

The challenges of female managers in Ireland

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“Submitted to the National College of Ireland, August 2019”

Abstract

Giselle Sardinha Lima – The challenges of female managers in Ireland

This research aims to find the challenges of female managers in Ireland. The purpose of this topic is to better understand the difficulties which female managers in Ireland have to overcome during their professional life. Therefore, help companies to improve their organizational culture solving some of the issues that female managers in Ireland face.

To comply with this objective, quantitative methodology was used to conduct the research, in which 89 participants answered an online survey with Likert scale questions. Then, all data was analyzed by IBM SPSS software.

The author discovered that work life and family life balance, promotion and difficulty leading a team are challenges that female managers in Ireland have to overcome.

Even with changes in companies' policies and culture, female managers still have extra pressure and extra work to achieve their professional goals.

With this research, companies can help female managers to achieve their goals as professionals who have responsibilities with their families and are able to accomplish it.

Keywords: Female, female managers, managers in Ireland, female in management field, gender equality.

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank God for giving me the opportunity to study this course and the strength to finish it.

I also want to thank my dearly loved husband, Darcio de Lima, for all his support during this course showing me how important he is in my life.

Thank my supervisor Dr. April Hargreaves for her guidance and kindness while I was lost and she gave me direction to finish this dissertation and Dr. Martin Skitmore for kindly sharing his work with me, so I could have a validated questionnaire with so much quality to work with.

I am so grateful for my parents, family and friends support, helping me to achieve my goals here in Ireland and life.

And the last gratitude that I have is for all people who have helped me answering or sharing my survey

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Introduction

The number of women working and achieving their careers in Ireland is growing significantly and, as result of this, women are obtaining management positions. According to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) (2014; 2017), this growth went from 55.9% in 2013 to 59.5% in 2016. This demonstrates that woman are willing to develop their professional career more than ever, but they have been facing some challenges to achieve this goal. Even though they have been studying and improving the skills they still have to deal with challenges that men may not have. In 2016, the majority of people between 25 and 34 years old with third level education was women with 55.3% while men were 42.7% (CSO, 2017).

The objective of this thesis is to identify the challenges of women who work as managers. This study will investigate the challenges in their (H1) family-life and work-life, (H2) promotion and (H3) the lack of gender equality that makes the act of leading a team a challenge for female managers.

1 Literature Review

The quantity of women working as managers is modest but the challenges that they have to deal with are significant. These challenges can reflect positively or negatively in the company. As previous studies have shown, women's well-being affects directly the companies, as "occupational stress among women middle managers will not only affect individual health but eventually will lead to lower organizational performance" (Fei *et al.*, 2017, pp. 9). To prevent future issues with women's well-being, "organizations should implement effective measures to make sure female middle managers are free from work-family conflict and the barrier to career achievement" (Fei *et al.*, 2017, pp. 9).

Women's well being will depend on these three hypotheses highlighted hereafter:

1.1 Work-family balance

Work-family balance has brought conflicts and issues for organizational behavior, sociology and human resource management (Xu, 2009). When women do not have a balance between their work and family, this may result in issues in their jobs as dissatisfaction, turnover intention, absenteeism and occupation stress (Amstad *et al.*, 2011; Blomme, Van Rheede and Tromp, 2010; Grzywacz and Smith, 2016; Netemeyer, Brashear-Alejandro and Boles, 2004).

When women have a family to take care, especially if they are a single mother, and do not have a job that allows them to have more time with their family, this professional will start to feel dissatisfaction with their job. This issue may result in low performance in their companies. A manager with low performance can lead their team to a wrong path, missing the company's target. Adding to this, if any professional has a problem with job dissatisfaction, this issue will also reflect on their clients' satisfaction and loyalty (Netemeyer *et al.*, 2004). For a healthy company, Human Resources needs to work on this and try to help woman managers to balance their role with their family life. If Human Resources do not

give care attention on it, they will have the employees' turnover percentage drastically increased.

It was proven by Blomme *et al.* (2010) that when a professional has work-family conflicts, the turnover intention tends to raise and this process is costly for the company because of all training and recruitment involved to hire another person. Women need to be there for their families and some companies do not have the flexibility to manage this issue with women who have managerial responsibilities. Some companies have in their organizational culture a sense of urgency. Some problems cannot be left for the next day, they need to be solved right away, and this demand more time working and less time for their family. Looking for a solution for this, the professional start to look for another job that can help them overcome this problem. Meanwhile, the company will start to face absenteeism.

Another consequence for professionals that do not have work-life balance is absenteeism, according to Amstad *et al.* (2011), and this can result in a problem for the organization. "Failing to manage employee attendance effectively can inflict great organizational costs, in terms of lost productivity, poor performance, and frustrated coworkers" (Schaumberg and Flynn, 2017, p. 982). A great challenge for women managers is to administrate their absenteeism, especially when they need to solve any problem in their family. All teams need their manager around to lead and support them. If the manager is absent for a long time, their team can forget their target and decrease their performance.

Women managers tend to avoid being absent in their job and, beyond that, most of them need to work overtime to prove their capability and competency. As Casademunt, Cabrera and Molina (2018, p. 1) said, "The advancement of women to top management positions positively affects firm competitiveness. However, this advancement may also negatively affect individuals as women find themselves forced to overwork to match their male counterparts in organizations, which can cause a decrease in their professional well-being". Overtime-working outcomes are less time to spend with their family, less time for leisure and less time for self-care (Rose, 2017). Not having time for children can reflect in future

education problem for these kids and so often women know that and feel guilty (Rose, 2017; Cuéllar-Molina *et al.*, 2018).

Lack of time can also affect a female manager's marriage. Their partners spend more time alone and this situation may lead them to divorce. Because of older culture, women tend to receive more pressure to stay at home and take care of their children. As Lawson *et al.* (2013) have stated, "women managers who are married and have children experience more work-family conflict than men". This situation brings more stress for women, which will make them forget their job (Carlson and Kacmar, 2000). According to Armstrong, Atkin-Plunk and Wells (2015), work-family balance and occupational stress are related and, adding to this, Apperson *et al.* (2002) said that the level of both increase together.

1.2 Career Achievement

Previous studies showed that career achievement and occupational stress are connected and the lack of career progression will increase the sense of insecurity and cause stress (Aizzat, Ramayah and Kumaresan, 2004; Carr *et al.*, 2015). As Alok, Raveendran and Shaheen (2015) demonstrated in their study, when a woman receives clear information about responsibilities and roles at work, they feel more confidence among their colleagues. This confidence will help them achieve their goal. Roles clarification is a challenge for a woman in a managerial position and if their role is not clear they may struggle to keep their job and this can be a stressful situation. The restriction of information can be a great barrier for women managers to achieve their goals. If companies have clear communication saying what they really expect from the professional and describe all objectives and performances expected, these women will be able to have the knowledge and remain in their posts (Cuéllar-Molina, *et al.*, 2018).

Companies' communication is essential to support and give direction to the manager. "The under-representation of women in places of power appears to affect the amount and nature of the support and mentoring they receive" (Obers, 2014, p.1119). Although, the research conducted by Bono *et al.* (2017) demonstrated that when supervisors believe that a manager might derail in the

future, they tend to withdraw mentoring support and sponsorship, which are especially critical for women career advancement. The literature reviewed shows that women in managerial positions receive less support from the company, which makes their life more difficult and challenging. To overcome this lack of support, they need to overcome this issue and have self-motivation.

As stated by Ayca (2004), the key factors to women manager are successful are related to motivation, determination, and self-confidence. Day-by-day women managers need to be motivated to overcome inequality and grow their performance. This motivation needs to defeat difficulties they may have during their time away, especially if they need to prove their competence to their team. The determination to finish what they have started and to follow their objectives. Having determination can be a challenge for women without motivation from the company and family. As mentioned above, self-confidence can be a challenge for women managers who do not have support, which will reflect in their determination to remain in their role. Confidence may also be a consequence of knowledge.

Bono *et al.* (2017) suggested that female managers should have individual coaching to help them keep on track. Ayca (2004, p. 457) also declared, “Moreover, job-relevant criteria such as having extensive work experience and knowledge, seeking difficult and high visibility assignments, and continuously exceeding performance criteria also determine the extent to which women are recruited for higher positions”. In countries such as Turkey, women managers need to exceed the recruiter’s expectations to compete in a high position and it is believed this process does not happen only in Turkey, but also in other countries (Ayca, 2004). Further study is needed for this supposition. Achieving their careers and keeping their behavior healthy at the same time is difficult if women cannot balance their time between work and family (Scott, 2009).

1.3 Gender Equality

It is known that gender equality is still a huge challenge for women. Pointing out this lack of balance, researchers found that women may experience extra pressure than men in the workplace (Cohen and Janicki, 2010).

As stated by Walby (2018, pp. 33), “the fuller utilization of women’s labour - by investment in human capital, reducing discrimination in labour markets, and re-orienting industrial policy - is the best way of securing a future of combined economic growth and social justice”. Discrimination against professional women may affect companies’ economy and the nation’s economy. It is a challenge for women in a managerial post to overcome this issue, as companies need to change the way they recruit executives, giving chances to women to demonstrate their abilities and be able to compete for a position fairly. Gender equality is still a great challenge for women, as they are not treated equally.

The research in the field of IT in the UK conducted by Kirton and Robertson (2018) stated that gender equality depends on companies’ culture. Some companies have more management opportunities for women than others. Some of them promote gender equality recruitment. Even though companies are promoting gender quality, these numbers are still low (Johansson and Ringblom, 2017).

“Women top managers are relatively few and dispersed to many companies, with relatively little influence wherever they work” (Kitterød and Teigen, 2018, p. 172). Influence has seemed to be another challenge for women in a managerial position, as their main role is to lead the team toward a certain target and, without influence, the team will not follow the women manager. It was stated by Cuéllar-Molina *et al.* (2018) that women in a managerial role need to have the confidence to influence people, and to have this skill, they have to know what they are doing and where they want to go. They need to have an objective and follow it.

Some companies have an organizational culture developed to work against gender inequality through which, helping women managers to be more confident. The previous study by Johansson and Ringblom (2017) has demonstrated that to have

more women in top management, some companies have changed their HR policies and are including quotas for recruitment. Walby (2018) has stated that policy which reports gender gap is a mandatory process for all firm level. "Such transparency is a necessary first step towards improved policy-making and its implementation in practice" (Walby, 2018, pp. 40). Adding to this, "Employment policy is an important area of decision-making because it has the potential to reduce the discrimination that distorts the economy and to improve work-life balance" (Walby, 2018, pp. 34). Human Resources has an important role in reducing gender equality, so that, women managers will face less pressure to achieve their goals.

Aycan (2004, pp. 454) declared that "the most significant barrier seemed to be the cultural norms toward gender roles". They also said that women managers' work life is considerably influenced by cultural norms (Aycan, 2004). A common case is when women want to return to the paid workforce after a period to take care of their children. Companies without gender equality in their organizational culture assume that women are not able to do some tasks or to do specific training because of their responsibility with their family and, adding to this, the company is not concerned about the women's opinion on this. Through which, the company believes that having women in a top position can be a costly investment because they will get married, have children and maybe leave the job (Aycan, 2004).

In the research conducted by Kirton and Robertson (2018), they found out that female after maternity leave found difficult to remain in their jobs, as they were advised by their male line managers to consider looking for another job. In their research, they also described a few situations where the women, who had children, were looking for a job with more flexibility, but they found difficult to return to a fulltime job or more challenging roles.

Women who want to return to their job after a period taking care of their children face a complicated challenge sometimes when they find a job as the job does not pay accordingly to their role and responsibilities. It was shown by Walby (2018) that discrimination is still an issue when it comes to women be paid a fair price for

their work. According to Aodha (2017), in 2014, there was a pay gap of 16% amidst men and women in a managerial position. The report named as ‘Gender Equality Global Report and Ranking’ from Equileap (2018, p.5) demonstrated that the top score for the pay gap between men and women in 2018 was 71% and in 2017 was 63%. Companies still have some steps ahead to overcome gender equality, but the numbers above have shown that is not impossible.

1.4 Conclusion

According to the literature reviewed, work-family balance, career achievement and gender equality appear to see a great challenge for women in managerial position. Women managers need to balance their work activities and their family. Most of them overwork and find it difficult to give enough attention for both areas. This issue brings so many consequences not only for them but also for their family and company. First, the consequences for the company are job dissatisfaction, turnover intention, absenteeism, occupational stress, client dissatisfaction, low performance, costs to the company and demotivation. Second, the result in their family life are not much time to spend with children and take care of their education. They have little time to spend with their partners resulting sometimes in divorce and no time for leisure which can all affect their health because of the stress.

The work-family balance also reflects on women managers’ career achievement. As described above, occupational stress and career achievement are connected and the level of both can affect women professional futures. To develop and achieve their career, women managers need to face challenges such as insecurity, confidence and clear communication from their managers and the company. They also need to have determination, self-motivation, exceed knowledge, work harder to remain in their position, overcome the absence of support and mentoring from the company and performance expected from the company. All these items are correlated to their capability to balance their work and their family life.

Adding to this, gender equality seems to be a difficult challenge to face, as it involves cultural aspects. The research above showed that women managers

experience more pressure in their jobs than men. They need to overcome discrimination trying to compete for a position that they may not have any change to obtain it or trying to influence their team or the board to achieve their goals. Some companies are changing their organizational culture including women in top management positions and creating internal policies to help minimize the gender equality. Also, there are rewards for companies that intent to treat women equally what, according to authors read, can help women managers to achieve their careers and have work-family balance.

Considering the literature reviewed, these researches were done in different countries, none was done in Ireland, so that, this research aims to understand the challenges that female managers have to overcome in Ireland.

2 Research Question

The objective of this research is to find out what challenges women managers face in their work-life.

It is known that women are expanding their actuation to several professional fields but this situation has brought them new challenges to overcome. Analyzing this statement, three hypotheses were deducted as their challenges: work-family balance, career achievement and gender equality.

The first hypothesis for this research question is achieving family-life and work-life balance is a challenge for female managers.

The second hypothesis is that promotion is a challenge for a female in a management role.

In addition, the third and last hypothesis is that the lack of gender equality makes the act of leading a team a challenge for female managers.

To analyze these hypotheses, research for this dissertation will attempt to answer the following three questions raised:

Is it possible for female managers to balance family life and work life?

Is attaining promotion difficult for female managers?

Is it difficult for female managers to lead a team?

The aim of this research is to help to understand what females with the managerial jobs have to deal with in their organization.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Approach

For this research, the methodology chosen was quantitative, what is mostly used for any data collection technique, such as questionnaires, or data analysis procedure, in which is included graphics or statistics, that generates or uses numerical data (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009). This methodology was also used in some literature which was reviewed for this work, such as the Thi and Skitmore (2003), in which they researched about “women project managers: the current status and future improvement”.

The experimental design was chosen for this research as it was evaluated as one of the best for this methodology and the data source was primary data, as this was classified as relevant for this research.

For the purpose of this research design, independent variables were identified for this thesis. The variables include work-family balance, career achievement and gender equality. The dependent variables were established as the challenges of females managers.

3.2 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was adapted from the original work of the authors Thi and Skitmore (2003) who have written the journal “Women project managers: The current status and future improvement” (see appendix 2). All modifications were necessary, and, the first reason was because Thi and Skitmore (2003) combined qualitative and quantitative methodology in their work and this research is using only quantitative method, so that, all questions that were associated to the qualitative method were not included, as listed below:

- PART 1 – Question 5, question 6
- PART 2 – Question 2
- PART 3 – Question 2

- PART 4 – Question 1, question 3, question 5

Secondly, some modifications were made as Thi and Skitmore's (2003) work specifically related to women project managers, whilst this work is including all female managers in Ireland, no matter their roles or field. So that, all phrases that appear in the original questionnaire as “women project managers” was changed to “female managers”. Following the same reason, some questions were adapted or not included for being considered irrelevant for the purpose of this research, such as:

- PART 1

Question 6: It was relevant to ask only how long the person was working as a manager, giving only four options to choose

Question 7, question 8, question 9 and question 11: They were not included because it was not relevant

- PART 2

Question 3: It was not included because it was not relevant

The third reason for modifications was because the original questionnaire was done in paper and the actual questionnaire was an online survey, which obligated the author to adapt some words and layout to fit in the context, as follow:

- All words “circling” were changed to “ticking”
- The table on Part 2, question 1, was divided into two different tables and the numbers were changed to the corresponding text
- For the table on Part 3, question 1, the scales in numbers were changed to the corresponding text
- Part 4, question 2, the table was divided into two different tables and the numbers were changed to the corresponding text
- Part 4, question 4, the scales in numbers were changed to the related text

The fourth and last reason for the adaptations was the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). EU GDPR.ORG (2019) stated that every subject must consent to share their data to fit a purpose in which they are involved, in this case, consent to share their personal data with this research. On the other hand, the data controller, in this case, the author, must keep the data safe and use only for the designated purpose and the controller must make clear to the respondent that they can withdraw whenever they want (EU GDPR.ORG, 2019).

“The conditions for consent have been strengthened, and companies are no longer able to use long illegible terms and conditions full of legalese. The request for consent must be given in an intelligible and easily accessible form, with the purpose for data processing attached to that consent. Consent must be clear and distinguishable from other matters and provided in an intelligible and easily accessible form, using clear and plain language. It must be as easy to withdraw consent as it is to give it” (EU GDPR.ORG, 2019).

The respondent must agree with the term before starting to answer the questionnaire, so that, the author added two questions at the beginning of the survey, which the first was asking for consent and the second was making the respondent aware of their right to withdraw at any time.

As a legal right, the participant also had the option of not choosing their gender in question 4, what was another adaptation from the original questionnaire.

3.3 Sampling Strategy

As this research is specifically for female managers in Ireland, there was a limitation to access them and gather their responses. For this case, the sampling used was non-probability, as we could have a few people answering the questionnaire representing the population.

Adding to this, as there was a particular population that the author wanted to reach, the purposive sampling was utilized as a better method to first approach this desired group of people, progressing to the exponential non-discriminative snowball sampling which enables to reach a group of people that is difficult to

identify (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). In other words, the author handpicked each participant and the same participant was asked to share the survey link to a person who they know with the needed characteristics.

As women managers tend to be busy and do not have much time for personal meetings, phone calls or answering e-mails, it was decided that it would be easier for them to fill out an online questionnaire, which was created using the Google Forms online platform. Each female who had answered the questionnaire was asked to share the link or the QR code with their colleagues or friends who were female in a management role. This process was for virtual snowball sampling.



Figure 1 QR Code for Online Survey

The author also attempts to share the online survey in social media such as Facebook groups, LinkedIn posts, WhatsApp groups and businesses groups, but it was not successful, so that, therefore, the purposive and snowball sampling was the method that brought success for this document.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

According to EU GDPR.ORG (2019), it is against the law to obtain personal data from any subject without a real purpose, so that, the questionnaire was completely anonymous, as the personal identification was not necessary for this research, which transforms this research safe and assured data protection.

3.5 Limitations

There was a risk of not getting enough participants to make the research reliable as female managers are busy and did not have much time to answer it.

Another limitation was the lack of knowledge using IBM SPSS software to analyze the results. As it was the first time that the author was using this software and there was not much time to learn more, it was not possible to know, in depth, the tools of this software and use advanced processes of analysis.

3.6 Method of Quantitative Data Analysis

The questions were set online by the Google Forms platform as a survey and females who have managerial jobs received access to this questionnaire in which there were items related to their day-by-day work-life.

All data was collected and stored in Google Forms then imported as a Microsoft Excel file (*.xls) to IBM SPSS software where the data was analyzed and the statistics were calculated.

To analyze this data, descriptive statistics was chosen in which the samples are described and explained for a better understanding of the results.

4 Results

In this section, the findings obtained after the questionnaire was shared with the selected sample group are presented.

Through the online questionnaire, 89 answers were received from females who have management roles in Ireland. The majority of the participants were married women with dependent children, with 4 to 7 years of experience in management roles and ages between 26 to 36 years old (25% of the participants).

Summing an amount of 15% of the participants, single women with dependent children, with over 11 years of experience as managers and over 55 years old, was the group with the second highest participation in the survey. The third highest group that participated in the questionnaire (13% of the participants) were married women with dependent children, with 7 to 10 years of experience as managers and over 55 years old. A summary of the participants' profile can be found in the appendices section (see appendix 3).

The questionnaire was divided into 4 parts, where the first part was the participants' profile. The second part was their experiences and how positive or negative these experiences had influenced them. The third part was to agree or disagree with a few statements. Moreover, the fourth and last part was to say how important the statements were to help them to make a decision to stay and leave the management field. Adding to this, still in the fourth part, it was asked to the participants their opinion on how much effect the actions listed would improve the situation of female managers.

4.1 Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha was used to validate the scale and check its reliability by using a single test (Cho & Kim, 2015).

According to Cronbach's Alpha statistic, the result should be greater than $\alpha = 0.7$ to be acceptable consistency of gathered data, however, the result for this research is $\alpha = 0.664$, what is a great result considering all limitations faced during the survey.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.664	.792	100

Table 1 Reliability Statistics

4.2 Part 1 – Participants profile

In part 1 of the questionnaire, data about the participant's profile was collected, where they answered their age, gender, marital status, if they had dependent children, for how long they had been working as managers and the industry where they had most of their experiences.

The results for age showed that most of the participants' age ranged from 37 to 55 years old ($n=89$, $M=5.91$, $Mo=6$ and $SD=0.848$). All participants were females, which have validated the survey, as only female managers in Ireland were asked to answer the questionnaire ($n=89$, $M=8$, $Mo=8$ and $SD=0.000$).

Only one person decided to not answer the questions about their marital status, however, the majority of responses was married ($n=88$, $M=10.69$, $Mo=11$ and $SD=0.414$).

When asked if the person had dependent children, 1 person chose to skip this item. The result was that most of them had dependent children ($n=88$, $M=14.78$, $Mo=15$ and $SD=0.000$).

All participants answered the question about the time they had been working as a manager, which the greater number was from 4 to 7 years ($n=89$, $M=17.63$, $Mo=18$ and $SD=0.970$).

The last indicator for part 1 was the field of work. The participants were asked to indicate the field that they have most of their experience and the result was in finance. There were a few different answers for this item showing that the participants were from different fields and experiences, even though, 3 participants have opted for not answering this question (n=86, M=25.22, Mo=21 and SD=5.773).

Statistics Frequencies – Participants Profile							
		Age	Gender	Marital status	Dependent children	Working as a manager	Industry are most of your experience
N	Valid	89	89	88	88	89	86
	Missing	0	0	1	1	0	3
Mean		5.91	8.00	10.69	14.78	17.63	25.22
Std. Error of Mean		0.090	0.000	0.059	0.044	0.103	0.623
Median		6.00	8.00	11.00	15.00	18.00	21.00
Mode		6	8	11	15	18	21
Std. Deviation		0.848	0.000	0.554	0.414	0.970	5.773

Table 2 Frequencies Part 1

When analyzing the data using Pearson Correlation method to assure the correlation between the variables above, surprisingly, it was not found a significant correlation between them.

Their marital status (n=84, M=10.71 and SD=0.550) and the type of industry where they work (n=84, M=25.18 and SD=5.817) was revealed by Pearson's r data analysis a moderate positive correlation, r=0.609. Females who are married have more experience in retail, school and training fields. This research showed that the marital status influences in the career field of female managers.

Another finding was that the industry where females work (n=84, M=25.18 and SD=5.817) slightly influences the period they had been working as a manager (n=84, M=17.70 and SD=0.929). The Pearson's r data analysis revealed low positive correlation, r=0.487 (see table 11 on appendix 4).

4.3 Part 2 – Experiences and influences

In Part 2, the participants had a few questions to answer regarded to their experiences and influences of these experiences during their work life and most of the answers were a high level of experience and positive influences. These items were divided in two different Likert scales where in one it asked to indicate their opinion the experiences they have had, raking them as “Do not know or do not have any idea”=37, “High level of experience”=38, “Low level of experience”=39 and “No experience”=40. The second Likert scale was asking their opinion of the influences that the experiences had in their career as “Do not know or do not have any idea”=41, “Negative influence”=42, “No influence”=43 and “Positive influence”=44.

4.3.1 Experiences

The participants answered that they had experienced most of the statements listed in the questionnaire. They had a high level of experience in organizing under pressure (M=38.31, Mo=38, SD=0.632), difficulties to communicate with people onsite (M=38.35, Mo=38, SD=0.676), difficulties in working with group dynamics (M=38.38, Mo=38, SD=0.699) and difficulties in applying management technique (M=38.53, Mo=38, SD=0.641). Analyzing this data, the research showed that female managers who have answered the questionnaire have had experiences that result in difficulties to lead a team. However, they have a high level of experience in co-operative leadership (M=38.3, Mo=38, SD=0.611), which demonstrated that few female managers have support from their leadership.

Limited promotion prospects (M=38.22, Mo=38, SD=0.517) are still challenging among female managers, as it is a high level of experience for them.

The participants answered that combining work and family (M=38.24, Mo=38, SD=0.523) was a statement that they have a high level experience, whilst discrimination against females in general (M=38.09, Mo=38, SD=0.925) is still a challenge for female managers, as the high level of experience was the most answered.

Difficulty to join informal network (M=38.73, Mo=39, SD=0.653), differences of gendered management style (M=38.64, Mo=39, SD=0.608), low paid fee (M=38.47, Mo=39, SD=0.623) and inappropriate job assignment (M=38.57, Mo=39, SD=0.721) were classified as low level of experience. The participants did not have much experience in these situations.

Statistics Frequencies - Experiences							
	N		Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing					
Organising under conflict	89	0	38.31	0.067	38	38	0.632
Co-operative leadership	89	0	38.3	0.065	38	38	0.611
Integrative thinking	89	0	38.29	0.07	38	38	0.661
Ability to make quick decision when environments changes	89	0	38.16	0.039	38	38	0.366
Being isolated and alone	89	0	38.82	0.095	38	38	0.899
Difficulty to find a mentor	89	0	38.82	0.097	39	38	0.912
Difficulty to join informal networks	89	0	38.73	0.069	39	39	0.653
Differences of gendered management style	89	0	38.64	0.064	39	39	0.608
Limited promotion prospects	89	0	38.22	0.055	38	38	0.517
Difficulties to communicate with people onsite	89	0	38.35	0.072	38	38	0.676
Difficulty to build relationship with clients	89	0	38.4	0.079	38	38	0.75
Difficulties in working with group dynamics	89	0	38.38	0.074	38	38	0.699

Difficulties accessing external professional training	89	0	38.54	0.073	38	38	0.692
Difficulties in applying management technique	89	0	38.53	0.068	38	38	0.641
Low paid fee	89	0	38.47	0.066	38	39	0.623
Inappropriate job assignment	89	0	38.57	0.076	39	39	0.721
Support from managers of your gender	89	0	38.54	0.064	39	38	0.604
Support from managers not of your gender	89	0	38.51	0.06	38	38	0.567
Initial understanding of the culture of the industry before entering the career	89	0	38.6	0.076	39	38	0.719
Combining work and family	89	0	38.24	0.055	38	38	0.523
Discrimination against females in general	89	0	38.09	0.098	38	38	0.925

Table 3 Frequencies Part 2 - Experiences

4.3.2 Influences

Following part 2 of the questionnaire, the next item was to answer if the experiences were positive or negative influence for them.

The data received and analyzed described that most of their experiences positively influenced them.

The experiences analyzed in the former item and classified as high level of experience, such as organizing under pressure (M=43.74, Mo=44, SD=0.594), difficulties to communicate with people onsite (M=43.38, Mo=44, SD=0.856) and difficulties in working with group dynamics (M=43.30, Mo=44, SD=0.817), were described as having a positive influence for the participants. There was an

exemption for difficulties in applying management technique (M=43.22, Mo=43, SD=0.687), which was classified as high level of experience but no influence.

The high level of experience in co-operative leadership (M=43.83, Mo=44, SD=0.458) was classified as a positive influence for female managers.

Whilst limited promotion prospects (M=43.53, Mo=44, SD=0.827) are still challenging for female managers, this item has a positive influence among them.

Combining work and family (M=43.57, Mo=44, SD=0.601) and discrimination against females in general (M=43.49, Mo=44, SD=0.827) are positive influence for the respondents, according to the survey.

Even though the participants did not have much experience with these items, difficulty to join the informal network (M=43.53, Mo=44, SD=0.813), differences of gendered management style (M=43.69, Mo=44, SD=0.667) and inappropriate job assignment (M=43.30, Mo=44, SD=0.745) were answered as positive influence for them. The opposite is the low paid fee (M=43.06, Mo=43, SD=0.646) which had low level experience and no influence.

The participants answered being isolated and alone as negative influence, which means that does not affect them.

Statistics Frequencies - Influences							
	N		Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing					
Organising under conflict	89	0	43.74	0.063	44.00	44	0.594
Co-operative leadership	89	0	43.83	0.049	44.00	44	0.458
Integrative thinking	89	0	43.81	0.060	44.00	44	0.562
Ability to make quick decision when environments changes	89	0	43.76	0.048	44.00	44	0.453
Being isolated and alone	89	0	42.91	0.101	43.00	42	0.949
Difficulty to find a mentor	89	0	43.48	0.083	44.00	44	0.785
Difficulty to join	89	0	43.53	0.086	44.00	44	0.813

informal networks							
Differences of gendered management style	89	0	43.69	0.071	44.00	44	0.667
Limited promotion prospects	89	0	43.53	0.088	44.00	44	0.827
Difficulties to communicate with people onsite	89	0	43.36	0.091	44.00	44	0.856
Difficulty to build relationship with clients	89	0	43.33	0.089	44.00	44	0.836
Difficulties in working with group dynamics	89	0	43.30	0.087	44.00	44	0.817
Difficulties accessing external professional training	89	0	43.42	0.076	44.00	44	0.720
Difficulties in applying management technique	89	0	43.22	0.073	43.00	43	0.687
Low paid fee	89	0	43.06	0.068	43.00	43	0.646
Inappropriate job assignment	89	0	43.30	0.079	43.00	44	0.745
Support from managers of your gender	89	0	43.65	0.060	44.00	44	0.566
Support from managers not of your gender	89	0	43.62	0.067	44.00	44	0.631
Initial understanding of the culture of the industry before entering the career	89	0	43.64	0.066	44.00	44	0.626
Combining work and family	89	0	43.57	0.064	44.00	44	0.601
Discrimination against females in general	89	0	43.49	0.088	44.00	44	0.827

Table 4 Frequencies Part 2 - Influences

4.4 Part 3 - Opportunities available to female managers

The participants were asked in part 3 of the questionnaire their opinion about a few statements, where they had four options to choose on a Likert scale. The

variables are: Don't know=45, Strongly agree=46, Neutral=47 and Strongly disagree=48.

The participants strongly disagree with the statement "there is increasing argument that "female are better managers" (M=47, Mo=48, SD=0.866), as well as, with the statement "are treated equally by their boss male colleagues" (M=47, Mo=48, SD=0.905) and "the increase in the acceptance of part-time management employment" (M=47.19, Mo=48, SD=0.890).

While asked about their opinion on "more female enter in management" (M=46.69, Mo=46, SD=0.763) and "higher demand for manager positions" (M=46.66, Mo=46, SD=0.811) statements, the participants answered that strongly disagree with them.

For the rest of the statements in part 3, the participants opt for neutral opinion.

Statistics Frequencies - Opinion							
	N		Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing					
Culture has changed in favour of female managers	89	0	47.22	0.078	47.00	47	0.735
There is an increase in the acceptance of mothers who work in managerial position	89	0	46.60	0.065	47.00	47	0.616
Increase in female's professional group(s)	89	0	46.57	0.055	47.00	47	0.520
More female enter management	89	0	46.69	0.081	47.00	46	0.763
Higher demand for manager positions	89	0	46.66	0.086	47.00	46	0.811
There is a change in entry requirements	89	0	46.74	0.090	47.00	47	0.846
There are more role models for	89	0	46.93	0.086	47.00	47	0.809

female managers							
There is increasing argument that “female are better managers”	89	0	47.00	0.092	47.00	48	0.866
Are treated equally by their boss. male colleagues	89	0	47.00	0.096	47.00	48	0.905
The increase in the acceptance of part-time management employment	89	0	47.19	0.094	47.00	48	0.890

Table 5 Frequencies Part 3

4.5 Part 4 – Prospects and actions to improve the promotion and progress of female managers

Part 4 was divided into 3 different Likert scales, in which, the first and second were asked to rank the level of importance from “Less important”=49, “Not much important”=50, “More important”=52 and “The most important”=53, which indicate the potential factor that may influence female managers’ decision to leave and stay in the management field. In the third was asked to rank from “Don’t know”=54, “Strongly negative effect”=55, “No effect”=56 and “Strongly positive effect”=57.

4.5.1 The decision to leave management field

According to the answers from the participants, the decisions to leave management field can be made by a few reasons, as it was shown in the table 6 below.

For the participants, to delegate responsibilities (M=52.17, Mo=53, SD=1.025) and the level of aspiration or motivation (M=52.28, Mo=53, SD=0.941) were the most important potential factor that may influence female managers’ decision to leave management field.

The participants ranked almost all statements as more important factors that may influence female managers' decision to leave the management field. It seems that when a female manager has to make a decision to leave the management role, these statements below tend to be considered.

Statistics Frequencies – Decision to leave						
	N		Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing				
Promotion prospects/opportunities	89	0	51.99	52.00	52	0.699
Time spent with family	89	0	52.22	52.00	52	0.579
Salary	89	0	51.85	52.00	52	0.777
Relationships in the industry	89	0	51.75	52.00	52	0.857
Experiences in the industry	89	0	51.81	52.00	52	0.838
Prospects for female in this field	89	0	51.55	52.00	52	0.754
Gender discrimination	89	0	51.08	52.00	52	1.539
Sexual harassment	89	0	51.04	52.00	52	1.507
Opportunities to find further jobs	89	0	51.28	52.00	52	1.128
Combining work and family life	89	0	52.11	52.00	52	0.630
Feeling of being isolated and alone	89	0	51.18	52.00	52	1.144
Delegation of responsibility	89	0	52.17	52.00	53	1.025
Need to work much harder than others to get ahead	89	0	51.99	52.00	52	0.935
The existence of the glass ceiling that keep female from advancement	89	0	51.99	52.00	52	0.872
Level of aggression needed to be managers	89	0	51.40	52.00	52	1.294
Level of aspiration/motivation	89	0	52.28	53.00	53	0.941

Table 6 Frequencies Part 4 – Decision to leave management field

4.5.2 The decision to stay in the management field

The second Likert scale in part 4 of the questionnaire asked to rank in order of importance the potential factors that may influence female managers' decision to stay in the management field.

Sexual harassment (M=50.80, Mo=49, SD=1.447), feeling of being isolated and alone (M=50.73, Mo=49, SD=1.420) and level of aggression needed to be managers (M=50.74, Mo=49, SD=1.025) were ranked as less important to them, followed by the statement where says that gender discrimination (M=51.19, Mo=51, SD=0.999) is an important factor.

Otherwise, the participants ranked salary (M=51.94, Mo=52, SD=0.803), opportunities to find further jobs (M=51.76, Mo=52, SD=0.866), delegation of responsibility (M=51.66, Mo=52, SD=0.797), need to work much harder than others to get ahead (M=51.72, Mo=52, SD=0.866) and the existence of the glass ceiling that keep female from advancement (M=51.72, Mo=52, SD=0.826) as more important factors that lead them to a decision to stay in the management field.

The most important factors that may influence female managers' decision to stay in management field are the promotion prospects or opportunities (M=52.18, Mo=53, SD=0.886), time spent with family (M=52.20, Mo=53, SD=0.919), prospects for female in this field (M=52.98, Mo=53, SD=0.941), combining work and family life (M=52.15, Mo=53, SD=0.936) and the level of aspiration or motivation (M=52.10, Mo=53, SD=0.942).

Statistics Frequencies – Decision to stay						
	N		Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing				
Promotion prospects/opportunities	89	0	52.18	52.00	53	0.886
Time spent with family	89	0	52.20	53.00	53	0.919
Salary	89	0	51.94	52.00	52	0.803
Relationships in the industry	89	0	51.93	52.00	53	1.085
Experiences in the industry	89	0	51.93	52.00	53	1.053
Prospects for female in this field	89	0	51.98	52.00	53	0.941
Gender discrimination	89	0	51.19	51.00	51	0.999
Sexual harassment	89	0	50.80	51.00	49	1.447
Opportunities to find further jobs	89	0	51.76	52.00	52	0.866
Combining work and family life	89	0	52.15	52.00	53	0.936
Feeling of being isolated and	89	0	50.73	51.00	49	1.420

alone						
Delegation of responsibility	89	0	51.66	52.00	52	0.797
Need to work much harder than others to get ahead	89	0	51.72	52.00	52	0.866
The existence of the glass ceiling that keep female from advancement	89	0	51.72	52.00	52	0.826
Level of aggression needed to be managers	89	0	50.74	51.00	49	1.402
Level of aspiration/motivation	89	0	52.10	52.00	53	0.942

Table 7 Frequencies Part 4 – Decision to stay in management field

4.5.3 The action would improve the situation of female managers

On the third Likert scale of Part 4 of the questionnaire, it was listed a few statements where they answered if the actions stated would be positive, negative or would not affect the situation of female managers.

The descriptive analysis result was that most of the statements would have a strong positive effect with $M_o = 57$ and $M=56,51 \geq 56.89$ (see table 8 below).

The participants agreed that campaign to change society's perception of female ($M=56.60$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.669$), to change attitudes of career advisers ($M=56.89$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.318$) and to change females' attitudes about themselves ($M=56.60$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.598$) would strongly have a positive effect, as well as, offering more opportunities for females to find further jobs ($M=56.51$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.503$) and highlighting the role of females already in management field ($M= 56.55$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.584$).

Adding to this, organisational actions to encourage applications from females ($M= 56.69$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.595$), support to develop a network for females ($M=56.65$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.546$), AIPM to offer more opportunities for females to enter the industry ($M=56.69$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.513$) and provide childcare facilities to support working mothers ($M=56.71$, $M_o=57$, $SD=0.527$) were highly concerned by the participants.

The participants believe that the action of introducing an insight program for students such as site visits will not improve the situation of female managers in

Ireland (M=56.38, Mo=56, SD=0.554). Mentoring schemes (Mean=56.25, Mo=56, SD=0.483) is another action that, according to the participants, will not bring any result to the situation of females managers.

Statistics Frequencies - Action would improve the situation of female managers							
	N		Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation
	Valid	Missing					
Campaign to change society's perception of female	89	0	56.60	0.071	57.00	57	0.669
Campaign to change attitudes of career advisers	89	0	56.89	0.034	57.00	57	0.318
Campaign to change females' attitudes about themselves	89	0	56.60	0.063	57.00	57	0.598
Introduce an insight program for students such as site visits	89	0	56.38	0.059	56.00	56	0.554
Offer more opportunities for female to find further jobs	89	0	56.51	0.053	57.00	57	0.503
Highlight the role of females already in Management	89	0	56.55	0.062	57.00	57	0.584
Organisational actions to encourage applications from females	89	0	56.69	0.063	57.00	57	0.595
Support to develop a network for females	89	0	56.65	0.058	57.00	57	0.546
AIPM to offer more opportunities for females to enter the industry	89	0	56.69	0.054	57.00	57	0.513
Mentoring schemes	89	0	56.25	0.051	56.00	56	0.483
Provide child care facilities to support working mothers	89	0	56.71	0.056	57.00	57	0.527

Table 8 Frequencies Part 4 - Action to improve the situation of female managers

4.6 Conclusion

The aim of this analysis was to verify the participants' opinion, which was given using a few Likert scales in the questionnaire divided into 4 parts, where they

were able to choose the ranking level of each indicator. The data analyzed above indicated that females in management field have plenty of challenges to overcome. This research found out that work life and family life balance is an important influence and great factor among female managers' decisions, although they had high level of experience with this problem. Blomme *et al.* (2010) and Netemeyer *et al.* (2004) said that work life and family life balance is important for females, as the absence of this can cause dissatisfaction and turnover intention.

The research results also showed that promotion is a topic that most of the participants have had experience of and had great influence in their decision to stay or leave a job. It was found that promotion prospects are still limited to female managers, however, Johansson and Ringblom (2017) stated that there are more females on top management because some companies have changed their culture in favor of gender equality.

The difficulty to communicate with people onsite is an issue for female managers, moreover, have a great influence on their careers. The results showed that even though females are having more support from their leaders, leading a group doing some actions, such as dynamic groups or communication with people onsite is still challenging to overcome. According to Cuéllar-Molina *et al.* (2018), the female manager needs to have confidence and influence people to better lead them.

5 Discussion

5.1 Objective

The objective of this research was to discover the challenges of female managers who are working in Ireland. The aim was to find out what kind of challenges they have been facing and overcoming.

After reading journals while researching on female managers issues and challenges all over the world, as listed in the literature review, 3 hypotheses were established for females who have management role in Ireland, including (H1) family life and work-life balance, (H2) promotion and (H3) the lack of gender equality makes the act of leading a team a challenge for female managers.

The author collected data by using an online questionnaire where there were a few questions listed as Likert scales. The participants answered the indicators and all data were analyzed by IBM SPSS software.

This research brought more knowledge about the challenges and insights of female managers' in Ireland, which was not specifically studied in deep in this country. There are a few studies based on female managers in so many countries, such as Kirton and Robertson (2018) research conducted in the United Kingdom and Thi and Skitmore (2003) with their research based in Australia.

The research questions were based on the literature review, which raised the need to study the following items:

- Is it possible for female managers to balance family-life and work-life?
- Is attaining promotion difficult for female managers?
- Is it difficult for female managers to lead a team?

5.2 Possibility for female managers to balance family-life and work-life

Balancing work and family life have been a challenge for female managers, as many of them do not have support from their companies. Netemeyer *et al.* (2004) said that if females do not have work and family life balance, the issue will raise dissatisfaction in their job, what can reflect in their jobs. Overtime-working is also a problem because they spend less time with their family and for leisure (Rose, 2017). The research result indicate that females managers in Ireland have a high level of experience combining their work life and family life, which has a great influence on their career. This issue is the most important factor that influences their decision to stay or leave their job. The participants believe that if the companies provide childcare facilities to support working mothers will have a strong positive effect on their situation.

5.3 Attaining promotion difficulty for female managers

Attaining promotion is still difficult for female managers to achieve, as declared in the survey. The majority of the participants have faced this situation in the company where they have worked for and this item has influenced a few managers to leave their job or make the decision to stay in it.

Females experience extra pressure than males (Cohen and Janicki, 2010) to do their job and there are just a few in top management roles (Kitterod and Teigen, 2018), which indicate that the top position is not easy to achieve. The participants answered that having a high level of experience in limited promotion prospects which can positively influence their careers. Adding to this, promotion prospects and opportunities were considered an important factor that can influence their decision to stay or leave their job.

Walby (2018) stated that salary was not paid at a fair price to female managers, however, this research revealed that, in Ireland, low paid fees were not experienced by the participants, who answered to have had low level of experience in this point, moreover, this item has no influence in their career. Nevertheless, the low paid fee is an important factor that can influence their decision to stay or leave their job.

5.4 The difficulty for female managers to lead a team

The difficulties to communicate with people on-site and the high experience of organizing under conflict has indicated the difficulties that female managers have to lead a team. Adding to this, gender equity is still an obstacle to overcome. According to Aycan (2004), the cultural norms toward gender roles is the biggest barrier. The participants believe that gender discrimination is an important factor that influences their decision to stay or leave their job. Moreover, the participants strongly disagree with the statement, which said they were treated equally by their boss male colleagues.

These results can help companies to better understand their employees' needs, which will optimize their costs with turnover and absenteeism.

5.5 Limitations of the research

As this research aimed to study female managers in Ireland, the sampling was the first challenge to overcome. Female managers were busy and said the questionnaire was long to answer. Regarding this, there was a great number of participants who helped to achieve the objective and have accurate data to analyze. All participants were female who have management role experience in Ireland, which gave a better overview and effectiveness to the document.

The skills for the quantitative analysis was another obstacle of the study. The author did not have experience with IBM SPSS software to analyze the data and had to learn and develop the skills to use the software in order to present and describe the results. This learning process took longer than expected.

5.6 Recommendations of future research

For future research, it is highly recommended to study organizational culture in Ireland, because it seems that a company's culture has a great influence on female career success. Another recommendation is to know the impact of having more females in management role on the Irish economy.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Summary

This research aimed to investigate the challenges that female managers working in Ireland have to face in their family-life and work-life, difficulties for promotion and the lack of gender equality that makes the act of leading a team a challenge for female managers. It was done by using an online survey with Likert scales in which the participants had to answer according to their experience or opinion. All participants were female professionals who work in Ireland in management roles.

After analyzing the data, the author discovered that it is possible to have work life and family life balance, yet with difficulties. The studies demonstrated this is still a challenge for females in the management field. The second hypothesis was to find out if promotions were a challenge for female managers in Ireland and the research confirmed this statement. When females become managers, the next step, which is to be a top manager, is more difficult to achieve. They have to work harder to prove their abilities. This hunting for promotion can lead them to do not have work life and family life balance. The last hypothesis investigated was about the difficulties which female managers have to face to lead a team. This item indicated that female managers still have problem to lead a team, as communication and conflicts seem to be a great issue among this.

Unfortunately, there are a few situations that female managers in Ireland need to overcome, such as work under pressure and conflicts. These findings led the author to conclude that work life and family life balance, promotion and difficulties to lead a team are challenges for female managers in Ireland.

6.2 Objective

This study is important to help companies and government understand better the main issues that can cause great harm to their economy. Females are studying more and willing to achieve higher positions, but the challenges they have to overcome every day sometimes can make them give up on their dreams. If

companies and government could study deeper these challenges, they could have more skilled female professionals available to work. When a female manager gives up their position, the hiring and training costs increase, moreover, this extra cost affect the company`s economy.

6.3 Recommendations for future research

As stated earlier, the author recommends for future research in the study of organizational culture in Ireland and the impact of having more females in management role to the Irish economy.

6.4 Recommendations for practitioners

It is highly recommended for companies to review their culture, adapting it to the new world where females are working hard to support their family, yet want to have a good relationship with their children and partner by having time to spend with them. The government could help companies to support their female managers giving them more training and financial incentives.

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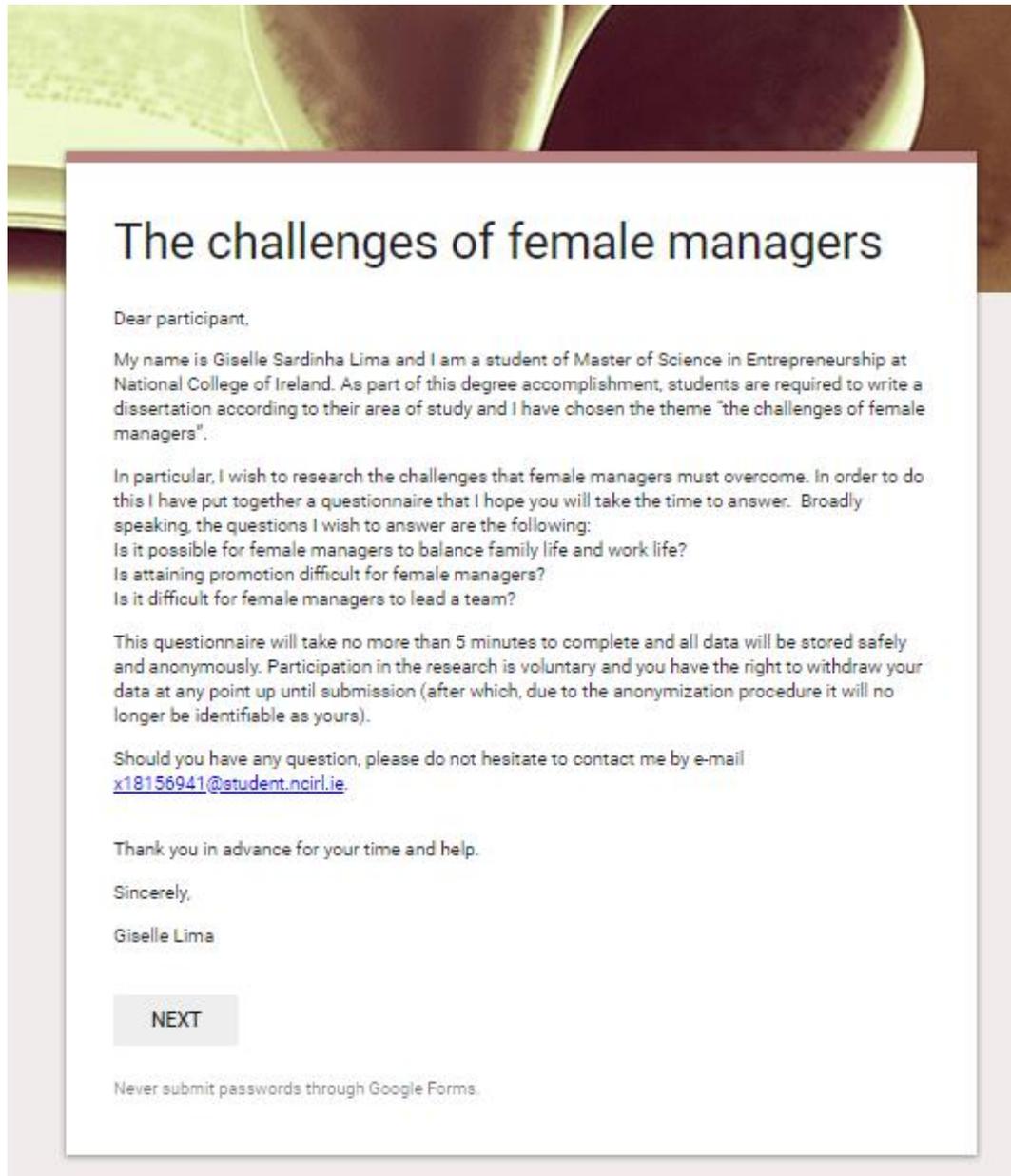
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Online Survey

Adapted from Thi and Skitmore (2003) questionnaire.

The image shows a screenshot of a Google Forms survey. The title is "The challenges of female managers". The sender is Giselle Sardinha Lima, a student at the National College of Ireland. The survey asks about the challenges female managers face, such as balancing family and work life, and attaining promotion. It includes a "NEXT" button and a disclaimer about not submitting passwords through Google Forms.

The challenges of female managers

Dear participant,

My name is Giselle Sardinha Lima and I am a student of Master of Science in Entrepreneurship at National College of Ireland. As part of this degree accomplishment, students are required to write a dissertation according to their area of study and I have chosen the theme "the challenges of female managers".

In particular, I wish to research the challenges that female managers must overcome. In order to do this I have put together a questionnaire that I hope you will take the time to answer. Broadly speaking, the questions I wish to answer are the following:

- Is it possible for female managers to balance family life and work life?
- Is attaining promotion difficult for female managers?
- Is it difficult for female managers to lead a team?

This questionnaire will take no more than 5 minutes to complete and all data will be stored safely and anonymously. Participation in the research is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your data at any point up until submission (after which, due to the anonymization procedure it will no longer be identifiable as yours).

Should you have any question, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail x18156941@student.ncirl.ie.

Thank you in advance for your time and help.

Sincerely,
Giselle Lima

NEXT

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Figure 2 Online Survey p. 01

The challenges of female managers

* Required

We are all curious to know about the challenges and opportunities for female managers. The following questionnaire aims to identify some of the main aspects. Confidentiality is assured.

Do you consent to share your data confidentially? *

Yes

No

I agree to take part of this survey and understand that I can withdraw at any time. *

Yes

No

BACK

NEXT

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Figure 3 Online Survey p. 02

The challenges of female managers

PART 1

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of your background, including your personal details and current career. Please tick the appropriate selection on the questionnaire, which is deemed to be appropriate and suitable to your present situation.

What is your age?

- Under 26
- 26 - 36
- 37 - 55
- Over 55

What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Other: _____

Figure 4 Online Survey p. 03A

Do you have any dependent children?

Yes

No

How long have you been working as a manager?

3 years or less

4 - 7 years

7 - 10 years

11 years or more

Figure 5 Online Survey p. 03B

What type of industry are most of your experience?

Constructions

IT

Heavy engineering

Health

Process and petrochemical

Training

Finance

Research and development

Other:

BACK

NEXT

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Figure 6 Online Survey p. 03C

The challenges of female managers

* Required

PART 2

The following questions relate to situations you have experienced and how these experiences have influenced your career.

Please indicate your opinion of your experiences by ticking the appropriate box. *

	Do not know or do not have any idea	No experience	Low level of experience	High level of experience
Organising under conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-operative leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrative thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to make quick decision when environments changes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being isolated and alone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulty to find a mentor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulty to join informal networks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Differences of gendered management style	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited promotion prospects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 7 Online Survey p. 04A

Difficulties to communicate with people onsite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulty to build relationship with clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties in working with group dynamics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties accessing external professional training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties in applying management technique	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low paid fee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inappropriate job assignment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support from managers of your gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support from managers not of your gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initial understanding of the culture of the industry before entering the career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Combining work and family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discrimination against females in general	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 8 Online Survey p. 04B

Please indicate your opinion of the influences of these experiences by ticking the appropriate box. *

	Do not know or do not have any idea	Negative influence	No influence	Positive influences
Organising under conflict	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-operative leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integrative thinking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to make quick decision when environments changes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being isolated and alone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulty to find a mentor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulty to join informal networks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Differences of gendered management style	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited promotion prospects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties to communicate with people onsite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulty to build relationship with clients	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties in working with group dynamics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Difficulties accessing external professional training	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 9 Online Survey p. 04C

Difficulties in applying management technique	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low paid fee	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inappropriate job assignment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support from managers of your gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support from managers not of your gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Initial understanding of the culture of the industry before entering the career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Combining work and family	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discrimination against females in general	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Figure 10 Online Survey p. 04D

The challenges of female managers

* Required

PART 3

This part concerns your views on the opportunities available to female managers

Please indicate your opinion by ticking the appropriate box. *

	Don't know	Strongly disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree
Culture has changed in favour of female managers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is an increase in the acceptance of mothers who work in managerial position	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase in female's professional group(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More female enter management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Higher demand for manager positions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a change in entry requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are more role models for female managers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is increasing argument that "female are better managers"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 11 Online Survey p. 05A

Are treated equally by their boss, male colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The increase in the acceptance of part-time management employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[BACK](#) [NEXT](#)

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Figure 12 Online Survey p. 05B

The challenges of female managers

* Required

PART 4

The following questions are to identify the prospects of female managers and the most effective actions that could be taken to improve the promotion and progress of female managers.

Please read through the following list and then rank in order of importance from 1 to 5 on the box to indicate the potential factors that may influence females manager's decision to leave management field. *

	1 Less important	2 Not much important	3 Important	4 More important	5 The most important
Promotion prospects/opportunities	<input type="radio"/>				
Time spent with family	<input type="radio"/>				
Salary	<input type="radio"/>				
Relationships in the industry	<input type="radio"/>				
Experiences in the industry	<input type="radio"/>				
Prospects for female in this field	<input type="radio"/>				
Gender discrimination	<input type="radio"/>				
Sexual harassment	<input type="radio"/>				
Opportunities to find further jobs	<input type="radio"/>				

Figure 13 Online Survey p. 06A

Opportunities to find further jobs	<input type="radio"/>				
Combining work and family life	<input type="radio"/>				
Feeling of being isolated and alone	<input type="radio"/>				
Delegation of responsibility	<input type="radio"/>				
Need to work much harder than others to get ahead	<input type="radio"/>				
The existence of the glass ceiling that keep female from advancement	<input type="radio"/>				
Level of aggression needed to be managers	<input type="radio"/>				
Level of aspiration/motivation	<input type="radio"/>				

Figure 14 Online Survey p. 06B

Please read through the following list and then rank in order of importance from 1 to 5 on the box to indicate the potential factors that may influence females manager's decision to stay in management field. *

	1 Less important	2 Not much important	3 Important	4 More important	5 The most important
Promotion prospects/opportunities	<input type="radio"/>				
Time spent with family	<input type="radio"/>				
Salary	<input type="radio"/>				
Relationships in the industry	<input type="radio"/>				
Experiences in the industry	<input type="radio"/>				
Prospects for female in this field	<input type="radio"/>				
Gender discrimination	<input type="radio"/>				
Sexual harassment	<input type="radio"/>				
Opportunities to find further jobs	<input type="radio"/>				
Combining work and family life	<input type="radio"/>				
Feeling of being isolated and alone	<input type="radio"/>				
Delegation of responsibility	<input type="radio"/>				
Need to work much harder than others to get ahead	<input type="radio"/>				
The existence of the glass ceiling that keep female from advancement	<input type="radio"/>				

Figure 15 Online Survey p. 06C

Level of aggression needed to be managers	<input type="radio"/>				
Level of aspiration/motivation	<input type="radio"/>				

Figure 16 Online Survey p. 06D

Please rank on scale of 1-4 how effective you think the following action would improve the situation of female managers by ticking the appropriate number next to the statement. *

	1 Don't know	2 Strongly negative effect	3 No effect	4 Strongly positive effect
Campaign to change society's perception of female	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Campaign to change attitudes of career advisers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Campaign to change females' attitudes about themselves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Introduce an insight program for students such as site visits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer more opportunities for female to find further jobs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Highlight the role of females already in Management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organisational actions to encourage applications from females	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support to develop a network for females	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
AIPM to offer more opportunities for females to enter the industry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 17 Online Survey p. 06E

Mentoring schemes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide child care facilities to support working mothers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Figure 18 Online Survey p. 06F

The challenges of female managers

Thank you for participating in this study!

The purpose of this research is to understand the challenges of female managers in the workplace.

I invited people who met the selection criteria of being both female and working in management in Ireland to participate in the study. The study results will contribute to an understanding of the experience and needs of female managers in the workforce.

It is possible that, due to the sensitive and personal nature of some of the questions, you may have become distressed during your study participation. As such I have provided a list of numbers below that you might find useful. Alternatively, I am happy to answer any questions you might have and can be reached at x18156941@student.ncirl.ie.

GENERAL COUNSELLING SERVICES IN IRELAND

1800 234 110	HSE Dublin North East (North Dublin & Meath)
1800 234 117	HSE Dublin North East (Navan, Cavan, Louth & Monaghan)
1800 234 111	HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster (South Dublin, East Wicklow)
1800 234 112	HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster (West Dublin, West Wicklow & Kildare)
1800 234 113	HSE Dublin Mid-Leinster (Laois, Offaly, Longford & Westmeath)
1800 234 114	HSE West (Galway, Mayo & Roscommon)
1800 234 115	HSE West (Limerick, Clare & North Tipperary)
1800 234 119	HSE West (Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo)
1800 234 118	HSE South (Waterford, Wexford, Kilkenny, Carlow and South Tipperary)
1800 234 116	HSE South (Cork & Kerry)

Giselle Lima

[Submit another response](#)

Figure 19 Online Survey p. 07

5 or less 6-10 >10

Q9) What size of projects have you been involved

- from 0 to \$500,000
- from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000
- from \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000
- > \$5,000,000

Q10) What type of industry are most of your projects in?

- Constructions IT
- Heavy engineering, Health
- Process and petrochemical Training
- Finance Research and development
- Others (please specify)

Q11) Do you mainly work off-site or on site?

- Off-site On site Both

PART II

The following questions relate to situations you have experienced and how these experiences have influenced your career.

Q1) Please indicate your opinion of your experiences and the influences of these experiences by circling the appropriate number.

- Do not know or do not have any ideas* 0
- No experience/ Negative influence* 1
- Low level of experience/ No influence* 2
- High level of experience/ Positive influences* 3

Experiences/Influences		Extent of experiences					Influences			
		0	1	2	3		0	1	2	3
Organising under conflict	E1					I1				
Co-operative leadership	E2					I2				
Integrative thinking	E3					I3				

Figure 21 Thi and Skitmore (2003) Original Questionnaire p. 02

Ability to make quick decision when project environments changes	E4					14			
Being isolated and alone	E5					15			
Difficulty to find a mentor	E6					16			
Difficulty to join informal networks	E7					17			
Differences of gendered management style in project	E8					18			
Limited Promotion prospects	E9					19			
Difficulties to communicate with people onsite	E10					110			
Difficulty to build relationship with clients	E11					111			
Difficulties in working with group dynamics	E12					112			
Difficulties accessing external professional training	E13					113			
Difficulties in applying project management technique	E14					114			
Low paid fee	E15					115			
Inappropriate job assignment	E16					116			
Support from project managers of your gender	E17					117			
Support from project managers not of your gender	E18					118			
Initial understanding of the culture of the industry before entering the career	E19					119			
Combining work and family	E20					120			
Discrimination against females in general	E21					121			

Q2) Are there any other influential factors that are not mentioned above:

.....

Q3) Generally, how do you respond to the following statements? Please tick the box next to the statement that is closest to your response:

- Women Project Managers are better than Male Project Managers
- Women Project Manager are as good as Male Project Managers
- Women Project Managers are worse than Male Project Managers

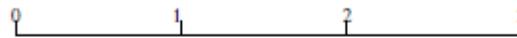
PART III

This part concerns your views on the opportunities available to women project managers

Figure 22 Thi and Skitmore (2003) Original Questionnaire p. 03

Q1) Please indicate your opinion by circling the appropriate number

Don't know Strongly disagree neutral strongly agree



Reasons		Scales			
		0	1	2	3
Culture has changed in favour of women project managers	O1				
There is an increase in the acceptance of mothers who work in managerial position	O2				
Increase in women's professional group(s)	O3				
More women enter project management	O4				
Higher demand for project manager positions	O5				
There is a change in entry requirements	O6				
There are more role models for women project managers	O7				
There is increasing argument that "women are better project managers"	O8				
Are treated equally by their boss, male colleagues	O9				
The increase in the acceptance of part-time project management employment	O10				

Q2) Any opportunities which have not been mentioned before?

.....

PART IV

The following questions are to identify the prospects of women project managers and the most effective actions that could be taken to improve the promotion and progress of women project managers

Q1) Do you expect

1a) Women project managers will remain in project management field

Yes No

Please indicate the reasons for your answers

.....

Figure 23 Thi and Skitmore (2003) Original Questionnaire p. 04

Actions		Scales			
		0	1	2	3
Campaign to change society's perception of women	A1				
Campaign to change attitudes of career advisers	A2				
Campaign to change women's attitudes about themselves	A3				
Introduce an insight program for students such as site visits	A4				
Offer more opportunities for women to find further projects	A5				
Highlight the role of women already in Project Management	A6				
Organisational actions to encourage applications from women	A7				
Support to develop a network for women	A8				
AIPM to offer more opportunities for women to enter the industry	A9				
Mentoring schemes	A10				
Provide child care facilities to support working mothers	A11				

Q5) Please specify any other actions that can be taken to improve the situation of women project managers that are not mentioned above.

.....

Many thanks for your kind help in completing the questionnaire.

A summary of the findings of this questionnaire may be obtained by contacting me via the e-mail address below.

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Your cooperation is very much appreciated, thanks for your help.

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Figure 25 Thi and Skitmore (2003) Original Questionnaire p. 06

Appendix 3 – Participants Profile Summary

Female	3 years or less as manager	4 - 7 years as manager	7 - 10 years as manager	11 years or more as manager	Total
In process of divorce				1	1
Children-Yes				1	1
37 – 55 years old				1	1
Married	4	28	21	3	56
Children-No	1	2		1	4
26 – 36 years old		1			1
37 – 55 years old	1	1			2
Over 55 years old				1	1
Children-Yes	3	26	21	2	52
26 – 36 years old	1	22	1		24
37 – 55 years old	2	4	8	2	16
Over 55 years old			12		12
Separated			1		1
Children-Yes			1		1
37 – 55 years old			1		1
Single	9	8		13	30
Children-No	7	8			15
26 – 36 years old	3	1			4
37 – 55 years old	3	7			10
Under 26 years old	1				1
Children-Yes	1			13	14
26 – 36 years old	1				1
Over 55 years old				13	13
(empty)	1				1
Under 26 years old	1				1
(empty)	1				1
Children-Yes	1				1
37 – 55 years old	1				1
Overall Total	14	36	22	17	89

Table 9 Results – Participants Profile

Appendix 4 – Part 1 Correlations

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Marital status	10.71	.550	84
Dependent children	14.80	.404	84
Working as a manager	17.70	.929	84
Industry are most of your experience	25.18	5.817	84
Age	5.93	.847	84

Table 10 Part 1 Descriptive Statistics

Correlations						
		Marital status	Dependent children	Working as a manager	Industry are most of your experience	Age
Pearson Correlation	Marital status	1.000	0.441	-0.216	-0.609	-0.199
	Dependent children	0.441	1.000	0.191	-0.133	0.168
	Working as a manager	-0.216	0.191	1.000	0.487	0.233
	Industry are most of your experience	-0.609	-0.133	0.487	1.000	0.428
	Age	-0.199	0.168	0.233	0.428	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Marital status		0.000	0.024	0.000	0.035
	Dependent children	0.000		0.041	0.114	0.063
	Working as a manager	0.024	0.041		0.000	0.016
	Industry are most of your experience	0.000	0.114	0.000		0.000
	Age	0.035	0.063	0.016	0.000	
N	Marital status	84	84	84	84	84

	Dependent children	84	84	84	84	84
	Working as a manager	84	84	84	84	84
	Industry are most of your experience	84	84	84	84	84
	Age	84	84	84	84	84

Table 11 Part 1 Correlations