in management positions given the concerns of the study for a number of reasons. First, given the range of differences which I wanted to ensure had a presence in the sample, I decided to focus on individuals who are already managers as I felt it would be easier to complete the research, taking all the differences into account, by focusing on existing managers. These differences included gender (male or female), managerial level (junior, middle, senior), location (headquarters, different regions) and profession (engineering, accounting, administration level). The downside of this focus on managers, is that employees who do not fall into this category, for example, non-managerial employees are excluded. However, identifying non-managerial employees who are seeking to become managers is not always straight forward in such a large organization. This leads me to my second reason for focusing on respondents who are already managers. Within Thai Utility, there are no formal management/leadership development programmes which are targeted at employees who have the ambition to become a manager or who are identified as potential management material. If such a programme had existed, I would have been able to identify suitable non-managerial employees to include in my sample but without it, pinpointing aspirational managers i.e., non-managerial employees who want to become managers was difficult. I acknowledge that this approach to the construction of the sample does impact on the research. Excluding non-managerial employees does create some bias in the sample as it is focused on individuals who are already managers and that to fully understanding how individuals 'travel' through different levels of Thai Utility, insight can be gained by including non-managerial as well as managerial staff. Participant bias can cause significant problems in construct validity and trustworthiness of findings in leadership research generally (Brutus and Duniewicz, 2012). In this research, it could be particularly problematic, since it is investigating two disparate groups: male managers who have succeeded in a system set up for their success and female managers who have succeeded despite this system. (This dichotomous system is not merely a matter of conjecture, as will be explained in the findings.) Furthermore, whether

male or female, the inclusion of only managers means that the sample is oriented towards employees who are deemed to be committed enough to the company to engage in the career progression to manager. This means that by excluding non-managerial employees, the research has an inherent bias towards employees who are potentially more positive toward the organization and can align with the performance demands of Thai Utility. However, as said above, this situation was unavoidable as there was no way to clearly identify employees who were *potential* managers, for example through a formal management/leadership development program. Therefore, this potential for respondent bias could not easily be mitigated in this study. However, later research could include these near-manager employees, or both managerial and non-managerial employees, to offset this limitation.

Interviews were conducted using face-to-face meetings, the interviews with headquarters personnel were conducted first, followed by the Middle, North, North-Eastern, and South regions. Interviews with junior and middle managers were conducted first, but senior managers and executives took longer because of the existing demands on their time, which made it difficult to schedule the interviews.

The population of the study was management-level employees at Thai Utility. There were a total of 8,608 management-level employees at Thai Utility at the time of the study, compared to a total population of around 40,000 employees. Table 4.1 summarizes the distribution of managers at different levels of the organization. As this shows, there are nearly twice as many male managers as female managers, with high levels of overrepresentation of male managers in the senior ranks.

Table 4. 1 Male and female managers at Thai Utility

Organizational Level	Female Managers	Male Managers	F/M Ratio
Senior	25	128	19.5%
Middle	1,233	1,406	87.7%
Junior	1,634	4,182	39.1%
Total	2,892	5,716	50.6%

This research selected participants from the company’s Bangkok headquarters and its geographic regional units (North, South, North- Eastern, and Middle). The headquarters was included as its own unit because it was assumed that it may be different from regional offices, either because it is in a city or because of its own culture. There could also be differences of organizational culture between organizational units, such as people’s attitudes, values, norms

and opinions. The interviews were distributed evenly between male and female participants where possible, which allows for a balanced comparison of gendered experience in the organization.

A total of 72 managers at Thai Utility took part in the research interviews. Although the study planned to have 76 managers, in fact this was not possible because at the upper levels of the organization there were only a few female managers. In particular, in the North and Northeast regions there was only one female senior manager, and no female senior manager in the South region. The participants were selected purposely. Purposive selection ensures that the research represents the range of views the research is concerned with (Myers, 2019). In this case, the concern was comparison of gendered networking experiences at the same level and the different levels and as participants move through the hierarchy of the organization, so the main selection criteria were gender and organizational position. I also desired a range of participants from different departments and geographic regions to account for the possibility that the organization is not uniform in its gendered practices. A total of 72 managers participated in the study and details of respondents are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4. 2 Participants selected for the study

Profile	Pseudonym	Occupation/Profession	Organization Location
Male Executive	Eakky	Deputy governor	HQ
	Poon	Deputy governor	HQ
	Sura	Deputy governor	HQ
	Som	Deputy governor	HQ
	Man	Deputy governor	HQ
	Serm	Governor	HQ
Female Executive	Chin	Deputy governor	HQ
	Chu	Director of Internal Audit	HQ
	Pib	Director of Legal office	HQ
	Buss	Director of Governor Office	HQ
Male Junior Manager	Sup	Lawyer	HQ
	Mon	HR	HQ
	Heng	HR	HQ
Female Junior Manager	Cherry	HR	HQ
	Rani	HR	HQ

Profile	Pseudonym	Occupation/Profession	Organization Location
	Pair	Marketing	HQ
Male Middle Manager	Pan	Engineer	HQ
	Maa	HR	HQ
	CC	Engineer	HQ
Female Middle Manager	Sor	HR	HQ
	Nong	Engineer	HQ
	Fah	HR	HQ
Male Senior Manager	Chart	Accountant	HQ
	Pasu	Engineer	HQ
	Pete	Engineer	HQ
Female Senior Manager	Vadee	HR	HQ
	Tiya	HR	HQ
	Fina	Marketing	HQ
Male Junior Manager	Nat	Lawyer	Middle region
	Gulf	Engineer	Middle region
Female Junior Manager	Pi	Engineer	Middle region
	Jan	Accountant	Middle region
Male Middle Manager	Kit	Accountant	Middle region
	B	Engineer	Middle region
Female Middle Manager	Yao	Engineer	Middle region
	Plum	Engineer	Middle region

Profile	Pseudonym	Occupation/Profession	Organization Location
Male Senior Manager	June	Engineer	Middle region
	X	Accountant	Middle region
Female Senior Manager	Aum	Accountant	Middle region
	Kelly	Accountant	Middle region
Male Junior Manager	KK	Accountant	North region
	Nutty	Engineer	North region
Female Junior Manager	Mut	HR	North region
	PP	Engineer	North region
Male Middle Manager	Tha	IT	North region
	Banky	Engineer	North region
Female Middle Manager	Porn	Accountant	North region
	Pink	Accountant	North region
Male Senior Manager	Dusy	Engineer	North region
	Petch	Engineer	
Female Senior Manager	Pass	Administrative	North region
Male Junior Manager	Super	Engineer	North-eastern region
	Chati	Engineer	North-eastern region
Female Junior Manager	Nap	Engineer	North-eastern region
	Susie	Marketing	North-eastern region
Male Middle Manager	Sami	Engineer	North-eastern region
	Nine	Engineer	North-eastern region
Female Middle Manager	Than	Engineer	North-eastern region
	Anna	Accountant	North-eastern region

Profile	Pseudonym	Occupation/Profession	Organization Location
Male Senior Manager	Wudy	Engineer	North-eastern region
	Great	Engineer	
Female Senior Manager	April	IT	North-eastern region
			North-eastern region
Male Junior Manager	Tree	Lawyer	South region
	Jatt	Engineer	South region
Female Junior Manager	Si	Accountant	South region
	Air	Engineer	South region
Male Middle Manager	Watt	Engineer	South region
	Can	Engineer	South region
Female Middle Manager	Sao	Administrative	South region
	Candy	Accountant	South region
Male Senior Manager	Panu	Engineer	South region
	Arthit	Engineer	South region

As this organization is very large, it was important, even within the context of a qualitative study, to engage with regional offices as well as the Headquarters. If data collection had only focused on the Headquarters, the full understanding of how people connect with each other within this organization may not have become visible. The sample was selected in three phases, based on Thai Utility's organizational structure. In **Phase 1**, male and female participants were selected from four geographic areas (Middle, North, North-Eastern and South), four functional areas (Administration, Engineering and Service, Operations and Maintenance, and Accounting and Power departments), and three managerial levels (junior, middle and senior management). This phase was planned for 48 participants, but only 44 participants were selected because there were not enough female senior managers in the North, North-Eastern and South regions. In **Phase 2** (18 interviews), male and female participants

were selected from the Headquarters staff, including three centralized units (Corporate Strategy and Development, Network and Service, and Support), again at three management levels (junior, middle and senior management). **Phase 3** (10 interviews) were the executive interviews. In this phase, there were five female and four male deputy governors from four departments (Office of the Governor, Legal, Internal Audit, and Accounting and Finance), as well as the current Governor.

4.2.1 Contacting and recruiting participants

Initial contact with participants was made by letter, email or telephone, depending on the research phase. During the initial contact, the research was explained briefly, including the time requirement and ethics. Before data collection commenced, ethical approval was sought and secured from the Kent Business School Research Ethics and Governance Committee. Each respondent was provided with a summary of the research and a consent form to sign in the presence of the researcher. The consent form provided the details of how the data would be stored and used, along with a statement about the right to withdraw from the research at any time. Copies of these documents can be found in the appendix. The interview data was kept by pseudonym on a password protected laptop which was securely stored. After the participant agreed to participate, the researcher scheduled interviews at the convenience of participants with the assistance of the HR Assistant Governor and Division Manager. Two weeks in advance of the interview, participants were given more detailed information and asked to complete the interaction map in advance of the interview.

4.3 The Data Collection Process

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

The research used semi-structured interviews to collect data from participants. Semi-structured interviews are relatively short single interviews that use an interview guide to focus, but not direct, the conversation between the researcher and participant (Galletta, 2013). This is only one form of interview that can be used with qualitative inquiry, along with life experience interviews, conversational interviews and other forms of data collection such as observation (Andrews *et al.*, 2004; Moen, 2006). All of these forms of interviewing and observation can potentially offer more detailed information, but it comes at the cost of longer data collection

times and more time commitment from both researcher and participants (Andrews, et al., 2004; Moen, 2006). Given that many of the participants had time constraints, it was important that the interviews were kept within one hour. This meant that use of longer or unstructured interviews was not appropriate for this research. The semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to limit the amount of time needed for the study, while still allowing the participant and interviewer to challenge each other and engage with each other's assumptions (Galletta, 2013). Along with the large sample, it was possible to use semi-structured interviews to both collect a considerable amount of data and remain respectful of participants' time and privacy preferences. These interviews were conducted using face-to-face meetings. The interviews with headquarters personnel were conducted first, followed by the Middle, North, North-Eastern, and South regions. Interviews with junior and middle managers were conducted first, but senior managers and executives took longer because of the existing demands on their time, which made it difficult to schedule the interviews.

4.3.2 The interview process

Interviews took place face-to-face, which was chosen because it yields better rapport between the participant and researcher (Edwards and Holland, 2013). The face-to-face interviews allowed the researcher to observe gestures, non-verbal communication and emotions. Since there was the possibility that the discussion would be controversial or difficult, this was preferred.

All interviews were audio recorded for transcription to enable analysis. This recording began during the consent stage, and participants were informed about it before any further discussion. The author also took notes during the interview. The notes were designed to draw attention to specific issues that came up during the interview, particularly when talking about the personal map of each person, as well as possible issues to address in data analysis.

The interview began with a general discussion and introduction of the interview purpose. I also used ice-breaking and rapport building techniques, because many of the questions were private and required disclosure and I wanted participants to be as comfortable as possible. I went over the informed consent form, which the participant then signed. The interview opened with some general demographic and career data, including their work experiences before working at Thai Utility and within the company. This helped understand their career path and personal networking and relationships generally, before moving through the more in-depth and details questions. At the close of the interview, I thanked the participant and informed them that they could access the findings of the research if desired following the

analysis.

In reflecting on the interview process, it was important to consider how my researcher identity impacted on the data collection. Previous research (e.g., Pini, 2005; Vahasantanen & Saarinen, 2013) has considered the impact the gender of the researcher has had on the interview interaction. Some research suggests that male respondents can respond negatively to female researchers, adopting an authoritative position which can make conducting the interview difficult (Pini, 2005; Lewis, 2021). Alongside this critique, alternative accounts of cross-gender research suggests that being a female researcher can have a positive impact on interview interactions with male respondents, with the latter more likely to view the interview as a shared collaborative event when the researcher is a woman (Gatrell, 2006). As my research included both male and female respondents, I also had to consider the impact of gender when interviewing women. As with male respondents, the literature indicates that this is not a straightforward situation. Accounts of same-gender interviewing vary from the work of Anne Oakley (1981, 1998) who argues that women interviewing women is likely to entail a more equal interaction while other research (McDowell, 1998) suggests that it cannot be assumed that same-gender interviews are inherently more equal.

In my interviews I experienced the need to vary my personal presentation and interaction depending on the seniority and gender of the respondent I was interviewing. Overall, I found there was a lot of individual variation between participants. Accordingly, and similar to McDowell (1998), I varied my presentation between adopting a researcher position based on a conventional female role which complemented the traditional masculinity of my male respondents, to demonstrating a form of female efficiency with senior women and having more in common with respondents who were similar to me.

I found that the interview interaction was easier with female and younger participants, as was building a conversation about networking and work experience, especially compared to male senior participants.

A likely cause of this difference in interaction across the interviews is my own social status, as a (relatively) young woman with no clear position within the organizational hierarchy. As there is an inherent power gradient within a research relationship (Hamilton, 2020), it is likely that I would have a better response from those who considered themselves on the same level as I am which aligns with McDowell's (1998) experience. Other researchers have noted that the gender of participants makes a difference in the amount of data that can be collected. For example, a female researcher conducting research among the largely male leaders of an Australian agricultural association observed the effect of various masculinities on the interview data (e.g. exaggerating their power and expertise) (Pini, 2005). Similarly, as indicated above, the act of being interviewed by a woman can cause men to react

negatively or to reinforce their masculinity (Lewis, 2021). Powerful women can also limit the amount of information given, for example if they sense a threat to their power or expertise (Ruan, 2020). Thus, it would not be surprising if there were gender-based limitations to the amount and quality of data I could collect, as well as seniority-based power differences. In recognizing the potential for variation in interaction with different respondents, I sought to ensure that I adopted an approach in each interview which aligned with the respondent, and I found the experience of McDowell (1998) referred to above, helpful in this regard.

Another issue I reflected on is that the interviews were limited in terms of my access to the work lives and experiences of the participants. Participants themselves do not always remember every aspect of their experience, and sometimes do not include relevant information because of this (Oakley, 2016). Furthermore, I would not *expect* that participants shared every aspect of their work life and experience. Some aspects of work life may be painful or embarrassing, or otherwise too psychologically challenging, to share with strangers, which is a limitation that I fully respect. It is quite possible respondents were concerned about sharing sensitive information, as I was an untrusted person and not known to them. My use of gatekeepers to access the organization may also have had an impact. Since I could not avoid the use of gatekeepers to contact members of the organization, I did have to accept that this would be the case. As there is no way to remove these limitations, I accept that my findings are partial and unreflective of the full experience of participants. Nevertheless, despite these constraints, I did successfully engage with my respondents and I did gain insight into their organizational and networking experiences.

4.3.3 The interview guide

Semi-structured research uses an interview guide to address specific issues with each participant, although the interview itself is not limited by the guide (King and Horrocks, 2010). The researcher designed and refined the interview guide following the literature review and conceptual framework.

The interview guide (attached in the Appendix) began with collection of some demographic information and professional experience, including their past experience and future career advancement plans. It then discussed the networking experiences of the participants, as well as the personal network mapping (which began the interview, and which are discussed below). The participants were then asked about their attitudes and beliefs about networking and how they viewed it. Finally, participants were asked about the organizational context of networking at the organization and what effects it has on their professional outcomes

and experience for both positive and negative sides. They were also asked whether they viewed others as having different experiences (e.g., do people of the other gender have a different experience of networking or outcomes). This section focused on gender differences in experience as perceived by individuals, to investigate whether they viewed gender as a factor in their networking processes or outcomes. This interview guide was designed for an interview lasting between 45 minutes and one hour. Open-ended questions with no right or wrong answers were used, since this would encourage sharing of experience from the participant (Galletta, 2013).

4.3.4 Personal networking maps

Personal networking maps were used as a tool for representing networking relationships. The personal networking map is a visual tool that individuals can use to represent their formal and informal connections within their social network and the characteristics of the networks (Wyatt, 2018). In this study, I adapted the way of personal networking map from Wyatt (2018) into Thai context and the Thai Utility context. Thus, the outcome might not be the same as the personal networking map of Wyatt (2018). Personal networking maps, in terms of how they were used in this research, are a straightforward representation of the relationships which support individual's work experiences. As well as representing an individual's relationship in work, they can also be used to consider the impact such connections have on career development. Through use of these networking maps and drawing on Acker's theory of gendered organization, the research to analysis aims to demonstrate how the interaction of gender, networking and organization results in differential career outcomes for male and female managers.

The initial research plan was for participants to complete personal networking maps in advance of the interviews, allowing participants time and space for psychological reflection on their networking practice. These maps would then be discussed at the interview. Participants were sent instructions for the process. In practice, only ten participants completed their maps prior to the interview. There were various reasons for this, including lack of time prior to the interview and lack of understanding of how to complete the networking map. For the participants that did not complete the personal networking map, the researcher hand-drew a networking map during discussion of their networking practice. The researcher also added detail for the participants who did complete the maps, as some of these maps were incomplete according to the discussion on networking. The researcher then converted the maps to a standardised representation using a computer graphics program to improve the analysis process. While this was not anticipated in the

original plan, in the researcher’s opinion it worked better than the prepared personal networking maps, because it allowed for the participants to add much more detail to their maps and for the researcher to ask questions about The personal networking maps were drawn following the instructions provided by Wyatt (2018). This is a five-step process, in which different types of relationships are added to gradually build the network map. In **Step 1** (Career Information Network, denoted by a rectangular box), participants were asked about who provides career information, organizational information, and career development information networks and relationship.

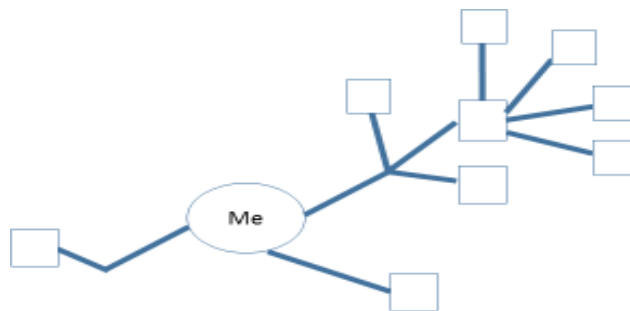


Figure 4. 1 Step 1 of networking map

Step 2 (Psychosocial support network, represented by ovals) included network connections who offer psychological and social support, for example friendship.

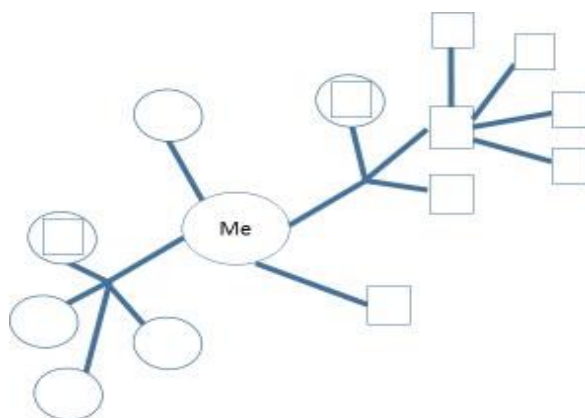


Figure 4. 2 Step 2 of networking ma

Step 3 (Powerful contacts, represented by a star) included network connections with high status and formal or informal power, both within and outside the organization.

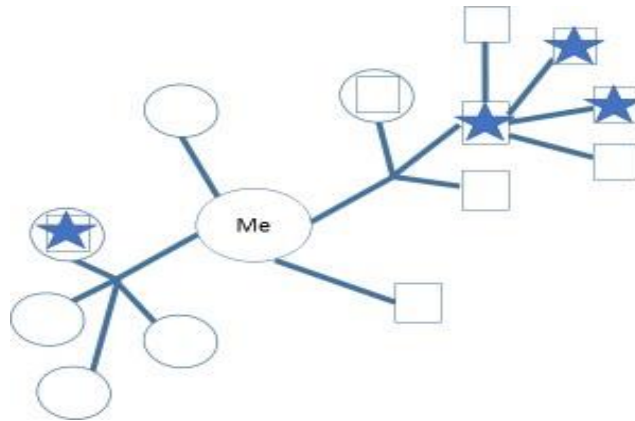


Figure 4. 3 Step 3 of networking map

Step 4 and 5 In the first three stages, network connections were differentiated by gender, including male (blue) and female (green). Mixed-gender groups were depicted in grey. Tie strength is also represented in the personal networking map, with weak ties represented by a dashed line and strong ties represented by a solid line. The example of a strong tie such as family or close friends etc. For the example of a weak tie such as a colleague who work in different department or boss who you hardly to contact with etc. Every tie identified in the maps has meaning. When I discussed maps in the interviews, I always asked about the nature of the relationship and how close or distant relationships are.

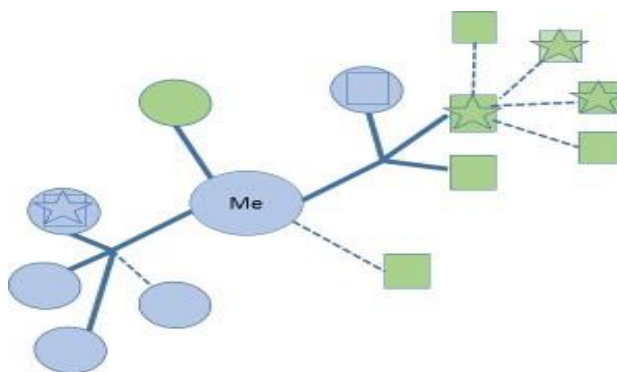


Figure 4. 4 Step 4 and 5 of networking map

Finally, when drafting the networking maps, I ensured that different relationships were identified using different colour lines. Line colour was used to represent relationship types. Family relationships were represented by red lines, while yellow lines represented close non-family relationships (Organizational family network). Black lines displayed powerful contacts. Blue lines are general people relationships in this personal networking map.

There were some differences between the ideal map-making process and the actual maps produced during the interviews. Figure 4.5 shows an example of a personal networking map produced during the pilot testing stage. This networking map, produced using a computer software program by a junior engineer volunteer participant, shows an ideal representation of the personal networking map following Wyatt's (2018) process. Figure 4.6 shows an example of the networking map as used in the interviews. The interviewee, a female manager, also produced her personal networking map prior to the interview using a software program. However, during the interview she made several connections and expansions to the network as network connections were discussed. Therefore, researcher made manual corrections to the network map, which were then incorporated into her standardized network map. These corrections, after re-drawing using computer software and standardized representation, are shown in Figure 4.7. These figures illustrate both how the personal networking maps appeared, and how they were modified over time during the interviews. (For the networking map; the list of abbreviation is in appendix)

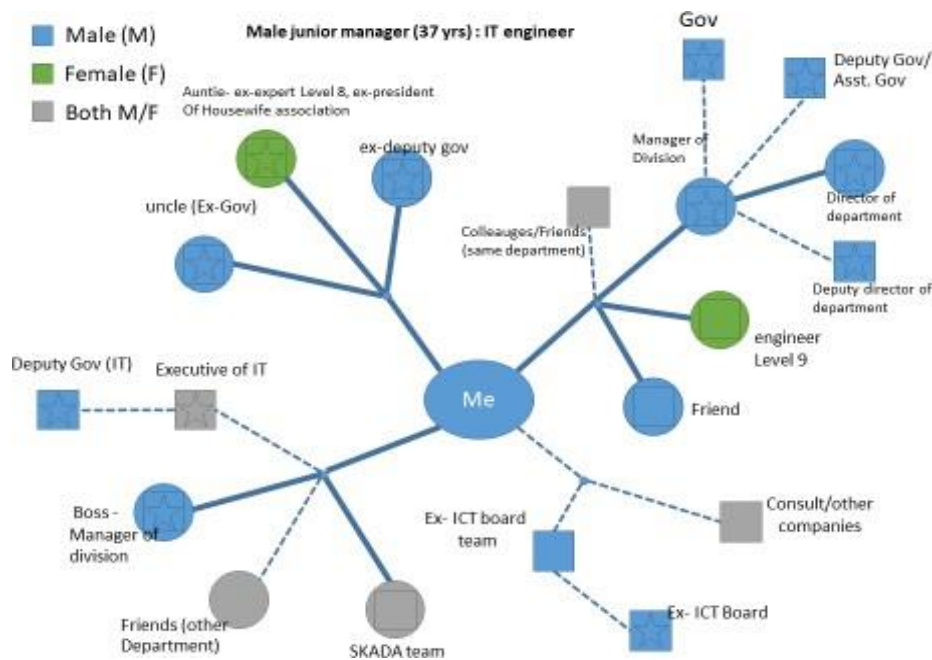


Figure 4. 5 Personal networking map produced during the pilot testing stage by an engineer

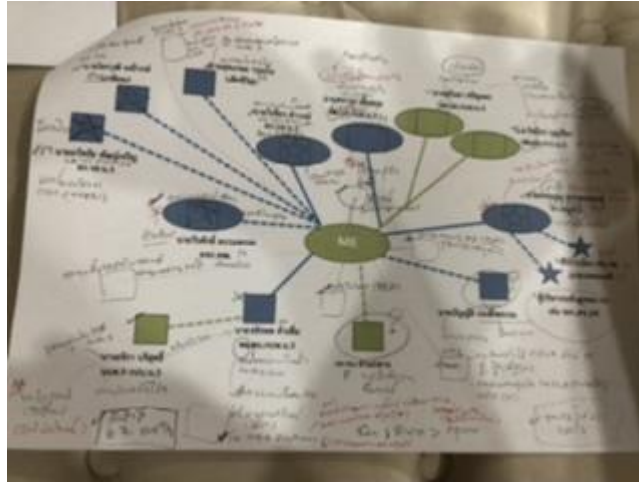


Figure 4. 6 An example of the map produced during a live interview with a female engineer

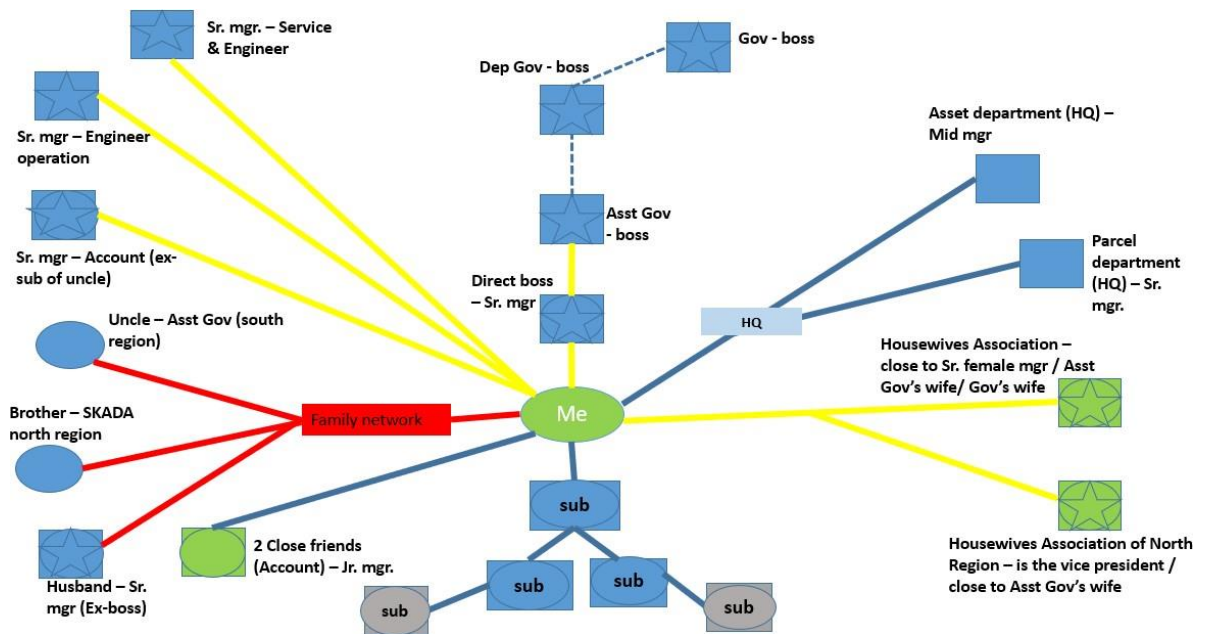


Figure 4. 7 The expanded and standardized personal networking map of the female engineer

4.3.5 Ethical concerns of data collection

There were several ethical principles that were a concern in this research. One of the most pressing concerns was the potential for harm to participants in the study. As is common with organizational studies, researcher access to the organization was facilitated by brokers (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012) and gatekeepers (Buchanan and Bryman, 2007). On one hand, these individuals did provide the required access to the organization. On the other hand, the involvement of gatekeepers (particularly the Governor, Deputy Governors and HR professionals) did pose a potential risk to participants. The most obvious risk is that unfavourable feedback about the organization could result in disciplinary action or other retaliation. There is also the risk of more subtle harm, for example the potential harm to network relationships if they are disclosed or critiqued (McDermid *et al.*, 2014). In general, research participants should be protected as far as possible from potential harm (Whitley and Kite, 2012). Therefore, the decision was made for all participant feedback to be made confidential and anonymous as far as possible. No unedited transcripts were released, and where there was identifying information (for example, specific information about departments or specific instances that others might recognise) these were obscured or removed. Although a list of interviewee identities was retained, each interviewee was assigned a pseudonym prior to analysis, which was applied to the transcript rather than their identity itself. This was intended to protect, as far as possible, from any incidental disclosure that could be harmful.

4.4 The Analysis Process

The first stage of analysis was data preparation. Following each interview, the audio recording was prepared into a digital transcript. Because the interviews were in Thai, there was a choice of whether to translate the transcripts and then code, or to code and then translate. Rather than attempting to translate raw transcripts, which can cause problems with the meaning, the researcher conducted the analysis in Thai (the shared native language of researcher and participants) and presents the findings in English in this thesis. Standardization and transcription of the personal networking maps as developed during the interview was also part of the preparation process.

This research used an iterative qualitative approach which built up through multiple stages of coded data. The theory of the gendered organization (Acker, 1990) was used as the lens for data coding. The four dimensions of Acker's theory – gendered structures and

divisions, gendered symbols and images, gendered interactions, and gendered identity – were used as the basis for the coding process with the coding of each interview guided by these dimensions. The coding process began with the identification of gender themes within the data. In identifying these themes, an effort was made to adhere to the language used by the respondents (Gioia, Corley and Hamilton, 2013). The identification of gender themes was linked to and guided by Acker’s dimensions and entailed going through the interviews of junior managers, middle managers, senior managers and executives within the regions and at headquarters to identify traces of Acker’s dimensions. Following identification of the dimensions within the interviews and because this research follows the logic of Benschop and Doorewaard’s (1998, 2012) gender subtext model based on Acker’s theory of gendered organization, organizational logic was not coded as an independent dimension. Instead, the emergence of the gendered organizational logic accumulated from the other four dimensions. From the examination of the interviews and the networking maps, the analysis identified the organizational logic as one of family which takes one of three forms – family of origin, marital (made) family and organizational family.

An example of this coding process is summarized in Table 4.3 Summary of Coding (Senior Male) and Table 4.4 Summary of Coding (Middle Women). In Table 4.3 comes from the interview of a male executive manager, while the example in Table 4.4 comes from the interview of a female middle manager. Both tables identify the gender themes which connect with the dimensions from Acker’s theory of gendered organization which contribute to an organizational logic of family.

By using Acker’s theory of gendered organization as a framework through which to ‘read’ the interview and network maps data, the research sought to explore how gender influences work experiences and career development within Thai Utility. Directing attention at networking as a gendered practice makes visible the gendered nature of this organizational behaviour. It highlights the way in which networking as a gendered practice generates an organizational logic of family with different consequences for men and women within the organization. The analysis also considers whether there are differences between levels. One example of these differences is that the gender subtext of ‘cheating’, in which men avoid close interaction with more junior women to avoid assumptions about their relationships, was prevalent at the senior and executive manager level, but not present at lower levels. This analysis among and between levels and dimensions of management allowed for identification of other patterns of interaction as well, such as intensification of single-gender interactions.

The analysis culminated in evaluation of each of Acker’s dimensions and how these ‘add up’ to a dominant gendered organizational logic of the family which prevails at Thai Utility.

Table 4. 3 Summary of Coding (Senior Male)

Gender Themes	Gendered Organization (Acker, 1990)	Organizational Logic of Family
I am the first person to appoint woman as manager	Divisions along lines of gender within organizations labour markets, family	<i>Family of Origin</i> ↓ <i>Marital (made) Family</i>
I focus on performance Reaching the standard Women get married In Thai culture women have to take care of children and their husband	Gender symbols and images language, culture, roles, family	
Mom person has to think about their children first Mom person has to manage or balance their time		
Men can work without thinking about family issue		
I can work easier with men Men have good decision- making more than women Women always think a lot before they make decision	Gender identities Choice of work Presentation of self as a gendered member of an organization	<i>Organizational Family</i>
My engineer gang always have parties and drink a lot		
No women engineers at this company in the past	Gender interactions between women and men, women and women	
Men prefer to stay with men more than with women		

Men can talk easier and private – they can say everything they want

men and men

Table 4. 4 Summary of Coding (Middle Female)

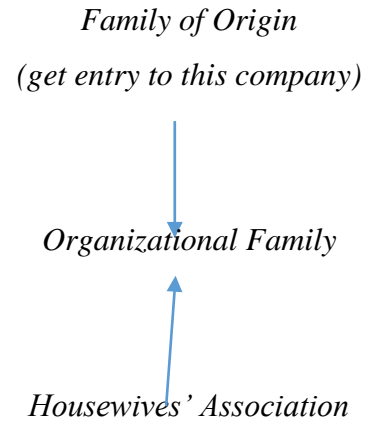
Gender Themes	Gendered Organization (Acker,1990)	Organizational Logic of Family
<p>Women cannot be the governor. This is not a rule or policy but everyone knows well. Governor should graduate from engineer field. And this company never had women governor before. People believe woman cannot control and manage their jobs well because their family responsibility also load for them.</p>	<p>Division along gender lines within organization, labour markets, family</p>	<p><i>Family (of) Origin</i> ↓ <i>Marital (made) Family</i></p>
<p>From the perception, women understands men are more flexible than women because women have to take care their family (husband and children), most of men also agree that.</p>	<p>Gender symbols and images language, culture, roles, family</p>	<p><i>Organizational Family</i></p>
<p>Women cannot make a good decision because of quite slowly and unconvinced. On the other hand, men love</p>	<p>Gender identities Choice of work</p>	

challenge and confidence when they make a decision.

Presentation of self as a gendered member of an organization

Sometimes women can get entry to work by their family origin support. (such as father) Moreover, women who joins housewives association would have a lot networking with their boss's wives, senior manager's wives and also executives 'wives. These wives can support them. (by themselves or through their husbands) Some case happen what surprising is some women can jump across to be promoted in other work line.

Gender interactions between women and men, women and women



4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the research methodology and techniques selected for the primary research. The study takes place in the context of an organization that, on its face, appears to represent the type of organization that Acker (1990, 1992) describes as a gendered organization: although there are no formal restrictions based on gender, nonetheless women have had limited success, particularly in the higher level of the organization. The fact that there are nearly twice as many male junior managers as female also points to the fact that this is not an artefact of a previous era – in fact, the organizational processes that are being used to select managers today continue to lead to underrepresentation of women in the upper ranks of the organization. The study employs the qualitative approach, using an iterative qualitative analysis process that highlights the similarities and differences in women's and men's experiences of networking within the organization. This approach is designed to tease out the differences not

just in individual networking practices, but in the organizational and structural conditions that affect outcomes of networking practices between men and women in the specific context of Thai Utility. The findings presented beginning in Chapter 5 demonstrate the value of this approach.

Chapter 5 Data Analysis (Part 1): Three Divisions

Drawing on Acker's theory of gendered organizations, this research seeks to make visible the gendered nature of Thai Utility and the impact this has on the work experiences of men and women working in this organization. As outlined in Chapter 3, the analysis will make full use of Acker's theoretical framework. In Chapter 4, it was explained that the data analysis process used a qualitative, iterative analysis process to evaluate interviews with members of the organization. Accordingly, this chapter moves through the gendered structures and processes from the theoretical framework, beginning with gender divisions and gendered structures, then progressing to gendered symbols and images, and gender identities. In chapter 6, the analysis focuses on gendered interactions. Within each of these segments, the evidence for how the organization evinces each of these aspects of the gendered organizational logics is discussed, as well as their manifestations (for example, the ideal worker, gendered hierarchies and flows of power, control of female bodies and sexuality, and the organizational identification with the family). Furthermore, within each of these aspects of the organizational structure and processes, the discussion is arranged to move from junior managers (the most junior level of the organization interviewed) to executives (the most senior level of the organization). This arrangement of interview data shows how the organizational processes and attitudes become more entrenched in the organization as individuals accumulate more power and become more invested in organizational structures and processes that allow them to keep this power.

5.1 Gender Divisions and Gendered Structures

The foundation of Acker's (1991, 1992) gendered organization theory is the gender divisions and gendered structures of the organization. These gender divisions and gendered structures are the focus of this chapter, along with their related gender symbols and identities. The chapter begins at the lowest peripheral level of the management structure in the organization – the regional junior manager – and moves up the ranks to the organization's executive management. Through this progression through the managerial hierarchy, the gender divisions and gendered structures of the organization become clear: engineering is a 'male' activity, while administration is a 'female' activity. A gendered hierarchy also becomes obvious— engineering, which is viewed as the core activity of the organization, is higher status

than the various administrative tasks that are coded as ‘female’. These divisions and structures only become more entrenched in the higher levels of the organization.

5.1.1 Regional Managers

5.1.1.1 Junior Managers

Within the organizational hierarchy, junior managers, who have typically only held managerial roles for a few years, are the first line of supervision, but consequently hold the least organizational power. For the most part, the junior managers are also the youngest management members in the organization, and show the weakest differentiation of gender roles and structure, strongly implying an intersection of age and gender that determines a ‘hierarchy of inequality’ (Acker, 2006). This can also be seen in the junior managers in the Headquarters team, which are discussed in section 5.2, and in the perceived intersections of age and gender according to senior managers, who also perceive that junior managers are subject to less gendered division and reinforcement of roles (discussed in subsequent sections). However, even at this level gender divisions and gendered structures are obvious.

5.1.1.1.1 Gender divisions and reinforcement

The most common gender division identified by junior managers is in types of work. Engineering is a ‘male’ profession, according to some of the junior participants. Management is also viewed as a ‘male’ profession. Meanwhile, HR, accountant, and marketing are female roles. There is no apparent drive from the top to change this situation:

The majority of engineers are male. Even Thai Utility has a policy for supporting/facilitating [female engineers] but it does not work in reality. No leaders take serious action and no one from headquarters follows up on the policy. (Si, female accountant)

Frequently, this gender division is justified through differences in job performance and basic capabilities and temperaments, which differentiate male and female employees and what roles they are suited for. For example:

I think the performance of female accountants is better than male accountants, because most female accountants are quite careful, nice and orderly... Male employees are qualified to be leaders and are good at management. In the past, when I have had to

work at night, male colleagues always take action to take care of everyone and take female [employees] home safely. (Jan, female accountant)

Another justification is because of differences in technological skill. For example:

Senior female accountants are unskilled in technology. They can only do basic computer programs and let others deal with their problems. [Female engineers] are better with technology and quite high skilled. (Si, female accountant)

This can be viewed as the problem of the ‘disembodied worker’ (Benschop & Dooreward, 1998), in which the assumed characteristics of an ideal worker are also assumed to be endemic to one gender. In the case here, it is assumed that lack of technological skill is a female characteristic, which the (few) female engineers are exceptional for overcoming, rather than that lack of technological skill is due to age or overall skill.

In other cases, the justification is a naturalization of the lack of female engineers, on the basis that there are not that many of them (KK, male accountant). For example, KK, male accountant argues that there is no difference between male and female engineers or in hiring – the lack of female engineers in the organization, he explains, is because there are not that many of them to hire. This is not an uncommon process, as gender divisions are frequently reinforced in the workplace, but formed in broader society (Kantola, 2008). With the assumption that female engineers are rare, it is easier to overlook the lack of female engineers in the organization.

Gender divisions are reinforced at this organizational level by perceived difficulties in dealing with the other gender. This perception is predominantly a perception of men that women are difficult to deal with, for example that they are fussy or weaker than men. In some cases, the respondent appears to assume that the woman in a role is responsible for organizational procedure. For example,

When I deal with women, there are a lot of processes, it is quite complicated and I don't understand why. For example, if I want to get a new computer [for an employee] I cannot talk to [the female administrator] to get it, I have to do a new letter and have my boss sign it, blah blah blah! (Nap, male engineer)

In other cases, there are perceptions that women do have advantages, but these same advantages also make them difficult to deal with:

Most women are neat and careful in everything. They always think before things happen because they have a second plan for themselves in case there are problems. However, they have some disadvantages. They are too fussy and picky because they focus on details! Also they talk a lot! (PP, female engineer)

In this case, it is clear that the women staffing the accounting and marketing department are not responsible for the procedural overload, but the problem is generalized to a female problem, rather than an organizational problem. This is a classic case of blaming women for the organizational conditions which create inequality, rather than viewing it as a systemic issue (Acker, 2006). This is not solely a problem of men; female manager (Jan, female accountant and Susie, female marketing) states that:

I don't like to deal my job with male engineer. They talk not good to me, I don't know why!!!! I think I hardly get a good collaboration with them. I am bored! (Jan, female accountant)

When I have to deal with technical staff or engineers I let my male colleagues do it for me... I think they are quite aggressive and never give good collaboration. (Susie, female marketing)

However, lack of collaboration can easily be viewed from the other side as unwillingness to work with female colleagues, as expressed in several cases. Thus, while Jan, female marketing's male engineering colleagues may be difficult to deal with, it is not because of her own failure, but because of an organizational division and structure which creates distance between them (Acker, 2006).

5.1.1.1.2 Gendered structures and hierarchies

There is also the sense that engineering, rather than administrative roles, is the higher status role, and one which women have to work harder to succeed in:

If women want to succeed they should have higher performance than males... women should have more skills [in the same position]. I think the organisational structure here still supports men more than women. You know the majority of jobs here are in the technical and engineering fields. (Super, male engineer)

I have to work so hard and harder than male to prove myself and try to make my boss appreciate on me. So sometime other male doesn't like me. They think I try to show off!! (Air, female engineer)

Of course, there are female engineers, who are more represented among this junior group than the more senior groups. For some of them, it seems that disassociation from the traditional female characteristics are necessary to succeed in their roles:

It is hard for me to deal with women in other fields. I am a female engineer and have been in the engineering environment for a long time. I could say I have quite a bit of male character inside me. (Pi, female engineer)

I think I cannot deal my job well with female account, especially with old female account. I think my logic differ from them and it might be because my characteristic like a man and they also said I am too much confident and quite aggressive when I talk to them! (PP, female engineer)

This type of dissociation has been observed previously among women in STEM, either through distancing from other women (Rhoton, 2011) or rejection of 'female' characteristics (Parsons *et al.*, 2012). (Here it is both.) This strategy can help women access male roles and identities to an extent, but ultimately, a woman using a disassociation strategy will still be systematically accorded a 'female' role (Acker, 1990, 1992). Thus, it is not clear that this

strategy would result in breakdown of social divisions, or simply carve out exceptions for individuals.

In summary, at this level, the gender divisions are clearest between ‘male’ engineers and ‘female’ administrators. The engineer role is viewed as higher status, although this view is not fully entrenched at this level. These divisions are justified based on different skills and affinities (or lack of them) and on lack of female engineers. Furthermore, it is a common view that women (particularly) are difficult to work with, often for reasons like administrative procedures that are not their fault.

5.1.1.2 Middle Managers

5.1.1.2.1 Gender divisions and reinforcement

The middle managers identified several different gender divisions, which are generally typical of the gender divisions of the other organizational levels. One of these divisions was in the type of work. Most participants identified engineering as ‘male’ work, in which women either could not succeed for structural reasons or were unsuited for. Perhaps the plainest statement about this was:

I think this kind of job [construction site engineering] is not fit for women... I believe in their performance but I prefer to assign the right job to the right person. (Sami, male engineer)

I never discriminate female engineer. I always give them a chance to work and show their performance but sometime I worry about them. Some jobs are not fit for them. I worry about their security first!! (Watt, male engineer)

Some of the reasons for limiting women from engineering include physical requirements and flexibility demands (Sami, male engineer), lack of appropriate education (Sao, female administrative), and other obstacles (Parn, female accountant). However, there is also a perception that women themselves are not interested in engineering, especially field work:

I never see any female... in my department want to go to work at the site... I think this kind of job is not fit for females. I believe in their performance but I prefer to assign the right job to the right person. (Sami, male engineer)

I think many female engineers don't want to work at the site because it is inconvenience for them. They have family So they cannot go outside at night when the problem occurs at the site!! I understand!! (Watt, male engineer)

In comparison, accounting and sometimes other field is identified as a 'female' by several participants. This was attributed in part to women's greater detail orientation and data analysis skills. In some cases, though, the difference is simply justified by reference to a broader field:

I don't see much difference... There are a lot of females in my department because this is an accounting and finance department. (Kit, male accountant)

In my department, there are a lot of females. I did not see any difference. Male can work well with female. I don't know for other department but I think working in my department is quite smoothly because this is administrative department. It totally differs from engineer or technical department!!. (Sao, female administrative)

In other words, it is not the organization's fault that accounting and finance is dominated by women – that is just how it is in the broader profession. Similarly, Kit, male accountant points to a general lack of women in the engineering field as a justification for their absence from the organization's engineering department. Of course, the evidence of Mihăilă's (2018) study suggests that women are absent from these fields because they have more difficulty succeeding and are not rewarded as well, rather than due to an endemic lack of participation.

In the case of exclusion of women from engineering roles, it is typically framed as a problem of women, rather than of the position itself. For example,

I understand that sometimes men are more flexible than women, because women have to take care of their families... In the female middle manager's case, my boss disagreed with promoting her because she was not flexible and could not [manage] the male engineering and technical staff. (Sao, female administrative)

I think the flexible is one of the key point for promotion, especially we are women! We have to take care our children. So we have to balance between our children and our job!! This is so hard!! (Than, female engineer)

The gender division between engineering and accounting as 'male' and 'female' fields respectively seems particularly strong in middle management compared to other groups. It is also consistent with division of professions (Acker, 1990, 1992). Particularly, the assumption that women are not engineers because they are ineffective as engineers, rather than because of the assumptions of engineering as a male role, and the devaluation of the accounting field meets this description.

5.1.1.2.2 Gendered structures and hierarchy

It was clear that the 'female' fields were devalued in comparison to the 'male' engineering for several reasons, which meant it was easier for women to advance within them. For example:

I think women can advance well in the accounting field because their route is quite clear and it is not hard to reach their goal. (Parn, female accountant)

I know the core function of this company is engineer and technical field. That's why sometime other work fields are devalued and feel unfair! (Yao, female engineer)

This suggests there is an underlying assumption that women are less capable or skilled at goal achievement than men, which makes the perceived 'easier' departments better suited to them. In other cases, the gendered structures and hierarchies are expressed much more bluntly:

I think a woman could not be the governor. This is not the rule or policy but everyone knows it well. Firstly, to be the governor you should graduate [in the engineering field]. There is just one [female] engineer who has reached middle management in the North Eastern engineering field now. This girl is outstanding, intelligent with good performance... So let's see her in the future. (Sao, female administrative)

I never see our ex-governor until current governor are from other field of engineer. It looks like everyone know governor is come from only engineer field and this is not the regulation. We just know by ourselves!! (Tha, male engineer)

In other words, not only does the divide between 'male' engineering and 'female' administration reflect a divide in the engineering and administration departments – it also effectively closes the top levels of the organization to women. This is not just at the top level, however:

Some positions, people know are for men. There is no rule or policy... I think it is just the culture, that they think men fit the role better than women. (Sao, female administrative)

I think to get promoted, it depends on our boss or senior in this company and mostly they are men!! Normally they always select men more than women. And they try to find the good reason to support that male candidate they select!!! I just observe! (Sami, male engineer)

Thus, at this level it is possible to see the beginning of entrenched hierarchies of value that not only make it challenging for women to succeed in engineering, but also lock them out of senior management positions. Watt, male engineer, similarly, seemed to view the lack of female management as a natural consequence of limited management roles and relatively few female engineers, rather than as a structural problem that privileged the 'male' engineering role in general. This can be viewed as a problem of the informal network (the 'old boy's network')

where women are excluded by definition, and which limits the opportunities of women to advance (Durbin, 2011).

In summary, at the middle management level gender divisions and gendered hierarchies become increasingly entrenched and unchallenged. At this level, engineering is a male field, not so much because of a structural lack of female engineers, but because women are in some way unsuitable for engineering. In other words, women do not meet the ideal worker standard of the engineer, for example being intellectually unsuited or uncommitted in some way to the role due to family responsibilities (Acker, 1990). At the same time, the ‘female’ role of administration is also viewed uncritically as a natural consequence of the field and individual characteristics. The same hierarchy of value is present as at lower managerial levels, with engineering valued more highly than administration. At this level it also becomes obvious that this has implications for organizational power – simply, top management roles are reserved for engineers, who are not (and potentially cannot be) women, because lower roles are also reserved, tacitly, for men. At this level of management, such a perception could have significant impacts on reinforcing the gender divisions and structures expressed, since middle managers within the organization are making hiring and promotion decisions. Thus, the existence of such gender divisions and hierarchies here contributes to the persistence of inequality within the organization.

5.1.1.3 Senior Managers

5.1.1.3.1 Gender divisions and reinforcement

The senior manager level differs somewhat from lower levels. As at lower levels of the organization, there were strong gender divisions between engineering and administration as ‘male’ and ‘female’ roles respectively. However, there is a sharp divide between male and female senior managers: male senior managers view this division as natural or attributable to female inferiority for engineering roles, while at least some female senior managers see it as resulting from systematic gender discrimination.

The male senior managers in the interviews viewed engineering as a predominantly male field, with a variety of different justifications for this. June, male engineer observed that in his region, most female workers are in account and other administrative departments, with only one in ten engineers being female. Thus, he ascribes lack of female engineers and engineering managers just to statistics, which has already been addressed above as a common perception for both engineers and administrators.

Another manager views the division of work as a problem of family responsibilities, since women have less time to devote to work (Panu, male engineer). This goes back to the definition of work itself as a public and therefore male activity (Acker, 1992, 1998).

However, Wudy, male engineer is more disparaging of women as both engineers and managers, viewing them as fundamentally unsuited to the task. For example:

When the boss is male, he can control female workers with no problem. Problems always happen when the boss is female, because she is fussy and bossy... Female engineers should follow the administrative track, they cannot compete with male engineers. (Wudy, male engineer)

Even outside management roles, they did not consider women suitable for advanced engineering work - simply, they felt women just couldn't "cut it" in the field. However, they acknowledges that female engineers are in some way different from women in traditional female roles, as they have adapted to working with men earlier in their education. This differentiation between 'engineer' women and 'normal' women was seen in the Junior management discussion as well, in that instance expressed by one of the female managers herself. In that case, it was characteristic of the female engineer distancing herself socially or via personality traits from other women, which has been noted as one of the ways women in STEM deal with their social position (Rhoton, 2011; Parsons, *et al.*, 2012). However, here it is a male senior manager who views his female engineering direct reports as exceptional and different from other women. This points to the notion that women can achieve to some extent (though not fully) the ideal characteristics of the universal worker (Acker, 1990). This distancing of women from other women is one of the ways in which gender divisions can occur, as occasional females in 'male' roles make it possible to ignore or deny the gendered organizational roles and divisions, instead attributing apparent gender divisions to differences in predisposition, personality or other traits. In effect, this distancing action allows those in power (men) to claim that women *can* hold organizational power and high-value roles if they are good enough in some way, because of the few exceptional women. However, as will be discussed below, this does not mean that women are treated within the organization, even if they do manage this.

5.1.1.3.2 Gendered structures and hierarchies

The most obvious way that gendered structures and hierarchies were evident at this level was in opportunities for advancement in the upper levels of the organization. Even at the senior management level, the hierarchy of value was viewed as limiting advancement opportunities. Pass – female administrative felt that she would not be able to advance further in the company, although she eventually did, because of this discrimination. Thus, while men view the lack of women in engineering as a natural consequence of statistics or inferior work, women view it as systematic discrimination. These divisions absolutely do retain power for men at the expense of women (Acker, 1990).

The source of this inequality was somewhat controversial. April, female IT felt that discrimination against women was systematic, not in interactions but in their access to promotions. She said,

The company views men as more flexible than women... they are offered more promotions and opportunities. I think like this because I always observe and used to experiences that I cannot get the promotion and no one can answer me why!! Even I qualify more than other male candidate! Other people told me that because they think I am not flexible!! OMG! They think by themselves!! (April, female IT)

I think I got many opportunities to work more than women. I don't know why because this is from my boss's consideration. Off course I can show my performance more than women. That's why I got the promotion when other candidate is women! (Dusy, male engineer)

Dusy, male engineer, a male manager, also viewed the company as having a “hidden agenda” that prevented the advancement of women. However, Pass, female administrative disagrees that this is an organization-wide problem:

There is no discrimination against women in my department... [but] I have never seen a leading female engineer. The highest position that I see female can reach in this field is just middle manager and there are just a few people. Not over 5 female for sure!! (Pass, female administrative)

In other words, in the administrative departments such as the department Pass, female administrative leads, the evidence of gender discrimination and its effects on women are much less than in engineering. This suggests that not only is engineering a field that is dominated by men, but that its internal structures and processes (its organizational logic) to some extent reserve the field for men. Furthermore, with gender-segregated departments enmeshed in a hierarchical structure, discrimination can take place invisibly at the department level – for example, by limiting the advancement potential of human resources professionals as a class, rather than by individual gender, while reserving more valuable leadership roles for engineers who happen to be men. The reservation of engineering roles (and thus advancement in the organization) for men can be seen in the comments of Wudy, male engineer:

“Women should be directed along the academic career track. I always direct my female subordinates [engineers] along the academic path because they can be promoted better. In engineering it is difficult for them to compete with the male engineers. (Wudy, male engineer)

I try to put myself in the right track, in account field because I know well that accounting is the second field that has a route to success too!! At least this company always has female deputy governor in account field! (Aum, female accountant)

One of the biggest problems with this perception at the senior management level is that it may preclude eliminating systemic discrimination which reinforces the gendered hierarchy. Lewis and Morgan (1994) notes that the organization cannot change if the organizers do not see a problem. This is particularly true since individuals only have a limited amount of influence when it comes to organizational change (Britton, 2000; Lester, Sallee and Hart, 2017). Thus, even if individual senior managers recognize the presence of institutional discrimination, this does not mean that they can enact change. In this case, senior managers do see a problem and have made at least some efforts to address it, which does suggest that there is at least the possibility of change, even though it may not be an easy process. Therefore, this should *not* be taken to mean that these senior managers should not attempt change.

In summary, the senior management to some extent had similar views of gender divisions and gendered structures and hierarchies as at the lower levels of the organization. However, managers at this level were also somewhat more aware of the gender divisions and gendered structures as a result of entrenched discrimination within the organization, rather than resulting naturally (for example, from lack of female engineers or inferiority of female workers compared to the male ‘universal’). This could be because of greater experience or because they were aware of organizational discussions occurring over the long term about gender discrimination, although it was not clear why this was stronger in the senior managers than others. However, some ideas did persist, such as the idea that women were less engaged with the organization or had greater family responsibilities which inhibited their performance or interest. Furthermore, the extent to which managers identified discrimination as a reason for lack of advancement of female engineers varied – at least one senior manager felt that women were fundamentally unsuited to engineering and even directed his female subordinates away from field engineering roles based on this assumption. Thus, even though at this level there was some awareness of discrimination, the managers at this level were also responsible for reinforcing and perpetuating gender divisions and gendered structures and hierarchies.

5.1.2 Headquarters and Executive Staff

Many of the gender divisions and gendered structures identified at the junior engineering level can also be seen at the level of the headquarters staff and executives, who are the central management of the organization both physically and in terms of power concentration. These gender divisions and gendered structures served to both divide workers and created a hierarchy of importance within the organization. To begin with, the headquarters staff identified many different gender divisions in work roles and departments. The HR department is mostly female, as is the accounting department. The engineering department, on the other hand, is mostly male. Furthermore, this meant that in many cases, such as Cherry, female HR, the female manager had mostly or only female reports, while the same was true for male participants like Pasu, male engineer, who had mostly male reports. This gender division of work roles and the spatial environment is reflected in the gendered hierarchies and structures of the central organization, as it is in the regional peripheries. Here, the gender divisions, structures and hierarchies of the organization’s central staff are investigated, beginning with the junior headquarters staff, through the middle level and senior headquarters staff and on to the organization’s executive management.

5.1.2.1 Junior Headquarters Staff

5.1.2.1.1 Gender divisions and reinforcement

The junior managers in the headquarters staff work largely in gender-divided departments and teams. For example, Cherry, female HR has five subordinates in the Human Resources department, all of whom are female. Most of the employees at her level in the HR department are also female. Mon, male HR, who is also in the HR department, also works with mostly women. This is equally true for male junior managers like Sup, male lawyer, an engineering manager, who works primarily with male engineers. Thus, the actual division of work for these employees is a matter of gender segregation.

Another gender division at this level is that of physical space. Specifically, there are some places and spaces where female workers are excluded. Although this is justified as a matter of organizational difficulty or similar, it has the effect that female employees cannot fully engage in the organization's work and social life. One example of this division of physical space, and by virtue of this division the social activities that occur within it, comes from Sup, male lawyer, who explains social events and conferences that the engineering department sometimes takes. He says,

My department [Legal department] creates events for travelling or seminars in other provinces. Everyone is allowed to join in these events but some women never go! I understand that sometimes it is hard to separate rooms for only women. Men can sleep anywhere and they are very easy going... but this is also a thing in Thai culture [that limits the interaction of men and women]. (Sup, male lawyer)

This was also explained by Cherry (female HR):

I hardly go to join any events or activities after work or travelling to other provinces because I have to take care my children and my husband. But I think my boss and my friends in department understand me. If the seminar or event are very important, I will join but I have to bring my children with me!! (Cherry, female HR)

In other words, there are specific social and work events where women are excluded because of the perceived difficulty of including them. This does not necessarily mean that it

would *actually* be difficult to include women, but rather that it is perceived that women's greater fussiness and unwillingness to get along means they cannot share rooms. This is only one example of how physical space itself is divided within the organization and how this is reflected in organizational interactions and processes.

5.1.2.1.2 Gendered structures and hierarchy

The junior headquarter managers did not have a strong statement about gendered structures and hierarchies. In some cases, the junior headquarter managers seemed to view the hierarchy either as invisible or inverted. For example, Cherry, female HR stated that male and female employees in the (female-dominated and led) HR department could "hang out whenever they want." In another case, Rani, female HR reported a conflict between male and female leaders where the female leader appeared to use her power to prevent the male leader's advancement:

[The female leader] thinks the other [male] leaders don't respect her. [A co-worker said] that [the female leader] is jealous of [the male leader], and never gives him any work to do so that he does not have good performance. She never lets it go! (Rani, female HR)

This anecdote suggests that there are gendered structures at work that are not recognised, but also that at least in some cases, there is room for female leaders to gain control of the environment.

5.1.2.2 Middle Manager Headquarters Staff

5.1.2.2.1 Gender divisions and reinforcement

Gender divisions and their reinforcement are strong at the headquarters middle management level as they are elsewhere. The same naturalization of the structural lack of female engineers that is observed in the regional engineering offices also played a role in Dr. Maa, male HR and Dr. Nong, female engineer's perception of why there were so few women in engineering roles. Of course, women are given a nominal route to succeed in this role:

Anyway, if they can prove themselves, I mean their performance, to all of the male engineers and technical staff, they will be fine. (Dr. Maa, male HR)

I think I have no problem about my career even I am a female engineer. I only show my potential, my hard working, my successful job to my boss. That's it! I think my good performance can beat other male engineer too!! (Dr. Nong, female engineer)

This goes back to the point Super, male engineer made (discussed above with the junior managers), which is that women have a higher bar for performance to achieve the same goals in the engineering department compared to men. The existence of higher performance requirements for women compared to men in the same roles is typically informal, but it is one of the ways in which gender divisions and hierarchies are enforced (Diehl and Dzubinski, 2016). It is also consistent with the idea that women have a fundamentally different level of performance than men, and therefore are held to different standards (Acker, 1990).

5.1.2.2.2 Gendered structures and hierarchy

Gendered structures and hierarchies were used to divide employees by gender and to limit them from leadership positions for nominally non-gender related reasons for example, one reason given for the lack of female engineers was that their performance was viewed as less than male engineers. Dr. Maa, male HR and Sor, female HR went on to explain that this difference in perception of performance made it difficult for the female engineer to manage their male staff.

[It is hard for female engineers] because normally technical staff don't believe their performance compared to male engineers... [In his department] it is really hard for women to be the governor. The core job of this company is technical. We don't focus much on profit but on serving people in Thailand and fulfilling government policy. In the future, if they focus more on investment, a governor might be from finance or HR [and therefore female] (Dr. Maa, male HR)

The core job of this company is technical. We're not focused on profit but on servicing people and fulfilling government policy. In the future if we focus on investment, a governor might be from the Finance or HR fields. (Sor, female HR)

In other words, the core focus of the company on its engineering work not just discourages leadership from Accounting and HR (which are ‘coded’ as female fields), but actively prevents it unless the company itself is changed. Some participants were much more blunt about this situation:

I think the executive managers [I work with] don't like me. I think the culture here is male-dominated... [executives] really do prefer men. (Sor, female HR)

I have heard other people said the culture of this company is male-dominated and I agree but for my opinion, if we have a good performance or outstanding task to show others. So no one doubt on us and I think I can get promoted the same as men and I never experienced the unfair promotion!! (Dr. Nong, female engineer)

Women themselves sometimes viewed their gender as a reason for the differences in value between the professions. For example, Dr. Nong, female engineer says:

I put a lot of effort into my job and focus on it. If I had a child it would be hard for me to manage my time [making it difficult to work engineering roles]. (Dr. Nong, female engineer)

I think I am lucky that I still don't get married! If I have family, I think I cannot devote myself to my job as today and it might be so hard for me to get promoted because if I have family, I cannot flexible like now!! (Sor, female HR)

In other words, Dr. Nong, female engineer herself viewed her gender as a barrier to success in the engineering roles, which is incompatible with her other roles. However, this point was not well developed at this level of the organization. Thus, it is not clear whether this is specific to Dr. Nong, female engineer herself or whether others at the headquarters share this view.

Taken together, the headquarter staff views suggest that the company is inherently structured as having a ‘male’ purpose (engineering) rather than a ‘female’ purpose (support, accounting, HR, and administration). Thus, not only it would be unnatural for the organization to be led by a woman, but the disembodied ideal worker of the organization is male. This has the effect of privileging the ‘male’ engineer and disadvantaging the ‘female’ support worker (Britton, 2000). Furthermore, the construction of the organization’s universal worker in an engineering role means that to be viewed as a ‘real worker’ one must be a man, or at the least able to simulate the characteristics of a man (Acker, 1990). This requirement may be why Dr. Nong, female engineer views her career as vulnerable to disruption if she has a family, while male colleagues are unconcerned.

In summary, the strongest gender division was along the lines of work roles and their relative value and access to those roles. With engineering viewed as ‘real’ and other tasks viewed as ‘support’, the male universal worker’s role was privileged over the other roles. This led to other problems for women that attempted to engage in engineering, since it was not designed for their needs. For example, Sor, female HR even had problems using the toilet, because her job was not designed with appropriate access. This is another example of the actual physical division of space between men and women, which was also seen in the exclusion of female junior managers from events because it was purported to be difficult to arrange rooms for them. Thus, the gender divisions both privileged ‘male’ roles in general and disadvantaged women who engaged in ‘male’ roles (Acker, 1990, 1992, 1998). The gender divisions and structures here must be viewed in light of the existing assumptions about the jobs themselves (Acker, 1990). The organization does not divide between ‘male’ engineering and ‘female’ administration on its own – instead, these are existing assumptions about the gendered nature of work, which are played out and reinforced within the organizational structures. However, this does not make them less powerful. As the analysis moves up the organizational hierarchy, it is possible to see that these become more entrenched, making them more and more difficult to change.

5.1.2.3 Senior Manager Headquarters Staff

5.1.2.2.1 Gender divisions and reinforcement

Senior headquarters staff felt much more strongly than junior staff that the engineering role was for men only, and they did note that mostly men were hired for the role. This was not

just coincidence – instead, the engineering role was considered unsuitable for women, for reasons like lack of flexibility and capability to travel:

[We] need engineers to be really flexible, travelling and working late at night. This job is really different from accounting [a female role]. Today there are a few female engineers who try to get hired by the company but there are still barriers for them, like dealing with technicians on site, meetings in other provinces and a lot of travel, and having to travel with men. In my reporting line there is only one woman out of 30 engineers. (Pasu, male engineer)

Another support from Pasu;

I think flexible and good performance are really important for engineer field. I think some jobs don't fit for female because some jobs are insecure or some need to travel! I worry about this point! In addition, when they got married and have children, I really double worry for them so much!! (Pasu, male engineer)

5.1.2.2.2 Gendered structures and hierarchy

A sense of gendered structure and hierarchy is very strong amongst the female senior participants. Some participants viewed their support jobs as devalued compared to engineering jobs, which participants like Tiya, female HR viewed as the 'real' work of the company. She said:

I don't expect to be promoted beyond [her current level] because I am not an engineer. Our organizational culture focuses on the core jobs, which is engineering. I'm just the support line. (Tiya, female HR)

However, gender is not the only hierarchy that is in play. For example, Vadee, female HR notes that for younger employees, there is a different pattern of relationships and networking than they experienced in the past, which opens up newer opportunities for them. Thus, she does not think younger women are in the same position as the senior women, a perception which is also somewhat reflective of the junior headquarters managers' lack of remark on gendered hierarchies. Thus, there is an interaction of gender and age that is worth thinking about here.

5.1.2.4 Executives

5.1.2.4.1 Gender divisions and reinforcement

There are clear gender divisions in work roles at the executive management level. First, engineering is seen by male participants as a masculine domain, both by occupational majority and by participation in the field. In general, this is naturalized as a consequence of the field, rather than viewed as an organizational inequality (Som, male deputy governor, Man, male deputy governor). For example:

Male engineers apply here more than female engineers, so it is normal that there are more male engineers and more male engineers get promoted... The majority of accountants here are female, so they have a greater chance for promotion in that field. (Som, male deputy governor)

However, in other cases the division is viewed as resulting from differences in socialization or attitudes of women compared to men. This can be seen in the response of Man, male deputy governor, who states:

Most males are leaders, and they network together by drinking and partying, making it easier to make friends and build up their networks, which women cannot do with men. Women have the chance for promotion too.. but female engineers have to be strong and control all male technicians and engineers. It is easier for women to be promoted in accounting, HR. and so on. (Man, male deputy governor)

This response shows a number of underlying assumptions about gender identity and power: that the male engineer is the universal worker (Acker, 1990), that women must be exceptional to succeed (Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia, 2019) and that male workers are fundamentally superior at engineering as a profession (Kantola, 2008; Mihăilă, 2018). This response also shows the bias toward males as leaders, which is derived from the juxtaposition of engineering as the core activity of the organization and the assumption that engineering is 'male'. Thus, it can be stated that gender divisions are just as entrenched at this level as they are at lower levels, and that assumptions about why engineering is a male activity are just as reinforced.

5.1.2.4.2 Gendered structures and hierarchy

As at lower levels of the organization, engineering is given a higher organizational position than administrative roles. Chu, female director, leader of the internal audit office, discusses this problem. She notes that the Director positions for internal audit and law, two female-dominated administrative departments, have equal responsibility to the deputy governor positions (dominated by engineers) but less power.

Despite the acknowledgement that engineering is prized over other fields, there is a discourse of equal opportunity: women can be promoted if they can perform. For example, Man, male deputy governor argues that women can be successful if they are not emotional and “don’t sweat the small stuff”. When male executives do acknowledge the difficulty of promotion for women, they attribute it either to women’s own performance, or to the statistical reality of the field. For example, Serm, male governor argues:

More men are promoted because there are simply more men in the field. This is because the number application for working in engineer or technical field, mostly are male!! So the proportion between male and female in engineer or technical field are really wide different!! (Serm, male governor)

And also support from Poon, male deputy governor;

I always support female if they have really good performance but the problem is there are not many female in engineer field, particular in managerial level!! So normally I saw a lot of candidate are male engineer when compared with female!! (Poon, male deputy governor)

Another argument is:

There is no discrimination here... it depends on the individual... women don’t believe themselves that they can do the job, but this is just their feeling! I always try to push them up and cheering them all. I believe as long as female have a good performance, they can successful in their career. (Sura, male deputy governor)

This is an example of the so-called ‘confidence gap’ argument, in which structural limitations on female performance are ignored in favour of individualist arguments about women not being confident or sure enough to advance (Stainback, Kleiner and Skaggs, 2016).

Despite this discourse of equal opportunities, some of the executives explicitly recognised a connection between the gender identity of the engineer as male and the gender identity of the organizational leader as male:

The engineering and technical field is mostly male, so it is normal that most of our leaders are male. I am not surprisingly! In the future if we have more female choice, they will get select too. (Som, male deputy governor)

Some female executives (though not all) do tend to view the field as unequal; for example, Chu, female director thought she would be better positioned for promotion if she were male. Furthermore, she argues that positions in ‘female’ departments (like her internal audit department) are unequal to positions in ‘male’ departments (like engineering), despite similar responsibility. She views this as fundamentally unfair, resulting in a systemic lack of power for women:

These departments have equal or greater responsibility to the existing 17 departments which have deputy governors, but directors of the departments do not have as high a position. Why? (Chu, female director)

Some men were quick to discount this view, though. Sura, male deputy governor argued that the female ‘mindset’, rather than lack of opportunity, was behind the lack of promotion. This indicates strong, self-replicating and persistent gender divisions (Acker, 1990, 1998).

The gendered structures that prevent female advancement in the organization can be seen Sura, male deputy governor’s recounting of the experience of a female subordinate:

[The subordinate] is a female engineer. Her character is very brave, like a male, and she can manage technician’s engineers... Some people do not like her because they think she is quite aggressive, and not soft like other women. (Sura, male deputy governor)

In other words, it is not possible for women to overcome the organizational hierarchy to advance in engineering by acting like a man, because then she is no longer like a woman. This points to the problem of the universal worker being defined as male, since it is not possible for women to meet the criteria for the male-patterned worker (Acker, 1990). There simply is no way for women to be accepted within the organizational hierarchy in the 'male' role, and instead she is limited to the 'female' role, which is inferior to the 'male' role even at the executive level.

In summary, the gender divisions identified at lower levels of the organization are easily recognized at the executive level, and so are the gendered structures that result. Like the rest of the organization, executives view engineering as male, and barely consider administrative and technical roles. As engineering is the 'core' activity of the organization, leadership also becomes codified as a male activity – simply, it is considered normal that leaders are male. Executive leaders are also likely to view female deficit, rather than male advantage, as the reason for the lack of promotion. Thus, at this level, the underlying logic that engineering is a male occupation that women cannot do (well), and which contributes the most value to the organization, prevents the executive leaders from questioning the male dominance of the organization as a whole.

5.1.3 Summary of Gender Divisions and Gendered Structures

The gender divisions and gendered structures at the organization are present and consistent at all levels of the organization, and become more entrenched at the higher levels of the organization. Engineering, the core activity of the organization, is a 'male' role, in which there is little female involvement and in which few females can excel. Simply, females cannot easily meet the ideal of the universal engineer, even if their technical work exceeds the standard for male roles. Therefore, female engineers, who are mostly junior, are viewed as inferior or inadequate compared to male engineers. Administrative roles, or *support*, roles, which are peripheral to the purpose of the organization, is a 'female' role in which relatively few males participate. This gender division is then propagated to organizational structures of hierarchy and leadership. Engineering is privileged in the organizational leadership hierarchy as the more important role and the one from which top leaders are drawn. Top leadership positions in administrative roles do not have as much control or power associated with them. Thus, even though there is no formal policy against promoting women to top positions, in practice it does not happen.

5.2 Symbols and Images

The symbology of the gendered organization, or the symbols and images that are associated with gender or assigned to gender, influences the ways in which the organization's members understand gender difference and how gender is performed (Acker, 1992). This gendered symbology does not stem from one place, but instead from multiple places, including broader culture as well as the organization's culture. Symbols can be tangible or intangible, visible or invisible. They are used by organization members to understand the meaning of gender and gender differences and to make sense of their organizational experience.

In this chapter, the perception of gendered symbols and images within the organization is traced through the organizational hierarchy, from the regional junior managers to the executive leaders. Throughout, the symbols are consistent, and only become more entrenched at higher organizational levels. Furthermore, these symbols, such as the association of women and family, have real influence on the organization's structure and the prospects of female employees. Thus, the symbols and images identified here are important aspects of the gendered organization.

5.2.1 Regional Management

5.2.1.1 Junior Managers

The most common gendered symbols and images that junior managers held were a division between public and private domains (work and family) and a cluster of gendered personality traits and characteristics.

5.2.1.1.1 Public-work-male versus private-home-female

One of the most common divides in gendered symbols was the association of *male-public-work* and *female-private-family*. For example, several participants viewed women as having responsibility for the family, which males did not have.

Some females used to join this male networking to drink, but when they have a family females cannot join anymore because they have to take care of their family [according to Thai culture]. (KK, female accountant)

I cannot join the activities after work such as party or drinking because I got my children and she is just baby. I have to take care her. I worry about my baby. I know this reason can make me lost some network! (Jan, female accountant)

The responsibility of women for the family did not necessarily mean that women were less devoted to the company, as is sometimes seen at higher levels of the organizational hierarchy. (These views are discussed in the next section.) Instead, it could impose social norms that prevented informal socialising (KK, female accountant) or created work-life balance issues that prevented long work hours or travel (Susie, female marketing). Furthermore, most participants did *not* view family as a major barrier to performance. Even Pi, female engineer, a female engineer with a strongly male-oriented self-identity, said:

I think women can succeed like men... even if the woman gets married and has a career, they can achieve their career too if they can balance between their work and their family properly! This is not the problem I think! (Pi, female engineer)

Also support by Mut, female HR;

I think family is not a problem for female career achievement. As long as they can manage their time and their family also support them to work. This is not a problem! (Mut, female HR)

The best chance for women to succeed, though, was not to have a family at all, which gave them the resources and time to compete with men (Air, female engineer). Furthermore, some managers *did* use the association of women with family and their assumed responsibilities as an excuse for their management decisions:

In some positions, [bosses] think women have to take care of their family... or they have to stay away from their family many days because of travel. [As a result] bosses do not support women working in the field, because they worry about them. (PP, female engineer)

When there is the event or seminar that employees have to stay overnight. My boss always sending male, to do the seminar or joining the event, instead women. My boss worry about some female who has the children and the responsibility for their family!
(Nutty, male engineer)

In contrast, none of the respondents mentioned the family responsibilities of men or argued that this might influence their ability to perform. Instead, work is assumed to be the domain of men, which extends to the ability to socialize with other men. Furthermore, none of the junior managers expressed concern or worry about men working in the field. In other cases, family responsibilities are perceived as a disadvantage:

I think women who have families are not flexible compared to single women, because they have to take care of their children... This could be an obstacle for them to get a promotion if their competitor is a man. (Susie, female marketing)

I think having family is the big problem to female career. I compare myself when I don't get married and now I already get married! I totally different for me. In the past, I can go to hang out and party with my male colleague and can go to seminar or outing event in other province with no problem. But now I have to think about my husband and my children first! So I cannot do like before! (Air, female engineer)

Thus, it can be stated that among junior engineers, the strongest symbolic association was for women, who were assumed to have a family role that men did not. Furthermore, this family role disadvantaged them, because they were presumed to have responsibilities that would interfere with the requirements of work. The division of female-private-family and male-public-work was anticipated given the literature on gendered symbols and images, and is part of the expected landscape of the gendered organization (Acker, 1990). However, this does not make these associations as benign. In fact, the symbolic position of the organization as public, by default, places it in the 'male' space (Acker, 1990). Thus, even if the junior managers do not intend to do so, by considering women as working outside of their natural symbolic domain

of the home and family as unusual or under strain, they reinforce the notion that the organization is by default male.

5.2.1.1.2 Gendered personality traits and characteristics

Another set of symbols and images held by junior managers was the gendered associations of specific personality traits and personal characteristics associated with men and women. Although family associations were not as strong as in other groups, there were some strong emotional and personality characteristic associations.

‘Female’ characteristics included *bossy* and *fussy attention-seeking, emotional* and *sensitive, careful* or *fastidious*. For example,

*Even though I am an accountant and work with a lot of women, I still think it is really difficult for me because women tend to be so **bossy and fussy**.* (Jan, female accountant)

It is so hard for me to deal my job with female account! From my opinion, female account is really bossy and fussy! Moreover, if I use the loud voice, some of them are angry or some cry! OMG! (PP, female engineer)

‘Male’ characteristics included *easy-going* and *easy to talk to, rational* but also *high ego* and *poor communicators*. For example:

In the engineering field, we are quite easy and not fussy. We all talk directly, without emotion and using reason. We never have any problem together in our department. (Pi, female engineer)

It is so difficult for me to deal my job with male engineer because they never listen to me and never do follow the process that I talk to them! I think they have high ego and they try to avoid to contact with us! I don't know why! (Si, female accountant)

Men were viewed as being *protective*:

In the past when I have had to work at night, my male colleague always took action to take care of everyone and get all the women home safely. They are nice and polite!!
(Jan, female accountant)

I remember we used to hang out together in our engineer gang and one guy from other table come to do sexual harassment with me by rude word. Then 2 of my male engineer friends come to chase that guy back to his table and tell the manager of that restaurant to manage and warning that guy. (Nap, female engineer)

Thus, both ‘male’ and ‘female’ symbols and images relating to emotion and personality were a mixture of positive and negative. Once again, though, there were many more descriptions of ‘female’ images compared to ‘male’ images. This supports the idea that ‘male’ is considered ‘normal’ or universal, with female characteristics viewed as deviations from the norm (Britton, 2000). In some cases, this extended to men being described as the negation of women (e.g. *not fussy*). There were some negative traits, such as *high ego*, ascribed to men, but these were not negated by female traits (for example, *humble*) – instead, they stood alone as simple characteristics of male engineers. Furthermore, following Acker’s (1990) observation, these symbols reinforce the assumption that women are associated with emotion and men with action and rationality. The privileged position of ‘male’ symbols like rationality and easy-going nature also serves to marginalize the ‘female’ symbols of emotion (Acker, 1990). Thus, these symbols go back to the assumption of the ‘universal worker’ ideal as male.

In summary, junior managers did recognise specific, gendered symbols and images. These included, for example, a connection between ‘female’ and ‘family’, which meant that female workers were viewed as less attached to the ‘work’ domain (viewed as the main concern of the male). Furthermore, there were various personality traits and characteristics that were ascribed either to men or to women. Emotional traits, both positive and negative, were mainly viewed as female, while cognitive traits such as rationality were viewed as both male and more positive. While, as will be shown in the following sections, these traits are not as strongly held by this most junior group of managers, they still had a significant effect on perceptions and understanding of gender.

5.2.1.2 Middle Managers

At the middle management level, the dichotomy of public-work-male versus private-home-female becomes both more prominent and more likely to exclude women from organizationally important activities. The middle managers also have many of the same symbolic associations as lower organizational levels for the personality traits and characteristics of men and women, which can have even stronger negative effects at this level.

5.2.1.2.1 Public-work-male versus private-home-female

The perception of the middle managers is that women are strongly associated with family and assumed to have family responsibilities (which men do not have). Furthermore, these associations were strongly associated with traditional gender norms, whose contravention could have consequences for women. For example:

Women still have some barriers. They have to take care of their family, so they cannot stay late at night... Staying late at night and drinking is not a traditional female activity in Thailand, and women that do this will be gossiped about. (Parn, female accountant)

I think women cannot succeed well when compared with men. This is not about gender discrimination, but about their family issues. [Women] have to take care of their family, their husband and children. (Tha, male IT)

There is not much opportunity for women because they have to deal with their family. This is different from men. It is a Thai cultural norm that women have to take responsibility for the household and family. (Yao, female engineer)

Yao, female engineer specifically identified this as a social norm coming from wider Thai society, where women were mainly responsible for the home and family, which is a source of gendered symbols (Benschop, 2009; Berger, *et al.*, 2015). Parn, female account also explained that this was a traditional female role, furthermore saying that women that did not meet this norm would be gossiped about. This agreement means it is possible to assume that this is an agreed norm, and not something that only one manager perceives. However, it is not only a broad social norm. Parn, female account points out that the only ‘female’ group in the

company was the Housewives' Association. Thus, while the association of women with family stems from broader cultural assumptions, it is reinforced within the organization itself. This image of women as attached to the home serves to limit women's power within the organization (Acker, 1998).

In contrast, men are associated with activity outside the home. This includes physical activities like golf, which Parn, female account stated were "not fit for" women. It also includes informal socializing activities, like bars and drinking. While she also argues women can participate in these activities, family conflicts and social taboos against drinking means practice they do not. The social norm against association between men and women also applies here. Furthermore, the assumption that women prioritize family responsibilities has a direct effect on their ability to be promoted:

If you want to be a manager, you have to be ready... you cannot just come to work and go back home on time. You have to socialize with other people after work, and build up your networking. (Watt, male engineer)

I think building network is very important in this company. So we need to socialize or doing any way to build up our network, particular with our senior in this company. This is really beneficial for our career. (Sami, male engineer)

In other words, a candidate must be able to engage in the 'male' domain of after-work drinking, golf and other social activities to be eligible for promotion. This limitation excludes female candidates who are assumed to have home obligations, and/or who cannot socialize with male colleagues because of social assumptions (Sami, male engineer). Thus, the association of men with public and work domains and women with private and home domains does have a harmful effect on women, effectively relegating them to lower level positions and preventing them from achieving promotions. Specifically, it prevents them from forming the informal networks which are so important for organizational advancement (Durbin, 2011). Even when women do take part, they still feel excluded:

For me, when I go out [with male colleagues] I don't even drink, I just drink water. A lot of men are always close to each other. I think this is because they have the same lifestyle and can drink and party together. (Than, female engineer)

I used to hang out with my male colleague. I think I cannot get through them. They talk the things that I have no idea!! I just silence all night and I think this is not my way!
(Sao, female administrative)

Thus, there is no way for women to live up to this ideal, even if they are not themselves burdened by family responsibilities. It is another way in which women are viewed as symbolically unsuited to the role of the universal worker (Acker, 1990, 1992).

5.2.1.2.2 Gendered personality traits and characteristics

Middle managers, like most other groups, associated specific emotions and characteristics as either male or female. To a great extent, these associations are even less complimentary to women than they were at the lower levels of the organization. Women are described as *sensitive* (Kit, male account), *fussy* and *too concerned with detail* (Tha, male IT), *slow, unable to make decisions* (Sao, female administrative), *jealous* (Than, female engineer).

I think women are quite fussy and focus too much on detail. That really wastes my time!... I think women cannot succeed when it comes to men. This is not gender discrimination! [rather a consequence of working conditions] (Tha, male IT)

In my experience, women cannot make good decisions. They are quite slow and don't trust themselves. On the other hand, men love a challenge and are always confident in decision making. (Sao, female administrative)

In contrast, men are described as *confident in decision making* and *challenge-loving*. The relative lack of emotional or action-oriented description of men may be due to their position as the 'default' universal worker, from which women deviate (Acker, 1990; Britton, 2000). Furthermore, comparisons like that offered by Yao, female engineer make it clear that managers do view women as defective in terms of their symbolic performance – this is not simply assumed, but explicitly stated. Ultimately, the difference in emotional symbolism leads to the assumption that women are fundamentally unsuited for leadership roles because of these differences:

Women are still the followers and men are leaders... Females cannot make a good decision, they are quite slow and don't trust themselves. On the other hand, men love challenges and are always confident to make decisions. (Yao, female engineer)

I think women lack of decision making skill! They have to take a long time to make a decision. I don't like it because I have to hurry to finish my job! It makes me have a problem with my boss! (Watt, male engineer)

This symbolic assignment of leadership as a male trait has been observed by other authors (Manville, 1997). In that study, it was shown that women who were willing to adopt male gender patterns *could* take on the roles. However, in this study the specifics of the 'male' role – especially belonging to the public domain and being free to socialize without concern for familial duties – is not truly available, even to women who do not in fact have these duties. Thus, this symbolic assignment of 'leadership' as a male role limits the opportunity of women to step into the leadership role.

In summary, the middle managers have many of the same assumptions about the relative symbolic domains of men and women and gendered association of personality traits and characteristics. At this level, these symbolic associations can be shown to disadvantage women. For example, at the middle manager level socialization becomes an important aspect of advancement, which is an obligation women cannot fulfil. Furthermore, at this level emotionality and assumed lack of rational capabilities have a negative effect on perception of women's managerial skill. Thus, both of these sets of relationships are detrimental to women and privilege men.

5.2.1.3 Senior Managers

Senior managers also have symbolic associations of male and female, like the lower levels of the organizational hierarchy. Furthermore, they may view themselves as proscribed from engaging in social activity with the opposite gender due to the symbolic association of mixed-gender interaction and infidelity. This is a new association which has not been very strong so far.

5.2.1.3.1 *Public-work-male versus private-home-female*

As at lower levels of the organization, common symbolic association of senior managers was the association of women and family. Panu, male engineer viewed women as being caught up in family problems, while Aum, female accountant felt that family responsibilities could impede work.

I think family responsibility impede my work. I have to manage my time a lot and I cannot focus only my job. I also have to focus on my husband and my children too. But I get used to it! What I can do is to balance my time as good as possible and try to do my best!! (Aum, female accountant)

Pass, female administrative felt this pressure herself, saying:

I felt that if I had a family or children it could be an obstacle for me – I might not work as hard as I would otherwise. My performance might decrease a bit. (Pass, female administrative)

Notably, none of the male senior managers felt this way about themselves or about their male colleagues, suggesting that family only poses a barrier to female engineers and other workers.

In comparison, men are viewed as having public connections outside the organization, but their home and family obligations are not considered:

Men often have social networks from outside, like politicians, government officers and soldiers, as well as other companies that this company has dealings with. (April, female IT)

People always say that I have a good network both inside and outside company!_this is because I used to work with the governor and go with him everywhere. So I have chance to build my network with a lot of people such as executive in this company, board director, politician and some government officer etc. (Dusy, male engineer)

Thus, the potential of women is limited by their (assumed) responsibility for family and home, even if they do not actually have this responsibility. Men, on the other hand, are viewed as having public connections which are advantageous, but are not thought to have family responsibilities that limit them.

5.2.1.3.2 Gendered personality traits and characteristics

As with lower levels of the organization, the senior managers express a symbolic connection between women and emotion. For example, Dusy, male engineer viewed women as *friendly*. However, Pan, male engineer viewed women as *quite fussy*. Women are also viewed as *not knowing manners, too talkative* (Aum, female account) and *sensitive* (Wudy, male engineer). The fallacy of the confidence gap (Stainback, Kleiner and Skaggs, 2016) also emerges for women, but it also is incorporated into different aspects, such as the ability of women to make decisions:

If female engineers could improve their confidence, they might succeed [in the organization] too... The weakness of women is that they are not good at decision making. (Pass, female administrative)

Another perception of women is that they cannot get along with each other:

Women are emotional and sensitive to each other. Sometimes they cannot get along very well. They always gossip each other and also gossip other people too!! This is so funny. They fight to each other almost every day in my department and sometimes they fight to other women in other department. (Wudy, male engineer)

These perceptions are not limited to men. Pass, female administrative, who is a female manager, also views women as difficult to deal with than women because they are not emotional.

Men, on the other hand, are viewed by Pass, female administrative as *not fussy* and *uncomplicated*. Otherwise, their emotional state or interaction is not discussed at all by the senior managers. It is only the female employees whose emotional state and condition is remarked on.

This leads to two insights. First, men are considered the default, with emotional differences mainly described in relation to women and how they are different from men. In essence, it is the male worker that is universalised, with female workers considered deviant (Britton, 2000). Second, women's emotionality and communicativeness is broadly viewed as a negative feature, which leads to work problems and communication issues, rather than positively. In brief, it inhibits their effective working. This is entirely consistent with Acker's (1990) consideration of the consequences of gendered organisations, in which male, 'rational' approaches are valued more highly than female, 'emotional' approaches. Furthermore, the lack of mention of male emotional states or even work habits (for example rationality) by senior management suggests that men are viewed as the default against which women are measured (Acker, 1990, 1992).

Although managers did not make this explicit, there is the implication that the perceived emotionality of women affects their future performance. For example, stereotypes that women are hard to work with or that they cannot cooperate could inhibit their chances of inclusion and promotion. This set of assumptions may be so embedded that it may be difficult to identify (Acker, 1990), which may be why it was not explicitly identified by managers. However, it is reasonable to infer that this would be the case, since promotion of individuals who are hard to work with is likely to be limited.

5.2.1.3.3 Symbolic limits on interaction

Finally, there was a strong social norm about mixed-gender interaction. Male managers felt they could not interact closely with female subordinates because of gossip, for example that they were having an affair or otherwise acting inappropriately. Furthermore, there is the sense that these limits on interaction are not to protect the male managers, but their female subordinates, who are likely to be affected more by gossip or other negative social consequences. A few of the managers' comments on this issue included:

It's not appropriate for me to be close to my female subordinates. People always gossip, like saying we were having an affair... This is just about the culture... Women are more careful and cautious than men [in their interactions with the other gender]. (Panu, male engineer)

It is a Thai [social norm] that women should not be close to men, because it is not good... people might gossip that they are having an affair This problem always happen in this company and it will be stronger and serious when that people already got married! (June, male engineer)

Furthermore, June, male engineer acknowledges that this is something that affects women more than men, and they must be more conscious of its effects.

This is a gender symbol that limits gendered interactions (Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012). It is also a gender subtext that emerges most strongly at the upper levels of the organization. In the middle manager interviews, there was a slight concern that mixed-gender interaction would cause gossip, but this did not appear to impede the actual interactions. This symbolic limitation on mixed-gender interaction is problematic for the advancement of women within the organization, since it means that women cannot meet the requirements for leaders for social interaction. For example, this symbolic limitation on action means that the close relationships of the 'old boy's network' (Durbin, 2011), which requires informal social interaction to develop, are not available to help women advance at a higher level.

In summary, the senior managers expressed many of the same gendered symbols and images as were seen in lower levels of the organization. These served at the senior level to proscribe the socializing activities of men and women even further at this level, which creates a disadvantage for women who cannot fulfil their social obligations. This is somewhat different from lower levels of the organization, where there were fewer explicit barriers to social interaction despite the symbolic image of informal social interaction as a male activity. As at lower levels of the organization, this has negative implications for women, who do not have the assumed freedom of action compared to men and may be viewed as less suited to advancement because of their assumed emotional motivations and drives.

5.2.2 Headquarters Staff and Executive Management

Headquarters staff from junior managers to executive management also had noticeable perceptions of gendered symbols and images. The three distinctive symbolic areas include the public-work-male versus private-home-female dichotomy, gendered personality traits and characteristics, and symbolic limits on interaction (interaction taboos). As with gender divisions, as discussed in the previous chapter, these gendered symbols and images were also expressed more strongly by senior employees than junior employees.

5.2.2.1 Junior Headquarters Managers

5.2.2.1.1 Public-work-male versus private-home-female

Of the norms identified, the public-work-male versus private-home-female symbolic identity association was the weakest in the headquarters junior manager group. There was some evidence of it, particularly in the commentary of Sup, male lawyer, when discussing the group events his department organises. In this discussion, he elaborates that:

After work, we always have dinner and drink together and sometimes we travel and stay overnight in other provinces. Our department has [travelling events], everyone can join in these events but some women never go. Sometimes it is hard to separate rooms for females, while males... can sleep anywhere. (Mon, male HR)

I always invite female in my department to join the party but they hardly come with us. Even they always reject me but I still invite them to join because I don't want they think male gang discriminate them. Anyway I understand because my gang always go to drink! (Sup, male lawyer)

Thus, there is a symbolic division of space, in which public spaces – such as dinners, bars and hotels – are assigned to male social activities and are uncomfortable, or maybe even impossible, for women to take part in. Overall, however, staff members at this level at headquarters are less likely to consider women to be ‘private’. This could be an age related difference, due to differences in age-based expectation; for example, women working at the junior manager level may not be presumed to yet have families, which is one of the differentiating factors of the symbolic hierarchy (Acker, 1990). However, it is also possible

that this dichotomy is so naturalised that none of the junior management interviewees thought to mention it, or that it is a symbolic norm that was more prevalent in the past, explaining why it is more entrenched for older and more senior managers as will be discussed below.

5.2.2.1.2 Gendered personality traits and characteristics

Junior managers, particularly the male junior managers, did view women as symbolically different from men, especially in their use of emotion.

[Women] use emotions and personal relationships at work... Females are quite fussy and bossy, and they gossip and have different groups... that don't like each other. This is a girl thing! (Sup, male lawyer)

Sometimes I am bored to have a meeting with women. You know! It takes for really long time to get the result!! Because they are fussy, bossy and self-centre a lot!! And also talk too much without any point!! I am headache every time after finish the meeting! (Mon, male HR)

These attributes may be used unflatteringly to compare men to women, showing how this emotional orientation is perceived as a weakness:

Mrs. [P] thinks men don't respect her. She is totally different from Mr. [V] – he is intelligent, friendly, and never uses his emotions to make a decision. I think Mrs. [P] is jealous of Mr. [V], as she doesn't give him any good jobs. (Rani, female HR)

The emotional and careful nature of women is not always viewed negatively, but as a characteristic that suited them for specific tasks. For example:

Women are quite careful in detail and are concerned about obligations and indebtedness. They always create a good relationship with people by buying gifts to give others... and are aware of the patronage system. (Cherry, female HR)

However, it is definitely a challenge to some managers. Once again, a male junior manager explains his relationship with women in the workplace:

Female engineers are different. They hardly listen to me! They are self-confident with their own thoughts and logic. So I think I feel quite uncomfortable when talking with female engineers. (Sup, male lawyer)

In other words, a female engineer who acts like a male engineer, rather than being pliable and easily persuaded, is a threat to Sup, male lawyer's internal comfortable level and perspective on himself. This is important because it implies that one of the symbolic characteristics of women, at least for him, is that they can easily be persuaded to go along with male opinions.

On the other hand, there are generally positive views of male personalities and characteristics. For example, men might be described as *intelligent, friendly... and [rational]* (Rani, female HR), *easy-going* (Sup, male lawyer), and *easy to talk to* (Cherry, female HR). There were a few negative traits that were identified for men as well, such as that they are uncommunicative (Mon, male HR) and *ego-driven* (Sup, male lawyer). For example:

I prefer in my job to deal with women because I can persuade females easier than males, they listen to me. Males have high ego when talking about their work. I used to experienced it and almost fight to each other!! (Sup, male lawyer)

While this may seem positive, he goes on to discuss how he cannot convince male subordinates very easily, whereas women are more easily led. Thus, the high ego association of male employees, viewed as negative, may be positive.

These symbols fall along the classical lines of action versus emotion (Acker, 1990). It is interesting that this set of respondents, who were mostly not in engineering but in the 'female' domains of HR, accounting and other administrative departments, did not view the male worker as the universal worker from which women deviate (Britton, 2000). Instead, men were often positioned as the deviant workers in this setting. While seemingly neutral, these judgments and associations actually have a negative effect on women, because of expressed dislike of working with people who show these characteristics (Sup, male lawyer, Mon, male HR). This is consistent with the devaluation of emotion in organizations (Acker, 1990, 1992).

5.2.2.2 Middle Headquarters Managers

5.2.2.2.1 Public-work-male versus private-home-female

As with many of the other management groups, the middle managers in the headquarters staff associated personality traits and characteristics as female and male, commonly following the divide of female-emotion, male-action (Acker, 1990). However, this association was relatively weak, mostly to do with private associations and private lives. For example, one manager states that,

Some women bring their private life to work. They cannot separate their private lives and their home lives, it is combined with their work. So it does not work for them. It might make their performance lower than before. (Pan, male engineer)

However, unlike the management interviews in some other groups, there was no explicit statement that women were more associated with or belonged in the home domain, or that they were not suited for external work. It is unclear why, although it may be because the middle managers in the headquarters groups were more associated with the administrative and support roles of the organization or central organization of field engineering, rather than the field management of the regional offices. Thus, from this perspective there may not be as strong a symbolic association of ideal workers for centralised roles excluding women.

5.2.2.2.2 Gendered personality traits and characteristics

Like other groups, headquarters middle managers associated specific personality traits with different genders. Common images associated with women, and more rarely men, were often emotional images. Often these emotional descriptors could be viewed positively. Women were described as *delicate and careful* and *flexible* as well as *soft*. They were also described negatively, as *bossy, gossipy, fussy, and emotional*. They might also be described as *slow and inactive*. Men, on the other hand, may be described emotionally as well. For example, this can include *aggressive, rude and impolite, high-ego* and *direct*. These differences are similar to those in other levels of the headquarters management, which suggests that they are consistent with the symbolic gender norms held throughout the company.

5.2.2.3 Senior Headquarters Managers

5.2.2.3.1 Public-work-male versus private-home-female

While the headquarters senior management is less explicit about the symbolic division between the public-work-male and private-home-female domains compared to senior regional management, it is still recognised by some. For example:

30 years ago engineers were only male. They needed to be flexible for travel and working late.... There are a few female engineers now but this is still a barrier, especially as they have to deal with men. (Pasu, male engineer)

Thus, even though Pasu, male engineer does not explicitly say that women are unsuitable for engineering because of their association with home and family, there is an underlying assumption that they cannot meet these obligations. In other cases, there are explicit references to the association of women with family:

Some of my female subordinates have problems with family. For example, one female subordinate's husband contacted me to ask why she had to work late. Another [female subordinate] brought her children to work with her after school. (Chart, male accountant)

Thus, while most of the headquarters staff was less likely to mention the association of women with the home and family, this assumption was still present. Furthermore, it was still viewed as a barrier to and/or an excuse for not offering promotions. Women, with their association with home and family, were viewed as less able and less suited to the demands of the engineering role. However, this is not because women are less suited to engineering, but because the seemingly neutral description of the engineering role hides an assumption of the universal worker that is male (and therefore without the assumed family responsibilities) (Acker, 1990). This shows that the association of women with home and family at this level, as at other levels, reinforces the idea that women not only *do not* but *cannot* meet the performance standards of the engineering role, and if they do, then the woman is exceptional (Rhoton, 2011; Parsons, *et al.*, 2012; Byrne, *et al.* 2019). This leaves little symbolic room for ordinary women to be successful at the engineering role.

Notably, the senior headquarters managers are the lowest level at which this is clearly identifiable, though it is also visible for executive management. This suggests that there may be a generational difference regarding this dichotomy, although it is evident at lower levels in the regional staff. While this raises a good question as to why there should be a different pattern of recognition between regional and headquarters staff, there is not enough information on working and organisational differences to answer it.

5.2.2.4 Executive Managers

At the executive level, gendered symbols and images were related to differences in public versus private domains and the connection of the female to the home rather than work domains, personality traits and characteristics and symbolic limits on interaction. While the first two of these factors is consistent with the organization, the symbolic interaction limits are only shared with senior managers.

5.2.2.4.1 Public-work-male versus private-home-female

Executives did to some extent have an association of women with the home and family, which affected their ability to take part in workplace life. At the same time, there is a sense that this norm may be changing, at least somewhat:

Women have to be concerned with their family, especially their children. So they cannot join a lot of events or party in the same way as male workers... This culture [of separate male and female interactions] will end soon because the new generation never have problems with gender. They can stay and do activities together, including hanging out together after work. The problem is with the old generation. (Pib, female director)

Unlike many other statements about women's family roles, Serm, male governor makes it explicit that family obligations are not something men are affected by, and that the company has not tried to address this inequality:

Thai Utility does not have any plans or programs to help support work-life balance or working mothers. Women lose opportunity because they have to worry about their children, but men can just work without being concerned with family issues. (Serm, male governor)

Furthermore, some men viewed women as having stronger social bonds to family rather than work, though women including Chu, female director and Buss, female director refuted this. The association of women and family is consistent with gendered symbols (Acker, 1998). It is also consistent that such an association has a negative effect on women's chances for promotion, since it is assumed that they have family responsibilities that limit their participation in the workplace life (Britton, 2000). Thus, this association of women with home and family rather than with workplace is negative for women and their advancement opportunities.

5.2.2.4.2 Gendered personality traits and characteristics

The executives also had gendered symbolic associations for personality traits and characteristics, many falling along the expected pattern of female/emotion and male/rationality. For example, Chin, female deputy governor views men as logical and women as imaginative, which are positioned as opposites.

Serm, male governor echoes the perception of men as more logical, also arguing that women take longer to make decisions. He states:

From my work experiences, men have quite good decision-making skills, more than women. Women always have to think a lot before they make a decision. And many time this too long time impact on other people work. (Serm, male governor)

When I let my subordinate (female) to make a decision by themselves. They always take so long time. I used to ask them why they have to take so long time like this. They answer that they afraid to make a wrong decision and not confident!! (Som, male deputy governor)

Som, male deputy governor views women as "delicate [and] housewifely", contrasted to strong men. Man, male deputy governor attributes 'leadership' as male, and 'fussiness' as female. Meanwhile, he states:

My wife is also working here too. But she always taking care me and children very good. She also helps me to manage all of household job. So I don't have to worry about this. I think I am lucky to have a good housewife as her. (Som, male deputy governor)

Mostly men are leaders, and the way they network together is drinking and partying... which women cannot do. This is because they have a family to response. So they don't have time much to hang out with male to build up this kind of network. (Man, male deputy governor)

These perceptions are not absolute; Man, male deputy governor, for example, points to Mrs. Chin (deputy governor of accounting and finance) who successfully socializes under male terms. Once again, however, this is the exceptional example of a woman who can mimic the behaviour of maleness (Rhoton, 2011; Parsons, *et al.*, 2012; Byrne, *et al.*, 2019). Otherwise, it becomes clear that even at the executive level, women are judged by a 'universal worker' who exhibits the 'male' traits preferred by the organization (Acker, 1990, 1992).

These are all common gendered attributions (Acker, 1990, 1992), and they are consistent with the symbolic attributions at lower levels of the organizational hierarchy. However, there is a difference at the executive level, which is that leadership itself is viewed as a male characteristic and something that women have to be exceptional to achieve. This has some serious negative implications for the organization's inclusion of women, since the executive level managers are the ones choosing future organizational leaders.

5.2.2.4.3 Symbolic limits on interaction

The symbolic limits on gender interaction are even more fully developed at the executive level than they were at the senior management level. Activities like golf and drinking were symbolically 'male' activities, which allowed for male network relationships to form. Some participants went beyond preference for men in these activities to homosociality or preference for men (Holgersson, 2013). No similar activities were identified for women, and in fact it has been said elsewhere that the only female-specific organization-wide social group is the Housewives' Association. This only serves to reinforce the symbolic link between women and family.

Furthermore, these bonding activities were viewed as unsuitable or unattractive for females, but not actually barred to them:

Women can join [golfing] but they will not come because they are afraid of sunburn. I always invite them every time but I understand they worry about their skin. I understand this is a girl things! (Poon, male deputy governor)

Women will only join group events that they are really interesting. They prefer to hang out with girl gang from my observation.. (Eakky, male deputy governor)

The implication of this is that women do not participate by choice, and out of a trivial reason (vanity).

Second, some viewed themselves as being prevented from having close relationships with female subordinates, especially if one or both were married, due to broader cultural norms. Specifically, this is to avoid gossip about whether they are having an affair:

I am never close to female colleagues or subordinates. People might gossip, especially since I'm already married. I have heard there are a lot of case happen in this company. And this effect on their job. Many senior or executive serious with this point so much. (Sura, male deputy governor)

Men cannot be too close to women, especially if they are already married. People will gossip. They will also think more negatively about the woman than the man! One of my female subordinate used to experience with. She was gossip a lot and it is not true story!! She comes to cry with me in my room and after 3 months, she resigns!! (Buss, female director)

The constraint on interaction between male superiors and female subordinates shows the connection between gendered norms in the organisation and society (Britton and Logan, 2008). It also shows that, like many other norm-based constraints, the effect of breaking the norm is likely to have more of an effect on the woman's career than the man's.

In summary, the gendered symbols and associations at the executive level are in many ways consistent with all lower levels of the organizational hierarchy. The strongest of these

symbols, including the association of women with home and family rather than work and the association of women with emotionality and men with rationality, have some significant negative implications for women in the organization. For example, they limit the opportunities for advancement (which is dependent on socialization) and create the perception that women's work is less effective or valuable than men's. Consistent with the senior management, the executive management also perceive a symbolic limit on gendered interaction, viewing female participation in both informal activities and work activities as inappropriate and even undesirable. It may be this, rather than the other factors, that has the strongest gendering effect, since this essentially constraints women from participating in social interactions which are the basis for promotion and organizational power.

5.2.3 Summary of symbols and images

There are some consistent patterns in the gendered symbols and images of the organization, which are echoed at all levels. One of these is the association of male-public-work and female-private-home, which is most clearly expressed in the idea that women have family responsibilities that prevent them from engaging or performing at work. This gendered association of women and family creates a division of genders, since women are assumed not to be able to meet the demands of long hours and informal socializing of the universal worker. Associations between female-emotional and male-rational also create a power difference, since women may be viewed as not performing to the standard of the universal worker (e.g. making emotional decisions or not paying attention to factual processes). These assumptions, although commonly shared, are rarely challenged. At the upper levels of the organization, another gendered symbol emerges, which is the symbolic limits on gendered interaction. This symbolic limit has very real effects, as it prevents or inhibits women from engaging in the social interaction that is the basis for advancement, especially at higher levels.

5.3 Gender Identities

The fourth dimension of Acker's (1990, 1992) gendered organization theory is that of gender identity. This chapter analyses how gender identity plays out in the context of Thai Utility and the organization's members. The analysis moves once again from the outside of the organization's hierarchy and from bottom to top; thus, the perspectives of junior regional managers are discussed first, and the executive leaders are discussed last. This discussion shows that gender identities become increasingly entrenched while moving upward and inward. The 'male' identity that predominates is that of engineer (at the lower levels) and leader (at the higher levels), strongly associated with rationality and socialization as male. The 'female' identity is oriented toward home and family, and even unmarried women without family responsibilities are subject to this identity. This leaves little space for women to form a work identity separate from either home or family that does not mimic the male 'engineering' identity.

5.3.1 Regional Management

5.3.1.1 Junior Managers

Gender identity for the junior managers included different types of work, but also to some extent work performance and limitations. These gender identities influenced how the managers thought about the capabilities of others, and how they viewed their own role in the organization.

At the junior management level, engineering is viewed as a characteristic of male identity – even by women who were working in the engineering department. The identity of 'engineer' was also associated with the symbolic characteristics of 'male', as discussed in Chapter 6, for example rationality, even temperament and ability to get along with others. These quotes illustrate how male and female identities are associated with both different occupations and different personal traits, which are assumed to be essential to these occupations:

[Men and women are different] because of the differences in their perspectives, thoughts, attitudes, mindsets, and so on. The majority of employees in this company are engineers and mostly they are male. (Mut, female HR)

The majority of employees are male engineers, with only a few female accountants... Compared between female accountants and male engineers, males are qualified to be leaders and good managers... Female accountants are better than male accountants because female accountants are quite careful, nice and orderly. (Jan, female accountant)

I never see any females in the engineering management in [my department] ... In my profession there are a lot more women than men... There is no discrimination here, it is that the office differs from field sites, which are hard for females to deal with. (KK, male accountant)

These quotes make it clear that there is a strong association between *engineering* and *male*. This could be viewed as a structural coincidence, resulting from the position of women within the organization (Kanter, 1977). However, this is inadequate as an analytical position, as it only serves to reinforce the naturalization of the lack of women in engineering. The junior engineers do not always strictly accept this as a given, and do sometimes feel that there *should* be more female engineers:

To support female engineers, we have regional positions for only female candidates, to increase the number of female engineers in each region, but we cannot use it in reality. Leaders do not take serious action and the headquarters do not follow up on this policy. (Si, female accountant)

Despite this, Si, female account maintains that there is no discrimination in the company, but rather that the low level of female engineer recruitment and retention is due to interpersonal problems or lack of interest on the part of female engineers. Thus, there is a perception that female engineers are desired, but simply unavailable or even maybe unwilling to work in the company. This contradicts Si, female account's overt statement that management and headquarters do not take recruitment of female engineers seriously even when there are programs in place to support it. This relates back to the issue of gender subtext, where overt discrimination cannot be named (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a).

At the same time, others mention that male engineers have high levels of homosociality (Holgersson, 2013), preferring to associate with other men (Mut, female HR). This is in contrast to women, who will socialise together or in mixed groups. Thus, gender identity plays a role in socialising and in setting norms for that socialisation. In brief, the social activity that individuals do (or do not) engage defines their position within the social network (Fuhse, 2009). Furthermore, the heavily gendered 'male' identity of 'engineer' limits the opportunities for non-engineers to interact or socialize with them. Since, as discussed in previous chapters, engineers are the core group in power in the organization, this serves to keep the non-engineering departments peripheral to the organization's structure. It would also limit the access to power of other groups, because these departments are outside the flows of power (Castells, 2011).

Accounting and other administrative roles were associated with the female identity, and are devaluated by the association. One quote illustrates both this association and the devaluation of work identified with women:

In my department, there are 10 women [who are contract employees]. They work as clerk and typists to help us manufacture documents. We don't do this kind of job. We are engineers! (Nutty, male engineer)

Thus, men are viewed by Nutty, male engineer as being not just naturally disinclined to such work, but actually above it by virtue of their being engineers. He also viewed women as not being able to manage the technical staff, with poor decision making skills, lack of commitment and poor technical knowledge. Thus, women were seen as only suitable for the lower status administrative jobs, while men should fill the higher status jobs. However, most junior managers did not accept this extremely negative view of women. For the most part, women were viewed as being as high performing as men were, rather than inferior. This was especially true in 'female' domains like accounting:

I think female accountants' performance is better... [they] are quite careful, nice and orderly. I think female fit for this kind of job. (Jan, female accountant)

I used to deal my job with female account. I cannot believe! They are really orderly, be careful even in a small detail and they are very strict!! (Jatt, male engineer)

However, this was not universal, even for female managers:

I prefer to work with men more than women... I am familiar with men and it is easier for me to deal with them. When I deal with women there are a lot of processes... I cannot get along with them. (Nap, female engineer)

In the case of Si, female accountant, she only thought about gender when working with women. Similarly, Nap, female engineer argued that women were harder to work with than men. This suggests an internalisation of the universal worker norms (which are driven by male characteristics) (Acker, 1990, 1992; Parsons *et al.*, 2012), which could make her uncomfortable working with women, especially in female-dominated domains where the male worker characteristics were not as strongly enforced.

Male and female identities were associated with different levels of commitment to the organization. None of the junior employees questioned the commitment of male employees, and in fact often noted that they worked extra hours, socialized and engaged in other activities that demonstrated commitment. In contrast, the commitment of women to the organization is thought to be less, specifically because of their presumed family responsibilities:

After women get married, they focus on their family and have less concern about career advancement. In my region, my star female manager... rejected an offer for advancement because of her family issues. She had her first child and did not want to rotate anywhere. (Si, female accountant)

I accept that I am less devoted to my work after I got married and got a children! I have to balance between my work and my family!! But for me, I cannot balance!! I have to concern my family first!! (Susie, female marketing)

This extends to informal engagement as well:

Some women used to join this male networking to drink, but when they have a family they cannot anymore... Married women should not go drink with other men. (KK, male accountant)

Thus, women are defined by their relationship to others (husband and family), which are assumed to be their main commitments rather than the workplace. This is consistent with Acker's (1998) observation that women's absence in the organization is often attributed to their presence within the household. It is also consistent with the observation that the male identity is defined in the household by its absence (Acker, 1998), as men are not assumed to have familial responsibilities regardless of their family status. It is also consistent with other studies which have shown that work-family conflict is a structural issue that does prevent full participation in informal networks for women (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019). As Thai Utility has no work-life balance program in place, there is no way for this structural limitation on identity to be addressed.

In summary, at the junior level there is already a clear divide in gender identity between 'male' and 'female'. Engineering is a firmly 'male' identity, even though there are a small number of female engineers. Engineers are viewed as highly committed to the organization, and their family commitments are not questioned. They are also viewed as the main holders of power within the organization. In contrast, administrative departments were viewed as peripheral, female domains, staffed by employees whose family, rather than work, was their main source of identity and their main commitment. Although these identities are not as deeply entrenched as at higher levels of the organization, they still serve to limit the opportunities of female employees due to perceived lack of commitment.

5.3.1.2 Middle Managers

Broadly, the gender identities in the middle management level are similar to those at the junior management level. For example, the 'male' identity in the organization is that of engineer:

I think in this company, the engineering and technical field is a male-dominated environment. The proportion between male and female are really big different. (Watt, male engineer)

I know I am one of the small number of female engineer. I know this company is really male-dominated because the core function of this company is engineer and technical field. Other fields are support. Anyway I am ok with this situation. I think I can compete with men too. (Yao, female engineer)

Once again, the subtext of the middle managers' discussion of identity is that the male worker is the 'universal' worker, against whom women are judged (Acker, 1990). Women are viewed as inherently limited in many ways compared to the male 'ideal' worker. For example, women might be viewed as unconfident and timid, especially as compared to men, and unwilling to fight for promotion or other benefits (Watt, male engineer). Than, a female manager in engineering, relates that she had to fight to prove she knew what she was doing before she was accepted. She says,

At first, no one accepted me to be in the middle manager role, because they think I could not do the job well. None of my subordinates, who are mostly engineers and technical staff, didn't listen to me. I had to prove myself and show them all... I asked them why, and they told me they think I am a VIP candidate and I am a woman. They think I cannot control and manage male subordinates. They don't believe in my ability. (Than, female engineer)

In some cases, this perception of women's 'lack' of ability compared to men is actively disparaging:

It is hard for me to work with some women. Sometimes I think they don't have enough knowledge for their own job... Some women prefer to work at a routine job rather than a manager. They told me they don't want to deal with a lot of people. (Kit, male accountant)

The physique of women isn't strong enough compared to the male... Moreover, women are not decisive. They are not good decision makers, and it is hard for them to manage male workers. (Sami, male engineer)

Thus, the ways in which women vary from men are viewed as negatives and barriers to their organizational life. Furthermore, it has an actively negative effect on women's career advancement:

At first, no one accepted me in the middle manager role because they think I could not do the job well. I had to prove myself, stay late at night and totally devote myself to my job. When I asked [her male co-workers] why they were anti-me, they said they think I could not manage male subordinates and did not believe in my ability. (Than, female engineer)

In the case of a female middle manager in engineering, my boss disagreed with her promotion. He thought she was inflexible compared to male [competitors]. He did not believe that she could manage the [male] engineering and technical staff. He also thought she was not senior enough for the job. (Sao, female administrative)

There are few women in the managerial positions, so their voices are not very loud compared to males. Sometimes they lose their confidence to fight and discuss with men... Some [female engineers] give up the fight for their position and let male [competitors] get the position. (Watt, male engineer)

Thus, the perception of women as lacking in comparison to the male universal worker, particularly in the engineering department, is a factor that inhibits their ability to be promoted through the organization. This would only serve to entrench the male dominance and flows of power at the highest levels of the organization, which reinforces gendered organizational logics (Acker, 1990, 1992, 1998). Of course, women are viewed as having strengths compared to men by some managers, but this is relatively unusual to mention:

I believe in [women's] performance, but I prefer to assign the right job to the right person. In some jobs, women can perform better than men, such as detailed jobs, analysis, collecting data and so on. (Sami, male engineer)

While this may seem like a positive perception, in practice it reinforces rather than refutes the notion that women are better suited to lower status administrative roles, rather than higher-status engineering jobs. Furthermore, perceptions like this can mean that women do not gain access to resources and status even if they take on leadership roles (McGuire, 2002; Ibarra,

Carter and Silva, 2010; Jonnergård, Stafstudd and Elg, 2010; Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019). This can be seen in the recounting of Than, female engineer, who struggled to be effective in her engineering management role because it was not seen as a job she could do.

Middle managers, like junior managers, also strongly associated female identities with family concerns and viewed it as a barrier to advancement (or even being able to do the basic job):

[Women] are not flexible to travel and stay overnight. They have family and have to take care of their family and children. Many women reject promotions because of this. Their ambitious is less than before they got married. (Kit, male accountant)

Men are more flexible than women because women have to take care of their family.... You cannot just come to work and go back home on time. You have to socialize with other people after work. (Watt, male engineer)

However, unlike in some other groups, this was not viewed as a complete limitation or barrier. For example,

I think family is not a problem for female workers if they work hard and have good performance. I think it also depends on their strategy to manage their family. If they can manage this well, it is not a problem. (Kit, male accountant)

Of course, this is not because women don't have family responsibilities, but because they are able to manage those responsibilities carefully. Given that this company does not have work-life balance or family support programs in place for women, this expectation falls into the 'superwoman' category of expecting women to do more than is reasonable to maintain the same position as a man (Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia, 2019). As Byrne, *et al.* point out, actually achieving this balance is not a reasonable expectation for most women, so this only serves to inflict unrealistic expectations on the majority of women who cannot do it.

As Sami, male engineer states, it also limits women's involvement in the organization, especially informal social interactions, since they have to go home to their families. Thus, women are not viewed as being as involved in the organization as men, and are seen as having

negatively affected performance from their family obligations. This again could have a negative effect on the advancement opportunities women have access to, since being able to participate in social interactions is one of the ways in which networking influences career success (Woehler *et al.*, 2020).

In summary, the gendered identities of ‘male’ engineer and ‘female’ administrator, which emerged in the junior managers’ interviews, are also present here. The gender-based difference in organizational commitment as a result of women’s (presumed) familial responsibilities is also present here. Although this is not viewed as a total barrier to advancement, the reality is that women’s ability to manage multiple commitments without organizational support requires ‘superwoman’ levels of self-management, which is harmful to most women who cannot manage this. Furthermore, it means that even women who are promoted, especially into male roles, will have a harder time meeting the expectations of the managerial role.

5.3.1.3 Senior Managers

As at lower levels of the organization, senior managers associated engineering with a male identity:

Mostly I work with men in a technical field [engineering]. Because normally there are just 10% or less of female in technical field or engineer. I have been working in this engineer field more than 20 years since I started working here. I can count how many female in my department! (Wudy, male engineer)

There are full of male around me because I am from pure technical field and also engineer field. You know I don’t have my female friend!! I always stay with my male friend. And since I start to work in managerial level, in my job field, I always working with male. sometimes less than 10 percent that I have to deal with female engineer. (Panu, male engineer)

However, this association was not as strongly reinforced in the senior managers as it was at lower levels. This may be because at this organizational level, the senior managers are no longer actively involved in the field engineering. Thus, the professional identity for men at this level was more about leadership than about engineering as such.

Once again, however, men were treated as the default identity (Acker, 1992), with little said about them. For some, male identities are associated with efficiency, ambition, flexibility and willingness to work at any time, which are classical 'male' identity attributes (Acker, 1990). For example, one manager stated that:

Mostly, men are ready to go [into the field] any time. I always prepare myself to any competition of job with anyone. I think I have enough potential to get promoted. (June, male engineer)

I have full of ambitious to get success here!! I aim high!! I believe in my performance and I believe at least I can reach deputy governor position! (Panu, male engineer)

There are some negative characteristics associated with men. For example, Aum, female accountant considers them under-skilled in coordination and planning and sometimes sloppy in their work compared to female peers. One of the biggest conflicts in gender identity at this level is whether women can perform as engineers:

Female engineers are careful and do their job well. They can work with male engineers They have really good of soft skill to deal with people. (Pass, female administrative)

Women have good performance and can compete with men, but still struggle with the senior system. The senior system is the root of this company and cannot get rid off! (Dusy, male engineer)

Overall, male engineers and managers are viewed as more committed to the organization than their female peers, even if they are not necessarily better workers.

As at other levels of management, female workers are viewed as heavily oriented toward the family domain rather than the organization. This compromises the view of their commitment to the organization. The senior managers view women as (potentially) good workers, but constrained by both lack of ambition for advancement and by their family roles. For example,

The main barrier to success for women is family issues. Some have a baby or children and they cannot work well compared to men. That affects their performance appraisal. If they can overcome this problem, I would support and promote them for sure. (Panu, male engineer)

Women have their own motivations. They don't focus on money, they just want to be with their family. Spending time with their family is their happiness and fulfil their life. I used to ask my female subordinate! (Wudy, male engineer)

Panu, male engineer's statement is particularly surprising, because he suggests that women should be responsible for 'overcoming' the barriers imposed by having children. It can be assumed that he is referring to the 'superwoman' narrative of exceptional effort being exerted (Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia, 2019). This demonstrates the unequal barriers to being seen as successful between men and women, as none of the senior managers (or in fact any of the managers interviewed) suggested that family responsibilities would affect the performance of men.

Female managers were split on whether the family responsibility identity association affected the performance or capabilities of women. Pass, female administrative agreed with this to a point, noting that she had put off having children in order to advance. April, female IT views women as being unwilling to take on more responsibility for promotion, because it would require them to do more work. Of course, when it comes to work that is coded as 'women's work', such as the social labour of arranging parties and events, there is no such barrier according to Aum, female accountant:

Women [in the company] manage a lot of activities like events and parties, because men don't want to do this work. They just join in. So I draw on my network to help manage these company parties. (Aum, female accountant)

Thus, overall, women's identity in the organisation is one of partial involvement and less commitment, with women more bound up in external responsibilities, but also less

associated with the social environment of the organization (for example engaging in less informal socializing).

The difference in women's perceived commitment to the organization and lower capabilities and performance associated with it has negative effects on women's advancement opportunities, even if they do not, in fact, have family responsibilities:

The family issue is a limitation for female career achievement. Single female engineers are more flexible, but if they want to succeed in the technical field, they need to be more patient. (Wudy, male engineer)

I know family responsibility limit me and be an obstacle to my career path. But what I can do is to do my best on my job. actually, I can do my job like in the past. My performance is still good but I just cannot work late at night like before and cannot travel to other province to work because I worry for my children. (April, female IT)

It was not clear why Wudy, male engineer felt that female engineers were impatient in their quest for promotion, as he did not expand on the information. However, this may be because of the seniority system that is in place for advancement and promotion:

It is difficult for women to be accepted, and they face double trouble with the seniority system... seniority is not gender-based, but senior staff do not listen to junior staff. (Dusy, male engineer)

You know it is so hard for me to climb up in the position now! actually I used to work in other department before but I got the trouble with male-dominated and also seniority!! That's time I feel suffer so much. But I am lucky that my boss help me to move to other department that I can grow up and I choose by myself to work in administrative. (Pass, female administrative)

This is an example of the gendered logic of the organization (Acker, 1990, 1992), wherein a seemingly gender-neutral construct is revealed to be highly gendered. The

confluence of both a formal seniority system and a seniority culture, along with a long-term failure to hire and retain female engineers, means that female senior engineering managers will take a long time (if ever) to come about. It also means that the identity of 'leader', which is also encoded as a male identity at this level, will also be difficult to change. Furthermore, Dusy, male engineer and Wudy, male engineer both feel this seniority system and seniority culture cannot be challenged or changed. In effect, this thought process is part of why gender is difficult to 'see' in the organization (Acker, 1990).

In summary, senior managers had strong gender identity assumptions. Male engineers and leaders were viewed as efficient, ambitious, flexible and so on, along with having high levels of organizational commitment. In contrast, female employees (not typically engineers) were viewed as less committed and less difficult to work with, even though they had some specialties. This level of difference in gender identities at the senior management level has some significant negative implications for women in the organization, imposing unrealistic expectations on their ability to succeed. This only becomes more entrenched when considering the nominally gender-neutral system of seniority-based promotion, which reinforces the male dominance of the engineering identity and of the leader identity. Thus, the gender identity assumptions in place at this level may be particularly difficult to overcome in order to facilitate women's access to engineering and leadership positions.

5.3.2 Headquarters Staff and Executive Management

The headquarters staff and executives do have some different perceptions than those held by the regional managers in terms of gender identity. However, there are some clear differences in male and female gender identities, which were mostly based in work roles and interactional processes between genders. The strongest of these is still that 'engineer' and 'leader' are male organisational identities. This perception is strongly entrenched at all three levels of headquarters management and at the executive level, to a much greater extent than the gendered divisions and symbolic images were shown to be in previous sections.

5.3.2.1 Junior Headquarters Managers

The gender identities discussed by junior headquarters managers were heavily influenced by emotional and rational dichotomies, with different perceptions of occupational roles. Engineering, particularly, was viewed as being a male activity. For example, Sup, male

lawyer notes that there are few female engineers in his department. Instead, most of the engineers are male. At this level, the assumption that engineers are male was not really questioned or explained, rather just assumed.

Leadership is also identified as a male role, with male leaders being viewed as more effective than female leaders. One comparison was made between two different managers, illustrating different perceptions of the leadership of male and female leaders:

[The female leader] is always fussy, bossy, emotional and highly feminine. She thinks the male leaders don't respect her. [The male leader] is intelligent, friendly, and never uses his emotions to make decisions. This is totally different from [the female leader].
(Rani, female HR)

Similarly, Cherry, female HR relates that:

It is hard for me to deal with females in my job because women have egos, are hard to understand, are headstrong and so on. This also happens with their boss! (Cherry, female HR)

Thus, the perspective of even female leaders in the organization is that males make better leaders. In comparison, the occupational role of administrator/helper (for example human resources staff members) is ascribed to women, which is directly attributed to their supposed traits such as carefulness and precision. One manager in this department notes:

In the HR department, most employees are female... Sometimes women in the department are quite fussy, but I understand because I'm fussy too. I am quite a perfectionist! So this is not a problem compared to someone who I have to guide through a task with each step – 1 2 3 4 5! (Mon, male HR)

In my department, there are mix of gender, both male and female. For me, we are quite the same characteristic. We are really carefully when doing our job because we are HR. everything should be accurate. Sometime we are fussy. This is our style. (Cherry, female HR)

Therefore, it is not the case that being fussy or precise is a problem per se, but rather that it makes women naturally suited to different kinds of work, for which some kinds of men may also be suited. This is distinct from the engineer and leadership roles, in which women sometimes seem to be viewed as totally unsuited. Using the metaphor of the ideal worker (Acker, 1990), this suggests that men can fit into an ideal worker template based on a female worker more easily than the opposite, implying that they are viewed as inherently more flexible. Thus, female occupational identities are more porous to men than male occupational identities are to women.

Another of the most common identities ascribed to women was that they were emotionally driven. This did have a negative effect on the possible advancement of women in some cases. For example:

Women are quite careful, detailed and concerned about obligation and indebtedness. Men just focus on their work and use some network. I would select men to be junior managers in general, rather than women. Women use their emotions and their personal relationships in their work. (Sup, male lawyer)

Similarly, Rani, female HR pointed to a preference for a male leader who does not use his emotions in his work, rather than a female leader who displays more emotion. The assignment of women to emotional roles is consistent with the symbolic association of women/emotion discussed in Chapter 6. It is also consistent with the theory of the gendered organization, in which women are viewed as emotional by nature (Acker, 1990, 1992).

5.3.2.2 Middle Headquarters Managers

As with junior headquarters managers, there are strong occupational identity lines. When talking about who gets promoted, Sor, female HR (who works in an engineering management role) made it clear that there were strong divisions, but at the same time she backs away from making clear statements about management discrimination:

The upper executives here don't like me, they prefer males. The culture here is male-dominated... [Advancement] depends on each person's characteristics. Gender is not the problem, but performance and networking are important. (Sor, female HR)

I know well the culture here is male dominated and male try to build up their network without women sometime. I am female engineer I know this point well so I try to build up the good relationship with male in my department and always hang out with them all the time. In addition, I always be their good advisor both life story and work problem. (Dr. Nong, female engineer)

In this quote, the problem of the naturalised, seemingly gender-neutral ideal worker (Acker 1990) can be seen. Furthermore, this quite illustrates the subtext of gender inequality in the organisation (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a; Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012). Specifically, it illustrates that workers such as Sor, female HR cannot directly acknowledge the problem of gender discrimination, even if they directly state that there is gender discrimination in the organisation. This illustrates how gender identities become so entrenched they may become invisible to the person explaining it. Simply, she does not see (and perhaps cannot see) that the preference for male workers in the upper management translates to an unstated discrimination against female workers at the lower levels of the organisation.

Male identities are also associated with high levels of homosociality among engineers, or a strong preference for associating with other (male) engineers (Holgerson, 2013). Sor (female HR) thinks that male engineers, unlike others in the department, do not want to socialise with women. This is echoed by:

In my department, men and women work together except for male engineers. They stay together in their own group... the culture here is male dominated. (Sor, female HR)

In contrast, female headquarters staff do not identify socializing or informal interaction as a strongly gendered activity. (This is reflected in Chapter 7, on gendered interaction.) Thus, there is a divide between ‘female’ fields (where male-female interaction is encouraged) and ‘male’ fields (where it is not). Like the occupational boundaries identified in the junior headquarters staff, this may be another way that the boundaries of the female organisational identity are more porous to male workers than the male organisational identity is to male workers.

Unlike other groups, the headquarters group did not have a heavy association of women as having a family-oriented identity. Although one person (Dr. Nong, female engineer) did mention work-life balance problems associated with childcare and the limits this placed, and Pan, male engineer thought some women brought private life to work, it was a secondary concern rather than a main one. This was also noted in Section 5.1 (Gendered Symbols and Images), where headquarters middle managers did not make much mention of family or private roles in their interviews. It also sets the managers in these central positions apart from middle managers in regional roles, who did strongly identify women with their private lives. It is unclear why this difference between the regional and central headquarters roles persists, however.

5.3.2.3 Senior Headquarters Managers

At the senior level, it was very clear that ‘engineer’ was an identity reserved for men. Pasu, male engineer, who works in an engineering support role, notes that there only one female engineer out of the 30-person team he supports. Some of the participants had very strong feelings about this. One of the strongest statements was that:

Today there are a few female engineers, but there are still barriers like dealing with technical stuff, travelling a lot and travelling with men... people might gossip. (Pasu, male engineer)

Thus, female engineers, according to Pasu, male engineer, are not hampered because they are more committed to their home life than their work life, but because of structural and social barriers. The reason for this difference between the headquarters staff and regional management is not clear. It is possible because most participants in this group were from female-dominated departments, rather than the male-dominated managerial ranks. Another possible reason is that this group is younger than the manager groups, which raises a possible generational difference. Perhaps people in the central office are ‘doing’ gender in a different way compared to the regional headquarters, which may have a different broader culture (West and Zimmerman, 1987; Kelan, 2010). However, whether this is a difference in attitudes or simply that women are less likely to have married and taken on family responsibilities is uncertain.

Another difference in the Headquarters group compared to the other management groups is that they may ascribe symbolic characteristics of a gender identity to a member of the other gender at times. For example,

Working with male engineers is easier in my job, but male accountants are very fussy and bossy... It can take three months to get information from accountants, although it is easier for me to get information from the budget section because I know people there.
(Tiya, female HR)

Sometimes it is so hard for me to work with old female accountant even I am also account too! They are really fussy and bossy to me even I am their boss! I think this is their nature. I try to let it go because I don't want to have problem with them. I am headache! (Chart, male accountant)

Thus, for some reason these respondents do not seem to have as strong an association between gendered symbols (especially emotional symbols) and the perceived gender of the individual in the role. This is similar to the weaker association between women and family responsibilities. However, it does not mean that gender identities have lost their power, as the comment above by Sup, male lawyer indicates. Instead, these essentialist identities still retain power when considering hiring decisions.

In summary, the headquarters staff generally had the same association of 'male' engineers and 'female' administrators that formed gender identities in other groups, including the symbolic association of men with rational thought and women with emotion. The association of women and the family rather than the workplace, which has a negative effect on perceived commitment of women compared to men, was also present. However, it was not as strong as it was in the regional offices, though it is not clear why. These associations have much the same negative effect in the headquarters as they do in other departments, limiting the access of women to engineering and technical roles and senior management roles. To an extent, the strength of these divisions seems weaker than in the regional managerial ranks, but this does not mean that they are powerless.

5.3.2.2 Executives

The executive leaders have the most power within the organization and, as shown in the previous chapters, their perceptions have a direct impact on the ability of managers at lower levels to advance. Thus, their perception of gender identities and how they respond to these identities will have the strongest impact on lower levels of the organization.

There is a sharp divide in traits associated with gender identities between executives. It is noticeable that while male gender identity is based on what men *do*, female gender identity is based on what women *are*, which goes back to the problem of agentic behaviour for women (West and Zimmerman, 1987). Like at lower levels of the organization, the ‘engineer’ role is assumed to be male, and this assumption is justified because of personal characteristics and identities:

Mostly engineers are male here. [This is because of] the engineer’s way of thinking. They don’t have imagination compared to women, they think... step by step and [using] logic. (Chin, female deputy governor)

The assignment of ‘engineer’ as a male identity has an immediate impact on leadership identities, because leadership is assumed to be part of the engineering role:

There are a small number of women [at the executive level] because the main function of the company is engineering. We all know about this. Other filed of jobs are support line. (Buss, female director)

Even if the proportion of male and female [engineers] was the same, male engineers would have more chance for promotion to the managerial level because of the nature of the company. (Som, male deputy governor)

This perception, especially at the senior level of the executives, has some significant consequences for women in the organization. Because beliefs that leadership is male have been naturalized, there may be little drive for change within the organization. In effect, the belief that women are unsuited for engineering leadership at the highest levels of the company

constitutes an inequality regime (Acker, 2006, 2012). This regime may be difficult or impossible to change, given that there is little impetus to do so on the part of the organization.

Male character traits are relatively rare in comparison to the assumption that they have specific action roles like engineer or leader. Sura, male deputy governor argues that women often view men as having high ego, and blocking female performance. Men might view themselves as having a right to promotion over women (Man, male deputy governor). In the instance Man, male deputy governor relates, the negative behaviour (a man trying to sabotage a female co-worker promoted over him) was rewarded with promotion in another division, so this may be true. Overall, however, the executive interviewees were concerned with what men *did*, rather than who they *are*. This is the opposite for women.

The perception of women's identities was bound up in emotion and personal preference rather than action. Women are viewed as better at dealing with people (Eakky, male deputy governor), but also as fussy, "bossy" and more prone to gossip and other negative communication behaviours (Chin, female deputy governor). A suitable role for women is "coordinator" (Eakky, male deputy governor). In contrast, women are not viewed as suitable for engineering management:

I tried to support one female candidate for assistant manager of a station office but she was not ready. She could not control the technicians and engineers. This could be my fault because she was not fully trained before she was promoted. (Sura, male deputy governor)

I am a deputy governor who control north region. In north region, we have policy to support female employees. I always give a good chance for them to get promoted if they have enough potential. But they are not ready to get promoted. They come to talk to me and said they are not ready! Because they cannot response all task and cannot deal with male engineer and male technical staffs. (Eakky, male deputy governor)

This perceived gap in readiness is based in a gendered assumption about performance (Acker, 1990), in which women are viewed as lacking as engineers if they cannot manage field staff, but field staff are not viewed as lacking or in need of correction if they do not follow the directions given by their managers. The problem of whether male engineers can manage their

subordinates, in contrast, was not brought up in the interviews. This once again points to the implicit position of men as 'normal' and women as 'other' (Acker, 1990). It also points to expectations of women that are not explicitly present for men, once again referencing the 'superwoman' narrative of success through exceptional effort (Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia, 2019).

The female identity identified by senior managers or executives is also wrapped up in the family (including not just children but also husbands) (Poon male deputy governor, Serm, male governor). This is not necessarily viewed as a barrier to organizational success, but once again it requires exceptional effort for women to manage the conflicting obligations:

After women get married, they have to take care of their children and sometimes their husband too. I understand that mothers need to think about their children first. If they can manage or balance their time, it is no problem for them to succeed or work here.
(Serm, male governor)

Of course, as Serm, male governor also acknowledges, there is no support program for parents or work-life balance, so in effect this is not likely to be possible, especially since the ideal worker (male) is not usually seen as having family responsibilities that need to be balanced.

This familial identity seems to prevent or inhibit the formation of a work identity or workplace commitment for women. For example:

After women get married, they have to take care of their children and sometimes their husband too... compared to men, women lose more opportunity... because of female responsibility for the household. (Serm, male governor)

Furthermore, he argues that women actively avoid promotion because of this responsibility.

In summary, the executive directors have strong assumptions about gender identities, including that women and men are suited for different tasks and roles, that women are unsuited to engineering and especially engineering management, and as a consequence are unsuited to

the organization's leadership roles. This has some serious implications for women seeking advancement in the organization, especially as there has been no effort to change job descriptions or otherwise provide support to enable women to balance family and work roles.

5.3.3 Summary of gender identities

Gender identities within Thai Utility are heavily reinforced. Male engineers, who are associated with symbolic traits like rationality and supported by gendered interactions (both formal and informal), are thought to have high flexibility and commitment to the organization. Female administrators, who are emotional and in some cases actively avoided both formally and informally, have no flexibility and no commitment because of their family obligations. These gender identities become more entrenched in senior ranks, although they are less so in junior management and headquarters staff ranks. The assumption that women are committed to family responsibilities, rather than work, is perhaps the most damaging of the gendered identities, and this assumption is held at some point throughout the organization. To overcome this limitation requires exceptional effort which only a few women can manage. Furthermore, invisible organizational structures like the seemingly gender-neutral seniority system create barriers for women based on their identities. Thus, the entrenchment of gender identities serves to both channel power and leadership roles to men and prevent women from gaining leadership roles.

Chapter 6 Data Analysis (Part 2): Gendered Interactions

In chapter 5, the three elements of Acker's theory of gendered organizations- divisions & structures, symbols and identities- were discussed. Here in chapter 6, attention turns to gendered interactions, another dimension of Acker's theory, within the Thai Utility organization. Gendered interactions are one of the more prominent dimensions of Acker's (1990) theory of the gendered organization. Gendered interactions, along with the other dimensions of Acker's (1990) theory, are explained in more detail in Chapter 2. Briefly, gendered interactions encompass the social interactions – primarily verbal interactions, though also shared activities – of employees within the organization, which are influenced and shaped by the other aspects of gender within the organization (Acker, 1990). Gendered interactions include both interactions between members of different genders and between members of the same gender, as both types of interactions can be influential.

This chapter draws on evidence from the interviews, combined with the interaction maps constructed as part of the research process, to investigate how formal and informal interactions become gendered as part of the organizational processes already discussed. As with other chapters, the analysis begins at the outside, bottom edge of the organization (junior managers in the regional offices) and works toward the central top of the organizational hierarchy (executive leaders). The analysis focuses on networking as a gendered practice, and the differences that emerge in women's use of networking compared to men. The analysis shows that at all levels, there is a degree of gendered interaction, which follows a specific pattern: formal interactions in the workplace are mixed gender, if necessary, but social interactions and especially enduring relationships are single-gender. While there are a few exceptions to these patterns, there is strong evidence that without formal requirements such as the need to deal with other departments, interaction would be predominantly single-gender, not mixed-gender.

As a reminder, interaction maps used in this chapter have a standardised set of representations for relationships and connections. Within the maps, the individual themselves is represented by the oval in the central position (typically marked as "me"). Other oval happens in the map represent their personal relationship. Square represent working together. Star represent the powerful contact who can help participants to get promoted. Gender of individuals is also represented on the map: green boxes indicate women, while blue boxes

indicate men. Grey boxes are either gender-unspecified or represent mixed groups (for example classmates).

Connections to people inside the organization in the same department are central to the map, followed by those that are in different departments, while those outside the organization are on the periphery. Typical connections include co-workers, work acquaintances and friends, and outsiders including former classmates, family members and powerful acquaintances. Thus, these connections include both instrumental network ties, which individuals can use to access resources and get things done, and expressive network ties, whose uses are primarily emotional and relational.

Network ties are represented by lines, with upward-directed lines indicating the person is above them in the organization's hierarchy and downward-directed lines indicating that the person is below them. Red, yellow and black lines represent informal connections. A red line represents a familial tie (either a family member or the family member of someone important, for example the wife of a powerful organizational leader). Yellow connections are also familial ties, but these represent ties to people in powerful positions in the organization who could influence organizational promotion and prospects. Black ties are powerful external contacts that could influence promotions or organizational power. Blue lines are the basic line of this thesis to represent/show the relationship between people in the personal networking map.

6.1 Regional Managers

6.1.1 Junior Managers

6.1.1.1 Formal interactions

The junior managers' formal interactions were typically mixed gender, although individuals may have more or less mixed-gender interactions depending on their field. For example, most of Pi's co-workers in her immediate department (engineering) were male, which made it difficult for her to engage in formal interaction with other women:

It is hard for me to deal with women in other fields, because I have been in an engineering environment for a long time. I get familiar to stay with male as usual and don't quite have female friend. (Pi – female engineer)

She attributes this to the stereotypical image that engineers have of engineering as a 'male' domain, which means they do not expect women to interact with them in the same way. In learning to deal with engineers in a typically 'male' way, though, Pi – female engineer has found it difficult to deal with women in other departments. This is likely due to her own internalisation of ideas about women as being emotional and fussy, compared to easy-going and rational engineers (men), rather than a deliberate intention to disparage or devalue other women (Parsons *et al.*, 2012).

Neither is it unique to her, as Nap (also a female engineer) has the same responses and beliefs. At the same time, this suggests that interaction is based to some extent on the association of men = action, women = emotion, which is one of the symbolic divides as well (Acker, 1990, 1992).

Even though formal interactions were mixed-gender, they were often conflicted, especially for women in 'male' engineer roles. One of these women said:

My first problem is trust from other men in my department and who I have to deal with... They did not believe that I can work well and be a good boss, manage the engineering job and handle problems in the technical field because I am female. I had to prove myself and show my performance to them. It took quite a long time to make them trust me. (Nap – female engineer).

This is consistent with other analyses which have shown that gendered interactions can fail to produce trust or create positive relationships (Lewis & Morgan, 1994).

Acker (1990) identified a division in gendered interactions, where female relationships may be viewed as emotional in origin, while male relationships may be viewed as being based in action and rational connections. This can be seen in the reporting of close relationships between managers and their mixed-gender reports. Formal interactions between female managers and subordinates at this level can be very close, though still hierarchical. For example, Mut-female HR states that her three direct reports, all younger in age and junior to her, are more like friends than co-workers, but at the same time accept her leadership:

We have lunch together every day... and often dinner. We go on vacation together. I like them because they are junior and respect me and listen to me. They never argue and fight with me. (Mut- female HR)

However, this same close relationship is not seen between male managers and female subordinates, or female managers and male subordinates. For example, Si-female accountant, who has four female subordinates and one male, is close to the women but not the man. In comparison, male managers at this level do not report close friendships based on emotion with their male subordinates, but did report socialization activities (for example, drinking with them). Thus, it is not the case that female managers are more likely to be friendly with their subordinates, but rather that the formal relationship is influenced by the informal relationship. In comparison, male managers may not directly report relationships with male subordinates, but they do have these relationships.

Network maps show that the networks of male and female junior managers are relatively similar in terms of their formal relationships. Four maps are presented below which outline the networks of two male and two female managers. To begin with, we can look at Nat male- lawyer and Jan female accountant, both from the middle region. Both of these junior managers have a small number of subordinates, with the subordinates of Nat-male lawyer being mixed-gender and those of Jan-female account being female. The respondents also have mixed-gender connections with higher managers, particularly their direct supervisors, and working relationships with people of both genders in other departments (for example accounting and customer service). Thus, the formal relationships and reporting chains of both junior managers is mixed gender, but slightly more likely to be male or female depending on whether it is an engineering role or an administrative role. This is consistent with the gender divisions discussed in Chapter 5, which showed that engineering was predominantly a 'male' role and administration predominantly a 'female' role. In part, it is a consequence of the strict gendering of these roles; for example, if 'engineer' is coded as a male role, it is likely that an engineering manager will be male and will work mostly with other males. However, what is less certain is why participants may be less likely to identify mixed-gender contacts from other roles, for example why they may not identify co-workers from other departments.

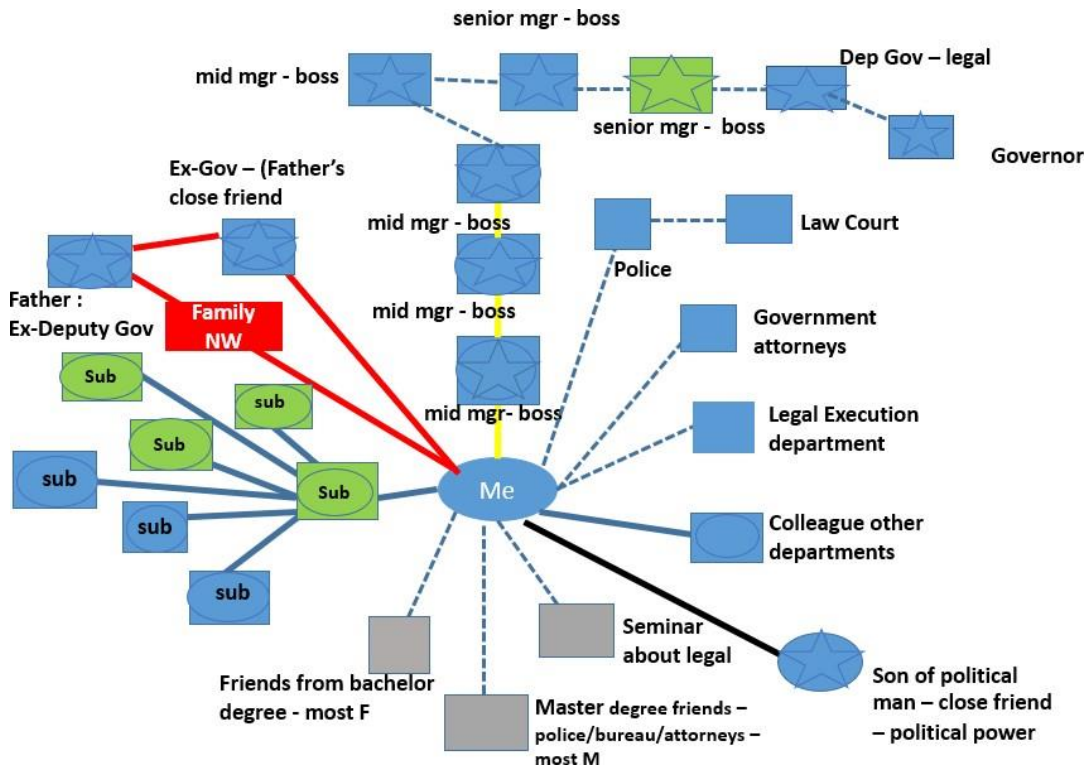


Figure 6. 1 Network interaction map: Nat-male lawyer

This person is junior male who is a Lawyer and works at the Legal Office. Nat-male lawyer has a variety of relationships identified, both informal and formal. Informal relationships include close friends (including powerful friends) and fellow students from earlier education and external training (of mixed genders). His subordinates are also mixed gender, though slightly more likely to be female. He has three male subordinates and four female subordinates. Notably, almost his entire upper reporting line is male, as is most of his key contacts from other departments and external organisations. His family relationships, to his father (an ex-deputy governor) and through his father to an ex-governor, are also male. His powerful external relationships, both family and friends, are also male. Thus, Nat-male lawyer has a strongly male network, both formally and informally. However, his friends from his Bachelor's degree are almost all female. This suggests that there is a break point at which Nat began to move away from emotionally-oriented relationships (with men and women) to instrumental relationships (almost entirely with men).

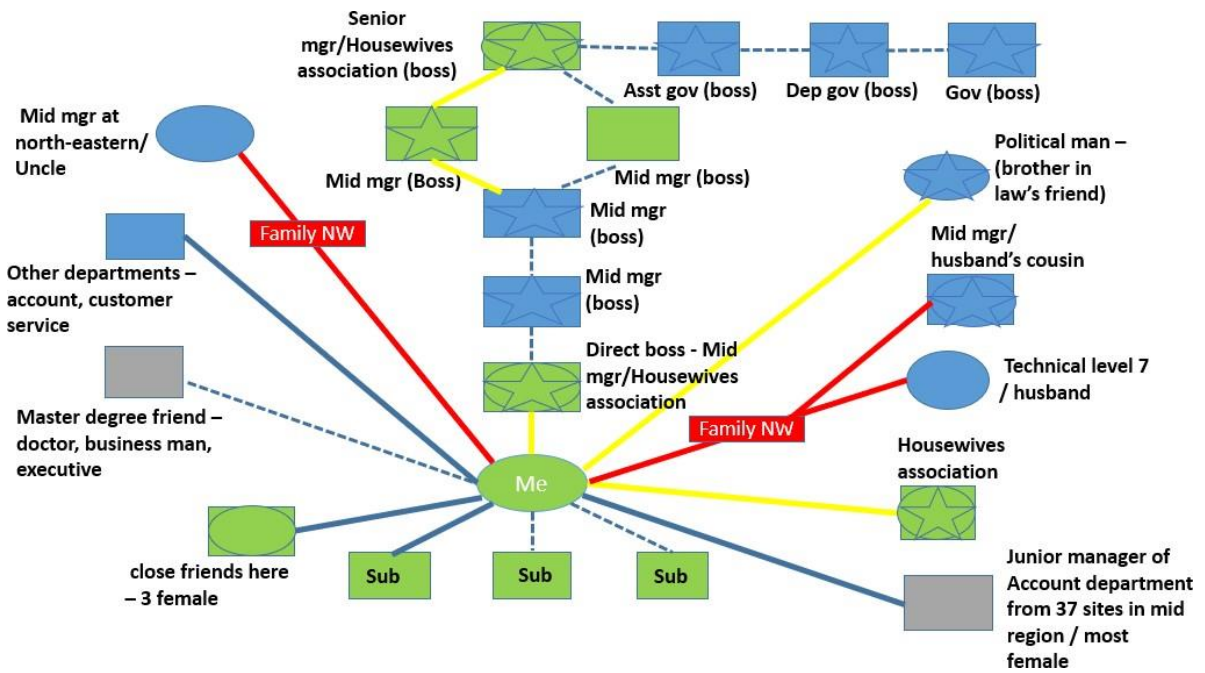


Figure 6. 2 Network interaction map: Jan-female accountant

This person is female junior manager who is an accountant and works in Department of Accounts. Jan-female accountant, in contrast to Nat-male lawyer, has a mixed gender formal and informal network. Like others, she has external informal relationships from earlier education, which are mixed gender. However, her organizational network connections including her direct supervisor, some of her upper reporting chain, and all her subordinates, are female. Unlike her colleague Nat-male lawyer, much of Jan’s upward reporting chain is female, including her direct manager, middle managers and senior manager. Jan-female account also has some informal connections to women through the Housewives’ Association, but her powerful familial connections are all male. Most of her powerful connections in other departments are also male. Overall, Jan has reported nine female connections, mostly subordinates, direct supervisors or those she knows through the Housewives’ Association. In contrast, her ten male connections, including managers in her reporting chain and her male relatives, tend to be in more powerful positions. Thus, while she does have female connections, her most powerful connections are male.

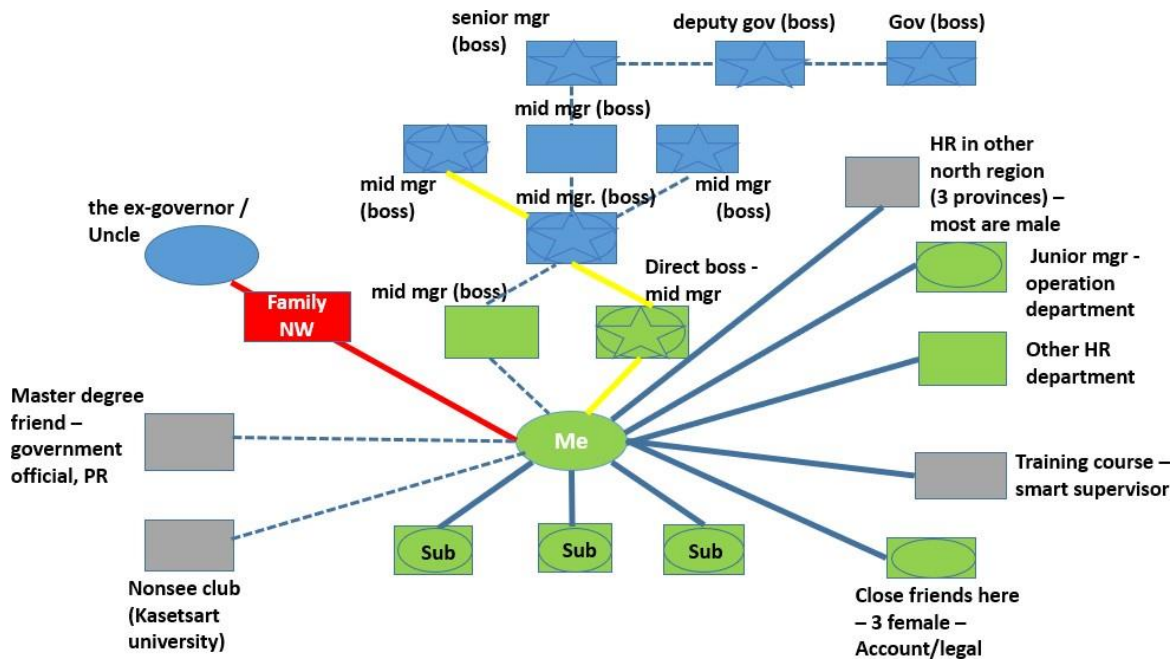


Figure 6. 3 Network Interaction map : Mut - female HR

This person is female junior manager who works as HR in Department of Human resource management. The HRM department is a mixed-gender department, and this is reflected in Mut’s mix of male and female direct reports and managers. However, it is notable that the upper management levels and above are male, while middle managers and below are female. Thus, even though the department appears gender-balanced, most power is held by male managers. Mut has nine senior managers at various levels within the HRM department’s chain of command, of which one is female and the remainder are male. Of these managers, seven (including her direct boss, which is female) have had a significant effect on her career. However, she does not have close relationships with most of these managers, except for her direct manager. Therefore, most of these relationships are only professional connections. Mut’s lateral co-workers and subordinates are all female. She has personal relationships with her direct reports, who she describes as close friends and who she chose for her team. She also has relationships with HR professionals in regional offices (mostly female), but describes these relationships as professional only. Mut has a senior family connection, as her uncle is a former governor. However, the lack of star (which indicates high career influence) shows that her uncle did not have a significant effect on her career. Therefore, even though this is a senior connection, it has not been of instrumental use in promotion. Mut also has mixed-gender groups of friends and acquaintances from schooling, interest clubs, and training courses, and some

close female friends. These connections, like that to her uncle, are purely social and have not influenced her career. Overall, Mut’s direct manager is the only person with whom she has both a personal and work relationship and who has influenced her career.

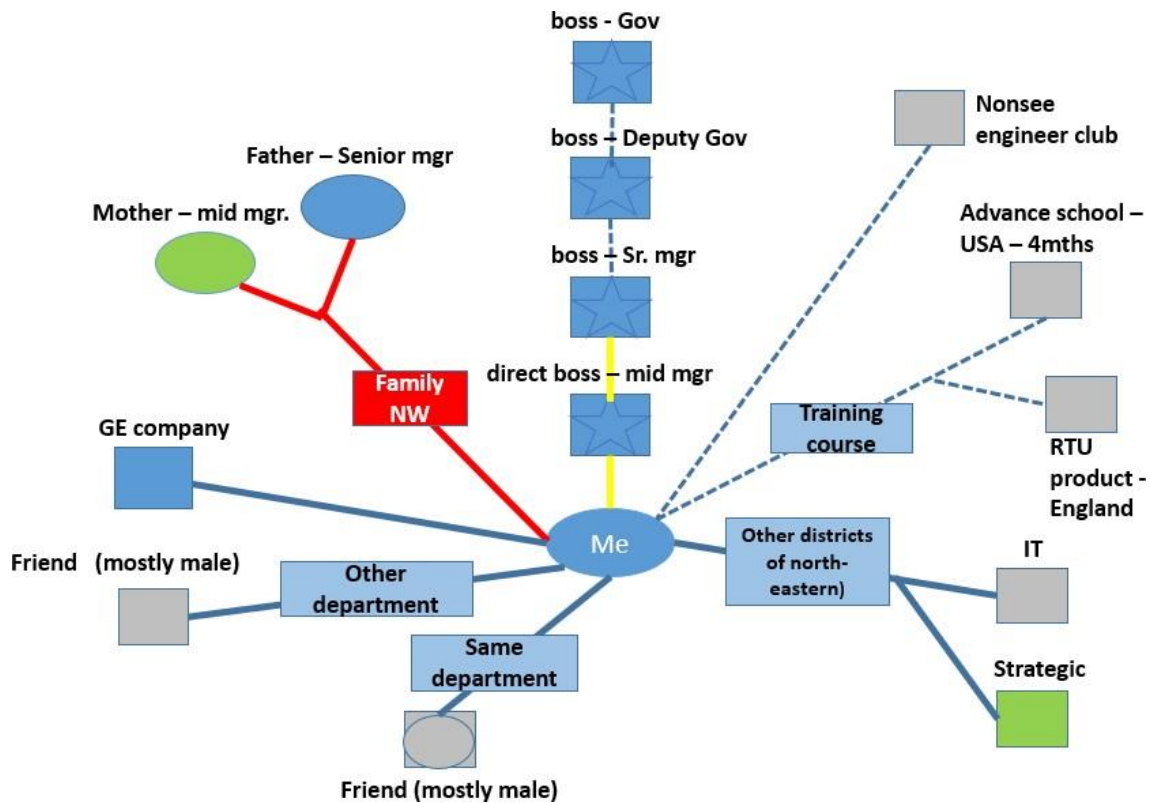


Figure 6. 4 Network interaction map ; Super – male engineer

This is male junior manager who is an engineer and works in Department of Engineer. Super is a male junior manager in the Engineering department. His interaction network is mainly male (blue squares), which is normal for the male-dominated Engineering department. His managers, all of whom he notes have the potential to advance his career, are all male. Although he does not mention social interactions or friendships with either of them, he does note that his direct manager and the senior manager above his direct manager have had a significant influence on his career and are very supportive. (This is indicated by the yellow lines.) Importantly, Super holds a manager job title, but has no direct reports or subordinates. This is because his role is as a technical engineering manager, rather than as a people manager. While he does have friends within the department, most of whom are male, there is no supervisory relationship between them. Super’s parents work at the company, with his mother being a middle manager and his father a senior manager. Although he did indicate it made it easier to get into the company, neither parent is in a position to influence

his advancement prospects (as indicated by the lack of star). He also has various connections to mixed-gender groups through training courses such as RTU product training (in England) and advanced training (in the United States), but he says that these relationships were short-term and he does not have a long-lasting relationship with them. He is a member of the Nonsee engineering club, but does not participate and has not made many connections. He also has friends and social connections at supplier GE company, which are a mixture of personal and professional. Thus, Super's instrumental social network within the organisation is almost entirely in his department and especially his upward chain of command, which has the most influence on promotions.

While there are some similarities between networking maps, there are also some significant differences between the junior managers of different genders. One of the most striking similarities is the prevalence of family connections to either current or former high-ranking organizational members (always male). For example, Nat's father was a former deputy governor, while Jan had an uncle, husband and cousin in middle manager or senior technical roles. Mut's uncle and Super's parents also had high-ranking roles in the organization. Thus, even though these junior managers were not typically hired directly by their family members, Thai Utility is literally a family organization for them.

A striking difference is the different patterns of gendered interaction that are already evident at this level. Male junior managers Nat and Super had limited contact with women, with few if any women in their upward reporting chain. While Nat had mixed-gender subordinates, all but one person in Super's formal network was male. In contrast, Jan and Mut worked directly with only women, including their subordinates and direct supervisors. For both of them, the first male contact was two levels up in the organization. Thus, despite a lack of formal policy and nominally gender-neutral recruitment, all four managers worked in gender-segregated departments where positions of power were held by men. This resulted in different patterns of gendered interaction between male and female managers. In addition to these general differences, there are also more intricate differences in the patterns of interaction and flows of power, which are discussed in the next section.

6.1.1.2 Informal interactions

Informal interactions are typically separate in practice, even though mixed in theory. Women are not barred from socializing with men at this level, but neither are they welcomed. KK – male accountant says:

Men and women can socialize together, no problem, but men socialize by themselves

when they go to drink... Some women used to join this [drinking session] but when they have a family, they cannot join anymore. (KK – male accountant)

Thus, the ability of women to engage in informal mixed interaction is limited to some extent. This limitation is, as noted in the previous chapters, strongly associated with the association of women with home and family, where it is assumed that women cannot engage in extra social activities outside the working hours – either because they do not want to or because they have caring responsibilities that do not allow for it. It may also be assumed that there are traditional taboos on women interacting informally with men, which are observed for the benefit of women themselves. Thus, this places the responsibility for limitation of interaction on women, assuming it is personal preference, rather than suggesting it is a cultural preference against mixed interaction. However, it is also the case that men actively avoid socializing with women at least at sometimes:

I see many of the men smoke together and chat. They have their own engineer club and are quite close to each other. I think they prefer to stay together more than to stay with female. (Si-female accountant)

This indicates a strong preference for homosociality on the part of men, at least as observed by women (Holgerson, 2013). This can also be expressed in the informal relationships of men, which are almost always male as far as workplace relationships go. Typically, male informal interactions are only female at more distant points, for example university classmates.

The informal relationships expressed on the network maps of Jan-female accountant and Nat-male lawyer (discussed in Section 6.1.1.1 above) are relatively similar. Both have a small number of family connections, including Jan's husband, uncle and cousin and Nat's father and family friends. (Notably, for both managers, these connections are all male.)

However, the nature of relationships changes. For Jan-female accountant, informal relationships within the workplace are mainly social, including friends, other regional managers, and other members of the housewives' association. This includes several managers in her direct chain of command. Jan-female accountant identifies only one male informal relationship (a friend from her Master's program) who is not a relative or family friend. Nat (male lawyer)'s informal network is even more strongly gendered, with all internal informal relationships and most external ones (except some friends from the Bachelor's program) being male. Thus, in contrast to the formal relationships, informal relationships at the junior level are largely, though not entirely, single-gender. This pattern can also be seen even more strongly at upper levels of the organization. By the executive level, informal relationships are almost exclusively single-gender, with the exception of familial relationships within the firm. This is a significant issue, especially when considering the gap in women's access to the organization between formal roles and networks and informal networks which has been noted previously.

The Housewives' Association, which is part of Jan's informal interactions with other women and, as we will see throughout the remainder of the chapter, that of other managers, is worth some investigation because of its gendered nature. The association is an informal (though official) group at Thai Utility, which is mainly oriented toward social activities. Although Thai Utility has many such informal social groups, which are focused on specific outside interests and professional fields, the Housewives' Association is the only one reserved exclusively for women. It is open to women who work at Thai Utility at all levels, as well as the wives of men who work there. The Housewives' Association is one of the most commonly cited sources of influence and networking for women at the company, and it does appear to serve as a valuable resource for female managers to access higher-level female managers. It is also one of the most common sources of indirect powerful relationships for women, as many of the women who were interviewed identified relationships with the wives of powerful men through it. Overall, the Housewives' Association has a complex role within the broader Thai Utility organization. It is clearly a gendered form of interaction and, as it supports the predominant identity of women as housewives rather than workers, does serve to reinforce gender hierarchies and inequality as well as a heteronormative notion of femininity and women as having a family role. At the same time, it is often a source of powerful networking relationships for junior women in the organization, who may not otherwise be able to access the sparse number of female senior managers and form relationships with them. This seems to suggest that the Housewives' Association serves almost as a network of alternate, indirect power channels for

women, which reflects the indirect power of the mother within a family (Kranichfeld, 1987). However, it is an inferior networking opportunity, because it does not offer direct access to power (McGuire, 2002). Thus, the Housewives' Association will be a major topic of discussion in the analysis of the gendered logic of the family in the next chapter.

6.1.1.3 Network Comparison among Junior Regional Managers

There were some similarities in the networks of male and female junior managers, particularly in terms of outside connections. They all had family connections at upper levels in the company. For example, both Nat and Mut have family members and/or family friends who are former governors or deputy governors. Jan and Super also had family members at lower levels, from middle to upper management. These connections helped gain access to jobs, but are not instrumental in career advancement. Furthermore, none of the junior managers had social relationships with upper-level management – these relationships were professional only. Instead, their closest connections were with their bosses, co-workers and direct reports. At this level, there are few connections that could be considered very powerful, and most career influence was from direct managers.

The formal interaction networks are gender-segregated for male and female junior managers, as are the informal interaction networks. Nat (lawyer) and Super (engineer) both worked in male-dominated departments, and most internal interactions, both formal and informal, were with male co-workers and bosses. Nat's direct reports were female, but Super's departmental connections were all male. Jan (accountant) and Mut (human resources manager) worked in nominally mixed-gender departments. Despite this, most of their day-to-day interactions were with female subordinates and direct managers. Male presence in both departments was at upper levels of the organisation, meaning neither Jan nor Mut had close relationships with male managers. This gender hierarchy means that despite a nominally equal division of personnel by gender, power was controlled by men (Acker, 1990). This is one way in which an organization that appears to be gender neutral hides a gendered subtext of inequality- there are men and women in the department, but men hold the power.

This gender division in formal interaction also carried through to informal interaction. Women sometimes interacted through the Housewives' Association, an all-female informal group - Jan did, but Mut did not. However, men never interacted in this way. While Super was a part of the engineering club, this was not a significant area of interaction. This suggests that even though the female junior managers were actively engaged in networking, it was not

effective at creating the social relationships within the management chain that would be needed to advance their careers. This calls to mind other findings, which have suggested that women's networking in the organization is less effective because of processes of exclusion (Greguletz et al., 2019). However, the hesitation to participate remarked on by Greguletz, et al. cannot really be observed – while it is sometimes assumed that women are reluctant to participate in networking activities, in practice, this is not so. Instead, they often feel they cannot, either due to cultural taboos or the nature of the networking activity.

In summary, at the junior level, the gendered interaction, both formal and informal, is beginning to emerge, with differences in closeness of subordinates to managers and a gender division in informal interaction. However, interaction networks of male and female managers are similar, and influenced more by the gender divisions of the company than by entrenched avoidance of mixed-gender interaction or active formation of single-gender relationships. Although the relationship network maps and activities expressed are similar, the way they are conceptualized by the junior managers suggests a persistent division between male/action and female/emotion, which influences the framing of both formal and informal relationships. In other words, men do things together, while women feel friendships (and enmity), as the basis of their formal and informal relationships. These gendered interaction norms are reflected in each of the other levels of management as well.

6.1.2 Middle Managers

6.1.2.1 Formal interactions

At the formal level, middle managers generally had work interactions with both male and female superiors, subordinates and co-workers. However, there were some exceptions. Tha-male IT, who works in the engineering department, specified he rarely interacted with female colleagues. This was also true for Than-female engineer, who was also in engineering and had only two female subordinates, and Sami-male engineer, all of whose subordinates were male. Thus, even though only one person (Kit-male accountant) said they were uncomfortable with or limited in interaction with both male and female people, in practice many of them had limited mixed-gender interactions. This limitation is to some extent traceable to the gender divisions and gendered structures of the organization as these aspects of the organization influence what interactions are possible (Acker, 1990, 1992). In this case, the gendering of certain departments (e.g. engineering and leadership are 'male', administrative departments are

‘female’) influence the interactions individuals have within these departments, and in their dealings with other departments.

The extent to which formal interactions were viewed as friendly varied a lot. Kit-male accountant, whose subordinates were all female, had only business relationships with them. However, other managers were friendlier with their subordinates, both male and female. These friendlier managers seem to express a concept of organizational family, with connections built on trust and interpersonal relationships, as well as bonds that are almost parent-like between managers and subordinates (at least from the managers’ perspective). Familial relationships are fundamentally expressive ties, rather than instrumental ties (Umphress, et al., 2003:

[My subordinates] always come and talk to me about their problems. I think we are family! They believe in me and trust me. (Kit-male accountant)

All of my subordinates are male... We work together as a family. I would like to develop their technical and management skills, so I coach them all myself. (Sami-male engineer)

Thus, ‘family’ implied emotional care on the part of the female managers, while it implied development of promotional capabilities for the male managers. This discourse of managers as family leaders was not seen in the junior engineers but became more common at the middle management levels. Instead, junior managers were more concerned with friendship or lateral relationships with their subordinates; thus, middle managers begin to perceive themselves in a position of more leadership and authority, but still with emotional ties to their subordinates which influence their perceived roles. This suggests that familial (private) relationships, rather than public relationships, are being used as a template for developing relationships.

Another interesting comment was from Sao-female administrative, who had frequent contacts with several men, but also said:

I am closer to [her senior managers] wives than I am to them, because we are in the Housewives’ Association. We travel and do activities together. They are my good advisors, I can talk to them about everything when I have problems. (Sao-female administrative)

This suggests that informal single-gender interactions may be dominant over formal mixed-gender interactions. Thus, even though interaction was not formally limited by gender, in practice a combination of circumstances and homophily led to limits on mixed-gender interactions.

Again, presented below are four networking maps of middle manager in Thai Utility. Looking at the maps of Kit- male accountant and Yao- female engineer, we can explore the networking experiences of the middle managers. The formal relationships of both of these managers were mixed gender. In the case of Kit-male accountant, his direct reports and immediate supervisors were female, while other formal relationships, including those to headquarters and other departments, may be male or female. The upper levels of management above him were male. However, this does not mean that Kit-male accountant is comfortable or fluent in mixed gender interaction:

I deal with my subordinates but we don't have a personal relationship. I can't be close to women much, as it's inappropriate. People would gossip and my wife works here too. I care about her feelings. (Kit-male accountant)

This probably explains why, as will be discussed below, all of Kit (male accountant)'s informal relationships within the organization are with men. However, here Kit brings in another aspect of the 'family' subtext of gendered relationships: that of the exclusivity of relationships between men and women, and the heteronormative assumption that relationships between men and women must be grounded in sexual interest (Cronin, 2015). This becomes much more obvious at higher levels of the organization, with some male senior managers and executives avoiding contact with female subordinates because of it, as will be discussed later in the chapter.

Yao-female engineer had both male and female subordinates, but her entire chain of command in the organization was male, as were most of her formal connections to other departments. She noted in her interview that most of the people in the departments she works with are also male; thus, she actually has very limited single-gender interactions. The formal networks of these managers were similar in that below them was more gender diversity, but this narrowed sharply at the top, with most upper managers being male.

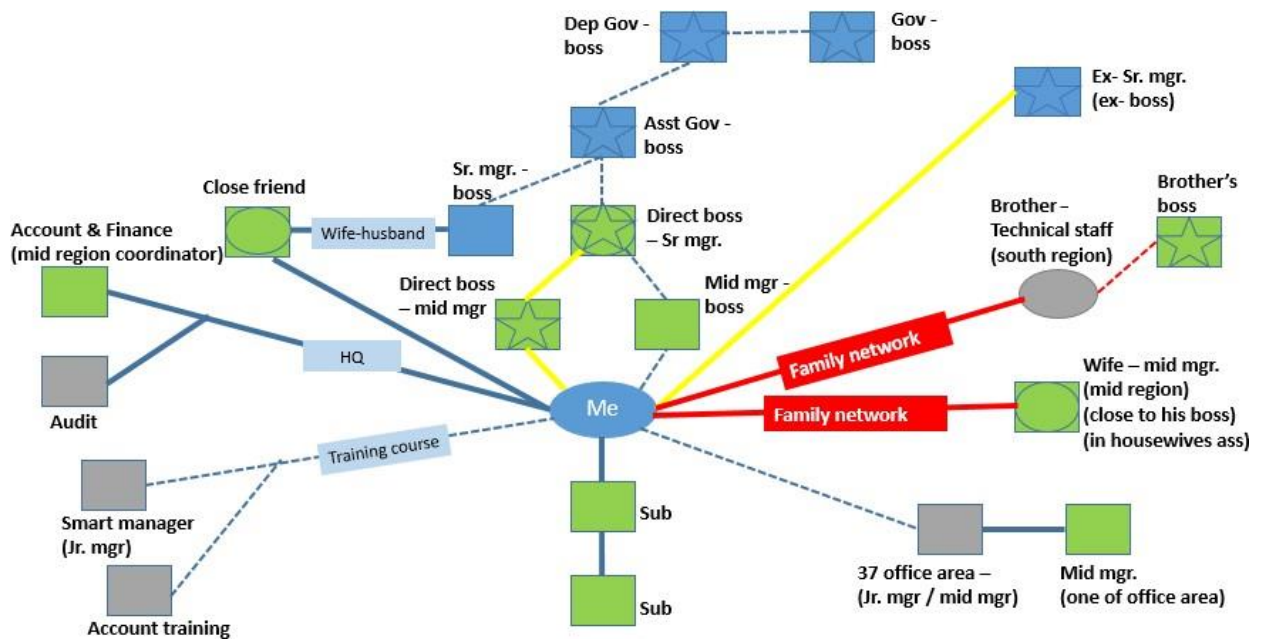


Figure 6. 5 Network interaction map: Kit-male accountant

This person is male middle manager who is an accountant and works in the department of accounts. Kit-male accountant is unusual for the male respondents in that he works in the female-dominated Accounting department, with direct reports and direct supervisors as well as co-managers all being female. In total, Kit-male accountant reports ten female connections and five male connections. Female connections include Kit's direct working group (subordinates and supervisors), as well as a close friend and connections in other departments, while male connections are mainly in his upper reporting chain. Unlike many of the other managers, Kit also has a female connection within the organization, but this is his wife. Relationships marked out as significant connections are typically to male employees. Thus, Kit shows more diversity in both informal and formal networks than most of the other male managers. This may be due to his position in a female-identified department. However, like others in female-identified departments such as HR, the upward reporting chain beyond his immediate supervisors is male. Thus, the association of men with leadership leads to their control of even female-identified departments.

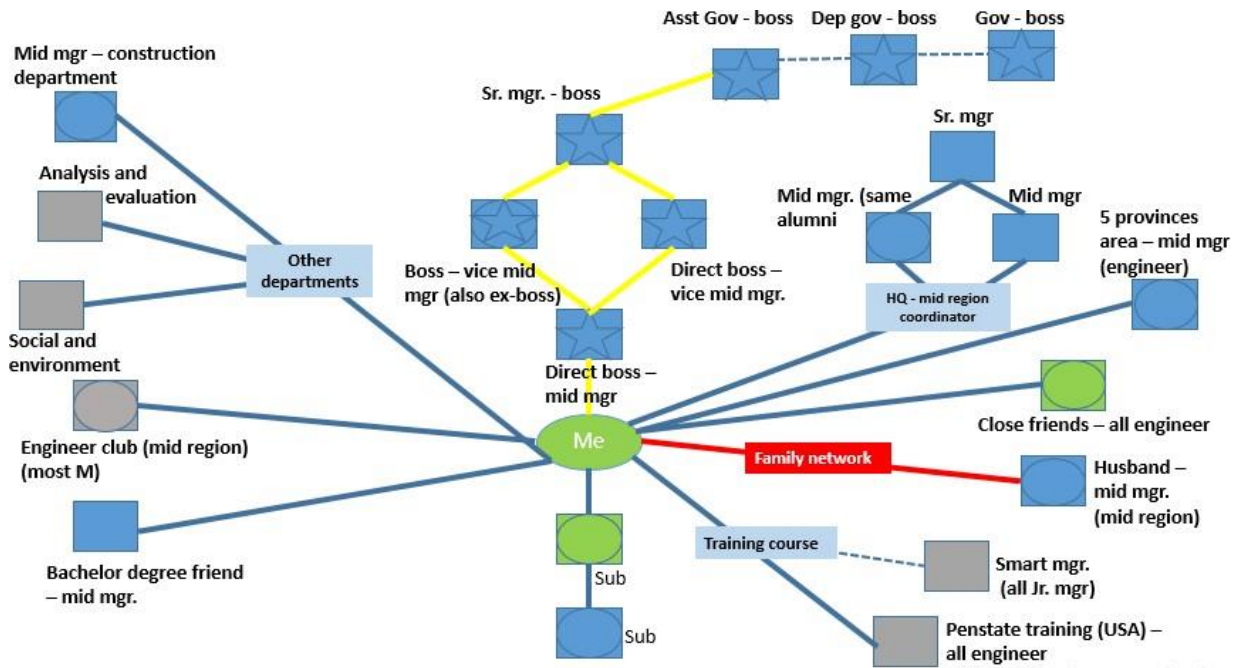


Figure 6. 6 Network interaction map: Yao-female engineer

This person is female middle manager who is an engineer and works in Department of engineer. Yao (female engineer)’s interaction map shows that she lives in a nearly all-male world, and her networking practice is predominated by male connections. She reports only two female connections, with 15 connections to male relationships including the upper management chain, middle managers in other departments, and one of her subordinates. Formally, she has one female direct report, but her entire senior management line is male. She has sparse family connections and no external powerful connections. As an engineer, most of her external connections from university and other social domains are also predominantly male. Connections in other departments are sometimes mixed but are frequently male. In some ways, however, her connections resemble those of Kit-male accountant, discussed previously in this chapter, in that her upward reporting chain is predominantly male. Thus, whether the department is male-identified or female-identified, upper management tends to be male.

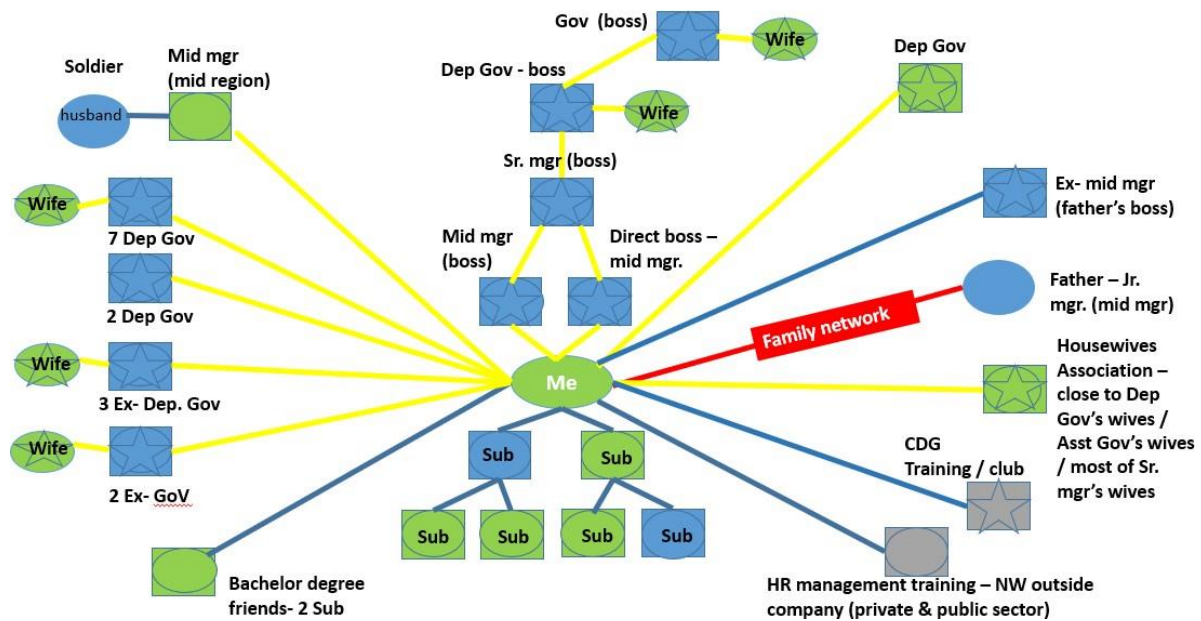


Figure 6. 7 Network Interaction Map: Sao– female administrative

Sao is a female middle manager who works in the Department of General Management as an administrative manager. As with many of the other managers, Sao has family connections in the company (a father who is a middle manager). She also has a close personal relationship with her father's boss, who is close to the family and supported her initial entry and her career since (as indicated by the yellow line). Sao's direct chain of command is all male, while her six subordinates are mainly female. Sao has a personal relationship with all of her subordinates. She also has relatively close relationships with her managers, and feels that many of them have both power to influence her career advancement (stars) and interest in it (yellow lines). Sao's department, like that of other managers, is predominantly controlled by men despite a nominally equal gender split. This brings to mind the problem of gender-based hierarchies, which create inequality despite outward signs of equality (Acker, 1990). What is most interesting about Sao's network map is that she has connections with many male senior managers and current and former deputy governors who are not directly in her department. While these are sometimes direct relationships, they are more often connections to their wives. These relationships were typically formed through the Housewives' Association, but not all of them. Interestingly, many of the connections to the wives of governors and deputy governors are starred, indicating that Sao thinks they have power and influence over her career prospects, even if they do not work there. These relationships reference another aspect of the logic of the

family, which is the indirect power of the mother over the father (Kranichfeld, 1987; Bates, Bader and Mencken, 2003). In comparison, Sao's other outside relationships are socially important, but not relevant to her career.

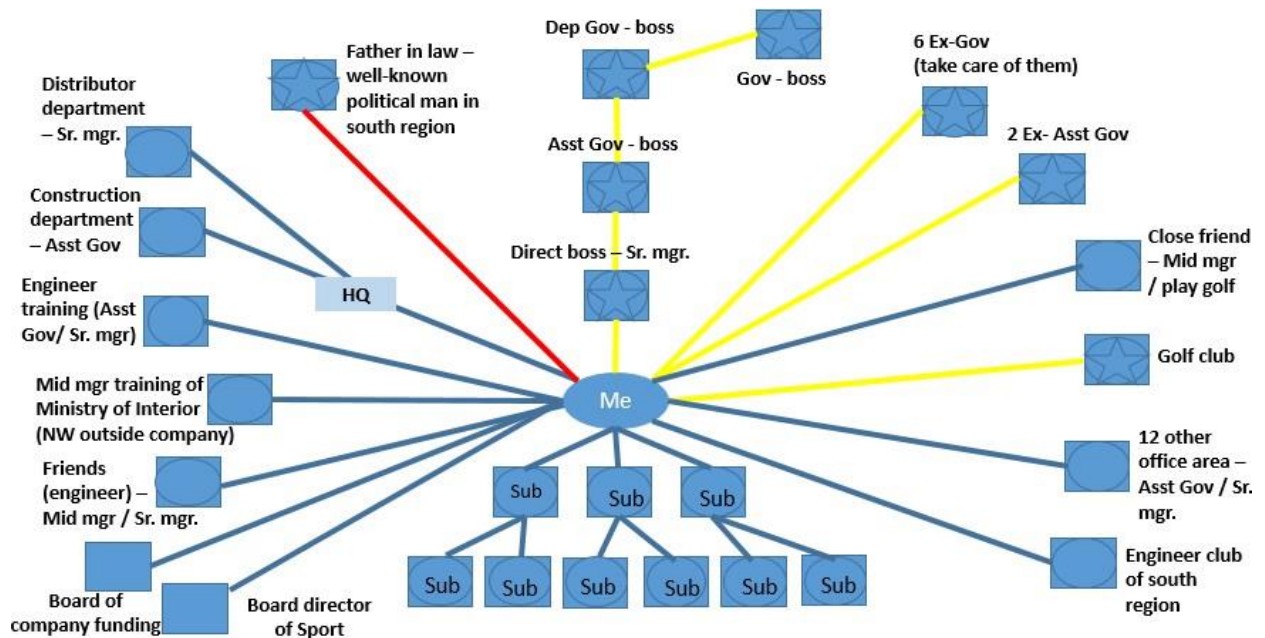


Figure 6. 8 Network Interaction Map: Watt- male-engineer

This person is male middle manager who is an engineer and works in Department of engineer & service. Unlike many others, Watt does not have relatives at upper levels of the organisation, but his father-in-law is a well-known politician, which he credits as having influenced his initial hiring. He also views his father-in-law as one possible influence on his career advancement. Like other managers in the male-dominated Engineering department, Watt's internal chain of command is all male. His upper management chain includes four managers at senior level and above, all of whom he views as having both power over (stars) and interest in (yellow lines) his career promotion. Watt's team of subordinates, which includes nine engineers, is also all-male. Watt has relationships with senior management and board members in several different departments, including distribution, construction, training and so on. These relationships do not have a direct impact on his career prospects, but they do offer him He also has internal relationships with other male managers, including close friends. Many of these close relationships were established through participation in the Golf Club. Watt has

many internal relationships with six former governors and deputy governors, which he formed earlier in his work life. He felt that even though these former high-ranking managers were no longer working at the company, they could still influence his career prospects and took an interest in him (stars and yellow lines) – they were “still taking care of him”. In short, Watt’s relationships within the organisation – both its past and present members – position him well for advancement within the male-dominated engineering department. This also points to Watt’s lack of hesitation in making connections and the lack of barriers to his participation (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019), with activities like Golf club serving as a gendered space to meet powerful organisational supporters.

6.1.2.2 Informal interactions

Gender division was much stronger for informal interactions at this level than for formal interactions. It was also much stronger than the gendered interactions at the junior management level. While ‘hanging out’ or attending formal events was common, women often only engaged minimally, for example not drinking (Than-female engineer). Other informal activities like golfing were exclusively male, even though Watt-male engineer did not understand why:

I always play golf as my routine and I love to play golf but I never see women join the golf club. I used to play golf with women outside the company. I don’t know why [they don’t play here]. I have heard they are afraid about sun burn. (Watt-male engineer)

Watt-male engineer’s assertion about women avoiding golf or other sporting activities because of fear of sunburn (which is repeated at another level of management as well) is in itself a gendered assumption about women’s overriding concern with their personal appearance. To some extent this could be viewed as a form of ‘patriarchal bargain’, where women accept some limitations on their action in order to avoid others (for example, passing on networking opportunities to avoid censure because of appearance) (Kandiyoti, 1988). On the other hand, it also seems that men use this assumption to avoid taking responsibility for actively seeking out relationships with their female colleagues, for example by choosing activities that are suitable for both men and women. By making it women’s choice, and then claiming a superficial motivation for this choice, this claim makes it possible to avoid working toward inclusivity.

Overall, at this level formal functional interaction is mixed gender to an extent, but informal interaction is separated by gender. This shows strong tendencies toward homosociality (Holgerson, 2013). It also shows limited attempts by women to dissociate themselves from the female identity in an attempt to get ahead (Rhoton, 2011), although this could be limited by the maintenance of 'male' social ties by either indirectly or directly limiting women from participation (Durbin, 2011). However, the interviews with female managers did not seem to suggest active exclusion from participation, although they did suggest men were more comfortable associating with other men. This could also be said of women, as in the case of Sao-female administrative, who rated her relationship with her subordinates' wives through the Housewives' association more highly than the formal relationship with her subordinates themselves.

Network maps demonstrated that there were some differences in informal enduring relationships as well. Kit-male accountant had only one non-family informal network relationship with a woman (the wife of a senior manager he was also friends with), even though his immediate formal network was all female. This was not true for Yao-female engineer, whose informal relationships included the engineering club (mostly male) and other engineers who were close friends (all male). However, in many ways Yao- female engineer, who works in engineering and declared in her interview that she was more comfortable with men than women, is atypical for women in the organization. However, it is very typical for women in STEM, who often align themselves cognitively and behaviourally with men in order to succeed in male-dominated, male-oriented settings (Rhoton, 2011; Parsons, et al., 2012; Byrne, et al. 2019). Thus, there is not just an informal interaction divide between male and female, but between male, engineering-female and non-engineering-female.

6.1.2.3 Network Comparison among Middle Regional Managers

The four middle managers had some similarities in their networks, but also some differences. One similarity is that regardless of gender, family relationships that could affect career advancement were more common than at the junior level, with Kit, Sao and Watt all having powerful family relationships. It is interesting that while male family connections tend to be direct (e.g. former or current managers and politicians), female family connections tend to be indirect (the wives of powerful men). This once again follows the logic of familial relationships and the difference between direct male power and indirect female power (Kranichfeld, 1987).

Overall, the middle managers had dense networks and actively engaged in networking. Particularly, informal club-based networking begins to play a role, including the Engineering club (Yao and Watt), the Housewives' Association and CDG club (Sao), and the Golf Club (Watt). It is notable that although the CDG club is mixed-gender, the other clubs are mostly single-gender, whether because of their rules or a de facto gender segregation. This makes Yao an exception, because she participates in the predominantly male Engineering club (but not in the more socially oriented Golf Club). All participants viewed these internal clubs as a source of potentially valuable connections. However, although there is some networking outside the organisation (for example, Watt's participation in the Ministry of Interior programs), these are of limited use inside the organisation.

There are some differences in how men and women engage in networking at this level. This can be seen by comparing Yao and Watt. Both are engineers, and their social networks are entirely or primarily male. For Watt, this is comfortable and allows him to build networks with powerful males, both formally and informally. For Yao, this is uncomfortable, and she has to actively work to form connections and is frozen out of close relationships with powerful senior males. In response, she has a broader set of networking connections, including both her direct work team and people (still mostly male) from around the organisation. She also takes a more active role in the Engineering club, as it is her only avenue to powerful males within her organisation. Watt is supported in his networking activities by the gender divisions of the Engineering department, while Yao is disadvantaged. This points to structural exclusions influencing how networking happens, which could make Yao a less effective networker despite her harder work (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019).

In summary, at the middle manager level, gendered interaction becomes stronger than at the junior level, especially informally. At this level the chain of command becomes more gendered, as do immediate formal relationships. This is not just a tendency of men, as women also tend to interact more with women than men, especially informally. There are still exceptions, like Yao-female engineer, who prefers to engage with men and there are signs that women are increasingly willing to build connections with male colleagues. Therefore, in the future the profile of women's networking may change but this may only apply to those women in work in male dominated professions such as engineering. This would leave women in male-dominated fields on a more level playing field, but potentially disadvantage women in female-dominated fields even further.

6.1.3 Senior Managers

6.1.3.1 Formal interactions

The senior managers' accounts of interaction at the company showed strong gender divisions, although these may not be recognised as gender divisions as such. Two of the managers (Dusy-male engineer and Pass-female administrative) argued that they personally or their departments had no problem with male-female interaction. However, most of the interactions they described were in fact strongly gender-divided:

In this department, men and women work and hang out together, no problem... but discrimination is based on occupation. Engineers get most of the training. My staff get a lower salary when compared to engineers at the same level... [My staff] does not prefer to interact with the engineers. (Pass-female administrative)

This suggests that there may be a disconnect between the actual interactions (which are gender-divided) and perceptions of those interactions. As discussed in Chapter 5, 'engineer' is actually strongly gendered as male within the organization. Therefore, when Pass-female administrative states that her staff does not like to interact with engineers, she is actually pointing to a specific pattern of gendered interaction.

Four networking maps of senior managers are presented below. In looking at the networking activities of senior managers, we can begin by comparing Pass- female administrative and Wudy- male engineer. These interaction maps are from different departments, because at this organizational level not all of the regions had female senior managers. The formal enduring relationships expressed within this map are strikingly different. Wudy (male engineer)'s direct subordinates and superiors are all male, as are most subordinates further down his chain of report and formal relationships with headquarters staff in other departments. For Pass-female administrative, her upper managers are male, but her subordinates are mainly female (though she does have one male subordinate). Thus, at the senior manager level there is a strong divide in formal day-to-day interaction that was not present at the lower levels of the hierarchy.

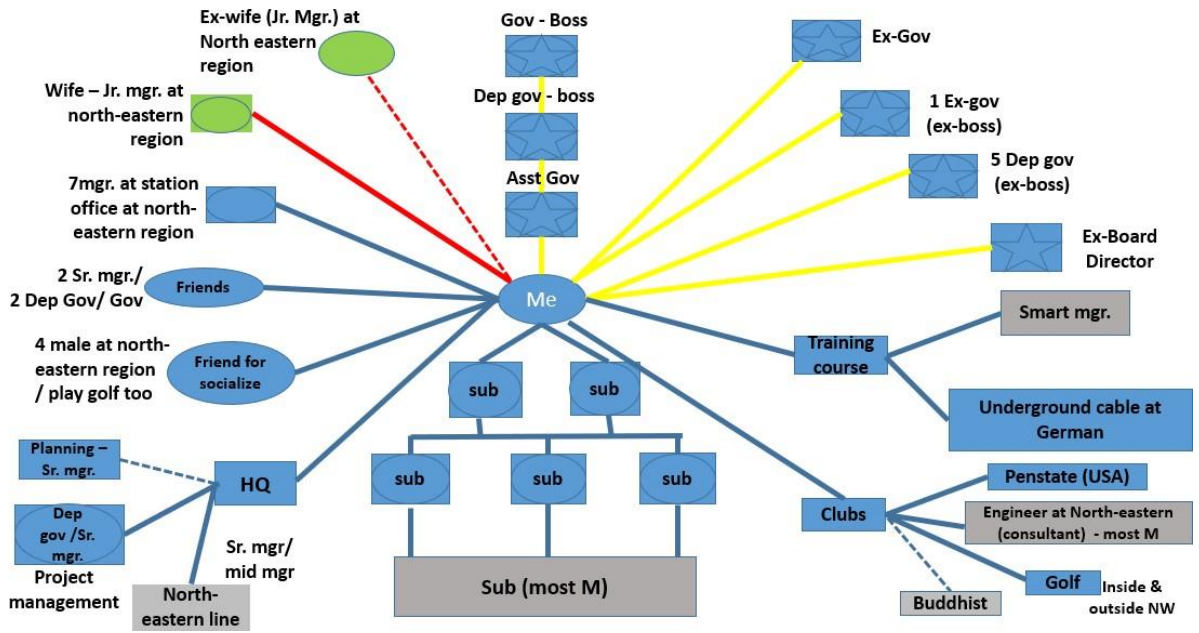


Figure 6. 9 Network interaction map: Wudy-male engineer

This person is male senior manager who is an Engineer in the Department of Customer Service. Wudy (male engineer)’s interaction map is among the most gender-segregated. The only direct connections to individual females he has are his wife and ex-wife, both of whom are also employees. In contrast, he reports 21 male connections and a downward reporting line with whom he does not have direct contact, but who is mostly male (blue boxes). His management line, as well as most of his subordinates and most of their subordinates, are all male. His powerful connections to governors and ex-governors are also male, as are most of his social connections. Thus, both formally and informally, Wudy engages in networking as a gender-segregated activity. Furthermore, he considers female relationships only in the context of heteronormative familial and sexualized ones – his only female connections are his wife and ex-wife. Women have very little place in Wudy’s professional world.

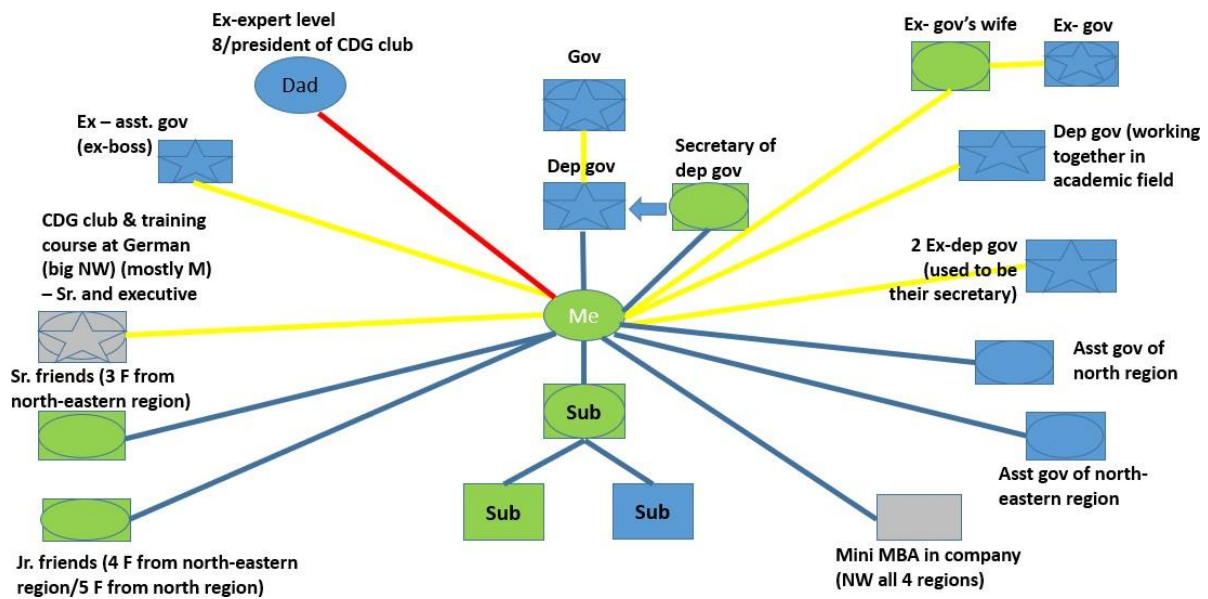


Figure 6. 10 Network interaction map: Pass-female administrative

This person is female senior manager who works as senior administrative in the Department of Business Planning. Pass (female administrative)’s formal network is mixed-gender, although female formal connections are primarily subordinates. She reports six female connections (green), compared to ten male connections (blue). Her direct managers (the deputy governor and governor) are male. She has a variety of informal connections with family members (including her father, as indicated by the red line), ex-governors, and ex-bosses, all of whom are male. Compared to more junior managers, Pass’s network is comprised more of ‘organizational family’ than ‘family of origin’, though this is still present. Both her family of origin and organizational family are predominantly male. Pass does have female friends within the organization from different regions, but her most powerful connections are male. When she does report female connections, they are actual family or ‘organizational family’ members of powerful men (e.g. the wife of an ex-governor, the secretary of the deputy governor). Thus, Pass’s network’s expressive ties (friends) are female, but her instrumental ties are male. Her female connections which she could use as instrumental ties would only offer her indirect access to power.

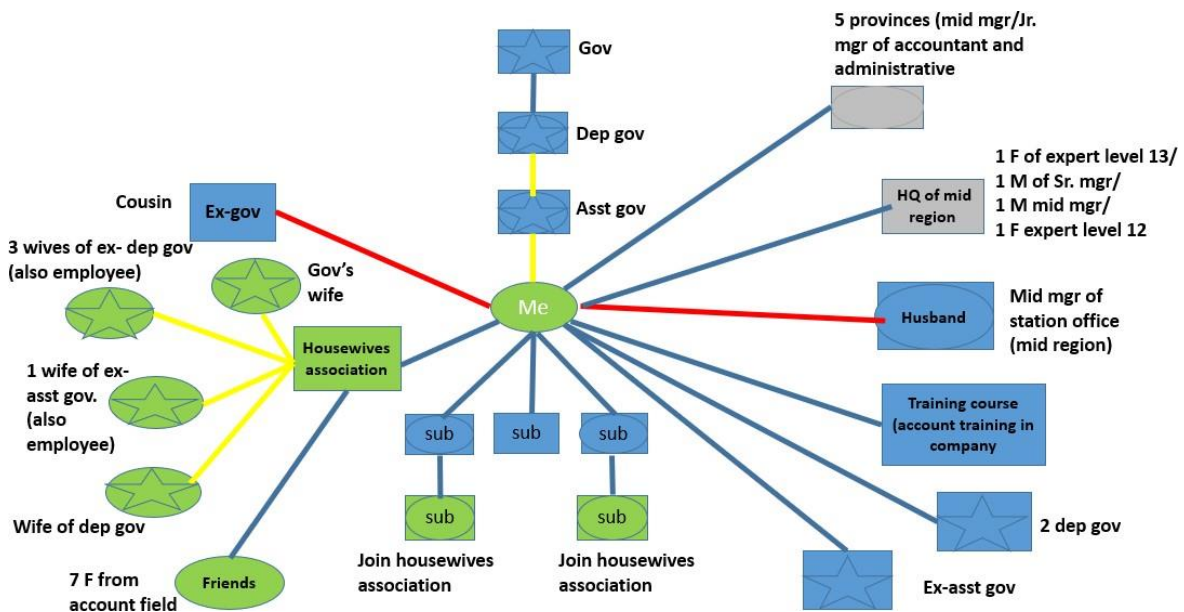


Figure 6. 11 Network Interaction Map: Aum – female Accountant

This person is a female senior manager who is an accountant and works in the male-dominated, but mixed-gender, at Accounts and Energy department. Like other managers, she has a family network in the company, including a cousin (former governor) and her husband (middle manager in another department). While she shares job information with both (indicated by red lines), her husband is the more important work connection. As far as professional network, Aum has three senior bosses in her chain of command, all male. Her boss and boss's boss both have power over her career (star) and an interest in helping her succeed (yellow lines), meaning these are powerful connections for Aum's advancement. Her subordinates are mixed-gender, including three male and two female workers. She has close relationships with all but one of the male workers. Aum also has professional contact and works with people in many other departments, including junior and middle managers in accounting and administration and experts and managers at HQ (mixed gender). While she has close personal relationships with accounting and administration contacts, she only has a professional connection to HQ. She has outside connections from training courses and other departments in the company, but these are not close relationships. Aum's most important informal networking is through the Housewives' Association. Through this venue she has connections with four wives of powerful men (current and former governors and deputy governors). These women, though they do not work at Thai Utility, have shown an interest in her career (yellow lines) and

could influence it indirectly through their husbands (stars). Aum also *has formed connections with* her two female subordinates by encouraging them to join the Housewives' Association. Thus, Aum is benefiting from this informal networking opportunity, but she is also beginning to pass it on to her female subordinates. This is a powerful source of indirect influence.

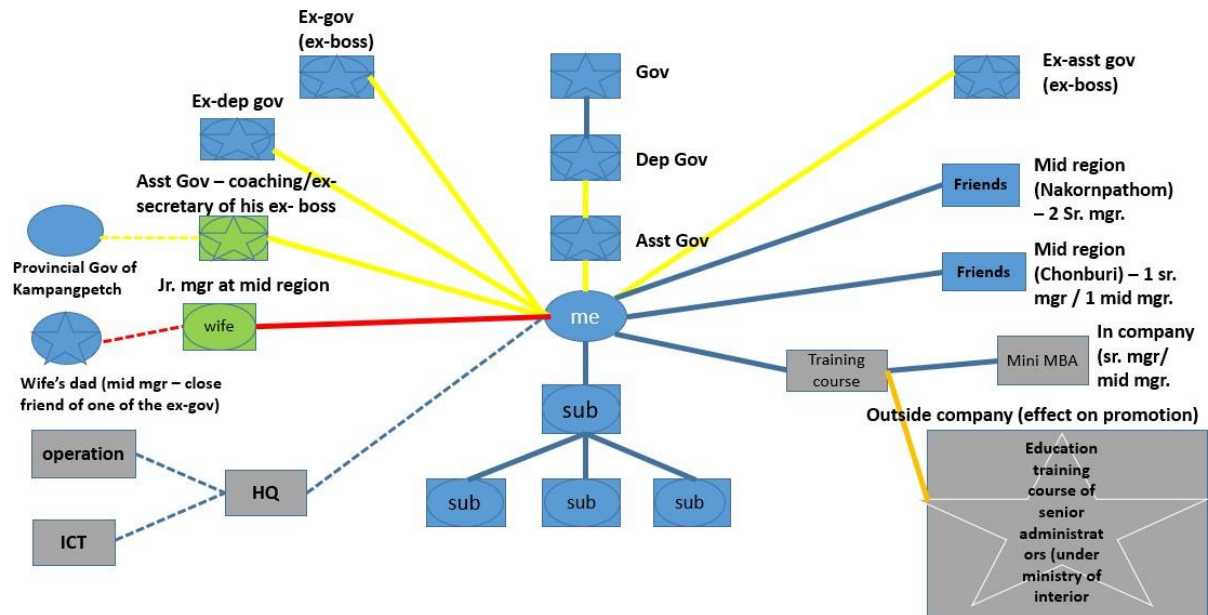


Figure 6. 12 Network interaction map: June - Male engineer

This person is a male senior manager who works as engineer in the Department of Operations and Management. Like many of the interviewees, June has family connections in the company. His wife is a regional junior manager, while his wife's father is a middle manager and also a friend of a former governor. While his wife does not have potential career influence, her father does (indicated by the star). As expected given that the Engineering department is known to be male-dominated, June's professional network is mostly male, including his three levels of management and his three subordinates. The yellow lines, including high-ranking former bosses and his current bosses, show that June has a powerful organisational family, with a high level of both power over and interest in his career. The only powerful female connection identified, a former coach and secretary of a former boss, is also connected to a powerful male. Thus, as far as June's working environment and his career-oriented networking go, almost all of those with power are male. Though he does have some mixed-gender connections at HQ, these are professional connections only and he is not close to these people. June's informal networking and social connections are also predominantly male, including friends in various

middle and senior regional management positions. He does have some mixed-gender external connections from training courses and education, but he says that these connections are neither close personal relationships nor have much influence on promotion. June is typical of male management in the engineering department, with gender-divided informal and formal interactions and his most powerful connections being the males at or above this level. His networking also shows how senior managers maintain power structures, as he does not network with women below his level, thus maintaining the supposedly gender-neutral, but actually hierarchically gendered, structure of department and relationships.

6.1.3.2 Informal interactions

Informal interactions for example, Pass- female administrative and Wudy (male engineer) both related their day-to-day informal interactions, like people they had lunch with, as exclusively female and male respectively. Aum –female accountant, who described her social connections, included the Housewives' Association and the Governor's wife (though not the governor) as the key contacts, along with day-to-day interactions with mostly women:

I can work more easily and faster through networking... [with women from the Housewives Association]. I benefit from knowing the Governor's wife and a lot of senior's wife and executive's wife. This is beneficial for my job. (Aum-female accountant)

Aum's experience is a good example of how the organizational logic of family works within Thai Utility. Her experience shows that women are commonly associated through family (whether family of origin or organizational family) rather than through formal network connections. Thus, these informal, single-gender interactions have more value for female senior managers than formal mixed-gender interactions. Once again, however, these connections and interactions are indirect (through the wives of powerful men) rather than direct. This points to the indirect and family-filtered nature of power even for women at higher levels in the organization. Would it not, for example, be more beneficial for Aum-female accountant to be able to claim relationships with the Governor and senior and executive managers? Would a male middle manager be satisfied with network connections to his reporting line's husbands? June-male engineer attributed this to an organization-wide trend, driven by adherence to existing social norms:

In my region, men hang out with men and women hang out with women. Women are uncomfortable hanging out with men. Moreover, there is some Thai traditions that say that women should not be close to men because it is not good, people might gossip about them having an affair. (June-male engineer)

Interestingly, June- male engineer does not state that men are uncomfortable hanging out with women, although other comments throughout the organizational hierarchy have suggested that this is the case.

There are indications that women do tend to self-isolate in interactions, as do men. Of the senior managers, Aum-female accountant identified a male colleague as a frequent contact, while other female senior managers did not identify any male frequent contacts. Male senior managers were also unlikely to identify female friends or informal contacts. Informal interactions as expressed in interaction maps show a degree of gender division as well. Pass-female administrative has expressive ties to mostly female friends in the organization, but also has connections to several male members of the management hierarchy above her, including assistant and deputy governors. She also cites connections to women with relationships to these assistant governors, including secretaries and wives. However, these are not friendships as such. In contrast, Wudy (male engineer)'s informal relationships are almost exclusively male, with the only exceptions being his wife and ex-wife.

This situation does suggest that these women do not deliberately try to distance themselves from other women or take part in 'male' interactions, as has been found by other authors (Parsons *et al.*, 2012). Perhaps at this level such a strategy is unnecessary, since there are so few women at the senior management level, so the formal interactions and informal interactions of women managers at this level are oriented toward male colleagues in any case. However, it also supports a strong division of interactions (Acker, 1990, 1992), with the most important interactions being single-gender. This may be particularly true for men, who begin at this level to report self-isolating from female subordinates, typically because of the heteronormative assumption that informal interactions between powerful men and women other than their wives signals an affair. (This assumption or fear is almost always expressed by men, not women!) Thus, the fact that women may have fewer single-gender interactions does not mean that they are somehow better at interacting with men; rather, women have to

undertake mixed-gender interactions because their same-gender resources are not powerful enough (or just for instrumental reasons, to get the job done), while men isolate themselves from mixed-gender interactions. With powerful networks for same-gender interactions, men can do this, while women cannot.

There were also influences from broader social norms that prevented male-female interaction, especially informal interaction. For example, June-male engineer and Pan-male engineer both noted that men and women interacting informally could lead to suspicion about them having an affair. This constraint on interaction could limit women's access to resources, even at this powerful level (McGuire, 2002; Ibarra, Carter and Silva, 2010; Jonnergård, Stafssudd and Elg, 2010; Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019). This stems from the symbolic position of informal mixed-gender interactions for senior staff members, which was discussed in Chapter 5.

The preference for single-gender interactions on the part of men, especially men at senior levels of the organization, is that it could have a negative effect on the career advancement prospects of female managers. One of the possible implications of this gendered interaction pattern is that engineers, who are viewed as the holders of specialist knowledge, may have access to higher levels of the organization compared to non-engineers (Kankkunen, 2014). Thus, the male engineering managers may have more frequent interaction, both formally and informally, with the upper management. Furthermore, male managers may have a stronger positive effect on their career process even if there are the same formal processes of interaction, as men routinely have stronger returns to their networking activities compared to women (Woehler *et al.*, 2020). Thus, the increasingly strict gendering of interactions at the upper levels of the organization both restricts the career prospects of female senior managers (who have limited access to levels above them) and female subordinates (who may not have access to male senior managers).

6.1.3.3 Network Comparison among Senior Managers

At the senior level, there are increasing differences between male and female managers. Family networks still exist, but are not very relevant, as they are either lower level or retired and have lower power. Thus, most family influence was in the past, rather than now. However, managers of both genders tend to have increasingly strong formal and informal networks, including ex-bosses and their support staff and social acquaintances and friends from their time at the company. Thus, senior managers become more dependent on their own connections,

rather than family connections. The formation of these connections, or organizational family, is a noticeable difference between men and women at this level. While junior managers begin with similar networks – high family of origin connections and low organizational family connections – by the senior level this has changed. While the family of origin connections disappear for managers of both genders, male managers tend to develop broader and deeper organizational family networks, which women do not seem to have access to. Instead, women are ‘pulled back’ to family of origin networking indirectly, with their most powerful connections being to the wives of powerful men through the Housewives’ Association or similar interaction fields. This is a substantive difference between men and women, as men now have direct connections to power, while women remain dependent on indirect family connections.

There is a difference in the networks built by men and women at this point. For example, Wudy (male engineering manager) has high-level networking connections in the company and outside, which support his career directly. In contrast, many of Aum’s (female accounting) high-level network connections are indirect, being wives of high-level managers which she connected to through the Housewives’ Association. Pass (female administrator) also has several indirect powerful connections, such as wives and secretaries of deputy governors and former governors. Thus, once again there is a difference in access to power, which mimics the flow of power through the family (Kranichfeld, 1987) and reinforces the dichotomy of male/direct power-female/indirect power.

Another major difference is segregation of gender interactions. Both Wudy and June, male engineering managers, exist almost entirely in a single-gender world, both formally and informally. However, Aum and Pass do not have the luxury of single-gender interactions; working with increasingly male upper hierarchical levels of management, their formal interactions with lateral co-workers and managers are mainly male. Like some female managers at lower levels, Aum and Pass also have to circumvent structural barriers to networking (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019), for example by having closer relationships with others and by having a wider set of network connections than men.

In summary, at the senior manager level, gendered interaction patterns become much more entrenched, especially for men. At this level, male managers may be surrounded by only male subordinates and supervisors, leading to a default of single-gender interactions, while female managers, who are also often surrounded by male subordinates and supervisors and have few female peers, cannot isolate themselves in this way. Furthermore, male senior managers may actively avoid developing close or informal interactions with female employees,

based on the symbolic interactionism discussed in Chapter 5. Informal interactions appear to follow the same pattern, with male senior managers engaging in mostly male interaction while female senior managers engage in mixed-gender interaction. This has negative effects for the advancement potential of both female senior managers and female subordinates due to lack of access to upper management.

6.1.4 Comparison between regional managers at different levels

A comparison between the junior, middle and upper management shows that there are some significant differences in social networks between the levels. However, there are also some similarities that can be seen, especially gender differences.

The relationships represented among managers changes a lot over the levels, including both the types of relationships and their importance. Managers at all levels typically had familial connections within the firm, including parents and uncles, friends of parents and spouses. It was typical (though not universal) that these connections helped the managers get their job initially. However, by the senior management level, these relationships faded in importance, as older relatives and friends retired and lost influence in the organisation. Thus, while there was still a possible effect of family relationships on the careers of junior managers, this was no longer true for senior managers. At the same time, the composition of formal and social networks also changed. At the junior level, there were few formal and no informal connections with senior managers, or people outside the chain of command generally. Most informal connections are external or lower-level. At the middle management level, formal and informal connections began to widen, including upper managers and managers and employees in other departments. By the upper management level, formal and informal connections are much wider, including for example present and former governors and deputy governors (often old bosses). At the same time, there is some narrowing of formal and informal connections, particularly for male managers, whose social networks begin to exclude women.

There are some gender differences in networking and interactions that persist throughout the management levels, and furthermore intensify as the individual climbs the organisational hierarchy. Even at the junior management level, male managers tend to have more single-gender formal and informal interactions than female managers. In part, this is because male managers tend to work in engineering, law and other male-dominated departments, while female managers work in mixed-gender departments. Female managers, who often have male bosses and reports, therefore cannot isolate themselves from interaction

with males. By the upper management level, women have predominantly male or mixed-gender networks. Furthermore, these female networks are broader than male networks, which may be a response to constraints on networking with men at upper levels.

At all levels, social interactions are predominantly single-gender. This extends to club-based social interactions, which tend to be either formally or de facto single gender. The Housewives' Association, which has female participants at all levels, is particularly interesting because of its forms of female networking power. For junior and middle managers, the Housewives' Association led to social relationships with their own managers. For upper managers, the most powerful connections through the Housewives' Association were with the wives of upper managers, governors and deputy governors, and secretaries of these men. Therefore, the Housewives' Association serves as a gendered form of networking that offers access to power in an indirect, rather than direct, way. This is consistent with the logic of power within the family (Kranichfeld, 1987). Children may have a direct relationship of emotion and power with their mother, which can be considered as the manager and her female boss. However, they may only have a direct relationship of emotion and power with their father, through their mother. This can be considered as the relationship of women to men in higher positions through their wives or secretaries. Men are unhampered by this limitation, and form formal and informal relationships with these powerful managers directly.

In summary, there are some significant changes in networking activities and social networks between levels. However, some differences between genders appear to persist at all levels, including women having broader and less gender-divided networks, having fewer powerful instrumental connections, and relying instead on indirectly powerful connections such as the wives of powerful men (rather than the powerful men themselves). This puts women at all levels at a disadvantage in a male-dominated hierarchy, which persists even in departments which are nominally gender-neutral. Furthermore, male upper managers, by isolating themselves from female subordinates, begin to disadvantage female managers seeking advancement. Thus, even though there are no formal barriers to interaction and networking, in fact male networking creates more powerful relationships between men, while excluding women. This serves to emphasize the organizational logic of family, as men have direct 'organizational family' connections to powerful men, which women cannot form. Instead, women are dependent on indirect relationships with powerful men through their wives, typically via contact in the Housewives' Association. Through this process, women's access to power remains indirect, relatively weak, and dependent on the family of origin and marital

(made) family that powers the networks of younger managers. This forces women into a traditional family role, rather than allowing them to separate from the family connection that characterizes less powerful managers.

6.2 Headquarters and Executive Staff

6.2.1 Junior Headquarters Staff

6.2.1.1 Formal interaction

The formal interactions of junior headquarters staff, with limited networks and mostly formal relationships, is among the most constrained of the management group. Here, the formal and informal relationships of junior managers are examined.

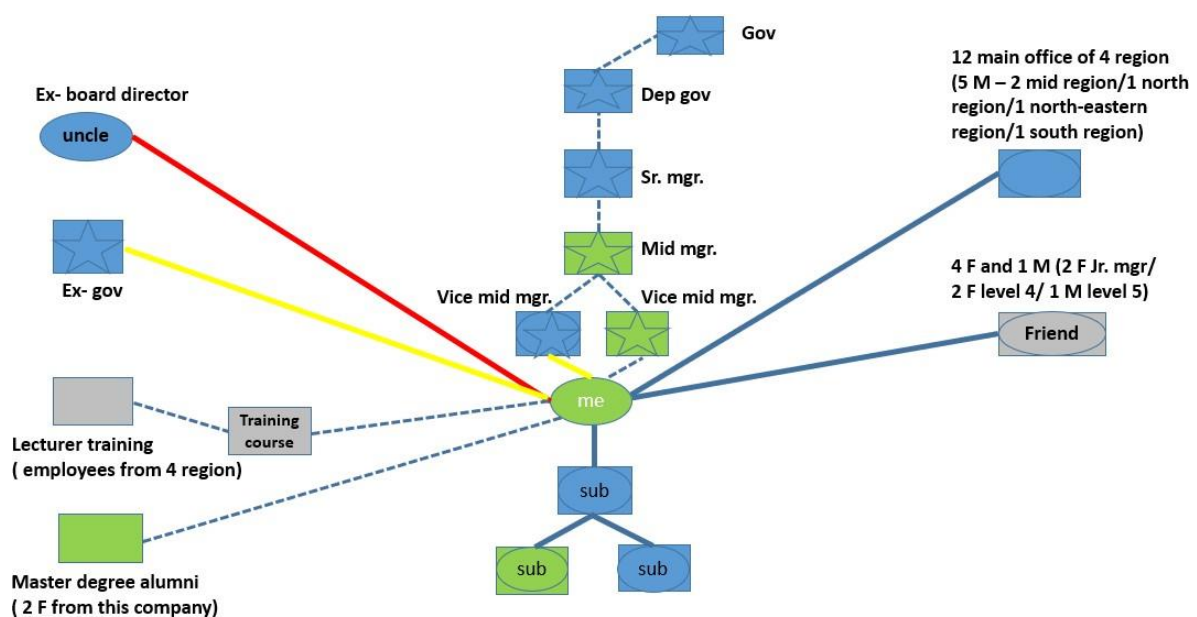


Figure 6. 13 Network interaction map: Cherry – female HR

This person is female junior manager who works as HR in Department of Standard Operation Development. Like other managers, Cherry has powerful family members, including an uncle who was a former board director at Thai Utility (red line) and an uncle’s friend who is a former governor (yellow line). While both have a close personal relationship with her and

interest in her career, only the former governor has direct influence on her career. As far as her formal professional network, it is mixed-gender-though male-dominated; she has two male subordinates and one female subordinate, and reports to one male and one female direct managers. Her upper management chain is all male. While this entire chain of command has possible influence over her career (as indicated by the stars), only her female reporting manager (a vice middle manager in the department) has taken an active interest. Thus, Cherry has few formal connections with individuals that have both power and interest in her career – while most of the power is concentrated in male managers, her only female manager has the most interest. Cherry has many informal connections based on friendship and shared interests, both inside and outside the organisation. She has a mixed group of friends from training courses, as well as a few close female friends in the company from her Master's program. She also has a mixed (though mostly female) group of friends, and some male connections in other departments. Overall, Cherry's network has few connections to powerful people. She has a mixed-gender interaction network, but her most powerful formal connections are to male managers, with whom she is not close

Formal interaction was viewed by the headquartered staff as mixed-gender, with most having little difficulty interacting formally with their superiors or subordinates. For example, Cherry-female HR felt that in her department, men and women interacted easily and male employees could hang out with female employees. (However, Cherry's own stated relationships are mainly with younger female employees, with whom she has a personal relationship she describes as "like mom-daughter"). This is not universal, though. Rani (female HR) identifies both female and male employees in her personal relationships among her co-workers, as well as people at slightly different levels. Thus, at the personal level, it is difficult to make generalizations about relationships between direct co-workers.

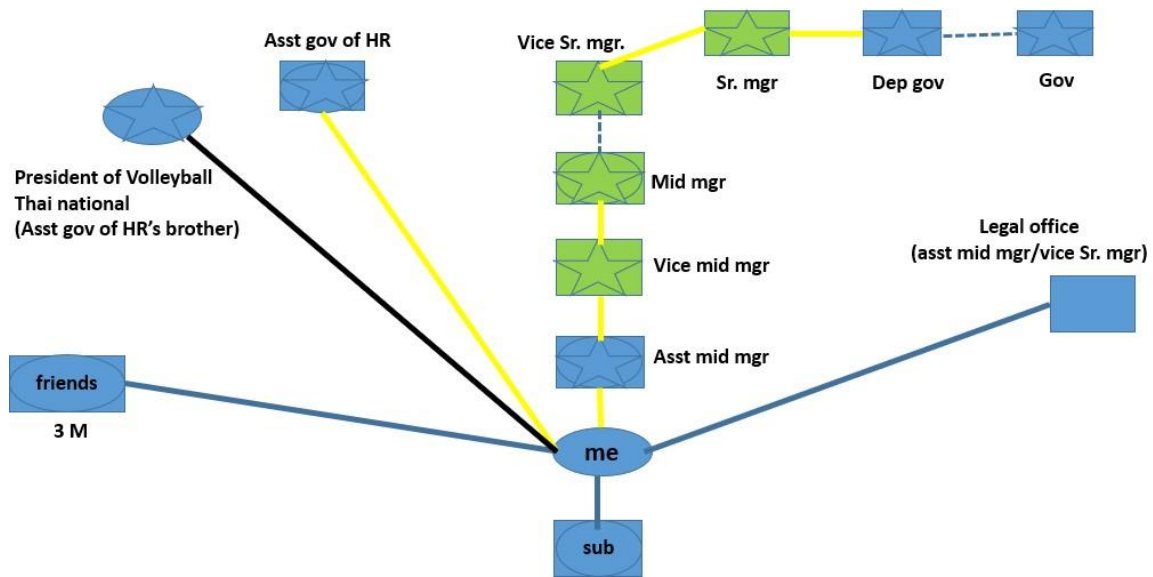


Figure 6. 14 Network interaction map: Sup – male lawyer

This person is male junior manager who works as a lawyer in Department of Coordinator and Follow up the signal. In many ways, Sup’s network and interactions is atypical of other managers, but his informal interactions and friendships are mainly male, as is common for male managers. Unlike most of the managers at all levels, Sup does not have family network connections in the company (absence of red lines). However, Sup is a former national-level volleyball player who represented Thailand in international competition. Therefore, Sup brings more powerful connections from his previous experience. This includes the President of the Thai National Volleyball Association, who is the brother of the deputy governor of the HR department. (black line) Thus, unlike most junior managers, Sup has powerful external connections (all male) outside his own family. Sup works in a mixed-gender department, and unlike many of the regional departments, the upper levels of the department are also mixed-gender. His subordinate and supervisor are male, as are his lateral co-workers in other departments, but the level of his boss’s boss and above in the department are mostly female. These individuals all have both power to affect his career progression and interest in his career advancement. Thus, Sup has a mixed-gender network of formal interaction, and furthermore this network is both powerful in terms of influence on his career progression and interested in it. Sup’s informal interactions are predominantly male. He has three close friends, who are all male. He also has personal relationships with some people in his management chain, including his immediate boss (male), middle manager (female) and subordinate (male). Thus, Sup’s

informal and personal relationships within the company are mostly with other males. However, these relationships are also limited in scope, which may be because Sup is relatively new to the company.

Sometimes interactions between men and women in different departments can be uncomfortable because the participants break the unspoken rules about gender division and identity:

The female engineers... hardly listen to [me]. They are self-confident and self-centred in their own logic. So it is so hard for me. I am very uncomfortable talking to them but I don't know how to solve this problem. (Sup- male lawyer)

Thus, even if interaction is not constrained by gender, it is still influenced by it. Especially, it is clear that men expect to control or dominate the conversation, and they also expect that women will play a subordinate role in the interaction (Kantola, 2008). This appears to apply across boundaries of knowledge and expertise, as in the case of Sup expecting female engineers to listen to him on different matters. It also suggests that men become uncomfortable when women do not practice gender in a way they are expecting (for example deferring to their opinion) (Berger, Benschop and van den Brink, 2015).

6.2.1.2 Informal interaction

One of the interesting aspects of informal interaction is that even if the interaction itself is the same, it may be viewed differently depending on the gender of the individual reporting. One clear example of this conflict comes from Sup (male lawyer, working in the legal department).

Women are very fussy and bossy, and they always gossip constantly. This is their nature! They have different groups who don't like each other. I am really boring and I don't know what this is! (Sup-male lawyer)

At the same time, Sup reported having a set group (or “gang”) with whom he hung out, had dinner and drinks, and went on trips and who could be described as having a friendly relationship with generally. Despite the fact that this relationship is very similar to the relationship he perceived between women (group formation, sharing of information and shared

activities), and the activities he reported women doing (movies, having lunch or dinner, and so on), Sup viewed the relationships between women in his department (or workplace generally) as different from the relationships he had with men.

Both men and women among the junior managers reported having close and informal relationships with their co-workers, whether junior or lateral co-workers. These relationships appear to be very similar from the outside, including many of the same types of activities and types of interactions. However, male managers were more likely to describe their relationships in terms of the activities undertaken, while female managers were more likely to describe their relationships as emotional and relational. There are also differences in the expressive content of interaction. For example,

We are close to each other and talk about everything... We love each other and we all have personal relationship. We trust each other. or we can say We are like family.
(Raneee-female HR)

This type of emotional connection was not expressed in the relationships described by male managers. Instead, the connection of male managers seems to be based on cooperative participation in activities, like Sup (male, law department) who explains that he hangs out with his male colleagues. It would be superficial to conclude that male employees do not have the same emotional connections to their co-workers; rather, it is likely that the symbolic image of males as rational and unemotional (Acker, 1990) makes male employees less likely to express such emotional and expressive views of interaction, even if they feel that way. Once again, as well, Ranee's comment points to the organizational logic of family, but this time framing 'family' as an emotive link, more like that of family of origin, than the instrumental ties of organizational 'family' expressed by men. This points out that 'family' logic means different things for men and women within the organization.

Overall, within the junior engineers, informal interaction is shaped by assumptions about male and female emotion and response, which are symbolic in nature (Acker, 1990, 1992). Male employees, viewing themselves and other men as rational and unemotional, described their male-male interactions as rational and based in shared activities. Viewing their female colleagues as irrational and emotional, they described female-female relationships, unflatteringly, in those emotional terms. Female managers were also likely to describe their informal interactions as emotional, but as positive and supportive relationships. (Additionally,

familial language was used by female employees. This is part of the underlying organizational logic of the family (Michael-Tsabari and Tan, 2013), which is discussed later.)

Another notable aspect of the junior manager interactions that can be called out is that even at this level, informal interaction that involves travel or trips away from home are part of men's social interactions, but not women's. (For example, Sup – male lawyer) mentions that his department plans trips but women do not take part because of traditional restrictions against room sharing and so on. This is part of the gender division between men and women, which does not allow men and women to share space, especially private space, and assigns women responsibility for home and family.

6.2.1.3 Network Comparison among Junior Managers at HQ

Comparison between the interaction maps of Cherry and Sup shows that there is a lot of variation in network type, connections and organisation. Both junior HQ managers had mixed-gender formal networks, which was because the departments themselves were relatively mixed-gender. However, Cherry's interactions were much more mixed-gender. Sup's closest working relationships and informal relationships were predominantly male, while Cherry had both male and female managers, reports and lateral co-workers. Furthermore, while Cherry's friends were mixed-gender (though mainly female), Sup reported only one female informal interaction (one of his managers). This indicates that Cherry is already showing that she has a broader and more gender-diverse network compared to Sup. A second difference was in their familial connections. While Cherry had fairly typical family connections (a powerful uncle), Sup's powerful external connections were mainly from his previous athletic and management career. Another major difference is that Sup perceived that most of his upper management chain both could affect his promotion and was interested in his career advancement. In comparison, only one of Cherry's direct managers (female) was interested in her career advancement and willing to help. Thus, overall Sup had a less diverse network, but also more support from upper management levels.

6.2.2 Middle Headquarters Staff

6.2.2.1 Formal interaction

The formal interaction of middle headquarters staff is, at a superficial level, mixed-gender in nature. Middle-level headquarters staff, like middle managers in the regions, have

daily interactions with men and women in most cases. However, male-female interactions are not necessarily the same as either male-male or female-female interactions. For example:

When men talk to women [in my department] they use their soft skills to filter their words first because they know they talk too much directly and sometime they using rude word. So they have to think first before talking to female. [Dr. Maa-male HR]

Both managers had mixed-gender formal relationships with both subordinates and superiors. For both managers, their direct manager was the same gender, but for Dr. Maa-male HR, the majority of his direct reports were female. However, Dr. Maa-male HR had working relationships with more organization members, both male and female, than Sor-female HR. This may be because of differences in networking activity or more specifically access to networks of power. Typically, it is common for men within organizations to have a denser network of instrumental network ties (e.g. working relationships) compared to their female colleagues (Benschop, 2009). Men may also have more inclusion in both formal and informal homosocial affinity groups, which increases their power relative to female co-workers even when they have the same nominal roles (Elliott and Smith, 2004). Thus, even managers working in the same department and at the same level may have differences in network access and thus working relationships.

6.2.2.2 Informal interaction

Comparison of informal relationships through interaction maps also shows that the informal relationships of headquarters staff are predominantly divided by gender. Most of the informal non-family connections identified by Dr. Maa-male HR are male, with the only exceptions being some academic friends and training co-participants who were not identified as close relationships. Sor-female HR had relatively few informal non-family relationships, but they included both female and male friends. This suggests that, like the senior managers, informal interactions are increasingly gender-constrained, but women retain more mixed-gender relationships than men do. The informal relationships shown in other network maps also had limited mixed-gender interactions, with the only mixed-gender non-family relationships reflected tending to be school friends or the wives/husbands of other acquaintances. Thus, overall, informal relationships at this level were not mixed-gender.

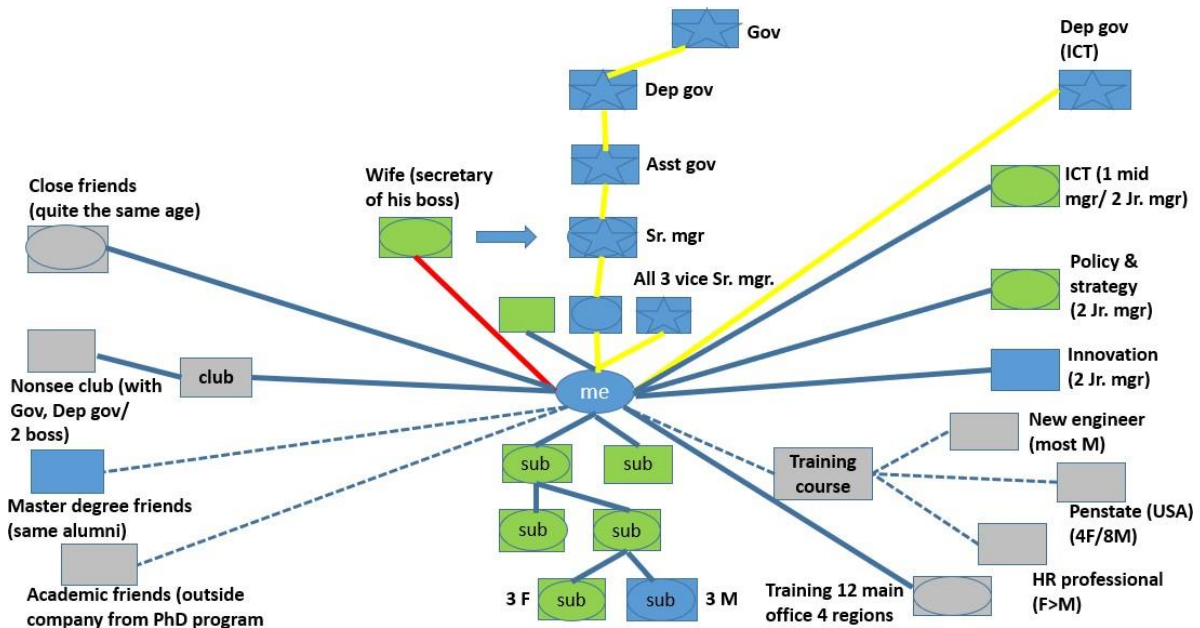


Figure 6. 15 Network interaction map: Dr. Maa-male HR

This person is male middle manager who work as HR in the Department of Personal Development. Dr. Maa (male HR)’s interaction map is interesting because it shows that the middle management level is where the gender division of the organization lies in terms of power. He reports nine female connections and 11 male connections, seemingly relatively gender-balanced. However, looking at the structure of the interaction map is revealing. He works in one of the administrative departments of the organization. Within this map, Dr. Maa’s direct report are almost all female. However, his direct reporting line is almost entirely male, with the exception of one senior manager. His most powerful connections are all male, although he does also have one female family connection (his wife). He has some connections to managers in other departments as well, which include a mixture of male and female connections. This interaction map illustrates two factors in the power structure of the organization. First, the top of the hierarchy in the organization is male, even in the nominally female-dominated HR department. Thus, power is being retained by male employees even in departments where, as discussed in the sections on previous dimensions, women are perceived as being better suited to the work. Thus, the perception of males as leaders overrides the perception of women as carers (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a; Kankkunen, 2014). Dr. Maa’s interaction map also illustrates how men may have denser networks of instrumental social connections than women, which may be viewed as being of higher value in the workplace

(Fang et al., 2015; Landis, 2016). Ultimately, this positions Maa as in a higher position of organizational power than his colleague Sor, despite their nominally identical job roles.

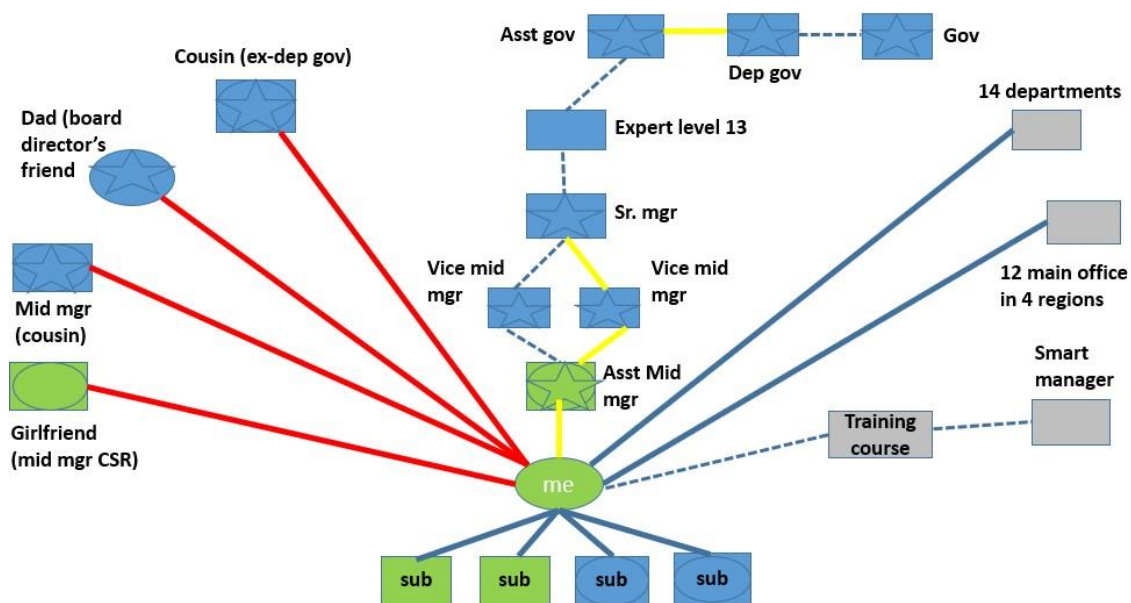


Figure 6. 16 Network interaction map: Sor-female HR

This person is female middle manager who works as HR in the department of business development. Sor-female HR, like Maa-male HR, shows in her interaction map that the middle management level is where the organizational gender division becomes clear. Sor reports only four female connections (green), compared to 12 male connections (blue). Furthermore, the female connections she does report are of limited instrumental effectiveness as far as organizational resources or power. Her direct reports are a mixture of male and female, and her direct manager is female, but the rest of her reporting chain is male. Furthermore, she has dense family connections in the organization, most of which are male (except for her girlfriend, a CSR middle manager). She does have a limited variety of connections in other departments, both male and female, which is more characteristic of female managers than male managers. In comparison to Maa, her male co-worker, Sor has fewer close relationships than Maa in other departments and roles, which places her at a disadvantage in terms of organizational social networks of power (Fang et al., 2015; Landis, 2016). Furthermore, her close connections are primarily family, and she has fewer connections in departments that hold organizational power, for example the engineering departments, which are viewed as the central repository of power within the organization (as is typical within organization (Kankkunen, 2014; Ozkazanc-Pan

and Clark Muntean, 2018).) Thus, this illustrates that while Sor is subject to the same male-oriented upper hierarchical levels as Maa, she has less access to lateral connections to power.

6.2.2.3 Network Comparison among Middle HQ Staff

Middle managers at HQ, including Dr. Maa (male) and Sor (female), showed some shared characteristics in their interaction maps. Both had relatively wide networks, with both internal and external connections. Furthermore, the hierarchies of their departments were similar: while nominally mixed-gender, higher level managers were mainly male, while lower-level employees were either mixed or mainly female. Thus, the most powerful connections for both Dr. Maa and Sor were male, although they did not have equal levels of interaction with those managers. In particular, while Dr. Maa interacted with his entire chain of command and felt that they were interested in his career advancement, Sor had interactions only with the two levels of management above her. Both of these managers had powerful relationships with upper-level males, though Sor's relationships were familial and Maa's were based on informal connections such as former bosses. This once again points to the difference in 'family' logics – while Sor remains dependent on her family of origin, Dr. Maa has begun to form an organizational family that provides powerful, direct connections. Both their informal interactions from organizational clubs, education and training tended to be mixed-gender, but close friends were typically the same gender. Overall, Sor and Dr. Maa both had mixed-gender interactions, but in both cases, the main influence on their careers came from powerful men further up the reporting chain. Since Dr. Maa had more interest than Sor, he would probably have more advancement possibility.

6.2.3 Senior Headquarters Staff

6.2.3.1 Formal interaction

Social norms, particularly the assumption that a male and female in close contact may be having an affair, also do constrain interactions between genders (Tiya-female HR). This social norm has already been discussed in Chapter 5, where it was revealed as a significant symbolic limitation on interaction especially for senior management. However, this does not seem to be as much of a problem for the headquarters staff as for senior and executive managers, perhaps because of lower personal risk of such a perception or because of less importance.

At the same time, Vadee-female HR identified a changing social norm, which is that younger subordinates are more likely to engage in mixed-gender interactions.

There is still networking here, but the pattern of relationships might change. Today we face an age gap more often. (Vadee – Female HR)

This is consistent with observations that mixed-gender interactions appear to be more common for junior management. It is also consistent with the evidence that organizational networks and norms change dynamically over time (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001). Thus, it is possible that the dynamics of formal interaction may change within the company in the longer term. However, since there is still a lot of evidence from junior levels that mixed-gender formal interactions remain difficult, this should not be taken to definitely indicate that such a change is taking place.

6.2.3.2 Informal interaction

It was typical that upper levels of management were all male, with perhaps a single female senior manager in the case of middle managers. HQ managers also typically had mixed gender subordinates, although in the case of Vadee-female HR there was only a male subordinate (the middle manager of HR). Thus, the formal interactions were mixed-gender, but as the individual moved up the organizational hierarchy they were increasingly only with males, even for female managers.

In comparison, informal and personal relationships are usually (though not always) divided along gender norms. Tiya (female HR)'s close friends at work are all female, while male participants typically had all-male informal social interactions. This is consistent with the strict gendering of interactions, as well as the division of departments by gender (Acker, 1990, 1992). It is also consistent with the strong tendency toward homophily in social networks and interactions (Mcpherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook, 2001). It also appears to relate to the gendered symbols of male and female emotion and expression that were discussed in Chapter 5. For example, Chart-male accountant, a senior manager in the Accounting and Finance Department, viewed women's openness to expressive emotion as a benefit when working with men, who were more able to move past their own emotional response. He argued that,

Women can get along with men better than men get along with men. Men decrease their ego when talking to women... women are quite soft with men. This means they can support each other. (Chart-male accountant)

This is a relatively rare recognition that men, as well as women, are engaged emotionally with workplace relationships and have emotional needs that can be met, as well as a recognition that the understanding of male emotional needs is poor among men themselves in the organization.

However, informal interaction is also shaped by existing relationships and networks. For example, Tiya-female HR notes that all her close friends are female, while Pasu-male engineer and Pan-male engineer are all close to friends from university and school who are predominantly male. Thus, it is not only the organization’s gender divisions and gendered symbols which are shaping informal interaction; instead, gendered informal interaction emerges from previously existing networks and practices.

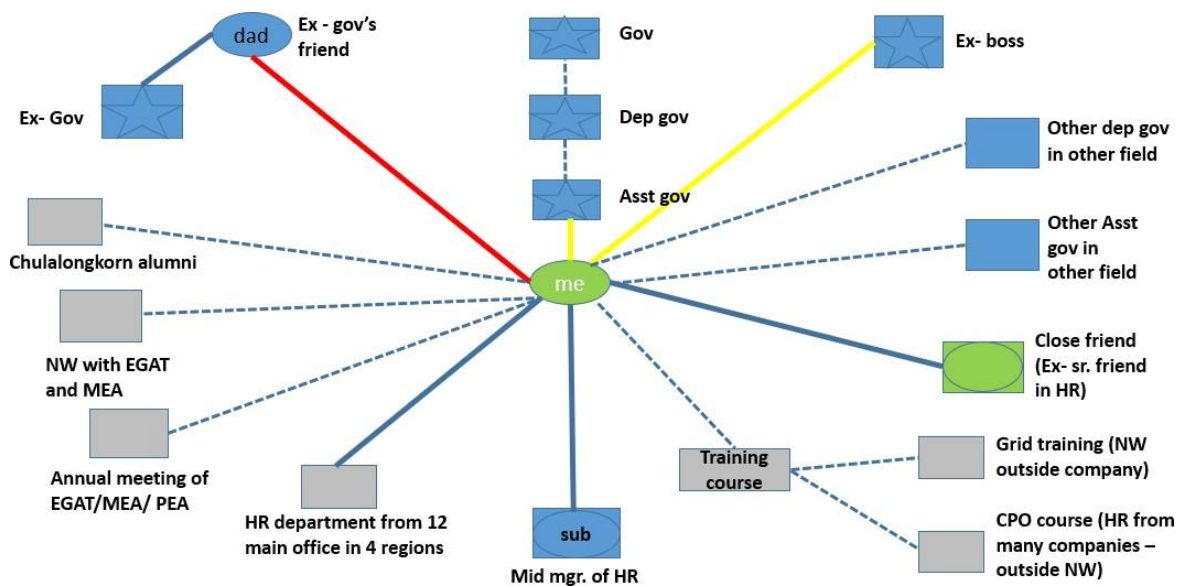


Figure 6. 17 Network interaction map: Vadee-female HR

This person is female senior manager who is HR and works in Department of planning strategy. Vadee (female HR)’s interaction map shows that her formal and informal networks, including family connections, are predominantly male. This includes both upward reporting line and direct reports, as well as colleagues in other fields. This raises the question of whether

success in the organization depends on direct connections to men, or alternatively if women at high levels in the organization are isolated from other women at their level (who are sparse), resulting in few same-gender connections at their own level. Only one female friend is noted in the organization. Thus, Vadee is relatively isolated in comparison to other female managers at lower levels, for example Cherry-female HR, a junior manager who described herself as having several close personal relationships with junior employees. The isolation of Vadee's network is also similar to that of other high-level managers, particularly male executive managers (discussed below) who deliberately isolate themselves from female subordinates. Through this issue was not specifically researched in this study, it is notable that for the women who are in senior positions, they did engage in these distancing tactics. This may be because of the isolating effect that high positions can have on women, as they must separate or distinguish themselves from other women in order to succeed (Rhoton, 2011; Parsons et al., 2012; Byrne, Fattoum and Diaz Garcia, 2019). It is mostly outside the organization, for example her university and professional organizations, where there are a lot of mixed-gender interactions. This suggests that the company may have a more constrained gender structure than others.

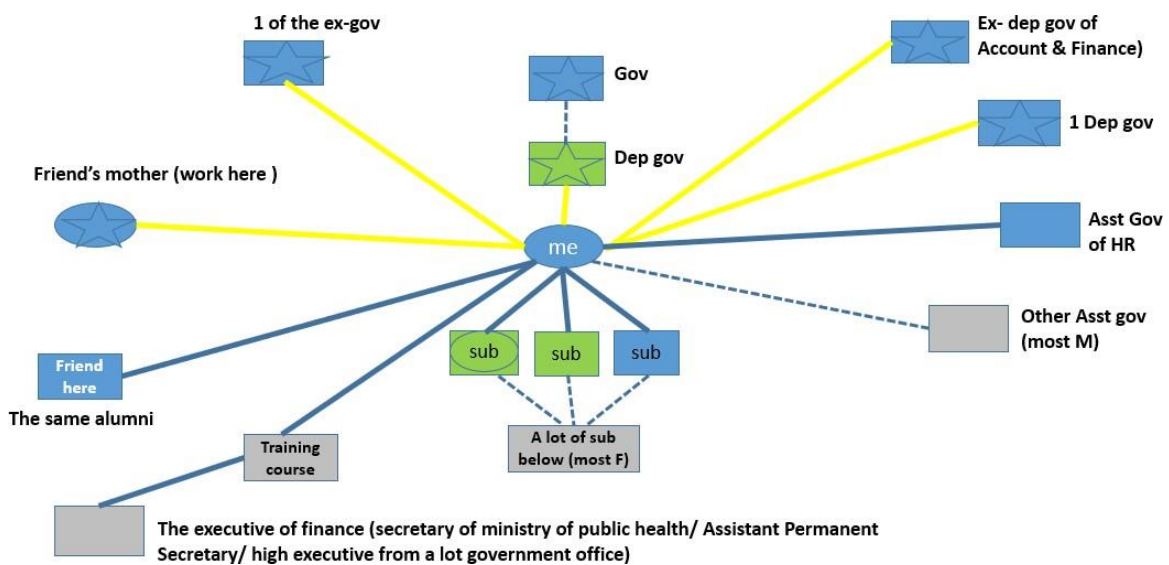


Figure 6. 18 Network interaction map: Chart – male Accountant

This person is male senior manager and work as accountant in Department of Account & Finance. He does not have family connections in the firm, but one of his friend's mothers works at Thai Utility and initially helped him to get his job (yellow line and star). He also has a number of other connections to what he considers organisational family, including a former

governor and former deputy governor and current deputy governor and assistant governor. These people have both interest in and some influence on his career advancement, but none are directly positioned to help him. As for relationships within his chain of command, Chart works in a mixed-gender department. His direct manager (the current deputy governor) is female, as are two of his direct reports, along with one direct report. His manager is included in those with interest in and influence on his career advancement, and he has a personal relationship with her as well as the formal interactions of the workplace. However, he does not have personal relationships with most of his subordinates, except for his one female subordinate, with whom he is close. Chart also has informal relationships, including friends (all male) and other assistant governors he has come into contact with during his career (also mostly male). He has distant relationships with fellow attendees from training courses and with his subordinates, but these are not close relationships and has little influence on his career. Chart's interaction network is unusual in that it is still mixed-gender in terms of formal interactions at a high level, which is atypical of male senior managers. However, his informal interactions, including friendships and close personal relationships with senior members, are single-gender. Furthermore, of those who he thinks have an influence on his career and can support him, only his direct manager is female, and the rest are male.

In summary, the headquarters management staff show many of the same trends in gendered interaction as the senior managers. This includes mixed-gender formal interaction (though tending to single-gender, particularly in the male-dominated engineering domain) and single-gender informal interactions. Overall, the mixed-gender interactions were limited to the working environment, and often included interactions with subordinates but not superiors for male managers. This pattern is less strict for female headquarters staff than it is for male headquarters staff for informal relationships, but not much so. This has the potential effect of limiting advancement possibilities for female managers, who may not be able to form informal relationships with higher-ups in the organizational hierarchy. Thus, even if these gendered interactions are not viewed as harmful or are naturalized, they do impose limitations, especially on female managers.

6.2.3.3 Network Comparison among Senior Managers

One of the characteristics of Vadee and Chart's networks is that they are increasingly broad, and less reliant on family members. Chart had no direct family influence, and while Vadee's father's connections to a former governor may have helped her get her job initially, both are retired and have limited influence. Instead, she relies heavily on her own connections

with powerful individuals inside and outside her chain of command, as does Chart. Instead, both rely on their organizational family of powerful connections. A surprising difference between them is that the gender divisions of interactions are somewhat changed – Vadee’s formal interactions are mostly with men, while Chart’s formal interactions are with both men and women. This is due to the structure of their respective departments, as the HR department is hierarchically controlled by men, while the Accounting and Finance department has at least a few women at upper levels. At the same time, there are consistent gender similarities. In both cases, informal interactions are gender-divided, and most only have friends of a single gender. These managers’ powerful connections are also consistently male. Thus, there is a clear gender divide: formal interactions are based on the department structure and hierarchy, powerful connections are male, and friends are the same gender as the individual. Vadee’s formal networking activities can also be compared to other female managers, as unlike them she does not report affective relationships with female subordinates or indirect connections to wives of powerful men. Instead, she relies on her own connections with powerful men, suggesting that Vadee has adopted a male style of networking which has contributed to her unusual success.

6.2.4 Comparison between HQ managers at different levels

Comparing the interaction maps and patterns of HQ managers at different levels shows that there are some significant changes as individuals move up the chain of command. At the same time, some things remain consistent.

One of the changes that occurs is in the importance of family connections. For Vadee (female senior manager) and Maa (middle manager), family members still have some influence over their careers, though this is beginning to fade as their initial contacts begin to retire. For Pan (middle manager) and Sor (middle manager), their family connections helped them get a job, but they no longer have power over career advancement. As explained above, at junior level family networks are important – for example Cherry’s uncle was instrumental in her getting a job. Interestingly, Sup is an example of an individual at junior level who had no family connections in the company though he did have powerful external connections. This may be indicative of his organizational family developing before he started in Thai Utility. He is unusual in this regard as most individuals, as demonstrated above, start with and benefit from family connections. It remains to be seen if more individuals like Sup gain entrance into Thai Utility. What is clear is that as individuals move up through the organization family networks become less important and organizational family networks become more significant.

At the junior level, the difference of family of origin (female) and organizational family (male) may be even more visible. Cherry relied on her uncle for her initial job contact. Sup has no family of origin connections in the organization, but instead relied heavily on his nascent organizational family of external connections. While this is unusual, as most junior managers rely initially on family of origin connections, it points to the most extreme difference in power between organizational family and family of origin.

One of the biggest consistencies throughout the levels of HQ management is the difference between formal and informal interaction practices. Formal interaction is governed predominantly by the gender structure of the department (and other departments, for managers with connections to them). Thus, at least consciously, the HQ managers communicate with men or women as required, either within their chain of command or to access those with power (who are routinely men). In comparison, informal interaction (friends and acquaintances) is almost always single-gender. Though some managers like Chart do have one or two people of the other gender they count as friends, this is uncommon. Instead, whether the informal interaction is one of personal friendship or clubs, it is predominantly gender-divided. This could be described as an interactional norm (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a), in which individuals do not consciously avoid mixed-gender interactions when required for formal purposes, but when left to their own devices, tend to choose single-gender interactions.

Of course, this is too simple, since the gendered hierarchy of the departments is not in itself neutral. Instead, this is an example of how the seemingly gender-neutral structure of the organisation lends itself to gender hierarchy (Acker, 1990). Since HQ managers have a role in hiring and selection, the limited presence of women is due to silent self-segregation of powerful men, rather than existing neutrally. Furthermore, individuals are pressured to do so by a form of hegemonic power, which serves to “(re)produce c) consent or compliance with the dominant organizational discourse and the acceptance of day-to-day practices (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a, p. 790).” Thus, even though no one actively avoids mixed-gender interaction in the moment, they are allowed or even encouraged to do so through entrenched hiring practices and hegemonic power structures that limit the acceptable domains of mixed-gender interaction.

6.2.5 Executives at HQ

6.2.5.1 Formal interaction

There is some mixed-gender formal interaction at the executive level, but it is not consistent. Eakky (male deputy governor) never interacts with his sole female subordinate, and Serm- male executive also does not interact much with women, while Sura – male deputy governor does interact but not closely. In contrast, female executives do interact with male subordinates formally (though not necessarily informally). This has been explained by many of the participants as a function of the organizational structure:

My network is all male. I'm in the engineering field and most of my subordinates, governors, managers are male. I just don't deal with the senior manager in my region, but ask the assistant governor to do so. (Eakky- male deputy governor)

Given the problem of access to networks as a factor in organizational inequality (Kankkunen, 2014), this strong preference for single-gender interactions on the part of executive's management is a significant problem for those lower in the organization. With access to executives limited by both organizational structures and gendered hierarchies and avoidance of mixed-gender informal networking and relationships, this means that female middle managers may not have equal access to higher levels. This could be especially exacerbated by the fact that most middle managers are not in engineering, which is viewed as the specialist or technical department at Thai Utility and therefore would have desirable knowledge for higher managers (Kankkunen, 2014). Thus, the gender divide in interactions at the executive level has implications for managers at all levels below them. However, executives do not necessarily see this – for example, Chu – female director argues that:

If women can build their network with senior or important people at the company they can be promoted, the same as men. I know it is so hard but this way can help us to get promoted like male. (Chu-female director)

When applying a critical lens, it is clear this is not true, since not only do women not have the same level of access in the first place (Kankkunen, 2014), but because women's networking activities do not have the same outcomes, as men's networking (Woehler *et al.*,

2020). Thus, this is a very problematic statement which probably does not reflect the actual experience of female managers at the lower levels of the organization.

6.2.5.2 *Informal interaction*

The executive perspective is that informal interaction is heavily gendered and bound by constraints including family obligations and social norms. Simply, male executives socialize with other males, in activities which women are excluded from in practice (even if there is no formal rule). For example, one of the male executives says:

Men can hang out and drink together, [creating] strong bonds in their own group. Sometimes women join but they have to go home first to take care of their children... because they have to take a responsibility of their children and their husband and household thing. (Poon-male deputy governor)

This type of work-family conflict has been noted previously as something that excludes women from the social environment (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019). It also relates to the symbolic association of women and family (Chapter 5, which is used as a reason to exclude women from interactions.

Male executives are adamant that women are not forbidden from participating, but at the same time make it clear they are uncomfortable with it:

Actually women can [play golf] but they will not come because they are afraid of sunburn. Men always hang out and drink together. They can talk about what they want, which is why they are close to each other. (Poon-male deputy governor)

Once again, there is the allusion to sunburn, which makes avoidance of informal interactions a choice of women, rather than a responsibility of men. In other words, women are not excluded (except by their own preference), but at the same time this informal interaction is key to the social bonding between men. In practice, women do not choose to engage in these informal interactions. For example, Chu-female director never engages in this informal social interaction, saying that she does not want to “hang out with men after work”, though she does not explain further. At the same time, she thinks that:

If women can build up their network with senior or important people in the company, they can get promoted too, no different from men! (Chu-female director)

Thus, even in situations where women have avoided social interactions with men, they may feel that these opportunities are open to women who want to take advantage of them. However, given the experience of other women and widespread reports that women do not take part in such activities, or only do so superficially (e.g. leaving after a short time, only drinking water), it is not clear that this is actually true. Instead, this may be one of the expressions of the ‘ideal’ worker, in which a seemingly gender-neutral opportunity for promotion is in fact heavily gendered (Acker, 1990).

The setting of interaction is also gendered. For example, Buss-female director interacts with women through the organization’s housewife association, while Chin (female deputy governor)’s male network connections exclude women by visiting places like lounges or massage parlours. These are heavily gendered settings, which go back to the association of women with the home and men with the public sphere discussed in Chapter 5. Furthermore, these settings serve to exclude the participation of the other gender in practice, even if they are not formally forbidden from participating. The Housewives’ Association, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter, is only open to women (including female workers and the wives of male workers). Lounges and massage parlours, in contrast, are male spaces in which women are likely to feel very uncomfortable (and may in practice be barred from). Thus, at the executive level, informal interaction becomes increasingly gender-segregated by gendered structures and symbols, even if there is no formal rule against mixed-gender interaction.

These informal interactions show the imbalance of power within informal networks by gender (McGuire, 2002), as the housewife’s association is based on familial rather than organizational roles. In essence, women – including female employees and even executives – are classified within the organization based on their home roles, which serve as the main point of shared experience. This serves to reinforce the symbolic assignment of ‘female’ the domain of home and family, even when in practice the women participating are high up in the organization.

Interaction activities may also be coded as male or female because of physical activities. Serm-male executive runs and rides bicycles, which is an activity more commonly joined by men than by women. Thus, informal interactions are heavily gendered by space, place and

activities involved (Acker, 1998). This encoding of informal interactions has some significant effects on the access of women to the higher levels of the organization, which has been discussed above as part of the evaluation of formal networks. In particular, it may limit the access of women to the more powerful networks within the organization, which in turn limits their advancement potential.

Interaction maps of Chin-female deputy governor and Som-male deputy governor also show considerable differences. Chin-female deputy governor has primarily female subordinates, but her direct senior (the governor) is male. Her informal relationships include a mixture of male and female interactions, but these include family members and friends. Otherwise, her interaction network is very thin. Som (male deputy governor)'s interaction map, on the other hand, is both dense and predominantly male for both formal and informal interactions. While his direct report (the Director of the legal office) is female, all other workplace interactions of note are male. His only female informal interactions are with his wife and the ex-governor's wife. This shows the extremely gendered nature of interaction at the upper levels of the organization, with the male executive essentially isolated from interaction with women while the female executive has mixed interactions.

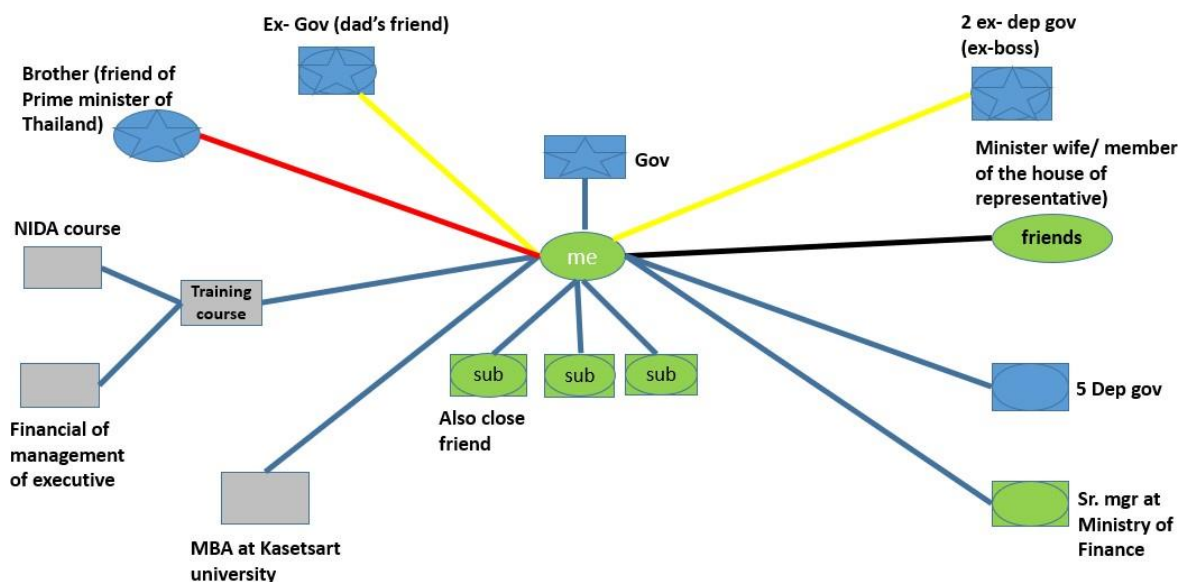


Figure 6. 19 Network interaction map: Chin-female executive

This person is a female deputy governor who controls all departments of account & finance. Chin (female deputy governor)'s interaction map appears formally to resemble the

maps of middle managers. She reports five female connections (green) and five male connections (blue), seemingly for a balanced network. Her direct reports are female (consistent with her role in an administrative position). However, her direct manager is male. This is consistent with most other reports from the organization, which have indicated that the governor level of the organization is entirely male. Chin, like other managers, has a variety of mixed-gender group connections outside the organization, for example from her educational experience. However, all her powerful connections and familial connections in the organization are male, except for one. This connection is to the wife of a member of the House of Representatives. This type of indirect relationship through the wife of a powerful person is emblematic of one of the ways in which organization members engage in networking as a gendered practice, while such a relationship is common for women, it is not used by men. This is one of the ways in which female networking within the organization tends to be less powerful (because it is less direct) than that of men (McGuire, 2002).

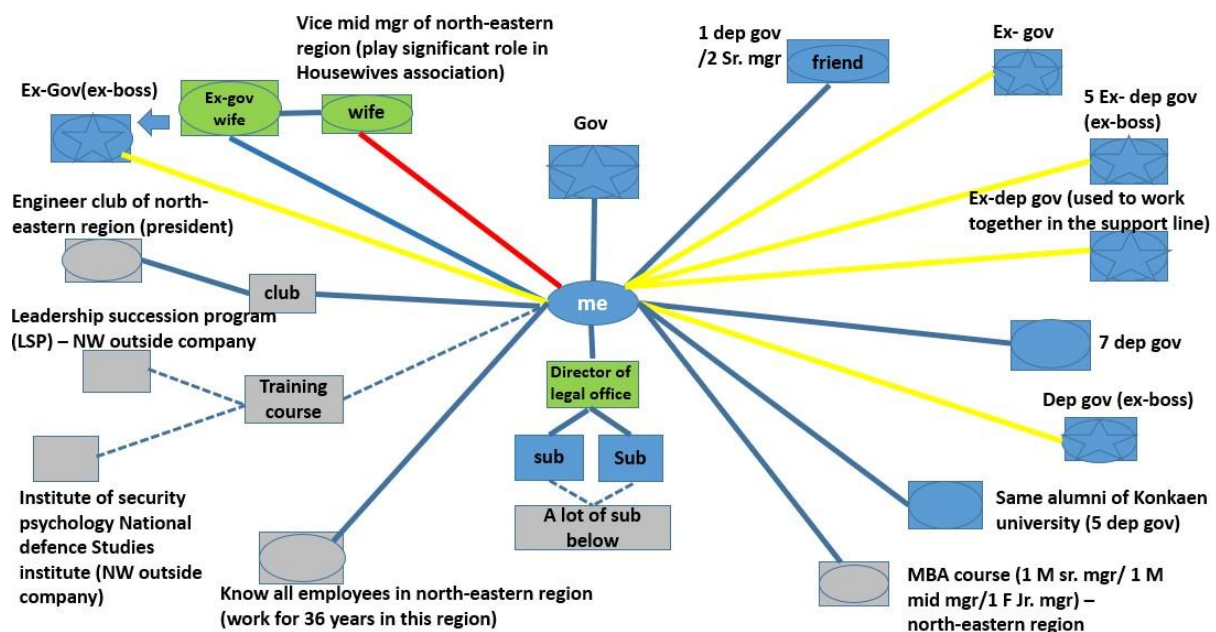


Figure 6. 20 Network interaction map: Som-male executive

This person is male deputy governor who control the legal office. In contrast to Chin-female deputy governor, Som’s interactions, both formal and informal, are predominantly male. The only formal interaction with a female colleague specifically is that of his direct report, the Director of the Legal Office. His family network is his wife and she also works as vicemiddle manager at north-eastern region. She has a personal relationship with the ex-governor’s wife

because of participating Housewives' Association for many years. Like others, he has connections to mixed groups outside the organization as professional networks; in educational (MBA course), training courses (Leadership Succession Program and Institute of Security Psychology National Defences Studies Institute). However, he did not mention these connections outside company influence on his career advancement because he hardly contacts with these people, and we could see the lack of star symbol. His organizational family (yellow line) are mostly powerful and direct connections (all are men), mainly from ex-governors, ex-deputy governors and current deputy governor. All are his former bosses who has power and interest on his promotion. He also has a strong network in north-eastern region because of his 36 year working experiences in this region before.

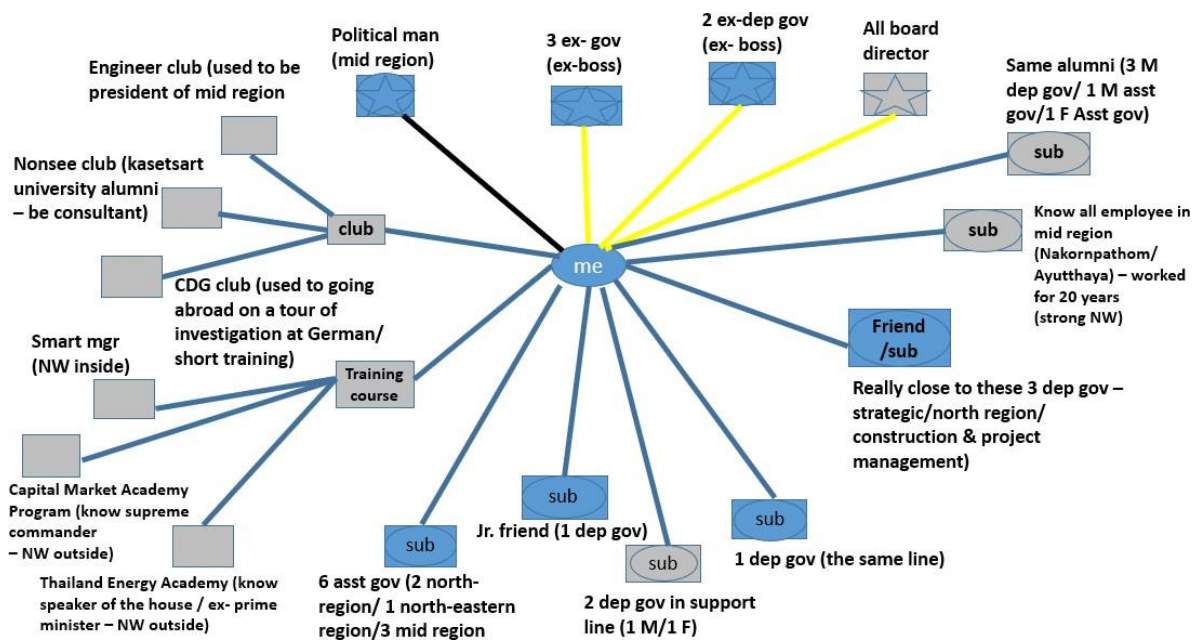


Figure 6. 21 Network Interaction Map; Serm- male executive

Serm is a male executive, holding a Governor role in the company. This is the most powerful roles in the company. Unlike managers at lower levels, Serm has no family connections within his interaction map. Instead, all connections are formal or informal interactions in his own network. What could be called his ‘organisational family’ (yellow lines), include former governors and deputy governors (all male) and current board directors (mixed gender). He has worked with these individuals before, and they have both power and

interest in his career. Serm's formal interaction map is predominantly male. His subordinates in four of his reporting departments are male, with one department having a single female deputy governor. He has both personal and work relationships with all of these subordinates, and he states that he is close to these reports. Serm also has widespread informal interactions inside and outside the organisation, including multiple training courses, organisational clubs including the Nonsee club and the engineering club, and alumni groups. He also knows all the employees in the Mid Region, where he has worked for 20 years. These interactions are mixed gender for the most part, though some are primarily male. Thus, at least superficially, Serm's informal interactions are mixed gender. However, he has only three close friends (other deputy governors), who are all male. Ultimately, Serm's primarily male formal interactions reflect his position in the organisational hierarchy, which is predominantly male at the top. At the same time, Serm as a governor has responsibility for the gender composition of lower levels of the hierarchy because he plays a role in hiring. This illustrates how powerful men can insulate themselves at the top of a seemingly gender-neutral hierarchy while being absolved of personal responsibility for that hierarchy (Acker, 1990; Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a).

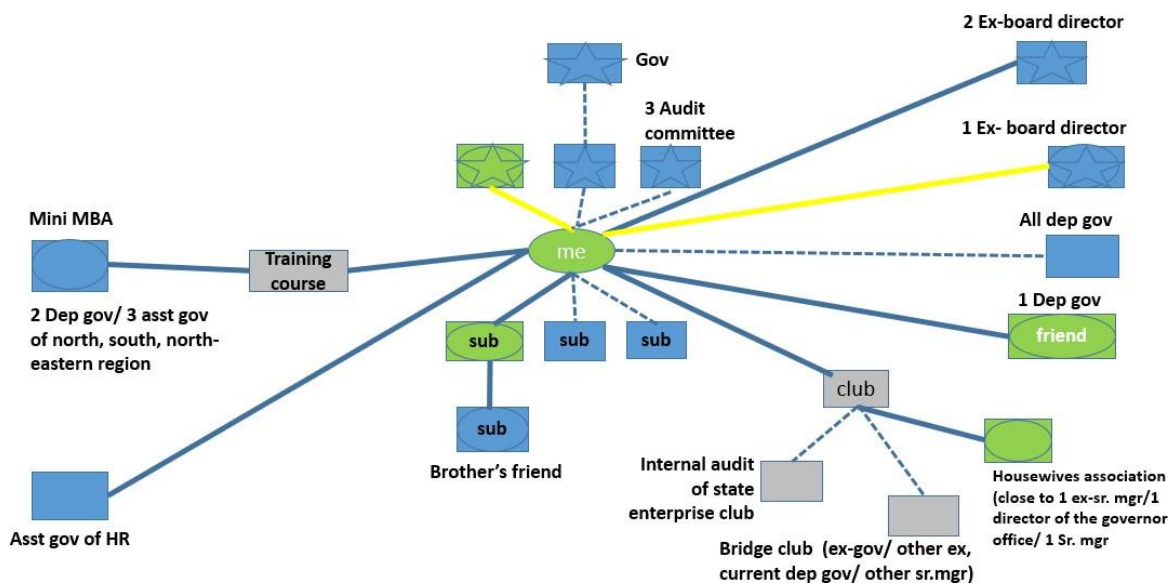


Figure 6. 22 Network Interaction Map; Chu – female executive

This person is female executive (Director) and works in Internal Audit office. Chu, one of the few female executives in the company, is the Director of the Internal Audit department. Although she does not have a boss to whom she directly reports, Chu's department is ultimately controlled by the Governor and three audit committees. Chu has no family network within the organisation, but she does have an 'organisational family' network (yellow lines). These connections include a female board member of one of the audit committees, as well as one of the former board directors (male). However, Chu is not close to the male leads of the other two audit committees. Chu has three direct subordinates, one female and two male subordinates. She works most closely with her female subordinate, along with a male subordinate at the next level. She identifies these as personal friends, and the male subordinate is one of her brother's friends. Thus, Chu's formal interaction network is mixed-gender. However, the closest relationships she has formed with this interaction network are with her female colleagues. As expected given the existing gender-divided norm, Chu's only noted friend (a deputy governor) is female. Also like others, Chu has connections to powerful males, including former board directors and deputy governors, but she does not view them as having a significant influence on her career. While they do have some instrumental use, most are retired and did not help when she was progressing through the company. She also has several informal interactions, including through training courses and clubs. She is a member of three clubs, two of which are mixed-gender and one (the Housewives' Association) is single-gender. However, Chu is ambivalent about the Housewives' Association, viewing it as more of an opportunity for friendship than for instrumental networking. Thus, Chu is on the other side of this indirect form of networking compared to most managers.

6.2.6 Comparison of networks among executives

At the executive level, network family connections have nearly disappeared. Serm and Chu have no family network, while Chin and Som have a limited family network. Unusually, Som's family network comes through his wife, who is an active member of the Housewives' Association and offers powerful, though indirect, connections to her husband. Thus, this is the 'other side' of the situation in lower management, where the Housewives' Association offers contact with wives of powerful men. In contrast, the 'organisational family' has both higher importance and higher relevance within networks. Sometimes these connections have had significant influence on careers, such as Serm's connections to the Thai Utility board of directors and Chu's connections to former board directors.

Executive networks are also marked by more external connection, though this is not universal. Chin has weak external connections, with indirect relationships through the wives of powerful men. Som and Chu, whose external networks are also limited, have extensive internal relationships to make up for this.

Another similarity is that at this level, informal interactions are limited and for the benefit of subordinates. Thus, there is not as much participation in clubs or social groups. Chin did not see a point in the Housewives' Association, while Chu only joined because of the social opportunities. At the same time, there are some consistencies in gender interactions. Most informal interactions and friendships are single-gender, and men at this level may actively avoid interacting with female subordinates because of the sexualized norm that mixed-gender relationships are construed as affairs. Since managers at this level set the organisation's policy and tone for gender divisions and hierarchy (Acker, 1990), this is a damaging norm, since it leads to insulation of men and lack of access for women (Kankkunen, 2014; Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018). Thus, this isolating norm is not harmless.

6.3 Comparison Between Regional, HQ and Executive Staff

One of the similarities between the three groups of management is that as seniority increases, birth family influence in the network is replaced with organisational family influence. For many managers, family members like fathers, uncles and family friends were their initial entry to the company, and for some at the junior and middle management level these connections remain important. However, from the senior management level and beyond, organisational family – current and former bosses and informal connections to powerful men further up the hierarchy – become more important for the career and more present in the network. Thus, for both male and female managers, the organisation to some extent becomes the family, with an increasing connection to important but unrelated people.

Another noticeable similarity is the gender differences in formal interactions. For almost all participants, formal interactions are dictated by who holds positions above, below, and beside them in their departmental hierarchies. Thus, for female managers in engineering, formal interaction is almost all mixed-gender, while for male managers it is single-gender; the opposite is true in HR, at least at lower levels. However, there is an exception to this. Male senior regional and HQ managers and executives have the ability to isolate themselves from formal mixed-gender interaction if desired, which many managers have chosen to do to avoid

the sexualised interaction norm that could suggest they are having an affair. This could in itself be viewed as a sort of family norm, in which ‘fathers’ want to avoid the appearance of sexual contact with ‘daughters’, even at the expense of withholding resources and power. Thus, there is a hegemonic barrier for women to gain access to and engage in relationship formation with these powerful males (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a; Kankkunen, 2014). Since male senior executives are responsible for staffing their departments, they even create their own gendered hierarchy through imposition of gender divisions and gendered structures (Kankkunen, 2014). Informal interactions at all levels and areas are similar, with the closest informal relationships being single-gender almost without exception. While this could be due to simple preference, there is also the use of hegemonic power to ensure that individuals go along with the norm of single-gender relationships. (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998a; Kankkunen, 2014).

Formation of networks is also consistent across levels, though it changes as individuals rise in superiority. The breadth of formal networks of junior and middle managers in regional and HQ areas is limited to family connections, direct chain of command (boss and subordinates, if any), and sometimes lateral co-workers in other departments. Informal networks are also limited, although it is at this level that the Housewives’ Association becomes important for access to power. At the senior management level and above, individuals show extensive, developed internal and external networks, including current and former governors, board members and others, but much less reliance on bosses and family members. Thus, at the upper management level, it is likely that individuals have made the transition to a broader, deeper power base and have established powerful connections. However, what kind of powerful connections have been established? For female managers below the executive level, whether in regional or HQ departments, the Housewives’ Association plays a central role in their networking efforts, offering access to both powerful women and even more so to the wives of powerful men. Thus, for many female managers, access to power through networking is indirect, through wives (who could be considered the ‘mother’ to whom the ‘father’ listens.) This mimics the power structure of the family, where female power is indirect and controlled by men (Kranichfeld, 1987). Taken together with the above points, there is an emerging organisational logic in which the company becomes a family, not just in terms of affective relationships, but also in terms of hegemonic norms, power flows and functional relationships.

In summary, at the executive level the extent of mixed-gender interaction is very limited. For some executives there is some mixed-gender formal interaction, typically only with direct reports. However, informal interaction is heavily gender-divided. Male and female

executives not only mostly avoid mixed-gender informal interaction, they engage in very different types of informal activities for socializing. It is very common for men, particularly, to cite gendered reasons for this gender-based sorting of social interaction, including ‘choice’ (e.g. choosing to avoid sunburn rather than play golf) or heteronormative familial assumptions (e.g. women cannot go on trips because they must care for family, women cannot socialise with men because they will be assumed to be having an affair). These reasons do not demand any change from men, since they ascribe responsibility for gender-based exclusion of women from informal social interactions to women themselves or to a broader social norm that men cannot change. Furthermore, these are not the same reasons cited by women – instead, women may refrain from interaction with men because they are unwelcome or because they perceive that their co-workers hold these norms. Thus, these gender-based constraints on interaction are imposed by men but felt by women. The effect of this is that while female executives have some amount of mixed-gender interaction, male non-family interaction is almost exclusively with other men. The effect of this can be seen in access to informal networks of power at lower levels in the organization, from which women are largely excluded or only hold weak ties based on family relationships, such as their own family members or access to wives of powerful men. The choice of powerful men in the organization to exclude women from their networks is especially important at the executive level, since it creates lines of power throughout from which women are excluded.

Chapter 7 Discussion: The Organizational Logic of the Family

The previous two chapters have investigated the gendered nature of Thai Utility, exploring aspects of gendered divisions (structure), symbols and images (culture) and identities in chapter 5. The focus of Chapter 6 was on gendered interactions, with attention directed to networking as a gendered practice.

Throughout this work, the thesis has made three key contributions to the theory of the gendered organization. First, the thesis applied Acker's (1990) gendered organization model in its entirety. This contrasts to many uses of the theory of gendered organizations, which as discussed in Chapter 2 and 3 often either only refer to the theory or only apply selected dimensions to the organization in question. Making use of the entire framework was useful because it allowed for systematic investigation of gender inequality, rather than only considering individuals in isolation. In applying the entire gendered organization framework, the thesis also develops a new way of working with Acker's theory. While the entire framework was applied to the Thai Utility organization, one of these dimensions – gendered interactions – was developed more strongly, by focusing on networking and use of network maps as a visual and spatial representation of the gendered relationships and interactions that make up the individuals' experience in the company.

Acker's framework also allowed the study to observe and investigate a tension between family of origin (including birth families and marital relationships) and organizational family. As discussed later in this chapter, organizational family is an established concept in the organizational culture literature. However, what is rarely considered in these studies is how to dominance of 'family' as a key element of organizational culture, in the face of family of origin and marital family responsibilities (both real and perceived), affects women's career development. This study uses the gendered organization framework to understand how these two different ideas of family interact, resulting in a 'sticky' influence of family of origin and marital family for women that does not persist for men. This results in a situation where men have much more freedom to form an organizational family than women do.

Third, the study applies Benschop and Doorewaard's (2012) reframing of the gender subtext to identify and make visible two different subtexts about women within Thai Culture. These two subtexts, including 'women's place in the home' and 'divided loyalties', are about these two different concepts of family within Thai Utility and the ways in which women (are perceived to) differ from men in their responsibilities to family of origin, marital (made) family

and organizational family. This chapter discusses these contributions, further elaborating the gendered context of Thai Utility.

Following the approach of Benschop and Doorewaard (2012), this chapter addresses the question of how these dimensions of organizational norms, practices and beliefs ‘add up’ to a specific organizational logic. This discussion incorporates the primary findings from Thai Utility, along with the theories and empirical research that were the basis of the literature review (Chapter 2) and theoretical framework (Chapter 3). The chapter begins with a review of the form of organizational logic that can be identified in Thai Utility, which is the organizational logic of the family. It then moves to the heart of Thai Utility’s organizational logic, which is the difference between families of origin (a weak resource) and organizational families (a strong resource). Here, issues are discussed such as the continued reliance of women on families of origin and marital family and their struggle to build a direct organizational family, the ‘pushing back’ of women into the family of origin and marital family, and the progressive replacement of family of origin with organizational family as individuals progress. This leads to an assessment of how this organizational logic systematically excludes women from the upper ranks of Thai Utility. Additionally, the impact of marital family and cultural expectations that women should care for children and husband first are considered. There are, of course, some exceptions to this rule that are evident within the management. Thus, the final section concludes with a discussion of these exceptional women, showing that their unusual success through adoption of ‘male’ interaction patterns and construction of organizational families does not mean that other women within Thai Utility are not systematically excluded.

7.1 The Organizational Logic of the Family

To begin, it is important to understand exactly what the organizational logic of the family means in general and how it is expressed at Thai Utility. Other authors have interpreted this organizational logic in different ways, which do have some commonalities with the organizational logics that can be identified at Thai Utility. However, none of the other organizations investigated have quite the same underlying subtext of family relationships as Thai Utility.

The organizational logic of family can be understood as a form of cultural and normative control, in which managers (aim to) control not just the worker’s behaviour, but also their thoughts and social norms (Grugulis, Dundon and Wilkinson, 2000). As these authors

explain, this type of control can happen as a seemingly natural process in small organizations, where the owner or manager can form individual relationships with employees. However, as the organization grows and becomes more formalized and institutional, such controls are no longer possible – instead, they must become a part of the organization’s management approach more broadly. The family culture is not the only organizational culture which may use normative control, as it occurs also in ‘friendship’ cultures (Costas, 2012) and in ‘conscience’ cultures (Costas and Kärreman, 2013). As explained by Costas (2012, p. 378), “In the context of organizations, family cultures are characterized by an emphasis on emotional group relations of unit and paternalistic management styles... A family culture involves the promise of security and protection, in light of a caring paternal management, against the backdrop of an uncertain world”. At the same time, family cultures position employees as children, unable to understand moral or social norms and dependent on senior others. Conflict in the ‘family’ organization is also suppressed or avoided, and efforts to avoid participation may be frowned on, as both of these occurrences “contradict the idea of a ‘happy family’ (Costas, 2012, p. 378).” Thus, even without the gendered aspect of organizational culture that is indicated by Acker’s (1990) analysis of gendered organizations, use of the ‘family’ metaphor within an organization serves to impose normative and behavioural control over its employees and imposes penalties for rejecting the notion. As Grugulis, et al. have explained, the organizational metaphor of family can be difficult to maintain, creating instability which is never resolved because of the barriers to conflict. Therefore, it is unsurprising that, as remarked by Costas (2012), the explicit use of the ‘family’ discourse for the organization is becoming less popular.

In Dye and Mills’ (2012) analysis of organizational logics at Pan Am, it was shown that the organization explicitly positioned itself as a “family” in earlier years, but this positioning only related to male familial roles. This positioning included domination of the organization by powerful older men (“fathers”), who took active roles in career advancement for younger men (“sons”) (Dye and Mills, 2012). Young women were commonly treated as sexual objects both directly and indirectly, through tight bodily control of dress and comportment, beauty contests, and even sexual harassment and abuse. Thus, they were hardly accorded a “daughter” role at all, but rather a role external to the family – more as “mistress”. Dye and Mills’ (2012) analysis suggested that older women who might be accorded a “mother” role were almost entirely absent from the organization. Thus, at Pan Am, the discourse of family *only* related to the roles of men within the organization. As will be discussed in the next section, this can be seen to some extent in Thai Utility, particularly the relationship of older powerful men and younger men and the exclusion of younger women. What is missing is the explicit sexualization

of younger women, though echoes of it still persist in the interaction taboo between older men and younger women.

Manville's (1997) analysis of an Anglican parish showed another way in which the logic of the organization can be cast as 'family'. In her analysis, women were assigned caregiving tasks, rather than leadership roles. In fact, the only way for women to advance (to an extent) in parish leadership was to not have caregiving responsibilities at home (Manville, 1997). While women did hold power within the organization, this power was indirect and lower than that of men, mimicking the indirect and lesser power of women within a family (Kranichfeld, 1987). As will be discussed in the next sections, both of these phenomena can be seen at work at Thai Utility, particularly women's reliance on indirect power through familial connections rather than direct power. Although there is some evidence for the 'caregiving' organizational role of women in leadership positions at Thai Utility, this is much less entrenched as an organizational phenomenon. However, just as in Manville's Anglican parish, the presumed caregiving responsibilities in the caregiving organization are used to exclude and limit women's participation.

The second way in which organizational logics of the family can be investigated is through the lens of the organization providing familial care. However, there are two distinct discourses that may fall under this umbrella: the affective notion of family as a set of interpersonal, emotional relationships, and the instrumental notion of family as a support system. These discourses of organizational 'family' are also gendered and tend to occur in different organizational contexts.

The first sense of 'the organization as a family' relies on the creation and maintenance of family-like affective ties. In an early investigation of this concept, the creation of an organizational 'family' was seen as a protective measure against external stressors and the pressure of internal bureaucracy (Baum, 1991). This formation of 'family' structures relied on participation in intimate family-like activities, such as eating together. Baum's analysis showed that this 'family' construct did follow the logic of the family in many ways, including reservation of power for older (white) men (the "father") and conflict between less-privileged organizational members (the "siblings"). The analysis also showed that this structure of the family was essentially built on weak interpersonal relationships, which ultimately collapsed when the "father" left the organization (Baum, 1991). While such detailed assessments of organizational 'family' are not so common in the literature, echoes of the organizational logic of affective ties and socio-emotional relationships can be seen in formalized theories of the organization. For example, paternalistic leadership theory explicitly structures organizations as

families led by powerful older men who control resources and direction of the organization, but who are presumed to lead for the benefit of the entire family (Pellegrini, Scandura and Jayaraman, 2010). While paternalistic leadership is commonly viewed as an Asian phenomenon, Pellegrini, et al. (2010) point out that it has a high level of similarity with leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, which argues that affective relationships between powerful superiors and their subordinates form the basis of effective leadership. This logic of the organization can be seen in many ways at Thai Utility, but there is a gendered split. The notion of the organization as an affective family was routinely expressed by women, while the notion of the organization as a set of affective relationships of control was commonly expressed by men. This is one of the points of difference between men and women, which will be discussed.

The instrumental notion of the organization as a family – that is, a place to receive care – is perhaps newer than the older relational and affective notions discussed above. This discourse of the organizational family as a caregiving environment can be seen in Silicon Valley firms. These firms draw from a workforce of young, mobile elite knowledge workers separated from their families of origin (sometimes internationally) and placed into a high-pressure work environment in unfamiliar environment which is both expensive and difficult to navigate (Lehmann, Schenkenhofer and Wirsching, 2019). Within these firms, ‘family’ is interpreted as a combination of caregiving (on the part of the company) and filial obligation (on the part of the worker) (English-Lueck and Avery, 2017). Caregiving, within these Silicon Valley cultures, includes feeding workers in free cafeterias, providing entertainment and diversion, offering wellness care like massages and other stress reduction tools, and even in some cases providing support outside the workplace, like busses for the long commute and arranging for dormitory-style living places. In return, the filial obligation of the worker is, essentially, to devote as much of their time as possible to the organization (English-Lueck and Avery, 2017). Thus, within this discourse of the organization as family, the worker is presumed to have *no* external obligations and *no* external family support – instead, everything comes from the organization. While this discourse of the family is not so visible within Thai Utility as the others discussed above, it still can be seen in the presumption that male workers – particularly the younger male engineers, who have much in common with the Silicon Valley programmers discussed by English-Lueck and Avery – have no external obligations and therefore can rely entirely on the organization. Another commonality with Thai Utility is that the level of care given to prized workers at Silicon Valley firms is not available to all workers; for example, production line workers and contractors are largely excluded (English-Lueck and

Avery, 2017). This is also true at Thai Utility, where both organizational resources and organizational power are retained for some workers at the expense of others.

Acker's (1990) framework of gendered organizations allows us to understand the organizational family logic both from a gendered perspective and to differentiate between these different *kinds* of family. These studies do have some overlap with Thai Utility. For example, studies that focus on 'organizational family' as a source of familial and affective ties, like Baum (1991) and Pellegrini (2010), are focused on aspects of individual relationships, like power dynamics and hierarchies, affective relationships and the concept of mutual benefit, protection and emotional care. These kinds of individual relationships can certainly be seen at Thai Utility, but they have a gendered component which makes some forms of relationships difficult to form (such as between married women and their colleagues) or even taboo (between senior men and junior women). These kinds of gendered hierarchies and divisions are not addressed in the previous studies. There are also echoes of the instrumental notion of the organizational family, as presented by Lehmann, et al. (2019) and English-Lueck and Avery (2017), in the pastoral relationships, entertainments and informal networking provided at Thai Utility. However, what is different is that Thai Utility is not staffed by young workers separated from their families of origin and with no marital 'made' families – in fact, it is the opposite, with young workers often brought into Thai Utility by their families of origin and forming marital families within the company. Thus, there are two distinct families in operation at Thai Utility – the family of origin (including birth and marital families) and the organizational family – which have different effects and are gendered differently. Acker's framework helps to differentiate the effects of these two families and makes visible the processes by which men form organizational families that replace families of origin, while women experience a "stickiness" of the family of origin and marital family that limits the formation of organizational family.

Another differentiation that can be made in studies that use the notion of organizational family is how this concept is used. Some of the studies reviewed, especially Grugulis, et al. (2000) and Costas (2012), along with Baum (1991) used organizational family as an organizing concept for the relationships within the organization but did not look outside. While these authors did not identify that these organizational family relationships were exclusive, studies on familial organizational cultures in Silicon Valley *do* seem to suggest that organizational family takes the place of family of origin (including marital family) (English-Lueck and Avery, 2017; Lehmann, Schenkenhofer and Wirsching, 2019). This replacement of the organizational family occurs both because of the isolation of young, internationally mobile knowledge workers from their families of origins (as identified by Lehmann, et al.) and due to an implicit

or explicit assumption within the organization's culture that the family of origin is not needed, and the organizational family serves as a replacement, as identified by English-Lueck and Avery. Thus, to a greater or lesser extent, both of these types of studies consider organizational family only as an internal construct in the organization. Acker (1990), on the other hand, makes it clear that organizational logics exist within a wider culture, and people bring those cultural assumptions, structures and processes to the organization itself. Thai Utility, situated firmly within Thai culture, therefore inherits and re-enacts at least some of its organizational logics from this broader culture. Furthermore, part of how the organizational family logic at Thai Utility is enacted is that family of origin (including both birth and marital families) are embedded in the organizational family, although its role is dynamic. Thus, unlike in these previous studies, Acker's (1990) concept of gendered organizational logic allows us to see that organizational families form not just in the absence of or as a replacement for family of origin but can also form in their presence and even encapsulate them. This is one of the main contributions of this research and demonstrates the value of applying Acker's framework in full to organizational analysis, rather than relying only on internal logics of organizational culture.

So, in summary, there are many different ways in which 'the organization as a family' can emerge as an organizational logic. Furthermore, these organizational logics are always gendered, which under Acker's (1990) model of gendered organizations results in disadvantage to women without being explicit about their exclusion. Understanding this de facto gendered effect in a nominally gender-neutral organization is one of the benefits of fully applying Acker's model. As will be discussed in the next section, these are present to some extent at Thai Utility. However, Thai Utility's structure and context adds another aspect to the organizational logic of the family – the gradual replacement of family of origin with organizational family through a process of networking, which is not available equally to male and female workers.

7.2 Families of Origin and Organizational Families

7.2.1 Families of origin and exclusion of women from networking opportunities

One of the most explicit and commonly expressed reasons for women not having equal access to networking opportunities is their presumed responsibilities to their family of origin and marital family. One notion, expressed at all levels of the organization, was that women

couldn't or didn't want to participate in informal social opportunities because they had caring responsibilities at home; for example, women could not go out for drinks after work because they had to care for their children and husband. This line of reasoning, which was put forward by both men and women, clearly makes women deficient (Giuffre and Webber, 2020) and out of line with the ideal worker (Acker, 1990) due to lack of commitment to the organization as a family. When viewed from the lens of the 'family' organizational logic, this becomes even more problematic, because family cultures punish those that do not participate fully, seeing this as a sign of lack of commitment and a threat to the unity of family (Costas, 2012). Thus, exclusion of women from these informal networking opportunities is not just a pragmatic response to assumed home responsibilities. Instead, it is a response to the perceived lack of participation in the 'family activities' that are promoted by the senior management of the organization. Furthermore, it suggests that women are viewed as not just refusing to participate but refusing to adopt the organization's norms. Women are, in many ways, out of the normative control of management (Grugulis, Dundon and Wilkinson, 2000), and therefore viewed as inferior workers.

Another notion, which occurred at the upper levels of the organization, was that women had to be excluded from informal networking (and even sometimes formal interaction) *for their own good*, as a way to avoid the suggestion of an inappropriate relationship between a male leader and his subordinate. This viewpoint was expressed only by men in senior and executive roles and did not seem to occur to women regardless of their organizational level. Once again, this is a signal of the family logic of the organization. Obviously, it positions the senior manager as the 'father', working to protect the 'children' or employees (Costas, 2012). However, it also has a gendered dimension, in that the good of 'daughters' is viewed as different from the good of 'sons'. While male subordinates are encouraged to form relationships and ultimately create an organizational family, female subordinates are not encouraged to do so (and may even not be able to due to resistance from senior men). The explicit justification of this avoidance is also sexualized, in common with the analysis of Pan Am, where 'daughters' were the object of sexual attention and imposition of sexual and gender appearance and comportment norms (Dye and Mills, 2012). However, Thai Utility was not characterized by the sexualized treatment of its female staff, such as beauty contests, as was seen in Pan Am's earliest periods. Ultimately, male senior managers' response to the purported interaction taboo, to avoid contact and relationships with female subordinates, is another way in which women are excluded or marginalized under the guise of their own protection.

In summary, even at its most superficial, it becomes clear that the organizational logic of ‘family’ is used to exclude women from both horizontal and vertical networking relationships. Women are presumed to have a higher obligation to their family of origin and marital family, leading to their exclusion from informal networking activities as a form of punishment for this divided loyalty. Women are also ‘protected’ by senior men from the putative social consequences from the appearance of an affair, which ends up penalizing them due to lack of formation of the organizational family. Taken together, these two occurrences suggest that women are in a double bind: they are presumed to have higher loyalty to their family of origin and marital family but cannot form the organizational family relationships that would signal belonging. Just as at Pan Am (Dye and Mills, 2012), the ‘organizational family’ logic extends only to men when it comes to resources and relationships, while it imposes stringent controls on women. This has some significant implications for their career progression.

7.2.2 Exchange of family of origin for organizational family

Another manifestation of the gendered organizational logic of ‘family’ that can be seen in the interviews and interaction maps is the development of an ‘organizational family’ of powerful connections that can contribute to the individual’s career progression.

The initial stage of family as an instrumental tool for career advancement is common to both men and women. Almost all of the employees entered the organization with one or more powerful connections within or through their families of origin, which in some cases were instrumental in their initial role attainment or advancement. For junior and middle managers and headquarters staff, these family of origin connections remained relatively powerful in comparison to their other relationships. From the middle management level, family of origin connections begin to fade in importance – for example, such connections may move from a current manager or deputy role (common in younger managers) to retired managers and governors. While these individuals retain some social power, they no longer have a direct impact on the individual’s career advancement or prospects.

As the family of origin fades into the background, beginning from the middle management stage, the organizational family begins to take its place. The ‘organizational family’ includes powerful connections, both formal and informal. For example, this could include current and former bosses and individuals further up the reporting chain, with whom the individual has had formal interactions. It can also include informal relationships with

powerful people who the individual has encountered earlier. These organizational families grow in both size and power through the individual's career progression, both because they make more of their own connections and because their previous connections become more powerful. For example, an individual's former boss may also be promoted, meaning that as a senior manager they now have a direct connection to a deputy governor based on their earlier relationships.

It is during this second stage of career advancement that men and women begin to show different patterns of familial relationships. For men, the process is straightforward as discussed above: their family of origin relationships recede into the background, while their organizational family relationships gradually offer more access to power. By the senior and executive management level, therefore, men typically have broad and deep organizational families. Wudy (a male senior engineering manager) is a good example of the initial stages of this development. His interaction map (Figure 9 in Chapter 6) shows that he now has organizational family connections with his management reporting chain, as well as two ex-governors and one current deputy governor, who was his former boss before both were promoted. In contrast, his only family of origin connections are his wife and ex-wife, who are in roles junior to his own. The interaction map of Som (a male executive) shows the intensification of this process (Figure 20 in Chapter 6). His chart also shows multiple deputy governors and ex-governors and deputy governors who are former bosses or colleagues from more junior positions, friends, and alumni of the same university programs. His only remaining family of origin connection is his wife, who like Wudy's is in a junior role. Thus, both of these men have large and powerful organizational families, while their own family of origin plays little role.

It is at this stage of development that women begin to suffer from the organization's attempts to continually force them back into a family of origin and marital family role, and where the effects of withheld horizontal and vertical networking relationships discussed in the previous section (7.2.1, above) become clear. These effects manifest in two ways: a relative paucity of direct connections to powerful men compared to their male peers, and a reliance on family of origin relationships for indirect connections to these powerful men instead. Senior manager Aum (an accounting manager) shows the beginning of this process (Figure 11 in Chapter 6). Her interaction map shows that her family of origin links, including a cousin and husband, are still prevalent. Her only organizational family links to powerful men are to the assistant governor and deputy governor above her in her reporting chain. The majority of her organizational family links, in comparison, are to the wives of powerful men such as governors

and deputy governors through the Housewives' Association. This situation highlights the importance of marital family connections within Thai Utility, particularly for women. The Housewives Association as a network places marital relationships in a key position within the organization, with women's access to powerful men often secured through their wives. Interestingly, two of these wives were also Thai Utility employees, although in subordinate roles to their husbands. Aum identified them mainly as *wives* of importance, rather than through their own roles. The centrality of marital relationships within Thai Utility, particularly for women, is demonstrated here by the fact that Aum's connection to these two women is valued for their marital status as a wife but not as an organizational actor.

In other cases, female senior employees may simply not have much organizational family at all. This can be seen in the case of Vadee (a female senior HR manager) (Figure 17 in Chapter 6). Even though she is in a senior role, Vadee has only two connections she identified as organizational family – her current boss and ex-boss. Chin (the only female in the highest position of executive interviewed) has a combination of these two patterns (Figure 19 in Chapter 20). Her organizational family is sparse, consisting of one ex-boss and a friend of her father's, while her family of origin (brother) still plays a relevant role. Tellingly, Chin does not include the Governor as a part of her organizational family, even though she directly reports to him. Thus, women at this level appear to be faced with the choice to either rely on a sparse set of direct connections in their organizational family or cultivate indirect connections to wives of powerful men through the Housewives' Association to make up the lack of direct connections to powerful men. This reinforces women's position as outside the organisational family, with their network contacts reliant on family of origin relationships and/or relationships with other marital partners (wives) of senior men.

The patterns of organizational and family development are clearly different for men and women, particularly at the senior management level and above (though it begins to develop earlier). This raises two questions: first, why does this happen? And second, what are the outcomes? These two questions are discussed in the next section. The discussion is followed by evaluation of the overall effect, which is systematic exclusion of women within the organization and structural barriers to their advancement.

7.2.3 Women's networking and organizational family development

The obvious question, given the discussion above, is how is it that women are less successful at building organizational families through networking than men are? One of the prevalent explanations in the literature is essentially that women are bad at networking in comparison to men, perhaps because they are unwilling to use social networking ties instrumentally (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019), use the wrong networking techniques (Forret and Dougherty, 2004), or are reluctant or not assertive enough in their networking practice (Brands and Kilduff, 2014). These explanations are all drawing on perceived deficiencies of individual women, which could be corrected if only they were taught to act like men (Giuffre and Webber, 2020). Acker's (1990) framework of gendered organizations makes it clear that these individualist explanations are inadequate, because they do not address the gendered structures, hierarchies and processes that form a context in which individuals act. This research firmly rejects these individualist explanations for the lack of success in networking by powerful women, and instead argues that the differences between men and women's organizational family formation are due to the organizational logic of the family at Thai Utility. This organizational logic simultaneously forces women back into family of origin and marital family roles and punishes them for these roles by withholding relationships as resources, meaning that women are forced to rely on comparatively weaker family of origin and indirect organizational family ties. Thus, the dominant organizational logic at Thai Utility forces women into a gendered role without ever explicitly stating that it is limiting women, in keeping with gendered organization theory (Acker, 1990).

The process of organizational logic by which women are constantly forced back into family of origin and marital family roles begins with the assumptions about the role of the organization and who should lead it which are embedded in organizational culture. Here, there are two distinct processes of gendered divisions (Acker, 1990) that can be seen. First, there is a veneer of gender-neutrality on discussions about management. For example, very few of the participants overtly said something like "women cannot be managers" – this would disturb the nominal gender neutrality of the organization (Acker, 1990). However, this veneer of gender neutrality does not hold up to the reality, which is that there are very strong gender divisions of roles within the organization (engineering and leadership are male, accounting and HR are female). Thus, there is a combination of gender divisions at a basic level of job role, coupled with a nominally gender-neutral stance of the organization, as is common with gendered organizational logics (Acker, 1990). This gender division is then coupled with normative

suppositions about what the core activities of the organization are – in brief, that Thai Utility is fundamentally an engineering organization. These normative suppositions feed into normative control (Grugulis, Dundon and Wilkinson, 2000; Costas, 2012) by top organizational leaders, who assert that therefore organizational leaders should come from the engineering department. Since engineering is coded as a ‘male’ activity, the logical outcome is that the most important organizational roles – its top leadership positions – are by default reserved for men. Essentially, these are paternalistic assumptions which enforce subordinate roles in women (Pellegrini, Scandura and Jayaraman, 2010). Thus, even before they begin networking, women are disadvantaged by the gendered organizational divisions, symbols, and identities, through which men rather than women are identified as ‘leadership material’ and therefore granted more access to power.

There are also a set of systematic assumptions throughout the organization, which affect women’s ability to engage in some forms of interaction (especially mixed-gender informal interactions). One of the expressed signs of these assumptions, which were discussed in Section 7.2.1, include that women have obligations to their families of origin and marital families that do not allow them to participate in the informal social interaction. The other expressed sign is the existence and prevalence of the Housewives’ Association. The concept of gender subtext can be used to explain the emphasis placed on women’s family responsibilities and the existence of the Housewives’ Association. The gender subtext concept is a reformulation of the gendered organizational logic as proposed by Acker (1990), in which the expressed texts of an organization – what people say and do – can be interpreted to understand the hidden subtexts – the underlying norms and assumptions that drive organizational processes. In this thesis, gendered subtext is understood as connected to the organizational logic of family. In Thai Utility, one way by which the identified organizational logic of family manifests is through two interlinked gender subtexts or gendered assumptions.

The first can be called “women’s place is in the home”, while the second is called “divided loyalties”. Together, these gender subtexts, which connect to and underpin the organizational logic of family, are used to limit participation of women in networking activities at Thai Utility.

7.2.3.1 “The woman’s place is in the home”

Both the assumptions underlying women’s participation in networking and the existence of the Housewives’ Association can be interpreted as signs of an underlying subtext that “the woman’s place is in the home”. In other words, even if women are working, she has familial responsibilities that cannot be displaced or avoided, and this means that she cannot

give everything to her job. This extends not just to informal networking activities after work, but also – at least at the junior level – to the ability to undertake engineering field work, field visits or training where they would need to leave home, as discussed in Chapter 5. Women sometimes used these responsibilities to explain themselves why they did not attend social events, and at least one woman stated she was reluctant to get married because of such responsibilities. However, it was actually more common for men to use family responsibilities as an explanation for women’s non-participation. Tellingly, none of the men interviewed were concerned with family responsibilities. Therefore, responsibilities for care of the family of origin was reserved solely for women, especially by men, demonstrating how women are ‘secured’ in the traditional marital family, preventing them from building an organizational family.

The “woman’s place is in the home” discourse can also be seen in the existence and structure of the Housewives’ Association, and its opposition to other activities. Thai Utility has a range of informal and formal clubs and activities for its staff. Many of these groups, such as the engineering club, golf club, and various running and cycling groups, are structured in ways that are reminiscent of Acker’s (1990) description of gendered organizational logic – they are nominally gender-neutral spaces within the organization, but are in fact closed to women either because of their embedding in a space where women are mostly excluded (engineering club) or because of the normative control (Grugulis, Dundon and Wilkinson, 2000; Costas, 2012) enforced by their leaders (golf and sports groups). The Housewives’ Association, which is the only group intended ‘for’ women at Thai Utility, is an organization that defines its members by their role in the family of origin and marital family, rather than by their work role or non-family interests as in the male-focused groups. Unlike other groups, the Housewives’ Association is also open to spouses of organizational members. Furthermore, members of the Housewives’ Association are defined by their access to power; thus, a non-employee wife of a high-ranking employee will have higher ‘status’ in the organization than an employee at a lower level than her husband. This structure reinforces the subtext that “the woman’s place is in the home”, as the Housewives’ Association is one of the main ways in which women form relationships with other women (and indirectly, men) in the organization.

The Housewives’ Association is particularly important for junior women like Jan (a female accountant), who lists contacts through the Housewives’ Association as members of her organizational family, but does not identify them as very powerful, or Sao (a female administrator) who identifies powerful members of the Housewives’ Association – all wives of powerful men – as among her organizational family. Thus, junior and middle managers are

often forced back into family of origin roles by their need to make connections with the wives of powerful men. Some junior women, like Pi (female engineer), do eschew these family-oriented connections, instead forming networks with other female engineers and male co-workers, but especially for women in the administrative, HR and legal departments it seems that the Housewives' Association is one of the main ways they can achieve power in the organization.

In summary, the “woman’s place is in the home” subtext that underpins the organizational logic of family can be seen both in the assumption that women have family obligations that prevent networking participation and the dominance of the Housewives' Association as a networking group for women, coupled with exclusion from men’s networking spaces. This gendered subtext limits women’s access to power by continually turning them back to their families of origin as a source of both power and responsibility.

7.2.3.2 “*Divided loyalties*”

The second gendered subtext that can be identified in these visible phenomena is more insidious. This subtext, which we will call “divided loyalties”, states that because women’s primary responsibility is to their family of origin and marital family, they cannot give full loyalty or participate fully in the life of the organizational family. As Costas (2012) explains, *unity* is one of the primary concerns of the ‘family’ organization. As a result, “individuals failing to participate in the family in the appropriate ways are sanctioned by the authorities and other employees (Costas, 2012, p. 378).” In other case studies, for example, workers who were unwilling to participate in long work hours and prioritize work relationships could be sanctioned as not being the right ‘kind’ of employees (Casey, 1999). Managers would therefore attempt to exert normative control over the attitudes and beliefs of these employees – trying, essentially, to control how they think about work and where their loyalties lie (Grugulis, Dundon and Wilkinson, 2000; Costas, 2012).

The basis of the “divided loyalties” subtext is that female employees can never be fully loyal to Thai Utility because their primary responsibility is with their family of origin. Here, ‘family of origin’ refers both to the employee’s birth family, who are influential at the start of their careers as discussed earlier, and to the marital ‘made’ family (husband and children), who are assumed to be the primary responsibility of married women in the workplace. Of these two families of origin, the marital family (particularly children) is more commonly used to exclude or limit women’s participation explicitly.

To be fully loyal to the organization means not just that the individual would not leave the company as suggested in studies of job embeddedness (Peltokorpi, 2013), but that the company is the priority in the individual's life (Zhang, Griffeth and Fried, 2012). Women may have suspected loyalty on both fronts. For example, women may be viewed as being more likely to leave the company in order to have children or care for their families, suggesting that their embeddedness in their job role is less than their male colleagues. Similarly, women's (presumed) family of origin responsibilities mean that they will never be able to participate fully in the organizational family life of Thai Utility – the company is not presumed to be the priority in their life. The underlying gendered subtext of the organization is that men, who have neither of these impingements on their loyalty to the organization, are therefore more loyal and thus more worthy of investing in for the long term.

In summary, the “divided loyalties” subtext is more submerged than the “woman's place is in the home” subtext (which is barely submerged at all). However, it may be more damaging for women's long-term prospects in the organization, since it constrains the amount of interaction they are allowed in the organization. Acker's (1990) framework of the gendered organization, along with the notion of gendered subtext (Benschop and Doorewaard, 2012), makes it possible to see both these subtexts and their effect on women in the organization.

7.2.4 Organizational family, access to power and advancement

The empirical evidence shows that women do not achieve equal advancement in the organization. In fact, the company has only one female executive, and in the engineering department (the core of the organization), the highest-ranking woman is a recently appointed (and controversial) middle manager. Therefore, if change is coming to Thai Utility at all, it is coming slowly. Here, it is argued that this is because of the organizational logic of the family, which limits female managers' direct access to powerful men (the organizational “fathers”) while at the same time rewarding those with this access.

This chapter has established, so far, that the position of women in the Thai Utility organizational family is only partial, and women are excluded from networking opportunities (either because of presumed family of origin responsibilities or in an effort to ‘protect’ them from a taboo mostly recognized by older men). It has also shown that the process of organizational family formation within Thai Utility is one of gradual replacement, with family of origin connections receding in importance and the organizational family taking over. However, this process does not happen in the same way for men and women – while men form

broad and deep organizational families featuring direct access to powerful men, women's networks are shallower, with fewer direct connections and more reliance on indirect connections through the wives of powerful men. At the same time, gender discourses such as "woman's place is in the home" and "divided loyalties" create dual justifications for the exclusion of women from networking and other organizational activities – they are not truly committed to the workplace and their primary responsibility is with their family of origin and marital family, therefore they are not considered to be serious. As will be discussed in this section, this organizational logic of the family, including the processes of organizational family formation and the exclusion of women from these organizational families, has direct consequences for women's advancement in the organization.

7.2.4.1 Gender differences in access to power

One of the most obvious differences between men and women in the organization is that, while men have direct access to powerful men, women do not. Male managers that were interviewed for this study detailed a range of formal and informal interactions with more powerful men, even at the junior manager level. For example, they might informally socialize with them in bars, participate in sports like golf and cycling, or take part in trips away from home, in addition to the formal interactions that took place in the course of their work. More senior men show clear signs of homosociality (Holgersson, 2013), with strong preferences for socialization with other men and even overt avoidance of direct contact (even formal contact) with junior women. The result of this is that men both have direct access to powerful men in the organization as they begin to form and strengthen their organizational families. Ultimately, their organizational families include not just their bosses, but their boss's bosses and other men in the upward reporting chain and powerful men outside their direct reporting chain as well. In comparison, most women are excluded from the formation of direct relationships with powerful men. For most women, there is a near-total exclusion from the informal and social interactions, which is where many of the more junior men make their initial powerful contacts. Many women also face exclusion from or limitation of formal interactions with powerful men, due to the interaction taboo that has been discussed previously in this chapter.

The effect of exclusion of women from informal and formal interactions with powerful men is that it prevents them from forming instrumental relationships that they can rely on to advance in their careers. Typically, women report only a few powerful connections that are also interested in their career advancement, while men may report many more. Furthermore, this effect becomes exacerbated over time, at least according to the interaction maps produced

in this study. At the junior manager level, when managers are still heavily reliant on family of origin connections and have not formed many organizational family relationships, there are relatively small differences between the organizational families of men and women. By the senior management level, men's organizational family relationships have broadened and deepened, and now typically include direct relationships with several powerful men, including their bosses and ex-bosses, men in their reporting chain, and friends they have met through informal networking activities. In comparison, women's organizational family networks have very few relationships with powerful men (or, unsurprisingly, powerful women). It is not uncommon for even senior and executive women to have organizational family relationships only with their bosses and former bosses, and their reach does not extend above them or outward to other departments. Thus, men and women have unequal access to the flows of power within the organization.

This difference in the organizational family of men and women is critically important because it has a direct effect on the chances of career advancement for men and women. As a general rule, women's lack of relationship to powerful people in the organization means that they have a lack of social capital in the organization (Williams, Muller and Kilanski, 2012). In other words, they have few social resources that they can use instrumentally, for purposes like career advancement. Poor social connections within an organization can have a negative effect on advancement even at very early stages in a woman's career (Ibarra and Deshpande, 2007). Furthermore, even in cases where women have nominal social ties (for example, ties to current and former bosses) that are equivalent to men's social ties, they may receive less assistance than men do from these connections (McGuire, 2002). For example, mentors of women may offer more passive assistance (such as advice giving) than active advocacy for the individual, compared to mentors of men (Ibarra, Carter and Silva, 2010). Thus, women's relatively less dense and less useful organizational families have a direct effect on their opportunity for advancement, particularly when the woman moves beyond the stage where family of origin can help with career advancement. Briefly, not only do women have less social capital to draw on, they can also rely less on the connections they do have to advocate for them or provide other assistance compared to their male colleagues.

In any organization, the net result of this reduced level of social capital would be expected to be that women are promoted less and have fewer prospects for career advancement than men. In an organization driven by a family logic, this effect can be even more exacerbated. This is because success in a 'family' organization is driven predominantly by relationships to the leaders of the organization, who play the 'father' role (Costas, 2012). In other words, these

leaders of the organization expect to have a direct and personal relationship with the individuals they promote, not just for trust formation but also because of the presupposed familial relationship that exists between them (Costas, 2012). This is one of the ways in which gendered organizational logics can be seen explicitly, as ‘father’ is a gendered role that has strong implications of not just leadership, but also power and control (Acker, 1990). When organizations are small, these relationships exist between the ‘father’ and all of the employees, but as the organization grows in size, such relationships become more selective (Baum, 1991). Thus, the employees who have the best chance of advancement in a large organization driven by family logic are those that have formed relationships with the organization’s ‘fathers’, who are directly responsible for selecting the employees that go further. Women, who are excluded from these relationships with Thai Utility’s ‘fathers’ for all the obvious and subtextual reasons identified above, therefore have comparatively lower chances of career advancement, particularly beyond the point where senior men directly appoint employees.

7.2.4.2 The Housewives’ Association as a compensation strategy

Some women (though not all) choose to form indirect relationships to power to try and overcome the barriers to interaction and widen their organizational family. Typically, this involves forming relationships with the wives of powerful men through the Housewives’ Association. Importantly, it would also be possible for female junior managers to form relationships with female senior managers through the Housewives’ Association, but this was relatively uncommon in the interaction maps. Instead, the focus was on the wives of powerful men as key contacts in the organizational family, making it clear that access to powerful men, rather than direct access to powerful women, is the objective. There were also a few other instances of this, such as organizational family connections that included the secretaries or female assistants of powerful men. These connections did increase the density of organizational families for women who were relatively limited in their direct connections to men, as well as providing access to the lateral and vertical connections that their male colleagues could draw on directly.

This choice seems like it could be an effective compensation strategy, since this results in a dense network with at least partial access to power. However, evidence from other studies suggests it may not be as effective as its users might hope. For example, lack of homophily in informal networks limit networking opportunities and effectiveness, due to lower levels of social connection (Greguletz, Diehl and Kreutzer, 2019). This effect can be seen in the Housewives’ Association, where both working women and the wives of Thai Utility employees

(who may work outside the company or may not work outside the home) both participate. Effectively, this creates a superficial connection where the only point of commonality, at least initially, is the purported role of women as bound to the home and family of origin – the “woman’s place is in the home” subtext discussed above. Furthermore, weaker social ties (such as indirect, short-lived or thin ties) are of less use to women than stronger ties, which does weaken women’s positions and opportunities for advancement (Jonnergård, Stafstudd and Elg, 2010). Thus, the indirect relationships to powerful men formed through the Housewives’ Association are not as useful as the direct relationships held by women’s male colleagues, being both indirect and much weaker (Jonnergård, Stafstudd and Elg, 2010). This is not to say that these relationships have no value (whether affective or instrumental), as many of the participants placed a high value on relationships formed through the Housewives’ Association. However, they cannot be used instrumentally in the way that direct connections to powerful men can, because of the divide between family of origin and organizational family. Identifying and untangling the effects of these different families is one of the benefits of applying Acker’s (1990) gendered organization theory.

The use of indirect connections through the Housewives’ Association also reinforces the gendered subtext of “woman’s place is in the home” by offering symbolic evidence that women are more concerned with their family of origin and marital family roles than their organizational role. Ultimately, the Housewives’ Association is a low-status network, with few direct resources to offer its members (McGuire, 2000, 2002), especially compared to the high-status networks that form around powerful men (McDonald, 2011). This reinforces the perception that women are choosing to associate with a low-status group concerned with family of origin instead of loyally supporting the organization itself, thus shoring up both of the gender discourses of family that affect women’s access to power (as discussed above in Section 7.2.3). Of course, this has nothing to do with the reality that the Housewives’ Association is the only organized group that women have access to reliably, and therefore is a major opportunity for social interaction and relationship formation. Once again, the gendered logic of the organization draws on stereotyped images and symbols about women and uses these to reinforce a gender identity, with the ensuing consequences discussed above.

In summary, while indirect access to powerful men through the Housewives’ Association is a both common and common-sense for women with few alternatives, it could end up being more harmful for the women that employ it. There are a variety of reasons for this, including weaker strength of relationship ties due to lowered homophily, weak power of the relationships formed and their relatively low instrumental value, and the reinforcement of

perceptions that women are concerned with families of origin rather than organizational family. However, individual women are not in any way deficient either for the choice to use this strategy or its failure. Instead, both the strategy and its possible failure are due to systematic exclusion of women at Thai Utility, stemming from the gendered logic of the family.

7.2.5 The organizational logic of the family and systematic exclusion of women

It seems obvious to state that there is no reason why informal interaction in the organization could not be made amenable to women, even ignoring the underlying falsity of the assumption that women have more responsibilities to the family than men. For example, socialization could switch to lunch hours, gender-neutral interest groups could be established, and bars and massage parlours could cease to be the focus of after-work socialization. These changes would open up access to informal socialization by women without exposing them to negative consequences (as feared by senior men who avoid contact with junior women). However, the organization has not made any effort to do so. Why not? As will be discussed here, it is because the underlying organizational logic of the family not only does not require it, but also justifies such exclusion in the basis of presumed divided loyalties and the lesser importance of women in the organizational family compared to their family of origin.

First, it is clear that neither individual sexism nor individual women's failures are the cause of Thai Utility's lack of women promoted to upper levels of the organization. Individual sexism certainly exists, as it does within any organization. Such tendencies can be seen in Chapter 5, where women are repeatedly characterized as fussy, difficult to work with, or otherwise deficient by individual managers. Undoubtedly this does have an effect on the advancement of individual women, especially when employed by powerful men, but it cannot fully explain their systematic exclusion. Similarly, even though the 'deficiency' of women in networking or other skills is a popular individualist explanation for their failure to advance (Giuffre and Webber, 2020), there is no real evidence of it here. Instead, women gain equal success regardless of their individual attitudes or the strategies they use.

Another popular explanation for organizations where women cannot seem to advance is that there are individual barriers to their advancement. This explanation typically focuses on work-life conflict to explain why women do not gain promotions (Benschop and Doorewaard, 1998b; Zhang, Griffeth and Fried, 2012; English-Lueck and Avery, 2017). Such work-life conflict explanations can be seen in this study in the interviews of women, who did sometimes express fears about family life interfering with their career or concerns about balancing their

work obligations and their need to care for their families. However, it would be a mistake to assume that these work-life conflicts were the underlying cause of all women failing to advance, especially since there were many women who avoided such conflicts and still did not build extensive organizational families.

Thai Utility does have various structural constraints to advancement for women, which was expected from the literature. For example, some work roles (like engineering) and some activities (like stay overnight and weekend trips) are in practice reserved for men, which is commonly observed in organizations even if they espouse gender-neutral assignments (Echelmann, Fiber and River, 2013; Gress and Paek, 2014; Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018). These structural constraints are in some cases stronger than others. For example, the barriers for women to advance in engineering (which some senior managers and executives explicitly view as a ‘male’ occupation) are much higher than in fields like accounting and finance or human resources (which are viewed as ‘female’ occupations).

These structural barriers have some serious consequences, because of entrenched social norms that the leadership of the company should come from engineering, which is viewed as Thai Utility’s core activity. Because the people that hold this view are typically powerful men – including executive-level managers and governors – the entire organization is subjected to a degree of managerial normative control that reinforces this attitude (Grugulis, Dundon and Wilkinson, 2000; Costas, 2012). Thus, the structural barriers to the advancement of women in engineering, particularly, could slow the attainment of top leadership roles for women. This has been observed in other organizations, where a combination of homophily (or homosociality) in networking and gender-based role segregation locked women out of senior roles (Ibarra, 1993; Ibarra and Deshpande, 2007; Ibarra, Carter and Silva, 2010). However, in this organization it can be seen to be even more entrenched, with the gender divisions in job roles, symbolic imagery of women as unsuitable to the role of leadership, and ultimately the gendered subtexts that imply that women lack connection to and loyalty to the organizational family standing in the way of advancement.

Women are already disadvantaged when entering the workforce by lack of relationships with powerful men, since these pre-existing relationships are relevant for selection (Ozkazanc-Pan and Clark Muntean, 2018). An example of such pre-existing relationships can be seen in the interaction map of Sup, a male lawyer. Unlike almost every other manager, Sup did not have family of origin connections when entering Thai Utility. Instead, he had a pre-formed nascent organizational family consisting of contacts from his prior athletic career, which resulted in his initial selection. Just as argued by Ozkananc-Pan and Clark Muntean, a

combination of homophilous social networks and unclear selection criteria led to a powerful man making a selection of another potentially powerful man. Thus, the nominally gender-neutral policies of the organization are not enough to overcome the structural inequalities faced by women, who do not have (and are often prevented from forming) the instrumental relationships relied on by men to achieve advancement. As this research has shown, this effect persists and strengthens over time as women become increasingly disadvantaged despite their attempts to route around the barriers in their way by seeking indirect power. Thus, it is not only at the initial hiring stage that women are disadvantaged.

The organizational logic of the family also creates systematic inequality against women. Obviously, the gender subtext of “woman’s place is in the home” has a discriminatory effect, as women may be less likely to be promoted. However, there are more dangerous effects of the “divided loyalties” subtext, since this subtext precludes managers from fully trusting their female subordinates. Effectively, the assumption that women’s primary responsibility is to their families of origin means that women are never granted the same opportunities as men, with their loyalty always in question.

In summary, this section has demonstrated that the failure of women to advance in Thai Utility has nothing to do with the women themselves and everything to do with the systematic exclusion of women from advancement opportunities, as implied by Acker’s (1990) gendered organization theory. This systematic exclusion has its roots in an underlying organizational logic of the family, which manifests in several ways including the need to establish organizational family for advancement and gender subtexts which position women as having a primary concern for their family of origin and marital family and therefore, divided loyalties. Can individual women overcome these structural barriers to achieve advancement? The fact that there are some female senior managers suggest that they can, but as discussed in the next section, this is not a transformative strategy for the organization as a whole.

7.3 Exceptional Women?

Some previous studies have raised the question of why some women seem to be ‘exceptions’ in organizations, seeming to have more in common with men than women within the organization. For example, unusually successful women in the organization may behaviourally distance themselves from ‘female’ roles and stereotypes in the organization (Parsons *et al.*, 2012) or socially distance themselves from other women, choosing instead to

associate and network with men (Rhoton, 2011). In some cases, women may even disassociate themselves from broader conventional social norms of femininity and female gender identity in order to fit in better in their male-dominated workplace (Alfrey and Twine, 2017). These practices of distancing from the feminine are actively promoted in broader society and education, with career advice aimed at women focusing on the purported ‘deficiency’ of women and recommendations to, essentially, be more male in order to overcome workplace stigma (Giuffre and Webber, 2020). Thus, such distancing and deliberate deployment of male social strategies and identities in the workplace is not incidental but is used consciously by women in an attempt to avoid the penalties of structural and individual exclusion from the organization. However, such strategies do not challenge gendered organizational logics, instead encouraging women to buy into these gendered logics (Giuffre and Webber, 2020).

There are three cases of such ‘exceptions’ that can be seen at Thai Utility: Pi (junior female engineer), Chin (highest position of female executive) and Vadee (female senior HR). These women chose not to form the dense networks of indirect connections that many other women rely on, and instead chose less dense networks of direct connections to powerful men. While this choice led to some degree of success for these women, analysis of their experiences shows that it does not negate the structural inequalities that women in Thai Utility face. Simply, individual choices do not cancel or overcome the gendered logic of the organization (Acker, 1990).

Pi, Junior engineering manager, is the most obvious example of many of the phenomena discussed by previous authors. Pi’s choice of engineering as a career, which is a male-dominated field in Thailand, was her initial rejection of female organizational roles (Parsons *et al.*, 2012), which continued in her choice to work in field engineering rather than research or another field. She also distances herself from other women, both socially (Rhoton, 2011) and in terms of gender identity and stereotypically feminine identities (Alfrey and Twine, 2017). Finally, Pi also appears to view ‘typical’ female behaviour as deficient in some way (Giuffre and Webber, 2020), both in herself and others. For example, she is not planning to have children, and views the social and emotional interaction modes of other women as annoying or inefficient. Thus, even though she is still similar to other junior women in some ways (for example her reliance on family of origin), Pi shows many of the behavioural features of the ‘female exception’ commonly held up to excuse or minimize the gendered logic of female exclusion.

Senior manager Vadee could also be viewed as an exception, because her formal and informal networking practices are more consistent with the male managers at her level than the typical female networking pattern. In particular, Vadee has eschewed connections through the Housewives' Association, instead forming relationships directly with senior men in her own department and in other departments. Thus, Vadee contrasts strongly with the other women within the organization, following male patterns of interaction. This is a strategy that both Rhoton (2011) and Parsons, et al. (2012) have suggested may be used by women in technology fields, serving to align their interests more with men in the organization than women.

Chin (female deputy governor) is an exception in another way: she is the only woman so far to have achieved an executive level role at Thai Utility. This does not mean that Chin's role is gender-neutral, as her department, Accounting and Finance, is one of the female-coded departments within the organization. Chin, like Vadee, has used male patterns of networking and interaction to form relationships with senior men, rather than focusing on indirect relationships throughout the Housewives' Association. Thus, she also has rejected the imposition of social and behavioural assumptions about women and their organizational practices (Rhoton, 2011; Parsons *et al.*, 2012). Even so, Chin faces considerable barriers in interaction with these senior men. Especially, many of the social activities used at her organizational level, including massage parlours and bars, are barred to her either socially or in practice. Thus, she cannot form close social relationships with senior males, even though she has avoided the easier route of socializing with their wives for access.

Pi, Vadee, and Chin are clearly exceptional, both in the sense that they are succeeding in roles that are challenging in an absolute sense and that they are making their way into roles despite the structural discrimination they face. However, their experiences do not negate the overall gendered logics of Thai Utility as discussed above. First, all three of these senior managers have to some extent been forced to distance themselves from both feminine gender norms and other women within the organization. Although Chin does have some female acquaintances, overall, all three women have few social contacts or close friends in the organization. In Pi's case, she has also actively bought into many of the feminine constructs and norms associated with women in the organization (for example, that they are 'fussy' and hard to work with). In other words, she has accepted the discourse that women are 'deficient' (Giuffre and Webber, 2020) in the organization, and changed her own actions to address this deficiency in herself. In the case of all three women, they have chosen formal and to some extent distant relationships with male co-workers and superiors rather than the indirect relationships to wives of powerful men that characterize many of the other women interviewed,

representing yet another distancing from women (both actual and conceptual) in the organization. Despite this distancing, they still have not achieved the depth of organizational family relationships of their male peers, as their relationships lack the informal and social connections. This has consequences for both their social lives and future careers. For example, Pi does not rate her chances of advancement highly in the Engineering department, which is aggressively male dominated. Even Chin, who has attained the highest position of any woman at Thai Utility, does not have an equal social relationship with her male peers and superiors. Thus, although Pi, Vadee and Chin are exceptional in both their attitudes and behaviour, they remain subject to all the same structural inequalities as their less-distanced female co-workers.

Furthermore, these structural inequalities cannot easily be overcome by the individual disconfirmation behaviour of a few women within the organization (Rudman and Glick, 2001; Phelan, Moss-Racusin and Rudman, 2008; Rudman and Phelan, 2008). This is in part because, as discussed above, the structural inequalities do not actually stem from the behaviour of women at all. Instead, they can be attributed to the norms and attitudes of powerful men, which have become entrenched and institutionalized in a system of inequality. Thus, simply changing the behaviour of individual women is pointless – they were never deficient in the first place.

However, as Rudman and Phelan note, such disconfirmation behaviour can have negative effects on the careers of women who use it. This is not always the case – for example, women in high-tech roles like Pi can often use such disconfirmation behaviour to become closer to their male colleagues and form male-like networks (Rhoton, 2011; Parsons *et al.*, 2012; Alfrey and Twine, 2017). However, other women, especially those in more traditionally female roles in the organization, can face some significant backlash both from men and from other women (Rudman and Glick, 2001; Phelan, Moss-Racusin and Rudman, 2008; Rudman and Phelan, 2008). Thus, while individually the choices of Pi, Vadee and Chin are both justified and effective, this is not a solution to improve systematic gender inequality on the whole.

In summary, Thai Utility does have some exceptional women who have succeeded despite the structural discrimination imposed by the organization's logic of the family. However, these women are the exceptions that prove the rule – they have succeeded not because the organizational structure has allowed them to, but because they have changed themselves to better fit the organization's demands. Thus, their success does not challenge the organizational logic of Thai Utility as discussed above, and neither does it offer a path to greater equality for women in the organization in general.

7.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the organizational situation presented in Chapter 5 and 6, focusing on the question of why women have not achieved top management roles at Thai Utility. Although there are a variety of individualist explanations available from the literature, such as failure or deficiency of individual women or sexism of individual men, these explanations are insufficient to explain an organization-wide, long-standing trend. Instead, systemic explanations were sought, focusing on the gendered organizational logic of the family that is evident in Thai Utility's policies, norms and management practices and behaviours. The explanation that is arrived can be described briefly as follows.

First, Thai Utility casts itself as a 'family' organization – that is, it relies on intimate interactions, family-like network relationships, and paternalistic leadership to create organizational unity, support employees, and get through challenging periods. However, it does not go as far as Silicon Valley firms and their instrumental care of employees as a way of enforcing family relationships. The consequence of this family organizational logic is that first, employees are treated as children to be guided and mentored by senior managers ('parents', especially 'fathers'). Second, employees who do not participate fully in 'family' – that is, organizational life – face sanctions, because they challenge the veneer of harmony and unity.

Second, women are presumed to have stronger ties to their family of origin, both birth family and marital 'made' family, (including caregiving obligations) than to their organizational family. This is considered both natural (as in the "woman's place is in the home" subtext) and suspect (as in the "divided loyalties" subtext).

Third, in response to this presumed looser connection and lower participation, women are punished by withholding of social networks created through informal networking with powerful men. Alternatively, withholding of social network ties with powerful men can be cast as protection for junior women. Regardless of justification, these sanctions have the effect of narrowing women's organizational family networks compared to their male colleagues.

Fourth, advancement within Thai Utility is heavily dependent on access to powerful men, who are instrumental in the selection process for upper management positions. This is in keeping with the logic of a 'family' organization, in which the 'father' (or upper management) is responsible for nurturing and encouraging 'children' (or junior employees). As a result of this logic, selection processes are ill-defined and tend to depend on existing connections.

Therefore, men – who have organizational families that include many powerful men – are more likely to achieve promotion than women – who do not.

The gendered organizational logic of the family is fundamentally a structural barrier to advancement for women in the organization. Women may use different strategies to circumvent these barriers, like using the Housewives' Association to access power indirectly through the wives of powerful men or attempting a broader disconfirmation of female gender roles. However, these individual actions cannot change the organization's internal structure or logic and are only partially successful for individual women. Therefore, women at Thai Utility remain in a position with limited opportunities for advancement.

Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organization has been an effective tool for identifying the gendered subtexts and logics of Thai Utility, which affect women systematically, not individually. As these discussions showed, even exceptional women are subject to the same limitations and exclusions of women at Thai Utility. Acker's framework helped to identify the unspoken assumptions – the gendered subtexts – that underlie limitations on women in the workplace. Furthermore, it allowed for identification and disentanglement of two related, but distinct, concepts of family – the family of origin and the organizational family – which have quite different effects on the career prospects of men and women at Thai Utility. Thus, the gendered organization framework was exceptionally useful for understanding the gendered context of Thai Utility. In the following chapter, the findings discussed here are used to form a conclusion about both the situation at Thai Utility and whether change is possible.

Chapter 8: Conclusion and Implications

The discussion in this thesis (Chapter 7) focused on the organizational logic of the family in Thai Utility. This organizational logic was pervasive throughout the company and led to different career experiences and prospects for men and women. However, this organizational logic is hard even for the women who are impacted by it to see. Given this organizational logic and its entrenchment in the organization, what are the possibilities for change? In this conclusion, we first consider opportunities for change, and then summarize key contributions of the thesis. Following, we discuss the limitations and opportunities for further research within the study.

8.1 Opportunities for Change

While it would be helpful to have a clear answer to whether there is an opportunity for change, unfortunately that is not possible. The interviews with some of the more senior managers have suggested that generational change may be occurring. For example, Vadee (female senior HR) argued that there were changing patterns of informal interaction and social network formation among younger employees, indicating that there may in the long term be changes in social attitudes. Attitudes of young women like Pi (female junior engineer), who refuses to accept the traditional female role within Thai Utility and instead crosses gender divisions both in job roles and in informal interaction style, also suggest that change is occurring, though slowly. However, these generational changes by no means ensure that there will be a change in the underlying gendered logic of the organization.

One of the reasons that change may be challenging for Thai Utility is that it is not an isolated organization. Gendered organizational logics do not depend wholly on the members of the organization itself to emerge and persist. This can be seen in the case summarized by Parsons, et al. (2012), who investigated the Stewardesses for Women's Rights. This organization was a short-lived, female-led organization concerned with women's rights and which initially started with an anti-hierarchical structure that rejected traditional gender norms. Nonetheless, external pressures still forced the organization into increasingly gendered organizational structures and logics over time (Parsons et al., 2012). In the case of Thai Utility, it is expected that there would be similar pressures, for example regulatory pressure for leadership from engineering, continued influence of powerful men within attitudes and assumptions discussed here, along with the general Thai culture which emphasizes women's

family role. These barriers could take a long time to dissolve and could continue to affect the company in the long term.

The broader social environment, from which many of the underlying assumptions and challenges of increasing female participation in the company stem, are also a barrier to change. The gender divisions, symbols, and images of a gendered organizations do not emerge from nothing, but instead come from the gender beliefs and practices of the broader culture in which the organization is situated (Acker, 1990, 1992a; Benschop, 2009; Benschop & Doorewaard, 1998b, 2012). Some of these culturally inherited dimensions of Thai Utility's gendered organizational logic can easily be identified, such as the association of women with the home and birth family, the assignment of engineering as a male gender role, and the interaction taboo between older men and younger women. While easily visible in the organization, it would not be easy to change these broader social norms which circulate within wider Thai society.

This is not to say that there is no possibility for change. As noted in Section 7.3.3, there could easily be changes made to Thai Utility's social environment that could improve the potential for women to form strong relationships among themselves and with powerful men directly. There are some cases in the literature which have shown that long-term change in gendered organizational logics can take place. For example, the case of Pan Am showed that over time, explicit sexualization of female employees was reduced (though it did not disappear) (Dye & Mills, 2012). Not all such organizational change is positive, though. Both the SFRA (Parsons et al., 2012) and Relate (J. Lewis & Morgan, 1994) cases reviewed in Chapter 3 showed that organizational change can often entrench, rather than lessen, gendered organizational logics. Thus, while change is possible, this change may not actually reduce the pressure of gendered organizational logics or its effect on women in the organization.

8.2 Summary of Research

In this research, I investigated the phenomenon of career advancement of women in management in a Thai organization. The study began from an observation on Thai Utility, the company where my parents worked throughout their lives: why were there no female managers? On investigation, I found that it was not quite true that there were no female managers at all. Rather, there were only a few, and they were widely considered exceptional in the organization. They also mostly worked in fields that were considered traditionally 'female', like human resources and accounting, rather than in Engineering or Operations, which are Thai

Utility's core departments. This is seemingly contradictory to what can be observed in wider Thai culture, which is high involvement of women in both management and technical fields.

I undertook this research to find out why this situation existed. Following the perspective of Acker's (1990) framework of gendered organizations, I did not consider the individual women as the reason for Thai Utility's lack of women in management. That is certainly a well-trodden path, with plenty of career advice authors offering to 'fix' the failure of women to fit into the mold of the ideal worker (Giuffre & Webber, 2020). However, as Acker's framework of the gendered organization implies, investigating how individual women conduct themselves in the workplace and looking for failures to conform to this ideal worker misses the point – women, by not being men, can never fit into this mold. Therefore, the choice was made to investigate the organizational and institutional reasons for lack of career advancement by women at Thai Utility.

Acker's (1990) gendered organizational framework, used as the basis of the theoretical framework, argues that gendered organizational logics emerge in response to broader cultural beliefs, assumptions and practices, as well as the actions of individuals within the organization itself. They also emerge from gendering processes within the organization, including gender divisions, symbol and image (or cultural associations), interactions and identities. These gendered organizational logics are embedded in organizational policies, processes, and other aspects of organizational life. Thus, to understand how and why women do not achieve management positions at Thai Utility, it was important to look at these gendered organizational logics and the processes they influence. In this study I chose to pay particular attention to the interaction dimension of Acker's theory of gendered organization as well as considering the other elements of her framework. In focusing on gender interactions as a form of gendered practice, attention was directed at the practice of networking, or the formation and cultivation of relationships (both formal and informal) that can be used for career advancement. While there has been no shortage of research on networking and women (Benschop, 2009; Berger et al., 2015; Brands & Kilduff, 2014; Kankkunen, 2014; Woehler et al., 2020), relatively few of these studies have examined networking from an organizational and systematic perspective. Instead, many have focused on the micro-relationships of individuals in organizations to explain differences in networking, often not critiquing the finding that women are somehow 'deficient' in networking. Thus, it was worth looking, once again, at networking, to understand how this particular process of interaction is gendered and what effect this has on the career prospects of individuals within the organization.

There were three research questions posed for the study. These research questions included: 1) In what way is Thai Utility gendered and what is the impact of this on the career advancement of male and female managers through their career lifecycle? 2) In what ways is networking at Thai Utility a gendered practice? And 3) What gendered organizational logics can be seen emerging within Thai Utility? How do these gendered organizational logics affect the career advancement of male and female managers?

In response to Question 1, I found that Thai Utility can be understood as a gendered organization. The analysis revealed that there was a fundamental gender division within the organization – engineering was a ‘male’ role, with very limited access for women. The implication of this gender division reverberated throughout the organization because engineering was considered the core purpose of the organization, and as a result was the main source of top management and leadership. Therefore, male engineers held much of the organizational power. Gendered symbols and images also persisted, particularly the association of women with family and the home, gendered assumptions about attitudes and personalities and gendered interpretations of actions and behaviors, and gendered identity roles. These roles did not emerge independently within Thai Utility, but were brought in from Thai culture and took on particular meaning within the organizational structure. These aspects of the gendered organization did have an impact on the career lifecycle. For example, assumptions about women’s primary role as family caregivers rather than workers was used as an excuse to exclude them from informal networking opportunities and interaction, while interaction taboos between senior men and junior women also excluded these women. Women’s assumed identities as primary caregivers, reinforced through activities like the Housewives’ Association, can be contrasted with men’s identities, which are *never* associated with home and family. Thus, the gender divisions, gendered symbols and images, and gendered identities worked together to exclude women from positions of power structurally (through exclusion from the engineering department) and through everyday interactions. Over time, this had the effect of ‘filtering’ women out of the management pool, resulting in few women attaining high- level positions within the organization.

In response to Question 2, I found several ways that networking at Thai Utility is a gendered practice. This was most obvious in informal networking, which was mainly (though not exclusively) divided along gender lines. Informal networking for men was primarily social,

including golf and other sports, visits to bars, and overnight trips. During these trips, men were able to make the acquaintance of other powerful men, who were later instrumental in career advancement. Women were not formally excluded from these activities, but for the most part they did not participate, a fact which was explained in various ways. The dominant explanation from men was that women had family responsibilities that prevented participation, but there were also other gendered explanations – for example, not wanting to get sunburned playing golf. Women, on the other hand, typically felt unwelcome at these gatherings or felt that there were social limitations on their participation.

Women also engaged in single-gender socialization, through channels like the Housewives' Association, where they interacted both with more powerful women in the organization and with the wives of powerful men. Thus, informal networking was both gender-divided and unequal: while it offered men the opportunity for direct access to power, access to power was more limited for women. This indirect and less powerful networking is visible in the interaction maps. While men at the middle and senior manager level begin to develop informal connections to powerful men, women at these levels are still excluded from such relationships and dependent on their family of origin or on indirect connections through women who may not even work in the company.

More insidious were the divisions in formal networking. Here, there was no formal division, and women typically networked with both men and women. However, men could choose to isolate themselves from mixed-gender interactions, and many were isolated by default because they work in Engineering, a highly male-dominated department. At the upper management of levels, some managers isolated themselves from formal and informal interaction with female juniors, using the nominal explanation that there was an interaction taboo. This had a noticeable effect on women's interaction maps compared to men's; for example, women typically could not rely on multiple levels of management in their reporting chains supporting their career advancement. Thus, both informal and formal interaction through networking was gendered. While informal interactions were obviously gendered, there were more subtle, and potentially more damaging, formal interactions and divisions that kept women from forming the strong and direct relationships that men had.

In response to Question 3, I used the concept of gendered subtexts (Benschop & Doorewaard, 1998a, 2012) as a means of operationalizing Acker's gendered organization framework. This approach positioned gendered organizational logic as emerging from the four

other dimensions of the gendered organization, which together ‘added up’ to an overall logic of the organization.

This approach allowed me to show how Thai Utility has a single dominant organizational logic of family. There were several ways in which the organizational logic of the family could be seen in both organizational networks and networking practices. Managers entered the organization by drawing on their family of origin, typically including their birth family and sometimes a slightly broader social family including parents’ friends. For women, the family of origin extends further, including their husbands and children, although wives and children are rarely mentioned as part of the important family of origin for men. Over time, this family of origin is extended and eventually replaced by the organizational family, which includes the networks of friends and mentors that build up as the manager gains experience and moves through the organizational hierarchy. The organizational family structure is noticeably different between men and women. For men, organizational family is often broad and almost always male-dominated or entirely male, including direct links to men in power both within and outside their immediate chain of command. For women, the organizational family is narrow, often including direct connections to powerful men *only* in their direct chain of command, if there. For connections outside their direct chain of command, women often rely on indirect connections through what I have called the wives of powerful men, and less frequently to other powerful women. These indirect connections mirror the logic of power in the birth family, in which fathers (in this case, organizational leaders) hold the majority of power and the influence of mothers (in this case, the wives of organizational leaders) is indirect.

This analysis also revealed two critical gendered subtexts, both of which related to an overall gendered organizational logic of family. The first gendered subtext was “women’s place is in the home”. This subtext specifies that women’s primary responsibility is to their family of origin (either their birth family or their marital family). Thus, they cannot meet the criteria for the ideal worker, because they will always have other commitments. This makes them less able to take part in informal interaction - for example, they must go home to take care of their family, so they cannot come out for drinks. It also makes them less suitable for advancement, for example because they cannot participate in overnight field visits or other tasks. The second gendered subtext is more insidious, though it is also less visible. The “divided loyalties” subtext states that women will never commit fully to the organizational family, and instead always remain tied to their families of origin. This lack of full loyalty makes them less suitable for advancement, since they can never fully commit.

Ultimately, the gendered organizational logic of the family hindered the career advancement prospects of women while facilitating those of men. Women were faced with a certain “stickiness” of the family of origin and marital family— even if she avoided such responsibilities, for example by not marrying or having children, it was always assumed that her primary responsibility and loyalty lay there, rather than with the organizational family. There were also other effects; for example, the interaction taboo between male seniors and female juniors meant that women could not form the depth of organizational family relationships with senior powerful men directly. Instead, they were forced to find alternative routes to power, such as through the Housewives’ Association. Thus, women were continually pushed back into the family of origin. In contrast, men were able to form relationships with powerful organizational families from early stages of their career, and there was never any assumption that their main responsibility or loyalty was to their families of origin. This meant that men were not hindered by family ties (either real or imagined), did not have interaction taboos with powerful seniors, and overall, were assisted by their organizational family rather than hindered by it. Using Acker’s (1990) terms, men had the ability to form organizational family ties in a way that met the criteria of the ideal worker, while women (it was assumed) did not).

In conclusion, I found clear evidence that the gendered organizational logic of *family* negatively affected both women’s networking practice and in turn their career advancement prospects at Thai Utility. This had nothing to do with the actions (positive or negative) of individual women, or even necessarily of individual men. Instead, the intertwined gendered organizational logics of family were embedded in the organizational assumptions, culture, processes and practices of Thai Utility. These organizational logics, encapsulated in subtexts including “women’s place is in the home” and “divided loyalties”, meant that women could not form the networking relationships needed to advance in the company. While they were not officially prevented from doing so, the informal interaction routes – and some of the formal ones – were simply blocked. This left women dependent on their family of origin or on indirect access through wives of powerful men, once again turning back to the family of origin, rather than organizational family. This was only one aspect of gendered organizational life at Thai Utility, but it had a direct effect on women’s advancement prospects.

8.3 Research Implications

This research does have some implications for the academic approach to gendered organizational logics. However, as discussed in Section 8.1, whether it has implications for managerial or organizational process or practice is dubious. In terms of academic impact, this study has demonstrated how it is possible to make full use of Acker's (1990) gendered organizations framework. This is an area of academic practice that has been neglected, with only a few studies (reviewed in Chapter 3) fully utilizing the framework to understand organizations and their gendering processes. This study used two novel approaches. First, while all the dimensions of Acker's model were used to some extent, the focus was on interaction as the key to understanding both gendered organizational logics and the effect of these logics on the organization. The study also focused on one type of interaction (networking), which further improved the application. Thus, this research has contributed by developing an approach to applying Acker's gendered organizations framework in a real-world way, which is both broad (encompassing the entire model) and deep (focusing on one kind of interaction).

The second contribution of this research to the academic body of literature is its systematic focus. The research is neither focused on the individual and her perceived deficiency (the subject of a lot of managerial writing) nor only internally on the organization (commonly used in other applications of the gendered organization framework). Instead, it tries to blur the boundary between Thai Utility and Thai culture, acknowledging that the company does not stand on its own but is instead influenced by these external factors. The use of this systematic approach was deliberate, as explained earlier in the chapter. It helps to make more obvious exactly how the gendered subtexts of the organization work, even in the face of no individual claiming to be particularly sexist or acting deliberately to control or limit the advancement prospects of women. This systematic approach is therefore among the more useful approaches to understanding networking and why it may not be as effective for women. It is not because women are, in some ineffable way, bad at networking – it is because networking is designed for women to not fit into its contours. This is a key issue that should be investigate further as elucidations of how organizational processes and structures can lead to a de facto but invisible exclusion women are needed.

8.4 Research Limitations

Like any other study, there are some limitations to the research that should be addressed. Some of these limitations come from the choice of methodology. Because the study was qualitative organizational research, the findings are particular to Thai Utility and as a consequence could not be directly generalized to other contexts (Symon & Cassell, 2012). This does not indicate poor research quality, but rather that there are idiosyncratic aspects of every organization and qualitative research study that means that findings that are correct in one organizational context, but not in another. Thus, the findings should not be taken to apply directly to any other organization or context, though they can serve as a guide to what kinds of gendered organizational logics could be seen in other Thai organizations.

A second limitation is that it is uncertain how representative Thai Utility is of Thai organizations or Thai culture in general. While the company is clearly situated in Thai culture, it is unusual in several respects, including its size (very large), its history as a paternalistically led state-owned enterprise, and its participation in an aggressively gendered field (utilities and engineering). Thus, Thai Utility could be entirely different from other organizations – but on the other hand, it could be very similar. Simply, the extent to which Thai Utility represents Thai organizations is unknown.

A final limitation is that the study relied heavily on the reporting of participants. This was a change from some previous studies, which have used documentary evidence from organizational archives as well as interviews with organization members as a form of cross-checking (Dye & Mills, 2012; Manville, 1997). This research did not, because such documentation was unavailable for such a personal activity as networking. The use of rich data (Given, 2008), with many interviews conducted at different levels and different departments and compared to arrive at conclusions, was intended to offset this to some extent. However, it was not possible to identify truly unconscious or subliminal assumptions, gendered bodily practices, or some other domains of personal gender practice that, while they are unspoken, may affect networking practices. There was no way to overcome this limitation, so it was accepted as part of the study.

8.5 Opportunities for Further Study

The main opportunity for further study is that the gendered organization framework established by Acker (1990) and developed in further works, including the present one, could be used more completely in organizational analysis and studies of gendered organizations. Despite its obvious utility as a theory of organizations, as indicated in the literature review and in the number of studies which have cited the theory, unfortunately Acker's gendered organization framework has not been applied completely in many studies. In fact, only a handful of studies could be identified in this research that came close to a complete application (as reviewed in the Theoretical Framework of Chapter 3). There is an opportunity for evaluating gender in organizations more completely and identifying more of the subtexts and organizational logics that underlie these organizations, if it is applied more completely, especially in combination with other organizational processes. As demonstrated in this thesis, full use of Acker's framework should include all dimensions of the theory of gendered organization framework. Additionally, I recommend extended focus on one dimension of the framework- here gendered interactions. In paying particular attention to networking as an example of gendered interaction practices, I make visible the gendered aspects of this practice and how it contributes to an organizational logic of family. This acted as a fulcrum by which the weight of the organizational logic of family can be exposed, improving understanding of how organizations can be experienced differently by individuals, with some people (in this study men) benefitting from taken for granted structures while others (in this study women) do not. Thus, following this general approach of not just applying the gendered organization framework but combining it with other organizational processes that are relevant, could help to improve understanding.

Another opportunity for more research addresses one of the limitations of the current study. Specifically, the ambiguity of organizational subtexts that emerged within Thai Utility and whether these are specific to the organization or whether they are clearly linked to broader gender subtexts in Thai culture. This is difficult to determine only from the case of Thai Utility, which has a particular history of state ownership and paternal leadership, operates within a gender-divided and patriarchal industry (utility services and engineering) and which has had a formalized, hierarchical organizational structure for a long time. Investigating gendered organizations in other Thai contexts – for example, in smaller firms, less formal firms and firms in female-dominated industries could help identify shared subtexts (which likely come from

broader culture, or from shared contexts like business schools). A better understanding of how Thai culture is gendered and what gender subtexts are previously existing would, in turn, enable researchers to understand Thai organizations better. Such research could also focus on different aspects of organization, to better understand how gendered organizational logics influence areas of women's work lives.

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Appendix A: Consent Form



CONSENT FORM

Title of project: The Organizational Logic of Family: Gender and Management in a Large Organization in Thailand

Name of investigator: Nayika Kamales

Participant Identification Number for this project:

Please initial box

1. I confirm I have read and understand the information sheet dated... (version...) for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. (*Insert contact number here of lead researcher/member of research team, as appropriate*).

3. I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses. (*Also add here a statement about publication of anonymised direct quotes, if this will be done*).

4. I agree to take part in the above research project.

Name of participant Date _____
Signature

Name of person taking consent Date _____
Signature

(if different from lead researcher)

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Lead researcher Date _____
Signature

Copies: When completed: 1 for participant; 1 for researcher site file; 1 (original) to be kept in main file

ARC: C:\Users\nk361\Desktop\Ethical forms\Faculty SS-reag-consent-form.docx

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

ID:

Study title: Gender, Networking and Career in a Thai State Enterprise

Dear participant,

Date:.....

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Please note that you must be work in a position of junior, middle and senior managerial level at Thai Utility to participate. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take your time to read the following information carefully.

This study has 2 parts which are drawing diagram and semi-structured interviews. For the first step, you will be asked to draw the diagram to show your personal networking map in Thai Utility follow the instruction. (I will give you again after you are willing to participate this study) Then, you will be asked to be interviewed to answer all set of questions about the topics of gender, networking and career in Thai Utility.

We hope you will take part in our study, and to do so, you will be asked to give your consent to proceed. If you decide to take part, you still free to withdraw at any time during or at the end of interview process.

To draw the diagram, I will allow you to do before interview date 1-2 week. For the interview process, it will take about 45 minutes to 1 hour (not over). Your data will be kept confidential. After completion both diagram and interview, you are welcome to ask more questions about this research study by contacting the researcher.

The results of the study will be written up for academic papers that may be submitted for publication. No identifiable information will be used in write-up.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the study or if you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, please contact Miss Nayika Kamales (nk361@kent.ac.uk)

If you have any serious ethical concern about the conduct of the study, please feel free to contact Chair of the School of Business Administration ethic panel, University of Kent, with a detailed account of your concerns. (email...)

Thank you for taking your time to read this participant information sheet. If you are willing to take part this study, please proceed to give your consent.

Appendix C: Interview Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study, which concerns gender, networking and career progression.

The research is a critical part of my thesis, because my aim is to present the importance of networking activities for facilitating and supporting the careers of male and female managers, particularly in a large public sector organisation in Thailand. Currently, there is little research into this subject from a Thai perspective, so that your contribution will be extremely valuable.

Your opinions about networking, and its link to career progression, are also extremely important to me because you have the direct experience and knowledge of this phenomena on a daily basis. This is why I asked you to complete the networking map before the interviews, so that it would be easier to answer the questions regarding the relationships you have developed.

I have pre-prepared a set of questions, that will form a framework for our discussion, and these will take approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete. At the end of the formal questions, I would like you to add any additional comments, which you feel are significant. Thank you.

The initial questions I will ask you relate to your personal data and are only relevant to devising a profile of all the participants, so that I can demonstrate that I have gathered a suitable range of opinions.

There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, it is your personal views on the subjects that are important; everyone will have different perspectives.

All of the responses you provide are fully confidential and the research report will be structured so that no individual can be identified from remarks that she/he made.

You can withdraw from this research at any time.

Please indicate that you have read the guidelines and are happy to continue:

Yes No

Non Manager Other Please specify your role:

****Start interview with this question and fill out demographic page at the end of the interview****

7. Please tell me about your career to date?

a) before you joined Thai Utility

b) about your role here at Thai Utility

8. What is your family responsibilities?

9. What are your career ambitions at Thai Utility

10. Which highest position do you think you can success at Thai Utility? Why?

11: Which highest position do you would like to success at Thai Utility? Why?

Section 2 : Discussion about the mapping of networks

1. Which networking activities do you think will have a positive impact on your career progression? (give the example) And Why do you think that is?

1. How did you find the experience of mapping your networks?

2. Are you surprise when you put your networks down on paper?

3. Did you expect to find something different to what you have outlined?

4. How would you characterise your network?

- Is it work and professional based only? Explain.

- Is it psychosocial (friendship or personal) only? Explain.

- Is it a combination? Explain.

- Please describe the main benefits of each of your networks to me.

5. Thinking about your career, would you like your network to be different? How might you strengthen it?

6. Do you have any important networks outside of Thai Utility? If yes, what are they?
If no why not?

7. Explain to me the linkages in the map (here you will specifically guide discussion through the map itself)

8. How did you build these network ties?

****If you need to reduce the number of questions on the interview schedule, then reduce the attitude and knowledge one but keep all the network and career ones.****

Section 3 : Attitudes

2. Do you like networking?
3. What are the advantage and disadvantage of networking? (from your opinion)
4. Can you identify a person (what kind of person) who you think is a really good networker?
5. What is it about this person that makes them a good networker?
6. How important do you think networking is in gaining promotion at Thai Utility?
7. In what ways, if any, do you think networking is different for men and women? If different.. Please explain why?
8. What barriers have you experienced in trying to join (formal & informal) networking?

Section 4 : Knowledge

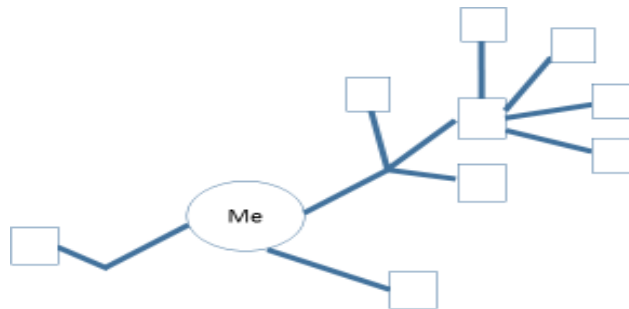
1. How pervasive is networking in Thai Utility? / What do you understand by the term of networking at Thai Utility?
2. What happen if you do not do it?
3. Do you think if you do not have networking, will you success at Thai Utility?
Combine questions 2 and 3 into one question

THANK YOU FOR THE TIME YOU HAVE GIVEN TO SUPPORTING THIS RESEARCH

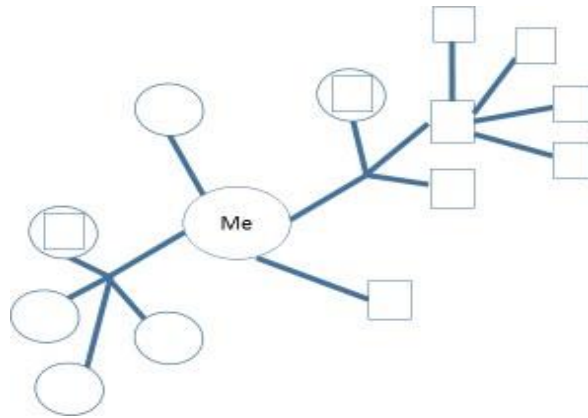
Appendix D: Instruction of Personal Networking Map

Please draw the diagram to show your personal networking map in Thai Utility follow this instruction below.

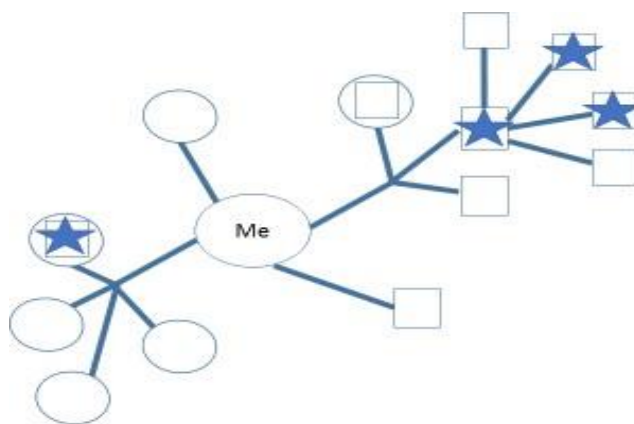
1. Step 1 (Career Information Network): please identify who provides career information, career development function and organizational information to you when you need. For example, if you would like to know your duties and responsibilities or you have any problems in your job, who could help and support for these things. (This includes your colleagues, boss (line of command), HR staffs and mentors.) These contacts can be denoted by a rectangular box.



2. **Step 2** (Psychosocial support network, represented by ovals) included network connections who offer psychological and social support, for example friendship or any person who support you.

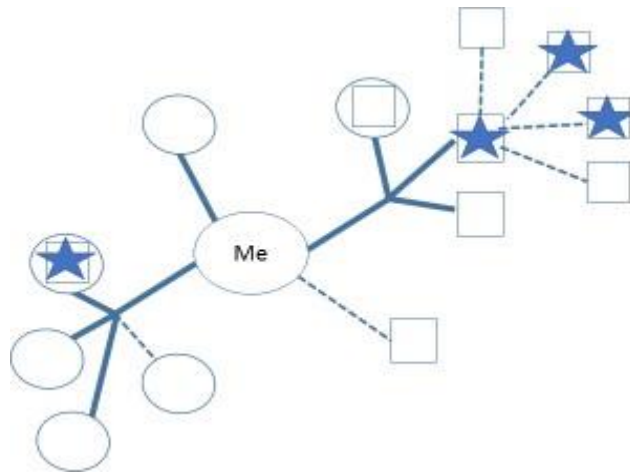


3. **Step 3** (Powerful contacts, represented by a star) included network connections with high status and formal or informal power, both within and outside the organization. For example senior managers or high executive in organization and powerful businessman or political man outside the organization. Please identify who in your network (or connection in Thai context. These contacts can be denoted by a star.

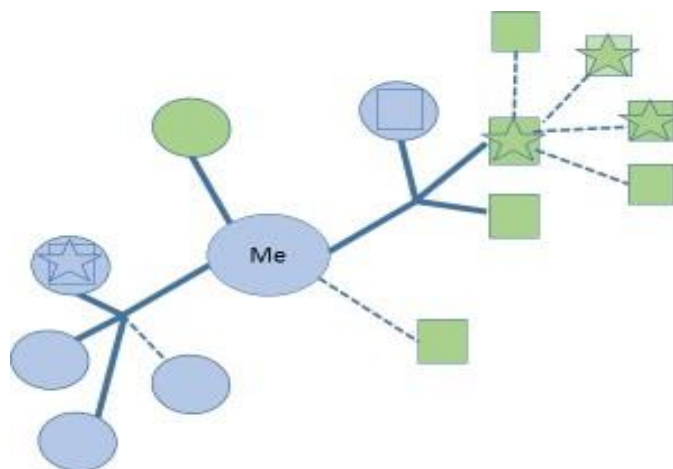


4. **From step 1 to step 3**, please identify which of these contacts are weak ties and strong ties. (weak tie is denoted by a dashed line and strong tie is denoted by a solid line) The example of a strong tie such as family or close friends etc. For the example

of a weak tie such as a colleague who work in different department or boss who you hardly to contact with etc.



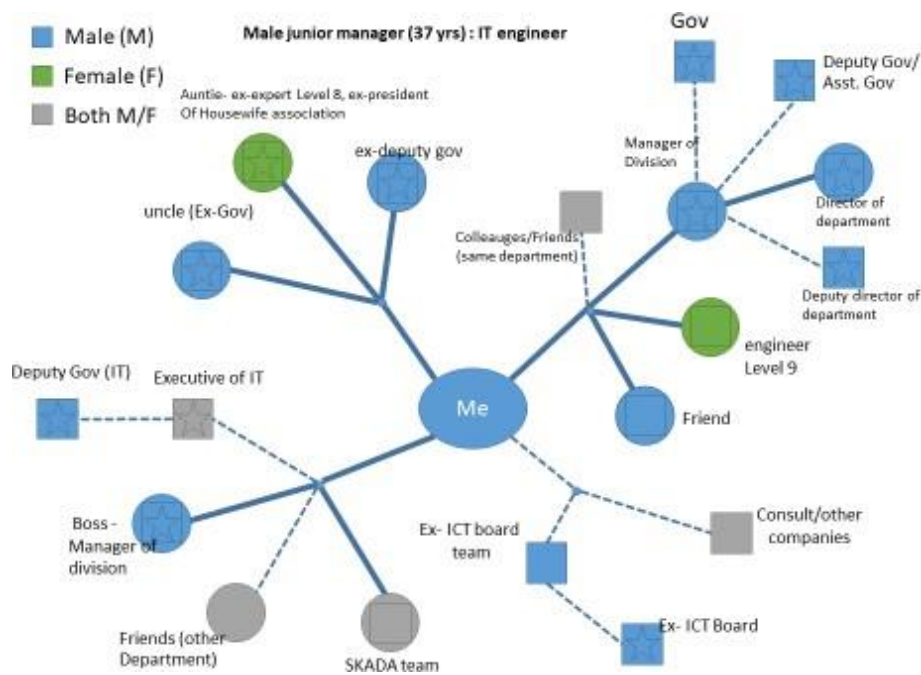
5. **From step 4**, please identify which network contacts are homophilous in terms of gender. These contacts are denoted by a different colour between male and female. (use blue colour for male, green colour for female and grey colour for mixed-gender groups)



Remarks

1. One person could or might play many roles more than 1. For example, one person could be career information network, psychosocial support network and also powerful contacts.

The example of personal networking map to show participants (before interview)



Appendix E: List of Abbreviations

(from the personal networking map; Chapter 4 and 6)

Asst = assistant

Dep = deputy

Ex- who already retired from this company

F = female

Gov = governor

Jr = junior

M = male

Mgr = manager

Mid = middle

NW = network

Sr = senior

Sub = subordinate