

Equality for women in career development in Finland

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<p>Equality between genders is still a discussed topic all over the world with different levels in diverse aspects of life. The following research involves gender equality in career development for women, its definition, and perspectives. The main objective to be studied is: How women are equal in practice, do they have equal chances with their male paradigms to develop their career? This main question breaks down into three sub-objectives following a theoretical framework.</p> <p>The research is done based on qualitative research, quantitative survey, and call interviews, and secondary data research but unfortunately, due to the timeframe of the research which happened during the pandemic of the Coronavirus, it was challenging to get sufficient resources which caused some limitations.</p> <p>The result of the research was limited to the Uusimaa area only. However, it points out that, gender equality issues remain in several perspectives: gender function, family duties, inequality at the workplace - which most people are not aware of.</p> <p>The research includes statistics from secondary research, quantitative and qualitative data, from surveys, and phone call interviews.</p>	
Keywords Career development, Gender equality, Finland, Career equality	

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background, objectives of the research

Equality is an important term and has been the talk of many nations for years, debates and research have been performed to prove the equality between genders. Nordic countries have been ranked at the top for many years in a row.

Finland has been considered one of the best countries concerning many aspects of life, besides, it has been placed in the top three of the list gender equality according to the world economic forum, and have been considered the best in balancing women's rights together with men's rights.

Finland might be the dream country for so many people because of the gender equality and rights, but time goes and females in the entire world are becoming increasingly independent, trying to achieve their dreams, enforce their presence and get new opportunities.

The challenge is not about whether Gender equality exists in Finland, but how women in Finland are equal in practice, and are they given the same chances to develop their professional careers.

The main objective of the research is to define if women in Finland are equal with men by considering resources, researches, and interviews done with female employees or entrepreneurs to get their insights about it and to what extent is equality in career development is practiced. The research will answer this main question: How women are equal in practice, do they have equal chances with their male paradigms to develop their career? The main question will be divided into three subjects, based on research and theoretical framework:

- Does gender functionalism exist in companies in Finland and how is it reflected in different job fields?
- How are women's free will of choosing their career valued and how is it affected by family and society?
- How is the current system of organization affecting women's career development?

The topic was chosen because of the authors' background, as many females face challenges while building their careers abroad. Many factors might influence it such as background, nationality, language, or even just the fact of being a female.

1.2 Methodology

This thesis studies into challenges women must tackle in reality to develop their career in Finland. Various methods of research have been carried out to give adequate information: qualitative research, quantitative survey, secondary data research, and call interviews.

First, gender equality theories are studied as fundamental knowledge to approach root problems in gender inequality, especially ones concerning society and people's mentality. Generally, studies of gender issues are quite vague as it conveys multiple perspectives, such as racism, history, psychology, biology, etc. Particularly, in the historical perspective, gender studies can be dated back to the beginning of human society. Each theory navigates to gender issues with its typical angle: the social construction of gender, gender functionalism, symbolic interactionism towards gender, etc. In this thesis, a study of these theories is based on selecting, reading, reviewing theory books, combining with reviews from experts. As a result, these theories are presented in several parts: primary information, review of theories, elements of theory as frameworks for interview questions.

As mentioned in the "Introduction", questionnaire design is based on a theoretical framework. A survey is built based on theoretical structure. The survey includes two demographic questions, five open-ended questions based on three theories, and two filling-in questions also based on the three theories. The survey is applied to gather as much data as possible. And based on the answers, interviews are going to be encouraged to contact the authors - interviewers to share further details on their answers.

Next, qualitative research was conducted to gather secondary data, to get a basic understanding of the Finnish labor market, regarding gender equality issues and to suffice the demanded amount of data. Besides, visualizing the interrelation between various fields of society could orient problems and solutions for further studies. The secondary data is used as a support to primary data in the case that primary research cannot get enough response. The study was carried out by retrieving and analyzing data from available and trustworthy sources. Information to be revealed in this thesis can be guaranteed with sufficiency, objectivity, and accuracy. The data sources are official websites of the Finnish government.

The analysis part discusses the results of primary and secondary data. And the conclusion part presents the results or findings of the thesis. Limitation presents profound matters that occurred during analysis which the authors did not have enough opportunity to answers.

The future study gives summed-up suggestions and repeats limitations as a basement for any similar thesis research in the future.

Apart from the survey, the last question which is to evaluate the business model in Finland is added. Learning the business model is a way to objectively understand how women experience their workplace. At first, the study of the business model into gender was uncertain because the data resource, as well as basic knowledge about the masculine business model, is quite limited. Therefore, to describe a masculine business model, a reference from similar research was applied. The result of this research is to be used as a framework for the general traits of a masculine business model. A survey question is designed according to it.

To compare and highlight differences between the masculine and feminine structure of an organization, research of feminine models is added to the extended study part of the thesis. Also, the authors combined typical patterns of both models and suggestions from experienced businesspersons to mention an idea about a modern business model as a suggestion for a movement towards gender equality.

And lastly, self-development gives ideas of each author's awareness and vision for their career development. This part includes two paragraphs, each paragraph is the personal development of one author.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Structural Functionalism

The functionalist perspective, also called functionalism, is one of the major theoretical perspectives in sociology. It has its origins in the works of Emile Durkheim, who was especially interested in how social order is possible or how society remains relatively stable. As such, it is a theory that focuses on the macro-level of social structure, rather than the micro-level of everyday life. Notable theorists include Herbert Spencer, Talcott Parsons, and Robert K. Merton. Emile Durkheim

"The entirety of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own. It can be termed the collective or creative consciousness." *The Division of Labor* (1893).

Based on the theory of structural functionalism, every person or object has a role in society which if it changes, society loses balance, Even though it supports the idea the man was the breadwinner in early ages by going out and hunting while the woman could not because of her body restraints when being pregnant and nursing, but still Functionalists believe that the fact of those early situations was passed on through generations and they are still serving for the effectiveness of family system functioning properly.

After the world started changing economical and socially especially after the World war second, the family structure was updated, as well as many females, had to take another extra-role beside their initial role of being the one creating stability at home, but to also go work and be the breadwinner, when men were in the World war second Females started working and gaining their wages but as the men returned from the war the women rejected being denied their role and positions to men which let the imbalance affect the society. Women did not want to forfeit their wage-earning positions (Hawke 2007)."

The functionalist theory consists of diverse parts that compose social institutions, and that each one of them is created to serve the other so that it creates balance in society. Family, media, economy, government, religion, education, and many other aspects are the core of the functionalist theory, for instance, parents or (breadwinners) are paying taxes while their children are given the education, in the other hand the government is applying rules and laws that need to be respected by its citizens, media then shares those messages and help the families get an overview about what is going on. religions as well are different but already structured so that anyone adopting such a religion would not have to create a hassle while searching for information or trying to change the core of it, as long as you adopt a religion you accept all the

definitions it has already. so when all of those applied, most of the parts are controlled and balanced.

In other words, everything and part should be in order if one of the malfunctions affects the others that are why the theory emphasizes the stability of all the factors

Functionalist perspective of gender inequality

From a functionalist point of view, inequality plays a role in holding society together and encouraging efficiency.

From This point of view, we can see that gender inequality for functionalists serves the need of the society as to create the global balance, as it is claimed that it is not about being female or male but about the abilities that men have compared to women either concerning the physical strength which does not give privilege to women to take such positions demanding more strength or by even claiming that some need manhood way of thinking to lead some positions for many reasons such as that man has been already playing an important role in the working field allowing him to get more knowledge and experience and suits more in the position.

It is not about accepting the role of a female or the situation where both have to have equal right, but indeed it is the will to not change a whole structured society, to not create a pristine environment which might take so long and must cause consequences to adapt with. People are not ready to change; people are responsible of changing society so it will never happen unless they do it.

From this theory, we can conclude some facts from our current world or current society.

Countries are different in ways of dealing with gender inequality and some claim they are the best ones dealing with the issue. However, we can still see gender inequality in all of them. The only difference is that each country has a level or an unusual way. For example, Finland is considered in the top ten countries which admit and try to encourage gender equality and we can see women working in leading positions, but unfortunately, the salary is different, and still, men get a higher salary. Or, compared to Saudi Arabia where just three years ago, women were not allowed to drive cars and must have a male driver which is one of the basic rights of living not mentioning, of course, the extremely low number of employed women.

Women in the current world are ready to try and do anything that men can do they are even in a challenge to get leading positions to able to show their presence and make an impact on society

As a conclusion, the main idea of Structural functionalism is, every person or object has a role in society and this arrangement stabilizes society. Thus, every person does gender functions. In

this thesis, we are talking about gender jobs. Structural functionalism is going to be a subject in the survey, to find out whether gender functionalism exists in Finland, and how far is it affecting women's career development?

2.2 Feminist theory – Patriarchy

Feminist theory is a substance of feminism that studies the nature of inequality - providing theoretical, philosophical tools for building knowledge of gender inequalities. And patriarchy - stands for male-dominant culture and its creation history explained the gender inequalities.

The history of patriarchy

Patriarchy describes a society dominated by a male in almost every field of life: politics, values, customs, laws, social roles. The term is an archaic, rooted in its old long history of the formation along with the formation of gender, human societies since the civilization of western society.

Since the agricultural era turned in, the development of cultivation came along with the rising needs of the workforce. Children became a resource for families and society. Women, thus, became a kind of "resource" (Gerda, 1986, 215) for the workforce of the society. This was apart from the progress contributing to western civilization.

Women commodified society by their reproductive ability, and this was appreciated by men. For hundreds of years, women were acquired by men as far as land, properties. Under tribal conquerors, women were a symbol of victory and wealth for nobles. They were traded into families for their reproductive and sexuality aspects.

Though women were possessed and traded for their bodily aspects, they still had the power to act and choose, and extremely limited compared to men. As the author - Gerda Lerner, stated: "Men as a group had rights in women which women as a group did not have in men" (Gerda, 1986, 216). Or, Claude Lévi-Strauss, the father of the concept "exchange According to him, "it is not women who are reified and commodified, but it is women's sexuality and reproductive capacity which is so treated" (Gerda, 1986, 217). Under the patriarchal society, women's commodification for society did not give themselves the respect they deserved from men and society. On the other hand, it became a favorite for men to take over women's equality, freedom in reproductive capacity, and sexuality. And their social roles, compared to men, were also limited to women" (Gerda, 1986, 217) under the Neolithic age clarified the reification of women.

Gerda Lerner, an American feminist, believes that patriarchy is the cause of women's oppression, gender inequalities, and the roots of gender function in society. She also added, a thousand years of being under control had added up to female's psychology in accepting their social roles and family dimensions. Agreed with Gerda, Alison Jaggar, an English American feminist philosopher, patriarchy is the root cause of women's oppression (Gerda, 1986, 218).

Nowadays, feminist theories approach gender issues by a conflict method to examine the existence of gender roles, male dominance. The fundamental feminist theory considers the roles in family is invariably male dominant. Males' opinions are held high in patriarchal societies and females' opinions are often belittled.

To sum up, applied in this thesis research, the theory provides an approach to consider gender equality in terms of women's free will of choices, regardless of traditional obligatory roles socially constructed for a woman. This matter is the second subject to be examined directly and indirectly in this thesis. Indirectly, the free will of women over their re-productivity is going to be reflected in responses from family, workplace, and society.

2.3 Symbolic interactionism

Interaction symbolism is a perspective in social psychology that studies human interactions. The theory created a frame of reference for shaping individual behaviors and explaining the meaning of social behaviors. Symbolic interactionism was developed around the twentieth century by an American philosophy George Herbert Mead.

Symbolic interactionism is certainly relatable to gender. Masculinity and femininity are both socially constructed, reproduced, reinforced through daily interactions, and passed down by generations. Thus, symbolic meanings of the gender traits are prejudices and fluid rather than natural and static. Women are associated with femininity, which represents "gentleness, empathy, humility, and sensitivity" (Charon, 1992, 13). And men connected with "strength, courage, independence, leadership, and assertiveness" (Charon, 1992, 13).

The study of symbolic interactionism gave an example of the theory: Imagine that a person needs to go to the bank to apply for a small loan for school or small business. If the person encounters a female loan officer, he or she might declare his/her case logically, statically, and present a clear plan of loan and paying back. If the loan officer is a female, the person might take a more emotional approach, presenting a positive intention on the loan. The former

approach inclines to analytics, which associates masculinity while the latter approach appeals to emotions, which relates to femininity.

Gender as performance

As mentioned above, symbols carry the meanings built by society and it is rather fluid than static, prejudice than natural. Thus, reactions according to symbols are based on their current assigned meaning. Both masculinity and femininity are socially constructed, carrying the indifferent traits associated with them. Thus, we react to genders according to the traits constructed for each gender. If it is a man, he performs masculinity. And a woman performs femininity. In another word, genders are not about being, but genders are about doing, performing their gender identities.

Sociologist Charles H. Cooley, in response to this social phenomenon, developed a theory called "Glass-looking self" in 1902. The theory argues that a person's perception of himself or herself is mainly dependent on how society views them. A man is expected to perform masculine tasks, and so as well as a woman, perform feminine tasks. The idea that an individual performing gender's tasks are believed to be natural, despite the roots of social construction.

In conclusion, being associated with gender traits, individuals might experience gender expectations from society. It can result either positively or negatively. Negatively, it is called gender bias. Within a working environment, gender bias results in several consequences, for example, jobs are either male or female; job stereotypes, such as woman are mainly work in Human resource; inequality in job promotions due to gender barriers; women act masculinity and diminish their femininity to fit in a masculine model of organizations; etc. In this thesis, symbolic interactionism is the basis for learning women's experience of gender bias in their working environment. This is the reason for the next study: the masculine business model.

2.4 Masculine business model

- Definitions and traits of masculine business model

Masculinity is a set of behaviors, characteristics, attributes, and role takings associated with males. Traits traditionally viewed as masculine in "Western society include strength, courage, independence, leadership, and assertiveness" (Kimmel, 1994, 119)

In another description, Hofstede stated:

- *“Masculinity stands for a society in which social gender roles are distinct: Men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success; women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.”* (Geert H. Hofstede, 2000, 297)
- *“Femininity stands for a society in which social gender roles overlap: Both female and male are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.”* (Geert H. Hofstede, 2000, 297)

And, according to Hofstede, some basic traits that can be seen in the masculine business model are a high gender wage gap, fewer women in the managerial board, the expectation of higher pay. Whereas, in contrast, the low masculine, or feminine business model is characterized as a smaller gender wage gap, more women in a managerial board, and expectation for fewer working hours.

- Gender bias in the workplace

Gender bias is accumulated from gender functionalism and inequalities (to be explained in the theory part - symbolic interactionism and structural functionalism).

Ian Dodds, through his work for ten years, has researched how unconscious bias about femininity plays out in organizations. The research has been conducted among groups of female and male from diverse cultural backgrounds. Participants as a group were always reached by the same affinity consultants to ensure the empathic understanding. As a result, these groups have certainly given a demonstration that unconscious bias presents and remains similar over the period. Organization’s workplaces are male dominant and not inclusive for everyone, which is also claimed in their recruitment literature.

The following quotes are taken as examples from the groups of women participants.

” Looking in, it looks like a boy’s club”

” To get on you have to adopt a more male style – I lead a more masculine life (at work)”

” It’s a long hour culture and I feel guilty leaving at 5 pm to collect my children”

” Women are more interactive and want to help people out”

” Roles are especially male/female, i.e.: males” services/sales, and females HR/admin, and projects”

” Many men think that women only work in HR – stereotyping”

As a result, women in a male dominant organization are:

- Having to adopt the masculinity style to fit in
- Experiencing gender barriers for promotions. For example, promotion to senior positions in male dominant areas
- Women are diminished in their level of ambition, or in developing a career path
- Experiencing traditional long working hours that suit men rather than women

Femininity characteristics are not fully respected in a masculine dominant organization. And women, therefore, are limited to achieve further in their career path. They also must adopt a culture that they do not belong to.

According to the research, unconscious bias about women and gender gap present invariantly in organizations for ten years. Symbolic interactionism can be an answer to the invariant of gender bias. The question is, in Finland, how policies have changed to raise awareness about women's participation in society and their equal position to their male paradigms?

Symbolic interactionism and masculine business model are the third and the last subject in the survey, to learn about participants' experiences in workplaces, and how it affects their career development.

3 Research methodology and data collection

3.1 Research method

Quantitative is the main research method and survey was implemented as it is the most common way of conducting quantitative research. Quantitative research is the systematic empirical study based on statistical data, used to produce conclusions or to test the hypothesis (Silva, 2019, 21).

Due to the format of the survey, an additional method was applied: qualitative research method. The quantitative research targets many respondents with both types of survey questions: open questions and multiple-choice questions. The additional qualitative targets specific survey answers with underlying stories. In another word, the qualitative method allowed the authors to cultivate further information and opinions from respondents who wish to share their stories. An additional reason for using this hybrid research method is, as Finland is well-known as a destination of gender equality, solely quantitative research might have only reconfirmed the gender equality status of Finland. As the authors are looking for specific existential equality problems for improvement, the quantitative method is mainly used to gather a large amount of data and qualitative research continue to cultivate specific answers, as mentioned above.

3.2 Questionnaire design

According to Silva (2015, 22), a layout of the questionnaire should follow this structure: general introduction, questions instructions, and an order of questions: simple ones first and complex ones last. It is also needed to explain the "purposes of the questionnaire, how people were selected, assurance of confidentiality, and how and where to return a mailed questionnaire" (Silva, 2015, 22).

The language implemented is English as this thesis is a corporate work of two international students, and the research target both Finnish and international workers in Finland. The questionnaire is designed closely following the theoretical framework. The main question is "How women are equal in practice, do they have equal chances with their male paradigms to develop their career?" The main problem breaks down into three main points, according to the theoretical framework: "Does gender functionalism exist in companies in Finland and how is it reflected in different fields of jobs?"; "Women's free will of career choices and affection from family and society"; and a Likert scale question a model of business.

The questionnaire started with an introduction to the purpose of the survey, and email or phone information for further interviews.

The first two questions (1 and 2) were general demographic ones, about job fields and gender of respondents.

The next three questions (3-5) aimed to find answers if structural functionalism regarding jobs exist in companies in Finland and how it is reflected in different fields of jobs. Question number three asked if respondents agree with the statement "There are jobs which are for women rather than for men, and vice versa." and what are their opinions? This question combines yes-no and open-ended methods. Open space was also given for respondents to fill in their opinions. This question aimed to find out if respondents have a mindset toward jobs relating to genders. Question number four asked if they wish to have more men or women in their workplace, and reasons why. The purpose of this question was to check the gender balance at their workplace, and their opinions about why more men or women would be a benefit for their workplace. Question number five is more specific about structural functionalism when the question asked respondents to fill in jobs that were more suitable for men or women or both. A list of fifteen job fields was given with a table (table 1 as below) for filling in. Besides, these questions focusing on one topic is on the purpose of affirming answers' persistence and critical thinking before answering. This way of designing the questionnaire is applied throughout the survey.

5. In your opinion, please copy and paste these phrases into a suitable column:
The following fields of work are especially suitable for male or female or both:
Hospitality, Business Management, Engineering, Construction, Forestry,
Accounting, Analysis, Doctor, Nurse, Lawyer, Judge, Software development,
Computer science, Electronics

Female	<input type="text"/>
Male	<input type="text"/>
Both gender	<input type="text"/>

(Table 1)

The next three-question cultivated women's free will of career choice from expectations of gender roles from family and society. This subject followed Feminist theory.

- Question number six: "If you have to choose either family or career to focus on, which one would you choose? Could you suggest any idea to have balance taking care of family and developing your career?" Women had been a weight on family duties heavier than men. This question aimed to learn whether women had to consider focusing more

on family or career; they did not have to consider, or any influence from family/society/their mindset about family and career development. This question was also given space for the answer.

- Question number seven: "Who or what factors can affect your choice in life (having children, not having children, focus on developing a career)? Would you like you to tell us how?" This question asked more details about the possible influence to choose over family or career.
- Question number eight: "Do you have equal chances to develop your career as your male/female colleagues? (Ex: promotion criteria, long working hours, taking care of other things, etc.) Base on your experience, please specify." This is an open-ended question, unlike other ones, this question is an anticipation to get to respondents who have some stories to share.

And lastly, the last question is a list of statements concerning the work environment. These statements were with a Likert scale "The most typical Likert scale ranges from one for most disagree to five for strongly agree" (Silva, 2015, 23). The question included seven statements describing the masculine working environment, ranged from one to five as strongly disagree and strongly agree, relatively.

3.3 Validity and reliability

Validity measures the accuracy of concepts in quantitative research (Heale, 2015). According to Silva, validity measures the honesty and accuracy of the thesis statement and its authors (Silva, 2015). Validity can be divided into three types: content validity, construct validity, and criterion validity. Content validity concerns the sufficiency in covering all aspects of a construct. The questionnaire was based on the theoretical framework which suggested aspects of measurement in gender equality study. Construct validity measures the accuracy of the research instrument (Silva, 2015). The questionnaire was designed with more open-ended questions than multiple-choice ones, as the purpose of getting stories sharing from respondents. The follow-up phone call interviews were an addition to this dimension. Criterion validity refers to the compliance with external contexts, or another similar research (Silva, 2015). Similar studies in gender equality specifically in developing career have been rarely found. However, there are other studies which generally are about gender equality that have been found, by various authors: students, and even governmental organizations.

Reliability relates to the consistency of the research instrument, including language, concept, question types (Silva, 2015). Participants must have the same responses every time completing the research instrument (Heale, 2015). Reliability is evaluated based on three dimensions: internal consistency, stability, and correspondence. Internal consistency refers to the integration of a research instrument that measures one thesis topic. Each question in the questionnaire aimed to learn about respondents' practical experiences and opinions about gender equality. The structure of it also follows a breakdown question system: main question, sub-questions, and detailed ones. Stability concerns that of results after repeated testing. The questionnaire was sent to a few friends as a rehearsal. This testing found out that, there were some errors in the survey. At some questions, respondents could not fill in their answers. The errors were quickly checked. The mode of these questions caused errors, then was improved. And correspondence relates to the consistency of responses through different alternative forms of research platform (instrument). This dimension does not relate to this thesis as the survey was done online via only one platform: web link to "SurveyMonkey.com."

According to Silva in her study, "Reliability in social sciences is the extent to which research findings would be the same if the research were to be repeated at a later date of with a different sample of subjects" (Silva, 2015). In this thesis, these questions were only sent once to respondents, due to the time-limited and accessibility to people. However, this thesis is a contribution to future studies, as a reference for further studies, or comparisons.

3.4 Data collection and target group

The survey was done online and followed-up by phone call interviews. The platform for the online study was "SurveyMonkey.com". The weblink to the study was open from 20 April to 3 May. The target group included both female and male, employees and employers, entrepreneurs, regardless of nationality or job fields. Women of all ages were encouraged to take part, as well as men. However, the result received twenty answers.

About the demography of respondents, various backgrounds joined the survey and interviews, from private to public section, from male-dominant industries to female and gender balance ones, including both employees and entrepreneurs. Though these backgrounds do not include every available job field in the labor market, they still suffice with all sides of opinion: agree, disagree, and neutral which significantly came along with its explanation. Due to the circumstance (Covid-19) during which the thesis research was conducted, the geography of respondents was limited to within the Uusimaa area. Hence, it cannot be generalized to the whole of Finland as it was targeted in the beginning.

The number of twenty responses is considered low for a survey. However, as the survey includes some open-ended questions and data received from these survey answers and interviews are mostly qualitative data, it is considered adequate for answering the main questions of the thesis. Moreover, there were two solutions applied to suffice the demanded data amount for result analysis. First, secondary research was conducted by gathering available research on gender equality issues in most aspects of gender issues (wage, employment rate, parental support, maternity support, share in a managerial position, gender dominant industry, policy, etc.). The research was carried out by some official organizations of the Finnish government and society (Statistic Finland, THL – Finnish Institute for health and welfare, and Social Insurance – Kela, which guarantee the reliability and variety of data. The result of secondary data is used as a supporting and added data to survey results. Apart from the survey, data from personal interviews reveal unexpected findings, which is among the most important findings in this thesis. Interviewees include two entrepreneurs, a primary school teacher, a manager working in the marketing field, and a nurse working in a shelter for the disabled. These women are in the age range of twenty-five to thirty-five.

The reliability of these answers is affirmed based on participants' consistent answers throughout the questionnaire. As mentioned above, two to three questions for one problem were made to ensure the persistent answers of participants. Interviewees' trustworthiness can listen through the phone calls, the hesitating or affirmative in answering, voice tones. Data received include qualitative and quantitative one. Data from the survey and interviews are complimentary for each other, plus the substitute of secondary data, answers are going to be given to the main questions of the thesis. Based on these confirmations, the next chapters are going to present findings, analysis, and conclusion from the survey as well as interviews, and secondary data.

4 Findings

4.1 Secondary data: Facts about Gender equality in Finland

Gender equality issues underlie in every field of society. As each field in a society supports and connects as branches, so does social issues, and particularly gender equality issues. By approaching society as a big picture, issues relating to gender equality should also be projected as a general vision. The following paragraphs reveal facts about gender relating issues in various dimensions: Societal policy (insurance, policies), gender attitudes, the wage gap, the share of managerial position, gender segregation in education and labor market, employment

rate relating to having children... These studies were done by the Statistic Finland. Founded in 1865, this is the only official public authority established for studying statistics all over Finland and international.

Statistics revealed in this chapter will be attributed to the general picture of this thesis: gender equality and career development for women in Finland.

4.1.1 Social Insurance (Kela) – Parental allowances

The Social Insurance Institution of Finland plays a major part in supporting Finnish citizens. As the country's birth rate is low, and with a strong approach to a gender balance country, where both female and male have equal chance to develop their career and take care of their family, Kela gives out plenty of support for parents on pregnancy and babies.

According to the Social Insurance Institution, there are plenty of benefits for families with children, include maternity and paternity grant, parental allowance, child benefit, childcare allowances, aid for sick and disabled children, child maintenance allowance, parental allowances. Maternity allowance includes a package of healthcare for mothers during pregnancy and baby, baby supplements, and a paid five-month leave. Early maternity leave with special allowance is added for mothers whose work contacts with radiation, chemicals, or infectious disease. However, the detail is not specified. After birth, fathers can get parental leave of up to 54 days (about 2 months). The paternity allowance is flexible. It can be broken into smaller periods or taken in one go, but no longer after the child turns two years old. Parental allowance is added after the maternity period is over. Either parent can take the parental allowance of six-month leave. If the family has a twin, an additional allowance of 60 working days is paid by the Insurance.

Kela supports genders based on gender aspects. Mothers are given more financial support than fathers. The fact that parental allowance can be taken by either father or mother proves, in this case, society does not force mothers to take the children's responsibilities. These responsibilities are decided between mothers and fathers, and so is a career choice.

4.1.2 Employment and unemployment rate by children

3.7a Employment and unemployment rates of the parents by number of children in 2017, aged 20 to 59 years

	Employment rate			Unemployment rate		
	Total %	Women %	Men %	Total %	Women %	Men %
Total	78.2	76.5	79.8	8.2	7.7	8.6
Parents with children under 18 years, total	83.0	75.6	91.0	5.2	6.5	3.9
1 child	81.2	75.1	88.3	6.5	7.6	5.3
2 children	86.8	80.7	93.3	4.0	5.1	2.9
3 or more children	79.0	66.5	92.1	4.8	7.0	3.1
No children under 18 years	75.5	77.0	74.1	9.9	8.4	11.3

Source: Statistics Finland, Labour force survey

3.7b Employment and unemployment rates of the parents by the youngest child in 2017, aged 20 to 59 years

	Employment rate			Unemployment rate		
	Total %	Women %	Men %	Total %	Women %	Men %
Total	78.2	76.5	79.8	8.2	7.7	8.6
Parents with children under 18 years, total	83.0	73.6	91.0	5.2	6.5	3.9
Youngest child under 3 years	69.9	48.6	89.7	6.6	9.8	4.5
Youngest child aged 3 to 6 years	86.7	79.2	91.5	4.8	6.0	3.8
Youngest child aged 7 to 17 years	89.0	85.6	91.6	4.6	5.6	3.6
No children under 18 years	75.5	76.8	74.1	9.9	8.4	11.3

Source: Statistics Finland, Labour force survey

(Source: Statistic Finland, Labor force study)

One of the main factors affect women's choice of career or family is having babies. Statistic Finland conducted a study about the relationship between employment and unemployment rate by children. The study was conducted among female and male between 20 and 59 years old, in 2017, and divided into two categories: by several children and by the youngest child.

First, by the youngest child, comparison criteria include children under three years old, from 3 to 6 years old, from 7 to 17 years old, and no children under 18 years old. The employed rate of women was relatively low when the youngest child was under 3 years old. However, the rate increases as the age of the youngest child increase (from 48.8% employed to 85.6%). Men, on the other hand, had a high rate of employed since the youngest child was under 3 years old until 17 years old (89.7% and 91.6%) the unemployment rate, in contrast, was higher from women than for men and it decreased as the child's age increased. Surprisingly, when it came to "no children under 18", women had a higher employment rate than men did (76.8% versus 74.1%)

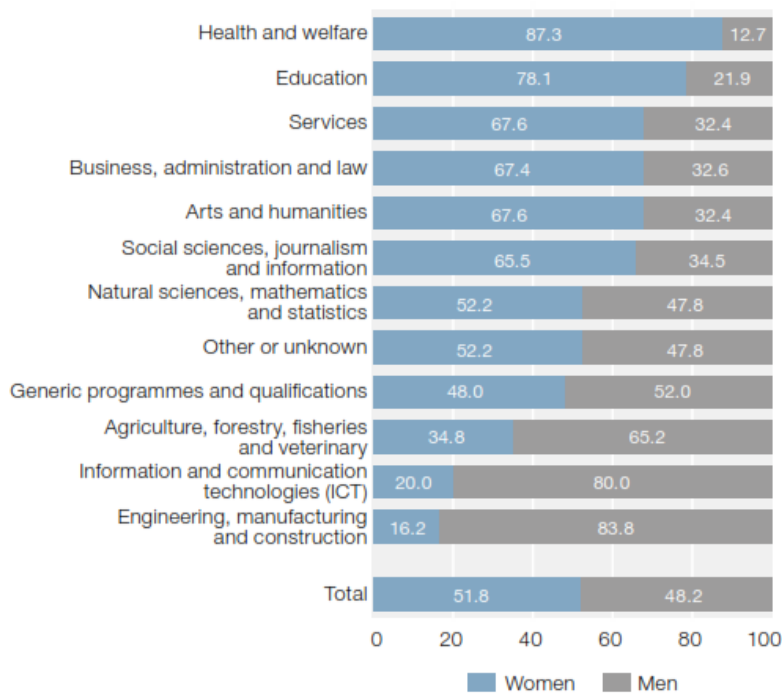
Second, in the category of the number of children, the employment rate of women with 1 child is 75.1%, while men had 88.3% of employment. Women with two children had an increase of 5% of employment and dropped down to 66.5% when they had 3 or more children. While women's employment rate was seemed to be medium, the men's employment rate was high and

increased (88.3%, 93.3%, and 92.1%). Similarly, to the first paragraph, women with no children under 18 had high employment rate than men did (77% versus 74.1%)

In conclusion, the employment and unemployment rate of people are related to children by their age and by number. Women’s employment is seemed to be more affected than men.

4.1.3 Education segregation

2.4 Population with educational qualifications from vocational institutions, universities of applied sciences and universities by field of education, 2017, %



Source: Statistics Finland, Educational structure of population

(Source: Statistic Finland, Educational structure of the population)

Students are the main supply of workforce for the society. The allocation of genders in fields of education has a strong impact on the equal proportion of gender proportion in the labor market. The graph reviews gender proportion in various educational qualifications from all higher education sectors: vocational institutions, universities, and universities of applied sciences. Statistics were recorded in 2017.

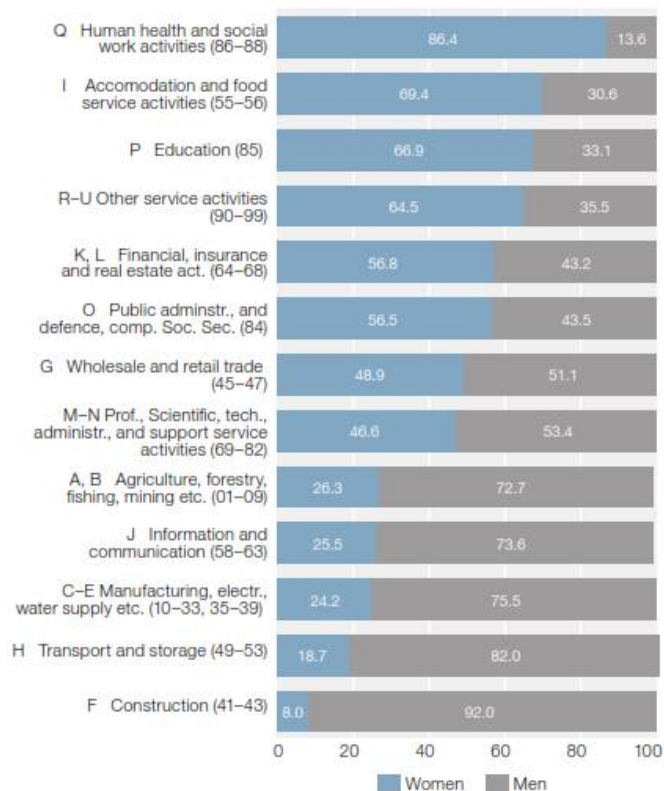
According to the graph, the proportion of male and female students varies from different fields of education. Top male-dominant fields are Engineering, manufacturing, and construction (83.8%), followed by Information and communication technologies (ICT) (80.0%), and 65.2% for Agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and veterinary. Male students dominated three fields of

education, while female ones dominated six fields, which are, in a descendant order: Health and welfare (87.3%), Education (78.1%), Services (67.6%), Business, administration, and law (67.4%), Arts and Humanities (67.6%), Social science, journalism and information (65.5%). There were three fields in which both gender groups shared a relatively similar number of attendances: Natural sciences, mathematics and statistics, Generic programs and qualifications, and others.

4.1.4 Industries with male or female dominance

As mentioned before, there is an interrelation between the unequal proportions of gender in the fields of education and fields of industries. It is no surprise that most of the female-dominant fields of education are those of female-dominant industries. Female dominant fields of industries include Human health and social work activities (86.4%), Accommodation and food service activities (69.4%), Education (66.9%), Other services, and activities (64.5%). Male dominant industries include Construction (92%), Transport and storage (82%), Manufacturing, electronics, water supply (75.5%), Information and communication (73.6%) and Agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining (72.7%). The fields of industries in which males and females shared equal participation included Financial, insurance, real estate; Public administration and defense, Wholesale and retail trade; Professional scientific, and support service activities.

3.13 Industries by female/male-domination in 2017, proportions of employed persons in the industry

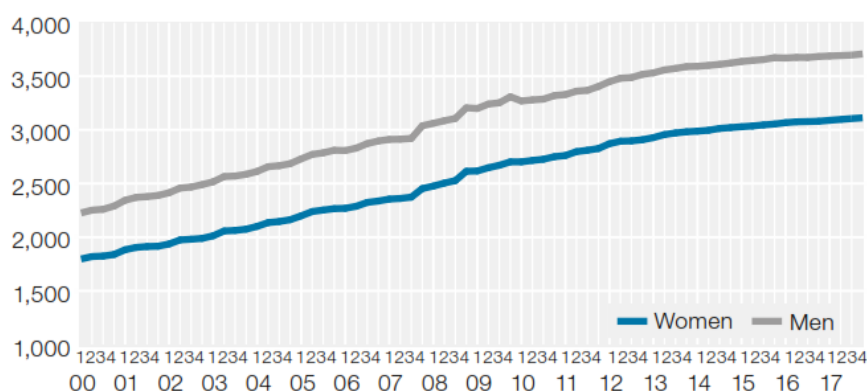


Source: Statistics Finland, Labour force survey

(Source: Statistic Finland, Labor force study)

4.1.5 Wage gap:

4.1 Average earnings in 2000 to 2017, EUR/month



2017 Women EUR 3,101 per month and men EUR 3,696 per month

(Source: Statistic Finland, Gender equality study)

Average monthly earnings represent earnings for normal working hours at full wage and salary. According to the study by Statistic Finland, the wage gap between female and male has slightly expanded over the period in the study, which means, from 2000 to 2017, from about 400euros

to 590euros. Men’s average earnings were higher than those of women over the period. Despite the female dominant fields of industry or gender-balanced participation, the average earnings of men were seemed to be always higher than those of women. For example, in the wholesale and retail trade, education, and health service (see appendix 4.4, 4.5).

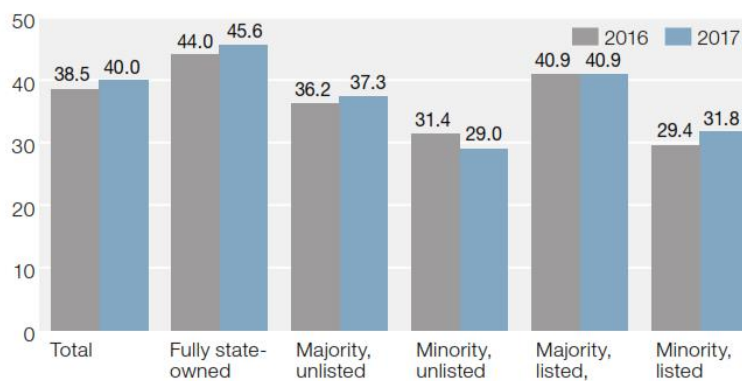
Besides, in a similar study, although female and male share the same level of education, men’s average earnings were also higher than women. (see appendix 4.9)

4.1.6 Share of women on the managerial boards of companies

To review the situation of women in managerial positions from the statistical way, The following studies present the participation of women in managerial positions in various types of companies, across Finland. The statistic is tactic evidence describing the advancement of women’s careers in comparison to their male colleagues.

Share of women on the boards of state-owned companies by the government’s holding share (in 2016 and 2017).

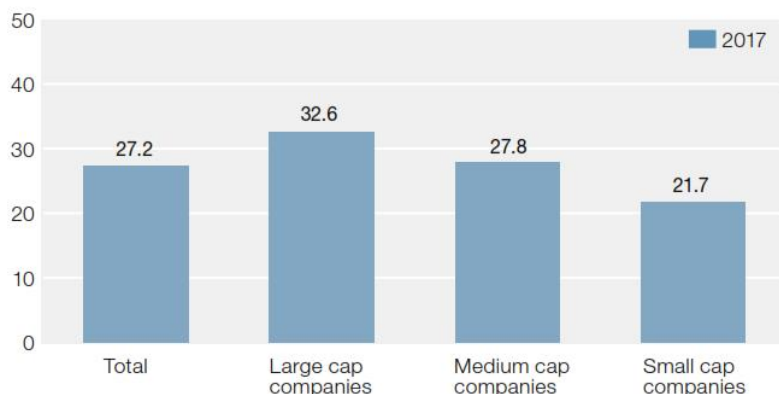
9.18a Share of women on the boards of state-owned companies by the government’s holding share in 2016 and 2017, %



(Source: Statistic Finland, Gender equality study)

State-owned companies had a larger share of women on the boards of top management than other companies. The lowest share of women was 29% and the highest was 45.6% (in 2017). The rate seemed to be increased over the studied period, from 2016 to 2017. (Graph 9.18a)

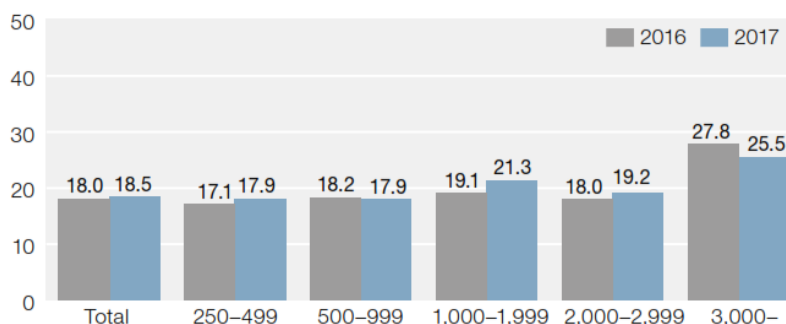
9.19a Share of women on the boards of listed companies by market value in 2017, %



(Source: Statistic Finland, Gender equality study)

Next, the share of women on the board of listed companies by market value made up to 32.6% in large capitalization companies, 27.8% in Medium capital companies, and 21.7% in Small capital companies. According to Statistic Finland, in a general statistic, in 2017, women made up for five percent of the chairs of the boards of listed companies, and eight percent of managing directors.

9.20 Share of women on the boards of the largest¹⁾ unlisted companies by the size of personnel in 2016 and 2017, %



1) The group of companies includes all unlisted companies where the size of personnel is at least 250.
In 2017, ten per cent of chairs of the boards of unlisted companies and 12 per cent of managing directors were women.

Source: Statistics Finland, Gender Equality; Suomen Asiakastieto Oy

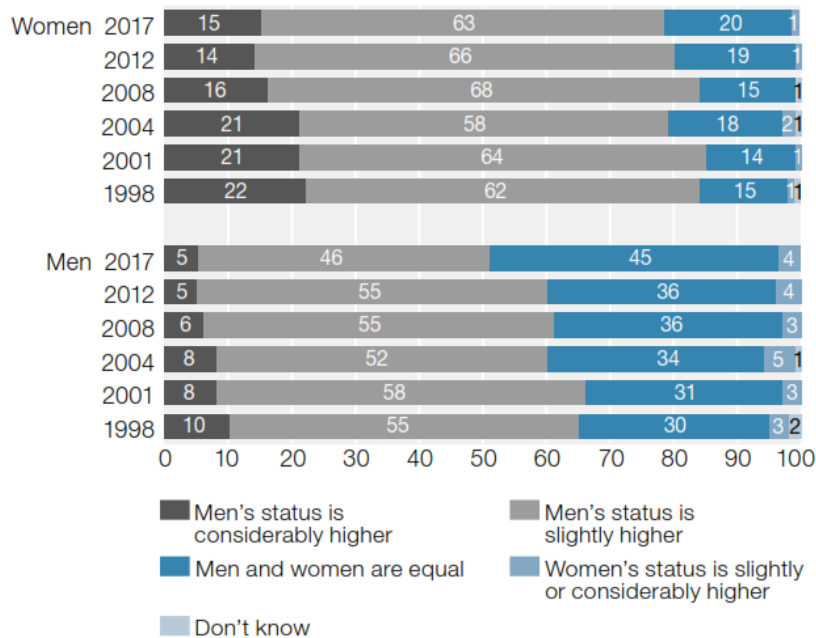
(Source: Statistic Finland, Gender equality study)

In the largest unlisted companies by the size of personnel, women accounted for 25.5% as the highest rate in 2017. The lowest rate was 17.9%. In general, the rate seemed to be increased during the studied period, 2016, and 2017, though it was slightly. On average, in 2017, women accounted for ten percent of the boards of unlisted companies and twelve percent of managing directors.

In conclusion, women's share in the boards of management in state-owned companies was highest among all other types of companies. And, despite the increase of the share, women were far behind men in the share of boards of management.

4.1.7 Gender attitude

11.1 Views on the current status of women and men in Finland in 1998–2017 (%)



(Source: Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Gender Equality Barometer 2017)

Approaching a gender-balanced society requires not only effective policies, plans but also an understanding of human mentality. By exactly evaluating the social bias of gender status, authorities could plan on a suitable approach to elevate gender equality.

In 2017, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (THL) conducted a study about the views on the current status of female and male in Finland (1998-2017).

The status included “Men’s status id considerably higher”, “Men’s status is slightly higher”, “Female and male are equal”, “women’s status is slightly or considerably higher”, and “don’t know”.

First, in response to “men’s status is considerably higher”, there was 15% of women agreed with the idea while 5% of men agreed. When mentioning “men’s status is slightly higher”, 63% of women responded positively while 46% of men agreed. There was only 20% of women agreed that female and male were equal, and 1% of them thought that women’s status was slightly higher. For men, 45% of them believed that genders were equal and 4% of them said that women’s status was slightly higher.

The percentage of women agreed that men’s status was higher than women was approximately three times higher than that of men over the years (from 1998 to 2017). From 2008 to 2017, despite vast changes and updates in the social activities and status of women, the ideas about

women's status were lower or slightly lower than men decreased slightly, from 68% to 63% (in 2008 and 2017, relatively).

In conclusion, the study has revealed an overview of gender bias in society. There were, and probably, nowadays, there are still ideas about gender hierarchy, that men's status is higher than women. This mindset would be one of the challenges for society to move forwards to a gender-equal stage. People's mindset is the key and the power to define a gender-equal society.

4.1.8 Legislation change for gender equality

Finland is outstood as a pioneer in the world in the field of gender equality. It was the first country to recognize women's full rights in politics, educations, work, etc. Since an early age, social activities regarding gender equality raised as waves to contribute to both national and international efforts, but gender equality in the spotlight.

Gender equality in Finland gave the earliest equal access for women in education. The 19th century witnessed the foundation of the first mixed-gender school in Finland, in 1886. Next, the Feminist Association Union was founded in 1892 has strengthened the voice of women's rights. In the early 20th century, women successfully obtained the right to study in universities. Following this success, women continued to win full political rights, bringing Finland's parliament to be the first government in the world that had female MPs. This was a sign of enhancing and expanding women's rights in many societal aspects of the country. A few events are taken as an example:

- In 1911: The National Council of Women in Finland is founded
- In 1926: Miina Sillanpaa became the first female minister of government
- In 1927: Alma Soderhjelm became the first female professor at Abo Akademi.

From the 1930s to the 1940s, gender equality brought strong changes to social life. A new Marriage act took effect as wives and husbands both have the right to own properties on their name, and wives became no longer under the guardianship of their husbands. In 1937, Maternity grants got adopted provided support to pregnant women. Since 1950, more and more acts were legalized addressing deeper aspects of women's roles. In 1950, therapeutic abortion was legalized. About 11 years later, women could use contraceptive pills.

In the aspect of work-life, women received more and more equal treatment due to the improvement of gender equality. In 1962, Equal pay for work of equal value was called for, through the establishment of the ILO's Equal Remuneration Convention. In 1965, the joint

association "Yhdistys 9" was founded as a labor committee for both female and male. Especially, from 1967 to 1970, a committee specialized in analyzing women's position was found.

Following the 1980s, Women's rights got expanded recognition. In 1980, the Government enabled an Action plan for Gender equality. For the first time in history, the parliament was made up of 30% of female MPs, in 1983. In the term maternity in the Children's home care support act, paternity and parental leave got confirmed. Additionally, the Names Act addressed married women. They may keep their surname and their child can inherit either the mother or the father's surname. Later, women's rights expanded to the religious area. In 1986, women gained the right to become priests. And 2 years later, the first female priest was ordained.

The 20th century reinforced expanded rights for women in childcare, voluntary military service, gender-based discrimination.

In 2000, the first female became the President of Finland: Tarja Halonen. In 2005, the Parliament reform the Equality Act. In 2007, female MPs accounted for 40% of the parliament for the first time in its history.

Especially in the 21st century, efforts from Finland has continued to grow internationally. The country has established the first International Gender Equality Prize. This award is on the purpose of emphasizing the importance of worldwide unity to persistently reinforce gender equality.

To sum up, The National insurance institute supports families since the period of pregnancy until the child turns eighteen. The support is vital for families with children and at some extends, should positively impact the career development of parents. On the other hand, the relationship between having children plus children's age and the reluctant employment rate of female and male should present some existential impacts of having babies. Women are less likely to be employed than men when concerning babies.

The wage gap, male dominance in managerial boards with relatively low participation of females are some of the existential scenes of gender inequality.

Both males and females dominate some industries. However, the result of the wage gap and managerial positions have always been in favor of males. And another challenge deprives of female dominant industries is, how is it likely for women to obtain equality with their male colleague, and advance their career?

Tackling gender bias needs work not only in business but also on social attitudes. In another word, gender inequality in business results from gender bias widely remains in society. Thus, in a general vision, to reach sustainable equality for gender in business, there are roots in society needed to be acknowledged and awareness to be raised.

4.1.9 Key conclusion

- The National insurance institute supports families since the period of pregnancy until the child turns eighteen. The support is vital for families with children and at some extends, should positively affect the career development of parents. National insurance (Kela), as a societal factor, give reasonable support for both mothers and fathers. Kela does not make women having to choose between family or career, but the choice of the family is supported by Kela.
- Having children and children's age relates to the employment rate of female and male. This should present one of the impacts of having babies. Women are less likely to be employed than men when concerning babies.
- The wage gap, male dominance in managerial boards with relatively low participation of females is one of the existential scenes of gender inequality.
- Both males and females dominate some industries. The similar dominance can also be seen in education segregation. And this is one of the reasons to consider when evaluating gender imbalance in the labor market.
- The wage gap and managerial positions have always been in favor of males.
- The gender attitude survey in 2017 reveals the existence of gender bias.

Findings of these matters will be considered and compared with survey and interview results, and to be brought out as results of this thesis. The next chapter studies the theoretical framework for conducting a survey about gender equality in career development.

4.2 Survey analysis

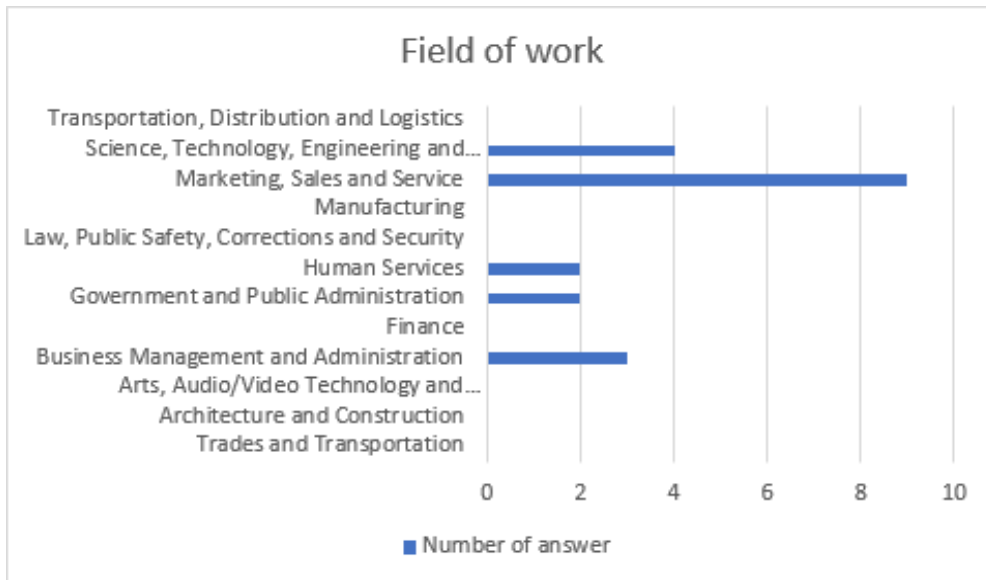
Based on the theoretical part, a survey was created with questions addressed to females and males and others as well to have answers to base on part of the research. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic (COVID-19) happening all over the world the research was affected as well as the authors could not reach that many answers neither use face to face interviews. Due to technical problems, the authors cannot deliver a direct survey report from the survey platform "SurveyMonkey.com". Instead, the results were collected from "Survey Monkey" and reported on the Microsoft excel.

A total of twenty interviews have been made which five of them were done via Phone calls, and the rest of the interviews were done through the platform SurveyMonkey.com. The face to face interviews was the primary plan as they provide rich information and communication with the person, although the interviewees might not answer a question, the authors could notice the changes in facial expressions or the situation. E-mails are less informative especially that it requires writing first and foremost that the main target group was female employees which mean most of them were not available or busy with work and family and could not provide enough time to answer to the questions, adding to that the current situation of Corona Virus which affected negatively on some women's thinking or morality and refused to answer to the questions for the reason they were not mentally ready.

Only one man was able to answer the survey that is why the authors could not consider its reliability as it does not stand for the majority and could not get different opinions to compare.

4.2.1 Field of work

The graph below (figure 1) represents the allocation of participants in the job market:



(Figure 1: Participants' job field)

Most participants work in the field of Marketing, Sales, and service (9). The field Transportation, distribution, and logistics got four answers; Human Services, Government and Public Administration, Business Management, and Administration are the same with two and three answers.

The women, in fact, were divided into two main types, women employed in a company or governmental organization and self-employed women (entrepreneurs). While collecting the data we have given different working fields to see what most fields are occupied by females, out of twelve fields of occupation such as Trades and Transportation, Architecture and Construction, Arts, Audio/Video Technology and Communications, Business Management and Administration, Finance, Government and Public Administration, Human Services, Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security, Manufacturing, Marketing, Sales and Service, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, transportation, and Distribution and Logistics. The most occupied fields through the interviewees were Marketing, Sales, and Service with 9 answers, while Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics was the second most occupied field with four answers. The third most occupied field accounted for three answers which were Business Management and Administration, while the fourth most occupied field was Human Services and Government and Public Administration with a percentage of two answers. Even though the number of participants is not high, the background of them is considerably diverse, from traditionally male-dominant to female dominant working fields.

4.2.2 Gender

The survey and interview in total, includes twenty participants, out of that there is only one male participant.

4.2.3 Gender job: question number three to number five

Gender job, which reflects structural functionalism, has been socially constructed along the way with the development of human civilization (detail in chapter 3.1). Today, the world is reaching a gender-equal standard for everyone, which means, regardless of gender, everyone can and has right to work with whom they wish to. However, due to the long history and human mindset, there are still difficulties, challenges for those who want to break through these barriers to work as whom they want to. Questions three to five aim to present people's ideas about gender jobs, whether structural functionalism about gender jobs exists in Finland, and how far the society has changed to support people's careers regardless of their gender.

Question number three: It is said that there are fields of industry which are for women rather than men, and vice versa. What do you think about this?

The answers received can be divided into two sides: agree and disagree with the statement of gender job. For example:

- "Yes and no, there are some fields that women outperform men, like ones that require detail, multitasking, and caring like nursing. And men are better at fields like engineering because of their ability to focus. But just the majority, not always the case!"
- "It's reasonable. Indeed, some industries require men for physical strength; others such as beautiful industry prefers women as they understand women's wants and needs much better than men."
- "I agree. Some industries are quite heavy for women, for example, construction."
- "Very true! Women are biologically different than men. A woman's brain is also different than the other. So, women have different strengths"

These answers agree with the statement, gender job is sensible, based on gender aspects: physic and mentality. Regarding Physical aspect, men get more advantages in some industries which require physical strength, for example Construction. About Mentality, women are more demanded in jobs that require nurturing: nursing or understanding of beauty as the beauty industry.

Answers with opposite ideas:

A respondent who has been working in the hospitality industry for four years, answered: "No. As long as they are competent and qualified for the job, gender doesn't matter." According to her, there is much physical work requiring strength, sometimes, men are more in demand. However, most workers are women, they manage the job without looking forward to men.

Another respondent said: "I disagree. I am aware that this is a common stereotype, but I find no differences between female and male that would make them more suitable for certain fields. I think it is more about personal characteristics that make someone more suitable to a certain field, rather than gender." According to him, the gender difference is not a reason to make someone more suitable to a certain field. He has been an IT engineer, and, in his workplace, there are both female and male.

Some other answers:

- "It's all made up by social history"
- "Women more than men"

As can be seen, there are more people who agree with the statement than those who don't. All these arguments are reasonable at some certain points (physic or mentality as gender aspects). However, "It's not always the case" (survey participant). The existence of gender function or gender job is still a concern, though awareness about existence is an advantage for removing barriers of developing a career.

Question number four asked: "Do you think there should be more men or women in your workplace? Why do you think so?"

According to the answer to question number four, people prefer gender balance and freedom in choosing careers regardless gender. On the other hand, in some workplace, since women cannot work overnight, men are more preferred. Gender imbalance also causes uncomfortable in some workplace. According to a participant, her IT office has mostly male colleagues, which caused her uncomfortable.

For example: "Equal works best"

"More women, 99% of people in my department are men (IT department), I feel uncomfortable sometimes"

"Yes, I do because, in my workplace, almost women cannot work overnight"

"Men because there is a lot of heavy work"

"I don't think either yes or no. I think people should choose what they want"

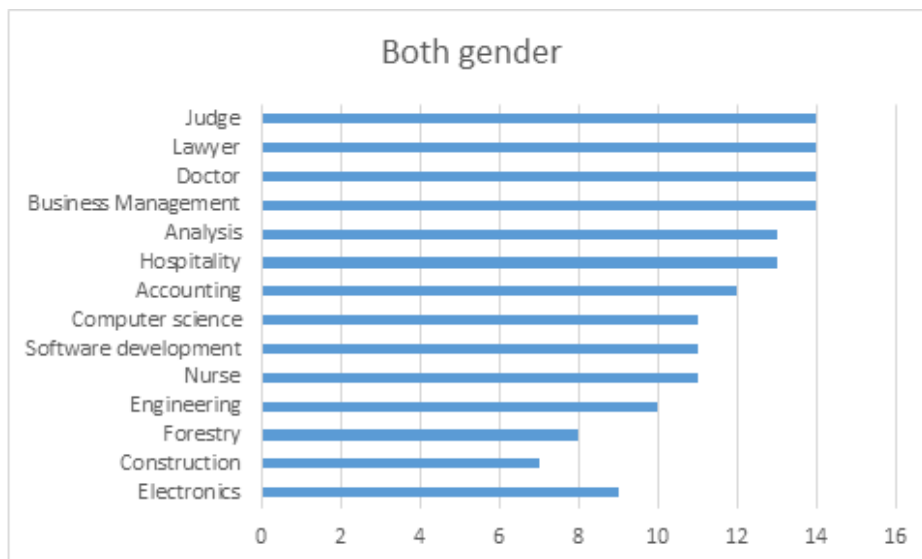
Talking about why more men or women should help their company, people think that female and male both have disadvantages and advantages, so they can all learn from one another.

Mostly, people focus on the physical strength aspect of men as an advantage over women. Additionally, in some job fields, women cannot work overnight while men can, which is a reason that men are preferable. One of the reasons that women cannot work overnight is children, or family - this matter will be discussed more detailed in the next part (Family and limitation of opportunity)

Question number five: In your opinion, please copy and paste these phrases into a suitable column: The following fields of work are especially suitable for male or female or both: Hospitality, Business Management, Engineering, Construction, Forestry, Accounting, Analysis, Doctor, Nurse, Lawyer, Judge, Software development, Computer science, Electronics

Male	Female	Both gender

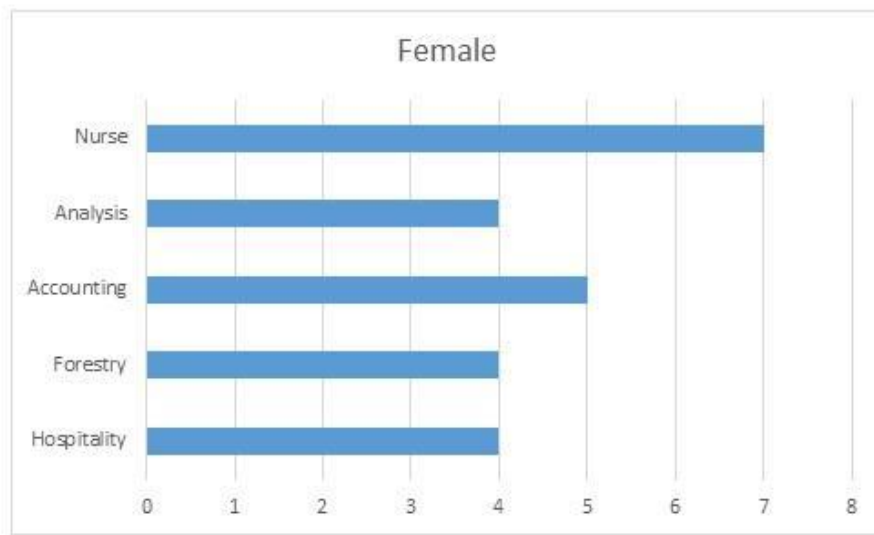
Result:



(Figure 2: Suitable jobs for both genders)

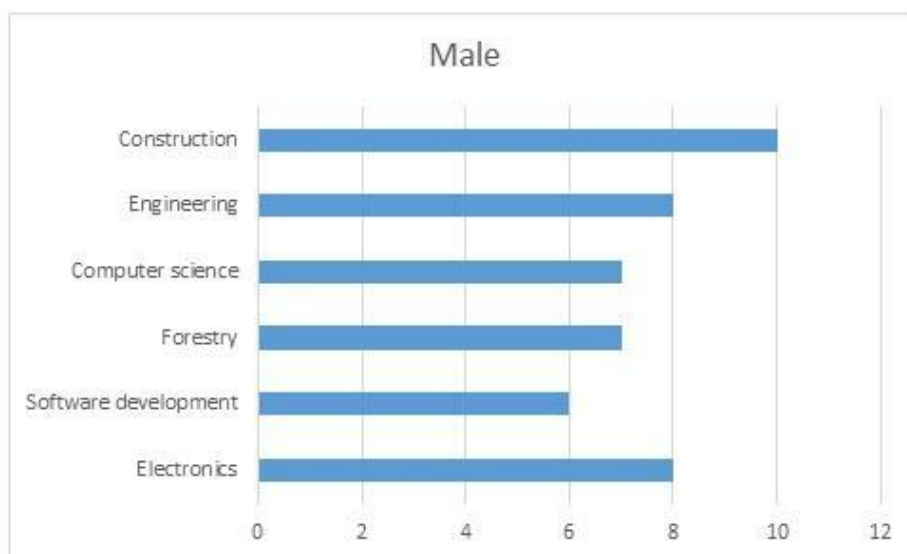
There were three out of 20 participants skipped this question.

In the "both gender" category, all fourteen job fields are selected. Top jobs that are suitable for everyone include Judge, Lawyer, Business management, Doctor (11 votes for each), Hospitality (10 votes), analysis (10 votes). The least popular job fields for both genders are Construction (4 votes), Forestry (5 votes), Electronics (6 votes). The rest of the fields are quite equally popular among the genders: Computer science (8 votes), Software development (8 votes), Nurse (8 votes), Engineering (7 votes).



(Figure 3: Suitable jobs for Female)

When considering suitable jobs for Females, many people agreed that the Nurse is the most one with seven votes, Accounting came second with five votes, and the other three: Analysis, Forestry, Hospitality came last with four votes each.



(Figure 4: Suitable jobs for Male)

Lastly, in the most popular job for males, Construction came first with ten votes, Engineering and Electronics came second with eight votes, and the last ones were Computer-science, Forestry, and Software development.

As a result, the least popular jobs in the “both genders” category are the most popular ones in the remaining categories: female and male. However, this question is rather subjective, the participants answered with inconsistency. Therefore, the authors decided not to use every answer to conclude. The purpose of the question is to reflect people’s ideas about gender jobs,

whether gender job – structural-functionalism reflected in the job field existed. The answer is yes, it is because the answers in Male's most popular jobs and both genders' least popular jobs are consistent. These jobs are Construction, Engineering, Electronics, and Forestry.

To sum up, after discussing all three questions about structural functionalism of gender jobs, the answer is found for the question of whether structural functionalism regarding gender jobs exists in Finland, and how it is reflected in different job fields. Yes, people have a mindset about gender functionalism. Based on gender aspects, physical strength, and mentality (femininity and masculinity), they believe there are jobs more suitable for men and those for women. The answer to this question also sensible for the labor survey from Statistic Finland, which is there are male dominant job fields and female ones. On the other hand, the study also found out that, gender balance plays an important part in people's work lives. And the free will of choosing the desired career is respected by participants of this thesis survey.

4.2.4 Feminism: Women's freedom of life choice versus response from family and society

Finland has already been well-known for gender equality. The questions in this part do not aim to assert this statement, but to a profound understanding of this equality in practice, by getting to know reactions from family and society toward women's freedom in life choice: career and family.

Question number six: If you must choose either family or career to focus on, which one would you choose? Could you suggest any idea to have balance taking care of family and developing your career?

Opinions on choosing family:

- "I choose family because the final target of a career is supporting my family."
- "It's a difficult question but I would probably choose family. I would focus more on having time to be with people who are important for me rather than developing my career. Of course, in case of an optimal situation, I would choose both. I think it is possible if the work won't take too much time and it's possible to have enough holidays."
- "Family, because if you only focus on career the family life will be damaged a lot more than vice versa, but you shouldn't forget the career either"
- "I choose my family. In my opinion, we make a suitable schedule to balance between family and career"

Four people would choose a family to focus on if they had to. In general, the family is the most important thing. However, they still wished to balance career and family focus.

Answers with opposite ideas:

- "I'd choose a career. I'd suggest focusing on pursuing a career when we are in a young age, when we have a stable income and decent career then start to invest in building a family of our own."
- "I will choose a career. I think it is hard to make a balance between both. You should know who you are and what you prefer. To understand what you want is hard. To do that, you need to have more experience in your life."

There are fewer people who would choose career over family. For them, balancing career and family focus is difficult, and "stable income" and "decent career" should be achieved before building a family.

Neutral or opened- answers:

- "Career Balance requires you to work smart on both, to ensure you have enough time for both and yourself. Work-life balance itself is a demanding task."
- "I chose to build a good career to have a strong foundation for my future family. Now I do not have to choose because I have both. Tips: knowing what you want and work for it to earn it, do not just be sitting and thinking about what to choose. Do something!"
- "Both"
- "Career!"
- "Depending on the life stage of each person. For me, I would prefer focusing on my career when I am young. But after 5 or 10 years, the family is more important."
- "Both are important to me"
- "Both are important."

These answers account for more than half the total number of all answers. They refused to choose one over the other. They would rather balance and develop both. For them, both are equally indispensable.

Question number seven: Who or what factors can affect your choice in life (having children, not having children, focus on developing a career)? Would you like you to tell me how?

Answers with family as a factor:

- "Yes, I am free. The biggest factor would be having kids"
- "My family can affect my choice, having children also. Having a child means there's a new responsibility and its go for a lifetime."
- "Having children! Because it's not easy to raise a child and developer your career at the same time"
- "My children and I "
- "Having a family certainly limits your options, like moving your house or changing workplace or study abroad."
- "My family and freedom"

Other ideas:

- "For example, the amount of free time available, wages, politics, attitudes in the society. They can all affect my opportunities to focus on both family and career."
- "Girlfriend, developing a career, education, need for money, values, interests"
- "Myself. I think if we can make a decision by ourselves, we will not regret and cannot blame anyone."

- “Nothing can affect my choice in life “
- “Focusing on career, then meeting the right partner, and building the plan together. I do not think it makes any sense to put children as a factor. They are blessings.”
- “In my case, I would say if that choice makes me happy at that stage. I would not choose a career because of the salary. Because at the end of the day, if I am not happy with what I am doing, it's worthless doing it.”

About half of all answers said that family and/or having children can affect their life choice.

Some believe that it is a certainty that responsibility for family and children last for life, limitations from family duties is obvious.

Question number eight: Do you have equal chances to develop your career as your male/female colleagues? (Ex: promotion criteria, long working hours, taking care of other things, etc.) Base on your experience, please specify.

Answers with Yes:

- “I think so. The field is more about you as a person not as your gender”
- “Yes, I do.”
- “Yes”
- “If a man does well in our field, they are preferred, because the majority is female.”
- “I have done only some summer jobs (I am a student currently) so I don't have any real experience with the issue yet.”
- “I can decide what to do or when to do and I am expected highly as the same as my male colleagues. They also respect me regardless of age and background.”
- “Yes”
- “Yes, in my company, I have all benefits that male colleagues have. Even more, than they have because I'm a woman”
- “Yes, I believe so. From my experience with the last 3 companies I worked for, I have no issue with equality.”
- “Yes, I have.”

All the answers confirmed that they had had no problem with gender equality issues. Except for one answer that, males are preferable in this person's field, the female is dominant in number.

Throughout these three questions, it can be seen that participants have had no experiences of gender issues, unequal to the other gender. On the other hand, their answers also reveal that, even though they do not experience gender inequality, family duties which limit their life choice, a family which some would have to choose over a career if they had to, is still considered gender equality. Depending on some circumstances, this limitation could be considered as gender inequality issue. The problem with gender equality lies not only in the surface/consequences but also in people's awareness.

Including the gender job issue and to sum up, people also have a mindset about gender jobs, which means some jobs are for females and some are for males. This statement is still not considered a gender equality issue by participants. However, these are consequences of

gender inequality as it causes gender barriers and multiple difficulties for people who just wish to work on what they want. As well as to children, they are mindset with what jobs are for them based on their genders. The negative consequences of this problem are evitable for children's future and their society.

Besides these answers, there are people with awareness about jobs for people who wish and capable of, regardless of their gender. And placing family as a limitation of career development is still.

Question number nine: Please rate the following statement according to your opinion:

Answer:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total answers
The workplace is tough, competitive, material success driven	1	3	4	9	3	20
The workplace is high team-spirited, helpful, quality-driven success	0	2	6	7	4	19
Female and male have equal chances at work	2	6	3	5	4	20
Roles are especially either male or female (ex: sales are for men, HR is for women)	4	5	3	6	2	20
Board of management is mostly males	3	4	3	7	3	20
Inequality in promotion due to gender barriers	2	3	3	7	5	20

This question was designed based on the traits of a masculine business model (Chapter 2.4). The purpose of the question is to be added to other open-ended questions about whether participants have experienced or agree that gender equality is practiced at their workplace. The results of open-ended questions are going to be discussed in the next part.

Most answers agreed that the workplace is "tough, competitive and material success" (9 out of 20 agreed). On the contrary, "high team-spirited, helpful, quality-driven success" also got 11 out

of 29 agrees. Based on the traits of gender, the former statement describes masculinity, and the latter is for femininity. The answers showed that both masculinity and femininity are reflected in their workplace.

Mentioning whether female and male have equal chances at work, the authors received almost equal answers to both sides: agree and disagree. Thus, many people have different experiences about gender equality at work, some of them have experienced equality and some have experienced inequality.

“Roles are especially either male or female”, votes for this statement are like the earlier statement. It mostly is equal on both sides: agree and disagree. And again, there are workplaces where gender jobs exist and there are not. Also, answers to this question once again emphasize the picture of gender dominance in some job fields (see chapter 4.1.3 and 4.1.4), and result from interviews which come in the next part in this chapter.

“Board of management is mostly males” received more agrees and strongly agrees than disagrees and strongly disagrees (in total, 10 and 7 respectively). As the statistics in chapter 4.1.6 reveals that, though women play an increasing part in the managerial board, men still mostly dominate. The votes for this statement follow the statistics. In managerial positions, there is male dominance.

“Inequality in promotion due to gender barriers” received more of agreeing than disagree. Could this be a circumstance of male dominance in boards of management? Further clarity will be revealed in the next part – interview analysis.

Conclusions from experiences of masculine business model from participants are both femininity and masculinity exist in workplaces, both gender equality and inequality still exist in many aspects: gender job, promotion, and management.

4.3 Interview analysis

This chapter is an analysis of the interviews. The result is divided into five sub-chapters, based on the question flow as well as prominent issues from answers – mostly from interviews.

The first sub-chapter is gender job. This part is an analysis of the first three questions about structural functionalism in Finland (question number three to number five):

Question number three: “It is said that there are fields of industry which are for women rather than men, and vice versa. What do you think about this?”

Question number four: “Do you think there should be more men or women in your workplace? Why do you think so?”

Question number five is gender job allocation (Table 1).

The second sub-chapter is Family and limitations of opportunity. This part analyses the next questions about feminism.

Question number six: If you must choose either family or career to focus on, which one would you choose? Could you suggest any idea to have balance taking care of family and developing your career?

Question number seven: Who or what factors can affect your choice in life (having children, not having children, focus on developing a career)? Would you like you to tell us how?

The eighth question to be analyzed is “Do you have equal chances to develop your career as your male/female colleagues? (Ex: promotion criteria, long working hours, taking care of other things, etc.) Base on your experience, please specify.” This question receives a few stories from interviewees which become topics for the last two sub-chapters: “Salary as a factor” and “Women in managerial position.”

4.3.1 Family and limitation of opportunities

Family is a global significant term and represents an entire system. It is quite common to know that one of the marriage goals, especially to females, is to maintain the stability of the family and reinforce the connection between the closed members. The responsibility increases when the parents give birth to children and try to supply a peaceful life for them, and altogether build a family. Regardless of Family being a heavy term and a positive feature of life to most people but It can influence some aspects of life such as the career development of women in general and females in Finland specifically.

As human nature, women are supposed to give birth to children, which can be valued as very gifted ones, Finland as a developed country is supplying child's financial and social support but the prior role still is the same which is the mother taking care for the child especially newborn for some time. The time, of course, varies from weeks to months depending about the mother either being unemployed or the other way around.

According to the interviews, one of the most challenging facts and a major one is the family if considered from an unfamiliar perspective such as time perspective, as well as limitation of job opportunities. About seventy percent of the interviewees agreed that both career and family are especially important to them and claiming they are doing significant efforts to balance between the two, especially that it needs a lot of time for both. Even though salaries differ from women to

men but the working hours are the same which affects the time spent with the family especially if the mother is working in a leading position which demands doubled efforts to maintain the work stability and work harder.

The other obstacle from their point of view is the time gaps between giving birth to children, nursing, and then coming back to work. Through this time things happen and change which sometimes cannot be in the advantage of the employed mother, especially if willing to show an advancement at work in a short time. The progress of work can be delayed when females are going on a mother's holiday, such as keeping with the methodology of work and especially if the mother is exercising a leading position.

What confuses the interviewees is the fact of facing those issues because they were born women by nature claiming they were born with no choice neither choosing to be a mother. For instance, one of the interviewees had to stop working and sacrificing her career dreams until her kids are young enough to be able to at least go to school. Unfortunately, it was hard to find a job after such a journey and had to work hard to obtain it. While another interviewee expressed how she was working as a manager in a marketing company and by law she had full right to get back to the work once the motherhood's holiday ends, during her absence new projects were developed and major changes occurred in the company which affected negatively on her psychological situation as she could not adapt with the new projects and teams and had struggled to even keep her job as a manager.

From the authors' point of view, it can be concluded that time takes diverse features while trying to build a professional career. First, enough time is needed to focus on the professional career plan and how to progress especially if it involves promotions and possibilities to get leading positions. Secondly avoiding time gaps so it does not delay the goals or be a reason for achieving. On the other hand, the will to establish a family and maintain its stable needs time as well. Some women might not be able to balance between the two especially those that are not given the right support and facilities needed based on the interviewee's argument. There are situations where the woman is forced to leave the work for a longer time, unfortunately, if the period is exceedingly long, the woman struggles to get employed and might be even harder to adapt to it.

Limitation of job opportunities is another huge challenging factor in career development in Finland according to the interviewees, as they mentioned how picky were the human resources while trying to employ them especially when it involves a small or medium-size company which might not be able to cover expenses in case of pregnancy or child's services, but also the fact of being a mom to a toddler or an adolescent is a disadvantage as well assuming that the kids will

get sick which will make the mother not able to come to work especially that her right is protected by Finnish law.

According to the interviewees, Family also affects more the self-development side as many mothers refuse to go abroad for long internships or business deals, which limits their chance of progress, getting a promotion, or applying to lead positions. As the interviews included women who own business and are entrepreneurs, there was a challenge of being a female entrepreneur against male entrepreneurs.

Finland is incredibly open to different businesses, either Finnish people or residents can establish a business. However, the interviewees admit the difficulties facing female entrepreneurs, especially mothers in Finland. As the entire process of being a female entrepreneur is a little bit difficult to some and need more time, focus, and concentration. The interviewees argued that males get more deals due to socialization with other companies and leaders, especially that most leading positions are occupied by men which do not give them an equal opportunity.

To sum up, if the answer is “Yes” to the question whether women have freedom in choosing their career or family, or both, it is a “No” to the question if they received enough support from society or company in developing their career – responding to their free choice. The obstacles facing women who desire to develop their career while maintaining motherhood are family duties which limit their opportunities for company trips/study; time gap between giving birth and coming back to work challenges those in leading positions; company’s financial policy to cover women’s maternity leave – which in such cases, men are preferable.

Women can choose career or family, or both as they want. The national policy does support them with maternity policies, and financial support equally to parents. However, women are still facing obstacles in developing their professional careers due to the lack of support from their workplace, and even their own family.

4.3.2 Culture of business networking in job promotion

This is an analysis part of question number eight: Do you have equal chances to develop your career as your male/female colleagues? (Ex: promotion criteria, long working hours, taking care of other things, etc.) Base on your experience, please specify.

Concerning promotions and years of experience, an interviewee with eight years of experience in the field of IT and Marketing shared that, she had remained the same position over the time

despite her experience in the field. Promotion decisions were likely to be made by managers of the company. Furthermore, she could not often join social gathering events, where her colleagues tend to build a partnership with one another and with their managers. She is a single parent of two kids. Like some of her female colleagues, they prefer spending their weekends off with their family and have some time for themselves, before getting ready for work in the following week. According to her, through the company's social events, managers can see people's social skills, and people have more chances to enhance their partnership with managers - as an advantage for them for promotion.

First, it can be understood that this woman, and including some of her female colleagues have been in disadvantages in getting promoted. It does not seem fair for them for being left behind just because they choose their children and motherhood when they leave their office. On the side of the business, it is normal that social skills together with professional skills are the main criteria for getting promoted. However, the problem is: how and when these skills should be recognized and evaluated? At the workplace, where everybody can perform directly at work, with their colleagues? Or in the company's social events, where not anybody can attend? Thus, fairness in social skills and professional skills should be considered seriously for everybody to have an equal chance to advance their career.

Second, transparency in promotion needs to be practiced. Unclear decision makings can result in subjective and unfair promotion. Through the question, the authors have gotten insightful stories about job promotion of some interviewees. Their stories are significant as many issues at work have been displayed. This story is an example of companies which do not fairly support women in enhancing job position.

In addition to the promotion issue, the story also points out a problem for female and male, why would men have time to go out and women spend more time on family. Regardless of job demand, social networking, do women have to spend more time on family and men do not? This question finds its best answer from each person who has this issue.

4.3.3 Salary as a factor

Based on the interview, the most mentioned factors and challenges can be identified as one of the proofs and causes to the females not being equal in Finland concerning career development.

One of the interesting facts is the salary gap between females and males in Finland. Finland might be ranked in the top twenty countries with high average wage according to

OECD statistics (Organization for Economic Operation and Development) and might be considered as one of the dreamlands for people intending to immigrate and get high salaries compared to many of the countries with the extremely low average wage.

Although the average salary is high, the gap between salary holders based on gender is noticeably based on the average salary concerning full-time employment. (See appendix 4.1)

From the chart, it appears that the salary of both genders has increased during the recent years however the numbers are not equal based on gender.

As stated by the interviewees, the difference in the salary wages between the genders might not be a discouraging issue for newly employed as they are seeking money to support themselves, especially that the financials play a major role in the employment grounds yet it gets remarkable while starting to develop a professional career especially if both genders are working with different salaries toward identical job positions.

On the other hand, the interviewees claim that the salary might not be that important for some others compared to the skills, and experience. Despite being a minor goal to female employees in Finland, it is considered as proof of inequality between gender in career development. It occurs in different working positions and field of occupation in Finland.

The authors have allowed the interviewees to express their overview on what causes the unbalance in the wage in Finland but unfortunately, most of them remained silent while the very few others assumed that women are still considered inferior to males in Finland and so contradictory to what it appears which influences on the salary.

To conclude, from the authors' point of view no concrete explains the reason there is a salary gap in Finland between the genders, especially that the country is considered as one of the top countries practicing equality in the entire world.

4.3.4 Women in managerial positions

During the interviews done by the authors, most of the female interviewees have expressed their will to develop themselves more to have the ability to seek managerial positions get their shares, or even established companies. It was not just a dream but in fact, a plan as they believe they are innovative and responsible enough to take the lead. Besides, some of them denied the fact of feeling inferiors to men when they were not given the chance to show their skills or evolve in their work. But those actions increased their motivation and belief in making a change in the future.

Generally speaking, it is the intention of most female employees around the world, it is human nature to make success and satisfy their inner goals, despite the background, nationality, work field, or even family situation.

A discussion has happened between the authors and one of the interviewees where the lady has given a simple example from her personal life claiming that one of the conditions of marriage was not allowing her to work because the man had enough resources to take care of the family. After thirty years of marriage and unemployment, one of the authors asked if she has been trying to convince the husband and stand out for her dreams to build a professional career. The lady said it has been hard especially after having children. But believes that she has already enough experience by leading the husband's decision as he owns a business. Plus, she has been sharing her feedback on each situation related to the business which her husband considered as a well-structured opinion and followed her guidance. Adding to that, the lady claims that the husband has not admitted her skills and brave way of thinking until he got retired when he confessed that the real reason after rejecting her idea of working was to not lose the chance of consulting with her and getting the guidance. For her, it was more satisfying seeing her husband admitting her role and help the growing business, she also added that they had only two daughters who are now leading the family business.

Today we can see slight progress, women are more present in the labor market than in the past, working in diverse fields as well as being leaders not only in companies but also in Governments.

About women in managerial positions, there are more men than women in a managerial position (chapter 4.1.6). Women face some challenges regardless their professional skills in developing their career (family duties, gender barriers, etc.). The question is, would male dominance in boards of management be an added challenge to women for enhancing career? Unfortunately, the authors did not have enough opportunity to get answers to this question. The authors hope this question will be an addition to future research on related topics.

5 Discussion and conclusion

This chapter is divided into three parts. "Discussion" debates analysis results from the survey, interviews, and secondary qualitative research (Chapter 2). "Key finding" presents the result of the thesis as well as expanded matters relating to the topic. "Limitation", as the name is given, explains some limitations occurred during the research.

5.1 Discussion

As it is well known that, Finland is one of the countries that provide the most advantages for women to develop their careers. However, this study finds out that women still face several challenges to develop their careers.

According to the survey result, people showed ideas about suitable jobs for males and those for women. Answering for the main question whether structural functionalism in gender job exists in Finland is "Yes, it does." Gender job attitudes cause more challenges for women in developing their career. For example, women take more duties of housework, gender barriers in job promotion, etc. On the other hand, many people also aware that choosing a career regardless of gender but based on personal interests is more important.

Whether gender jobs are resulted from or resulted in Female or Male dominance industries, job fields have already divided into gender dominant areas (like Education segregation). The study has not reached enough participants to find out if this is another challenge for men or women in developing their careers in the other gender dominant industries.

Secondly, women, especially those with children, must balance work and family time. Women as entrepreneurs must put even more effort to maintain work stability - especially during crises and taking care of their kids. Second, the time gap between pregnancy, giving birth, and coming back to work give challenges for women on different levels. Women working in leading positions might put effort into catching up with new projects at work and risks maintaining their leading positions for maternity leave. Women who must find new jobs might face disadvantages compared to women without underage children or men.

One of the reasons is, women with children underage might have to get off work for their children are sick. Financial aid for maternity, replacing employees during maternity leave are considered disadvantages for companies to hire female employees. Third, women do not have equal chances as men to spend time for additional study or long day trips – which affect their career path.

Looking back on the second chapter (chapter 2.2), the study by Statistic Finland also showed that, women with children have a lower employment rates compared to men. The younger the children are, the lower the employment rate women have. Women on maternity leave do get financial support from Social insurance and it is also equal to men. The survey and interviews results comply with the study by Statistic Finland. The national policies (chapter 2.8) also enhanced women's role in society in early age. Women are supported and encouraged to develop themselves as we wish to, in both career and family. However, this study found that women's family and workplace are challenges for them in growing their careers.

Third, if social networking gives chances of job promotion for people, it does not fairly work for women who spend more time on family than on social working events.

Fourth, women in a managerial position, statistically, are quite limited compared to men. To achieve higher positions, women, especially those with family, besides having to put effort by themselves to balance work – life. Even though there are female and male-dominant industries, males are mostly dominant in boards of management in all job fields (chapter 2.6). And again, due to the limited reach of the survey, the authors could not be able to work on the issue: would male managerial dominance in all job fields challenge women or support women's careers? More importantly, as gender job and gender identity exist in the working environment in Finland, and under male managerial dominance, does it affect or support women in enhancing their career?

Lastly, some interviewees confirm that wage gap is a challenge for them to focus on career. Compared to their husband, they receive less salary, which is a cause for them to take more duty on housework. The study from Statistic Finland also reveals that women receive less salary than men regardless of their professions (chapter 4.1.5). The wage gap, managerial positions, gender attitudes might be consequences of gender identity (symbolic interactionism theory, and the masculine culture of business). It is not important to say whether the theory and the business model have revealed the situation of the working environment in Finland. But, it is important to say that, women in Finland still have a long way ahead of them to grow to equal positions and get equal rights with their male paradigms, not denying that Finland is still one of the best countries in the world regarding gender equality.

5.2 Conclusion

- Women in Finland receive maternal support from society of finance
- Family, having children are among the challenges for women in escalating their career

- In some cases, employers prefer to hire men over women due to maternal support and women's maternity leave
- Women have their freedom to choose their desired career, however, they still face challenges to develop a career and take care of their family
- Gender barriers still exist in workplaces
- Awareness about gender barriers poses positive changes supporting women
- The wage gap between female and male still exists, which push women to more housework duties compared to men
- There are fewer women in managerial positions than men, even though both genders are dominant in different industries
- People are lack of awareness about gender equality regarding career development

Going back to the main questions: How women are equal in practice, do they have equal chances with their male paradigms to develop their career? Answers to the main questions are given in three main points below:

- Does gender functionalism exist in companies in Finland and how is it reflected in different job fields? The answer is yes, gender function exists in Finland, both in career and family side.
- How are women's free will of choosing their career valued and how is it affected by family and society? Some cases show that women do not get adequate support from family to develop their careers. Family duties are among the limitations that hold them back. Society support women in terms of maternal support in terms of policy and finance.
- How is the current system of organization affecting women's career development? The current systems of the organization remain some issues which cause barriers for women in developing their career. For example, gender imbalance inboard of management, inequality in job promotion, wage gaps, maternity support for women is a reason that men are preferable, etc.

Questions for further studies:

- How would male managerial dominance in all job fields challenge women or support women's careers? As gender job and gender identity exist in a working environment in Finland, and under male managerial dominance, does it affect or support women in enhancing their career?
- What are the attitudes of people in the higher boards of management about gender job/function and influences from these attitudes on gender equality at work?
- What is people's mindset about gender equality? How do they understand about gender equality?

5.3 Limitation

The research topic has multiple definitions even though the authors have tried to specify it into the job fields and how equal are women to men in job opportunities, the topic itself was a major challenge as the first stage of the research was to define the gender equality in Finland in practical, then going to factors about it and defining the aspects of gender equality in the employment sector in Finland.

In other words, the major challenge was to limit the information based on theories, facts, and research concerning the extraordinarily rich topic. It caused confusion on what to focus especially that we are comparing two genders from one perspective in one country.

The second main challenge was the fact that most women took part in the research while we needed more man's participation. There were some men who refused to participate in in the research because the topic focuses on the women's side.

The coronavirus as it is a global pandemic now affected the results of the research, in a way that it was impossible to lead the interview face to face, as well as it was hard to keep up with the interviewees as they were not that open. Approaching interviewees, not by a face-to-face is less active and deep. Besides, resources were limited as libraries were closed during the peak time of the pandemic. The authors had to work on most resources from the internet: online libraries (with limited eBooks, magazines, etc.).

The pandemic also caused distress to the authors, which they had to stop working on the thesis for a while to work on their issues before getting back on the thesis with clear mindedness.

The number of participants in the research is another limitation of the research. This affects the result of mass quantitative research. The reach of the research was limited, which is why some problems that occurred during analyzing are still left unanswered. However, the finding of these questions may bring the basement for further studies on related topics.

6 Self-development

Author number one: The study on the thesis topic: Equality for women in career development brings a profound impact on me, personally, in both practical skills for future career advancement as well as self-developing my individuality on humane culture. The thesis required quantitative and qualitative research, which demanded me to be able to select and analyze data from massive resources to relevant, brief, and logical points. Thus, the thesis has advanced me in research skills. Besides, conducting interviews requires skills in communication and getting insights from the interviewees. These skills may include listening, questioning, observing unspoken words, leading the conversation, and concluding. Second, another important self-development after this thesis work may include a better understanding of women's matters at work, and in society in general. Gender inequality results from a long history of human civilization. And how it is going today reflects the development of the society. Economy and Religion are the major influences on gender inequality. This thesis focuses on the economy. No matter how much this thesis, along with other studies from the economical perspective can cultivate understanding about gender equality, there are still huge areas needed to be studied to improve the situation. There are reasons rooted in history, and reasons in the modern days. Besides, awareness and individualistic eager to balance gender in each woman are the most important key to raise above gender bias and barriers. As personal experience after the thesis, I have gained more knowledge about gender inequality in many aspects: at work, at home, cultural behaviors, etc. To me, it is quite lucky to work in Finland, as this is among the least gender unequal in the world. It cannot be denied that some unequal issues are existing in Finland. However, I have come to realize that, despite gender inequalities, If I aim at some things, I will work towards it no matter what. if gender bias looks down on a woman's voice, she needs to manage to stand out and speak louder until everyone pays attention to her. This works for everyone. A philosopher once said, "The worst enemy you can meet will always be yourself". So, whatever happens in the world, we can always choose how to react and raise. It is a privilege to be a woman.

Author number two: The Gender equality itself is an especially important topic to me as it can be discussed from different perspectives involving diverse matters, but especially as being a female makes you very curious to search and assume how gender equality is considered in each country and society.

Gender equality in career development is a whole chapter as it can represent our life being females trying to achieve progress in career development. That is why the topic is not only a research topic but also to try to clarify many aspects to help to build my future in Finland.

The research includes statistics which proves the equal right of women since the past but unfortunately shows the side where the society can influence on the balance to protect the societies and the system. From a theoretical part, there can be slight differences, especially when speaking of Finland as one of the best countries famous with gender equality and how the country is empowering women and supporting them to develop their working skills.

On the other hand, considering real-life, many obstacles facing women while developing their career can be seen in society especially when it involves international women coming from abroad. Despite not facing most of the challenges while I am trying to develop my career, but the research helped me encourage increasing people in my environment to speak for themselves and try to build a career and live the whole experience.

Working on the research represents a huge step to me as It might support women who are not treated equally in their workplace and make them know that some people are aware of the challenges they are facing.

The research also developed a logical inner sense in me which helps see the value of male's work as well and appreciation of supportive males and not blame them for the inequality.

7 Future research

The main objective of this part of future research is providing a basement for future studies about gender equality in career development, and relative topics. This part presents points which are limitations in this thesis, ideas for improvements, and solutions for the main problem of this thesis. Future studies can develop the topic more profoundly and could be applicable in real life.

The part "Limitation" has also presented some basic issues for further studies. Plus, the results and references from this study may bring advanced fundament to future studies on related topics.

7.1 An alternative matriarchal model

Anthropologist Peggy Reeves Sanday dedicated a study of the Indonesian Minangkabau (in 2004) society. The study focused on the culture and the origin of Minangkabau and explained the structure of the matriarchal society. Based on understanding the core values and structure of the matriarchal Minangkabau society, the authors (of this thesis) refer to a matriarchal business environment.

In the Minangkabau community, males and females can be related as partners for common good rather than competitors for either sides' interests. Females and males work in collaboration whether the jobs are considered female or male-dominant – according to the general current circumstance. In social relations, females present as majority as "the center where the fish nets meet". In terms of social prestige, people who follow the standards of customs and religion are to be accrued by the community. Their religion and customs drive towards the central values of nature-based philosophy, which is called "Adat", and matriarch. It can be referred to as a quote by a villager: "One must nurture growth in humans, animals, and plants so that society will be strong."

Females' power is central values in each dimension of society. Senior females are associated with the central pillar in traditional houses. Marriages take place with males moving into the female's house and are like divorces. Females take the inheritance of land properties. Terms, ideas suggest a matriarchal order of society. For example, old villages are called mother villages, in traditional festivals, females dress up as an image of the Mythical Queen.

Throughout the activities and presence of the society, it is suggested that maternal is the center, the origin, and foundation of life, as well as social order. However, when concerning the dominant gender, the one that rules the society, it was answered that "people are a complement

to each other". And said of Dr. Sanday, "Neither male nor female rule is possible because of the Minangkabau belief that decision-making should be made by consensus". Thus, under this society, males and females' social role is balance. And there is no bifurcate of genders or gender bias.

When referring to solving conflicts, consensus, as mentioned above, is considered rather than fights. An example of solving social conflicts back in the 16th century when Islamism entered Indonesia. Not until the 19th century did wars between "Adat" and Islam took place. The conflicts were resolved by both sides making an accommodation. And nowadays, both religions are considered equally sacred and unbroken.

Maternal and "Adat", are a complement to each other, contribute to the harmony society. According to Frederick Errington, a Professor of Anthropology stated the core and peripheral element of "Adat":

"In Minangkabau, the conflict is not only recognized but institutionalized within the system itself. Conflict is seen as dialectically as essential to achieving the integration of society. (Abdullah, 1966, p. 3)"

"The peripheral elements can usually be allowed to change as long as the core elements remain fundamentally the same." (Errington, 1984, p. 37).

To sum up, the Minangkabau society, or a society of matriarchy and "Adat", is a representative of a balanced, peaceful, gender equality, female and male work in collaboration. The idea of the Minangkabau society is also the idea of a matriarchal society, or in this thesis study, a matriarchal business model. It is a workplace where gender bias should be aware of and understood, feminine values to be honored and elaborated, and of course, a collaborative working attitude between everyone.

7.2 Modern business model

As studies of the masculine business model point out its negative sides and as a contribution to gender inequality, there are increased ideas about reforming the business model. One of them is the incorporation of femininity and masculinity in a business environment.

Christopher Martlew (2015, 48), in his study about "changing the mind of organization: building agile teams", has emphasized the essence of gender balance in organizations. If men are characterized by competitiveness, women are with empathy. Men are single-minded while women can be multitasking. Men tend to risk while women are more nurturing. Mostly men are

physically stronger, women are emotional. From the perspective of evolutionary, men are programmed for hunting and competing, while women are programmed for nurturing and caring.

The classic business model had been built on men's side, where the organization emphasized assertiveness, competitiveness, risk-taking, etc. rather than a balance between the two elements: masculinity and femininity.

Either masculinity or femininity weight heavier is a sustainable model for a business environment. As the Minangkabau society honors the complement of both genders for the common good of the society. Valerie Keller, head of the Ernst & Young Beacon Institute, suggested, a more successful business is the one that focused on solving bigger problems, rather than manifests only on turning profits.

It is enthusiastic to debate a gender balanced business model, however, if it took revolutions and hundreds of years of forming a masculine business model, would it take a similar time to reform the business structure? And, what is the most crucial element to work on, to transform the conventional business model?

8 Questionnaire

Main question: How women are equal in practice, do they have equal chances to develop their career?

Sub-question 1: Does gender functionalism exist in companies in Finland? How is it reflected in different fields of society?

Question 1: It is said that there are fields of industry that suitable for women and those that are suitable for men. Do you agree with this idea? What do you think about this?

Question 2: Is there dominance in the number of female or male colleagues in your workplace?

Question 3: Please put these phrases into a suitable column, in your opinion:

Hospitality, Business Management, Engineering, Construction, Forestry, Accounting, Analysis, Doctor, Nurse, Lawyer, Judge, Software development, Computer science, Electronics

Male	Female

Sub-question 2: Women's free choice and influence from society

Question 1: Between career and taking care of family, which one is more important for you? Or how do you balance work and family life?

Question 2: Who or what can affect your choice in life (having children, not having children, focus on developing a career)?

Question 3: Do you find your workplace and your spouse supportive of you in your choice (career/family/both)?

If yes, please name some policies at work or stories about that.

If no, what would you suggest encouraging you with your choice, from society/ company/ spouse, whether it is family or career?

Sub-question 3: Qualitative questions and survey of the masculine model of business:

1. From 1 to 5, to what extent do you agree with these statements:

At your workplace:

Female colleagues are less supportive of one another 1 2 3 4 5

Female has to work harder to get their voice heard 1 2 3 4 5

Prejudice about female's level of ambition, ex: women don't want to get further 1 2 3 4 5

Stereotype roles for male and female 1 2 3 4 5

Experience inequality in promotion due to gender barriers 1 2 3 4 5

Your ideas are not credited 1 2 3 4 5

Your ideas are not included in decisions 1 2 3 4 5

Competitiveness at work 1 2 3 4 5

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10 Appendix

1.21 Parental allowances (payments ended) and duration (average) of period, days in 2016

Type of benefit	Periods ended	Duration (average) of period days	Number of days reimbursed to the employer	Euros/day (on average)
Mother				
Total	52,966	261	31	62.37
Special maternity allowance	212	91	9	69.49
Maternity allowance	52,833	105	31	67.27
Parental allowance	52,618	157	0	59.07
– Partial parental allowance	48	98	0	40.81
Father				
Total	39,175	36	4	85.94
Paternity allowances, total	39,089	33	4	86.30
– Paternity allowance during maternity/parental alw period	36,440	16	4	79.21
– Paternity allowance after the parental allowance period	22,056	31	1	92.43
Parental allowance	2,066	61	1	82.36
– Partial parental allowance	48	98	0	46.09

Source: the Social Insurance Institution of Finland, Families

Appendix 1.21: Parental allowances (2016),
(Source: Social Insurance of Finland, Families)

4.4 Average monthly earnings of employees in manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade in 2002 to 2016, EUR

	Manufacturing		Trade	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
2002	2,061	2,477	1,839	2,497
2004	2,269	2,699	1,973	2,647
2006	2,477	2,903	2,129	2,835
New weight structure				
2008	2,772	3,238	2,433	3,266
2009	2,857	3,267	2,513	3,280
2010	2,931	3,327	2,587	3,347
New weight structure				
2011	3,055	3,483	2,675	3,447
2012	3,154	3,587	2,722	3,602
2013	3,276	3,727	2,807	3,676
2014	3,357	3,788	2,860	3,690
2015	3,454	3,886	2,884	3,678
2016	3,485	3,871	2,948	3,783

Source: Statistics Finland, Index of wage and salary earnings and Private sector hour and monthly salaries

Appendix 4.4: Average monthly earnings of employees in manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade in 2002 to 2016, EUR
(Source: Statistic Finland, Index of wage and salary earnings and Private sector hour and monthly salary)

4.5 Average monthly earnings of employees in education and health services in 2002 to 2016, EUR

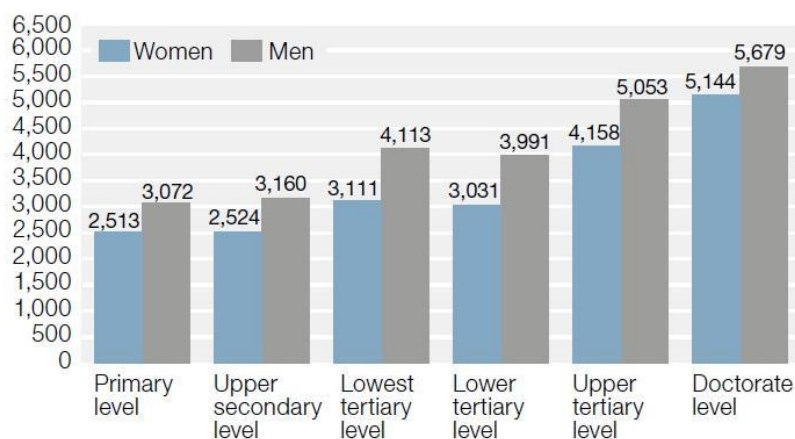
	Education		Health services	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
2002	2,164	2,519	2,017	2,842
2004	2,348	2,713	2,172	3,068
2006	2,523	2,903	2,330	3,289
New weight structure				
2008	2,951	3,372	2,618	3,655
2009	3,041	3,458	2,720	3,789
2010	3,087	3,495	2,786	3,874
New weight structure				
2011	3,185	3,588	2,886	3,966
2012	3,275	3,671	2,982	4,039
2013	3,351	3,754	3,054	4,075
2014	3,388	3,800	3,086	4,110
2015	3,429	3,826	3,114	4,143
2016	3,487	3,866	3,137	4,101

Source: Statistics Finland, Index of wage and salary earnings and Central government monthly salaries and Private sector hour and monthly salaries

Appendix 4.5: Average monthly earnings of employees in education and health services in 2002 to 2016, EUR

(Source: Statistic Finland, Index of wage and salary earnings and Central government monthly salaries, and Private sector hour and monthly salaries)

4.9 Monthly earnings of full-time employees by level of education in 2017, EUR/month



Source: Statistics Finland, Structure of earnings

Appendix 4.9: Monthly earnings of fulltime employees by levels of education in 2017, EUR/month

(Source: Statistic Finland, Structure of earnings)

The end