

Facilitators and Constraints: Perceptions of Gender Differences on Women's Career Advancement

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The underrepresentation in top management positions has made women's status in the hospitality industry a great concern. The study examined hospitality students', educators', and industry recruiters' perceptions of facilitators and constraints on women's career advancement and identified if there were any significant differences among them. Data were collected through an online survey. Perceptions of gender differences of facilitators and constraints in women's career advancement and gender issues were analyzed within the three groups (students, educators, and recruiters). Results revealed significant gender differences between male and female educators and recruiters. The findings suggested that hospitality education should make a contribution and reveal barriers and gender issues in the industry.

Keywords: women in hospitality management, women's career advancement, hospitality education

Introduction

The family picture is on HIS desk.
Ah, a solid, responsible man.
The family picture is on HER desk.
Umm, her family will come before her career...
He's leaving for a better job.
He knows how to recognize a good opportunity.
She's leaving for a better job.
Women are not dependable.

The above poem (Powell, 1993) shows the gender stereotypes of women and men in the office. Over the past several decades, women have become a larger percentage of the workforce, who accounted for 47% of the total U.S. labor force (U.S. Department of Labor, 2017). There has also been an improvement in the number of women promoted to advanced positions: 46% of employed women were food service managers (U.S. Department of Labor, 2017) and more women have enrolled in higher education, which is viewed as a shorter route to top level management positions. Females were the majority of college and university students in fall 2017: About 11.5 million females enrolled in fall 2017, compared with 8.9 million males (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Women received 60% of all bachelor's degree, and 60% of master's degrees (Eng, 2017).

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Regardless of these improvements, women continue to be underrepresented in management positions, inequitably hired, promoted, and paid in overall employment. In 1991, for example, women in the labor relations field made about 85.4% of their counterparts' salary. In 2000, the number climbed to 87.5% (Baker, Wendt, & Slonaker, 2002). In 2013, "Globally, women are paid less than men. Women in most countries earn on average only 60 to 75 per cent of men's wages" (UN Women, 2013). Although most young men and women are promoted based on performance, a gender gap still exists related to promotions and women are at a disadvantage (Cobb & Dunlop, 1999; Baum, 2013). Women are still concentrated in traditional occupations, such as technical, sales, and administrative support (Bowler, 1999). *Fortune Magazine* reported that there were 24 women CEOs in the Fortune 500 and 27 in the Fortune 1000 (Fairchild, 2015). Among Fortune 1000 companies, only 5% have female CEOs, "but those giants generate 7% of the Fortune 1000's total revenue". The Fortune 500 list showed that no women held a CEO title in 2012, among the 13 hospitality-related companies (Boone, Veller, Nikolaeva, Keith, Kefgen, & Houran, 2013). As reported by Caroline Fairchild of *Fortune Magazine* in 2014, half of women and 35% of men agreed that most businesses are not prepared to accept women in top executive positions (Fairchild, 2014).

Research has identified the lack of representation of women managers and gender discrimination issues in the workplace (Woods & Kavanaugh, 1994; Fagenson & Jackson, 1993; Gregg & Johnson, 1990; Fogliasso, 2011; Baum, 2013; 2015). Brownell (1994; 2008), Ng and Pine (2003), and Zhong and Couch (2007) recommended that both educators and industry leaders take responsibility for preparing women for success. However, little research has focused on the perceptions of hospitality students, educators, and industry recruiters regarding the advancement of women in the industry. Therefore, the purposes of the study were to:

- (1) Examine students', educators', and industry recruiters' perceptions of significant facilitators and constraints on women's career advancement;
- (2) Identify significant differences on gender issues in the workplace in the perceptions of male and female students, educators, and industry recruiters.

The results of this research should strengthen hospitality education programs and benefit the hospitality industry in general. Addressing these issues in an educational setting will, in the long-term, enable educators to fulfill their responsibilities to help all students develop their abilities and help to create a more supportive industry environment for women.

Theoretical Framework

Theorists believed that women's careers cannot be explained appropriately by traditional theory which emphasizes men's careers. However, there is a lack of agreement about whether to modify the existing theories or to create new ones (Swanson & Fouad, 1999). Farmer and Associates (1997) argued that there are few career development theories based on the experiences of persons of color and women. Super (1953) identified five career stages as growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and disengagement. The model was thought influential, but has been criticized for ignoring that women's career paths are non-linear and are interrupted by women moving in and out of the workplace (Bierema & Opengart, 2002). Some theories on women's career development relate to multiple roles: the ability to arrange different work schedules because women are socially expected to be caregivers and carry family responsibilities (Bierema, 1998). Bierema and Opengart (2002) identified some factors that impact women's career development, including gender role, social expectations, and hidden curriculum necessary for success in a male-dominated environment.

One theory, the "glass ceiling" refers to invisible, generally artificial, barriers that prevent qualified individuals, for example, women from advancing within their organizations and reaching their full potential (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). It describes a tendency for women and minorities to be over represented in the lower levels of an industry, but underrepresented at senior levels. Even though great strides have taken place in recent years, there still remains room for improvement.

Bily and Manoochehri (1995) described the development of women's role in history: Traditionally, a woman's role has been in the home, taking care of children and husband. During World War II, women went to work because men were at war. After World War II, women were sent back home again to be wives and mothers. Since the 1960s, more and more women have entered the workplace, and 30-40 years later, they have stayed in the workforce so that the number of working women has been continuously increasing. While women comprise almost half of the workplace, the number of women in mid-management and especially senior management is low. This underrepresentation in upper level management positions is defined by the term "glass ceiling" (Bily & Manoochehri, 1995). Eagly (1987) proposed that the "glass ceiling effect" is related to the social role theory in that people behave according to stereotypical gender-based assignments.

Kanter (1977) suggested that men traditionally play all their roles while employed women were having problems with multiple roles. Theories of women's career development indicated that women have been devalued both in theory and in social context (Bierema & Opengart, 2002). On the other hand, women's roles, such as being a mother and a care-taker, enhance women's leadership styles. These "female advantages" may be considered unique contributions in the workplace (Bierema & Opengart, 2002).

The gender role theory applied easily to the hospitality industry. The majority of house-keepers were female, while bellmen always were male (Greenlaw & Grubb, 1982). The situation continues and while more female managers work in positions, such as house-keeping and event-planning, they are less likely to be promoted to senior management positions (Garavan, O'Brien, & O'Hanlon, 2006). Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1975) and the New Home Economics Theory (Becker, 1981; 1985) suggested that those with a larger investment, including education, have greater career opportunities. The theory explains that the difference in income is not attributable to gender at all, but to the different levels of education and experiences. The New Home Economics Theory argued that households divide labor so that men specialize in market work and women in domestic work. The male and female wage gap is a derivative of this decision-making process. Women choose part-time jobs that allow them the flexibility to manage their domestic household duties and that do not require them to put career above family.

Constraints on Women's Career Advancement

Research has reported a number of constraints to women's career advancement. These included glass ceiling (Galinsky, Salmond, Bond, Kropf, Moore, & Harrington, 2003; Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999), gender discrimination (e.g., pay disparities and sexual harassment) (Adams, Gupta, Haughton, & Leeth, 2007; Baum, 2015; Cave & Kilic, 2010; Diaz & Umbreit, 1995; Lin & Gunderson, 2014; Woods & Kavanaugh, 1994), organizational culture (Brownell, 1994; Eagly & Wood, 1991; Vianen & Fischer, 2002), and work and family conflict (Boone et al., 2013; Brownell, 1998; Mallon & Cassell, 1999). Weber (1998) also found that important career constraints perceived are "old-boy network", "lack of assertiveness", "male bias and stereotyping", "family and work conflict", "insufficient career planning", and "unhelpful bosses".

Ng and Pine (2003) found significant gender differences in the importance of effective communication skills, which indicated that female managers viewed a stronger positive relationship between communication skills and career development than males. Three obstacles were found to be significantly different between female and male managers. They were inadequate job knowledge, difficulty in establishing credibility, and lack of equity in training. In all these areas, males viewed these issues as bigger obstacles than females.

Many studies consistently describe gender-based pay differences. Educational attainment has been shown to be a major factor in career progression and job mobility in human capital theory (Becker, 1975). A notable finding was that completion of a bachelor's degree raised the rate of promotions by 76%-78% (Sparrowe & Popielarz, 1995). Umbreit and Diaz (1994) suggested that the gender gap in earnings would be even larger if women did not achieve a higher level of academic success. Woods and Kavanaugh (1994) found that female managers in the hospitality industry earn \$6,400 less than their male peers. According to Brownell (1994), women view this lack of equity as a predominate obstacle to their career progression. Researchers have also reported that fewer women were at higher levels of management and receive less pay (Garavan et al., 2006; Knox, 2008; Skalpe, 2007; Sumer, 2006).

Facilitators to Women's Career Advancement

Research has also identified facilitators to women's career advancement: hard work (Abdalla, 2015; Gregg & Johnson, 1990; Zhong, Couch, & Blum, 2011), networking and mentoring (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2009; Fagenson & Jackson, 1993; Ng & Pine, 2003), relocating or changing companies (Blayney & Blotnicky, 2010; Blayney, 2008; Ng & Pine, 2003), and a charismatic personality (Knutson & Schmidgall, 1999). Brownell (1994), in a study on personality and career development, reported the traits of hospitality managers: hard work, fairness, and the ability to motivate others. Skills and intelligence are also important, such as communication skills, leadership skills, and interpersonal skills.

Method

The research questions were examined by administering an online survey using instruments modified from previous studies. Survey included 15 facilitators and 15 constraints, and seven gender issues in the workplace. A 5-point Likert response format, ranging from "1 = Not important" to "5 = Extremely important" was used. Data were gathered from 226 participants (107 students, 60 educators, and 59 recruiters) through a questionnaire that was available via the Internet. A contact person was identified at each of the participating universities. The contact person introduced the project and distributed the websites to faculty members, students, and recruiters.

T-tests were performed for individual items within each of the three groups (students, educators, and recruiters), to examine if there were gender differences in perceptions of facilitators and constraints and gender issues related to women's career advancement. Three sets of independent *t*-tests were performed for each of the three groups. Perceptions of facilitators and constraints affecting women's career advancement and gender issues were the dependent variables and gender was the independent variable. The sample was divided unequally between females (66.4%) and males (33.6%) of the total sample ($n = 226$). Seventy-three percent of the respondents were Caucasian, 16% were Asian, and 3% were Hispanic.

Results

Facilitators

Students. Female and male students expressed similar opinions on facilitators. Mean scores ranged from 2.77 to 4.78 for females and 3.07 to 4.75 for males. For the top three items, both female and male students ranked "hard work" first, "attitude toward work" second, and "effective communication skills" third. Male students also ranked "job knowledge" and "hard work" as third. Both female and male students ranked "support and guidance from a mentor" and "luck" as the least important factors. There were no significant differences found for individual items in this group.

Educators. Female and male educators expressed similar opinions on facilitators. Mean scores ranged from 3.23 to 4.81 for females and 2.79 to 4.72 for males. Both female and male educators ranked "hard work", "attitude toward work", "effective communication skills", and "problem-solving skills" as the top four facilitators for career advancement. Both female and male educators ranked "effective communication skills" first and "problem-solving skills" third as most important facilitators. Male students also ranked "attitude toward work" first. Both female and male educators ranked "luck" as the least important factor. Significant differences were found for three facilitator items. They were "personal sacrifice" ($t = 2.674, p < 0.05$, mean = 4.00 for females and 3.38 for males), "job knowledge" ($t = 2.148, p < 0.05$, mean = 4.58 for females and 4.21 for males), and "educational qualifications" ($t = 2.102, p < 0.05$, mean = 4.03 for females and 3.66 for males).

Recruiters. On a scale from "1 = Not important" to "5 = Extremely important", all the means were above 3.0 except "luck" for both female (Mean = 2.5) and male (Mean = 2.05) recruiters. Female and male recruiters expressed similar opinions on facilitators. Mean scores ranged from 2.5 to 4.85 for females and 2.05 to 4.79 for males. Both female and male educators ranked "hard work", "attitude toward work", "effective communication skills", and "problem-solving skills" as the top four facilitators for career advancement. Both female and male educators ranked "effective communication skills" first and "attitude toward work" second. Both female and male educators ranked "luck" as the least important factor. Only one facilitator was found to be significant by gender, "family" ($t = 2.372, p < 0.05$, mean = 4.03 for females and 3.42 for males).

Constraints

Students. Female and male students had similar opinions on the constraint items. Mean scores ranged from 2.61 to 3.99 for females and 2.50 to 3.93 for male students. Both female and male students ranked "conflicts with family responsibilities" as the most important constraint item. The next three constraint items ranked by both were "being a single parent", "child care responsibilities", and "lack of work support" but the ranks varied. Both groups ranked "lack of role models" and "being married" as the lowest. No significant gender differences were found in items that constrain women's career advancement.

Educators. Female and male educators had similar opinions on constraint items. Mean scores ranged from 2.74 to 4.23 for females and 2.48 to 3.68 for male students. Both female and male educators ranked "conflicts with family responsibilities" as the most important constraint item and "lack of equity in training" the lowest. Two constraint items showed gender differences, "conflicts with family responsibilities" ($t = 3.007, p < 0.05$, mean = 4.23 for females and 3.69 for males) and "old-boy network" ($t = 2.149, p < 0.05$, mean = 4.19 for females and 3.51 for males).

Recruiters. Mean scores in this group ranged from 1.85 to 3.78 for females and 1.58 to 3.26 for male recruiters. The most important constraints were ranked differently. Females ranked "conflicts with family responsibilities" as the top constraint while males ranked "inadequate job knowledge" as the most important. Both female and male recruiters ranked "being married" the lowest factor. Five constraint items had significant gender differences. They were "conflicts with family responsibilities" ($t = 4.322, p < 0.01$, mean = 3.78 for females and 2.63 for males), "lack of equity in pay" ($t = 3.430, p < 0.01$, mean = 2.98 for females and 1.95 for males), "lack of equity in promotions" ($t = 2.857, p < 0.01$, mean = 3.08 for females and 2.11 for males), "job characteristics" ($t = 2.643, p < 0.05$, mean = 3.53 for females and 2.89 for males), and "difficulty in establishing credibility" ($t = 2.447, p < 0.05$, mean = 3.2 for females and 2.47 for males).

Gender Issues

Female students and male students disagreed significantly on gender issues and the factors that constrain career advancement are different for males and females ($t = 2.04, p < 0.05$, mean = 3.81 for females and 3.39 for males). Three significant differences were found in the educator group. Male managers/supervisors treat female employees differently than they treat male employees ($t = 2.385, p < 0.05$, mean = 3.81 for females and 3.14 for males). Male employees in the hospitality industry respond differently to female managers than to male managers ($t = 2.129, p < 0.05$, mean = 3.90 for females and 3.24 for males). The factors that constrain career advancement are different for males and females ($t = 2.008, p < 0.05$, mean = 3.97 for females and 3.31 for males).

Three gender issues were found to be significant for recruiters: Females face significant obstacles to career advancement in the hospitality industry ($t = 3.329, p < 0.05$, mean = 2.98 for females and 2.00 for males). The factors that contribute to career advancement are different for males and females ($t = 4.113, p < 0.001$, mean = 3.32 for females and 2.11 for males) and the factors that constrain career advancement are different for males and females ($t = 3.145, p < 0.01$, mean = 3.68 for females and 2.68 for males).

Discussion

Findings revealed that among 15 significant items (facilitators, constraints, and gender issues), there was only one for students, eight for educators, and nine for recruiters. In all cases, females' means were higher than males. Table 1 summarizes the significant gender differences.

Facilitators

All three groups expressed similar opinions on the top four important facilitator items: Both females and males in each group rated "hard work", "attitude toward work", "effective communication skills", and "problem-solving skills" as the most important facilitators to women's career advancement. In almost all the cases, females rated the items higher than males, suggesting that women may have viewed the items as more important. Both female and male students believed "luck" to be the least important facilitator.

There were no significant gender differences in students' perceptions of facilitators of women's career advancement. Three facilitator items were found to be significant between female and male educators. They were "personal sacrifice", "job knowledge", and "educational qualifications". One facilitator item "family support" was found to be significant between female and male recruiters, which suggested that male recruiters viewed family support as less important to women's career advancement. On all the significant items, the higher means for females indicated that women perceived stronger relationships between the facilitators and

career advancement than did males. The ranking of the items was consistent with the significant results, for example, female recruiters ranked "family support" as a more important facilitator than male recruiters (female ranked 7th vs. males ranked 12th among 15 facilitators).

Table 1

Summary of Significant Gender Differences

Significant items	Students	Educators	Recruiters
Facilitators	Personal sacrifice	*	
	Job knowledge	*	
	Educational qualification	*	
	Family		*
Constraints	Credibility		*
	Conflicts with family responsibility	*	***
	Job characteristics		*
	Lack of equity in pay		**
	Lack of equity in promotion decision		**
	Old-boy network	*	
Gender issues	Females face significant obstacles to career advancement in the hospitality industry		*
	Male managers/supervisors treat female employees differently than they treat male employees	*	
	Male employees in the hospitality industry respond differently to female managers than to male managers	*	
	The factors that facilitate career advancement are different for males and females		***
	The factors that constrain career advancement are different for males and females	*	**

Notes. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

There were both similarities and differences between these findings and those of Brownell (1994) and Ng and Pine (2003). Brownell conducted a survey examining general managers' perceptions of factors related to women's career advancement in the hospitality industry, especially the lodging industry. Female and male samples had striking similarities on their first, second, third, and fourth rankings on importance of career-related activities and circumstances: hard work, attitude, effective communication, and problem-solving. Ng and Pine (2003) had similar findings in a study of the perceptions of gender and career development issues in hotel management in Hong Kong. The first, second, third, and fourth rankings were "attitudes towards work", "effective communication skills", "problem-solving skills", and "hard work". In the current study, students, educators, and recruiters ranked the top four facilitators as the same as Brownell (1994) and Ng and Pine (2003). Even though the rank order was different, this indicated that females and males in all three groups agreed that those facilitators were important to women's career advancement. The findings were also consistent with the pilot study (Zhong & Couch, 2007) of hospitality students; students ranked the top three facilitators as "effective communication skills", "attitude toward work", and "hard work". Instead of problem-solving skills, they ranked job knowledge as fourth. Similar to the finding of Brownell (1994), luck was considered as the least important facilitator to women's career advancement in the views of all the three groups in the study as well as the pilot.

In terms of facilitators, educators had more significant differences on items than did recruiters. Female and male educators had significant differences on three items: "personal sacrifice", "job knowledge", and "educational qualification", which raised questions as to why female and male educators disagree about these items. Perhaps female educators viewed these items as significantly more important than male educators from their own experiences. For example, females may be more likely to make personal sacrifices to accommodate their careers (Fagenson & Jackson, 1993). Social norms encourage the allocation of greater power within the family to men and it is expected that women will make sacrifices to benefit their husbands' careers (Melamed, 1995). Melamed (1995) also suggested that due to the lack of informal networks, women tend to rely on job performance and education to achieve success, which might be a good explanation of the significant differences.

Constraints

Female and male educators and recruiters had similar opinions on "job characteristics (e.g., irregular work hours)". They all viewed it as one of the most important constraints. However, the three groups had different opinions in regard to "conflicts with family responsibilities". Both female and male students, educators, and female recruiters perceived it as the most important constraint to women's career advancement, while male recruiters ranked it 8th of the 15 constraint items. Male recruiters viewed "inadequate knowledge" and "lack of mentoring/coaching" as the top two constraints, while the other groups perceived them as less important.

There were no significant gender differences on students' perceptions of constraints on women's career advancement. Two constraint items were found to be significant between female and male educators (see Table 1). They were "conflicts with family responsibilities" and "old-boy network". Five constraint items were found to be significant between female and male recruiters. They were "difficulty in establishing credibility", "conflicts with family responsibilities", "job characteristics", "lack of equity in pay", and "lack of equity in promotion decisions". On the above significant items, female means were higher than males, suggesting that women perceived the items as larger barriers to women's career advancement.

Brownell (1994) reported that the predominant constraints in women's career advancement were the old-boy network, conflicts between family and work, and lack of equity in pay and promotions, which was similar with the pilot study. Ng and Pine (2003) found lack of support at work, lack of equity in promotions, inadequate job knowledge, and lack of mentor to be the first four major constraints. The first four constraints of the current study were "difficulty in establishing credibility", "conflicts with family responsibilities", "job characteristics", and "lack of work support", which had few similarities to the previous studies. Similar to Ng and Pine's (2003) study, students and recruiters viewed being married as the least important constraint, while educators viewed lack of equity in training as the least important constraint.

Concerning constraints, educators had two significant gender differences: "conflicts with family responsibility" and the "old-boy network". Female educators ranked these two items as their top two major constraints on women's career advancement, which were also frequently mentioned in the related literature (Brownell, 1993). Recruiters had significant differences on several constraints: "credibility", "conflicts with family responsibility", "job characteristics", "lack of equity in pay", and "lack of equity in promotion". All students and educators and female recruiters considered the above constraints as major barriers to women's career advancement. On the item "conflicts with family responsibility", all groups ranked this as the top constraint, except male recruiters who ranked it as 8th. These findings suggested that females were more aware

of some special barriers than were males, which is consistent with the literature. The findings in this study revealed that male recruiters did not consider conflicts with family responsibilities as an important constraint. In the literature, Brownell (1994) and Rosener (1990; as cited in Brownell, 1994) reported that men ranked this constraint higher than did females, and as many men and women experienced family and work conflicts.

Gender Issues

On perceptions of gender issues related to women's career advancement, students, educators, and female recruiters ranked the items "The factors that constrain career advancement are different for males and females", "Male employees in the hospitality industry respond differently to female managers than to male managers", and "Male managers treat female employees differently than they treat male employees" as the top three. The three groups ranked "Females face significant obstacles to career advancement in the hospitality industry" and "Female managers treat female employees differently than they treat male employees" the lowest.

Males and females in all groups expressed significantly different opinions on "The factors that constrain career advancement are different for males and females". Two additional gender issues were found to be significant for both educators and recruiters: "Male managers treat female employees differently than they treat male employees" and "Females face significant obstacles to career advancement in the hospitality industry" (see Table 1). On all significant items, female means were higher than males, possibly because females had experienced or observed more constraints to career advancement than did males.

Concerning gender issues, female and male recruiters disagreed that females face significant obstacles that the factors facilitating women's career advancement are different for males and females, and that the factors constraining career advancement are different for male and females. The finding suggests that male recruiters did not see some obstacles to women's career advancement, so they did not view that the facilitators and constraints are different for males and females. Female and male educators had different opinions on male managers treat female employees differently and male employees respond differently to female managers. Most educators had hospitality industry experience and about 90% of them had worked in the industry for more than five years and about half of the educators had taught for more than 10 years. Perhaps female recruiters and educators had experienced some obstacles and benefited from some facilitators.

Conclusion

The study identified several factors that influence women's career advancement. "Hard work", "attitude toward work", "communication skills", and "problem-solving skills" were considered by all groups as the most important facilitators to women's career advancement. Conflict with family responsibilities, job characteristics, childcare responsibilities, and lack of work support were considered as the strongest constraints.

Females and males had significant differences on equity (lack of promotion, pay, and training), family (childcare responsibilities, being married, and conflicts with family responsibilities), and career advancement. Recruiters were less aware of the above issues than students and educators. Women viewed these factors as more important than did male students, which suggested that females are more aware of the difficulties they may face in the industry. Contrary to Becker's (1975) Human Capital Theory, equity in pay and promotion cannot be attributed to differences in education. Educated females frequently are unable to obtain payment equal to that of male counterparts in the hospitality industry, even when they have similar educational and work experiences (Galinsky et al., 2003; Sparrowe & Iverson, 1999). This research reveals that Becker's theory could not fully explain the pay disparity.

Data reported in the study confirmed that women in the hospitality industry continue facing challenges in their career advancement. Hospitality education programs should present information and activities to prepare women for leadership, reveal the existence of barriers and gender issues in the industry, develop courses focused on necessary skills for women, and provide more mentors and role models to the classes.

Hospitality education also has a responsibility to address the barriers that women might encounter in the hospitality industry, such as work and life conflicts, job characteristics in the program, so that students will have a realistic expectation for the careers and themselves. Due to the importance of women in the hospitality industry, the mission of hospitality educational programs is not only to prepare students for professional lives, but also to meet the needs of the hospitality industry in preparing women for career advancement. It is encouraging that most people in this study realized the importance of hospitality education with regard to women's advancement.

The findings of the study have implications for hospitality educators and industry recruiters on curriculum design and industry training. It appears that recruiters, who represent the hospitality industry, were not aware of the barriers to women's career advancement, such as conflicts with family responsibilities and lack of equity. The solution lies not only in better preparation of women to work hard to foster their abilities, but in the creation of a more equitable organizational culture in the industry, as suggested by Ng and Pine (2003). Since hospitality students are the future leaders of the industry, it is important that hospitality education programs help female students prepare for advancement in the industry and make all students aware of the existence of barriers to women's career success. Addressing these issues in educational and industry settings will enable both educators and the industry to fulfill their responsibilities to help in creating a more supportive industry environment for women.

The study was limited to convenience samples of the three groups: students, educators, and recruiters. Additionally, findings were limited to the uneven number of males and females because the focus of the study may have been of more interest to females. Random selection and larger sample sizes would increase the generalization of the data. In the future, qualitative methods including in-depth interviews may be applied to generate perceptions of male and female executives and educators in the hospitality industry, and to determine how they address these issues.

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