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Statistical Analysis of Factors Influencing Women's Career Progression in the Hospitality Industry

Satyanarayan Choudhary
Tribhuvan University, Nepal
snc.pentagon@gmail.com

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Abstract

The hotel industry, characterized by its labor-intensive nature and dynamic operational environment, has witnessed increasing female participation in recent decades; however, women's progression into leadership and executive positions remains disproportionately limited. This study investigates the factors influencing women's career advancement within the hotel sector, focusing on both structural barriers and enabling mechanisms. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were collected in 2024 through a structured online questionnaire distributed via email and social media platforms to a purposive sample of hospitality professionals across multiple organizational levels. Key variables examined include organizational culture, work-life balance, mentorship access, gender bias, and professional development opportunities. Data analysis revealed significant constraints impeding women's career growth, notably systemic gender biases, limited access to strategic networking opportunities, and insufficient flexible work arrangements. In contrast, critical enablers identified include the presence of equitable workplace policies, access to mentorship and sponsorship programs, and the availability of structured leadership development initiatives. The study's findings underscore the complex interplay of institutional and cultural dynamics that shape women's career trajectories in the hospitality industry. It highlights the urgent need for

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targeted policy reforms, inclusive human resource practices, and sustained organizational commitment to diversity and equity. These results offer actionable insights for hospitality leaders and policymakers aiming to foster more inclusive career progression frameworks and strengthen gender equity in leadership within the sector.

Keywords: Women's Career Advancement; Hospitality Leadership; Gender Equity; Organizational Barriers; Professional Development

INTRODUCTION

A hotel is an establishment that provides lodging, typically featuring rooms with beds and bathrooms, along with services such as housekeeping, dining, and room service. The primary function of a hotel is to offer short-term accommodations that are secure, comfortable, and convenient for travelers. Hotels vary in size, amenities, pricing, and service levels, catering to a wide range of consumer preferences. As a vital component of the global economy, the hotel industry supports both leisure and business travel, often providing conference facilities, recreational services, and diverse dining experiences. Social, cultural, and technological advancements have shaped the evolution of modern hotels, aligning with growing demands for comfort, luxury, and accessibility (Jones, 2022).

Women constitute approximately 49.6% of the global population, according to The World Bank (2021), and their participation in the workforce has steadily increased over the years. Reports indicate that women now account for nearly 39% of global employment, yet they remain underrepresented in senior leadership positions within various industries, including hospitality (ILO, 2021). In the United States, women comprise 50.5% of employees in managerial professional jobs, yet only 15.4% hold corporate officer roles in Fortune 500 companies, and a mere 6.7% are among the highest earners (Catalyst, 2023).

Despite the increasing involvement of women in the workforce, gender disparities persist in the hotel industry. Although global initiatives promote equal opportunities and workplace diversity, issues such as discrimination, gender bias, and harassment continue to limit women's career progression (UNWTO, 2023). Studies have highlighted that women remain disproportionately underrepresented in executive roles despite their significant contributions to the hospitality sector (Baum & Cheung, 2022). This disparity is often

attributed to organizational structures, societal expectations, and a persistent perception that managerial roles are predominantly male domains (Davidson & Burke, 2022).

Historically, women in the hotel industry were assigned supportive roles, such as housekeeping, front desk management, and food service. However, societal shifts over the past two decades have led to a gradual increase in female representation in leadership positions. Today, women are making strides as hotel executives, entrepreneurs, and senior managers, influencing corporate culture, customer service standards, and strategic decision-making (Mooney & Ryan, 2023; Mahat & Aithal, 2022). The rise of female hotel executives has transformed traditional business operations, fostering a more inclusive and diverse hospitality environment (McPhail, 2023).

Women have played a pivotal role in shaping both luxury and budget segments of the hospitality industry. Many have founded boutique hotels, managed international hotel chains, and championed policies that create equitable career opportunities for women in the workforce. The contributions of women leaders have led to innovations in hotel management, branding, and customer engagement, strengthening the industry's overall growth (Sparrowe & Iverson, 2023).

In the past, women primarily worked in non-managerial roles, but over time, they began to break into leadership positions within major hotel brands. Notable figures, such as Sonia Cheng, CEO of Rosewood Hotel Group, and Christine Duffy, president of Carnival Cruise Line, exemplify the growing influence of women in high-ranking industry roles (Doherty, 2023). Additionally, mentorship programs, professional development initiatives, and corporate policies promoting gender equality have contributed to the rising number of women in executive positions within hospitality (Martínez & Lopez, 2023).

While progress has been made, the industry still faces challenges in achieving gender parity at the highest levels. Continued efforts in leadership training, policy reforms, and workplace inclusivity initiatives are essential for ensuring long-term advancement and equitable opportunities for women in the hotel industry.

Objective

To assess the Factor affecting Woman Career Advancement in Hotel Industry

METHODS

A descriptive research design was adopted for this study to systematically analyze the characteristics and behaviors of individuals involved in the hotel industry. The research employed quantitative methods, allowing for objective measurement and statistical analysis of collected data. The target population for this study includes both males and females who are directly or indirectly involved in the hotel industry. This encompasses individuals currently working in the hotel sector, students pursuing hotel management studies, and individuals possessing prior knowledge or experience in the hotel industry. A total of 120 participants were surveyed through an online questionnaire, ensuring a broad representation of perspectives. The participants ranged in age from 18 to 40 years old. Efforts were made to include individuals from diverse backgrounds, encompassing different genders, educational levels, and professional experiences, while minimizing biases in the sampling process. A random sampling method was employed to ensure that every eligible participant had an equal opportunity to be selected. This approach is akin to drawing names from a hat, enhancing the fairness and randomness of the participant selection process. The study specifically prioritized individuals with prior experience in the hotel industry, particularly women, and those who have utilized online reviews to make decisions related to hotel services.

RESULTS

Demographic Analysis

This information was gathered via a floating questionnaire distribution to the male and female representation of hotel industry. This section describes the demographic profile of the respondents and how the primary data acquired via survey was used to analyses and interpret it. As a result, it will be simpler to comprehend the respondent's demographic characteristics. The profile of the respondents comprises the respondent's gender, age, education level.

Table 1 Age Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
17-21	68	53.54%	53.54%
22-26	43	33.86%	87.40%
27-31	10	7.87%	95.28%
32-36	4	3.15%	98.43%
37 and above	2	1.57%	100.00%
Grand Total	127	100.00%	100.00%

Field Survey 2024

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on age group. Among the 127 respondents, 55.54% are between 17-21(68), 33.86% are between 22-26(43), 7.87% are between 27-31(10), 3.15% are between 32-36(2) and 1.57% are 37 and above (2).

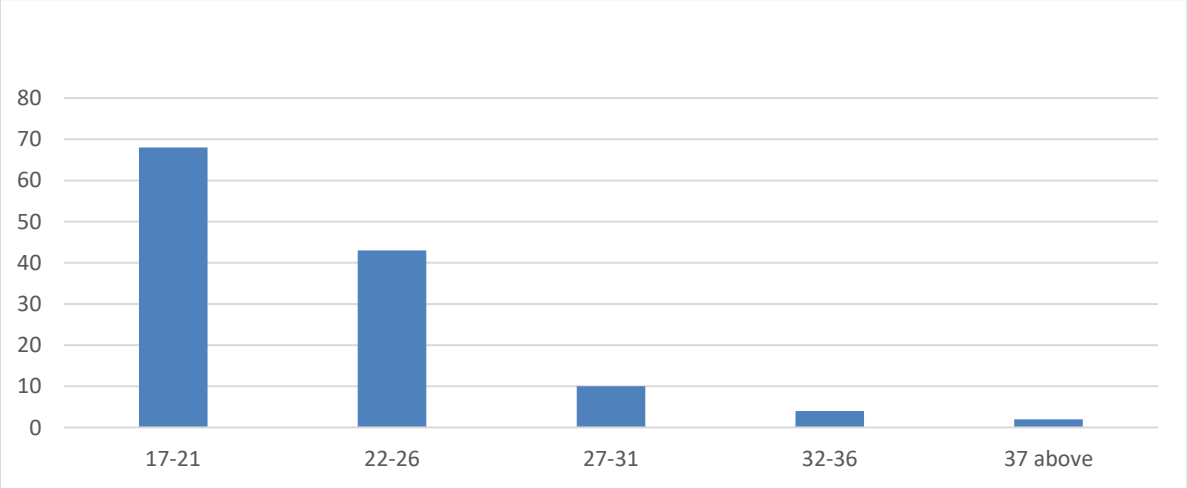


Figure 1: Age

The above column shows the responses of respondents based on age group in percentage. This clearly describe the table 1 "Age Respondents".

Table 2: Gender

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Male	37	29.13%	29.13%
Female	90	70.87%	100.00%
Grand Total	127	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on gender. Among the 127 individuals, 29.13% are Male (i.e., 37 individuals), 70.87% are Female (i.e., 90 individuals). This data indicates that there are maximum females who gave the data.

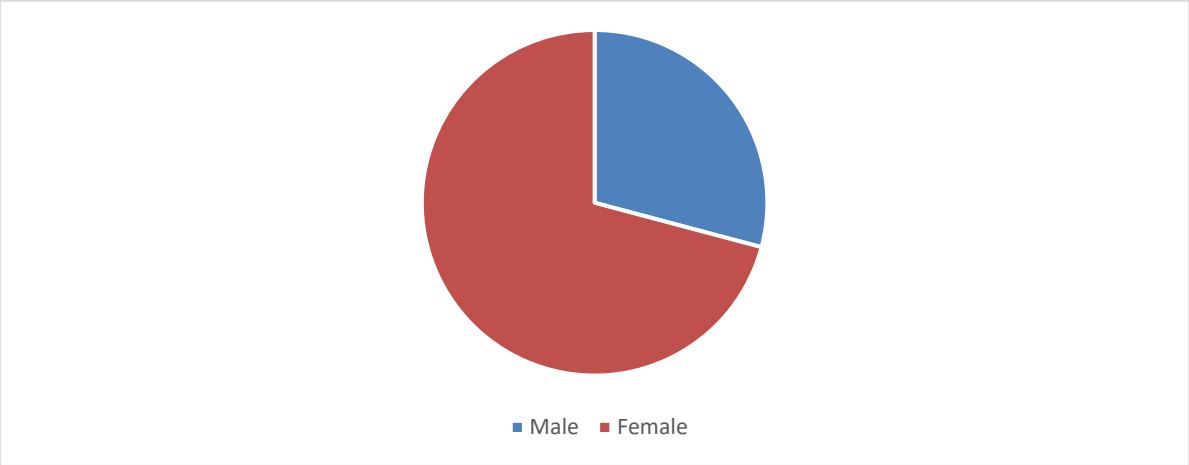


Figure 2: Gender

The above pie chart shows the responses of respondents based on gender in percentage. This clearly describe the table 2 "Gender".

Table 3: Education

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
SEE/SLC	4	3.15%	3.15%
+2	21	16.54%	19.69%
Bachelor	89	70.08%	89.76%
Over Bachelor	13	10.24%	100.00%
Grand Total	127	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table shows the distribution of respondents based on education. Among 127 individuals, 3.15% are SEE\SLC (i.e., 4 individual) 16.54% are +2 (i.e., 21 individuals), 70.08% are Bachelors (i.e., 89 individuals) and 15.9% are over Bachelor (13 individuals). This data indicates higher percentage of bachelor's individuals and there are no missing or invalid respondents from other educations.

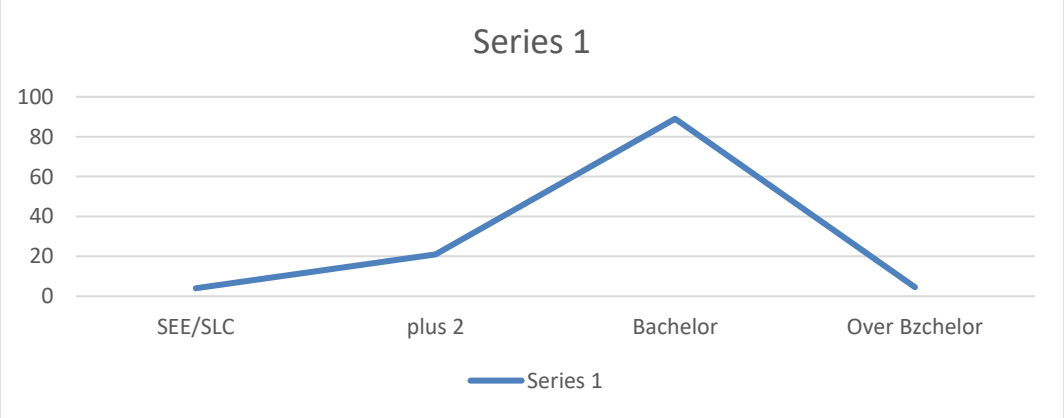


Figure 3: Education

The above line graph shows the responses of respondents based on education in percentage. This clearly describe table 3 "Education".

Analysis

Table 4: Hard work is essential for retaining in the hotel industry.

	frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage(%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	40	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%
Agree	68	56.67%	56.67%	90.00%
Moderate	14	11.67%	11.67%	101.67%
Disagree	2	1.67%	1.67%	103.33%
Strongly Disagree	1	0.83%	0.83%	100.00%
Grand Total	120	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table shows the distribution of hard work is essential for retaining in the hotel industry. Among 127 individuals, 33.33% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 40 individuals). 56.67% agree with the statement (i.e., 68 individuals).11.67% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 14 individuals). 1.67% disagree with the statement (i.e., 2 individuals). 0.83% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 1 individuals). Since the majority says that the Hard work is essential for retaining in the hotel industry.

Table 5: Discrimination of female leadership discourages women to go higher position in industry.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	21	15.91%	15.91%	15.91%
Agree	70	53.03%	53.03%	68.94%
Moderate	19	14.39%	14.39%	83.33%
Disagree	13	9.85%	9.85%	93.18%
Strongly Disagree	14	10.61%	10.65%	103.79%
Grand Total	132	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table shows Discrimination of female leadership discourages women to go higher position in industry between respondents. Among 127 individuals, 15.91% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 21 individuals). 53.03% agree with the statement (i.e., 70 individuals). 14.39% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 19 individuals). 9.85% disagree with the statement (i.e., 13 individuals). 10.61% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e.,14 individuals). Since the majority agree that Discrimination of female leadership discourages women to go higher position in industry.

Table 6: Work overload based on job depress woman to go career advancement

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	12	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%
Agree	58	48.33%	48.33%	58.33%
Moderate	37	30.83%	30.83%	89.17%
Disagree	14	11.67%	11.67%	100.00%
Strongly Disagree	3	2.50%	2.50%	102.50%
Grand Total	124	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table shows the Work overload based on job depress woman to go career advancement the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 10.0% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 12 individuals). 48.33% agree with the statement (i.e., 58 individuals).30.83% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 37 individuals). 11.67%disagree with the statement (i.e., 14 individuals).2.50% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 3 individuals). Since

the majority agree that Work overload based on job depress woman to go career advancement.

Table 7: Informal network among workers (kinship and friendship) discourages women employees to go career advancement.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	14	11.67%	11.67%	11.67%
Agree	32	26.67%	26.67%	38.33%
Moderate	46	38.33%	38.33%	76.67%
Disagree	31	25.83%	25.83%	102.50%
Strongly Disagree	3	2.50%	2.50%	100.00%
Grand Total	126	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table shows Informal network among workers (kinship and friendship) discourages women employees to go career advancement among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 11.67% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 14 individuals). 26.67% agree with the statement (i.e., 32individuals).38.33% feels the statement is moderate (i.e.46 individuals). 25.83%disagree with the statement (i.e., 31 individuals).2.50% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 3 individuals). Since the majority are moderate (neither agree nor disagree) about the statement Informal network among workers (kinship and friendship) discourages women employees to go career advancement.

Table 8: Lack of appropriate opportunities and training program affect to female career advancement.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	38	31.67%	31.67%	31.67%
Agree	67	55.83%	55.83%	87.50%
Moderate	15	12.50%	12.50%	100.00%
Disagree	3	2.50%	2.50%	102.50%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.67%	1.67%	100.00%
Grand Total	125	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table shows Lack of appropriate opportunities and training program affect to female career advancement among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 31.67% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 38 individuals). 55.83% agree with the statement (i.e., 67 individuals).12.50% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 15 individuals). 2,50%disagree with the statement (i.e., 3 individuals).1.67% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 2 individuals). Since the majority agree that Lack of appropriate opportunities and training program affect to female career advancement.

Table 9: Male dominated work culture and few female roles model discourages women employee to go for career advancement.

Response	Count	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	27	22.88%	22.88%	22.88%
Agree	58	49.15%	49.15%	72.03%
Moderate	24	20.34%	20.34%	92.37%
Disagree	11	9.32%	9.32%	101.69%
Strongly Disagree	4	3.39%	3.39%	100.00%
Grand Total	124	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show male dominated work culture, and few female roles model discourages women employee to go for career advancement among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 22.88% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 27individuals). 49.15% agree with the statement (i.e., 58 individuals).20.34% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 24 individuals). 9.32%disagree with the statement (i.e., 11 individuals).3.39% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 4 individuals). Since the majority agree that male dominated work culture and few female roles model discourages women employee to go for career advancement.

Table 10: Women are not promoted to senior management position at same rate as men in hotel industry.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	29	23.77%	23.77%	23.77%
Agree	38	31.15%	31.15%	54.92%
Moderate	29	23.77%	23.77%	78.69%
Disagree	19	15.57%	15.57%	94.26%
Strongly Disagree	7	5.74%	5.74%	100.00%
Grand Total	122	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show Women are not promoted to senior management position at same rate as men in hotel industry among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 23.77% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 29 individuals). 31.15% agree with the statement (i.e., 38 individuals).31.15% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 29 individuals). 15.57%disagree with the statement (i.e., 19 individuals).5.74 % strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 7 individuals). Since the majority agree that Women are not promoted to senior management position at same rate as men in hotel industry.

Table 11: Gender based discrimination regarding nature of job, negatively effect on women on women career advancement in hotel industry.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	27	20.93%	20.93%	20.93%
Agree	60	46.51%	46.51%	67.44%
Moderate	22	17.05%	17.05%	84.49%
Disagree	13	10.08%	10.08%	94.57%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.55%	1.55%	100.00%
Grand Total	124	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show Gender based discrimination regarding nature of job, negatively effect on women on women career advancement in hotel industry among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 20.93% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 27 individuals).

46.65% agree with the statement (i.e., 60 individuals).17.05% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 22 individuals). 10.08%disagree with the statement (i.e., 13 individuals).1.55 % strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 2 individuals). Since the majority agree that Gender based discrimination regarding nature of job, negatively effect on women on women career advancement in hotel industry.

Table 12: People think women are not suitable to handle senior management position comparing men

Response	Count	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	18	14.63%	14.63%	14.63%
Agree	53	43.09%	43.09%	57.72%
Moderate	22	17.89%	17.89%	75.61%
Disagree	18	14.63%	14.63%	90.24%
Strongly Disagree	11	8.94%	8.94%	100.00%
Grand Total	122	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show People think women are not suitable to handle senior management position comparing men among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 14.63% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 18 individuals). 43.09% agree with the statement (i.e., 53 individuals).17.89% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 22 individuals). 14.63%disagree with the statement (i.e., 11 individuals).8.94 % strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 11 individuals). Since most people think women are not suitable to handle senior management position comparing men.

Table 13: Often hotel industry career advancement-based experience and well-educated worker. So, female discourages entree to the industry.

Response	Count	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	16	13.33%	13.33%	13.33%
Agree	42	35.00%	35.00%	48.33%
Moderate	40	33.33%	33.33%	81.67%
Disagree	21	17.50%	17.50%	99.17%
Strongly Disagree	6	5.00%	5.00%	100.00%
Grand Total	120	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show Often hotel industry career advancement-based experience and well-educated worker. So, female discourages entree to the industry among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 13.33% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 16 individuals). 35.00% agree with the statement (i.e., 42 individuals).35.33% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 40 individuals). 17.50%disagree with the statement (i.e., 21 individuals).5.00 % strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 6 individuals). Since majority of people agree that Often hotel industry career advancement-based experience and well-educated worker. So, female discourages entree to the industry.

Table 14: Woman faces more challenges balancing work life responsibilities compared to men in hotel industry.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	32	25.60%	25.60%	25.60%
Agree	53	42.40%	42.40%	68.00%
Moderate	26	20.80%	20.80%	88.80%
Disagree	10	8.00%	8.00%	96.80%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.60%	1.60%	100.00%
Grand Total	123	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show Woman faces more challenges balancing work life responsibilities compared to men in hotel industry among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 25.60% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 32 individuals). 42.40% agree with the statement (i.e., 53 individuals).20.80% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 26 individuals). 8.00%disagree with the statement (i.e., 10 individuals).1.60 % strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 2 individuals). Since majority of people agree that Woman faces more challenges balancing work life responsibilities compared to men in hotel industry.

Table 15: There is sufficient organizational support for woman's career development in the hotel industry.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	19	20.21%	20.21%	20.21%
Agree	46	48.94%	48.94%	69.15%
Moderate	19	20.21%	20.21%	89.36%
Disagree	14	14.89%	14.89%	94.15%
Strongly Disagree	3	3.19%	3.19%	100.00%
Grand Total	94	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show there is sufficient organizational support for woman's career development in the hotel industry among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 20.21% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 19 individuals). 48.94% agree with the statement (i.e., 46 individuals).20.21% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 19 individuals). 14.89%disagree with the statement (i.e., 14 individuals).3.19% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 3 individuals). Since majority of people agree that there is sufficient organizational support for woman's career development in the hotel industry.

Table 16: The culture within the hotel industry does not fully support women's career growth and leadership development.

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Valid Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	19	15.32%	15.32%	15.32%
Agree	49	39.52%	39.52%	54.84%
Moderate	32	25.81%	25.81%	80.65%
Disagree	20	16.13%	16.13%	96.78%
Strongly Disagree	4	3.23%	3.23%	100.00%
Grand Total	124	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Field survey 2024

The above table show the culture within the hotel industry does not fully support women's career growth and leadership development among the respondents. Among 127 individuals, 15.32% strongly agree with the statement (i.e., 19 individuals). 39.52% agree

with the statement (i.e., 49 individuals).25.81% feels the statement is moderate (i.e., 32 individuals). 16.13%disagree with the statement (i.e., 20 individuals).3.23% strongly disagree with the statement (i.e., 4 individuals). Since majority of people agree that the culture within the hotel industry does not fully support women's career growth and leadership development.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight significant challenges faced by women in advancing their careers in the hotel industry. The results indicate that hard work is essential for retaining positions, with a majority of respondents acknowledging its importance. However, gender-based barriers persist, limiting women's upward mobility. Discrimination in female leadership roles, work overload, and informal workplace networks were found to discourage career advancement for women. Additionally, a lack of training opportunities, male-dominated work culture, and an absence of female role models further contribute to career stagnation. The study also reveals that women are not promoted to senior management positions at the same rate as men. Gender-based discrimination in job roles negatively impacts women's professional growth, reinforcing systemic inequalities. These findings suggest an urgent need for policy interventions, mentorship programs, and workplace reforms to create a more inclusive environment. Addressing these barriers through equal opportunities, leadership development initiatives, and supportive organizational policies can help bridge the gender gap. While women demonstrate the dedication required to succeed in the hotel industry, structural and cultural challenges hinder their progression. A collective effort from employers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders is crucial to fostering gender equity in career advancement.

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