

Gender equality in the hospitality industry: How do female workers perceive their working opportunities in the hospitality industry, and for what reason?

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<p>The aim of this thesis is to identify if there are gender related issues according to women in their career in the hospitality industry. Moreover, if they experience difficulties in their working opportunities.</p> <p>The goal is to identify if women encounter difficulties in having working opportunities, which will be analysed by conducting interviews, to find out if they experience difficulties in their working opportunities or not. Additionally, other goals include, to identify existing barriers, and if women still experience these barriers to grow up in a management position, or not.</p> <p>The focus of this thesis is on how easily or challenging women can reach an upper management position and identifying the different barriers that need to be passed to reach such a position. This focus is chosen by the author, as she wants to reach an upper management position, and therefore, want to understand the barriers that women need to pass, and how they can pass it.</p> <p>Research of this thesis is done by doing desk research to first have a better understanding about the difficulties that women have in their working possibilities, and field research, to analyse women's current point of view, where and what kind of problem they currently experience.</p> <p>The research showed that there are different barriers that stop or held women from reaching an upper management position. Such barriers can be segregation, discrimination, work-life balance, and the glass ceiling.</p> <p>Field research is done by doing semi-structured interviews. This research method is chosen due to the fact, that there can be more of conversation instead of fixed questions and follow up questions are giving more explanation to the general set of questions and answers.</p> <p>The field research showed that none of the respondents ever noticed direct gender inequality, however, they do still believe that there is gender inequality, and that it has occurred in their lives. Moreover, none of the organizations has a policy to prevent gender inequality to happen. Meanings on the glass ceiling were divided, where some argued that they bumped into the glass ceiling, and others do not even believe that it exists.</p> <p>To conclude this research the literature, and field research proves both that gender inequality still occurs in the hospitality industry, nevertheless, it is often because men or more decisive and aggressive in their leadership style, then women are.</p>	
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1 Introduction

This research-oriented thesis will study the gender equality in the hospitality industry. As the industry tend to not have equal opportunities yet for male and women. Gender equality means the equal rights and conditions for men and women, this include the social development, next to economic and political development. This topic is chosen by the author as currently there are a lot of women working in the hospitality industry, sometimes there are even more women employed than men, however, they still get less opportunities than men. Moreover, women are still underrepresented in management positions, and whenever they get a managing position, they tend to receive more pressure, than males would receive (M Kogovsek & M Kogovsek, 2015).

Therefore, the reason that the author wants to write about gender equality is that she wants to create a better understanding on gender equality, if female employees still perceive gender inequality. Moreover, the glass ceiling will be discussed, and which barriers are most common for women, not being able to reach an upper management position. Globally, the gender equality gap is currently at 68,6 percent, there are four dimensions which are taken into consideration to calculate this performance. The four dimensions are economic participation, educational attainment, health and survival and political empowerment. Within these dimensions it is calculated how many women are participating in the labor market, and how much power they have. Their research shows that gender parity in the economic dimension is the biggest, and would take around 260 years to close this gap (World Economic Forum, 2020).

As the author, a woman herself, wants to strive for a management or leadership function, and she does not believe that she needs to prove herself, only since she is a woman. Moreover, the author herself want to have equal rights in her professional career later on, however, this problem cannot be quickly fixed, and needs time over it, therefore, it is essential to continue writing about this topic right now, to hopefully see changes in the near future. Furthermore, as living in 2020, the author does not believe that this topic still can be an issue. Additionally, this explains as well that this topic is extremely relevant to discuss within the hospitality industry. As well as this industry is a big industry with a lot of employees up to 11,9 million in 2016 only in Europe, where the hospitality industry is contributing as one of the biggest players in the European economy, including a lot of women, where on average there is 46,1 percent in the overall economy women, in the hospitality industry this rises to 53,7 percent (Hotrec, 2018).

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to state out clearly what gender equality is in hospitality. The research problem that the author wants to understand is, if women are getting fewer working opportunities or not. It is essential to write about this topic, as the industry needs to get more knowledge on this problem, and eventually the industry need to have gender equality as well.

Therefore, the author believes that it is crucial to write about this to managers, leaders, owners, and everyone who is involved in the hospitality industry.

What the author precisely wants to investigate and get more knowledge in is; how women perceive their working opportunities, identify different barriers, the invisible glass ceiling, how women above the glass ceiling experiences their position within the industry.

1.2 Objective

To describe this objective clearly, there is a research question. This question will give a better overview on what exactly will be analysed.

The research question for this thesis is:

How do female workers perceive their working opportunities in the hospitality industry, and for what reason?

With this research question, the author is trying to get a better understanding about the current status of gender equality in hospitality, moreover, it is also about creating more awareness and make it less of a taboo to talk about it. Currently people are not talking much about gender equality, however, they still perceive this problem as normal. Ideally, the author wants to achieve equal rights for men and women in the hospitality industry, though, she know that this problem is not solved by just writing this thesis, nevertheless, it helps to create more awareness, understanding the problem, and to help the industry getting more knowledge on gender equality, to solve a problem like this. First there need to be recognition, and this can only be created by talking and writing about this topic.

The research question will be answered by doing desk research and conducting interviews on hotel employees. The interviewees will be picked randomly in different hotels. The positions of the employees will not be a crucial role, as the author wants to get more insights and knowledge on the topic, however, if possible, the author wants to interview female leaders, to have more insights in their perspective on this topic. All data gathered will be analysed by colour coding.

1.3 Delimitation

There are some delimitations to this thesis, as not all aspects of gender equality can be discussed within this thesis. The wage gap between males and females will not be discussed within this thesis, due to some research difficulties. The author will also exclude to find the reason behind gender equality, she will only focus on the individual level. Therefore, the author will exclude to write about why gender equality is still existing, however, she wants to have a better understanding of the topic.

1.4 Thesis structure

The thesis is structured as followed. First the author will start with the theoretical framework, where previous research will be gathered and analysed, Afterwards, the methodology will be explained and applied, interviews will be conducted in hotels in the Netherlands and Belgium. Furthermore, the results will be analysed, a discussion, and a conclusion including the learning development, suggestion, and further research will be given.

2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this thesis will elaborate on previous research that has been conducted on the different aspects of gender equality. Firstly, the term gender equality will be described and elaborated on, next to that, gender equality in the hospitality industry will be described and discussed. Furthermore, the women's perception of gender equality at the workplace will be discussed, finally the different barriers that often are described as the invisible glass ceiling will be discussed, and how female leaders perceive their career opportunities.

2.1 What is gender equality?

Gender can be described as a system of principles and procedures that refers to differences between male and female, and how it can be dealt with, furthermore, it is often used to describe the gender role expectations of men and women (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019). These roles can be seen where women and men differ in their tasks, and where gender equality is referred to women and men having equal value, and that men and women should be treated equally (Cambridge University, 2020), or gender inequality is where based on gender, men and women are treated differently (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). Dahiya, et al. discuss that gender inequality exists in different ways, including, occupational segregation, segregation occurs within the organization, where there is a difference between men and women in the workforce (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019), gender-based wage gap, is a difference of wages between men and women, and discrimination, which means that a person or a situation is disadvantaged (Elshaer & Marzouk, 2020).

In many organization there is no gender equality yet, in 2014, the world average gender gap stood at 0.3659, where 0 is no gender gap, and 1 the highest possible gender difference (Eden & Forquer Gupta, 2017). The gap in the hospitality industry is the biggest in the management positions in bigger hotels, hotels with more than 200 rooms, only have 10 percent of management positions occupied by women (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019). Therefore, the author will conduct interviews with female managers, in the bigger hotels.

2.1.1 Lack of women in management position

However, women's participation in the labor force worldwide is increasing immersive, therefore, the diversity worldwide will have an impact on the worldwide labor diversity. Even though the hospitality industry is recognized as a female friendly sector, as it is often dominated by female employees, however, it is still managed by men (Elshaer & Marzouk, 2020). Burke and Christensen Hugher (2018), argued that at entry-level management women are in majority, with around 54,5 percent. However, in middle management they decline to only 31,6 percent of the employment.

There are multiple reasons why this percentage change is quite big. Some of the reasons of gender inequality is because of the discrimination against women, the value given to women's work is underestimated, and therefore, stereotyping is happening. Stereotyping can be described as people perceptions about gender and race, for example, women are often questioned if they are suitable for a managerial position (Burke & Christensen Hughes, 2018). Gender roles are often seen as another reason that hold women back from a higher position. Gender roles can be described as a social position with different expectations (Helgeson, 2017). For women, the gender role is often seen as taking care of the family and domestic work, which makes it harder to balance work and family (2014, cited in Eden & Forquer Gupta, 2017, p. 194). Moreover, women tend to be more caring, kind, and being more sensitive. Due to these roles, women are not seeing their occupational roles as breadwinners, and therefore, they choose jobs where a high level of education is not necessary.

Furthermore, women are getting segregated vertically and horizontally. Segregation means that men and women are not equally distributed in occupational structures. Vertical segregation means the hierarchy of the organization. Men are on the top, and women at the bottom. Horizontal segregation means that within the same job, that men and women have different tasks (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019).

Moreover, women are also facing gender discrimination. It occurs when a specific person or group is seen as inferiority, and therefore getting fewer opportunities. This means in the hospitality industry, that women are getting less opportunities in different stages in their career. Such as during the hiring process, or when it comes to promotions (Elshaer & Marzouk, 2020). Compared to 100 men there are only 70 women who get promoted to a manager position (Thomas, et al., 2019). Even though, women are negotiating as much as men for promotions or increasing wages. Research of Thomas, et al., (2018) showed

that 37 percent of women negotiate for promotions, and 36 percent of men did the same. However, the outcome for women is significantly different than men.

Additionally, there are barriers that hold women from reaching management positions. These barriers can be described as the glass ceiling. There are two kind of barriers, one is the self-imposed barrier, where women tend to put household and domestic task as their highest priority, and do not believe that they should be seen as the breadwinners of the household (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019). The other kind or barrier can be described as the work place barriers, or the glass ceiling effect, including characteristics such as not enough mentoring opportunities, stereotyping, and prejudice (Boone, et al., 2013).

2.1.2 Organizational advantages of gender equality

Nowadays, gender equality or gender diversity in the workplace can even gain organizational advantages, such as lower employee turnover, this means that the organization will also mitigate the labor shortage. Moreover, there are also financial benefits, such as, increased sales, reducing costs. Diversity in an organization can be reached by first understanding it, therefore, it need to be acknowledge that there is a current problem, next the problem need to be understood, and accepted, only then all different aspects of diversity can be assessed. Diversity in the workplace does not only include gender, furthermore it includes, sexual orientation, the ability and disability of a person, age, social inclusion, and the motivation and choice, this means that people can elaborate on why do they choose to work, or not (Baum, 2007). Furthermore, an organization that has a great diversity, not only in gender, is often recognized as a successful organization, because of their care in sustainability and competitiveness (Elshaer & Marzouk, 2020).

Multiple actions can be undertaken to have a gender diverse workplace. First, organizations need to ensure that the hiring and promotions processes are fair for everyone, in leadership and managing positions there must be a diversity already. Moreover, the culture within the organization might need to be changed to be able to reach gender equality. Finally, a very essential point is to give all employees the flexibility and opportunity to balance their work and life (Thomas, et al., 2018). If all organizations take the previous mentioned actions into consideration, they can come to a gender diversity workplace, within a couple of years (Thomas, et al., 2019).

2.1.3 Gender equality in the hospitality industry

Gender equality is reached, when the gap between men and women is closed, or tighten up. This means that women and men are having equal opportunities, they get equal pay, they will carry out the same tasks, and having the same promotion chances (Genç, 2018). Samkange and Dingani (2013) adds that gender equality is reached only when the previous mentioned points are fulfilled, and if women are financial independent, having equal access to education, or any other opportunities for personal development

However, before an organization can try to reach gender equality, governmental policies, nationally and locally need to be changed. Otherwise, if a business is attempting to reach gender equality on its own, the gap between men and women might even increase, instead of decreasing (Genç, 2018). However, Fain (2011), concludes that organization who stop discriminating right now in order to have a gender equal business, still can take up to 60 years to reach it, especially in the upper management positions.

Moreover, Audette, et al., (2018) research shows that gender equality leads to a greater well-being for both men and women. This well-being for women also has other advantages, women will be better represented in the economy, and will have a greater social inclusion. However, the results also show that a greater well-being levels of women, can lead to dissatisfaction for men, and vice versa. Therefore, it is essential that gender equality is reached as soon as possible, however, in an equal way that it does not give gender inequality for men, as that would lead again to reducing the well-being for men. Genç (2018) adds that only increasing job opportunities for women will not lead to better well-being for women, if they still get paid less, therefore, it is essential that also wages are according to the job, meaning that women will earn the same in the same job as their male counterparts. Finally, Genç (2018), concludes that empowering women is not only essential for the welfare of women, however, it is essential for the future society, where all individuals are incorporated, in particular women, to increase their empowerment in the industry

2.2 How is gender inequality perceived in the hospitality industry?

The hospitality industry is described as a female friendly workplace, one of the reasons that this is being said, is because of the nature of work, where women are recognized in being better in serving people, having more social skills and having more patience (Elshaer & Marzouk, 2020). However, employment in the hospitality industry is also perceived by poor wages, the shift work that is often required, next to long working days. Moreover, it is also considered as low-quality employment, with little working opportunities (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019).

A direct consequence of these working conditions is a high staff turnover, which means high costs, which subsequently lead to holding back the success of the organization in the industry (Aynalem, et al., 2016).

2.2.1 Women in hotels

Within the hospitality industry there are many women employed, however, they mainly work in lower skilled jobs, and will be managed by men (Elshaer & Marzouk, 2020). Segovia-Pérez, et al (2019), describes that there are multiple reasons for the lack of women in management positions, such as, the invisible barriers that hold women to grow up in the career ladder, moreover, down in the career ladder there are often insufficient numbers of women with the qualities required for a higher position. Furthermore, women in management positions are often discriminated as their gender role is not in accordance with the positions. Additionally, often the job structure and raising a family is often seen impossible for women, this means that they put on a self-imposed barrier.

This self-imposed barrier means that women often choose for the jobs where higher levels of education are rarely required, and previous experiences or skills are not so necessary. Furthermore, women are often insecure of their own capabilities, sometimes they do not have the desire for a greater career. Finally, women tend to be risk averse, where they prefer to not take a risk (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019). Eventually, women often choose these lower skilled job or part time themselves, due to the fact that they can create a better balance between work and family (Baum, 2013).

2.2.2 Segregation of women

Women are often segregated, most of the times the segregation happens vertically, this means in the hierarchy, women tend to have positions in a lower place in the hierarchy, such as waiters or cleaners. This is since segregation is often associated with traditions and stereotypes (Aynalem, et al., 2016). Women are often seen as the family caretaker. Where they need to take care of the family and household, and men will work for the financial supplies (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019).

Moreover, women that are working choose more frequently than men to take parental leave. Nevertheless, women are often forced to leave the labour market, with less possibilities to get back into the work field, due to their parental leave. In order to be able to combine work and family, women tend to choose a lower skilled job, where they have less responsibilities, which often lead to less chances to grow within the company (Aynalem, et al., 2016).

2.3 Women's perception on gender equality at the workplace

Women who are at the start of their career, and hold positions such as junior manager, do not believe that there is gender inequality in their positions, equally amount of men and women are working in these positions. However, when looking at senior level, mainly men occupy the positions, and women in junior positions feel that the men in the same position will advantage promotion cause of gender (Mooney & Ryan, 2009).

This section will discuss the perception of gender equality from women's point of view. Moreover, what effect do male leaders have on women. Moreover, this chapter discusses the importance of evaluating and mentoring on women. Research of Ezzedeen and Ritchey (2009), state that mentoring female is essential in order for them to overcome barriers.

2.3.1 Effect of male leaders on women

Businesses are organized in a way that they value a masculine culture more than a feminine one (Antony, 2017). According to Carvalho, et al., (2019), organizations have their processes organized by men since the Industrial Revolution, as a result it is now seen as a norm, where men are dominating management positions. This has a big impact on the decisions of female employees, whether they want to apply for a leadership position or not (Antony, 2017). Moreover, women are often seen as inferior, and less capable of a management positions, due to these gender roles, where they are the family caretaker. Furthermore, Mooney & Ryan (2009) discuss that women often have negative thoughts about a leadership positions, this come due to what they often see on the workplace. Nevertheless, an organization that applies a masculine leadership style, will often influences who will receive more advantages and opportunities within the organization.

Furthermore, as organizations often apply a masculine leadership style, also implies that women are disadvantaged, as their leadership style is different than men. This is due to the gender role behaviours. This means that men and women experience their organizational life cycle differently. As women often experience more barriers that hold them from a management position (Antony, 2017).

2.3.2 Evaluation and mentoring for female leaders

Furthermore, women are often negatively evaluated, which will also affect the occupational self-efficacy, the beliefs of work-related skills and abilities will decrease. Women do not dare anymore to take a risk, or their desires to occupy a leadership position is no longer there. Women do not feel they want to be visible anymore, due to the fact that they often get negatively evaluated (Hartman & Barber, 2019). However, women that have the desire and willingness to strive for a management positions, are doubtful to be hired in such positions, even though they may have higher levels of degrees than their male counterparts (Thomas, et al., 2018). However, Daspher (2019), argues that mentoring females may lead to women overcome their fear and the barriers to enter a leadership position. Zhong, et al. (2013) argues that, managers investing in education, or mentoring will have greater levels of career advancement or development, where they will enhance their managerial skills, and gain more work experience.

Therefore, it is important to mentor female employees in the industry (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2009). Mentoring a person means that an individual with more knowledge, and experience, helps someone who is seeking for this knowledge. This person is as a result,

able to learn more, what helps them to support their career, moreover, also personal and professional life will be developed by mentoring (Dashper, 2019). Furthermore, mentoring can be done, formal and informal. Formal mentoring is a formalized process, where the mentor exchanges his or her knowledge to support and reflect the mentee to advance the mentee's career. Where an informal mentor is quite similar, but it is more in a naturally way (Deale, et al., 2020). Dashper (2018) argues that formal mentoring is often considered as the most essential mentoring for women, as it can help women to defeat the glass ceiling. Moreover, women that have mentors who hold senior leadership positions are essential, as they give them access to networks, and opportunities in their career. However, the author also discusses that these mentoring programmes are not only made to decline the barriers to make the process to become a leader easier. Moreover, it is created to encourage women that have the desire for such a position. Mentorship is about getting more self-knowledge, and to find out personal goals in regards of professional career.

2.3.3 Advantages of mentoring

Dashper (2018) explains that, mentoring programmes has advantages for both mentees and mentors. The mentees, the person who receives the mentoring, will experience improved career outcomes, for example, promotional chances, or a better recognition. Mentors will improve their leadership skills, as well as, they stay up to date with all new developments in the organization. Moreover, women described that mentoring also influences their long-term goals. In other words, mentors are encouraging and inspiring them for a strong professional career, and how this can be reached. Next to the fact, that the mentor can help the mentee in order to find new challenges and opportunities for her career (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999).

Mentoring also has advantages for organizations, as it transfers the values, culture to the other, maybe new, employees. Moreover, it also support the employees, they feel more committed to the organization, and that decrease the employee turnover (Dashper, 2019). Moreover, gender inequality will be better recognized within the organization and they will try to resolve this problem (Dashper, 2018).

2.3.4 Support from outside the organization

Women that get supported by their male spousal often feel more enriched than single women. If the male spouse better understands the career aspirations of the women, than the spouse will give them more space and freedom to progress her career. Hands-on support is one type of support where the male counterparts will support the female while working in more time demanding jobs, such as working trips, or time-devouring activities

on the work floor. Additionally, the husband can also negotiate his own career, to support the wife's career. This, can be done by taking parental leave, shorten his working days, or not seeing their career as the most essential one (Heikkinen, et al., 2014).

Finally, research shows that when both partners work, but the female partner had a higher responsibility such as a managerial position, the male partner would take over some of the household task, that household tasks were equally divided (Mäkelä, et al., 2017). Women that get supported by their spousal have often good career development and feel much more accomplished (Heikkinen, et al., 2014).

2.4 The invisible glass ceiling

As said before women are highly present in hospitality organization, however, they are lacking in the upper management positions. A reason for this is the glass ceiling, an invisible barrier for women (González-Serrano, et al., 2018). This glass barrier exists in many hospitality organizations and has been studied extensively. Because women are still underrepresented, there is a definite need to research this more in depth, to be able to break the glass ceiling for more women. Nevertheless, there are currently women breaking this glass ceiling.

The term glass ceiling is used for women or minority groups that cannot get into upper management positions, it is seen as an barrier that cannot be passed by women (Clevenger & Singh, 2013). Albrecht, et al. (2003) described the glass ceiling as phenomenon where women are doing well in the general labor market, however, at some point there is a barrier, which limits their process in their career development. These barriers exist mostly in compensation, career advancement and training opportunities (which has been discussed before), this means that the biggest difference between men and women exists in these areas (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018). Moreover, Shrestha (2016), argues that there are more barriers existing, including work/family conflict and gender discrimination. However, the barrier describing the work family conflict can also be a self-imposed barrier. Nevertheless, an organization can have little effect on this.

2.4.1 The compensation barrier

The compensation means that women often get less paid for the same job than their male counterparts. Moreover, women are often vertical segregated, where men often have the best paid job, and the highest position (González-Serrano, et al., 2018). However, in general women in the hospitality industry still get paid less in comparison to men (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018). Women often notice that they get less paid than their male counterparts.

Research shows, that 42,7 percent of women complained that they earn less than males in the same position (Castaño , et al., 2010). Iverson (2000), shows that female managers earn only 58 percent of their male counterparts, in a similar position. While in the general labor force female managers earn 61 percent of their male counterparts, which is slightly more. This shows that the gender gap in the hospitality is slightly bigger, then in other industries. This can be the result of the poor employment characteristics (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019).

2.4.2 Career advancement barrier

The glass ceiling effect can also be seen in the career advancement of women. This means that there are barriers for women that want to reach a management position. There are multiple explanations for this. The organizational structure can influence the glass ceiling. Where the business is prejudging based on gender. This means that based on gender someone will be seen different, and therefore, not able to do the job (Clevenger & Singh, 2013). Moreover, within the organization women are often excluded in essential meetings, or decisions (Boone, et al., 2013). More barriers that women experience in their career advancement are such as, work-life-conflict (Mäkelä, et al., 2017), not having enough mentoring opportunities, which is essential for women's networking events.

Moreover, promotional barriers also exist within the hospitality industry, and is often recognized as the biggest barrier for women (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018). The promotional barrier can be explained by, men and women are both being employed in the same position, however men receiving more promotional chances, even tough, when women have the same abilities and skills (González-Serrano, et al., 2018). This can be due to the fact that board groups originally were male dominated, and men's prefer a group that is similar to them, therefore, are more likely to hire men instead of women (Boone, et al., 2013).

2.4.3 Impact on work environment

The glass ceiling effect also has an impact on the work environment. This means that it holds back the qualified and competent women within the organization, which leads to a less effective organization (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018). Moreover, multiple studies confirm that hospitality organizations with both men and women in their board have increased results in terms of profitability. This is since their workplace is more diverse (González-Serrano, et al., 2018). However, Marco (2012) argues that profitability is not always seen better by men or women. Nevertheless, his research concluded that female managed hotels do perform better in sales and employment growth.

Moreover, it is also depending on the culture of the business (Mooney & Ryan, 2009). A culture of an organization can be described as including the values and ideas, meanings from everyone in the organization (Alvesson, 2013). Many women believe that people often hire men above women, as they have less chances to go out of business again due to family care (Mooney & Ryan, 2009).

Furthermore, the promotional barrier can also affect the organization, as people that want to grow within their career, and do not get promotional chances, will leave the organization, for another business. This results in high employee turnover, or even job dissatisfaction (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018). As said before, organization must change their culture to receive gender equality. Therefore, they need to change policies that are more helpful towards women striving for a upper management position (Boone, et al., 2013).

2.4.4 Breaking the glass ceiling

Women that are willing to pass the glass ceiling into a managerial position, are still perceiving different obstacles. For example, the gender role stereotype, this means that people still have different expectation on how individuals are behaving according to their gender (Kiser, 2015). According to Carvalho, et al. (2019), women stumble across the glass ceiling with the availability for work. The hospitality industry is an industry where long working hours and days are required, the service continues 24/7, and so need the employees. While, women are often the family caretaker, and do not have the possibility to be available this much. And yet, Knutson and Schmidgall (1999), argues that women often have to prove themselves against men, where they often have to work harder, and longer than their male counterparts, in order to break the glass ceiling. Moreover, the work/family conflict is frequently perceived as a barrier for women, where it is hard to be 24/7 available for work and be the primary caretaker (Shrestha, 2016). Moreover, research of Mooney and Ryan (2009), has shown that women in senior positions are often single, and do not have a child wish. Moreover, women often choose to not have children, as it may

seem impossible. Therefore, women put this barrier themselves, which can be perceived a self-imposed barrier (Shrestha, 2016). Therefore, Kiser (2015), argues that organizations providing family-friendly benefits, and giving women the flexibility to take care of her family, while being in an upper management position, will not suffer the loss of these skilled women.

Additionally, women often feel that men are negatively judging women and stereotyping them. Women see that men are questioning the professional capabilities of women, moreover, they are wondering if women are able to completely commit themselves to an organization (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). Baumgartner and Schneider (2010) refers this as the old boy network, where men are having a negative stance towards women, and female leaders. Kiser (2015) argues in return, that if an organization value its female employees more, than perceiving them as not valuable, or less flexible, will also give greater opportunities for women, as they will feel more valued.

However, an organization cannot always help women to break the glass ceiling, therefore, women must put effort in it themselves as well. Some strategies that are explained by Baumgartner and Schneider (2010), are goal setting, self-promoting, determination, and finally, education. It is essential to set your own goals, what do women want to reach in their career, and should they believe that the glass ceiling does not exist for them, or that they can easily pass this. The second strategy is about promoting yourself; it is crucial to put yourself forward, however, do not push anyone too much. It is essential to have good communication and presentation skills; however, also personal grooming is perceived as one of the aspects of self-promotion. The third strategy is about determination, it can be described as someone very motivated, and determined to strive for its goal. The last strategy described by Baumgartner and Schneider (2010), is research and education, it will have advantages for women to educate themselves more. Women can educate themselves more in for example doing an internship, working in different jobs, to gain more experiences, and maybe even switching to another organization which will advance a women's career development.

2.5 Female leaders in the hospitality industry

As discussed before female leaders are increasing within the hospitality industry, however, they are still underrepresented in upper management positions, this is due to the barriers, or glass ceiling, they face during their career development (Glass & Cook, 2017). There are several personal characteristics that has been described by female leaders who broke the glass ceiling. These characteristics include, hard-working, creative, positive, motivated, moreover, availability, ambitious, willingness to learn and self-confidence are necessary, in order to break the glass ceiling (Carvalho, et al., 2018).

2.5.1 Career opportunities

Women that are often getting career opportunities, which are declined by their male counterparts, usually accept the job, which can be seen as a big career risk (Fitzsimmons, et al., 2014). However, taking a risk can have a positive effect on a later stage in their career (Carvalho, et al., 2018). However, Glass and Cook (2017) indicated that women tend to choose these jobs, as they believe they will not get another offer for an upper management position. This is due to the fact, that they are not only bumping into the glass ceiling, it is often also the structure or culture of the organization that is stopping women. This means that women also see the glass barrier around them, meaning that the organization is in some sort of way still discriminating women, which is having a direct impact on women's career advancement (Carvalho, et al., 2018). Direct discrimination is usually direct to a person or situation, while indirect discrimination is where conditions and treatments are different in general, which cannot be related to specific situation or person (Wahl, 1992, cited in Carvalho et al., 2018, p. 400).

Furthermore, if an organization give women the possibility to show their capabilities of successfully finishing a task, they will feel more appreciated. Women are able to show their capabilities in for example, giving them high visibility assignment, or job rotating, where they can acquire new skills (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). Moreover, Maxwell (1997), argues that women should also be achievement oriented. Women need to be willing to learn something new, even if it includes moving to other organization in maybe other countries to gain more experiences.

However, women tend to move quicker to another organization if they are not getting any promotional offers in their current organization (Fitzsimmons, et al., 2014). However, it is not always depending on the structure of the organization, while, it needs to be acknowledged that it also depending on the power relations. Meaning that a minority group is often acknowledged as not having enough skills or abilities for a leadership position

(Carvalho, et al., 2018). Additionally, Fitzsimmons, et al. (2014), argues as well, that the dominance board group are most likely to choose one of their own gender, which is usually men.

2.5.2 Leadership style of female leaders

Research shows that it is more likely that the ideal leader or even employee tend to be male. This is because men often do not have responsibilities such as caring for kids or elderly. Moreover, the characteristics for an ideal leadership style, such as, decisiveness, competitive, assertiveness, and confidence, are usually seen as masculine characteristics. Women tend to not have these characters in their leadership style, therefore, they are more likely to be unqualified for a management position (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019). Women who apply a masculine leadership, are not appreciated, as they are tend to be perceived as bitchy, and cold in this kind of leadership style (Dashper, 2019). Moreover, Pizam (2017) argues, that women who are successful leaders are still getting negative reactions, where a leadership position does not fit into the gender role expectation. Furthermore, one of a female interviewee, interviewed by Pizam argued, if female leaders act in a way according to their gender, they might fit into a leadership position, however, then often seen as soft leaders, and if applying a masculine leadership style, they are seen as tough, and too aggressive (Fastenberg, 2010). However, often it is not about who should apply which leadership style. Nevertheless, it is about how effective the leadership is, as a leader need to have the skills and abilities to control a group to all work towards the same result (Cohen, 2000, cited in Fitzsimmons, et al., 2014, p. 246).

Moreover, Kiser (2015) argues that when the dominated group exist of more males than females, they will probably support their male counterparts more to promote into a management position. However, this does not only happen with only dominated groups, men that have business management positions can decide on whether they hire a men or a women, due to the fact that men believe they are superior in running a business, they will be more likely to hire a men for this job as well.

Moreover, women tend to have a more democratic leadership style, which is more interpersonal (Kiser, 2015). Some other characteristics that are seen as benefits for female leaders are such as, good communication skills, flexibility and ability to adapt, and teamwork (Masadeh, 2013). Women tend to be more caring and supportive (Koburtay & Syed, 2019). These characteristics are seen only as a supportive function, therefore, women tend to receive lower rewards, or promotional options (Hartman & Barber, 2019) Nevertheless, these qualities are becoming fundamental characteristics for leadership (Koburtay

& Syed, 2019). Additionally, Maxwell (1997) presents some other female leadership characteristics. Such as, high expectations on performances from staff, including every little detail. Female leadership style can also be a very open, visible leader, they want to be transparent in their leadership.

Hotels led by females often perform better in sales and employment growth measures, in comparison to hotels managed by men. However, research shows that there is not much difference between the KPI's (Key Performance Indicators) of hotels managed by men or women (Menicucci, et al., 2019). However, Boone, et al. (2013), argues that the glass ceiling exists in some organization when there results are low, due to low management skills. Therefore, women are not able to reach higher positions within these organization. However, Böhren and Ström (2010, cited in Gröschl & Arcot, 2014) argues that there is no link between female executives having a better performance. According to Mínguez-very and Martin (2011), gender diversity has a positive effect on the leadership, and on a organization's outcome. Gröschl and Arcot (2014), add that only 10 to 20 percent of women in hotel's management team, already make a positive impact on the outcome of the firm's performance.

2.5.3 Appreciation for female leaders

Women in upper management positions often feel that there is no or little appreciation for their behaviours. Moreover, they are more likely to be penalized to strive for self-promotion, or having a different behaviour, which is not in compliance with their gender roles (Glass & Cook, 2017). Furthermore, Carvalho, et al. (2018), argue that women often deny that there is discrimination, and refuse to say that they are victims of this. It might be emotional and socially demanding to put effort in bringing this out, and therefore they prefer to not say anything. Additionally, women in a leadership position often feel a lack of work-related support. They encounter greater challenges and feeling less powerful or influential possibilities to the business strategy (Glass & Cook, 2017). Fitzsimmons, et al. (2014), argues that next to the fact that female leaders are often negatively evaluated, they are also placed in risky leadership positions, as they tend to be better in managing in a crisis situation.

Moreover, women managers, often admit that they do not want children due to the fact that they rather go for a career (Carvalho, et al., 2018). According to Sharma and Kaur (2019), marital status also has an effect on their work engagement, as the career success of a married women can be seen less successful, as someone who is not married. Moreover, Mooney and Ryan (2009), discusses that female leaders are often single women,

whether divorced, or never married. This concludes that women in management positions often must remain single to succeed in their job, where they can be more actively involved in the organization.

3 Methodology

The interviews are about the gender (in)equality in the hospitality industry, in more depth, about the career opportunities of female employees, and their desire to upper management level. The desire is to interviewee female managers that can tell more about their career ladder and opportunities in the hospitality industry.

This chapter will discuss the method of research, the interviews, the respondents, an analysis of the interviews, and finally the reliability and validity will be described.

3.1 Research method

For this research, the author decided to conduct a qualitative research, by doing semi-structured interviews. This means that there will be more of a conversation between the interviewee, and the interviewer (Newcomer, et al., 2015). This research method is chosen due to the fact, that there can be more of conversation instead of fixed questions and follow up questions are giving more explanation to the general set of questions and answers. If the interviewee wants to tell more about a topic not stated within the questions, this is possible. The dialogue can also include follow-up questions, in order to find out more on the perspective of the interviewee (Newcomer, et al., 2015).

It is essential that every question gives an answer to the research question. It is unnecessary to ask any questions, which cannot help the author in her research (Galletta, 2013).

Additionally, data collection of interviews can be to find trends in the respondent's answers. A statement stated three or more times can be called a trend, however, these so-called trends cannot be generalized for the entire industry. However, they can guide the interviewee in developing the results. Moreover, qualitative data will give greater details on the human aspects, including, emotions and personal characteristics

Moreover, it is essential to prepare the interviewees for the questions. They need to have knowledge about the topic and need to be prepared for it as well. Therefore, the author decided to send an abstract and the interview questions beforehand, so the respondents could prepare themselves.

3.2 Interview

The research question that the author wants to have answered by conducting interviews is as follows.

How do female workers see their career opportunities in the hospitality industry, and for what reason?

To gain more knowledge on different people's perspectives, the designed questions will be asked to all interviewees. The interviews will happen over Skype, as there is no possibility to meet in person, due to the corona virus situation.

The questions are designed in an open-ended way. Where the interviewee should give more information on how they perceive gender (in)equality in the hospitality industry, how they perceive their career opportunities, and how and what an organization can do to help reaching gender equality in hotels. The questions are designed with the theoretical framework in mind, where questions are linked to previous research, and will provide the author a transparent understanding, on how women perceive their career opportunities regarding gender (in)equality.

The interviews are designed to support or not support the theoretical framework. Where the female managers can tell about their personal experiences, and point of view. The results will be analysed to see if they perceive difficulties in their career opportunities or not. The results of the interviewees can support the theoretical framework, where they strongly agree there is a current problem, or they can disagree with the literature. This means that they do not perceive any or less difficulties according to their gender.

The interview questions can be found in the [appendices](#).

3.3 Respondents

As promised to all interviewees no names or company names will be mentioned, to give them more freedom to speak open about their career ladder and the organization, without affecting anyone. The respondents are chosen because of their position, and gender, and because they work in the so-called, bigger hotels, where gender equality has been seen as a bigger problem (Segovia-Pérez, et al., 2019).

To keep all interviewees clearly separated, they have been given a random letter from A to D, in no specific order.

The first interviewee is a front office manager in a hotel in Antwerp, Belgium. She is employed in this hotel since 2016 and is in her current position for now almost two years. She worked first as a front office employee, next up as a shift leader, and then got the opportunity to be the front office manager. She is responsible and in charge for everything happening at the front desk, and currently she has 4 full time front office employees to manage, next to some interns.

The second interviewee is a hotel manager of a hotel in Antwerp, Belgium. She is employed in the hotel since 2009 when the hotel was still operating under a different name. She has had different positions in front office, reservations, sales, marketing. Now she is in her position for four years. In her position she is responsible for different departments in the hotel including front office, housekeeping reservations, sales and meetings, marketing, and technical services.

The third interviewee is a general manager of a hotel in Goes, Netherlands. She is employed in the hospitality industry since an age of 15 and works in her current position for now 25 years. She has been employed in different departments, from starting in F&B, now leading this hotel with 125 employees. She describes herself as an active leader, where she is often on the work floor which has a positive impact on the employees, which she describes, that also the guests, see this, and are often more satisfied as well.

The last interviewee is in the managing board of a hotel in Middelburg, Netherlands. She already was helping her family at the age of 11. However, at first, she did not want to enter the hospitality industry. Therefore she first wants studying communication sciences. However, after she had her degree and was working in a different industry, she knows it was not something for her, and wanted to work with people around her. Therefore, she did

make the decision to start working in the hospitality industry. With starting in F&B, moving towards front office, to sales and now in the managing board of this hotel.

3.4 Analysis of interviews

Content analysis will be used to analyse the data gathered from the interviews. Content analyses is a method that can be used to analyse different type of communication messages, such as written or verbal communication. The aim of content analyses is to reach a broad description of the research, and the result should demonstrate the many words in text into smaller categories describing the research.

Content analysis can be used to gain a better understanding of the significance of the written communication. As the author has previous research, and what to find out, if previous research is still relevant, deductive content analysis will be used. This means that a categorization matrix will be developed, later, the data will be coded according to the categories (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008).

4 Results

This chapter will discuss the results retrieved from the semi structured interviews, conducted with four female managers. The findings will give a representation of the literature review, and how they perceive the gender equality in hotels, and how this has affected them or not in their career.

The interviews were all arranged via Skype, due to the COVID situation. They have all been recorded, to be able to analyse and transcribe them. The interviews lasted around 30 to 45 minutes, and were all very helpful to analyse personal opinions and perspectives on gender equality.

4.1 Content analysis

This part will discuss the perspectives of the four respondents. The respondents had different opinions, however, there were also perspectives that were the same for some respondents. The answers from the interview are occasionally in line with the literature, hence, there are points, where the respondents did argue the opposite from what the literature stated.

4.1.1 Personal perspectives on gender (in)equality

All four respondents argued that they almost never were confronted with gender inequality directly. Even though none of the interviewees felt like direct gender inequality, they all had arguments, in which they felt less powerful because of their gender. Where interviewee B argued that

“I never noticed any direct gender discrimination, however, at the start of my management career, I was paid under the minimum wage, and only knew this because of a governmental agency”

While interviewee number C argued in the beginning of the interview that she never felt discriminated, she stated later in the interview that when she became front office manager, she had mainly men employees at the front desk, and the interviewee explained that she was not always appreciated by them. Moreover, she also once felt discrimination by another male manager. This is because she believes that older generations often do have problems with younger female leaders, therefore this male manager tended to show less respect towards her.

Other arguments from indirect discrimination are as follows.

“Women do get treated differently than men often get treated, even though it might be sometimes like that, I do not always perceive it like that, as I am verbally very strong, which has a negative result, as people who do not know me, think I am a bitch” (interviewee D)

This can argue that females leaders often have to be strong independent women, and do not have to be scared of arguing with or towards someone. Where for example, interviewee A confirmed as well, that often she recognize gender discrimination during discussion, when she not feeling appreciated, or people are not taking her serious.

It seemed that multiple interviewees argued that women do have to stand up for themselves, and push themselves forward in a position, to show who they are. Interviewee D stated that she is verbally very strong, and that helped her within her career. While interviewee A stated, that women can definitely reach the top, however, women might need to work a little bit harder for it.

Where interviewee B also stated that gender inequality has immensely decreased over the past 10 to 15 years, what is also visible in her hotel. Where she discussed that 10 years back, Mother’s Day was one of the busiest days of the year in the restaurant, and Father’s Day one of the quietest day, while now currently, mother’s day is less busy, and father’s day is much busier. In her opinion, this is since household tasks are not only occupied by women anymore, and men are taking over these tasks as well.

In reflecting to female leaders, it is discussed by multiple interviewees that women are better in fulfilling a management position than men are. Interviewee C stated that women are better in dealing or handling with people, they do have more emotions, and can also show them towards customers, or employees. Besides, interviewee A added, that women have more empathy, which is perceived as a great advantage for females.

However, interviewee D does not agree with that, because in her opinion, women cannot show their emotions, to be able to grow in their career. She sees emotions more as a disadvantage, as an advantage.

In reflecting a gender equality hospitality industry, two out of the four respondents argued that there was no gender equality yet, and they both argued that men are still holding the general management positions (Interviewee C and D).

Interviewee B was not sure on how the status was within the hospitality industry. However, she perceives that there is not much of a difference anymore, and over the past couple of years there has been a shift, with more female leaders, who also have good capabilities of fulfilling this job.

Interviewee D and A, both discussed that having children, and occupying a higher position can sometimes be challenging. Where interviewee D had a situation in her career, where her reservations managers, was also in charge of yield management. However, she got pregnant, and was not able to fulfill these task successfully anymore. Therefore, she had to tell her, that she was not able to do yield management anymore, when only working four days a week. She got very mad, but it proves in my opinion that women cannot get children and have a successful career, and therefor need to choose what they want. Interviewee A argues that, while it is not allowed to judge anyone because of gender, it still happens, in the back of her head.

“My team is a young team, with a lot of women, who all have changes to fall out a set period of time. It is harder to replace a female manager, for only a set of time, than hiring someone who will not have the changes to fall out”
(Interviewee A)

During the interviews, interviewee D and B argued that men are acting differently towards other men or women. Where interviewee B argued

“I think that men act or talk differently to men, then towards women. However, is this an advantage, or a disadvantage? That is often depending on the situation where, when, and how it happens”

Gender (in) equality already started in the early staged of life. Interviewee D stated that already has being children, girls need to play with barbies, and boys have to play with cars. Moreover, it is also affected by the kind of structure a family goes.

4.1.2 Organizational structure

This part will discuss the matter of the organizational structure with regards to gender (in)equality. All four respondents mostly shared the same perspectives on the importance of a gender equal organization, however, none of the organization tend to have a policy to strive for gender equality.

In reflecting gender equality in the interviewees own organizations, almost all of them stated that there organizations are gender equal, as they perceive, that if the division between men and women is equal, the whole organizations is equal. Some of them stated that also management positions where equally divided. Moreover, they all argued, that in their viewpoint, everyone gets a fair chance in the organizations, whether it is a men or a women. They all reflected this as a characteristic of gender equality.

Interviewee A stated that in her perspective it is essential to have good division of men and women employed in hotels. Moreover, she stated

“Competitiveness someone has are way more important than gender, everyone in this organization will get a fair chance, and until now it seems to work, as the employees are divided around 50 percent men, 50 percent women, also in management positions, there are three women, and two men” (Interviewee A)

“The division of my team should be and is equal. It is not about the person is a man or a woman, it is about the competitiveness some has” (Interviewee B)

In the organization of interviewee B stated that at her organization they do not care if a man applies for a more feminine jobs, such as front office, or housekeeping. If this man has the right competitiveness, the interviewee will hire him, because men do have different points of views, and a different way of thinking. Which will be an advantage.

However, only interviewee D argued that their organization was having gender inequality, for men instead of women.

“I do not think we are a gender equal organization, as we have much more women occupying the management tasks, then men do. So, I think we have gender inequality for men, instead of women. However, I do not see this as a problem, because women tend to think differently than men do, hence I do not believe this”

Even though no organization was having any policy or protocols, some organizations were doing something to strive for a great diversity. So says interviewee D, even though gender does not matter in her organization, everyone need to be able to build a strong case, to argue or to ask for promotions. They will help everyone, to be able to build this strong case.

Where interviewee C stated that

“Women are often recognized in their management positions; this means that this decisions or opinions they have are all respected”

However, interviewee D, did not argue that they put women forward for any specific reasons. She argued that everyone, men and women do need to have strong case, if they want to grow within the organization. Hence, she did argue that gender is a non-existing factor for them. So, if you have the right mindset, have a strong case, and the needed competitiveness and capabilities everyone gets a right change.

It seems that wages are also recognized as a factor for gender equality. Both, interviewee B and A argued that men and women receive the same salary, in the same position. However, interviewee B add to that, that women must be more assertive in asking for salary rises. As in her organization, it is more often that men ask for a wage increase than women do.

Interviewee A argued that, if we get enough applicants for a job, which in hospitality is sometimes difficult. The interviewee would look at how many women and men are already employed in this departments and would then choose for the gender that it is minority. So somehow, the interviewee does try to be as gender equal as possible.

However, on some specific positions they do prefer male above female, such as in the night shift. As someone is alone in charge of the guests, and the hotel, and sometimes, there are annoying drunk guests, which can discriminate women, and men can stand up for themselves more often.

4.1.3 Mentoring and networking

This section will discuss the different point of views of the interviewees on mentoring and network events.

It can be discussed that none of the interviewees believed that mentoring was essential for women. However, they all perceive it as a very useful thing to do if possible.

Two out of the four interviewees had a mentor program that they followed. Interviewee D followed mentor programme that was offered by an university. The programme was only designed for women, but no specific industry. The interviewee perceived it as very helpful in order to learn new tips and tricks, how to lead people, without losing them or yourself, and where you would work in groups to see different opinions, and learn more on how to manage and communicate with people.

Interviewee A followed a mentor programme offered in her organization as well. She learned how to become a good female leader. She recognized it as very helpful, as she missed previous experience. Now she believes, she is more confident, definitely learned more, and also know how other people see her as a female leader.

While the other two interviewees did never had the opportunity to follow a mentor programme, they both argued that it would have been helpful in their careers. As interviewee C discusses that mentoring would be beneficial for women to receive, as now the interviewee had to learn everything herself. Hence, she never asked for a mentor, where she saw that her manager was always way too busy to help her, and she wanted to learn it all to herself, as the interviewee believed herself that would be good for her. Finally, she argued that it would have made her career a little bit easier.

Interviewee B stated that she never had the opportunity, because at the time she started her career, there was no opportunity yet, to follow a mentoring programme. She stated, that she would have followed, as learning new things, is never a bad idea”

It is not always about an assigned mentor. Interviewee D is saying that her mentor, is her current boss. Where he is always challenging her to learn new things and making her better in the things she already knows. Moreover, he is always asking questions such as why, how, what, where, when, for her to build up a story, and explain why she want to do it in a certain way.

And finally, interviewee A is arguing that a mentor in these times is not even necessary anymore.

“The technology is so advanced, that you can easily learn yourself anything online”

It seems that none of the interviewees believes that networking is necessary, however, it was multiple times argued that it can be useful, when someone is at the start of her career. It can be perceived that someone need to put herself on the market, in order to gain more advantages.

Only one of the interviewees attended a networking event in her career. Two other interviewees do not believe that a networking event was necessary in their careers, and the last interviewee argued that she did not got any opportunity yet.

“I did not had any opportunity for a networking event yet, hence, I would definitely go if there is an opportunity, as I think this is very useful to meet new people, and learn new skills. However, in my current job position I do not perceive a network event as a must” (Interviewee C)

Where interviewee B and A argued both that a networking event was never essential in their careers. Interviewee B does argue that for young people it can be very essential to get to know the right people who might offer you a job opportunity later in your career, however, LinkedIn is a very popular networking site, where you can also network online. It is about who you know, and not on what you know.

Interviewee A stated that due to her family organization, they do not need to go a network event, as their family gatherings are already a network event. Because almost everyone in the family is working in different positions in the same brand, therefor they can discuss with them if they do want to learn something new or get more insights in how they might do something. Finally, she does argue, that for women who are working in smaller hotel brands, it can be very helpful to attend different network events, where you can put yourself on the market.

4.1.4 Glass ceiling

This section will discuss the perception of the interviewees on the glass ceiling. Some interviewees discussed that it might still exist in some organizations. Others believed it does not exist anymore.

Interviewee C discussed that even though she never experienced the glass ceiling herself, she does believe that the glass ceiling still exist, this comes due to the fact that the older generation does not want to believe or admit that women can also be great female leaders. However, if the older generation leave their positions, they will make space for the younger, also women, generation. In result, that women have greater possibility to have an upper management position.

Interviewee B does not believe that the glass ceiling still exists because, worldwide there are enough women holding top positions. However, she does think that in some organization it is still existing, however, less than it has ever been. She never was stopped by the glass ceiling herself, but she advice, that if it would ever happen, that every woman just need to step up for themselves more, to break the glass ceiling.

Interviewee D does believe that she is in front of the glass ceiling herself right now. As she is not able to grow within this company anymore, not because she is in the highest position, but because she is not part of the family, what is necessary within this organization. She argues that she would be able to grow within an organization, however she does not wants this, as other organizations often have high hierarchy levels, and she does not like that, as she also love to work in operational departments. She noticed the glass ceiling before as well because her previous boss, would not let her grow because of the high possibility of pregnancy. Moreover, she argues that in old-fashioned business there is clear visible barrier for women. And finally she discuss that you can pass the glass ceiling, however, you have to be emotionally stable, this means that you cannot show your emotions, and you have to be hard, but not hard, so you do not push anyone away.

Finally, interviewee A argued that she never experienced the glass ceiling herself, because simply, she just does not believe that it exists. She argues that the glass ceiling is a very old definition and cannot be a current problem anymore. Even though she might not believe in it, she still think if an employer get the opportunity to choose between a male or a female leader, the employer rather go for the male, where there is less possibility to fall out because of pregnancy or any other household duties.

She concludes the interview that

“Any women can reach the top; we might just need to work a little bit harder to get there”

4.1.5 Actions for future

The actions that the interviewees mentioned is mostly about to learn more on how to prevent gender inequality from happening. Moreover, interviewee A argued that if her organization is not gender equal anymore, she would change it, however, then she would only hire applicants based on gender, and not on their competitiveness, therefore, it can be seen as discrimination again.

Interviewee B finished the interview with a little motivational quote

“I think that women can easily pass the glass ceiling, however, they just need to stand up more themselves”

5 Discussion

With this research the gender inequality of women in the hospitality industry is analysed. First there has been a literature review done, where gender inequality was discussed from a perspective, where women are inferior, and often do not receive the same advantages as men do. Moreover, there has been discussed that there are several barriers for women to grow into an upper management positions. Additionally, mentoring and networking has been discussed. Finally, the glass ceiling has been extensively discussed where it has been analysed what this glass ceiling is, which barriers it has for women, and how they can break this glass ceiling into an upper management position. To gain further knowledge on the current perspectives of female leaders, there has been done field research.

This discussion is based on the theoretical framework of this thesis, and the results for the interviews. Moreover, there will be discussed whether the literature and the interviews, are having the same results or not.

5.1 Reliability and validity

The reliability and validity of the research is essential to analyse, whether this research is reliable and valid. Therefore, that would be discussed within this chapter.

Reliability means that qualitative research is designed in a way with the purpose of explaining the problem. Moreover, reliability includes consistency, where raw data, and outcome of interviews are in line (Golafshani, 2003).

Therefore it can be discussed that the reliability of this research is satisfactory. The research that has been found and used, are found in academic databases, and the metasearch engine. Moreover, the interview results shows that there are similarly arguments with the research, others might be the opposite. Moreover, it can be discussed that a bigger sample will give a greater reliability, due to the fact, that it can be shown that more people agree with the literature or not. However, it can still be argued that there is a great reliability for this research.

The validity of the research shows whether some research type is a qualified check or measure for this specific research. Moreover, if the research provides the correct answer to the research question (Golafshani, 2003). The validity of these interviews are seen as trustworthy, as the research method that has been used, the semi-structured interviews, are seen as an appropriate method for qualitative research. Moreover, everyone was free

to answers all questions and no one has been forced in any way to take part in this research.

5.2 Does gender inequality still exist in the hospitality industry?

As previously mentioned in the literature review, there is no gender equality for women yet in the hospitality industry, and women do get disadvantaged because of their gender. There are multiple barriers existing for women, which are hard to pass without doing any sacrifices. For example, making the decision to not have children, but rather choosing for a career. Likewise, these was one interviewee argued to not have children, because she chose for her career, therefore, that is also a way to prevent gender inequality to happen.

The results from the interviews, indirectly confirmed that there still is gender inequality in their perspectives, even though, none of them argued from the beginning on that they were ever being disadvantaged in their career. Nevertheless, they all had examples to show where they were (in)directly disadvantaged, because of their gender.

This shows that there is still gender inequality for these women, however, the respondents argued that it might not be that visible and obvious anymore. Where for example, one interviewee discussed, that men do not complain or disrespect female leaders anymore. Someone else argued, that women are not showing their emotions anymore, to be perceived as a strong independent woman, who can successfully run a business. That is also discussed in the literature, where a woman is often more emotional, however, some interviewees argued that showing emotions is seen as a weakness, and therefore, are not showing them anymore, or making decisions depending on emotions.

Even though all respondents acknowledged that gender inequality in their perspectives is still existing in the hospitality industry. Nearly all argued that their organizations are gender equal. None of their organizations has a policy or regulation to organize or strive for gender equality. They argue that their organizations grew in this way. This is also supported by the literature, where multiple authors argued that the hospitality is a female industry, with a lot of female employees. This shows that gender inequality has been decreased in the hospitality industry, nevertheless, research shows that it does still exists.

5.3 Is mentoring and networking essential for women?

Within the theoretical framework it is discussed that networking and mentoring is essential for women to have better career advancement. It would be valuable for both mentor and mentee to have a mentor programme, nevertheless, it also has benefits for the organization. However, field research showed different. Where it is not considered as essential to be able to grow up, however, they do consider it as valuable. Where it is always good to learn new things, and network, where you are putting yourself on the labor market.

While it is not seen as essential by the female leaders interviewed. They all argue the same thing, that it can be very valuable. This means that it is not always about someone's knowledge, and skills, although, often it is about who you know. There is a possibility to meet new people, who can give an opportunity in later stage. Therefore, it is valuable to profile and promote yourself on the labor market.

Therefore, it can be discussed that mentoring and networking is not seen essential for women. However, the author would argue, even though it is not seen essential by the female leaders, to do a network event or following a mentor programme if getting an opportunity. As one of the interviewees argued that it is was very helpful in her career, and she would never been in the positions she is currently occupying. Moreover, you will never know which opportunities might be within these mentoring and networking programmes.

Moreover, mentoring and networking does not always have to be official. Unofficially mentoring can also help the mentee. Where the unofficial mentor can be the manager, or a colleague with more experience. Unofficial mentoring can involve challenging the mentee, helping to solve problems, or in decision making, where a good coherent story must build to justify the decision. Unofficial mentoring has not been discussed in the literature, however, it is always useful to have a mentor, where you can go to with questions, or to ask for help.

Finally, the mentoring or networking does not always have to be offline, face to face. However, it can also happen online. For example, one interviewee explained that LinkedIn, is a very popular professional networking site, with a lot of recruitments happening at the time. Literature only discussed mentoring offline would be essential, however, due to the field research, the author suggest that mentoring and networking can be as sufficient online as offline.

5.4 Does the glass ceiling still exist?

The respondents believed that the glass ceiling is still existing and stopping women from growing into a management position. Literature showed that there are multiple barriers for women, which are hard or difficult to pass. The field research showed otherwise, the female interviewees do not necessarily believe in the glass ceiling. They argued that in their organizations there was no glass ceiling, or barriers. However, they all believed that in old-school organizations, with older generations managing the hotels, that there is a glass ceiling.

They describe this old-school organizations, as organizations with a very clear and distinctive hierarchy, and many layers. Management positions are often occupied by male leaders, next to the lower positions which are occupied by females. This means that they do believe that the glass ceiling effect still exist. Nevertheless, they do perceive it as easy to pass. However, as discussed in the literature, it is more difficult for women than men to break this glass ceiling. That is also showed during the field research, while some were arguing that women need to worker harder for it, and showing less of their emotions in decision making.

One of the barriers explained in the literature is the promotional barrier. This barrier shows that men are often getting more promotional changes than women get. This barrier is also supported by some of the interviewees. Where for example, someone argued that if there is a choice between a male leader or a female leader, they will presumably choose for the male. Moreover, it also stated by one of the interviewees, that men ask for more promotions than men do. This can also explain why there is still gender inequality.

Finally, they believed that the glass ceiling effect will disappear (if not yet) quickly, even though research showed, that gender equality can take a long time to achieve.

6 Conclusion

This chapter will conclude this thesis, and will give suggestions, further research proposals, and the learning development of the author.

The objective of this thesis was to gain more knowledge on individual level of women, what is their perspective on gender (in)equality, to better understand the phenomenon of gender inequality in the hospitality industry. Moreover, the author wanted to understand the career opportunities from women. Are they still getting disadvantaged because of their gender or not?

The main research question was

How do female workers perceive their working opportunities in the hospitality industry, and for what reason?

To give an answer on the research questions, the respondents of the interviews do perceive their working opportunities almost equal to their male counterparts. This is due to the fact, that the field research showed that those women often did not notice or realize there is any gender inequality. They believe they get equal career opportunities than men, and do not get disadvantaged because of their gender. Even though, field research showed that women do not feel disadvantaged, they all argued some examples of situations where they were disadvantaged.

Even though the literature showed that gender in the hospitality industry is not equal, and women are often getting disadvantaged, that is not what the field research demonstrated. Where the field research showed those women sometimes do feel less powerful than their male counterparts, however, none of them believed that they are disadvantaged because of their gender on a regularly basis. Where at first all interviewees denied any gender inequality in their career, however, after a couple of questions, they all had some situations where they were less powerful, or not respected due to their gender. Some examples that were drawn, men had final decisions, not respecting a female manager, or having a lower salary than a male counterpart in the same position. While this might not be direct discrimination on these women, however, men are often more aggressive and decisive in their (leadership)style, and therefore, having unconsciously taking the final decisions.

Furthermore, while the literature showed that mentoring and networking is essential, field research showed the opposite, where it is not seen essential but helpful. It is argued in the literature that formal mentorship is essential for women to become in an upper management position, however, the field research proved that it is rather helpful than essential. As

only half of the interviewees followed a mentor program, all interviewees occupy a management position. This implies that it can be argued that mentoring or networking, is not necessary, however it can be very beneficial to do so. To meet new people, that might need you in a later career.

Finally the literature stated that the glass ceiling effect is having a significant effect on female employees, trying to reach an upper management position. The glass ceiling effect can be described by different barriers. Some of these barriers are stated by the field research that they might still exist. Even though, the research showed that the glass ceiling is very difficult to break through, the female managers interviewed argued otherwise. They do not necessarily believe that it still exists, and therefore, if it does so, easy to pass. It is argued that by the female managers that it probably only still exists in old-fashioned organizations. Therefore, it can be stated that the glass ceiling still exists, however, it is not that present anymore, as the literature review stated. Moreover, field research stated that women can more easily break through the glass ceiling as the literature review stated.

6.1 Suggestions

This section will provide suggestions for the hospitality industry, to mitigate the gender differences between men and women. Moreover, the suggestions are mostly designed for women. Suggestions are based on the research derived in this thesis, however, before implementing one or multiple of the suggestions, hence it first needs to be studied.

As the field research showed, organizations are currently not having any policy to strive for gender equality, hence nearly all organizations where gender equal. To make sure that this will not change into inequality for either men or women, it can be suggested to make a policy that can be applied if needed. This policy can include ways on how to strive for gender equality, including, promotions, hiring, wages, however, also employee satisfaction. As research proved that employees who are satisfied, are more willing to stay in the same organization.

As the research showed that mentoring can be beneficial, it might be interesting for organizations to give women the possibility to follow a mentor programme or having the possibility to have a mentor within the organization. This way, the employee can choose rather to follow it or not. With this possibility an organization is helping its employees to learn more and giving them higher chances to grow within the organization. Furthermore, it can be suggested to give the mentoring programmes separately for men and women, where

women will hold back themselves, when there are men participating in the same programme.

6.2 Further research

It can be suggested that several topics can be further researched, while also the delimitations of this research, can be further studied.

This study mainly focused on the individual perspectives of female leaders; however, it can also be more discussed on institutional level, which will be more in depth of the culture or the organization, and the gendered positions. Next to the institutional level there is also the interactional level, where stereotyping and leadership style are discussed in greater detail. This can show new perspectives from women about gender (in)equality.

Moreover, the wage gap is not discussed in this study. Some resources showed that there is a significant wage gap between men and women, with a greater gap in higher positions, than lower positions, however, both results in gender inequality. Therefore, it can also be discussed as an aspect of gender inequality.

Furthermore, it can be suggested that a larger sample would give greater, more reliable outcomes. Therefore, this same research, can be done with more female employees and female leaders. Besides, within this research there is no male perspectives involved, however, can be suggested to include male perspectives on their opinion on gender (in)equality. It would be interesting to include their perspectives, as they might see it differently than women do, or they might even agree.

Now this research has been applied in the so-called bigger hotels, however, it can be that there are different perspectives on gender (in)equality in smaller or bigger hotels. Though, they have been excluded in this research, since research proved that the so-called bigger hotels has the biggest research gap. Therefore, it can be discussed to do research in the smaller, and even bigger hotels, to broaden the understanding on the total industry.

6.3 Learning and development

The topic of this thesis has been a very interesting one. Within this process, the author learned a lot about gender (in)equality in the hospitality industry, and different perspectives from different point of views. The literature review helped to have a better understanding and knowledge on the topic, while the interviews helped the author on the current perspective of female leaders in the hospitality industry.

Furthermore, as author of this thesis, I gained more knowledge, and skills during this process. Where, time management is essential in writing a bachelor thesis. During this process, the author set various deadlines in the very beginning of the process. However, due to other courses in the first period it was not always possible to be finished on the time. The theoretical framework took the author longer than expected. Where reading and writing was not always easy in the beginning, however, the author was able to set various deadlines, which were reached. The author knew how to set priorities in this process, together with having a strong motivational will. Therefore, the author believes that reading- and writing skills, and time management has all been improved.

One challenge that has occurred in the thesis process is organizing the interviews. Despite the Corona virus, it was a very busy period for all hotels. Some hotels where closed, however, had to make a lot of arraignments to re-open. Other hotels, where organizing to become a corona hotel for patients. Luckily, there were four female managers who were willing to help the author in this research.

To conclude this thesis was a very interesting process with a lot of new knowledge, where new perspectives are drawn, and older perspectives are confirmed. Moreover, this research is also beneficial for the author, especially while a career in an upper management positions is something wanted to be reached.

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8 Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview

Background information

These first series of questions are designed to find out more personal information on the respondents.

1. Can you please tell me more about yourself, age, completed studies, and why are you working in the hospitality industry?
2. Where do you work, and what is your position?
3. Why did you choose for this position?
4. Can you please tell me about your career ladder? When and where did you start? And how smoothly did you become in this position?

How do you perceive gender (in)equality?

5. Have gender issues ever occurred in your life? Can you please tell me in what way?
6. How do you perceive gender (in)equality in the hospitality industry? Can you please elaborate? With gender inequality we mean that women are disadvantaged in their career progression.
 - If yes, why do you think/believe gender inequality is a big problem today?
 - If no, why do you think/believe gender equality is reached today?
7. Can you please give an example where you came across gender inequality in your career?
 - Please elaborate.
8. Can you please give an example where you came across a situation where there was no distinction between genders?
9. Can you please tell me more on how your organization is striving for or handling gender equality?
10. Did you ever feel you were disadvantaged because of your gender?
 - Can you give an example?
11. How can an organization help you in order to not be disadvantaged? Or how is your organization preventing this?
12. Can you give me an example where you were advantaged because of your gender?

13. How is the division of gender in upper management positions in your hotel?
- Why do you think this is the cause, and how do you think this can be changed?
14. How do you think gender equality is now in the hospitality industry?
- Why, can you please tell me more about your point of view?

Mentor opportunities

Mentoring a person means that an individual with more knowledge, and experience, helps someone who is seeking for this knowledge.

15. Do you think mentoring and networking is essential for women?
- Why do you think so?
16. Did you ever get the opportunity for a mentoring programme?
- If yes, can you please tell me a bit more, how did this went? Did you ask for it yourself, did you get it offered?
 - If no, why not? Was it not necessary for you? Please elaborate why not?
17. How did a networking event ever help you within your career?
18. How did mentoring ever helped you within your career?

Glass ceiling

19. How do you perceive the glass ceiling, in the hospitality industry?
20. When did you ever noticed that there is/was a glass ceiling?
21. Do you think the glass ceiling still exist?
- Can you please tell me why, and in what way?
22. When in your career did you bump into the glass ceiling?
- Can you tell me more about it?

Appendix 2. Coding system

Codes	Including info
Positive perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive perspectives on gender (in)equality
Negative perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative perspectives on gender (in)equality
Organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible policies for gender equality • Division between men and women in management
Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpful or not • Opportunity or not
Glass ceiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether it still exist or not
Actions for future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can organizations do? • What can women do?

Appendix 3. Summary interviews

Codes	Summary
Positive perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None of the interviewees felt directly disadvantages because of their gender. • “I never had any gender issues at the front office, or in my life” (Interviewee C) • “I am verbally a very strong women, and therefore I do not much believe in gender inequality” (interviewee two) • “Us women can definitely reach the top, we might need to work a little bit harder for it, but it is definitely possible!” (Interviewee A) • “Gender inequality had a big change the last 10 to 15 years. This is since men are taking over domestic tasks from women. (Interviewee B). • “Women experience less aggression from men, than men do from men” (Interviewee B) • “We live in a modern society currently, where gender inequality problems occur maybe less, because men do not dare to say anything bad about female leaders anymore” • “I believe that women are betting in management positions, due to the fact, that women can better feel someone

	<p>else's feelings, and do have more emotions, and can show them" (interviewee C)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Women are more emotional, and have more empathy, what I believe is an advantage for female leaders" (Interviewee A) • "being able to negotiate hard with men" (Interviewee D) • "I do believe there is not much difference between men and women anymore in the hospitality industry, it has shifted over the last couple of years" (Interviewee B) • "I believe that women are more respected and recognized in a management position" (Interviewee C) • "In my sales position, I was often advantaged because of my gender. Where people are more likely to open up themselves towards women than men" (Interviewee D)
<p>Negative perspectives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even tough every interviewee argued in the beginning that they were not discriminated, they all could give examples of a situation. • "I am always standing up for myself, even when I am feeling a little bit discriminated, but therefore, people who do not know me, think I am a bitch" (Interviewee D) • "I do feel gender discrimination during a discussion, where they do not take me serious, and sometimes even laugh with me, if I am arguing with them" (Interviewee A) • "I felt that my employees in my department, mainly men at that time, where not always appreciated me, when I was telling them what to do" (Interviewee C) • "While also the F&B manager (male), was not appreciating me, because I was telling him what to do" (Interviewee C) • "At the start of my management career, I was paid under the minimum wage, and only knew this because a governmental agency" (Interviewee B) • "Women are not showing their emotions to be able to reach a higher position" (Interviewee D) • "A lot of people have the misconception that women cannot drive hard negotiations" (Interviewee D) • "Male managers seem to show less respect towards female managers" (Interviewee C) • "I think men are still holding the majority of the general management positions" (Interviewee C)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The traditional roles, such as sales and marketing, are occupied by women” (Interviewee D) • “I think that gender inequality can also come due to different cultures” (Interviewee C) • “I had once, where I was feeling less powerful, because of my gender” (Interviewee C) • “As women, you will always be treated differently as women” (Interviewee D) • “In an upper management position, it is not about being casual to your employees, you often need to be more though, and business” (Interviewee B) • “I was once disadvantaged because of my gender, as I wanted to grow within the company, however, I could not because my boss thought I would get children” (Interviewee D)
<p>Organizational structure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In my organization, I believe there is gender equality, we have a lot of women working in management positions” (Interviewee C) • “I do not believe we are a gender equal organization, but there is inequality more for men, as almost all upper management positions are occupied by women” (Interviewee D) • “I think it is important to have a great diversity of men and women in our organization, and currently we do have” (Interviewee A) • “It is said that women do have different views and perspectives, however, I do not believe in this too much” (Interviewee D) • “The division between men and should be equal in the whole organization, not only in management positions” (Interviewee B) • “I do believe my organization is treating everyone the same, whether a decision is taken by men or women does not matter” (Interviewee C) • “The young team all perceive the female leaders as normal, and there is no judgement from anyone” (Interviewee C) • “I’m not scared to hire women who might get pregnant. As our organization is big enough, with a lot of employee” (Interviewee B)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “If I get enough applicants for a job, I will look into the department, to see how many men and women are employed, and I would rather go for the gender that is in minority” (Interviewee B) • None of the organizations has any policy or regulation to strive for gender equality. • “Decisions are respected whether they come from a male or female” (Interviewee C) • “Everyone with a strong case, need to build up a story, will definitely get a chance in our organization, gender is a non-existing factor for us” (Interviewee D) • “Our management is mainly dominated by women, not for any specific reason, it just grew that way” (Interviewee D) • Equal pay was one of the characteristics explained by two interviewees. • “We also try to look where we employ our employees, cause on events with alcohol involved, or lots of men, we are more likely to put a man on shift than a women, this is to make sure that they cannot get the opportunity to be discriminated on the work floor” (Interviewee A) • For some jobs we just do prefer men, where women are maybe less safe or comfortable for a job such as night manager, however, if a women would apply, and have the right qualities we would hire her” (Interviewee A)
Mentoring and networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring is by none of the interviewees described as essential, however, everyone agreed upon the usefulness. • “I had a mentor programme offered by a university, which I accepted to follow. So once a month we came together with only females to learn new things. The mentor programmes where offered by different female leaders from various industries, and was very helpful in order to learn new tips and tricks, how to lead people, without losing them or yourself, and where you would work in groups to see different opinions, and learn more on how to manage and communicate with people” (Interviewee D) • “I attended a mentor programme that was offered in our family business, where we learned how to become a good female leader. For me it was helpful, as I missed previous experience. Now I believe, I am more confident, I learned

	<p>more, and I also know how other people see me as a female leader” (Interviewee A)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Mentoring would have helped me in my career, as it would simplify it a little bit” (Interviewee C) • “In the time that mentoring would be beneficial for me it did not exist yet. However, if it was available, I would have done it, as learning new things, is never a bad idea” (Interviewee B) • “Now my current manager is also my mentor, he is always challenging me to learn something new, and is always improving herself” (Interviewee D) • “The current world is so technology driven, that is also where we can find mentoring options, without having an actual mentor” (Interviewee A) • A network events has been described by the interviewees as useful, but not necessary. • “I met a lot of interesting people on network events; however, it is not something I see as too useful” (Interviewee D) • “It is essential to do so at the beginning of your career, where you go to promote yourself, and profile yourself. Since it is often not on what you know, but who you know” (Interviewee B) • I never attended a networking event since this is not required in our family business. Because we are such a big family, our family gathers are already seen as a networking event” (Interviewee A)
Glass ceiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meanings are divided about the glass ceiling, some do believe it exists, others don't • “the glass ceiling comes due to the older generations still holding top positions” (Interviewee C) • “The glass ceiling definitely exists, especially, in more old-fashioned organizations” (Interviewee D) • “I do not believe that the glass ceiling exists, however, it probably does still exist in some organizations” (Interviewee B) • “I do not want to believe that the glass ceiling is still existing, however, unconsciously I still think it is there” (Interviewee A) • “The glass ceiling can disappear, if the older generations will leave their positions” (Interviewee C)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now, women are growing up already in a different culture, where female managers are normal, and therefore, they can more easily pass the glass ceiling” (Interviewee C) • “I never bumped into the glass ceiling myself” • “I believe I am right in front of the glass ceiling now” (Interviewee D) • “I think I would be able to grow up to higher positions” (Interviewee D) • “I bumped onto the glass ceiling when I was working for a previous boss, where I was not able to grow within the company, because I was a young female, and I had great possibilities to get pregnant” (Interviewee D) • “I never bumped into the glass ceiling myself” (Interviewee B) • “I never experience any glass ceiling; however, I also do not believe in it. Because it is a very old definition, and we should not think too much on this concept, as it does not exist anymore” (Interviewee A) • “However, older people might still think that the glass ceiling exists” (Interviewee A) • “I do believe that if an employer can choose between men or women, with the same qualities, they rather choose for a man” (Interviewee A)
<p>Actions for future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “If my organization will have gender inequality, I will definitely try to change so. However, then I would only accept applicant based on their gender, and not on their qualities” (Interviewee A) • “I think that women can easily pass the glass ceiling, however, they just need to stand up more themselves” (Interviewee B) • “At the moment I would not know how to prevent gender inequality from happening, just because it has not occurred yet, therefore, it might be useful to learn something about it” (Interviewee D)

Appendix 3. Abstraction process

I never felt direct discrimination	Personal discrimination/gender (in)equality perspectives		
I never had any gender issues in my career			
I do feel gender discrimination during different moments			
I had once, where I was feeling less powerful, because of my gender			
Was not always appreciated by them			
A lot of people have the misconception that women cannot drive hard negotiations			
I never experienced direct disadvantaged because of my gender			
Women are better in dealing with people	Positive personal perspectives about female leaders	Personal perspectives on gender (in)equality	Gender (in)equality
Women are more emotional which is an advantage			
I believe that women are better in management positions, due to the fact, that women can better feel someone else's feelings			
I believe that women are more respected and recognized in a management position			
Women are often recognized in their management positions; this means that their decisions or opinions they have are all respected			
Women are more emotional, and have more empathy, what I believe is an advantage for female leaders			
Women can definitely reach the top			

Older generations often do have problems with younger female leaders	Disrespect by male managers		
Women cannot show their emotions, to be able to grow in their career			
I do feel gender discrimination during a discussion, with either employees or guests, where they do not take me serious, and sometimes even laugh with me, if I am arguing with them			
	Differences from men		
I think that men talk in a different way to men than towards women			
Women are better in dealing with people, they do have more emotions, and can also show them more towards			
It is more often that man asks for a wage increase as women do			
Women experience less aggression from men			
	Negative personal perspectives		
I think that men mostly hold director positions, and the traditional roles, such as sales and marketing, are occupied by women			
Household tasks are not only occupied by women anymore, and men are taking over these tasks as well			
People will not take you seriously			

I believe the hospitality industry is gender equal	Is the hotel industry gender equal or not?	Perspectives towards gender (in)equal organizations			
I do believe that there is gender equality in the hospitality industry					
Men are still holding the general management positions					
The division between men and should be equal in the whole organization, not only in management positions					
It is essential to have good division of men and women employed in hotels					
We live in a modern society currently, where gender inequality problems occur maybe less					
In my organization, I believe there is gender equality, we have a lot of women working in management positions	Perspectives on gender (in)equality in their own organizations				
I do believe my organization is treating everyone the same, whether a decision is taken by men or women does not matter					
We have equal pay for our employees					
Everyone in this organization will get a fair chance					
We try to be as equal as possible, where we also have equal pay for men and women in the same position					
There is great equality between men and women in the management positions in our hotel					
In our organization we do not care about gender					

I do not believe that mentoring is essential for women	Is mentoring essential or not	Mentoring and networking	
Mentoring and networking is very good for women,			
The current world is so technology driven, that is also where we can find mentoring options, without having an actual mentor			
Networking and mentoring are essential for women; however, I also do believe it is essential for men			
You can learn from them, and see how they did it	Benefits of mentoring		
To learn new things			
Was very helpful in order to learn new tips and tricks			
, I am more confident, I learned more, and I also know how other people see me as a female leader			
We learned how to become a good female leader			
A networking event would be useful, to meet new people, learn different skills, such as language skills, and get to know more about people's knowledge	Networking		
I met a lot of interesting people on network events			
It is essential to do so at the beginning of your career, where you go to promote yourself, and profile yourself			

I do believe that the glass ceiling still exists	Existence of glass ceiling	Glass ceiling effect	
The glass ceiling definitely exists			
It probably does still exist in some organizations			
It does not exist anymore			
Unconsciously I still think it is there			
Having children, and occupying a higher position can sometimes be challenging	Barriers identified by interviewees	Glass ceiling effect	
That women cannot get children and have a successful career			
She does not want this, as other organizations often have high hierarchy levels			
Would not let her grow because of the high possibility of pregnancy			
It is harder to replace a female manager, for only a set of time, than hiring someone who will not have the changes to fall out			
I think I would be able to grow up to higher positions	Breaking the glass ceiling	Glass ceiling effect	
Where I was not able to grow within the company, because I was a young female			
I never bumped into the glass ceiling myself			
They rather choose for a man, because women can get pregnant			