

If the Ceiling Fits:

A Study into the glass ceiling for women in senior management positions in the top 1000 Irish Companies as named in the Irish Times List 2015



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Declaration: I Carla Ryan, declare that this is my original work and that I has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of a Degree or Diploma. In addition, I have referred correctly all literature and sources used in this work and this work is fully compliant with the Dublin Business School's academic honesty policy.

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Abstract

This research project will examine the perception of the glass ceiling in Irish companies today, it will look into some of the barriers including, maternity/paternity leave, tokenism, education vs experience and the gender pay gap. The research took a sample of companies from The Irish Times List of Top 1000 Companies 2015.

1. Literature Review

The literature review gives an overview of the evolution of the glass ceiling, and the development of the glass cliffs and walls. It then identifies some barriers that have prevented women from progressing to senior positions.

These barriers can include Maternity/Paternity Leave which encompasses spousal support, childcare facilities and a mentoring program for women.

The barrier of education vs experience investigates women's progression rates within companies, work ethic and attitudes to working long hours.

The barrier of Tokenism is looked at, if women feel the need to prove their qualifications and not a show of diversity.

The gender pay gap is a tricky subject to tackle but it is an important aspect for women to break the ceiling.

Finally the benefits for both employees and the company of breaking the glass ceiling is discussed.

2. Methodology

This chapter discusses the reasons why in-depth interviews were chosen and why the companies were chosen.

3. Data Analysis

This chapter discusses the findings from the 13 in-depth interviews from a range of companies and sectors investigated, including a stay at home mum and a mum who chose to go back to work and her partner stay at home.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter discusses the idea of a glass maze and how it is women's choice how their career progresses. It gives some recommendations to make it easier for women who have family commitments can continue to work, or gain access back into the work force if that is their choice.

Introduction

For many years, the dominant argument in literature has held that male leadership was the most effective in business with respect to financial performance (*Fairlie and Robb 2009*). As the business world was created from a male vision (*Dye et al, 2005*), the ideal leader is characterized by traits that most men possess (*Broadbridge and Hearn 2008*). To demonstrate an effective and efficient leadership style, managers must also develop social and emotional capabilities (*Melero, 2011*). This translates into either performance or women subjugating their personalities (*Essers and Benschopp 2007*). *Schein (2007)* called this the “think-manager; think-male” effect, which apparently qualifies men as better leaders.

The Glass Ceiling is a term used to define the invisible but impenetrable barrier for women to progress to senior management positions or positions of power within industries today. Despite the introductions of equality legislation such as The Employment Equality Act, 1998, the number of women employed in senior management positions remains low (see appendix 1) (*Linehan, 2002*). This can be illustrated clearly in the hostility in the media towards Hilary Clinton in the presidential race for election. Despite this fact there are more women on FTSE 350 boards than ever before, with representation of women more than doubling since 2011. Yet it will still take 73 years to reach parity with men in the boardrooms of the top 500 companies in the USA. The UK and Equal Opportunity Commission calculated it would take 65 years for women to achieve equality with men as directors of Britain's top 100 companies (*Thomson 2008*). It is also worth noting that in tech companies' the dress code for women vs. men. This can be seen at the awards ceremony recently where Mark Zuckerberg (Facebook) can arrive and wearing jeans and a t-shirt, in contrast Marissa Mayer (Yahoo) arrives in a power suit and heels. While this is not unusual and can be seen in a range of industries. Women in the legal profession must always be dressed in power suits to avoid being mistaken for secretaries and to establish their position of power.

Although the glass ceiling could exist at different levels in different organizations or industries, the term is typically used to suggest a barrier entry into top-level management positions. Among the factors which impede progress of women in management include; motherhood, which results in a career interruption or a career break, a lack of a role model or a mentor and a conscious decision to avoid the stress of balancing work and life (*The Economist, 2009; Matsa and Miller, 2011*).

One explanation for the limited number of women in leadership roles is the notion that men and women define success in private and professional life differently (*Bilimoria, 2005*). Similar to these studies, men and women employ different leadership styles in different business decisions (*Mandell and Pherwani, 2003*). Female leadership style appears to be less effective when analyzing performance by comparing, start-up capital (*Coleman and Robb 2009*). While in contrast to this *Lafuente and Rabetino, (2011)* and *Hallward-Driermeier (2011)* both have found significantly higher performance in companies led by women.

However a gap still exists at the top levels of organizations in decision making roles. Senior and middle management positions in Ireland are twice as likely to be occupied by men rather than women. (ESRI 2009). In Ireland the underrepresentation of women on corporate boards, executive committees and in politics is the reality. Other European countries are considering a voluntary system of encouraging employers to increase their board gender balance with a number of years lead in, prior to implementing any such legislation.

While women are becoming increasingly better educated than men accounting for 55% of university graduates in OECD countries. In some colleges women are out numbering men close to 3,500 more female students, however this does even out to more of an even split when it comes to post graduate programs. However the World Economic Forum has found that, while Ireland ranks equal first for women's educational attainment, it is twenty ninth in women's workplace participation. Similarly women make up 80% of consumer purchases in the developed world despite complaining being misunderstood by marketers. If the leadership was more diverse the needs of both males and females would be better represented.

Current research on gender diversity indicates that discrimination towards gender in organizations persists in various forms. Women leaders are still stigmatized as less qualified leaders than men, and their leadership effectiveness is assessed by a different set of standards. This was reiterated by *Cale and Heilman (2009)* who argued that, due to stereotype-based prescriptions, female authorities would be penalized in a greater extent than male authorities for treating their subordinates unfairly. Their study indicates that women do indeed receive less favorable performance ratings and harsh reward recommendations compared with men they behave unfairly.

Numerous theories have proposed the existence of outright discrimination against women in organizations because of their gender. One such theory is that men have a desire to keep women in a dependent status contributes to limitations on the latter's employment opportunities, including access to top management positions (*Strober 1984*). Another theory suggests that gender discrimination results from international bias in decisions by managers, acting in their own self-interest, who see their organizations as not interesting eliminating gender discrimination or alleviating its effects (*Larwood, Szwajkowski & Rose, 1988*).

As the situation for women gradually improves, it is now necessary for women, especially those in leadership positions to recognize that expecting women to do more to prove their worth is no longer a healthy response to a chilly climate, such an attitude is now outdated and counterproductive (*Renwick Monroe 2002*)

A woman who is devoted to her family has her professional commitment questioned compared to a man who is praised for his humanity and family values. A man is quiet dedicated, dispassionate scholar, a woman with the same personality is criticized because her reserved, professional

demeanor lacks warmth or because she is not nurturing enough. The standards shift, and shift in a way that privileges men.

Research Objectives/Hypothesis

It is my intention to study further the glass ceiling for women today in Irish companies. This is a topic that is worth further research after reading a recent case study from 2012 based on gender equality in senior management positions and the boardrooms. To reiterate, it is claimed that it will take 73 years to achieve equality in the top 500 companies in the USA. Furthermore it will take 65 years for the top 100 companies in the UK to achieve equality. It would be interesting to examine this further in the context of Irish companies.

Although the glass ceiling is not a novel idea, it has been revitalized by the case studies, such as those carried out in Japan. These work to keep women in the workforce by introducing childcare and laundry facilities to facilitate working mothers and their return to the workforce. (The company is also acknowledging women's day and children's days with half days on these particular holidays). This new idea is being praised and a happier workforce has resulted. This is in contrast to the more established countries such as USA who has not adopted these policies. However in Europe the Scandinavian countries who have adopted these policies have a much more productive workforce.

On the same level claims of unequal of a lack of improvement in the gender pay gap have been made recently. This study aims to research the working conditions, benefits and advantages to both male and female employees in the top firms in Ireland and thus explore the veracity of these claims.

The constitution itself enables discrimination by providing that the mother is the principle career. This is the bedrock of our legal system- therefore is discrimination or the glass ceiling inevitable in Ireland. It is ironic that the higher the level of employment the more flexible the working hours. If more women were able to get to the higher levels, they would in turn have more time to raise their family and more flexible working hours. However is it a case that the hours and commitment to get there is a deterrent for some female candidates to aspire to reach such levels? Still faced with the definition of "female leaders" not simply "leaders". This implies a note of tokenism that women are given the position of managers. Does this apply to men on the other side of the coin.

The aim of this study is to investigate, analyze and conclude and recommend on the following in depth:-

It is intended to examine the cultural aspects of some of Ireland's top companies at senior management levels today within certain topics that have been recognized to hinder women's progression to the senior levels of organizations. In-depth interviews can give an insight to these objectives and can be helpful to understand the reasons for and the thought behind each hypothesis.

The objectives of this research are:-

- With the new Paternity leave coming into legislation the researcher wanted to investigate the current rights for women in terms of maternity leave, and about spousal support. How easy the transition back to the work place after a career break is and the childcare facilities or allowances if any are made for Irish Women today.
- Career progression rates for women are not as successful as their male counterparts. The researcher sought to discuss the career progression with organisations. It was also intended to find out if women were more likely to progress to the more senior roles from within an organisation. The criteria that an employee must meet before they can progress and are these requirements equal for all employees.
- There are still a lot of male dominated sectors in the working environment, my objective was to investigate women's opinions on this working environment. Do they feel the need to work harder to prove they are their own merit and talent rather than to portray an image of being a diverse and equal rights company.
- There is a pay disparity within the working classes. However, further investigation has determined that there is a gap between male and female wages within Europe. The aim of the researcher was to break this down further and investigate if there was a pay disparity within organisations. If there was what could be done to shorten the gap and if there was not what procedures or policies were used to prevent this gap.
- The final objective was to get a view on women's perceptions of the glass ceiling from within organisations, their struggles or experiences in getting to their current positions and what advice they would offer to the next generation of women to avoid the pitfalls they have overcome.

There are some limitations to the amount of information that may be available for this topic. Certain issues such as pay disparity may not be as easily accessible from organizations. There are 1000 companies on the Irish Times List so the researcher would aim to investigate a cross-sectional variety of these companies. Due to the time constraints, there may be issues in collecting the data a lot of people will be on holiday.

Companies may not wish to disclose their internal company policies, and it may not be possible to find out the companies practices on gender diversity. While company policies and mission statements will be available on line the practical application may be difficult to obtain from companies.

The pay disparity is a sensitive topic and would not be possible to look at specific numbers but rather to enquire if all employees of the same qualifications are on the same pay grade within the

companies. The main aim would be to investigate whether men and women who are in similar or identical positions are paid identically. Due to the confidential nature of this it may not be viable.

This research paper will review the literature already written on this topic under different headings or barriers that can affect women's progression. It will then investigate a section of companies and analyze the findings and conclude and recommend some future procedures or policies that could be implemented to ensure that this ceiling is demolished for the next generation.

Some contributions from this research will be a modern day takes on the glass ceiling within the top 1000 Irish Companies. This research will investigate modern day legislation for equality and the new paternity rights and its effects if any on the attitudes and general implantation of the act. The glass ceilings, walls and cliffs will also be investigated and if the glass ceiling has actually been broken or if tokenism has given the false hope of equality in business today.

Literature Review

What is the Glass Ceiling/Cliff or Walls

The underrepresentation of women in senior management positions can be understood as a consequence of structural inequalities which favor men. The majority of organizations have been created by men and therefore function to accommodate men *Meyerson and Fletcher (2000)*. This has been reiterated by *Francis & Lublin, (2014)* who states that in the last decade gender diversity has been a widely debated subject, especially within the corporate sphere and on corporate boardrooms. Although women make up 47 percent of the overall labor force they account for only 6 percent of corporate CEOs and top executives. Women have made considerable progress in entering the managerial ranks of US enterprises in recent years but fail to make it to the highest level. All but one of the chief executive officers of the Business Week Top 1,000 corporations for 1992 were men *Segal (1992)*.

The Glass Ceiling

The obstacles that lead the under representation of women in leadership and upper level management positions is commonly described in scholarly works and the media as glass ceiling. It has been argued that the glass ceiling beliefs can lift or diminish desires to be promoted. These beliefs may lead to career pathway choices and long-lasting behaviors within the organizations. It is these beliefs that can lead to formatting of long term and short term behaviors and expectations of women in business. (How women's glass ceiling beliefs related to career success). Although the glass ceiling could exist at different levels in different organizations or industries, the term typically is used to suggest a barrier to entry into top-level management positions.

The Glass Cliff

The 'glass cliff' describes a situation in which women are more likely than men to be placed in precarious leadership positions. An assessment of women and men as leaders in the FTSE 100 companies, for instance, found that women were more likely to be appointed to the boards of companies that had been performing poorly in the five months prior to their appointment. Similar observations were made regarding political representation, with women being more likely than men to compete for unsafe or unwinnable seats in elections (*Ryan, Haslam, & Kulich, 2010*). While limiting women's chances to achieve electoral or business success, the 'glass cliff' effect also increases women leaders' chances of failing, thus potentially serving to support common prejudices against women leaders as less competent.

The Glass Walls

Glass Walls- hold women in segregation by gender within management occupations. Women now have access to top management positions but in functions such as Human Resource, Public Relations and Communication Management. (www.ilo.org.ie) (See Appendix 2)

The Evolution of the Glass Ceiling

The glass ceiling is subtle that it is hard to identify but strong enough to prevent women from moving up past middle management level in a company (*Morrison & Von Glinow, 1990*). The early acknowledgement of the glass ceiling did establish that although subtle the glass ceiling does exist. In a 1994 study it was established that women who wish to reach senior management levels in a company are less likely to be married with children compared to their male counterparts (*Tharenou & Conroy, 1994*).

The underrepresentation of women in senior management is perpetuated through social and cultural biases that define the role of manager as equating to masculine characteristics and traits (McKinsey 2007). Men are seen to be competent and more suited to the workplace, whereas women are seen to be expressive and nurturing which is more suited to the home (*Hoobler 2009*).

When women do break through the cracks it is seen as tokenism (*Lyness & Thompson, 2000*). The idea of tokenism is that the company presents an image of equality and fairness by placing women on their board of directors or in very visible senior positions.

Starting work early and finishing work late are seen as a sign of commitment to the company. This is also a way for employees to distinguish themselves from other others with similar qualifications and experience (*Guillaume & Pochic, 2009*). Senior management roles are seen to equate with constant availability and mobility (*Liff and Ward, 2001*). This model of a work-life has caused women to downsize their career aspirations (*Hewlett, Buck Luce, Shiller and Southwall, 2005*). Women who behave in line with the managerial expectations are considered to have lost their femininity (*Marvin, 2008*). As women managers are often assessed against male model of leadership, they are “left with limited and unfavorable options no matter which way they go, no matter how they might choose to behave as leaders” (*Catalyst 2007*).

It may be this reason why women do not see themselves as being ambitious – those that are seen to have some ambition are viewed negatively. This negative perception may explain why women are less likely to be ambitious and make career plans, which can have a negative outcome for career progression (*Valiulis et al 2008*).

In nine years of measuring the global gender gap, the world has seen only a small improvement in equality for women in the workplace. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2014, launched today, the gender gap for economic participation and opportunity now stands at 60% worldwide, having closed by 4% from 56% in 2006 when the Forum first started measuring it. Based on this trajectory, with all else remaining equal, it will take 81 years for the world to close this gap completely (*Global Gender Gap Report 2014, World Economic Forum*)

Barriers to Women breaking the Glass Ceiling

There have been some high-profile hiring of female CEOs in recent years, and they included Marillyn Hewson, CEO of Lockheed Martin (LMT), and Mary Barra, CEO of General Motors (GM), the first woman to lead an auto company. As pointed out by (Egan 2015), these women CEOs are exceptions rather than the rule; in fact, as of 2015, only 24 of the CEOs of Standard and Poor's (S&P) 500 companies are women. Equally identified by (Parker et al. (2015), "women have made only modest progress in gaining top leadership positions in the business world. While the issue of gender diversity has certainly received attention, the promise for greater diversity on corporate boards does not seem to have been delivered upon and there seems that gender discrimination exists and persists in companies today (Adams et al 2007, Sealy and Vinnicombe, 2013). There has been little research of any type, not just gender based, on how actual promotion decisions are made for top management positions. Stumpf and London (1981) identified criteria that are commonly used when decisions are made about management promotions. They specified both job-irrelevant criteria, such as gender, race and appearance and job-relevant criteria, such as related work experience, being a current member of the organization offering the position, past performance, education and seniority. However, they observed that "the relative importance of these factors in particular promotion decision or across decisions has received little attention. These factors still hold true today. (Academy of Management Review)

Company respondents to the ILO company survey conducted across developing regions ranked what they considered the most significant barriers in order of priority as shown in Appendix 3 .Consolidated rankings may mask important differences between regions. Nevertheless, all regions except Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) identified the same top 5 or 6 barriers relating to women's and men's social and reproductive roles on the one hand and on the other the reflection of these in workplace structures, e.g. corporate culture and women not gaining adequate line management experience to position them for top jobs.

All regions also identified inadequate labor and non-discrimination laws as the least significant barrier. The lack of flexible solutions as a barrier for women was ranked 10 out of 15. However, for much of Asia as well as the Caribbean nation of Jamaica it was ranked 6 and 2 respectively. While most regions identified roles assigned by society to men and women as one of the top barriers, CEE countries only ranked this as 9 out of 15. While CEE companies ranked women having more family responsibilities than men as the top barrier, they ranked men not being encouraged to take leave for family responsibilities as the second highest barrier and in third place the lack of a strategy for the retention of skilled women. In fifth place CEE ranked inherent gender bias in recruitment and promotion.

They have been some ideas as to why this may be the case including: –

Muriel Niederle and LiseVesterlund (2007) argue that women may shy away from competition for promotions and career interruptions such as childbirth can be seen to limit the advancement of women up the corporate ladder.

Similar arguments have been made about the existence of outright discrimination against women in organizations because of their gender. Theories such as *Strober (1984)*, focus on men's desire to keep women in a dependent status contributes to limitation on the latter's employment opportunities including access to top management positions.

This was again reiterated by (*Larwood, Szwajowski and Rose 1988*) by suggesting that gender discrimination results from intentional bias in decisions by managers, acting in their own self-interest, who see their organizations as not interested in eliminating gender discrimination or alleviating its effects. Such managers may find a personal advantage in this discrimination.

A further argument may be that a man's career takes precedent over a woman's family commitments or social custom.

Finally *Nieva and Gutek (1980)* documented the existence of pre-male bias in laboratory studies involving evaluation of applications for managerial positions. Women are promoted faster internally, but display similar rates of external promotion and demotion. Female executives, however, have higher exit rates than men. Both at age 39 and age 49, the probability of a female executive becoming CEO is less than half that of male executives. (Gayle 2011)

Barrier- Leave-Maternity Leave- Spousal Support

Among the factors which impede progress of women in management include motherhood that results in a career interruption, a lack of a role model or a mentor and a conscious decision to avoid the stress of balancing work and life (*The Economist, 2009; Matsa and Miller, 2011*).

Significant improvements in the entitlement to maternity leave had been introduced over the last decade. Maternity leave continues to be paid to women for 26 weeks at 80 per cent of earnings (subject to a minimum of EUR 217.80 and a maximum of EUR 232 per week) and a further 16 weeks of unpaid leave can be taken. A minimum of 2 weeks must be taken before the end of the week in which the baby is due. Maternity leave is granted by the Department of Social Protection to women who have paid a certain number of social insurance contributions on their own insurance record. Top-up payments are paid by employers in many cases, but these are discretionary.

Changes to parental leave entitlements were introduced in March 2013, giving effect to EU Council Directive 2010/18/EU. Parental leave is unpaid in Ireland. The main changes are an increase in leave entitlement from 3 to 4 months – the extra month being non-transferable between parents. The government state that they hope that this non-transferable period will encourage men to take parental leave, and encourage a more equal sharing of family responsibilities between men and women. The changes also include the right to request flexible working arrangements upon return from leave. Parents are now entitled to 18-week unpaid parental leave per parent per child (i.e. an individual right) which must be taken up to the child's eighth birthday. Leave may be taken in separate blocks of a minimum of 6 continuous weeks or more favorable terms subject to the employer's agreement. Parents who are employed by the same employer may transfer all or part of their parental leave entitlements to the other parent, subject to the employer's agreement. There is no recent data on the take-up of parental leave by fathers. All statutory leave entitlements in Ireland count as pensionable service. Irish employees are entitled to three-day paid *force majeure* leave in time of urgent family crisis in any 12 consecutive months, up to a limit of 5 days in any 36 consecutive months.

A national study of pregnancy at work conducted in 2007-2009 based on a survey of women in receipt of child benefit looked at the question of take-up of leave. 92 per cent of mothers took paid maternity leave, while 41 per cent took unpaid maternity leave, mostly in addition to paid leave. Women who were self-employed, worked in temporary/casual jobs or part-time employment during pregnancy were less likely to take paid maternity leave. Nearly half (48 per cent) of employed women received a top-up payment from their employer. Nearly one-third (32 per cent) of the women in employment surveyed experienced problems around maternity leave. Almost one-fifth (19 per cent) of women had their request for parental leave refused, or not in the form requested. The study showed that take-up of unpaid parental leave is linked to women's ability to afford it. There is no data available on the take-

up of parental leave by fathers (HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme and Equality Authority 2011; International Leave Network 2014 (www.leavenetwork.org)).

The current culture in organisations rarely facilitates men and women who are trying to balance their work life and family responsibilities. Thus having caring responsibilities can have a negative implication for career progression (*Russell et al, 2009*). Many women feel the need to choose between work success and family. Gender roles have historically tended to endorse the women's role as a wife and the husband's authority over her (*Crompton and Lynoette 2006*). This line of thought has been reiterated by many academic writers, (*Tharenou, 2001*) noted that married women with children are indeed known to advance more slowly in the managerial ranks compared to corresponding men. Women who are career-orientated and can be regarded as economically independent of the traditional patriarchal structure of income and support of the marriage through their own work-life activity (*Gatrell 2007*).

The negative impact of having a family on career progression has not been significantly reduced by the introduction of family friendly policies, such as flexi-time or parental leave. Employees with caring responsibilities are aware that devoting time to family demands will have negative career consequences (*Thompson, Beauvais&Lyness, 1999*). It is further viewed by managers that women are rated lower on both job and organisational fit and commitment (*Heilman&Okimoto, 2008*). Women are believed to have a greater conflict in the family-work conflict rather than men, resulting in the assumption that women are incompatible with the job and organisation and therefore unsuitable for promotion. (*Hoobler 2009*). This is in stark contrast to men who are viewed as fitting in with the job and organisation as they are perceived as having less family responsibility (*Lyness&Heilman 2006*).

However a study by *McGinnity and Keane (2009)* has resulted that the benefit of employment for women outweighs any of the family-work conflict. In Finland, at the societal level, women's participation in working life is facilitated by extensive childcare support and maternity and child allowances, which enable Finnish women to combine work and family responsibilities and permit them to have professional careers. (*Crompton and Lyontee 2006*) Similarly, in Japan these work to keep women in the workforce by introducing childcare and laundry facilities to facilitate working mothers and their return to the workforce. (The company is also acknowledging women's day and children's days with half days on these particular holidays). This new idea is being praised and a happier workforce has resulted. (*Human Resource Management International Digest 2015*). Equally the Australian gender culture has proven resilient, with contradictory norms that support women's increased employment participation yet insist that mother's primary responsibilities are to their families (*Van Egmond et al 2011*)

Hoobler et al. (2011), states that women generally continue to bear most of the burden of child care and household chores compared with men. Women make up the majority of single-parent households, and in two-parent households, they remain responsible for a greater percentage of parenting and household duties, and often fall short of managers' expectations for "the ideal worker"

or “one who is available to stay late, come in early, and drop everything for the company if necessary” (*Hoobler et al., 2011*).

Even when women have “similar career demands as men in their jobs, 41 per cent of women report doing more childcare and 30 per cent report doing more chores than their husbands” (Bernstein 2015). The survey also found that women are more likely to step out of their career track to take care of children and family. *Bernstein (2015)* also pointed out that “five times as many senior men have stay-at-home partners” as their female counterparts. This is consistent also with the finding by *Smith et al. (2013)* in their studies of the Nordic countries, whereby they found that time out of labor force and child-related decisions affected gender gap and mobility to the top management position. This finding is more troubling, as *Knorr et al. (2011)* found that in their research of attitudes of businessmen and businesswomen in Valencia, Spain, businessmen thought that having children negatively impacts careers of businesswomen by a two-to-one margin. As *Knorr et al. (2011)* point out, this “can be problematic when entrepreneurs decide to hire women, because in similar conditions, with this perception, men would hire men instead of women”. *Knorr et al. (2011)* and others have also found that women are also likely to dedicate more time to family and thus have a negative influence on their businesses.

Barrier to Breaking the Glass Ceiling -Education Vs Experience

The finding is in a new report from the *World Economic Forum (WEF)*. Ireland is now the highest ranked non-Nordic nation, the study found. It said the country had improved over the past year in three of the four pillars examined; Economic Participation and Opportunity; Health and Survival; and Political Empowerment. But it loses ground in the fourth category, Educational Attainment.

"Indeed, while Ireland is among the three most improved nations in our Europe and Central Asia region when it comes to improving in health and survival, it has actually lost ground over the past decade in terms of education, with the gap having been closed completely up until 2011 but now slowly widening," a WEF spokesman said.

The report measures the size of the gender inequality gap in four areas: economic participation and opportunity - salaries, participation and leadership; education - access to basic and higher levels of education; political empowerment - representation in decision-making structures; health and survival – life expectancy and sex ratio.

Overall, internationally, the gap between men and women in health, education, economic opportunity and political representation has closed by 4pc in the past 10 years. Women have made only modest progress in gaining top leadership positions in the business world (*Parker et al 2015*). This slow progress by women to the top positions is surprising, given a number of arguments and evidence provided by many researchers that women possess many important skills needed for managing a workforce and to take on the leadership position. *Zenger and Folkman (2012)* found that women are rated more highly than men as leaders at every level, and the higher the management level, the greater the gap grows. Furthermore the educational attainment of women has also grown.

In general with greater education, more women are better positioned to work in management, professional and related occupations. Despite the gains made by women in economic status and educational attainment, their full economic potential and participation in the economy is still to be realized.

Sabharwal (2015), even though women in the workforce are generally making progress in climbing to senior management positions, the continue to face challenges in those leadership positions for reasons ranging from greater scrutiny and judgement over their management style and performance to receiving less support from their peers (primarily males) over issues including work-life integration

The glass cliff is a term by Ryan and Haslam (2007) that suggests this could be the reason that women managers leave their organisations before reaching the top.

Bruckmuller (2014) suggest that women are appointed in companies that are in a state of crisis which make them prone to failure or, that women may seek to leads in high-risk context as they regard these situations as good career opportunities.

As Knorr et al (2011) point out that this “can be problematic when entrepreneurs decide to hire women, because in similar conditions, with this perception, men would hire men would hire men instead of women”. Also that women are also likely to dedicate more time to family and thus have a negative influence on their business.

The weaker marginal impact of education confirms findings by past researchers such as Tonello (2011), who also found no evidence of a strong relationship between CEO education and firm performance as success of a CEO is determined by other factors, like having visions and leadership skills which are not necessarily acquired through getting more education. Similarly Silver (2008) education alone is not sufficient without the reinforcement of job experience in multiple roles. Women are generally rational and have “international leadership” style which “encourage participation share power and information, enhance other people’s self-worth” (Rosener, 1990).

The educational attainment of women has also grown. According to the *USA Congress Joint Economic Committee (2010)* report, the women’s share of the bachelor’s degrees granted in the USA has jumped from almost just 40 per cent in 1970 to 60 per cent in 2012. In general, with greater education, more women are better positioned to work in management, professional and related occupations.

Black et al. (2008) report that, although highly educated women earn approximately 30% less than men, more than half, but typically less than all of the difference, is accounted for by background variables such as age, education, and work experience. Similar to the view of Katz (2010), who report that gender differences in the wages of young professionals can be largely attributed to differences in college education, career interruptions, and weekly hours worked.

Nonetheless, it is instructive to compare the fortunes of top executives by gender since executive management epitomizes the pinnacle of employment within the firm. It is heavily dominated by men, but it is not their exclusive domain.

We find significant differences between male and female mobility rates which, on the surface, seem to favour women. Women are promoted more than men internally and at the same rate externally. In addition, women are promoted at a younger age. Because female executives have a higher rate of promotion at the upper levels of the hierarchy, they have significantly less job experience than male executives. Female executives, however, have a higher exit rate than men, and the probability of a female executive becoming CEO is less than half that of male executives at every age

A higher female exit rate has two separate effects the first is that female executives would gravitate to higher ranks and spend less time investing in human capital. This would explain the higher female promotion rate, the lower human capital of female in higher ranks, and the unconditional gender pay gap. The second effect is that female executives would have less incentive to exert effort than male executives because, on average, their careers are shorter. Since their career concerns motive is

weaker, females require more incentive pay to align their incentives with those of their employer firms than their male counterparts. Therefore their compensation is tied more closely to the firm's performance with a higher risk premium.

The weaker marginal impact of education confirms findings by past researchers such as *Tonello (2011)*, who also found no evidence of a strong relationship between CEO education and firm performance, as success of a CEO is determined by other factors, like having visions and leadership skills, which are not necessarily acquired through getting more education. As pointed out by *Silver (2008)*, education alone is not sufficient without the reinforcement of job experience in multiple roles. This was evident, for example, from the experience of Carly Fiorina, who began her career as a management trainee at AT&T before spending 16 years as the president of the consumer products business at Lucent, a spinoff of AT&T, followed by being the CEO at Hewlett-Packard (*Silver, 2008*).

Barrier to Breaking the Glass Ceiling –Tokenism

While the issue of gender diversity has certainly received some attention, the promise of greater diversity on corporate boards does not seem to have been delivered upon and there is clear evidence that gender discrimination exists and persists (*Sealy and Vinnicombe 2013*). This is particularly surprising given the growing media and political interest in gender diversity on boards. (*Brady et al 2011*) find that firms that have experienced a scandal in recent years are more likely to have female executives. Systematic over-representation of females in such positions would be consistent with structural barriers to advancement making it necessary for women leaders to take bigger risks.

Many women report they do not want to be the subject of special treatment or quotas, but what they do need are flexible solutions to manage work and family time commitments. The survey of 3,000 members of the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) found 73% of female respondents felt barriers still existed for women seeking senior management and board-level positions in the UK. In contrast, just 38% of men believed there is a glass ceiling (*The Guardian*). While the glass ceiling seems to be weakening to overcome tokenism, the number of women over the glass ceiling needs to exceed 15-20% (*Frankforter, 1996*)

Current research on gender diversity indicates that discrimination towards women in organizations persists in various forms. Women leaders are still stigmatized as less-qualified leaders than men and their leadership effectiveness is assessed by a different set of standards. In Hofstede's cultural model masculinity refers to male assertiveness and competitiveness on the one hand and female nurturance and modesty on the other. (*Moulettes 2007*).

In a paper session called "Assumptions and reactions to women leaders", the participants analyzed some of these challenges and the prejudices women leaders face in today's organizations. In their paper, *Jonsen et al. (2009)* reviewed the literature on perceived and actual gender differences in leadership and emphasized the importance of knowing what kind of gender stereotypes a culture holds in understanding the linkage between gender and leadership. They identified three paradigms that can guide managerial actions towards achieving gender equality: the gender-blind view, the gender-conscious view and the perception-creates-reality view. Furthermore, they suggested that employing a combination of all three approaches might be the most effective way of creating gender equality in an organization.

In contrast *Caleo and Heilman (2009)* argued that, due to stereotype-based prescriptions, female authorities would be penalized to a greater extent than male authorities for treating their subordinates unfairly. Their study indicates that women do indeed receive less favorable performance ratings and harsher reward recommendations compared with men when they behave unfairly.

Loughlin et al. (2009) investigated whether transformational leadership is accurately recognized and rewarded for both men and women. Their findings indicate that although both male and female managers are expected to be individually considerate – one aspect of transformational leadership – only male managers receive significantly higher competency and reward ratings for engaging in such behavior. They further concluded that the rater's sex does not make any difference in this outcome. The authors theorized that because considerate behavior is congruent with female gender role stereotypes and is expected of women, it is not recognized and rewarded in women.

Pay gap – Barrier to women progressing

The gender pay gap is the difference in hourly earnings of male and female employees after controlling the human capital factors such as education (*Blau and Khan 2006*). The National Women's Law Center (NWLC) declared that in the USA at the present rate of the gender pay gap in the average woman had to work until April 2008 to make what the average man made by the end of 2007 (*NWLC 2008*). Evidence suggests that a similar tendency for the European Union.

This gap can be split into the macro and the micro levels. The macro can be defined as economic theories which provide explanations of the phenomenon based on such factors as difference in education, work experience, amount of starting salary as well as general explanations such as discrimination (*Keaveny et al 2007 and Grybaite 2006*). The micro level can be described as the personal factors such as individual preferences and forces, which change values and attitudes towards working conditions and compensation practices (*Giapponi and McEvoy 2006*).

The Special Eurobarometer (2009) found that around 50 percent of Europeans consider the gender pay gap as one of the priorities for action in the field of gender equality. The pay level of individuals with similar skills and their perceptions of pay can be similar within a sector within a sector but vary considerably across occupations. The gender pay gap can be perceived differently in different countries since gender roles vary across cultures. In the Netherlands, the pressure of domestic work forced women to work shorter hours and have argued to effectively reduce their job commitment (*Rubery et al 2005*). This may give a perception that women are less committed to work in the Netherlands than in other countries is commonly used as an explanation for their relatively low salaries and lack of overall advancement. In contrast in Finland, women on an average have more education than men and their work experience is almost equally long (*Raevaara, 2008*). Finnish performance-based pay systems and appraisals of work performance are mostly beneficial for men because of women's typical occupations involve caring human contact, social relationships and not profit-making to the same extent (*Lehto, 1999*).

Pay expectations

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (**OECD**) reported in 2013 that the US and Ireland had the highest percentage of low paid jobs in the developed world – low paying jobs were defined as those that earn less than two-thirds of the median income. The ratio in the US was 25 per cent and in Ireland 22 per cent, UK at 21 per cent, contrasting with Switzerland and Finland at ratios of 10 per cent (OECD 2013).

A range of factors have been found to generate and sustain the gender pay gap in Ireland, which was found to be 14.4 per cent in 2012. Young women's earnings were estimated at more than 90 per cent of male wages but this falls to 71.5 per cent in the 35-44 age groups and to only 61.4 per cent for

women aged 55-64 years. Ireland has the second highest rate of low pay in the developed world and it is women who make up the majority of those on low pay. There are a number of reasons for the persistent significant pay gap, including the fact that women continue to have the primary responsibility for care in Irish society, undervaluing of women's work and skills, low number of women in senior and leadership positions, and discrimination against women (*European Commission 2012*).

OECD research indicates that there is a high cost linked to motherhood in pay terms. Their figures show that in Ireland the Gender Pay Gap for women with one child jumps 31 percentage points compared to women with no children. The OECD data also highlights the differences across pay levels, for example, among the lowest 10 per cent of earners the Gender Pay Gap in Ireland is 4 per cent, but in contrast among the top 10 per cent of income earners the gender pay gap is 24.6 per cent for the top 10 per cent, which they argue suggests 'the continued presence of a glass ceiling and indirect discrimination' (*OECD 2012*). No new national data or research has been conducted on the gender pay gap.

The other aspect of male dominance is the issue of gender pay gap. Gender pay gaps are likely to be influenced by wage setting institutions that do not directly impinge on gender, such as those governing collective bargaining and minimum wages. Member states of the European Union prohibit discrimination based on gender, race and (in Northern Ireland only) religion. This tends to be more of an educated person who may take the company to court but often to do not leading to the glass ceiling remaining intact.

Of course many other factors are likely to be adding to the pay gap such as promotion procedures favoring men over women toward the top of the wage distribution, and then the gender pay gap might be bigger towards the top. *Lander, Rebitzer and Taylor (1996)* showed in their study of US law firms, how criteria for promotion as excessively long hours of work can exacerbate gender pay gaps toward the top of the lawyers' wage distribution.

The glass ceiling that prevents women from reaching top positions in business and management may be showing cracks but it is still there. More women than ever before are managers and business owners, but there is still a dearth of women at the top of the corporate ladder. (www.ilo.org.ie)

The results on the gender difference within executive management are mixed. Bell (2005), Al-banesi and Olivetti (2008), and Selody (2010) and that women are paid less than men at equivalent ranks, contradicting earlier work on this subject by Bertrand and Hallock (2001).

Benefits of Breaking the Glass Ceiling

A focus on gender diversity would increase employment rates and would facilitate corporate competitiveness by tapping into underutilised talent (*McKinsey, 2007*). Organisations that are already utilising skilled women are benefiting from increases in performance (*Welbourne, Cyscota & Ferrante, 2007*.) Similarly organisations where women are strongly represented at board or senior management levels have been shown to outperform organisations with low numbers or no women at top levels of management (*Catalyst, 2007*). Evidence from the USA suggests that gender diverse boards are more efficient monitors than all-male boards (*Adams and Ferreria 2009*). Women value independence, stimulation and change more, while men put a higher value on tradition, conformity and security. (*Thorburn Karin 2013*).

As the situation for women improves, it is now necessary for women, especially those in leadership positions to recognize that expecting women to do more to prove their worth is no longer a healthy response to a chilly climate, such an attitude is now outdated and counterproductive (*Kristen Renwick Monroe June 2002*)

Evidence from USA suggests that gender-diverse boards are more efficient monitors than all male-boards (*Adam and Ferreira 2009*). Female directors have better attendance records than male directors. The male directors are less likely to skip a meeting with a gender diverse board and the stricter monitoring by gender-diverse boards manifests itself in a higher likelihood of CEO turnover when the firm performs poorly. The firms with at least three female directors are more profitable and have higher performance sensitivity of CEO turnover. Boards with at least three women present in the meeting are twice as likely to request further information from management and to take an initiative. Also both men and women are more active in these meetings.

Female directors care less for power and achievement and are more benevolent and universally concerned. Women value independence, stimulation and change more, while men put a higher value on tradition, conformity and security. Another benefit of women on the board of directors is the spillover to women in top management positions. USA evidence shows that firms with more female directors also have more female top executives. *Zenger and Folkman (2012)* found that women are rated more highly than men as leaders at every level, and the higher the management level, the greater this gap grows

Bruckmüller et al. (2014, p. 207) point out that women are more likely to be appointed to lead companies “in situation of crisis”, as they are often thought to possess “soft skills” or competence in handling situations involving other people. Such situations place them in environments which are associated with a relatively higher levels of stress and probability of failure in management (*Hennessey et al., 2014*), although as pointed out by *Hunt-Earle (2012)*, ambitious women managers may also view such high-risk situations to be more of an opportunity to prove their leadership skills and climb up the management ladder.

With respect to the size of business, the positive impact of the number of employees on the likelihood of having a woman CEO may provide some support for arguments that women leadership style and characteristics may be better suited for challenging management or crisis situations, as proposed by glass cliff researchers like *Ryan and Haslam (2005, 2007)*, *Bruckmüller and Branscombe (2012)* and *Bruckmüller et al. (2014)*. The stereotypical view is that women leadership which differs from that of men may be considered “transformational”, which is “characterized by consideration, motivation, stimulation and trust” (*Bruckmüller et al., 2014, p. 210*). Additionally, women are generally relational and have “interactive leadership” style, which “encourage participation, share power and information, enhance other people’s self-worth” (*Rosener, 1990, p. 120*). Therefore, women with transformational and interactive leadership styles perform best in large organizations with diverse teams where there are needs for fostering and encouraging collaboration and communication across departments and teams.

(*Eagly and Carli 2007*) asserted transformational leaders aid their employees in developing their full potential and face difficult situations using innovation. It appears that women employ a transformational leadership style that is concerned with mainstreaming the motivation of the employees with whom they work (*Davis et al, 2010*). Its impact does not translate into financial rewards (*Rees and Garnsey, 2003*). It has been suggested that in transformational leadership, female capabilities are more important and women are better adapted to understand the changes that occur in the market (*Sczesny, 2009*).

(*Davis et al 2010*) reported that gender has a significant, indirect effect on growth and profitability, which they attributed to the presence of a market-based approach to business. (*Aterido and Hallward-Dreiermeier 2011*) found that women focused their businesses on process or product improvement to a greater extent than men did to satisfy their customers and on social action and human development to compromise with their employees.

(*Page 2011*) in her call for additional gender mainstreaming activities, also noted that exhibiting female leadership behavior attributes often has a negative connotation.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to review all of the relevant literature in accordance with the objectives in question. It examined the history and evolution of the glass ceiling and the barriers that hinder women's progression to the top management positions of companies.

These barriers can be summarised to the maternity/paternity leave which encompasses childcare facilities, flexible working hours, and the spousal support that is required for equality in both the home life and the working life.

The issue of education vs experience can be another barrier to women progressing. It seems that although women have made some progress within the education and now possess the skills and abilities required to become a leader, there is still a gap. The women that do break through are still faced with more challenges to their leadership styles when they do break through.

Another barrier that can be identified is tokenism the idea that females are put in management positions to parade equality and diversity of the organisation. This can be seen by still referring to leaders as female leaders, as they are the exception to the rule and not the norm.

The final barrier that women face while progressing their career is the gender pay gap. While some authors speculate that pay gap is can be tied in with experience and maternity leave that the differences with pay gaps can be attributed to education, experience and career breaks. Other authors' think that it is the long hours that are required to progress in an organisation will deter female employees and this will enhance the gender pay gap.

It emerges that the benefits to breaking the glass ceiling or even the perception of the glass ceiling. The benefits can be on almost every level of the organisation. The benefits can be seen in studies in the USA that all board members will attend if it is a mixed board, also it is worth noting that a diverse board can lead to the generation of more ideas, and also female leaders can be more caring towards other employees. In fact studies have shown that female leaders are more concerned with their team or the organisation doing well rather than themselves. This is in contrast to male leaders who may be more concerned with their own career progression.

Research Methodology

Research Hypotheses / Research Objectives;

The objectives of this research are to find out if there is a glass ceiling in the top 1000 Irish companies.

The culture of the company that allows this ceiling to thrive in today's society. To identify the markers that keep women from developing and succeeding as quickly as men. It was the aim of the researcher to identify the culture of gender pay grades and the division of rewards for equal labor.

To further explore the idea of Tokenism in Ireland today. The researcher anticipated establishing if women today are gaining any real power shifts or if their positions in power are confined to the "fluffy" softer management functions such as PR, or HR.

Another aspect the researcher wished to investigate further is the paternity/maternity leave. This would encompass all aspects of leave for both parents and the new age trends of childcare facilities in work to encourage women back to the working environment. Is this a new trend in Ireland or would it be worth pursuing.

The final research objective that the researcher delved into is the education vs experience conundrum. As many women today have equal academic achievements as their male counterparts, but still seem unable to gain the experience needed to advance the career ladder.

In order to investigate these objectives in an in-depth manner, *Saunders 2001*, research onion method was used to analyze the best approach. This was a clear guide to the different stages that would be necessary to undertake this research.

The researcher chose the method of semi-structured interviews to conduct the research, because on a further review of the research onion and other methods this was the only method available within the time constraints to yield enough information that the researcher may interpret and gain a deeper understanding of the research objectives as set out above.

Research Philosophy

A research philosophy refers to the set of beliefs concerning the nature of the reality being investigated (Bryman, 2012). The main research philosophies are positivism and interpretivism and realism.

Positivism is a research philosophy adopted from the natural sciences. According to positivism knowledge is obtained by investigating the social reality through observing objective facts. The research process starts with identifying causalities forming the base of the fundamental law.

There is no human interest in this approach which is a contributing factor as to why this was not the approach to take in this study. The units of analysis must also be reduced to its simplest forms which would not work with the in-depth questions needed to gain an insight to the reasons why the glass ceiling still exists. This type of research also requires a large number of randomly selected samples, whereas this research requires a smaller number of companies chosen for a reason (Irish Times List).

Positivism relies on experience as a valid source of knowledge however, some concepts such as cause, time and space cannot be based on experience and this would further hinder the ability to gain insight into the research objectives. Finally the most important reason that Positivism was rejected as a method for this study was the research findings in positivism are only descriptive, they lack the insight into in-depth issues that the research objectives raise.

Realism is a research philosophy sharing principles of positivism and interpretivism. It accepts the existence of a reality independent of a human beliefs and behavior. While this approach does concede that people and their behavior require acknowledgement of the subjectivity inherent to humans. However for this philosophy it requires the identification of external factors describing general forces as well as how the people interpret and give meaning to their situation. This approach was not suitable to find out the research objectives.

For the purposes of this dissertation interpretivism is the best approach to take to conduct this research. This approach is best suited as the researcher is part of what is being observed, and has a keen interest in this area. This research approach is not ideal for a prediction but the goals of these objectives is to understand not to predict and future outcome. The desired information is to find out what people think and do understand about this subject. The knowledge gathered from the end of this research will be time, context, culture, and value bound. The researchers' emphasis on making sense of what is happening sometimes even generates surprising findings beyond the current common and accepted knowledge. This approach allows the researcher to interpret explanations which are meaningful for the participants of this research.

The main disadvantage of this approach is the subjective nature of this approach and room for bias. The data can be heavily impacted by personal viewpoint of the researcher and therefore the data can be undermined to a certain extent.

However, this approach gives a high level of valid data that conveys how people think, how they confront and deal with issues that they encounter in their working environment. This is why this research method is best suited as the results will be driven by interests.

Research Approach

Due to the time constraints of the dissertation the research will be cross-sectional in that it will provide a snapshot of equality in Ireland's companies today.

There are two types of research approach, the deductive and the inductive approach.

The deductive approach develops the hypotheses upon a pre-existing theory and then formulates the research approach to test it (*Silverman, 2013*). Deduction is arriving at a conclusion based logic. It does not depend on observation or experience; it is simply a matter of logic. The deductive approach thus might be considered particularly suited to the positivist approach, which permits the formulation of hypotheses and the statistical testing of expected results to an accepted level of probability (*Sneider & Larner, 2009*). The deductive approach is characterized as the development from general to particular, the general theory and knowledge base is first established and the specific knowledge gained from the research process is then tested against it (*Kothari, 2004*). Deductive research is good in that it allow for the hypothesis to be tested and then proved or disproved. However a difficulty to this approach may be the concepts must be operationalized in a way that enables facts to be measured quantitatively. This approach is not a valid option for these research objectives because there is no hypothesis to begin with.

The inductive approach is characterized as a move from the specific to the general (*Bryman & Bell, 2011*). In this approach, the observations are the starting point from the researcher, and the patterns are looked for in the data (*Beiske, 2007*). Induction is when a conclusion is drawn from a past experience or evidence.

The advantage to this method is that it allows for an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events based upon a close understanding of research context. Induction is more tolerant when it comes to the researcher's knowledge of the area, unlike deduction where the researcher must have the necessary knowledge of the area to form a hypotheses.

The main disadvantage is that this method cannot guarantee its conclusions, and assumes there is uniformity of nature throughout the universe, and finally that it relies on observation for information collection.

Despite the disadvantages the inductive approach is the best approach for this research due to the nature of the objectives.

The quantitative approach can be most effectively used for situations where there are a large number of respondents available, where the data can be effectively measured using quantitative techniques, and where statistical methods of analysis can be used (*May, 2011*). It is for this reason that this type

of research will not be applicable in this case. There will not be a large number of candidates but rather a selection of participants due to time constraints.

Qualitative research would be the best approach to take. Although qualitative does not yield large amounts of data, it does give a more in-depth analysis of the psychology behind the data. Qualitative research is considered to be particularly suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of underlying reasons and motivations. It provides insights into the setting of a problem. At the same time, it frequently generates ideas and hypotheses for later quantitative research. Qualitative research is the approach usually associated with the social constructivist paradigm which emphasises the socially constructed nature of reality. It is about recording, analysing and attempting to uncover the deeper meaning and significance of human behaviour and experience, including contradictory beliefs, behaviours and emotions. Researchers are interested in gaining a rich and complex understanding of people's experience and not in obtaining information which can be generalized to other larger groups.

The aim is to investigate how the respondent interprets their own reality (*Bryman & Allen, 2011*). This presents the challenge of creating a methodology that is framed by the respondent rather than by the researcher. An effective means by which to do this is through interviews, or texts, where the response to a question can be open (*Feilzer, 2010*).

It is these reasons qualitative research will be applied in this research paper as it will yield the best results and most informative conclusions from the time constraints and resources available. The conclusion explains the facts, and the facts support the conclusion. The chosen method of qualitative research is in-depth interviews. This will expose a comprehensive insight rather than quantitative surveys. This research looks at why rather than statistics.

Research Strategy

The research strategy is how the researcher intends to carry out the work (*Saunders et al., 2007*). The strategy can include a number of different approaches, such as experimental research, action research, case study research, interviews, surveys, or a systematic literature review.

Experimental research is unsuitable due to the nature of the strategy, as the name suggests this strategy involves examining the results against the expected results. The relationship between the factors are examined, and judged against the expectation of the research outcomes. This approach works well in all areas of research and works well with a limited number of factors however the research objectives do not fit this approach.

Action research was rejected also, this method is characterised as a practical approach to a specific research question within a community of practice (*Byman, 2012*). It involves examining practice to establish if it is the best approach, it is a common practice for professional such as teaching or nursing, where the practitioner can assess ways in which they can improve their professional approach and understanding (*Wiles et al, 2011*).

The case study approach is commonly used in financial research, to compare companies or contexts. This research was not suitable because it assess a single unit to establish its key features and draw generalisations which is not the aim of this research dissertation.

Surveys were rejected as they produce quantitative data that can be analysed but generally do not yield the in-depth knowledge that interviews do. Surveys tend to be used in quantitative research projects, and involve sampling a representative proportion of the population (*Bryman & Bell, 2011*).

Ethnography involves the close observation of people, their cultural interaction and their meaning (*Bryman, 2012*). This research was again unsuitable for the research objectives and timeline for this paper.

The interviews were semi-structured so as to allow for serendipity – i.e. further probing or questioning an answer or topic that arises during the interview. This is one advantage over quantitative research. The dynamics of a one-to-one interview and a group interview are different and are suitable for different purposes: one-to-one interviews are useful where you want people to open up about personal or private matter, which is why it is the most useful and suitable method for this research. Interviews are very flexible. They can be highly structured and formalised, with all the possible options determined in advance (a quantitative survey administered face-to-face would be an interview of this type) or unstructured and relaxed. For this a semi-structured interview would work best as it will allow for a free flowing and informative research.

There will be broad questions to start with and it will then narrow down to the more in-depth questions. Although it will not be as rigid as the structured interviews, allowing for some questions to be skipped or adapted to the flow of the interview or the information already provided. However, it is best to have a guideline unlike the unstructured interviews which may not yield any good data of the interviewee goes on a tangent and struggles to get back to the point.

The interviews can be recorded and will provide the data need much quicker and can collect more information to compare and contrast. The information will be informative and answer the why questions more than the how many.

Overall the in-depth interview is the method best suited for the research aims of this proposal due to nature of the information required and the time in which to conduct the research it will yield the best possible results and most information to form some analysis of the data.

It is more focused on interpretative research of cultures and subjectivities rather than measurement which is what this research proposal requires.

The choices outlined in the research onion include the mono method, the mixed method and the multi-method (*Saunders et al 2007*). The mixed method or multi-method as suggested use one or two methods usually both quantitative and qualitative. This method has been rejected in favour of a mono method. The mono method of just qualitative in-depth interviews has been chosen for its practical and rich insight into the heart of the reasons why, not quantitative numbers and surveys to be interpreted. This mono method allows for a deeper understanding and probing into the research objectives and with the time constraints.

There are two different types of time horizons are specified within the research onion: the cross sectional and the longitudinal (*Bryman, 2012*). The cross sectional time horizon is one already established, whereby the data must be collected. This is dubbed the 'snapshot' time collection, where the data is collected at a certain point (*Flick, 2011*). This is used when the investigation is concerned with the study of a particular phenomenon at a specific time. The longitudinal time horizon for data collection refers to the collection of data repeatedly over an extended period, and is used where an important factor for the research is examining change over time (*Goddard & Melville, 2004*). The longitudinal has the benefits of seeing the changes in action and over a period of time. This would be a considerable asset to any body of research however due to the timeline it is not possible for this research.

Population and Sample

In qualitative research the purpose is seldom to arrive at a statistically valid conclusion, but rather to understand, gain insights and explanations. However in qualitative research sampling issues are also important, such as who and how many should be included.

A sample is a representative segment of a larger population (Bryman, 2012). In quantitative research, the sample size and how it is selected can be used to establish the reliability of the results of the study. In qualitative research, the sample characteristics are also important, but much smaller samples tend to be used.

Sampling procedures can be drawn into two broad categories, probability and non-probability samples.

Non-probability samples are easy to draw, but they give misleading results, if the due to the researcher's views they are not a representation of the population. Another major disadvantage of non-probability samples is that these samples give no basis for evaluation the size of the sampling variation and the error of estimation. While this method of sampling is not useful in quantitative research as it does not lend itself well to stats and figures, it can prove to be useful in qualitative research.

Probability samples can be considered to be the more reliable sampling method. There are several different ways this method can be applied but the common theme in all methods is that all units in the population have the same chance of being included. (*Ghauri, Gronhaug 2005*).

A simple random sampling is a method that is easy to understand and apply. However, it results in a high number of errors, and can result in high costs for the researcher, if the units are geographically widely scattered.

Systematic sampling is where every 10th unit is chosen after a random start. However a prerequisite for this method is that the units in the population must be ordered in some way. The advantages of this method is its simple application, and the even spread of the units throughout the sample may increase precision in the results. The main concern is the danger of a bad start will result in a defective sample and result, also hidden periodicals that cannot be easily identified that may result in a poor result and ineffective sample.

These two methods have been rejected in favor of cluster sampling. Cluster sampling is not without its drawbacks. It does require group level information to be known, and commonly has a higher sampling error than alternative methods. However both of these disadvantages can be set off using a multi-

stage sampling with cluster sampling. Using both these methods in unison may prove to be cost effective and time effective and may prove to decrease the margin of error that may apply.

In multi-stage cluster sampling, large clusters of population are divided into smaller clusters in several stages in order to the primary research more attainable and manageable.

As the research objectives are to examine the glass ceiling phenomenon in Irish Companies today, because of this the research population is made up of the companies on the list of The Irish Times Top 1000 Companies in Ireland.

This list is made up of 10 categories as listed below this will be the sampling frame that the clusters will be chosen from. The research sample must be easily quantifiable and identifiable. This list has already been populated and covers a broad range of industries/companies in Ireland today so it was a good sample to choose from. Having a set list of companies already listed from the Irish Times there was little room for the researcher's bias or own thoughts

For the samples to truly represent the population, it needs to eliminate any personal preferences (biases) and allow chance to guide the selection process. Chance is the best antidote to idiosyncratic preferences and biases. A random selection uses chance and chance alone to determine which members or elements of the population are selected for inclusion in the sample.

As a general rule the larger the population the smaller the sampling ratio needed to obtain a representative sample. Large samples however can undermine the efficiency.

The method for multi-stage cluster sampling used was to use the different levels of the list to identify the cluster sample. The top level was the top 1000 companies in Ireland on the Irish Times List. The next level was to list all companies in under each heading (only one company under each heading), and randomly pick one company under each list.

All companies are based in the Dublin area, which means they are easily accessible for the primary research. If it is the case where the company's representative cannot, due to time constraints conduct an interview face to face it may be conducted over Skype or the telephone once it is recorded.

It is proposed to conduct all interviews in a week, two a day, morning and afternoon, depending on availability of managers

The companies were chosen from the Top 1000 Companies in Ireland as named in the Irish Times List. The companies were chosen by cluster sampling. Under each heading all the companies

The contacts chosen have wished to remain anonymous, they are from the following Industries are:

1. Travel/Aviation
2. Travel/Retail
3. Public Educational Institute
4. Consumer Technology
5. Food Distributors
6. Media
7. Food Manufacturing Company
8. Technology Company
9. Recruitment Agency
10. Health Care
11. Insurance Company-
12. Pharmaceutical
13. Formerly Medical Devices- Now- Stay at home mum

Data Collection, Editing, Coding and Analysis

In qualitative research data collection and analysis are often done simultaneously. To analyze qualitative data, the researcher seeks meaning from all of the data that is available. The results of qualitative data are results that give meaning, experience and views. It is data that is not easily reduced to numbers, but that are related to concepts, values and behaviors of people. It is essential to analysis the data straight away so that the information is fresh. The data should be reviewed for themes and patterns so that it can be identified in the next interviews.

In designing the questions for the interviews a mixture of both open and closed questions were used. Closed questions were used for the first few questions to ease the interviewee into the interview. While closed questions are helpful because they give a precise answer they do require the interviewer to have a broad knowledge of the company and its procedures. The design of the questions pre-suppose that the subject is interested, aware and has knowledge of the topic (*Reily, et.al. 2000*). The open ended questions will offer a deeper insight and more in-depth responses to the questions. When designing questions it is important to keep in mind the focus of the research objectives, to raise attention to the topics that are to be addressed without leading the interviewee. Semi-structured interviews give the interviewee the leeway to answer and to talk openly and further questions may arise from this. It is important to mix up the questions types using a multiple question format form Kvale's list (*Kvale 1996*)

The questions had evolved and expanded the more interviews that took place during the course of this research. The original 15 questions, had evolved to more leading questions, and questions that would prompt more information out of the candidates. Not all questions were needed a lot of the time the information would be covered by a previous question but they proved a good probe to get more information.

Once all data is collected it will need to be reduced. Quantitative data gives a lot of data not all of it useful or relative so it is essential to review it early on and review the relevant data for analyzing. It is your job as the evaluator to comb through the raw data to determine what is significant and transform the data into a simplified format that can be understood in the context of the research questions (*Krathwohl, 1998; Miles and Huberman, 1994; NSF, 1997*). When transcribing the interviews verbatim, it is important to consider the non-verbal expressions and body language also. It may lead to a different approach or be able to steer the interview in another direction.

The process of summarizing each piece of date enters information "into your unconscious as well as consciously processing the information" (*Boyatzis, 1998*).It is important to reduce and analyse the data under the themes identified under the research objectives. The data collected will be analysed as

a whole and not just individually. Depending on the nature of the questions and data received it can be analysed in two ways i.e. by content or thematic

Miles and Huberman (1994) distinguish between the following components in qualitative data analysis:-

Data reduction

Data display

Conclusion drawing/verification

Data Reduction

Refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying abstracting and transforming the data that appear in writing up the transcripts from the interviews. It is here that the categories and themes are identified. Once these themes and categories are established, an understanding of the data emerges and the researcher can understand and explain some of the research objectives that have been answered. It is important to keep in mind that at this stage the researcher should be extremely careful and critical as in most cases there may be more than one interpretation/explanation.

Data Display

Data display is an organised, compressed assembly of information that permits drawing conclusions and taking actions.

Codes

Coding is an interpretive technique that both organizes the data and provides a means to introduce the interpretations of it into certain quantitative methods. Most coding requires the analyst to read the data and demarcate segments within it, which may be done at different times throughout the process. (*Saladana 2012*). To analyse the information collected from the semi-structured interviews, coding will be the method used to understand and identify themes in the data collected.

Coding the data for certain words or content by:-

- a) Identifying their patterns
- b) Interpreting their meanings.

This type of coding is done by going through all of the text and labelling words, phrases, and sections of text (either using words or symbols) that relate to your research questions of interest. After the data is coded it can be sorted and examine the data by code to look for patterns.

Thematic analysis

Grouping the data into themes that will help answer the research question(s).

These themes may be:-

- a) Directly evolved from the research questions and were pre-set before data collection even began, or
- b) Naturally emerged from the data as the study was conducted.

Once themes have been identified it is useful to group the data into thematic groups so that the data can be analysed, the meaning of the themes and connect them back to the research questions as stated above.

After identifying themes or content patterns, assemble, organize, and compress the data into a display that facilitates conclusion drawing. The display can be a graphic, table/matrix, or textual display.

Regardless of what format is chosen, if done correctly it should enable the data to be presented in a way that the themes are clearly identified and the research objectives have been addressed.

There may be a common thread or arguments that are present in all interviews. This may be apparent from the first interview and the questions may be adapted to suit this. This approach will highlight the themes quite easily.

The thematic analysis may prove to be the most useful method for this qualitative approach.

Conclusion drawing and verification are the final step in qualitative data analysis.

To draw reasonable conclusions the best approach is to firstly read all the interviews individually and as a whole. There will be trends that are apparent throughout all interviews. Once these have been identified, place them in the themes of the research proposals.

Determine how the findings help answer the research questions.

Draw conclusions from the findings.

To verify these conclusions, it is best to revisit the data (multiple times) to confirm the conclusions that have been drawn.

Ethical Issues and Procedure

There are four main areas that effect the ethics of primary research. They can be summarised as:-

- Whether there is harm to the participant
- Whether there is lack of informed consent
- Whether there is an invasion of privacy
- Whether deception is involved.

These have been set out by *Diener and Candall (1978)*.

Research that is likely to harm the participants is not acceptable at all. It is also the responsibility of the researcher to assess carefully the possibility of harm to research participants, and where possible to minimise the possibility of that harm. There is potential harm caused to participants in research that is highly confidential and private. The participants must be advised in advance of the area of the research proposal and to ensure that confidentiality agreements if signed are to be honoured and not to be waived in any circumstances. If it is a case where the identity must be revealed it must be made clear to whom it will be revealed (markers and a supervisor) and not public information or for non-research information. This is easier to guarantee in quantitative research due to the nature of the research methodology.

The issues of confidentiality arise in most forms of qualitative research, and extra care must be taken by the researcher to ensure that the identities of the participants are protected. In some cases the entire nature of the organisation must be changed, name, location etc. so as not to identify the company. In contrast the organisation may want or give permission to publish their name.

The level of information that would be required to complete this research may delve into pay grades and how women are perceived in some companies. This information may be compromised or glossed over to be more appealing to public consumption if it is not possible to guarantee anonymity of required by the company in question. The participants will not be confiding actual numbers only pay grades but this may still be unappealing and cause harm to the organisations on question so there will be the option for anonymity. Once there participants have been informed of this area or possibility of queries in this area this should allow for the avoidance of harm.

Informed consent is another issue that arises in the ethical procedure of research. The nature of this is that the participants should have as much information as possible so that they can make an informed decision as to whether to participate in the interviews.

It was *Homan (1991)* that pointed out that it was “easier said than done” to disclose everything.

Issues such as timing for an interview, unforeseeable issues may arise that because the interview to run over on time, or a simple miscalculation of the time involved in the interviews. A similar issue is

giving the interviewee all the research areas, for fear of a rehearsed response and an untrue biased account of the organisations stance. However it has been argued that this openness will make it harder to gain inside access and knowledge to managers, however it could be better to be honest and upfront and attempt to let the potential interviewees know. Consent is a similar issue that may arise due to the nature of qualitative research can the companies consent if they are unsure exactly what is being requested. There is a fluid nature to the interviews which can lead to uncharted territory – can this be consented to without prior knowledge.

Some other ethical issues that may arise that are not as easily detected are the potential to be invasive. It can be a social and emotionally invasive form of research. It has the potential of asking probing questions that the interviewee is not comfortable with. The unstructured or semi-structured questions can present the opportunity to go off target and result in some questions that are quite personal and intrusive in nature. Privacy can be linked to the idea of informed consent. The privacy of those who participate in the research should be respected; personal information concerning the research participants should be respected. It may be necessary to decide if it is appropriate to record certain kinds of sensitive information should it arise during the course of the interviews.

Deception occurs when researchers represent their research as something other than what it is. Deception in various degrees is probably quite widespread in much research, because researchers want to limit participants' understanding so to get a more natural response to the questions. (*Lee, 1998*). Similarly *Bulmer (1982)* whose stance is predominantly that of a Universalist in ethics terms, nonetheless realises there are bound to be some instances such as this and deems them justifiable.

Results of the Interviews/Findings

The researcher interviewed a cross-sectional selection of companies from various industries in the Irish Times Top 1000 Companies. The industries the researcher focused on were aviation, a university, a recruitment firm, a retail company, a food processing company, a media company, a consumer tech company, a telephone tech company, a pharmaceutical company and finally a woman who took a career break to have her children and women whose husband stays home while she continues to work. For a full summary of all interviews and views in the appendix (appendix 4).

Maternity/Paternity Leave

All companies that were interviewed adhere to the statutory requirements for women and will do the same when the new paternity leave comes into legislation. There was some companies that offered a small amount of extra leave for new fathers on the birth of their new children, ranging from 2 days to 2 weeks. It is interesting to note that not all men took this time offered. Some companies do top up the statutory maternity pay and have added benefits for their employees but this is not a common practice. There was an American multinational company that went above and beyond, offering their employees both male and female a new baby bonus, or gift basket. There was already an 8 week add in paid paternity leave for fathers (although it has been the practice that men will not take all this time), they also cover a cleaner and a nanny serviced for the first two years in their healthcare package, and have an affiliation with a reputable crèche which offers a discount. There was also a Danish company that offered a really good paternity package with the mother taking the first 6 months off work and the father taking the second 6 months off.

It was interesting to note that on the discussion of maternity leave, the media company had quite a young workforce and although they had the legislation in place it did not apply to them at the moment. It was noted that women are taking the time now to establish their career before starting a family which is idea echoed by many of the participants. It has been stated by a number of candidates while this is a risky choice, it allows women to establish their careers first before they take time off for maternity leave.

While on the subject of childcare, there were only a few companies that offered any services in this area. While a lot of companies do not have the facilities to offer such services, they do however offer a flexible working week wherever possible and try to accommodate parents with working from home if possible. There was one company who were attempting a work from home programme for people who had been out of the workplace for a number of years, but this in itself has its own challenges to implement. Some companies (depending on the nature of the work) have great working from home policies and flexible working hours/week. The public educational institute has excellent facilities for childcare on site that are available to both males and females. The recruitment firm (who has a female CEO) is very accommodating to employee's needs with regarding to working hours and flexibility.

There was two conflicting interviews by two participants one in the pharmaceutical industry and the other in the medical devices industry. Both women have recently started their families. While the candidate in the pharmaceutical industry has enjoyed a pleasant experience with her employers, she has actually got both her promotions prior to her maternity leave, and enjoys a good life balance with both home and working life. In complete contrast, the candidate in the medical devices industry has not undergone such treatment. She unfortunately lost her baby and on return to work, felt that she was being isolated and not utilised in the organisation. She also noted the level of support and understanding from her partners firm (a female dominated organisation), who offered the couple counselling, extensive leave and complete understanding and empathy towards the couple. This was in stark contrast to her own firm (male dominated organisation). She left the company and take a career break when she became pregnant again.

Experience Vs Education

The majority of participants confirmed to recruiting from within the company and where possible (of the required skill set is available) they will promote from within. There will always be times where the resources will have to be obtained from outside recruitment. All companies have said they have clear and concise goals and targets for career progression. The candidate from the pharmaceutical industry made a horizontal move in order to progress her career, and now has much less clear targets to progress to the next level (this is a smaller firm). The larger firms have performance appraisals and these goals can be set then. The smaller companies may not have the resources for such appraisals keeping them yearly. In relation to working hours needed for progression. There was a general agreement in 50% of the interviewees that in the more senior positions there was a clear correlation with longer working hours and responsibilities. In contrast the other half of interviewees saw no correlation with senior positions and long working hours and had the opposite view, that the more senior the role the more flexibility was afforded to the individual.

There has been a unanimous agreement from all candidates that career progression is based on ability and not merely years of service. Also the majority of the companies offer some further education programs for employees (both in-house and external further educational training). Some of the smaller SME are budget based whether the education grant will be awarded, however all companies offer in-house upskills and training seminars on the programs used within the company.

There is also a mentoring programme in place in the larger organisations, this has been implemented with the view of helping employees to progress within the company. It was worth noting that he majority of mentors throughout this plethora of companies, were in fact male. While there was a great range of mentees, there is hope that this mentoring programme will help to keep women in workplace and progress to the higher ranks of the organisation if they so wish. The current trend is that the drop off after level 4. The pharmaceutical interviewee did not have a good experience with this (she had a

male mentor who did not want her to progress and this hindered her progression in a previous role), but does think that this is a good idea if executed correctly.

The American multinational tech company took this mentoring programme back to the schools, and helped secondary school students with career options. It was noticed that certain industries are male dominated so to remedy this is re-educate the school students as to opportunities available to them.

Tokenism

As noted above there are still a lot of industries that are male dominated, while the idea of going back to the source and attempting to broaden the horizons of younger students is a great idea. Currently women in male dominated industries are labelled as being aggressive whereas their male counterparts are seen more as assertive. This divergence between assessments of female and male managers has been one that is much disputed. The majority of companies tend to agree with this assessment, and have come across this at some point in their career. One candidate went further to state that females managers were less likely to delegate compared to their male counterparts.

This was discussed at length was it just that women had to put on a façade to act this way, or were women their own worst enemy. A lot of female HR Directors that the researcher spoke to felt that the females were still referred to as female leaders because they are still not as common or as many female leaders. There is a lot of female managers but very few leaders and so are still referred to by gender. This was not the case with all candidates however, some have not found this to be an issue at all.

In the consumer technology company, there was one female engineer in the programme full of males. This female candidate was the best student, worked the hardest and it was noted by the Engineering Director how well she worked and wanted to keep her full time. When probed further if the female in question felt pressure to work this hard to compete with her male counterparts, the interviewee could not speculate but if it was the case her hard work paid off she was noted as being the best. This issue gave mixed reactions from the candidates while some felt this pressure for women to prove themselves in this position on their own merit and not to provide a diverse front for the company, while in complete contrast others felt that it was all based on merit and not gender, the best candidate gets the job.

Those who felt there was pressure for women to conform to their male counterparts felt this is why women only went so far, because they were masquerading in the male world and they chose to leave it at a certain time.

On the other side of the coin males in a female dominated sector did not feel the same pressures which were unanimously agreed upon by all candidates.

Gender Pay Gap

A lot of companies are now implementing pay grades and annual pay reviews to ensure that there is no longer a pay disparity between employees. There is an industry band which helps to prevent the pay gap regardless of gender. The opinion of all the candidates the researcher interviewed was that their male counterparts compared to the females, had more confidence to go and request for more money. It was after all a negotiation; the male employees possibly had more confidence in themselves to ask for more money.

It was also agreed by all candidates that the females would not take less money to do the same job as their male counterparts but on a more flexible working week. It was also accepted that there has been a gender pay gap before but due to better education and exposure to this gap that the gap has lessened for a lot of females. While now it is not uncommon for females to be the main earner in their home, this also could contribute them to ask for less than they deserve due to the fact that they rely on this income as thought by the recruitment company. In contrast the other companies felt that this would give the employees a boost to ask for equal money.

Where there is a pay disparity not gender disparity, but a disparity between employees who do the same job but not the same level of experience this is being rectified by yearly pay reviews for employees to rectify the gap.

A lot of industries are regulated now to ensure that the issue of the pay gap is not as large an issue as before there is now pay bands and grades based on industry and experience, ability and education this is no longer a gender issue.

The Glass Ceiling Phenomena

Finally all candidates discussed their personal career experiences and aspirations. How their journey was and their understanding and beliefs of the glass ceiling.

While all candidates have acknowledged the existence of the glass ceiling, not all candidates have experienced it. One candidate in the healthcare industry said that due to her masculine characteristics, being extremely confident and assertive, that she has not experienced the glass ceiling or any aspect of it. Similarly other women have had an easy advancement within their companies. Some women felt that there was not necessarily a glass ceiling but there was a personality clash, they felt this was not to do with gender but rather with personality. There is still a favouritism between employers and employees. This discrimination is not simply gender based, it can be what college you attended, where you are from. All these prejudices can affect the progression within some companies.

All candidates confirmed that the next generation will indeed have the same challenges that they have faced. It was also speculated that males now will have to face the same struggle. Males may now face a push back from the older generations about taking paternity leave and flexi-time.

Discussions

Maternity/Paternity Leave

With the new Paternity leave coming into legislation the researcher wanted to investigate the current rights for women in terms of maternity leave, and about spousal support. How easy the transition back to the work place after a career break is and the childcare facilities or allowances if any are made for Irish Women today.

The research findings of *Crompton and Lynoette (2006)* and *Hoobler et al (2011)* has been reiterated in the findings. That women are still the primary care giver. All candidates the researcher spoke with confirmed that for any changes to be seen in the boardroom they would first have to be implemented at home. There were two exceptions to this one general rule. One candidate that did not adhere to this routine. In fact her husband is a stay at home dad while she works full time. She is in the pharmaceutical industry and works in Denmark. This is completely against the social norm for Denmark as childcare is so cheap that all parents worked. The government makes great allowances for cheap childcare so that women can return to the workforce.

Similarly in the healthcare industry, the candidate and her husband share the responsibility for childcare and family commitments. While this is in stark contrast to *Bernstein (2015)*, who found that almost half of women shoulder the childcare and household chores. This new attitude is a welcome change and this outlook will help to breakdown the barriers for women entering into senior positions.

The majority of women feel that they need to put off starting a family until they have established their career. This new trend of waiting to establish themselves in the workplace before

While all companies must comply with the statutory rights for maternity leave, the researcher was more interested in the discretionary extras that some companies afford to women. Some companies were very open about their maternity leave and spoke openly about the added extra time that the employee could avail of and similarly the top-ups to the statutory pay granted to women on maternity leave. In contrast other companies choose not disclose any added extras that was of a confidential nature between themselves and the employee in questions.

It was very encouraging to hear that some companies already had some paternity policy in place. The current policies included an extra 2 weeks paid annual leave that could be taken within the first year the child was born and also 2 days off when the child was first born. However it was counterproductive to discover that men did not avail of this time off and it is more common practice that they will work longer hours and return home when the children are settled and in bed.

The companies who had no such policies in place were in the process of writing up or in discussions with the organisation as to how to implement this new legislation. They all confirmed that they would comply with the statutory requirement but were unsure as to how this would be implemented.

There was two companies that went above and beyond the requirements prior to the new legislation. The first was a large American corporation had already implemented the paternity leave up to 8 weeks paid leave for new fathers. This could be taken in increments throughout the year but no less than 2 week intervals. The second was with a Danish company. The standard policy already in Denmark is women take the first 6 months and men take the second 6 months of the maternity/paternity leave. The whole culture of Denmark is that both parents work and is encouraged for both parents to work. There is cheap childcare and supported government to assist working families. It is also interesting to note that Denmark also give 5 weeks holidays.

In complete contrast to these companies the media company had a young staff that this was not an issue for the company yet. While the company would of course comply with statutory requirements it has not come up with such a young staff force. She stated that women were taking the "risky" move of establishing their career before having children so that as the workforce matured this would then become more of an issue to be dealt with.

In a similar vein of discussion, the issue of childcare arose in the interviews. Again there was only two companies who had any input on this. One company (the public educational institute) had on-site childcare facilities for both staff and students. This was very encouraging as it was available for all members of the university and not just the female members. It also had a flexible working year (over 9 months) and flexible hours. Another company in the customer technology industry had a discounted rate with a crèche near the organisation's offices. Other companies had no pleas to implement childcare policies, it was not a priority to the smaller SME companies who did not have the resources.

Women as mentioned above are starting family at a later stage in life based on their belief and experiences of colleagues that once they take the career break to have a family the career trajectory that they had been on will come to a stop. These findings back up the theory of Tharenou & Conroy (1984). That women are less likely to reach senior management positions if they are married with kids. Some of the women the researcher has spoken to have been late thirties and are still establishing their career and are waiting to start a family. Others women are mid-forties with a young family who have reached their own person career goal and can now say what they need to continue with their working life and have that work life balance. The model of (*Hewlett, Buck Luce, Shiller and Southwall, 2005*) of working life has been overturned so women are now beginning to see they can have both the career and the family. This will hopefully be the case for the next generation.

The researcher spoke to two women who had conflicting views and experiences on this matter. The first candidate is in the pharmaceutical industry. Her career has gone from strength to strength she is now a marketing manager on a global level. In the past number of years she has had two children, and each time she has been pregnant has gotten her promotion that she had been working towards. She has not experienced any ceiling in relation to her family commitments. Her current role is on a

global level and is based in Denmark. Her husband has chosen to stay at home with the children and supports her career. Her office supports her with flexi-time and allows her to work from home where possible and with the support of her husband she is continuing to fulfil her work commitments.

In contrast the researcher spoke with a candidate who was in the medical devices industry. She did not have a good experience when it came to maternity leave. She was pregnant with her second child who tragically did not survive. When she returned to work in her male dominated industry she felt she did not get the support that was offered from her husband's firm (his firm was predominately females and female directors), when she got pregnant again so soon after this, she felt her firm were pushing her to leave with lack of support and no work when she returned to the office. It was this treatment that facilitated her decision to take a career break and stay at home with her children.

The concept of work inducements for women to come back to the workplace after children or a career break of any description also came up. While there were not any official procedures in place in any of the organisations, it was unofficially stated that most women would be given a "buddy" to help transition them back into the working environment. If they needed to brush up on skills training would be provided for them also. This was the case with the media company, the technology company, and the travel industry did not have this at the moment but was very interested in putting this into practice. The aviation was not an issue as it was primarily males. Similarly, this was not an issue with the recruitment industry or the educational institute who were open to any amendments or allowances to ensure the easy transition back to the workforce after maternity leave. The consumer technology company was attempting to bring people with these skill sets back to the work force on a work from home scheme. This scheme in itself bring about its own challenges in contacting and identifying the individuals

In contrast the consumer tech company felt that the need for inducements back to the work force after maternity leave was not necessary and felt that the idea in itself was more discriminating than encouraging. When pushed further on this, the individual felt that women should not need to be paid to come back to work but rather make the conscious decision themselves. It was after all the woman's choice how she conducted her working and home life.

This again was to encourage people back to the work place who have small children. The remainder of the companies did not offer any childcare services and had no intention of doing so. The aviation company and technology companies and media company stated that it was not an environment suitable for children to be around. The food manufacturing company said that they were only a small company and did not have the resources for this.

Russell et al (2009) whose previous research has now been completely disregarded by the current research as companies are attempting to facilitate all staff where they can. The majority of the companies offered some flexibility in their working hours. That being said this could not be applied to

all departments- some departments need to be present during the opening hours i.e. customer support. However it was not a luxury saved for only the senior members of the organisations. While there must be a level of trust established between the individual and the company once it has been established all members can avail of the flexi-time. The recruitment company due to the nature of the work can offer a work from home scheme to encourage people to stay in the work place. This applies to both women with young families and fathers and people who have taken a career break and are looking to get back into the work environment.

In relation to the time or hours needed to be put in to achieve such high ranking positions in the organisation there was a mixed view from the interviewees. In the aviation industry, recruitment, pharmaceutical, and transport industries expressed the need for putting in long hours and occasional weekend work to achieve the advancement to top management levels. This being said all candidates also stated that their male counterparts had the same expectations and responsibilities. When queried further whether this would deter women for aiming for this career goal, the general consensus was that it would not be an issue.

Education vs Experience

Parker et al (2015) found that women have only made modest progress in top management positions. However the researcher found that when it comes to career progression a lot of companies have open policies to ensure that there is an open career path progression which is open to all employees and has a clear and concise requirements and targets so comply with the progression. Most companies have an open policy when it comes to upskilling and training. In the majority of companies have confirmed that there is further education grants and allowances (although this may only be available for employees in the related sector of further study).

The majority of companies similarly have confirmed that they will advertise a position and where possible will promote from within. The media company who was unable to promote from within as it was a new company and simply did not have the resources to promote from within. The larger companies the researcher interviewed confirmed they were happy to promote from within wherever possible. The career progression was quite clear within all companies of what was required in order to achieve the next level.

Sabharwal (2015) an interesting facet of this career progression that came up was career mentoring. It has been noted by numerous companies that predominantly career mentors have been male. This was mostly in the pharmaceutical, aviation, health care and consumer technology. When this was examined further it seems that it while employers have no issue in hiring either gender it seems they can only select from one gender. The candidates explained further that there was a lack of female applicants. It was noted in the aviation industry that they had one female engineer, and whether she felt pressure or it was her work ethic she worked harder than the other engineers and was noted as

being the top apprentice that the organisation had. However due to unknown circumstances she did not progress within the company (the employees choice). The companies stated that they are procedure bound to be open to all applicants but it tends to be that some sectors are primarily male applicants. The aviation industry and attempting to promote a cadet programme to try to attract more female applicants or get more females interested in engineering or aviation.

While some cultures have a who you know culture and not a clear progression route. There can be some appointing positions and not necessarily a recruitment process that is open and clear. The lack of transparency tends to lead to some conflict within the organisation. The pharmaceutical candidate found that in her new position it was a small firm, it was a horizontal move but because the firm was smaller it was a promotion (she was one step closer to the CEO), but also due to the smaller company it was less regularised in terms of targets to aim for to progress.

In terms of progression some firms have a trend that sees women drop off after level 4 as women have to jump a lot higher to progress to level 3. This has seen a large drop off of women from level 4. Middle management perform really, really well then there seems to be a drop off in women progressing past this stage.

Silver (2008) notes that education alone is not sufficient alone without job experience. The researcher has found this state reiterated that education alone is to progress within the company but instead a plethora of experience and ability is required. Larger companies will have clear targets that employees and managers can work towards if they wish to progress.

Tokenism

Marvin (2008) his idea still resonates with a few of the candidates the researcher spoke to. Women who act like managers are said to have lost their femininity. This idea comes across now as female leaders being aggressive, while their male counterparts are merely seen as assertive. It is perceived by the candidates interviewed that they must possess or express masculine characteristics when it comes to career progression, job applications and even so far as salary negotiations. It was thought that this might contribute to the reasons why women seem to drop off from management levels, they struggle to keep up the pretence of having masculine traits.

While in some industries *Egan (2015)* still applies the female leaders that do get through are more the exception to the rule rather than the norm and because of this they are often referred to as a female leader as opposed to merely their job title. While not all candidates would agree with this assessment, stating that all leaders would simply be referred to by their job title rather than their gender.

Similarly when it comes to the research by *Monroe (2002)* the majority of the candidates felt that senior managers had to stay late and or work longer hours due to more responsibilities attached to the position rather than their gender. It has been noted in a few interviews that while women may not

be the dominant gender in the organisation, they did not feel pressure to work harder to prove themselves to their male counterparts. In the aviation industry which is heavily male dominated, the candidate did not feel any more or less pressure by anyone within the organisation because of her gender. Her male counterpart in the London based office had the exact same responsibilities and duties as she did and during the busy season would both often bring work home with them.

This may be in contrast to an engineering student in the consumer tech industry. She was the only female on the course and worked harder and longer than her male counterparts. While the reason for this work ethic cannot be confirmed, it is worth noting that she was the best student in that group and her hard work did not go unnoticed by senior management.

In a study by *Heliman & Okimoto (2008)* it reiterates the need for long working hours and competition which women are viewed on a lower rate. Again this question of long working hours and competition gave mixed results. Again some companies agreed wholeheartedly that this was indeed the case, that women felt the need to put in long hours in the office and that the more senior the level in the company the more competition this led to. This was seen in a few companies but not all healthy competition.

Sealy and Vinnicombe (2013) have stated that there is gender discrimination that still exists today however this was not the case in any of the companies that were interviewed. While some industries and companies were male dominated this was not down to gender discrimination on the part of the employers. It is fair to say that some jobs can be seen as more female friendly and some jobs are seen as more male friendly. It is this gender divergence at a young age that causes the lack of equality in some work forces. It is not that the employers would not hire one gender over another but rather that there is none that fit the qualifications. This can be seen in the engineering and aviation industries most predominantly. However, women do make it through the maze and

Pay Gap

While this again is a topically current issue the researcher found it was difficult to broach this subject. Some candidates were very honest in their answers while some candidates were very short and did not wish to discuss this issue at all. They simply confirmed the pay grades and statutory requirements that were in place to ensure there was no pay gap. It could be seen that it is not "ladylike" to discuss issues such as money and salary and so there is clarity on the matter within companies unless privy to such information as women may still wish to keep it private.

The conflicting results reiterated the contrasting studies of both *Selody (2010)*, *Bell (2005)*, both theorists confirm that women in executive positions are indeed paid less. While some of the candidates have confirmed this to be true, not necessarily in their present position but at some point in their career there has been an issue with the pay grade.

It is worthwhile to note it was pointed out by a candidate from the pharmaceutical that it is speculation about other people's wages unless you are privy to the details. It is also a perception of how people spend their salaries they might give the impression of a comfortable living.

Black et al (2008) although women are highly educated they earn approx. less than 30%. This is a worrying stat that the researcher did not find to be true. It is encouraging to find that the news bands and pay grades, have been implemented that ensure this is not the case. In some companies where there is a slight may grade (not gender based but experienced based) this has been noted and a plan implemented to shorten this gap as was seen in some companies.

Conclusions/Recommendations

Conclusions

The researcher endeavoured to find out about the Maternity/Paternity leave, childcare policies and spousal support for women today. While all companies comply with statutory requirements there are a few companies that go above and beyond including extra benefits and leave entitlements. The researcher also found that the new paternity leave has not been implemented yet and the majority of companies are still considering how it will be implemented within the organisations.

Women still (mostly) have household chores and family responsibilities and until spousal support, sharing of duties at home are the norm, there will not be equality in the boardroom. It is worth taking notice of the Scandinavian countries and the way they have equality and diversity rights. This set up works well and is making its way into eastern cultures so will hopefully become more popular in western society.

While there are very few formal policies for reintroducing women back into the work force after extended leave (not only maternity leave, but a career breaks), there is some informal allowances that allow women to re-establish their skills and gain their confidence back. This could be useful to prevent the perception of a glass ceiling for women, so they do not feel like they are starting back at square one after a break from employment.

The second objective was to investigate the career progression rates for women. It was thought that the long hours and excessive work load was a deterrent to women's progression to senior level management positions. The researcher found that while most companies will always try to promote from within, this is not always possible. It is also noteworthy that there is a lack of confidence for women who may not apply for the roles of promotion or progression, whereas their male counterparts will be more outgoing in applying for same promotion. This may lead to the perception of the glass ceiling. If men are more vocal or more forward in applying for roles this could be part of the reason why there are more male managers. Women cannot get senior management positions if they do not apply for them.

The researcher furthermore intended to investigate the idea of tokenism. This idea comes from there being very few women in senior roles in some sectors. The females that are in these positions do not feel the need to prove themselves on why they are there, however it has been noted by many interviewees that while men are seen as assertive women are seen as being aggressive for the same attitude to work.

The researcher proposed to obtain some insight on the gender pay gap. This was an area which has proven difficult. While many companies state there is no issue with the pay gaps and there are

industry pay grades to comply with to ensure that this does not happen. There have been one or two companies who acknowledge this gap and aim to lessen the gap. The reason for this gap is down to the individuals (male or female) lack of experience. While it was not expressly stated to be a gender pay gap, but down to the individual being less experienced than other members. This was being rectified by pay reviews yearly and other incentives to ensure the gap is lessened and the individuals are on a more even pay grade.

The researcher finally wanted to find out women's opinions for the next generation of women and the barriers if any that may affect them. It was also interesting to note that all candidates that participated were not objected to furthering their own careers. They did not feel they had hit their peak and felt they could if they choose to, continue with their career progression. In terms of the next generation it was a mixed review if they would have any barriers at all. It is generally hoped that their progression will be easier and they will not have to face too many barriers or restrictions. While there is not a glass ceiling for women, there is a maze. Women do have more of a challenge to reach the senior management positions, they do get through.

Recommendations/Further Research

The paternity leave which is only being implemented this year. There are still a lot of issues that will need to be addressed. It might be worthy to ask will men now encounter push back or barriers, women have equality and have been fighting for this for years will men now meet the same resistance to the paternity leave act from the older generation. How will this affect the organization and if it will hinder men's progression if they choose to take the allocated paternity leave. A further facet of paternity leave is the childcare policies which are not allowed for today. Again the practices in Scandinavian Countries could be applied, cheap childcare to allow for both spouses to work and diversity in the progression of women.

Would there be less of a barrier for women if after their career break/maternity leave there was a program in place to aid the employees to re-establish their abilities and skills. Would this program allow for women to continue with their career trajectory rather than to have a stilted career/promotion after their break.

There is still the perception that management and the road to management levels require long weeks and excessive working hours. However, it is also ironic that most senior management positions do not require such hours. The idea of working from home is an interesting aspect at preventing employees from feeling isolated if circumstances require them to stay at home. There is no longer a stigma think manager think man, so this idea of long hours in the office needs to be amended also. More flexibility and a good working life balance will work well for both genders and not just women. It is becoming clear that men are striving for this life balance also; with the new paternity leave being implemented this may become a reality.

Tokenism is an aspect of the barrier for women to progress to the senior management positions that should be examined in relation to both genders. There is still gender diversity within certain career sectors and this could be addressed at a school age. It might be worth looking in to mentoring or work experience for school students which will open more course choice for college students which will eventually work its way into the workforce. This may break down the walls and any perception of a glass ceiling for women. If there is more variety for the next generation there will be no ceiling or walls.

It would also be an interesting element to the workforce to arrange for mentoring programs for employees who wish to progress to the next level. This would be particularly effective if there was a mixture of mentors. To see a strong female mentor in a position of power could inspire other women to want to progress their careers or show them that it is possible to reach the higher management positions.

The gender pay gap is being decreased by industry regulations and hopefully this will become less of an issue in future. It is after all a negotiation between the employee and the employer and if women become more confident then they will be better equipped to negotiate their salary as well as men.

Reflections

Self-Appraisal

During the course of my masters, I feel I acquired various skills and knowledge which supported me throughout my research and the completion of my research. I was nervous at first under taking this commitment with working full time also.

Kolb's (1984) illustrates the circular process of learning, and the four stages within this cycle. Starting with the concrete experience, reflective observations, abstract conceptualisation and finally the active experimentation

Assessing myself within Kolb's learning cycle I feel that I am most comfortable in the diverging rather than the active experimentation. I am much more comfortable with observing and abstract conceptualisation that I was slightly worried about the carrying out of the interviews.

Throughout the course of my MBA and with interactive classes I found that my confidence in the area of area of speaking in public and doing the primary research, going to meeting and conducting the interviews, had grown. The first few interviews were of course a bit stilted and a little hesitant. However by the third interview I had reformulated my questions (they had evolved from 15 questions to 33) not all of which were asked but there to steer the conversation where I wanted, and was much more confident in meeting with companies and addressing candidates. I found I was also much more capable of diverging from the formulated plans and being able re-direct conversations and topics back to where I needed them to be.

When looking at the Myers Briggs personality type my strengths and weakness can be identified and I tried to counteract some of the weaknesses before I started this research. While being energetic and enthusiastic would help complete this dissertation while working full time. The traits of overthinking things can be a detriment before I even started. I am highly emotional and tend to get stressed easily so I made a plan and a timetable of every weekend to try and get a couple of hours in this helped to achieve goal within the time constraints and avoid a panic at the end. This has happened in my undergrad when I was completing my dissertation.

Problem-Solving

There were a number of problems that arose during the course of this dissertation. The main one was that after three weeks of emailing and phone calls with one large tech. company, they cancelled at 10pm the night before the interview. I was in a panic, as I had already been told no by a number of the leading organisations in food and beverages and transport. I was nervous of being able to

complete my primary research. I was unsure with the time constraints and the time of year if I could complete the research in time. The time of year was another factor, there was a number of people who confirmed they would participate but with time constraints and work commitments and vacation time (for the candidates) it was impossible to schedule a meeting.

As a result of this, I went through over half of the top 1000 companies on the list through linked. I composed an email setting out my course and the objectives of my research, and the premises of the interviews. I did chose as many companies from the list as was possible and attempted to contact them all. I also attempted to contact a careers coach and a careers counsellor to get a more rounded view of the current status for women in the real world (outside of academic opinion). There were a lot of rejections, or people who read the questions and did not come back to me in a variety of areas. I think if I was afforded the opportunity to do this again I would try to make contact earlier in an attempt to survey a larger selection of companies on the list for a much broader understanding of the glass ceiling or the perception of the glass ceiling.

There was the privacy issue that arose in one of my interviews. The candidate in question had left her previous organisation and had successfully sued them for unlawful dismissal. However I could not corroborate the details of this case I was unsure if I could add it to my dissertation. However the antidote was perfect to back up a lot of the theories I had found. It was decided to use the antidote with not company or organisational details.

I found there was very limited recent articles and information on the glass ceiling and gender diversity. While there was a lot of industry data I struggled with backing this up with recent relevant academic articles. If I was to revisit I would gain access to Emerald and pay the subscription.

Summary of Added Value

This course overall has added value to my organisational skills. I found this was obvious throughout completing this dissertation. The skills and confidence that I have picked up over the two years enabled me to conduct interviews with little to no disruption to my working life. This was made it easier and less stressful on me and my employers. I was very disciplined on myself and worked a little every week throughout the 3 months, and this paid off that I was able to continue –albeit limited – with my social engagements also.

Plans to apply/Sustain the Learning

It is my hope to make a career change and move out of law and into HR. I have spoken with and met with a lot of companies throughout the course of this research, and as a result have a few follow up meetings with some of my candidates. I am in anticipation that out of all the new contacts I have made they may provide some guidance in my move into HR.

I will then continue to apply all I have learned throughout the course of my MBA as whole with starting a new course for CIPD qualification required for all HR Managers. I feel I will be more confident in my ability to work full time and study having completed a much more intensive course.

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Appendix 1 – List of management equality

1. Russia – 43 percent
2. Indonesia – 41 percent (tie)
3. Latvia – 41 percent (tie)
4. Philippines – 40 percent
5. Lithuania – 39 percent
6. China (mainland) – 38 percent
7. Thailand – 38 percent
8. Estonia – 37 percent
9. Armenia – 35 percent
10. Georgia – 35 percent
11. Peru – 35 percent
12. Poland – 34 percent
13. Hong Kong – 33 percent
14. Botswana – 32 percent
15. New Zealand – 31 percent
16. Belgium – 30 percent
17. Chile – 30 percent
18. Italy – 30 percent
19. Finland – 29 percent
20. Greece – 29 percent
21. Mexico – 28 percent
22. South Africa – 26 percent
23. Sweden – 26 percent
24. Taiwan – 26 percent
25. Vietnam – 26 percent
26. Argentina – 25 percent
27. Malaysia – 25 percent
28. Turkey – 25 percent
29. France – 24 percent
30. Norway – 24 percent
31. Canada – 23 percent
32. Ireland – 23 percent
33. Singapore – 23 percent
34. Australia – 22 percent
35. Brazil – 22 percent
36. Spain – 22 percent
37. United States – 22 percent
38. United Kingdom – 20 percent
39. Denmark – 14 percent
40. Germany – 14 percent
41. India – 14 percent
42. United Arab Emirates – 14 percent
43. Switzerland – 13 percent
44. Netherlands – 10 percent
45. Japan – 9 percent –

See more at: <http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/6050-us-ranks-in-bottom-10-for-women-in-management-roles.html#sthash.WxDLcDsl.dpuf>

Pasted from <<http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/6050-us-ranks-in-bottom-10-for-women-in-management-roles.html>>

Appendix 2 – The Glass Wall

Figure 2: Percentage of companies with women and men in different types of management



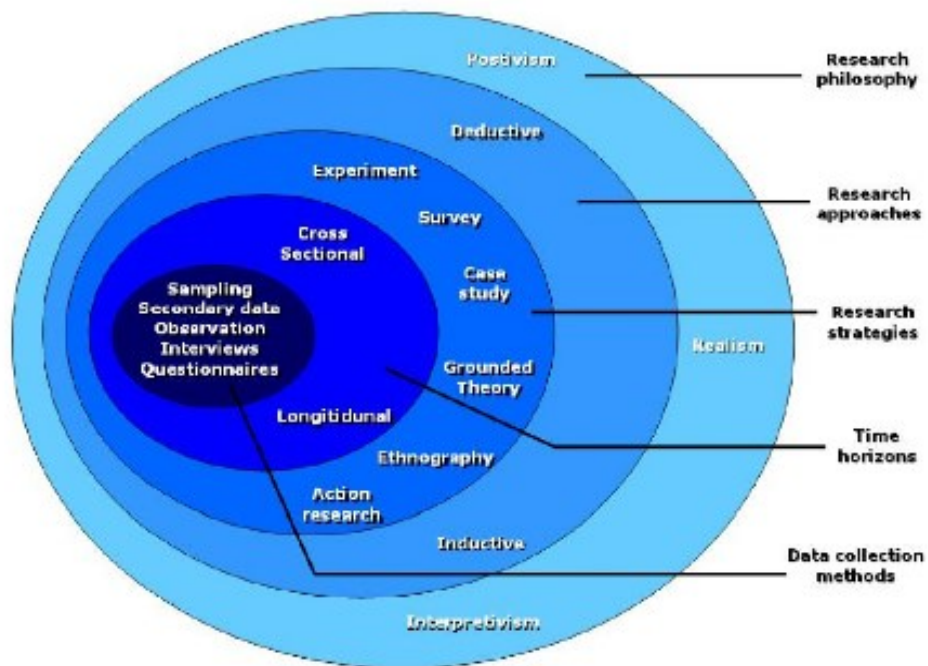
Source: ILO company survey, 2013

Appendix 3

Table 3: Ranking of Barriers to Women's Leadership

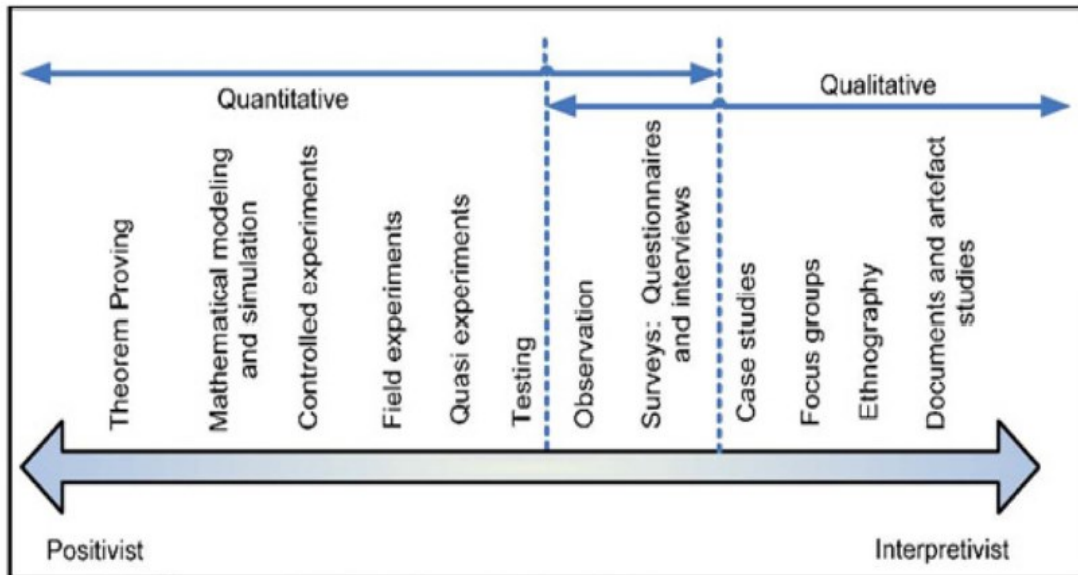
1.	Women have more family responsibilities than men
2.	Roles assigned by society to men and women
3.	Masculine corporate culture
4.	Women with insufficient general or line management experience
5.	Few role models for women
6.	Men not encouraged to take leave for family responsibilities
7.	Lack of company equality policy and programmes
8.	Stereotypes against women
9.	Lack of leadership training for women
10.	Lack of flexible work solutions
11.	Lack of strategy for retention of skilled women
12.	Inherent gender bias in recruitment and promotion (ranked the same as)
12.	Management generally viewed as a man's job
13.	Gender equality policies in place but not implemented
14.	Inadequate labour and non-discrimination laws

Figure 1: The Research Onion



(Source: Institut Numerique, 2012, n.p.).

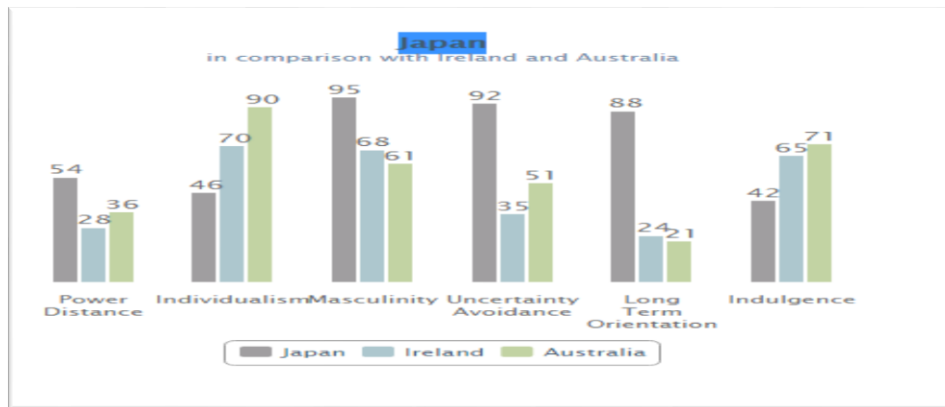
Research Strategies, Choices and Philosophy



(De Villiers 2005)

The key features of positivism and social constructionism philosophical approaches are presented in the following table by Ramanathan (2008).

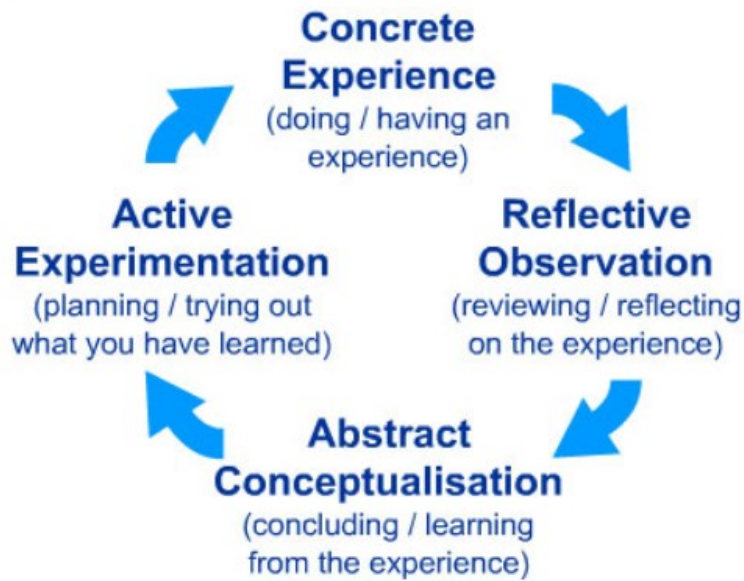
	Positivism	Social Constructionism
<i>The observer</i>	Must be independent	Is part of what is being observed
<i>Human interests</i>	Should be irrelevant	Are the main drivers of science
<i>Explanations</i>	Must demonstrate causality	Aim to increase general understanding of the situation
<i>Research progresses through</i>	Hypotheses and deductions	Gather rich data from which ideas are induced
<i>Concepts</i>	Need to be operationalised so that they can be measured	Should incorporate stakeholder perspectives
<i>Units of analysis</i>	Should be reduced to simplest terms	May include the complexity of 'whole' situations
<i>Generalisation through</i>	Statistical probability	Theoretical abstraction
<i>Sampling requires</i>	Large numbers selected randomly	Small numbers of cases chosen for specific reasons



Traits of Masculinity / Femininity

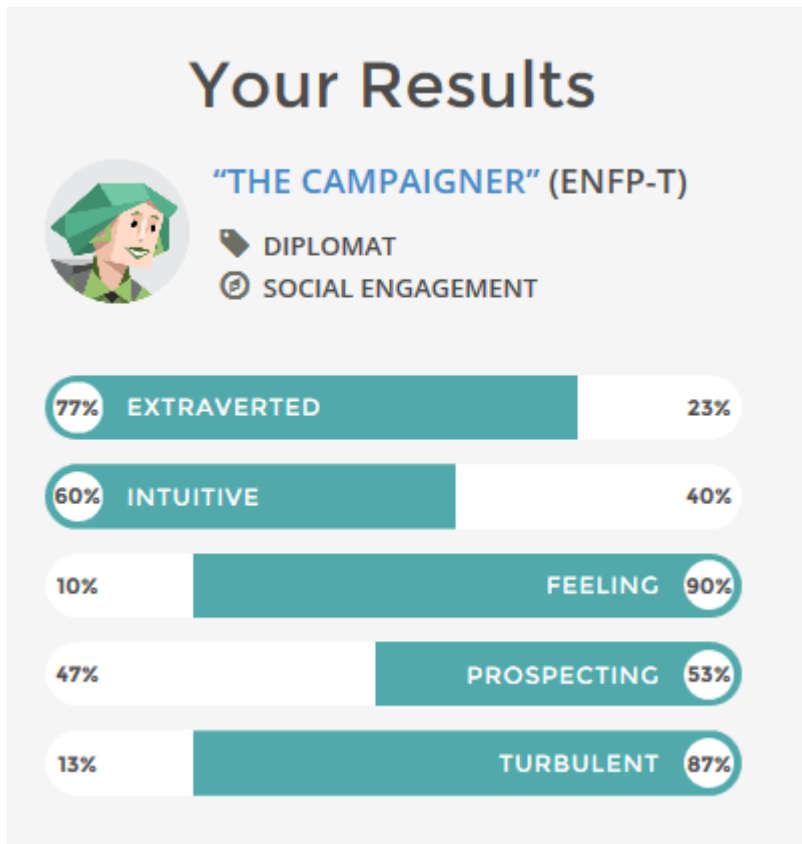
	High Masculine	Low Masculine (Feminine)
social norms	ego oriented	relationship oriented
	money and things are important	quality of life and people are important
	live in order to work	work in order to live
politics and economics	economic growth high priority	environment protection high priority
	conflict solved through force	conflict solved through negotiation
religion	most important in life	less important in life
	only men can be priests	both men and women as priests
work	larger gender wage gap	smaller gender wage gap
	fewer women in management	more women in management
	preference for higher pay	preference for fewer working hours
family and school	traditional family structure	flexible family structure
	girls cry, boys don't; boys fight, girls don't	both boys and girls cry; neither fight
	failing is a disaster	failing a minor accident

Kolbs Learning cycle



- 1. Concrete Experience** - (a new experience of situation is encountered, or a reinterpretation of existing experience).
- 2. Reflective Observation** (of the new experience. Of particular importance are any inconsistencies between experience and understanding).
- 3. Abstract Conceptualization** (Reflection gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept).
- 4. Active Experimentation** (the learner applies them to the world around them to see what results).

Myers Briggs Personality



CAMPAIGNER PERSONALITY (ENFP, -A/-T)

It doesn't interest me what you do for a living. I want to know what you ache for – and if you dare to dream of meeting your heart's longing. It doesn't interest me how old you are. I want to know if you will risk looking like a fool – for love – for your dreams – for the adventure of being alive.

— Oriah Mountain Dreamer

General

- 1) Name of Organization?
- 2) Position held in the company ?
- 3) How long have you been with your organization?
- 4) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
- 5) Are there many women employed within your organization?

Leave- Paternity/Maternity – Childcare Facilities

- 6) What is your organizations policy on maternity leave?
- 7) What is your organizations policy on paternity leave in light of the new legislation which came into effect in 2016 ?
- 8) Does your organization offer childcare facilities, do you have a childcare policy in place and/or do you have any plans in the pipeline around childcare facilities and policies?
- 9) Japanese companies offer substantial inducements to entice working mothers back into the workforce is this something that your organization has considered? If so what inducements would your organization be prepared to offer to encourage women into/back into the work environment.
- 10) Do you believe that those in more senior positions within your organization enjoy a more flexible working environment or do you believe that at a senior level there is a much higher expectation by the organization that senior executives work longer hours?

Experience vs Education

- 11) Are there structures within your organization which facilitate career progression?
- 12) Is promotion based on Ability, Years of Service, further Education or a combination of all three? Please elaborate.
- 13) Within the last five years how many senior managers have been promoted from within the organization and how many of them have been female?
- 14) What combination of question 10 above do you believe contributed most to these promotions?
- 15) Over the last 5 years how many senior managers have been outsourced from other organizations?
- 16) How many of these senior roles have been filled by women?
- 17) Some major studies suggest that for a male counterpart to apply for a role/promotion he need only be competent in 50% of the tasks/skills required, however female applicants need to be competent in above 80% of the tasks /skills required. Do you believe this is a fair reflection of the workplace and would your organization be representative of this finding?
- 18) What are the main skills, abilities, educational, seniority, emotional intelligence, or general characteristics you believe will assist the individual to progress quickly within your organization?

Tokenism -30% Club

- 19) Do females within your organization or within organizations you have dealings with feel that they need to commit to longer working hours to prove their commitment to the organization or their ability to perform at a senior level.
- 20) Do you believe this level of commitment leads to higher levels of competition at a senior level?
- 21) Do you believe men in similar roles feel the same pressures as their female counterparts to perform and prove themselves in a similar way?

Gender Pay Gaps

- 22) Is there pay disparity within your organization particularly in male versus female pay and benefits?
- 23) Is this pay disparity significant? Do you believe this disparity grows the more senior the role in a male versus female situation?
- 24) Is it your view that women within the organization are more open to a lower salary and benefits in exchange for more flexibility in the workplace Is it your view that male counterparts in the organization would not be open to a lower salary and benefits in exchange for a more flexible work life balance.
- 25) How does your organization address the issue of gender pay disparity?
- 26) What procedures/policies have been put in place to ensure that this does not become an issue within the organization?
- 27) Do you believe that the gender pay disparity has decreased with the rise in number of women higher education and skills than ever before?

The Glass Ceiling Phenomon

- 28) Do you believe the perception that in order to reach the higher echelons of an organization there is an expectation and necessity to work excessive hours and do you believe this perception is a bar to women seeking to reach the highest echelons in the workplace?
- 29) Female Directors /CEOs are continually referred to as Female Leaders instead of simply their job title, do you agree with this view and do you have an opinion as to why there is this deferential.
- 30) It is not uncommon in today's society for the female to be the main "breadwinner" of the household does this reflect in women's working attitudes and behaviors?
- 31) Do you believe you have reached the panicle of your career, what goals/ambitions do you still harbor? Do you believe that you can attain them within your organization or do you believe that you will have to move to reach them?
- 32) There is a widely held belief that there we still have a glass ceiling in Irish business do you believe it exists? How do you propose to shatter this glass ceiling as you build your own career?
- 33) Do you believe that the future generation of women entering the workforce will face the same challenges that you faced as you developed your career?

Interviews

Questions –Pharmaceutical

General

- 1) Position held in the company?
Marketing Director
- 2) How long have you been with your organization
Under 1 year

Prior to this was with GFK for 8 years as marketing- spent first 4 years in Ireland and moved to Head Office in Global Team in London.

- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
Couple of thousand medium sized
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
Yes even split on a global level but not necessarily in every function there is more males in senior levels but they do have a female CEO which is quite one of the appeals to move to the organization. GFK only one woman on leadership women were on middle management but the top level was all male.

Leave- Paternity/Maternity – Childcare Facilities

Standard in Denmark office, is that women take the first 6 months and then men take the second 6 months. This is cultural standard in Leo Pharma. The policy of Denmark in her experience is that both parents share the responsibility and it transpires throughout the company

Already in place men take the second 6 months of the child's life.

Not the company but in Denmark all childcare is very affordable so it is incredibly rare for one parent to stay at home, support of the government also helps for both parents to work . Socially driven culture. Everyone gets 5 weeks holidays also regardless of position in the company.

Experience vs Education

Actually not very structured. In previous firm was much more structured easier to work to what needed to be done to achieve the next level. New job is open to much more interpretation. Denmark is a small country very much like Ireland still a case of who you know, transparency is not there. Equally so a lot of appointing people into the position rather than open recruitment. Not a very open access process which creates some challenges with people resentment and issue. Transparency was lacking which in turn creates tension in the company. In GFK very clear what to do get to each level still a lot of political reasons as to why someone got a job but it was done much more subtly. Political challenges to women. They had to jump much higher than the men did and this was quite obvious and a source of frustration. Spent the last year working there trying to implement policies to change this and open up progression to both men and women.

Leo is less structured not progress just now starting to implement the frame works.

In previous organization had competency frameworks, use 9 box varied transparencies, different cultures, in GFK was not official but had an idea of where everyone was on the grid. They very clear career paths; career route was success at a local level, into the European team, from there onto the global team. Ended up on level 4 (i.e. 4 from the CEO down), to get to the next level, was the hardest transition of all this is where most women dropped out of the process.

To combat this set up a mentor program, they noticed that all senior staff were men and there was an unconscious vibe from the men to look for people in their own likeness, so they recognize the unconscious vibe and try to set up mentoring programs with women from level 4 and men from level 2 to attempt to break the barrier into level 3 roles.

In theory this should be successful but in practice it was difficult as were trying to do something that was unnatural. These guys (mentors) wanted to look down the line and see themselves and they were not going to see themselves in a woman. To overcome this aspect was difficult. Need a really strong level 2 mentor, but the senior vice president didn't have the skill set to engage and encourage the employees to the next level it didn't work.

It was implemented by mentoring groups of women at level 4 each had an individual mentor assigned to them for one to one coaching once a month. HR Manager and Manager would also meet with your coach to define your development area in terms of progression, and then the plan was agreed and worked into the system and daily tasks. This procedure would all depend on the manager and their attitude. Manager was her level which is unusual in the company should have been a senior manager, this created an issue. He was not happy to support her progression within the company. This made for some challenges to undertake the tasks at hand.

In this peer coaching the women really struggles because of what was happening within the organization because of the "lad culture", the men would meet quite regularly. They would all go out for dinner and the company progression and development was discussed outside of business hours informally and this lead to some biased. Women were not in this gang and missed out the promotion developments.

Flexible working had now gone against women in this case.

Overall with a good manager this would be good system to help with progression. However for this to work would need to work on the men also not just the women. Otherwise it will never happen.

In her career path, the push back was to get more sales experience. Interviews internally were never achieved. There is an argument of recruiting on potential not on past. Lacked sales experience as progressed through the marketing route, but struggled to gain sales experience internally in order to move up to a level 3 position. This never happened -recruited people on experience.

The bar was much lower for male colleagues much easier to take a risk on a man than to take a risk on woman. There is an unconscious vibe that men are seen to better than female counterparts.

No difference in the recruitment manager. Had to leave the company to progress and to reach the next level to gain more commercial sales experience.

New company is so unstructured there is nothing to work towards. More difficult to progress as there is no clear guidelines. Much more political

Women do not enjoy the politics of work just want to go in and do our job and be awarded or merited for the work they do. It takes a while for women for realize they have to be pragmatic to be there to play the game in their careers.

Moved to Leo an inner core of Danish men that hold the keys are quite powerful but the power is diminishing all the time and now may be the time for an outsider to advance through the ranks time of change and company of transition.

Sideways move to in order to progress. Small company and go up a level or stay in the same and struggle to go up.

Not definite, parallel moves to gain experience. The role spec rather than the level or title but the need to change and opportunities to change. Need to enjoy what she does and be passionate about it. This aspect will weigh in more than the progression aspect.

Maybe in the future may choose to digress but currently on not an option.

Gender Pay Gaps

Well paid and do not have visible to other people so cannot judge. People spend their money differently so may give the perception of being well paid. In her experience to make salary gains need to leave the company if you stay there for a long time tend not to progress in salary. Would get paid more than someone in Leo for over 30 years.

Do not think its an issue that is easily recognizable to others. The salary is down to how good a negotiation you are know your value and fight for that value this is an important aspect of salary. Know what you want to get paid and argue why you should be given it. Take responsibility for your own wages.

Do not underestimate your value, but women do undervalue themselves and go into better negotiations that women.

Women believe that they must be able to do 80 but women only 50 of the tasks at hand a study done at previous organization. This was also displayed by the mentoring program and translates to the salary negotiations.

Part of the gap is because women undervalue themselves. Traditionally and historically there is a large gap. Also the issue of men have a wife and kids to support at home.

Women are more diligent and contentious students and tend to do quite well, def. a difference in education and belief in yourself. Men now in present times

The Future

Love to step back and see where she will go played the corporate race and political energy sapping. Not where she wants to spend her day. Do not want to do this. If you want to move up the ladder do I want to do this

Undecided there is a way but not necessarily straightforward, circling upwards rather than a straight trajectory. Meandered while got some experience. Could take some more time to get to the next level. Do you want to be doing the intensity of work or relax a little. The life quality balance and what does it look like for her.

Does she have the energy for the commercial and political game? Constantly looking for more money, not a big a priority now than in early 20s a bit of greed in the industry, female not too much a male thing.

Now males are more on this track too wanting a good work life balance.

There is a glass ceiling not a complete block not a ceiling but rather a maze to get through can put off women. In part this is the way we operate. We play in a man's world and have to play by their rules and politics.

However never experienced this issue at all. Some men in this generation want more balance, women have fought the battle and have the flexibility now men are facing the same struggle and are getting push back from the older generation of men. Acceptable for women, they achieved this. Ironically men are behind women when it comes to that battle, boys clubs are still there, it is more difficult for women, they have to work harder and prove themselves more in their career at every point to succeed. They can do it but just have to work harder to get there. A lot of men appointed into roles that are not good enough to be there never seen a woman that is not good enough to be there. Male performance has been mediocre where women have been good.

Proves women should be getting more promotion than male counterparts as they are more than competent but struggle to get into those roles, have to work harder.

Feels this is changing a little bit but a slow process.

Questions –Medical Company

General

Position held Medical Director

- 1) **How long have you been with the company?**

One Year

- 2) **How many people are in the organization?**

In Ireland, there are 7. The organization operates in 19 countries across Europe with over 1,000 employees

- 3) **Are there many women in the company?**

Within Ireland, there are 3 female employees and 4 males employees. I cannot be certain of the gender distribution across the entire organization

Leave- Paternity/Maternity – Childcare Facilities

Maternity leave is per count. In Ireland is the statutory requirement of full pay for 26 weeks but the option of an additional 18 weeks unpaid leave. Paternity leave has already been granted in the form of 2 additional weeks paid leave on top of their annual leave once the baby has been born. There is nothing official in the pipeline in terms of childcare policies, but incredibly flexible with regard to working hours and working from home if needs are there. This applies for all functions. Everyone is quite senior, and everyone is afforded incredible flexibility in terms of working hours and working from home to accommodate childcare arrangements. Women have children and their confidence can be shaken to get back in and nothing to do with the amount of hours, need to manage time and tasks this can be why women do not progress. I worked in the USA for many years and the lack of support for women on maternity leave/childcare management was startling for an advanced nation. Norway is a socialist society with equal maternity/paternity rights and state-managed childcare facilities. This encourages parents to work and contribute to society while supporting family responsibilities

Experience vs Education

Within Ireland everyone is quite senior so difficult to progress. There are no formal progression routes within the company. Within Ireland, it is limited are there is one person per function. In order to progress, international relocation would be extremely likely. If you want to think of upward movement would have to think about migration to another part of the company in France. There is no formal structure, but to progress would have to leave Ireland. Within Ireland over the past 5 years there has been 1 promotion. In Ireland, there are 2 senior female managers. Promotion is based on a combination of ability, years and service and education. To get into the company need a good education. Has a PHD, done research abroad, and years of management in Ireland Hired based on experience and education, if when you are in the company can prove yourself, then the support is put around you to progress within the company. At end of the year review, putting a plan in place to develop the full skill set, driven by the individual, if you put it out there what you want, the company will back you and provide formal education or training to develop the full skill set

Need a broad range of skill sets such as experience, people skills, flexible – headquarters in France, the ability to travel, the desire to learn, to pass on the information to key stakeholders, drive, ambition, outside the job title.

In the approach for interviews with a male counterpart, took the males leads in regard to salary negotiations and negotiations for packages, because wouldn't have had the confidence to ask. Also when read the job spec was not as confident in all tasks and skills required, but the male counterpart encouraged to give it a go anyway. Women much more conservative, if when the job spec we don't

match all criteria, reluctant to apply, not as confident as men, and male counterpart so much more nonchalant and confident in the negotiations regarding salaries and she had to be prepared beforehand.

Not sure if just genetic how women were made up, even as a scientist wouldn't show results until she was certain whereas male counterparts showed the results the first time. Men are more confident to talk in a boardroom without having the full background information whereas women are more reluctant to do this. Not sure if it is due to the fact that women want to give all the correct information or is it because we enter an organization on the back foot and feel we can't make a mistake.

Tokenism

Female leaders are still referred to as female leaders because there is so few of them. This is the reason if more equality this title will go away.

In her career always more women than men in the organization so has never noticed the barrier. However is very male in her characteristics – much more confident than female counterparts. Is this nature or nurture?

The more senior has become in the organization the less working hours seem to be. Now up to speed and confident. Do less hours but would get more done much more efficient. Juggling a work life balance, work less hours but worked hard to achieve this point in her career. Do not feel the need to prove herself in the workplace.

Men feel similar pressures in the first few years to prove yourself. Once you have proved yourself you are more confident in the role. Men have a different approach but still feel the need to deliver. Currently no competition but the larger organisations would def. have more competition the higher you get.

Flexibility is a huge deal if not flexible would take less money, for higher flexibility. Would do 3 day week for less of a salary but would work 100% in those 3 days. Men now are striving for this flexibility also. Time has been tuning approach to career, is both 50/50 can't change it in the board room until changed in the home. Basically need to support each other 100%.

Gender Pay Gap

I am not aware of any initiative to combat gender pay gaps. My current salary is benchmarked against industry standards so I am content. There is one colleague internally who is not benchmarked and he is in fact male. He has struggled for pay equality for a number of years. I think you need to start on a competitive salary as rectifying it once in employment is exceptionally difficult. This requires strong negotiation skills at interview stage. The research tells us that women are consistently paid less than men. I have never experienced this. I was in public sector employment for a long time where salaries and levels are transparent. As far as I was aware, I was paid the same as my male counterparts. As previously mentioned, I am benchmarked against industry standards so presume that I am paid the equivalent if not **more** than my male counterparts. Never experienced disparity in pay because of gender entire career paid more than her husband. Her and husband have same qualifications he takes more risks, but she took a conservative career path which led to more money.

The Glass Ceiling

There is no glass ceiling, women who want to progress will progress just may have to work harder to get there. We need to encourage more women to want to progress and want to reach the top levels. Women enjoy maternity leave and then find it difficult to get back into the work place. Need to encourage women to be more driven, and have that work life balance, have to want it and need to get to a position to be trusted and flexible. This is established over time and everyone needs to work hard to get there. Need to know where you want to be but need to be driven to get there can have it all just need to balance, can be the good mother, the good friend and wife but need to balance out work life

to get it. It is women's choice. Has never experienced the glass ceiling but I know of friends who have. I have a strong personality with many typically male characteristics. Perhaps this is why I have never experienced any discrimination in the work place with regards to my gender. My plan is continue to perform, voice my opinions, be heard and make a difference. I think this work ethic is generally rewarded.

Questions – Food Distribution

General

- 1) **How long have you been with your organization?**
1 Year in the current organization
- 2) **How many people are employed throughout your organization?**
Almost 3000 employees in Musgrave Operating Partners Ireland
- 3) **Are there many women employed within your organization?**
Yes, but at present I do not have the actual statistics however looking at the recent hires we have similar men to women ratios

Leave- Paternity/Maternity – Childcare Facilities

There is the statutory payment but there is no top up and any added time is un-paid. The new paternity leave will be updated for the new legislation in September 2016. There are no childcare facilities currently available and there is none in the pipeline. No affiliations with crèches in the area and no practical on the premises to have childcare facilities. We have a parental leave policy which many colleagues avail of

I don't believe the flexible working hours is due to seniority however it would be down to more flexible contracts due to retail, our stores have less flexible contracts due to work demands but this is not based on seniority it just depends on where the role is based within the business.

Experience vs Education

Yes there are career progression programs within the company in house training and development courses. Promotion is based on capability, drive, personality, fit for the role and a person's potential within a role, we have often promoted someone who is ambitious and who we believe will learn quickly. Management roles are usually based on experience, capability and if someone has proved themselves in the past. Good understanding of retail operations for example waste and margin and sales, good attitude, good people management skills

I would say half of the people recruited have been from external sources. However I don't have numbers for this question. I would say 1/3 were filled by women. We are an equal rights employer and if someone has potential their gender is irrelevant

Tokenism -30% Club

No females do not feel pressure to work longer hours to compete with male counterparts. I believe the work pressures are the same at senior level in this business for men and women alike

Gender Pay Gaps

I don't have this information (about pay disparity) however any manger I have hired in the last year has been the same for men and women

I believe some women chose more work life balance commitments for extra time with their family particularly women with young families will take unpaid parental leave to spend more time at home We have an equal and fair recruitment and promotions policy

Yes, better education has lead to a decrease in the gender pay gap. I don't believe it is acceptable to the extent it would have been in the past in Ireland

The Glass Ceiling Phenomon

I believe in order to succeed you must show commitment and often this is over exerting yourself in terms of hours worked for example I would regularly take calls on weekends which I am not obliged to do and would answer emails on holidays to ensure work does not fall down

I don't agree that the word female should be mentioned, we would never say the "male" CEO therefore it is discriminative in my view to say when it is female

Yes, I think women are more confident I know I have always been the "breadwinner" and this makes me proud having pushed myself this far to be successful

No, I am just getting started. I believe I could get far where I am but more than likely will move to something else in a few years to progress further

I think it does, it is difficult to get to the top especially as a female and the older you get and the more kids you decide to have it does certainly get difficult, our HR Department has over 15 people in it, 14 are female and the only male is the intern, the HR Director and Senior HR Manager both have families and retain their seniority and confidence within the workplace which is nice to see and reassuring for me progressing and wanting to progress further

I think it is getting easier, I didn't face difficulties however worked hard to get to where I am today. I believe organizations are being much more careful with recruitment and promotions lately.

Questions – Customer Technology

General

1) How long have you been with your organization?

2.3 years

2) How many people are employed throughout your organization?

Currently 108

3) Are there many women employed within your organization?

Yes 30/70 split (women/men)

Leave- Paternity/Maternity – Childcare Facilities

Paid Maternity, pay full pay 28 weeks top-up normal salary for full term there is extra few weeks but unpaid.

We already offer paternity leave however the policy will change in light of new legislation. We are currently at the draft stage of this new policy. HR had a first meeting with finance and have proposed a similar policy to our current maternity leave policy (paid paternity leave) for equality reasons. Same as maternity is proposed.

No childcare offered. This is not something in our budget. Not big enough larger organizations have more budgets and facilities it is only an SME so not plausible.

Never has anyone not come back no need to encourage them back do not offer any incentive, discriminatory towards women to invite them back should be their own choice to come back or not. We have considered this. We have a flexi time policy and are currently looking to engage with people who would like to work from home for our sales team. If they left on a career's leave or extended leave wouldn't try and incentivize them back so why with maternity leave.

If women take a career break, do think women leave with great skill set –leave out of choice or necessity childcare is very expensive great to encourage people back into the work environment everyone is welcome back, the culture is telecom so there is allowances to work from home males and females all difference levels. Not restricted to management. Sales people with great telecom skills have left recently would like to investigate the idea of home workers people who left for whatever reasons family etc. and want to get back into it but haven't got the resources to travel up and would like to get people to work from home. A big challenge now is how to identify and contact these people who are not working and would be interested in working from home. They have the skill set but hard to reach them as they are not looking for a job

All levels have flexi-time. Now unless it's a role that cannot be done form home i.e. customer call center

I believe that we are a company of equality and everyone has flexible working from the bottom right up. This is evident across the board and in each team. Also some of employees and our directors work from one or two days a week. There is overtime for sat and Sunday every level have some working from home options would have to build up time for trust levels. First 6 months then working from home except home works if that happens.

Customer care rotate the weekend work from home but get paid extra.

Education Vs Experience

Career progression succession planning no formal structure only an SME non formal but everyone is aware of it. Senior discussions to find potential talent within the company equal opportunities employers all roles external and internal give everyone the opportunity on the progression path. Give everyone the opportunity to go into the educational plan and look at skills sets and competencies to progress to the next level. This plan is on the internal website and handbook open to everyone. Can only go for the grant is the course is relevant to their current position or a position in the company that they might like to move to or if the budget allows. All promotions bases on competency not years of service.

No pay grade issue. Believes it still exists but if the right people interview should hire for skill set, what they have achieved in the past and not gender. Competency based interviews are very useful for that. Staged interviews if you have the resources are also great to use. Cultural fit for the company

Women are not aggressive, know a lot of women men are just as hard work as some women. The men can be just as difficult. Women normally have a lot of power, they demonstrate this a little bit more, to be successful need to be drive, and have personal goals. The common factor is that you need to be driven. Charm makes you more successful in her experience. From childhood is it set out as some jobs being female and some jobs being male.

Combination. It really depends on the role. For some roles you must have some educational foundation such as legal, HR, engineering, finance. However, it is experience and ability to really identifies those employees who will be promoted. Adding value to the organization is key. We had one employee who started in the business at 17 and studies her for ACCA through the company until she was a Financial Accountant.

Of our 6 directors (excluding CEO) all of these were promoted to these roles in the last 5 years. Two of these directors are women.

This will vary depending on the department / role. I would say all of these things but this is not an exhaustive list;

- Full competency in the core tasks of their role
- Ability to work within a team environment but also autonomously
- Emotional Intelligence
- Resilience – this cannot be taught but is essential. There is no room for holding grudges or making enemies in the workplace. Professional attitude is very important
- Reflective – they will learn from their mistakes and move forward
- Ability to learn quickly
- Educated and 'expert' in their field
- Commitment to continuous learning and development (curious) – very self-motivated in this area
- Outward looking (not just within the business) engaged with other businesses
- Ability to develop strong networks
- Loyalty to organization and team
- Leadership Qualities
- Problem solver but more than that seeks to improve on processes / systems
- Ability to adapt and change – embraces and encourages change

Tokenism

I don't believe that women feel the need to work longer hours to compete with their male counterparts, but I'm not sure to be honest. It is difficult to answer this for them

Commitment is important but not necessarily contributing to competition

Gender Pay Gaps.

I believe we are all individuals, with different drivers, motives, priorities, goals and agendas. I believe for some people money is their status symbol and flexibility isn't as important. I believe this is linked to

the individual's upbringing and values systems. For some flexibility and time is very important. I don't think it matters if you are male or female. I'm not sure gender is such a factor and not something I ever consider when asked, as I believe all employees should be treated fairly. As I mentioned earlier we have a number of people who work days from home. These are both men and women. Also, we've had requests from both men and women to have their hour's changes to accommodate their lifestyle. I don't ask is it for work-life balance, travel or family. We accommodate all employees where we can and this is not linked to their remuneration.

We have had some requests from women to take parental leave or change hours for a period of time. We have accommodated these requests. We have not received any of these requests from men as yet, however if we do they will get the same consideration and accommodation as a female.

The Glass Ceiling

This may be some individuals perception, however this not my perception. I believe in quality not quantity. I believe you need to work smarter and not harder. These seem like 'slogan's' however the research I've read supports the fact that the longer the hours, after a threshold the quality of the work deteriorates and the time it takes to complete the work slows down. To me long hours does not make you a great employee. It makes you a foolish one. But that's just my perception. You have to put in work to reap rewards but definitely smarter working.

There is no distinguishing between female/male leaders I have not heard of this deferential and I don't use it myself. I would be interested in reading the research about this. I don't see the need for a deferential to be honest. Leadership is an important trait for both men and women in very senior roles.

I have not reached all my goals and ambitions. I would like to be a Head of HR/ HR Director but I'm not in a hurry. I also like to continuous learn and improve on my competencies. I believe as the organization grows, my role grows and so my ambitions are achievable in my existing organization.

If I'm honest, then yes I do believe there is a glass ceiling. I've worked in business for almost 20 years and from my experience it can be difficult for women. We still see far more men in senior roles in general business. I believe for my small part that I can encourage and support women through my networks to follow their ambitions. I believe however, particularly when recruiting, that as a HR professional gender should not be a factor (male or female) as this would be a bias approach to recruitment. Rather the candidates' education, experience and competencies should be the focus and getting the right fit for the organization and team should always be the key consideration.

No. But there will always be challenges for the next generation maybe not as much as what we have faced but still some challenges. More females in different areas start with colleges, if there is no female leaders, females will not rise to the top. There is not mentor. Lifestyle course for more flexibility.

Questions –Media Company

General

- 1) Position held in the company ?
HR Manager
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
1 year.
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
120 quiet period. Next year double.
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
Half and half. Quite unusual generally is more men than women, some department is more male dominated

Summary

Maternity/Paternity Leave

In previous company was male dominated, new company is equal. Previous company was 95% male, came in to the company prepared for that again but was pleasantly surprised at the split not sure if intentional or not.

The company is quite young at the moment maternity/paternity leave is not an issue. They will establish any add-on to the statutory rights. As the company ages up they will introduce or investigate more policies. People do not start families young anymore they establish their careers first. There is no childcare facilities at the moment. There will never be a crèche. The building is too small not a suitable environment for children it is where people go to do work. Flexi time will be introduced when need not currently a need. Many of the people working for the company with kids are guys not an issue for them the women work elsewhere.

There is an element of flexi-time can start work anytime between 7.30 and 9.30 and work your 8 hour shift so a degree of flexibility. Parents work earlier and finish earlier.

No obstacles for women to comeback. Only one women left but she came back no problem in taking someone back after an extended maternity leave break. Previous issues with maternity leave is that people will leave and at the 11th hour admit they are not coming back. Should be give and take on both sides.

The problem with maternity leave is when the women come back and want their old job back, esp if they are more senior and the role has been given to someone else. There would be issues for women who go on leave if they do not draw or pick up a men, while gone. They would have to be gone a very long time for new technology to come in so not an issue, but skills get rusty and so they need to keep drawing or using their skills.

There is a personal choice to work flexible hours or not, both male and female directors can choose to go home, but men tend to wait it out in the office until the children are in bed. It is all about choice men and women choice their path and how they want to work. Men ask for more money they are not more talented but they ask so they get it. Women need more confidence to ask and get what their male counterparts get. What you ask for you get. Women go into fields that lead to them leaving earlier due to stress and pressure. They start to have families and take time off for years. This is where the gap grows.

Education vs Experience

Career progression is within the organization, original not so much but now they have more opportunities for progression. They need more people to come in to put more of a structure in place and more people can go to the directors with ideas and fields they want to progress into. Open to

everyone and well know but will not be pushed onto the individual you will have to ask for it. Monthly meetings to ask and communicate.

In previous roles can bring a horse to water was the issue, will not be forced to do this but can ask for it and will get it.

Promotion can be based on two factors the hard approach or the soft approach. The hard approach is sink or swim the soft approach is to learn you way into the role. Progression is based on both years of service and talent. If you are quite talented and want to go far can progress quite quickly. Not like some sectors where you are moved up automatically by years of service, this is not a good way to conduct business can be very disheartening and can cause un-motivation.

Recruit from within for higher/senior positions where possible, for more admin and finance staff will have to outsource as there is no skills within the organization that fit this criteria. However, for the more senior role at the moment must recruit from outside as there is not skill set currently in the organization to fulfill the needs

Main skills are talent, need to be able to draw etc, keep the head down but also try to find solutions esp for leadership roles not just problems but solutions too.

Men do have the confidence to apply for roles that they are under qualified for previous manager was not qualified. He had no skills to be a manager. It happens that men can blag their way into a job and not have the skills to back them up

Tokenism

Not noticed women having to work longer hours to compete with men, however has noticed men working longer hours to avoid family responsibilities. Men wait for kids to be in bed before they go home, several male colleagues have done this in the past.

HR is a female driven role, as are health and safety, in these fields men do not apply for these roles. Some roles are female dominated and it needs to be to have empathy there. Need to embrace who you are, can't try to be who you are not regardless of gender. Women are good at multi-tasking, which is helpful in HR. Aviation is male dominated but the hours are horrendous and impossible for a woman with family commitments.

Gender Pay Gap

There is no pay disparity, however rigging (setting up a set design) is a male dominated field and is well paid. Paid better because it's heavy moving, not popular with women.

Always have to ask what you want need to ask for a pay review and to set goals with both yourself and the manager.

Don't believe the pay disparity is decreasing with women entering higher education, it is a choice women need to make can't work and raise a family full time it's a choice. Need to arrange the workplace to allow you to have children and a life balance, and your work responsibilities is the solution.

The Glass Ceiling

Women are still differentiated because it is not the norm. will hopefully be different for the next generation.

Questions –Aviation

General

- 1) Position held in the company ?
Hr Director
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
Over 9 years
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
Over 800 years
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
Not an even split mostly men

Summary

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Internal company policy, statutory benefits but added on benefits for some staff members. Not decided if paternity will be topped up have to go through the unions.

No childcare facilities or policies at all. Firm no on all childcare facilities.

There are flexibility and part-time hours. Can work hours around dropping children to and from school to allow for working parents to continue with the company.

Aviation industry is seasonal. Most managers are male and do not require the flexibility. Some of the office workers are female and would enjoy more flexibility.

Have been women on the board over the years have moved, but enjoyed the flexible working hours.

Education vs Experience

There is career progression, any role is offered internally first so as to encourage staff to progress. Various paid documents that proceed up the ranks and would have a pay increase also. There is cross-functional training also.

Progression is based on a combination of years of service, education, and ability and do testing, do profile screening status analysis pilot and cabin crew have to look at hours and different criteria than the office staff.

Do not outsource people. Aviation is quite male dominate, all pilots and engineers are male, and all senior engineers are male. A lot of women do not apply for roles in Aviation. Do pick the best candidate for a job regardless of gender.

Procedure bound, have to have all the paperwork, and requirements and qualifications, a lot of checklist to be filled for the role.

The ability to manage a team and if they have no previous experience of this, provide coaching and mentoring to get them up to speed.

Tokenism

Women were there on their own merit. Female working predominantly with males and not a problem or not tokenism. Or pressure to prove her position.

Gender Pay Gap

No pay disparity, all on the same band depending on level and roles within the organisation.

Women have never offered to work for less money equal flexibility for both male and female workers. Women are now more qualified, general salary surveys the gap is reducing. She is paid the same as her male counterpart in the UK both at the same level.

The Glass Ceiling

No view on female labels, have always been referred to as simply the job title.

Women do not feel any pressure to work harder regardless of the private life. Women just work to their best capabilities.

No glass ceiling in her view.

No pressure just for women, pressure is for both male and female role dependant. Would take work home if they had to but so would male counterpart.

Questions – Recruitment Company

General

- 1) Position held in the company ?
Senior Recruitment Consultant
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
17 months
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
600 people
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Once permanent can extend it the statutory leave for women. All process will be changing for the new paternity leave, had already given 4 weeks to new fathers.

There is no childcare facilities but looking to have some sort of contribution scheme in connection with the great place to work. Need to find crèches that can be signed up to the project. There is a lot of flexibility in the workforce. Trying to move away from presentism, all employees have a lap top and a phone, and can do this job from home, there is a lady with 2 children who works from home and comes in once a week for a staff meeting.

The organisation actively encourages women to come back to the workforce after career breaks ensures that returning mothers have whatever they need to make it work. Women who have family responsibilities (children or careers) can work from home a lot of flexibility. More female directors than male directors and the CEO is female. All directors and CEO have children, they encourage people to come back in and value the skill set. There is a lot of individual tailored working schedules to ensure that everyone is catered to.

Another lady didn't want to recruit after her maternity leave, she was encouraged internally to do a trainer's course and is now leading the internal trainers' course.

Education Vs Experience

Structures in place for career progression are clearly labelled. The training courses are not defined to the area that you are in can move about within in the organisation. If you fit the company, you can go to college courses that would benefit the company in any area. They will support you, recruitment is tough, need to show how keen you are to learn and progress within the organisation. Promotion is based on ability rather than tenure. Now will be encouraged to progress if work well within the organisation.

Need a lot of soft skills rather than education based, customer service skills, ambition and drive, the willingness to learn.

Tokenism

Women are not necessarily the softer managers. The director of current team is male and is easier to approach than the female leader who is more numbers and target driven. Women excel in recruitment because of their ability to multi task, admin and organisational skills. All these help women progress quicker.

Women are definitely harder on themselves, men across the board when looking at a job spec what they do jumps out rather than what they cannot do. Women need to be more confident in themselves

and go for the job, women do not get promoted because they do not go for the job not because they don't get the jobs. Women say "I just" a lot need to stop minimising their accomplishments.

Men struggle just as much as the women do it is a learning curve mistakes will be made. There is still the stigma that women are aggressive and men are assertive. People are waiting for Hilary Clinton to make a mistake, women can be their own worst enemy.

Women in the current organisation got their promotion because they are top of their game. They are very supportive it is not to show a level of diversity.

There are more female mentors than females it is a female dominated area. Men do not feel the pressure to compete with women. At the end of the day it is a sales role.

Gender Pay Gap

No pay disparity it is based on experience, you build yourself up, and negotiate yourself all individually based. All requirements to move up a pay grade or promotion, is clearly stated what you need to obtain this.

The pay disparity has decreased due to women getting more education and confidence. Women are encouraged not to disclose their salaries but now more confident can

The Glass Ceiling

Females are still referred to as a female leader, but it is an industry habit.

Women who are the main earner in the household, they feel the responsibility and will take less and settle because they feel the need to have money.

If could also have the opposite effect, and cause women to work harder and strive for more pay and promotion working for their families not themselves.

Women would take less pay for a more flexible working schedule if it was for family commitments. Women are willing to take less for the same experience. Sometimes have to calm men down get very carried away. Men are a lot more confident.

In current organisation there is no glass ceiling however has seen it in some other organisations. There is a male privilege. Male privilege build relationships in sporting activities, boys clubs are still present. It would be difficult for women in these companies. Women need to find a company whose culture works for them.

Flexible and not fear of change is a major requirement for career progression.

Currently working with the travelling community to break down barriers and to get them temping throughout the organisations braches.

Women will still have barriers but not to the same extent as the women before pave the way for new women to come though

Questions

General

- 1) Name of Organization?
Tech US Multinational company
- 2) Position held in the company ?
Has progressed from operations coordinator now is business partner
- 3) How long have you been with your organization?
Over 5 years
- 4) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
Dublin but work for region- 150 people
All in all 900
- 5) Are there many women employed within your organization?
Even split some roles more male – engineering
Finance and sales are even split

Summary

The supply of the work force is mostly men all post doc a lot of men do this and not women this is flow. Low supply of women. There is a big push for women in tech in women. Have hired a person to ensure diversity – should probably go back to school. There is a schools partnership with deise schools –not many opportunities- help with cvs and seminars and mentoring programme for 2 years. One girl won a prize got a job as a software engineering assistant. The new minister deputy for department of education wanted to promote diversity. Women wanted to be hairdressers while men wanted to be engineers' employers can do more to promote diversity.

Mentoring programme not for new joiners, not buddy system, happens naturally, have an internal mentoring programme. There are a few female mentors but male dominated. The mentee gets to choose their mentor, chose for their achievements rather than gender. However subconsciously could see people picking the person they had similar characteristics with. Good mix of mentees but the mentors were mainly male. We see a lot of women in high positions but not in high positions as managers. Have a group of senior female leaders to raise awareness noticing that some female leaders got a certain point and were leaving the company. Became very male dominated after this point there was a miria of reasons, wanted to understand why to try and prevent the loss of skill set. Ensure they felt they could advance, and they were not under pressure.

Maternity leave is fully paid, state pay and topped up for the 26 weeks. Also give a bonus, or a basket full of presents. Fathers also get 8 week paid leave. Although a lot of men do not take it. They do not need to take it in one block can be broken down but in increments of 2 weeks and used within the 1st year. The tendency is to take 2 weeks in the beginning and two weeks later on. Very rare to take the full 8 weeks. The perception is it is a long time away from the office. Can't be off for so long. Have a lot of young people and want to keep the talent so promote work life balance.

There is not back to work courses for career breaks. But managers will reintegrate the returner. There is not rating system for someone who is away for more than 30 days to get back up to where they were.

No childcare facilities do have healthcare plans, new child gift- blankets etc. and new child bonus, for male or females, Have a link with a crèche with a discount. With the healthcare once you have a child it covers for a cleaner up to 3 times a week or a nanny service so that they can help with the new mother.

There is longer hours the more higher you progress through the company but also in terms of flexibility there is more flexibility and ability to work from home.

Used to have more work from home opportunities but due to loose handling of this and the lack of productive work being done from home has since been revoked for the majority of employees.

Career progression, year-end review with potential promotions within that, very open about the expectations and requirements to get to the next level. Work with your manager to understand what is expected to the next level, careers week, open roles, cv work, try encourage internal movement. Like to hold on to good staff.

Promotion is based on years of service and ability. To move into another role must be with current role for over a year and a half. There are a few training but mainly product and internal training.

40% promotion of women within the company and 60% was men, nearly an even split, based on potential and merit. Put it on the individual to go and work for it. Managers really help the promotion not gender basis but how somebody shows their ability to be adaptable. Try to promote from within not really hire externally unless there is nobody ready to take on the role.

Balance of tasks and skills across genders managers hands on helps to promote, men are picked more than women because they think more outside the box need to be more adaptable and push the boundary out.

Do not outsource many people from outside try to hire from within, typically people progress from within there is a lot of tenure in the organisation. If there was a need for a skill set which was not inside would go outside.

There is a good balance of skills throughout the organisation, there is no opportunity to exaggerate or to underperform, and there is a quarterly review. It is a different environment, in tech always changing, constantly have to prove your worth within the company. Very competitive market female leaders put pressure on themselves the organisation and peers do not think they are any less valued, it is a general trend with all leaders' not just female leaders.

When women decide to take maternity leave it can be referred to as a holiday, not maternity leave, this also puts a pause on their career, some people in the organisation work harder before they go and have been promoted and then gone on maternity leave. There is also issues when they come back and there is no opportunities for part time positions. There can be a drop off then for women at this point. Men would have the same pressure if they take time off. Men do not want time off, or take the time off they are happy to stay in the office.

Gender Pay Gap

Pay disparity is there but not massive of the top 20% earners in the company 8 are females. These gaps grow with the seniority. Men tend to be more demanding when they move into a new role. Women do not argue as much they are happy with the new role and do not need the pay hike. Men are more confident, and can be better at being vocal of their self-worth. Females are generally more humble and happy with the new role. Women are happy when the team, or the company does well. More compassionate than others. Men would be more likely to look after themselves.

Recruitment tries to deal with the pay disparity, but it is always up the candidate to negotiate their salary, very hard once you are in a company to move up. Men will have the confidence to do this while women may be just happy to get a new role. Not guaranteed to get an increase every year.

The pay disparity has decreased in Ireland, now that more females are in higher education its becoming much more equal.

The Glass ceiling

There is no distinction between male and female directors in the organisation, simply referred to by the job title.

Women more and more being the lead earner, and the male stays at home, it is more socially acceptable.

There is a glass ceiling, has not been affected by the ceiling. However when promoted from within an organisation there is little opportunity to renegotiate salaries, if when out to the market would get more money.

If wanted to start a family would want to progress any further, there is no incentive, more money but less work life balance, as a female professional on paper HR Director sounds good but in terms of family wouldn't want the pressure.

There are no walls within the organisation, the only limits is lack of roles. Many people can grow within the roles.

Has not experienced any barriers, need to give more than 100% and as a female that is a choice if you want a family and want to do this, may have to accept that won't become a director but this is a personal choice.

Would recommend for females, career can be holistic and not just job, have a work life balance and make a choice and go for it.

Women are more aggressive, men come across as more relaxed but women are that bit more demanding.

Questions –Food Manufacturing Organization

General

- 1) Position held in the company ?
HR Officer
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
2 years
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
Connected to a larger one above 20,000
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
Yes even split.

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Maternity leave is statutory but there is not top up applied. Will just be statutory again. There has been nothing. There is no childcare facilities and none in place. There is nothing in place to help women integrate back. There is a back to work interview but that is it.

The more senior the more hours you have to work. Senior level in any position would have to stay longer not in contract but it is expected and there is a lot more responsibility. Not more flexible policies and procedures are for everybody. Nothing for senior positions no work from home facilities.

Education Vs Experience

Career progression on performance based reviews can move in to difference positions. There are upskills and education facilities and grants must be there for a few years before can avail of this. Everyone is aware of this programme. Promotion is based on performance based than years of service. Less than 5 have been promoted from within but 3 were female. A lot have been outsourced and a mixture did not have the skill set within the organisation.

Women need to more confident to apply for a job they lack a certain level of confidence compared to male counterparts, possibly because women leave for children etc. it hinders career progression. Women lose confidence when out of work for so long should have programme to entice women back to the workforce. Part-time and flexibility for women. Men have the confidence to go for any job.

Support should be there women should not be left with the brunt of childcare should be even split that the only way for change to happen. Men are starting to look for the step men and women are starting to level changed in the mind set of women working, free childcare and other facilities for women and men to go back to work quicker.

Tokenism

Women are not afraid to ask questions once they reach certain levels they are more confident and progress up the ladder, women are in senior management but the head roles are still male dominated. Women do feel the need to take on too many tasks and find it hard to delegate male managers are better at delegation women are need to be in control. Sometimes women are women's own enemy instead of supporting each other tear each other down and can be portrayed as being aggressive rather than assertive like men. Sometimes they are aggressive as they feel the pressure more to try and retain the position at all costs depends on the individual.

Gender Pay Gap

There is no pay disparity in organisation.

The Glass Ceiling

Do accommodate women in flexi hours where possible. Women are now more confident in asking for what they want and women have no problem fighting for their rights. Female leaders are not specifically referred to as a female will just be by job title. On some level if there was only one single female in management if there is more than one female in management position then would be simply the job title.

Women are getting more aggressive and do not stop at a certain level want to get as high and as far in their career as they can. All her friends are the same want to get as far as possible. Definite change in recent change. It has been a long time coming, changed a few years ago. No barriers in her career progression. Have noticed male counterparts get further in their career than females. A male counterpart was in a lower career, jumped two job title inside one year to overtake her. Men can go further because its female dominated. Sometime companies have gender quotas to fill and can be an element of tokenism to have them progress. In careers where gender dominated female programmers for example looks good to have a female in the role, would seek the female candidate out but would not hire someone without the required skill.

Women are progressing Scandinavian countries are an inspiration hopefully things will go forward and not backwards. Improvements for every generation constantly moving forward.

Questions – Travel/Retail

General

- 1) Position held in the company?
HR Director
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
18 months
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
2,300 approx
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
Retail 47% female 53% Male.

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Maternity leave varies within support office, top up statutory leave, 18 weeks top up in the office, but in retail there is no top up.

Full intend to implement new legislation offer paternity leave currently but unpaid. No childcare facilities or policies. No plans for future plans.

No specific inducements for women to come back to the work force- after maternity leave all women come back. There is currently no need for training for people who take career breaks to up-skill no formal training. There is on the job training to familiarize themselves.

Support office is incredibly flexible for all members at all levels with working from home. There is some departments that require long hours but there is a great degree of flexibility once the level of trust is established. Most people work from home one day a week depending on the time of the year with work load etc.

Education Vs Experience

Career progression –within retail space a number of development programs for both manager and supervisor levels- need to be in these roles to take the development role. Within the office there was a re-structure so now will be re-implemented through talent planning and education of high potentials. Promotion is based on ability and performance not years of service this is not a factor. Support office look at females 20% getting better within the organization.

Deal with everyone on a level playing field. Like to give people the chance and learn from within. Men are more likely to apply more confidence, they can be oblivious to their development needs. The self-doubt form women, men do not have these issues.

The skills and abilities to progress in the company are,

Tokenism

Sometimes women do feel the need to put in extra hours; women put this pressure on themselves. It goes back to the self-doubt. If they get up at 5pm to go home they suffer from self-doubt. Men do not think about it as much. However, in this organisation it is not an issue everyone puts in long hours when they need to.

It leads to high levels of competition which can be off putting to female candidates. Overall women are seen as aggressive where as men are seen as assertive. Across the board this can be seen not necessarily in this organisation but over a number of organisations. There are two currently two females on the leadership team and aggression would not be used to describe them. However it has

been seen in other companies. Women are genetically softer, and therefore feels they need to put on this aggression so that they can match with the board or male leadership team.

Females are happy when the company are doing well they are more team players, whereas men are more out for themselves. Not in all cases, but there is definitely is the case. From leadership teams in the past women are focused on their team over all, however on the male side there is a less of a majority focused on the team benefits.

From the current organisation the male leaders are equally as team orientated as the females.

Gender Pay Gap

There can be a pay disparity within the organisation. In some cases it can be significant, but normally it is a historical thing. One person may be on a team for a long time, and compared to a new employee who joins a team and starts at the established rate at that time. While the male employee may have 20 years' experience in the business and brought the historical pay rates with him, she will be starting at the bottom. It is not an intentional thing that basically comes down to new vs historically rates.

Females may not have as much management experience as the males, the females were new to business so wouldn't have the equilibrium, or wouldn't have had 10 years' experience on a leadership team and therefore this needs to be factored in and end up on a lesser rate.

Once a year try to bench mark all roles. This is done in conjunction with the pay review. So therefore, would get a medium salary and if someone was above that medium probably wouldn't get a pay increase, however if someone was below the medium they would get a pay increase to try and lessen the gap. Gradually catching up with the people on your team.

The gender pay gap has decreased somewhat, due to education, this is ongoing evolving so it has decreased.

The Glass Ceiling

No women or men would not take a lesser salary for more flexitime or more benefits.

There is no differentiation between leaders as to their gender, simply referred to as their job title.

Women have become the breadwinner, so they feel they have more responsibility in the job, feel they need to perform really well and perhaps earn more money for the household. The exact same thing men would have felt years ago being the bread winner, women now feel that. There are women who do have it all, have families and careers but struggle to balance that all the time.

There is the perception that you need to be seen in the workplace all the time and put in excessive hours to reach the senior management positions. This is not a barrier, it is a mind-set, it's your attitude, although easy to say as currently do not have children. If had children who might struggle with this. However, there are women, in the business who have both and just work really hard to manage this.

Have faced some barriers in the past, would have in a previous place worked, would have viewed the development was focused on favourites rather than merit. Not as outgoing, or in wrong place at the wrong time, was a barrier to promotion.

To overcome this left the company. Got to the point there was no next step, was on the development course and the output of this would have been 20% were signed on to the next work level, but left 80% on the course with nowhere to go.

There is still glass walls, in some areas women would progress quicker, hr over sales, women might not get there as quickly. On the flip side, men are not progressed quicker no tokenism.

The future generation of women might possibly face the same challenges, these challenges were not gender based but barriers to the career progression. The development program was 50/50 split. Has never felt gender as a barrier.

Some of the best mentors have been men. Women take a lot from male mentors. If males had a female mentor wouldn't take it as seriously, seen this in the past. There are female mentors but they do not shout about it. Mentorship should be equal male and female.

Questions Public Education Institute

General

- 1) Position held in the company ?
Managing HR Director
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
10 years
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
2,500
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
56 men to 44 women academic more men administration side more women.

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Maternity leave is topped up to the statutory pay. The new paternity leave is welcomed, it will be adopted not sure how yet. There is an onsite crèche for both students and staff, and are very child friendly in the organisation. A lot of work life balance incentives throughout the organisation. There is more work life balance in a college, shorter working day. People can take time off and get paid throughout the year. Gives great flexibility to working parents if they want to work part time or flexi time, helps retain working women.

The higher the level not expected to work longer hours in current organisation. Occasionally the work will demand it but the organisation are happy for you to take the work home to complete and not work in the office. Do not have a present feel, flexibility to work from home, go home and put the kids to bed and continue to work. This open to everyone within the organisation.

Education Vs Experience

Career progression is present, all jobs are offered internally first this helps with career progression. There is also a lot of training and development for staff. There is an educational support fund which employees can avail to upskill and do long term courses both internally and externally, give some financial support and also study leave. It is available to everyone but must have a year's service within the organisation.

Promotion is based on ability, people get the promotion based on their merit not years of services. does not agree at all men and women are equally confident in their abilities in the job at hand. Has never had a barrier in her career.

Men are more confident will put themselves forward for a promotion quicker than a woman would.

Tokenism

In own experience, there is no issue, for women to feel under pressure to prove position is based on merit and ability rather than to show diversification within an organisation. If this is felt irrespective of gender then in the wrong job.

No it is an outdated perception of women in the work force that women are described as aggressive while men are simply described as assertive. This is not the case, have never come across this issue.

People perform best when they are themselves, sometimes women have a tendency to try and be someone they are not the higher up an organisation they go. This does not work need to try and be themselves.

Mentoring programs are being introduced and expanding for administration and support staff there is already one in place for academics.

There are an even split for mentors and mentees.

Would be a good idea to have a back to work scheme for women,

Gender Pay Gap

There is no pay disparity, there are grade structures in place to ensure that this is not the case.

Not necessarily will take a lesser pay cut. No willing to take lesser pay for more benefits or a flexible working schedule.

The pay disparity depends on what career is chosen, some women chose careers with lower paid jobs to suit their family needs, which leads to a pay disparity between men and women.

The women who chose to climb the corporate ladder the pay disparity has decreased over the number of years. It is all about choice and what path women choose to take.

The Glass Ceiling

Women have the choice there are not glass walls, it is all down to choice and drive. Have never experienced a glass ceiling but the opposite people who have helped and encourages and made it work for her and her family needs. If there are any limitations have placed them there herself, 3 small kids and a senior job, the only limitations is the ones that the she has placed there.

Have had both male and female bosses, it is more about the persons' capabilities rather than gender can make it work.

Both males and females can be team orientated or indeed both can be out for themselves. It depends on the stage your career is at. If you are at a senior level it is all about developing other people as you have developed yourself. Once you are competent and capable, so to get satisfaction from the role help to develop other people.

Money should come secondary to work, firstly it should be about enjoyment and fulfilment. Women are more confident in asking for a pay rise if it's for their family. Women are not strong in asking for a promotion or more money. Women should push for more equality in this area.

A lot of women can't be see to ask should be made aware that they can ask, education and awareness.

Does not believe in the glass ceiling and does not think it exists. It is a freedom of choice. It is ok for women to choose to take time off and take a career that suits their family's needs, it is not the organisation that puts up the barriers it is a personal choice. Women have chosen to stop their careers at a certain level. It is not that they wish to go further and cant it is a personal choice.

Would hope that the next generation would have the same opportunities that have experienced, it was a choice to get to a certain career level before having her children. Established herself as a senior manager before having children. If had children earlier would not have progressed as far or to such a senior level would have had more of an impact. More women are making this decision, and it is a risky choice but they want to establish themselves. Need to reap some rewards of college and masters etc. before taking long career breaks.

Questions -Healthcare

General

- 1) Position held in the company ?
HR Manager
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
8 years
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization?
257
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
37%

Leave- Paternity/Maternity – Childcare Facilities

We provide enhanced maternity leave. We will provide enhanced paternity leave. Does not provide for childcare facilities and has no plans to do so in the future. Would consider flexible working hours dependent upon business needs but atypical working hours, part-time hours etc. Would try to accommodate the individual as much as possible. There is a much higher expectation to work longer hours the more senior position you hold within the company.

Experience vs Education

There are structures within the company to facilitate career progression training courses, and encouragement. Promotion and progression is based on ability rather than time spent with the company. In the last number of years there have been 7 senior managers promoted from within the company, (2 of which were females). Over the same period 2 senior managers have been outsourced because they did not have the skill set yet within the company to promote from within. The promotions have been based on business acumen, problem solving skills, communication skills, and knowledge of area of work, this with the ability to complete the tasks at hand have led to the individuals being promoted or career progression.

Tokenism

Yes females seem to work longer hours to match the efforts of their male counterparts. No men do not feel the same pressures as women do they are more confident.

Gender Pay Gaps

No there is no pay disparity. We ensure pay is equal and perform annual adjustments where necessary. Regular salary benchmarking No, not in my experience education has not reduced the pay gap.

The Glass Ceiling Phenomon

I think women at the pinnacle of business is still a rarity so until it becomes equal, their gender will always be focused on rather than their job title.

It is still viewed as the woman's responsibility to care for any children, until this becomes completely equal, women will struggle to reach their full potential in the workplace.

No, I believe that as the organization grows, my role will develop further by continuing to challenge myself and take on new responsibilities.

The glass ceiling is diminishing and opportunities are increasing but there are still some barriers to women reaching their full potential in the work place

Questions – Medical Devises

**** Am currently at home with my kids. Answered questions based on my most recent employer****

General

- 1) Position held in the company?
R&D Manager
- 2) How long have you been with your organization?
7 years
- 3) How many people are employed throughout your organization? Circa 130 on site; parent company 3000 world wide
- 4) Are there many women employed within your organization?
Yes

Leave- Paternity/Maternity – Childcare Facilities

6 months full salary for women, unsure of paternity leave as not in the organization anymore. There is no childcare facilities or policies or any plans to put them in place. There is an expectation of longer hours but more flexibility for directors

No support for women who are on maternity leave- opposite occurs

Has left organization because of the treatment and lack of support shown to her when she lost her baby. This is compared to her husband's company who is all female directors and showed a lot of empathy and offered counseling for both her husband and herself. Her organization is predominately male and were not helpful or showed any emotional support for her.

Experience vs Education

There are no progression structures in place.

If there is a role that recruits from within it will depend on the role. Sometimes elaborate process, sometimes appointed with no opportunity for others to apply

No recruitment of senior managers within the last 5 years; restructuring to get rid of senior manager positions. There is 1 director role filled by woman

Yes men are more likely to apply for jobs quicker than women, more confident.

Obedience, organization are the skills need to progress within the organization.

Tokenism -30% Club

Yes females feel under pressure in the organization to work long hours to compete with male counterparts.

Yes men have the same pressures as women do in this organization

Gender Pay Gaps

Yes there is a pay disparity

Yes this disparity grows with seniority.

It doesn't address the issue of the gender pay disparity.

There is an employee handbook but it is ignored when it doesn't suit the company's agenda

The Glass Ceiling Phenomon

Yes I agree. As the question suggests, it is to keep them separate/apart from male leaders

Yes women are more confident in now they are the main breadwinner.

I intend on starting my own business in a different field. There was no opportunity to progress in my last organization.

Depends on what glass ceiling means. I don't think it is impossible for women to be at the very top but it is much, much harder.

Yes women the next generation of women will still face these challenges.

Gantt Chart

Gantt Chart

Task		Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Research Litreature	3 weeks	█											
Write Litreature review	3 weeks		█										
Methodology Chapter	2 weeks				█								
Design question for interviews	1 week						█						
Test Questions to ensure validity	1 week						█						
Carry out indepth interviews (10)	2 weeeeks						█						
Transcribe interviews and anyalse responses	1 week							█					
complete first draft	3 weeks								█				
Revise after feedback	1 week											█	
Proof and amend document	1 week												█
Print and bind for submission	1 week												█
Submission	1 week												█