

WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Exploring the Underrepresentation of Irish Women in Senior
Positions

Vanessa Monte Amorim

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of a Master of Science
in International Business

National College of Ireland

Submitted to the National College of Ireland, School of Business

May 2020

Abstract

Today's Irish women's rights are undoubtedly ameliorated in comparison to the past, when women were not allowed to serve on juries, work after getting married or work in the industry sector, but regardless of the gains in women's engagement over the past 40 years, gender inequality remains a modern concern in Ireland and there are several evidences that the status of women in the workplace has enhanced, however progresses on the reduction of inequality on the workplace has still been slow, since men are the major decision-makers in politics (Oireachtas and local and regional authorities) and business such as health and education sectors, where most of the employees are female (European Commission, 2014).

This thesis aims to enhance prior studies on the barriers face by women on leadership progression and career development in Ireland, in an attempt to acknowledge and better understand the main causes of the obstruction of female representation on decision-making positions. The investigation findings will contribute to supplement the current literature and fill up the gaps related to the underrepresentation of Irish women in senior positions.

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Acknowledgement

This master was a unique opportunity filled with exceptional academic and personal learning and at the end of this phase I can only be thankful to everyone who supported, incentivised and believed in my potential.

I would like to thank all my teachers and lecturers for sharing all their knowledge, competencies and experiences during my academic years and that in an “indirect way” helped me to develop this thesis.

To all my classmates, who came from all over the world to open my mind to new ways of thinking and taught me how to respect different opinions and that we can always learn from different cultures.

To my family and friends who were always supportive and proud of every little step I have been making on this incredible journey.

To all the incredible women I had the chance to connect with during the thesis process, for all their patience in answering all my questions and for giving me so many good advices for my future professional career.

And a special acknowledgement to myself, for persisting in making my dreams come true and learning from every little mistake I have done before.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Background of the research

Over the past half-century, a significant enhancement and advancement have been observed among the global women population, including different fields and facilities, such as education, political activism, labour force participation, and so on. Evidence suggests although gender gap remains associated in different low as well as middle-income developing countries; however, the proportion becomes significantly lower in some of the recent years. O'Connor and Carvalho (2015) reported that in many of the developed or high-income countries, the overall gender gaps become reversed, as the women population has undertaken the positions of men population in certain specific areas.

For example, the ration of women and men enrolment in the tertiary education protocol is 11:10 in the lower-income nationalities, whereas, in the middle and high-income population, the ratio becomes 14:10. According to the statistical reports proposed by US Bureau of Labour Statistics, it can be stated that in the year 2009, women comprised of around 51% of the global employment structure, including the high-salaried professional sectors as well as related occupations. Based on the political contexts, it can be stated that women did not have any right regarding the political decisions taken in a country; however, from the year 1994, they had gained the voting right in 96% of the countries.

However, as reported by O'Connor (2015), although improvements can be observed in the attainment of professional development, like education or similar other fields, the significant increment of the women population could not be observed in the female leadership or higher management programs, either in business or politics. The global statistics show that only 19% women legislators are associated with the higher position in the political and legal contexts, whereas in case of the corporate sphere, only 11.9% female population get the opportunity of being a member in the board of director.

1.1 Problem statement

While investigating the gender gaps and undermining of women's power in the seniority positions, a number of evidences have been found, which might be considered as the main concerns behind doing this study. There is more than one

issue associated with the context of under-representing the feminine power in authoritative contexts. For example, one major problem is the absence of accessing the entry point of the labour market. The second problem is the presence of a wage gap between male and female employees. Third and the significant reason behind the dominative situation over the women is the presence of 'glass ceiling'. Such discriminative mentality of the modern society leads to the development of a concrete stereotype situation, due to which women are always offered the lower payments, precarious, and less opportunity-oriented job positions. It is also observed that under-representation women's power often causes economic loss as well as an increment in the poverty level in a national context. Therefore, investigating the possible solutions for improving the positions of women in the Irish labour force is required.

1.2 Research aim and objectives

Research aim

The prioritized aim of this research paper is to evaluate the factors and reasons associated with the process of under-representation of female population, as per the Irish contexts, along with analysing its impacts on the economic and nationalized growth and the possible way of elimination.

Research objectives

The research sheds light on the following objectives

- ✓ To assess the level of female participation in the senior positions of Ireland
- ✓ To evaluate the main barriers inhibiting the progress level of female career
- ✓ To analyse the impacts of under-representing women population on the national and economic growth
- ✓ To recommend some strategic process regarding the influence of work-life balance on the advancement of women's career progression

1.3 Research questions

The research questions essential for conducting the study are as follows-

- ❖ In the Irish Context, what is the level of female participation in senior positions?
- ❖ What are the main barriers that inhibit female career progress in Ireland?
- ❖ What are the impacts of the under-representation of women population on national and economic growth?

- ❖ How could the work-life balance influence female's advancement and career progression level in the Irish corporate world?

1.4 Rationale

Inequality in the women's power position is completely associated with the concepts of gender pay gap as well as gender disparities, which is an integrated part continuing from the initial period of humankind. As mentioned in the earlier section of the problem statement, it can be stated that the issues associated with the under-representation of women in senior position are caused due to the less participation and fewer opportunity of participation in the labour force activities. Apart from this, the other discrimination is this woman generally are offered around 25-30% fewer salaries compared to their male counter parts, even if they have better skills, better knowledge and additional experience level. Additional to this, the third issue is the presence of 'glass ceiling', which becomes one of the most common issues while women are trying to reach to their targeted goals (Assembly.coe.int, 2019).

The reason behind these barriers and gender discrimination can be considered as the outputs of the certain mentality of society. Based on the societal norms, it is often observed that men have the spontaneous nature of dominating women. Therefore, in many cases, employees, especially male employees show some resistance against the recruitment and selection of women as their leader or manager, as this could hurt their unjustified male-ego (Assembly.coe.int, 2019). On the other hand, the psychological skills and emotional intelligence of the women often create obstacles in believing that a woman can effectively work during the problem solving and decisions making the process. According to the statement of O'Connor and Goransson (2015), it can be stated that discrimination of women's power is not only associated with the economic reasons, the discrimination mostly occurs due to the presence of misguided preconceptions and stereotyping mentality of the male dominated society. Therefore, the current study sheds light on the current statistics of women in a higher position associated with the Irish context, the main barriers faced by them, and the possible solutions for managing their work-life balance.

1.5 Significance of the study

Evidence suggests that although there are many research studies previously conducted as per the contextual factors of gender gaps, however, the reasons and factors are continuously changing along with the passing time, due to the influence of globalisation, urbanisation, and digitalisation. Therefore, the main significance of

the current study is it can help the readers in understanding the main reasons behind the under-representation of the women in the senior authoritative position. It can explore the relation between gender, gender roles, and feminism, along with explaining the factors working behind the gender gaps and gender inequality observed in different countries. On the other hand, the study has also evaluated the main barriers faced by the Irish women population while trying to promote in the higher authoritative level. Apart from this, this study also sheds light on the impacts of gender gaps or under-representation of the women on the development of Ireland economy and other factors. Highlighting some current possible way of dealing with such gender discrimination and under-representation of Irish women is also included in the study.

1.6 Structure of dissertation

The structure of the dissertation is as follows-

Chapter 1: Introduction- This chapter contains a brief description of the background of the topic, the intended problem statement, the aim, objectives, and research questions, and the rationale behind doing the research.

Chapter 2: Literature review- This chapter is the descriptive one, and contains huge information regarding the variables embedded in the broader research topic.

Chapter 3: Methodology- This is the third chapter of the research, in which the researcher(s) has mentioned all the methodical elements through which the study has been conducted.

Chapter 4: Findings and discussion- In the fourth chapter, the discussion, interpretation and analysis of the collected evidence has been done.

Chapter 5: Recommendation and Conclusion- This is the last chapter, concluding the ultimate outcome of the research, along with suggesting some recommendations and future scope of the study.

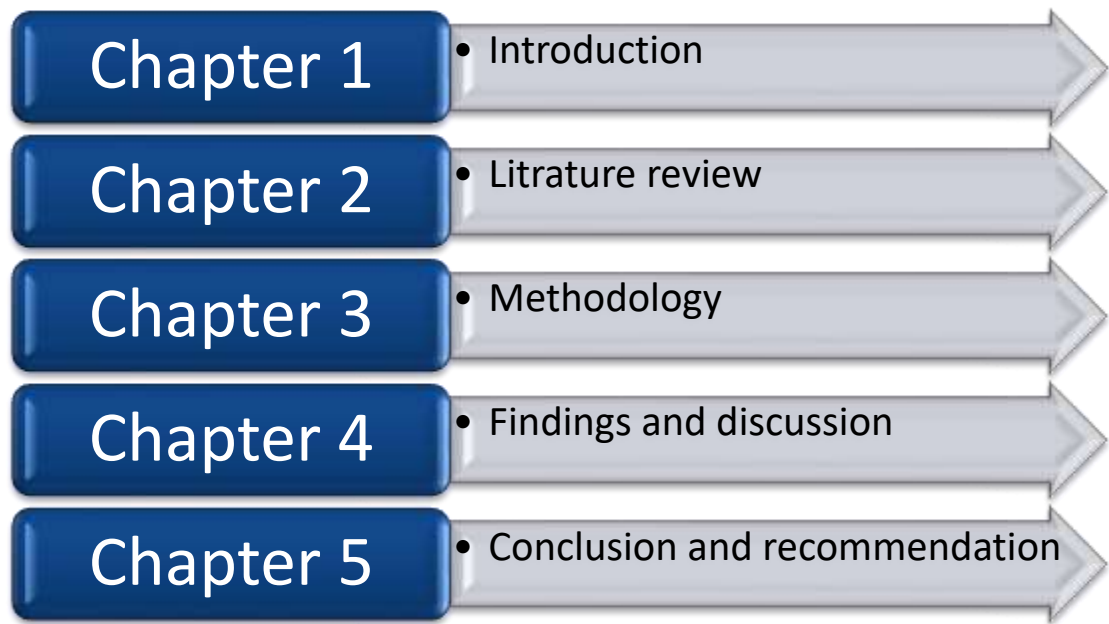


Figure 1.1: Structure of dissertation

(Source: Created by learner)

1.7 Summary

The chapter mainly sheds light on the background of the research topic, through highlighting the fact that advancement in the educational and professional contexts of women could not change their corporate or political positional aspects, as they could not get the chances of being employed as a leader or member of higher management. There are different problems associated with this fact, such as gender pay gap, glass ceiling, and inaccessible path of entering the labour market. The chapter also highlights on the research aim, objectives, and the research questions, based on which the further study has been conducted. A brief justification behind doing the study, along with its significance and the proposed structure of the research study is also included in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This is the second chapter of the research study, which include all the statistical, analytical and descriptive contexts regarding the specified topic. In order to evaluate the current positioning discrimination and stereotyping faced by the Irish women population, it is essential to collect evidence from the previous research articles and scholarly papers, from which the researcher(s) has understood the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

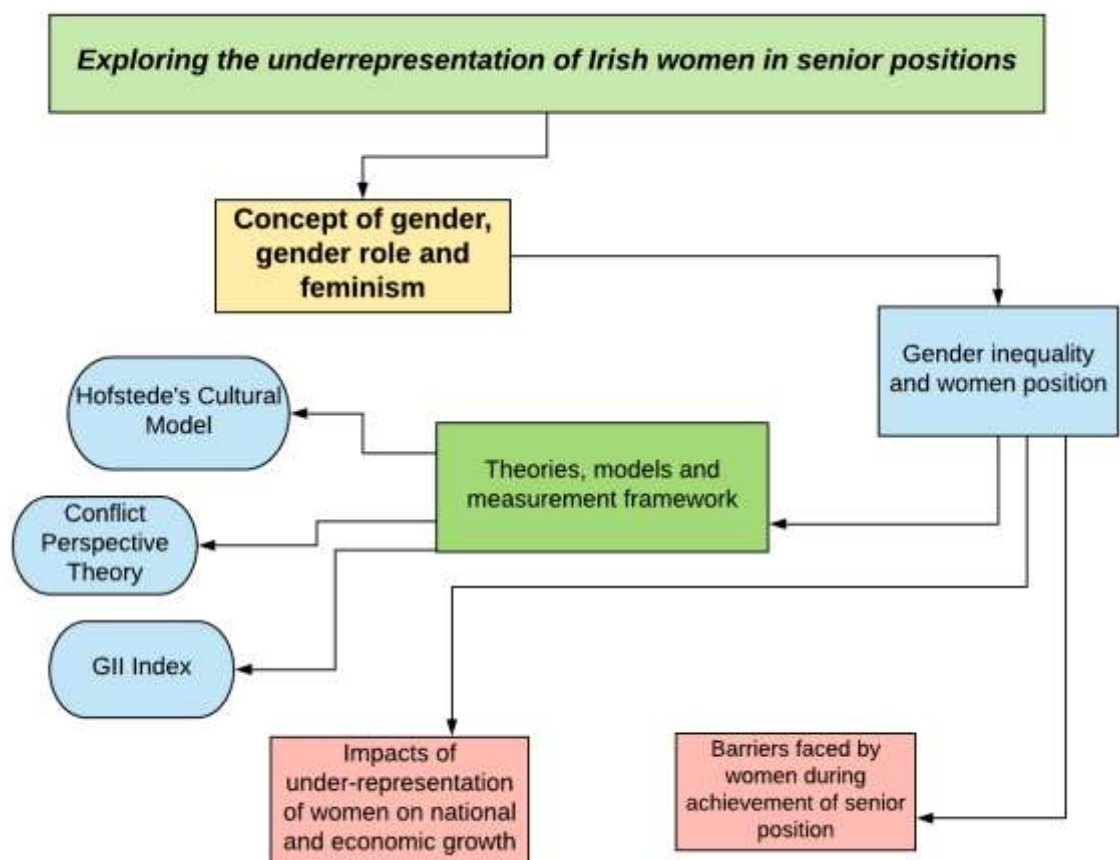


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

(Source: Created by learner)

2.2 Concept of gender, gender roles and feminism

Based on the traditional viewpoint, it was thought that the roles and responsibilities of women were entitled and bound within the family-oriented aspects. The principle of this thought was men would work outside from the home and women would

manage the insides, along with performing different household works, cooking, taking care of children, and so on. According to the statement of O'Brien (2017), the roles and responsibilities associated with the women group had initially been influenced through the psychological differences. However, as contradicted by Kiser (2015), such points had also been largely shaped through the societal as well as cultural norms. Gender socialisation is one of the outcomes of such societal norms, through which the individuals can learn about the gender roles, along with gaining the knowledge of distinguishing the acceptable nature of male and female, as per the biological definition.

The distinguishing characteristics are associated from the time of birth, which are often become facilitated through different types of socialisation agents, such as family perspectives, education attainment, peer groups, religion, mass media, and workplace. However, Rhode (2017) mentioned that the expectations and attitudes associated with the opposite gender roles do not have any direct connection with the inherited or natural differences, these are more associated with the over-generalisation of the attitudes, behaviour patterns and traits of the distinctive population. Therefore, people often face challenges due to the events of repeated socialisation, which often creates a false sense of belonging among the men and women, which could be considered as a socially constructed aspects rather than being natural phenomenon.

On the other hand, it can also be observed that gender stereotypes is one of the basic form associated with sexism, along with the prejudiced trust through valuing one sex over the other. Sexism generally varies as per the severity level. For example, in different parts of the world, the significance of women is undervalued, and therefore, the younger girls could not get the accessibility or opportunity of getting proper nutrition, education or healthcare provisions. Although the sexism level is spontaneously prohibited in maximum parts of the world, the inequality in the feminine treatment provisions occurs at a higher level in the surroundings (Nwci.ie, 2019).

The concept of feminism is highly related with the contexts of gender and gender roles. The main purpose of spreading the wordiness of 'feminism' is to acquire equal rights for the men and women population, along with providing them equal opportunities of participating in the societal decision-making process. The concept of feminism is inclusive for all the women, without discriminating through their race, age, ethnicity, or culture. As per the viewpoint of Sandberg (2015), feminism can be

considered as a belief, through which the policies, practices, government systems, and societal structures become equal for both the men and women population. Apart from this, feminism is also essential for eliminating level of poverty social exclusion, racism, violence, equality, and so on. Additional to this, feminism can also provide a greater support for realising the creative potentiality of the women, their talents, facilitation, and complete contribution in the national development process.

2.3 Gender inequality and Women's fluctuating position in Irish contexts

Gender inequality or gender gap is one of the common issues associated with the current societal aspect, which represents or acknowledges that there is a huge difference between the population of men and women, and therefore, they do not have the rights of treating equally. Gender gap is mostly applicable for the women population. Although it is evidenced that the differences are generally appeared from the biological, psychological, and cultural distinctive factors, some of the gender inequality factors can be defined as socially constructed. As per the statement of Rochon *et al.* (2016), gender inequality can be triggered through different factors, among which one main factor is the sexual differentiation. Gender inequality can be manifested through different ways, such as absence of equal accessibility to the resources, power, health services, education, and so on. Apart from this, discrimination in socio-cultural practices can also be considered as gender inequality (Kågesten *et al.* 2016).

A recent report published in the Guardian stated that the presence of gender inequality is still as bad as the previous 10 years, and there is no progress in case of tackling the inequality level. The UK is considered as one of the worst performing country among the EU states, as they fail in addressing the issues of gender inequality (Boffey, 2017). As mentioned earlier, females are the worst sufferers of gender inequality or disparity, and they can face the discrimination through different ways. Evidence suggests that every 3rd in a group of 10 male of UK participates in the household works, like cooking, washing clothes, or so on, whereas every working woman in a group of 10 women spend more than one hour in taking care of their household activities. On the other hand, although the gender inequality becomes narrowed down from the previous time, however, women get still 20% less salary from the men, which ultimately make huge disparities in the UK.



Figure 2.2: Gender pay gap in Irish male and female population

(Source: thejournal.ie, 2016)

Similar like the UK statistics, the data evolved in the Irish context also shows the presence of gender disparities among the Irish men and women population. It is evidence that the Irish workers generally work for fewer hours, due to which they earn less money compared to the men. However, as per the study of European Commission Research, the power of women is often negatively represented in the Irish business contexts. As per the reports of Irish Government, the presence of gender pay gap increased from 12% to 14%, within the year range of 2012 to 2014 (Cpl Recruitment, 2019). The concept of gender pay gap is one of the most common discrimination, which is occurred in almost all the countries, including the developed and developing ones. According to the statement of Johnson (2017), the gender pay gap and positional gaps might be occurred even if women have retained more tertiary educational degrees compared to the men population.

In the field of education, men generally dominate the scientific and technological fields, which is around 66%, whereas women remain mostly involved in tertiary education (78%), humanities (65%), and health and welfare studies (71%). On the other hand, the percentage of women involvement in junior management is more than 40%, however, the percentage of females in position of CEO or other authoritative board members is only 17%. The study statistics also show that 67% of the Irish female employers feel concerned about their reputation in the corporate world, as around 34% of the population think that there pay standards are lesser than the national average. Another unfortunate fact is the only 50% of the organisation operating in Ireland focuses on the implication of Equality Act 2010,

whereas the rest 70% companies still operate their operational processes without incorporating any gender pay gaps (Cpl Recruitment, 2019).

Through considering some new research reports, it can be stated that some progress is observed regarding the participation rates of women in the management or leadership positions. From the past few decades, the Irish business personnel tried to provide attention on the women empowerment in their business operations. An active pipeline can be observed by analysing the current positional aspect of women compared with the past 10-years positional aspects, which shows that female talents and skills are coming from the lower level of employment to the upper level of management. Studies suggest that highest female proportions remain included as the departmental leaders of HR position, which is 72% of the entire female workforce of Ireland (Goodbody, 2019).

Additional to this, 53% female leaders remain involved in the customer service departments, whereas 39% of them play the role of financial and accountancy manager in different corporations. However, the level of female leaders remains lower, i.e. around 17%, in the IT section, which becomes lowest in case of engineering profession, around 5%. In the field of manufacturing, materialistic roles, and distribution, the professional aspects of female employers remain lower (Goodbody, 2019). However, women often experience the adversities of gender inequality due to some other personal and professional factors, some of which are discussed in the following point.

2.4 Barriers faced by women during the achievement of senior position

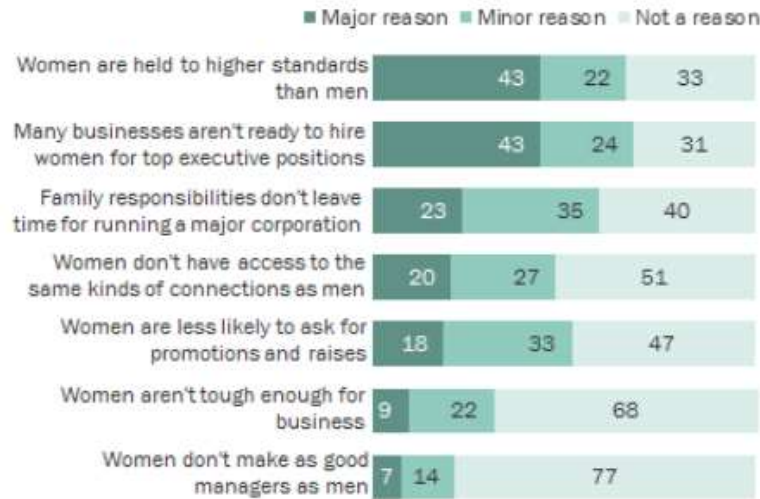
There are number of barriers associated with the under-representation of women's position in the higher managerial aspect. Some common reasons are listed as below-

- ❖ Sex stereotyping leading to the resistance of women leadership- As mentioned in the earlier section, sex stereotyping is a result of the cultural norms, through which several assumptions might often come up while a woman is chasing the leadership position. The group of ambitious women are often tagged by some specific objectives, such as pushy, abrasive, self-serving, deceitful, and aggressive. On the other hand, in case of men, the factor of ambition is considered as the one of the leadership traits. Another viewpoint of the sociologists is women could not be ambitious, which is required for being a practical and skilful leader. Such types of myths often debilitate the female population from the achievement of leadership or

authoritative goals. Hill *et al.* (2016) mentioned that women often feel less motivated and lack of sufficient ambition in the male dominated culturalism.

Why Aren't More Women in ...

Top executive business positions



High political offices

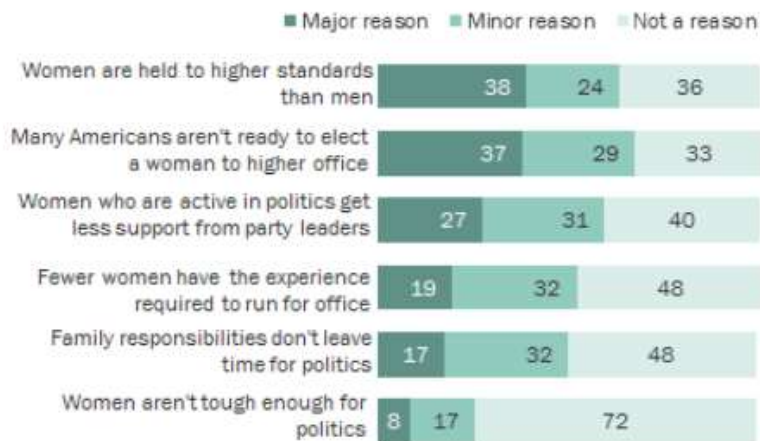


Figure 2.3: Reasons behind the less presence of women in senior positions

(Source: pewsocialtrends.org, 2015)

- ❖ Absence of efficiency in leadership style- Through considering the typical stereotyping perspectives, it is observed that women often require struggling for the cultivation of leadership styles. As per the statement of Davis and Maldonado (2015), women require understanding the reconciliation of the dichotomy, between the leadership qualities as well as feminine characteristics. Psychologists often suggest that women perform their duties for satisfying others instead of following their personal gut instincts. This

might create a sense of in-authenticity, due to which lack of trustworthiness might arise for the person or the population. Evidence suggests that if the team members could not trust their leaders, they could not rely on the decisions they take. On the other hand, Walker and Aritz (2015) mentioned that women often prefer the democratic leadership style along with the provisions of participation and collaboration, which again represents that they have less trust on their decisions, which might create difficulties in the authoritative decision-making process.

- ❖ Demands in family life or absence of work-life balance- As mentioned in the earlier point of the literature review, from the ancient times until today, it can be stated that women have the primary responsibility to their family members, and they need to manage all the family matters by themselves. Therefore, a group of people think that sacrifice is necessary trait for being a successful wife, mother, or careers for the family members. Based on this perspective, companies often think that the working progress or fulfilling organisational objectives is not their prioritised one, and therefore, they often show their demands for unmarried girls of married women having no children. According to the statement of Chisholm-Burns *et al.* (2017), the main perception behind this concept is women having family lives require giving time in the evening, and therefore, they would not be capable in case of taking additional work pressure.
- ❖ Difficulty in making social capital- Authoritative or senior management positions often require the development of proper social capitals for gaining more networks as well as external opportunities. However, women could not attend the social capital requirements after balancing their personal and professional lives, and therefore, socialisation becomes very difficult for them. On the other hand, Burkinshaw and White (2017) mentioned that if women try to manage the social capital networking process, they often become uncomfortable in such types of male-oriented networking activities.
- ❖ Absence of sponsors or proper mentors- As per the statement of Hoobler *et al.* (2018), mentorship and proper coaching is one of the serious issues for the women positioned at the authoritative prospect, as seniors often remain free and less hesitated with same sex juniors. Therefore, a male senior could not provide effective and efficient training to his female subordinate. A specific reason behind this case is the binding of different government rules and regulations regarding workplace behaviours, due to which men often feel more hesitation due to the fear and anxiety of negative repercussions.

Apart from this, there are certain other factors, which can also work as the potential barriers against the women's chasing towards senior authoritative positions. For example, a recent report suggests that '**changing the perception for the women could not help in changing the attitudes against the women as leaders**'. Most of the employees working in different corporate sector think that home is the best place for a married woman. On the other hand, the maximum population of the employees want to work under the male senior or supervisors instead of a female boss. Apart from this, Bierema (2016) mentioned that economic development could not beget the aspects of female authoritative nature, as based on the data collected from 126 countries; it has been found that the GDP per capita could not predict the percentage of female legislators in the national assembly of the country.

The continuously growing career prospective of women could not support the increment in the female leadership, as the proficient level of education as well as labour participation rates might create a weak correlation with the leadership aspirations for the women in different corporate sector. There are many countries, where the number of women directors is very higher, such as 92% in France, 79% in SA, and 87% in US, whereas the overall percentage regarding the global women leadership remains much lower than the former one, such as 14% to 16% respectively. The data can demonstrate that there are different companies, which are regulated by one single woman, however, this can only be considered as tokenism instead of substantial leadership success for the women. Additional to this, there are certain supply side and demand side related barriers faced by the women, such as preferences as well as entry cost, lack of aspirations, aversion to competition, discrimination in taste or preferences, statistical performance level, biased selection system and so on (Scholar.harvard.edu, 2019).

2.5 Theories, models and measurement tools

Since gender roles and culturalism is inter-related with each other, therefore, the concept of feminism in the senior position can be interpreted through applying the **Hofstede's cultural model**. According to the statement of Latu *et al.* (2019), Hofstede includes total 6 factors or elements, which are power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence. Among the 6 factors, the third factor is masculinity and femininity, and at this point, the score of Ireland is 68. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the Irish societies and communities are highly masculine as well as success-oriented. The behaviour of people, especially male population remains associated with the shared values and norms, which should be strived by the people for being 'the best' and

'the winner'. The Irish societies and communities feel proud regarding their natural urge towards achievements and success in lives, and the decision of selection and recruitment of the male employees is offered from this perspective. Therefore, it can be stated that the concept of gender biasness is embedded in the societal characteristics of the country (Hofstede Insights, 2019).

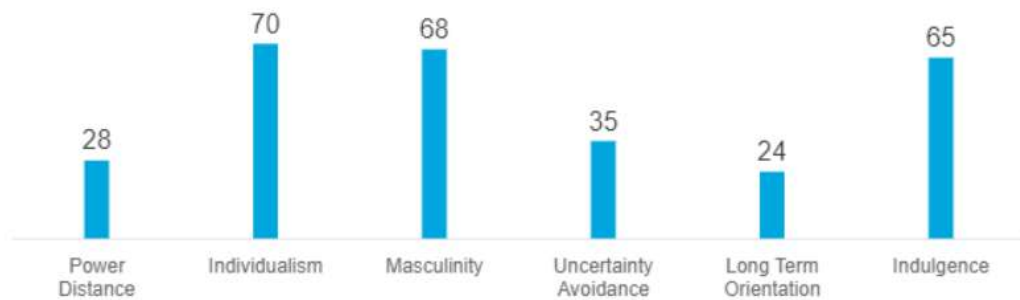


Figure 2.4: Hofstede of Ireland

(Source: Hofstede Insights, 2019)

Apart from the Hofstede's cultural framework, the concept of gender inequality and gender disparity can be interpreted through the **Conflict Perspective Theory**. In this theory, the functionalists observe that consensus and stability, whereas conflict sinologists observe the societal world at a stage of continual struggle. According to this theory, it can be assumed that societal behaviour against the women's under-representation can be best interpreted through evaluating the conflicts or tensions associated with these two groups. This theory can be related to the concept of gender inequality, as men always try to maintain their power as well as privilege based on the cost of women's benefits. According to the statement of Howe-Walsh and Turnbull (2016), through using the Marx's analysis of class conflict, the capitalist and bourgeoisie males try to control the societal prestige, power, and wealth. On the other hand, the proletariat females only have the capacity of acquiring valuable resources, based on the dictations of their bosses. Additional to this, the theory also stated that society provides uniform values to the men's work whereas women's works are generally devalued.

The occurrence of gender inequality is a major barrier in the human as well as societal development. Evidence suggests that women gained huge strides from the year 1990; however, they could not get equality as a whole. As per the report of UNDP of United Nations Development Program, there is a gender **Inequality Index**,

or GII, through which the inequalities can be measured based on the three major human developmental aspects, which are reproductive health, adolescent birth rate, and maternal mortality ratio. This GII generally highlights the position of women population in the developed and developing 160 countries, which can yield a major and proper insight on the aspects of gender inequality and women under-representation. Apart from this, the GII components can also indicate the areas of gender inequality in which policy intervention and proactive stimulation is required for overcoming the systematic disadvantages faced by women (Hdr.undp.org, 2019).

2.6 Impacts of under-representation of women on national and economic growth

Through considering the above-mentioned facts, it can be stated that under-representation of women from achieving the target of leadership or senior management position can influence the overall corporate, economic and national growth of a country. Based on the Irish contexts, although it is proved that gender gap can support in increment of national GDP up to an average of 35%, however, it is also essential to include women in the modern gender-inclusive working environments. Studies suggest that woman generally retains soft leadership skills, and Galbreath (2017) mentioned that this is not suitable for being in a senior management position. Evidence mentioned that while experience, knowledge and technical skills are the fundamental key to success, organisations currently focus on the incorporation of different soft skills, as this is now considered as '**even more important to work readiness**'.

Women have the capacity of emotional intelligence, which is a part of the soft skill, then can refer to any types of capacity pertaining to the approachable ways or handling the professional lives. Some authoritative leadership traits of women are professionalism, self-motivation, and desire of doing best, work ethic maintenance, resilience, collaboration, and critical think communication. As per the MCKinsey study, it is observed that women positioned in the leadership or senior management role often retain better skills of problem solving and decision-making, which ultimately leads to the greater success. Apart from this, Longman and Anderson (2016) mentioned that around 34% of the American workers stated that women have an advantageous edge compared to men population while it requires being honest, ethical and trustworthy.

As mentioned in the Introduction chapter, there are main three barriers faced by the workers while trying to reach to the upper authoritative position. The presence of lower participation in labour force often contributes in the enhancement of unemployment or position loss of women. Such incidences might cause economic loss, along with the formation of an unequal perspective based on the differences between men and women. This can be translated into some situations of poverty and economic dependency for the entire population. Klettner *et al.* (2016) mentioned that the discrimination against women is not only influential for the women population, it also reduces the growth of country, through impacting over the diminishing tax rates as well as higher outlays in the unemployment ration, along with reducing benefits of social security policies. Therefore, elimination of such discriminatory perspectives can help in developing proper economic base, policy goals, along with the improvement of social cohesion (Assembly.coe.int, 2019).

2.7 Literature gap

After discussing the considerable issues collected from different secondary sources, it can be stated that the topic is interesting but not having proper information regarding the actual current percentage of women associated in the higher position within the Irish business context. Apart from this, there is much research evidence present regarding the gender pay gap and gender disparity; however, the research studies contain very limited amount of evidence about the inter-relationship among gender pay gap, gender disparities and feminism. Additional to this, the research studies also lack proper evaluation of the impacts of preventing women in being promoted to the upper management, on the national as well as economic growth.

2.8 Summary

The chapter of literature review sheds lights on different contextual factors associated with the research topic of under-representation of women in the senior leadership position. The chapter includes a conceptual framework, through which the researcher(s) has demonstrated the inter-relationship of different elements. The chapter highlights the current positional aspects of women in the Irish business contexts, along with exploring the connections between the gender, gender roles, feminism, and gender inequality. Additional to this, the chapter also sheds light on the major barriers or obstacles faced by women while chasing the dream of being authoritative member. Since gender role is related to culture, therefore, application of Hofstede's cultural framework has been applied. The major effects of such obstacles and discrimination has also been described in the chapter. At the last part,

the researcher(s) has mentioned the literature gaps and the summary of the entire contents.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This is the third chapter of a dissertation, as in this chapter, the researcher(s) has highlighted all the details about the research methodology, including the selected elements along with the associated justification. The chapter includes research outline, philosophy, design, approach, data collection method, data analysis method, sampling technique and size, cost structure and research timeline.

3.1 Research outline

| Types | Methods Used |
|------------------------|--|
| Research Philosophy | Positivism |
| Research Approach | Deductive |
| Research Design | Descriptive |
| Data collection method | Primary |
| Data collection tool | Quantitative survey and Qualitative interview |
| Sampling techniques | Simple random probability and Purposive sampling |
| Sampling size | 100 Irish employees and 4 managers (2 male and 2 female) |
| Data analysis tool | Graphical/Frequency analysis Transcript analysis |

Table 3.1: Research Outline

(Source: Created by researchers)

3.2 Research philosophy

In order to fulfil the research aim and objectives, along with finding the suitable answers of research questions, the researcher(s) has selected the positivism philosophy, for the collection of different information regarding the deteriorating situations of women in the senior management position. According to the statement of Mertens (2014), this philosophy is suitable in analysing and evaluating the

existing theories, models, and concepts related with the research topic. This philosophy properly supports the survey-based statistical analysis method, and this is suitable for collecting the quantifiable or measurable information.



Figure 3.1 Research philosophies

(Source: Created by learner)

3.3 Research design

In this particular research study, the researcher(s) has decided to follow the principles of descriptive design, as the research has proper aim and objectives relevant with the study topic. This design is suitable in case of performing the analytical interpretation, which often becomes beneficial for obtaining desired outcomes. Apart from this, Eriksson and Kovalainen (2015) mentioned that a most significant positive point of this element is it provides the opportunity of collecting or obtaining numerous numbers of primary data from a vast population, within very limited time.



Figure 3.2: Research designs

(Source: Created by learner)

3.4 Research approach

In this research study, the researcher(s) has chosen deductive approach between the two, inductive and deductive; as this was helpful in exploring the suitability of different theories and models related with the topic. According to the statement of Flick (2015), the deductive approach is applicable in different circumstances and it can efficiently explain the inter-relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The existing concepts regarding gender inequality, disparity, and pay gap have also been evaluated through this element. Evidence suggests that the approach is suitable for the interpretation of the older concepts and make it connected with the newer ones, which often becomes beneficial for the research.

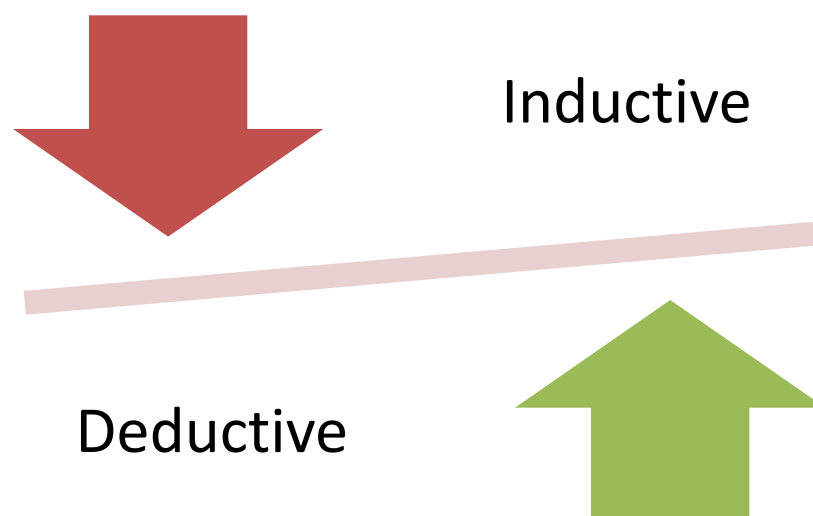


Figure 3.3: Research approach

(Source: Created by learner)

3.5 Data collection method

Between the two main types of data collection methods, the researcher(s) has selected the primary mixed methodology, including both quantitative survey and qualitative interview session. The main reason behind choosing the primary data collection process is it can help in acquiring real-time information based on the current situation, therefore, the outcomes become comparatively authentic, reliable and valid. Through the quantitative survey, the researcher(s) has tried to understand the viewpoint of Irish employee population regarding the subjective topic, whereas, the interview sessions have helped the researcher(s) in understanding the managerial perspectives about the topic.

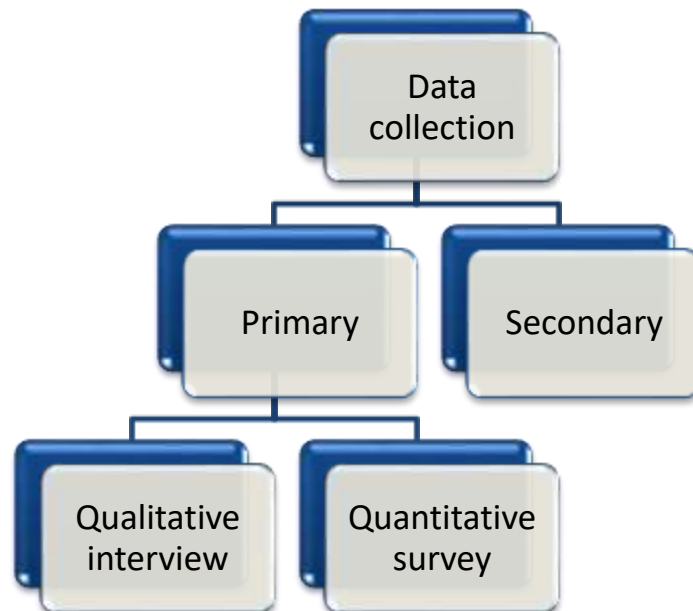


Figure 3.4: Data collection methods

(Source: Created by learner)

3.6 Sampling technique and Sampling strategy

In order to select, the suitable sample population for conducting the research, the researcher(s) has followed two different sampling techniques, simple random probability sampling and non-random purposive sampling, for survey and interview, respectively. Through the former one, the researcher(s) has randomly selected 100 employees working in different Irish sector, along with giving the equal opportunities to all the eligible participants. On the other hand, the latter one includes the

selection of samples based on some inclusion and exclusion criteria, through which the researcher(s) has chosen 4 managers from the Irish corporate and political sector, including 2 male and 2 females.

3.7 Data analysis method

After collecting the data through primary mixed method study, the researcher(s) has decided to analyse the data through different data analysis techniques. For example, in order to interpret the survey responses, the researcher(s) has performed frequency analysis, in which graphical representations along with tables and charts remain included. On the other hand, for interpreting the transcripts obtained from the interview session, the researcher(s) has followed the protocols of transcription analysis.

3.9 Research ethics

Every research project remains abided through some specific research ethics, which are essential to maintain their level of authenticity, reliability, and validity. In this case, the main research ethics is maintenance of the privacy and confidentiality of the collected evidence from the selected sample. In order to perform this, the researcher(s) has ensured the inclusion of Data Protection Act. Apart from this, consents have been given to every participant, for eliminating the risk of forceful conduction and involvement in the research method. The consent has explained the main purpose behind doing the research along with providing the freedom of leaving the questionnaire session whenever they want.

3.10 Limitation of the research

Like every other research methods, there were certain limitations in this case also. The most common research limitation was presence of less time and less sufficient cost for completing the broad field study. Since the research topic is relevant with the entire working people population in Ireland, therefore, obtaining information from all of them was not possible in such limited time. On the other hand, the researcher(s) have completed this research in \$1200, which is not sufficient for doing such vas field study appropriately. Apart from this, absence of sufficient human as well as materialistic resources was also considered as a significant limitation in the current research.

3.11 Summary

The chapter highlights the methodical elements, which are essentially considered at the time of data collection for fulfilling the research aim and objectives, along with finding out the answers of the research questions. The chapter includes brief

justifications behind the selection of positivism philosophy, deductive approach, and descriptive design, primary mixed method survey and interview for data collection, simple random probability and non-random purposive sampling, and frequency and transcription analysis. Apart from this, the chapter also includes the ethical considerations and the limitations associated with the research protocols.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

4.0 Introduction

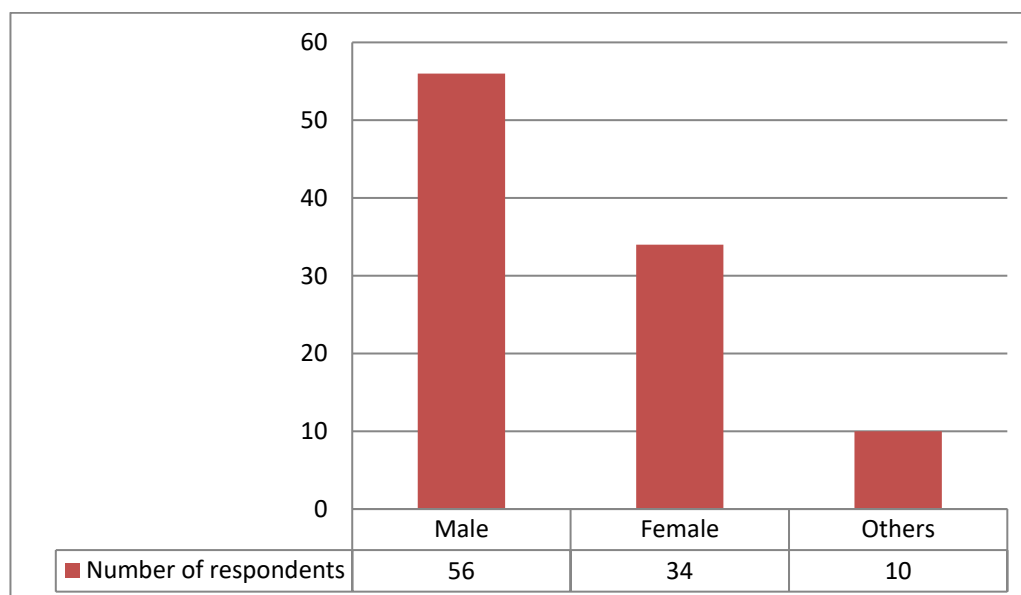
This is the most significant chapter of any dissertation, as the researcher(s) has jotted down all the evidence and information collected from the selected sample population. In this current research study, the researcher(s) has chosen primary mixed methodologies, including both primary quantitative survey and qualitative interview process. The data collected from these two methods are represented in this chapter. Along with this, brief discussion and interpretation of all the information are also included for each of survey and interview questionnaire.

4.1 Analysis of the collected data

4.1.1 Analysis of the survey data

1. Please, state your gender.

| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|---------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Male | 56 | 100 | 56 |
| Female | 34 | 100 | 34 |
| Others | 10 | 100 | 10 |

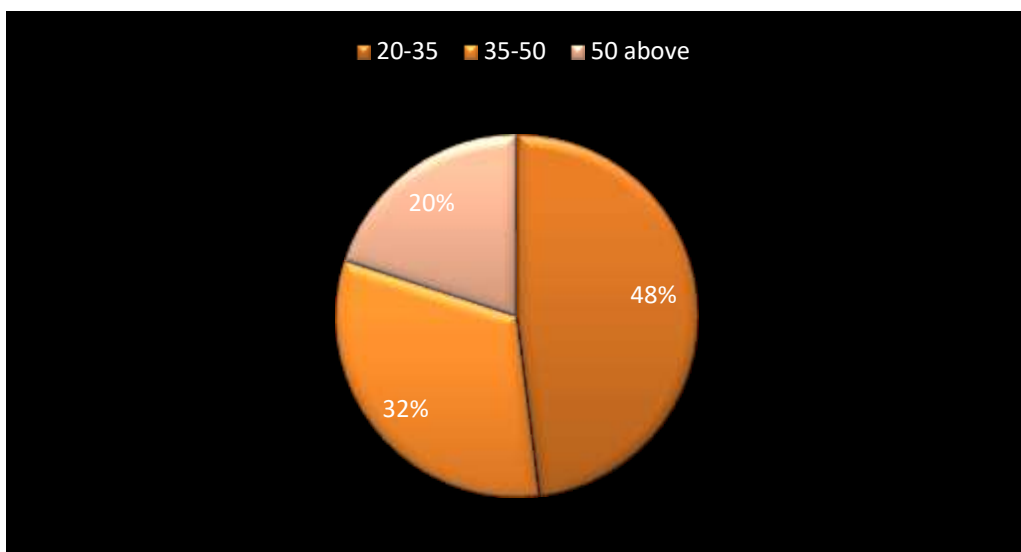


Analysis: The above table and graph shows the average gender differentiation embedded in the Irish employment contexts. The answer shows that in every 100 employees, there might be an average estimation of male, female and other

employees, among which male employees are standing at the highest position, along with the percentage of 56%. On the other hand, women only occupy 34% of the selected sample population. This shows the fact that in most of the cases, women do not show interest towards employment or they could not get the opportunity of employment. Evidence suggests that the latter statement becomes true in Irish corporate sector. However, one good fact is that Irish organisations provide employment opportunities to the third-gender population also.

2. Please state your age.

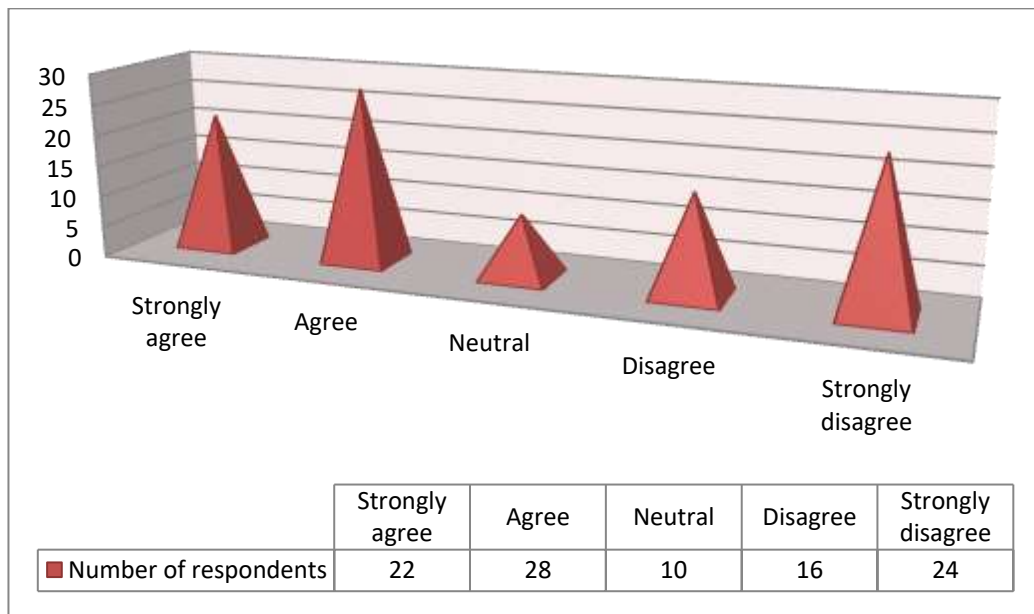
| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| 20-35 | 48 | 100 | 48 |
| 35-50 | 32 | 100 | 32 |
| 50 above | 20 | 100 | 20 |



Analysis: In this case, it can be stated that the highest number of Irish employees belong from the age group of 20-35. Therefore, it can be assumed that in most cases, younger generation gets the opportunity of being employed. Through combining the two facts showing in two consequential questions, it can be stated that the partiality of hiring male younger people often creates obstacles for the women in being hired or especially promoted, as most of the employers think that male population retains better management, leadership and other corporate skills compared to the female population.

3. How far do you agree with the statement that women could not get proper opportunity of being promoted to senior position?

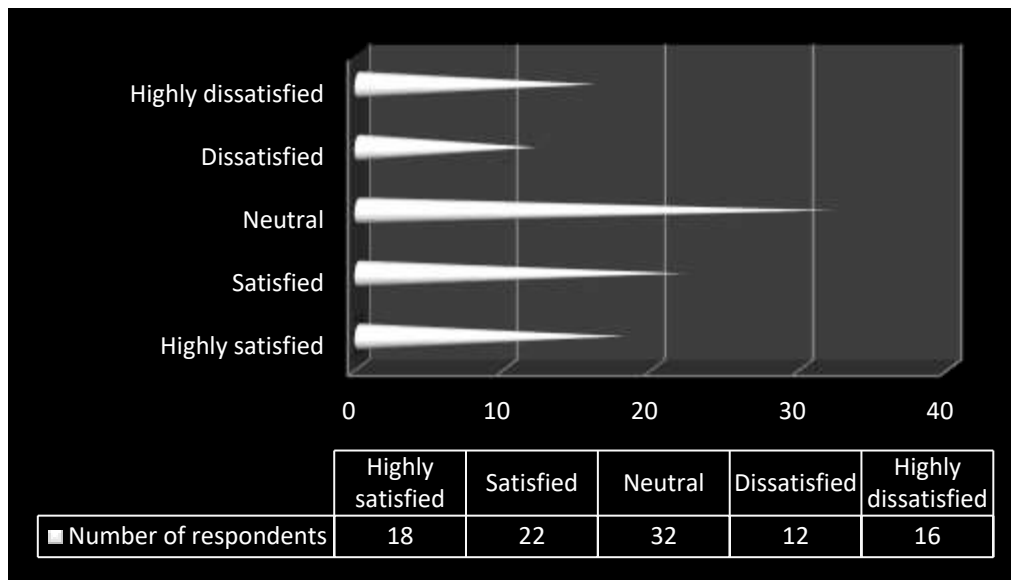
| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Strongly agree | 22 | 100 | 22 |
| Agree | 28 | 100 | 28 |
| Neutral | 10 | 100 | 10 |
| Disagree | 16 | 100 | 16 |
| Strongly disagree | 24 | 100 | 24 |



Analysis: According to the above table and graph, it can be stated that the highest percentage of the participants support the statement that women could not get proper opportunities in case of being promoted to the upper positions. Around 28% of the respondents agreed with the statement, whereas 22% shows strongly agree with the above. However, the question shows that there is a string opposition group, as 24% of the respondents think that the statement is not fully correct. Through aligning the previous literature and the obtained contradictory viewpoint, it can be stated that women become progressive in certain fields, like HR department, Customer service field, financial and accountancy, and healthcare, whereas there are many other professions, like engineering, IT, and so on, where women are still standing far behind the men compared to the senior most position.

4. How far are you satisfied with the appraisal techniques that your organizations apply?

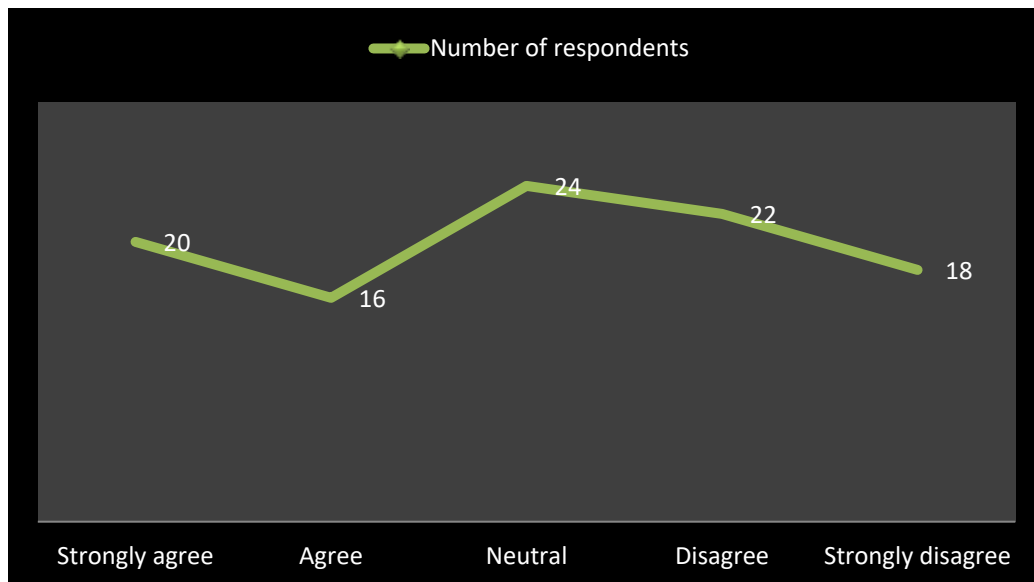
| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Highly satisfied | 18 | 100 | 18 |
| Satisfied | 22 | 100 | 32 |
| Neutral | 32 | 100 | 22 |
| Dissatisfied | 12 | 100 | 12 |
| Highly dissatisfied | 16 | 100 | 16 |



Analysis: The table and graph show that 32% of the respondents show neutral viewpoint regarding the appraisal techniques followed by the companies operating in Irish corporate sector. This means that there is a balance between the agreement and opposition, as a group of people supports the appraisal techniques. They think the companies provide equal opportunities for all the employees. On the other hand, some other group of people do not support the appraisal techniques, as according to their perspective, almost all the appraisal techniques are biased towards the male employees, such as easy promotion, higher wage difference, friendly corporate culture, less victimisation of sex stereotyping, presence of 'old boy network' and so on.

5. To what extent you believe that your organisation takes unbiased decision while giving promotion?

| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Strongly agree | 20 | 100 | 20 |
| Agree | 16 | 100 | 16 |
| Neutral | 24 | 100 | 24 |
| Disagree | 22 | 100 | 22 |
| Strongly disagree | 18 | 100 | 18 |

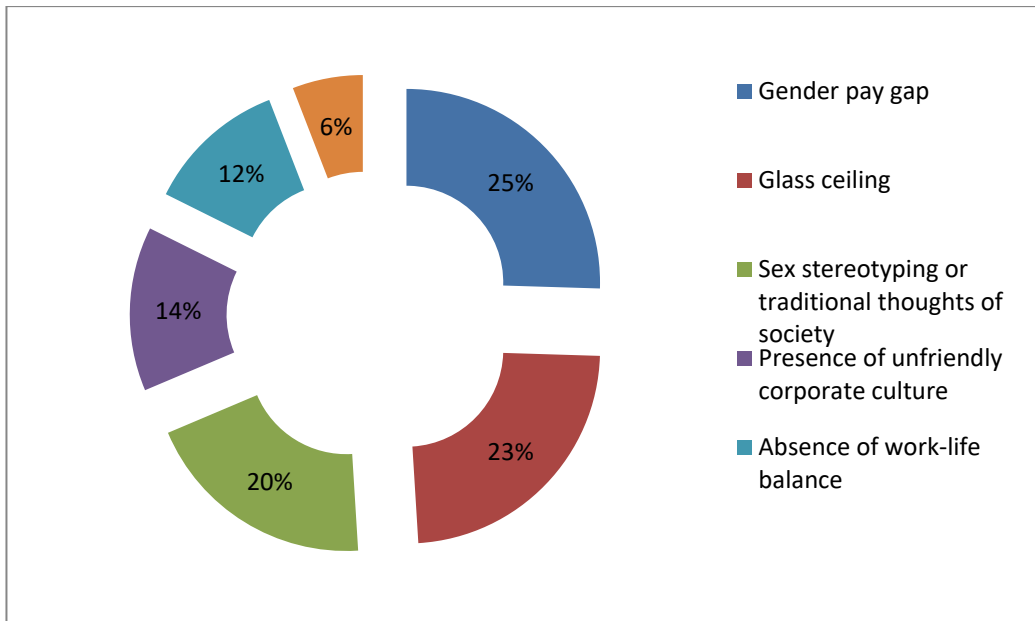


Analysis: Like the above two questions, the current question is also showing a contradictory balance between the positive and negative aspects. Due to this reason, the participants agreed with the neutral opportunities, as they retain both positive and negative viewpoints regarding the question and its answer. For example, 20% of the respondents think that the techniques and protocols followed by the Irish organisations are unbiased. On the other hand, 18% of the participants' shows disagreed viewpoint against this statement, which means that organisations could not follow the principle of Equality Act 2010. Based on the requirements of the current employee population and aligning the facts obtained from the literature as well as real-time data, it can be clearly understood that almost every organisation has some biased policies, through which they provide more benefits to the male

employees. Additional to this, this is often observed that subordinates mostly prefer the male seniors or supervisors, and for fulfilling the demand, organisations often require taking biased decisions while deciding about their senior designations.

6. Following the list below, according to you, what is the most significant barrier to women’s professional career?

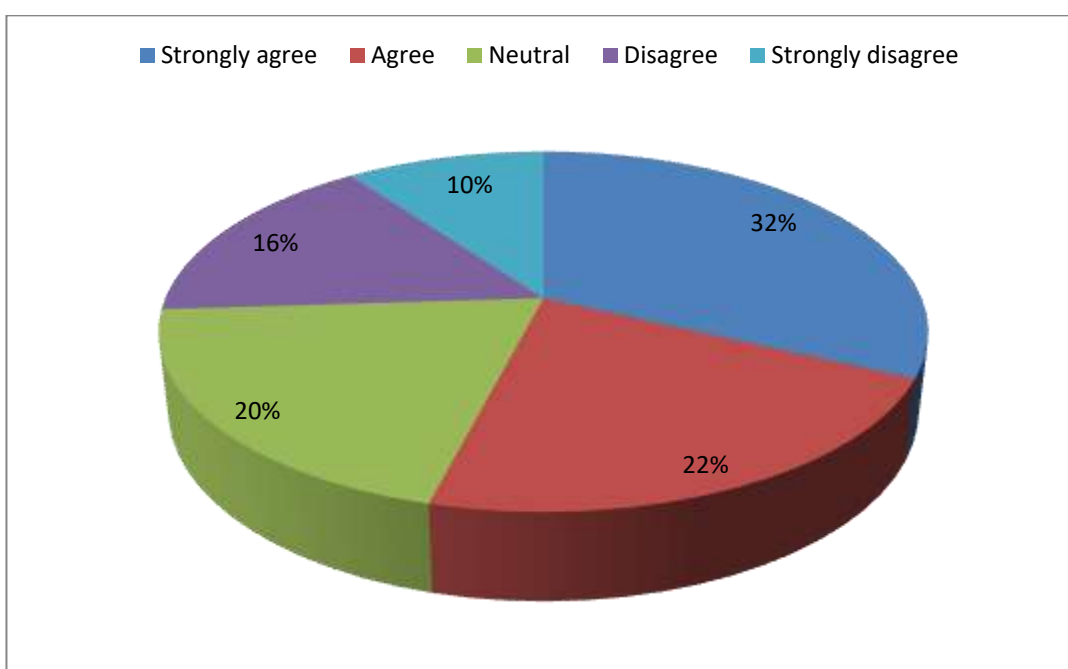
| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Gender pay gap | 26 | 100 | 26 |
| Glass ceiling | 24 | 100 | 24 |
| Sex stereotyping or traditional thoughts of society | 20 | 100 | 20 |
| Presence of unfriendly corporate culture | 14 | 100 | 8 |
| Absence of work-life balance | 12 | 100 | 12 |
| All of the above | 6 | 100 | 10 |



Analysis: Through considering the collected evidence and the obtained responses against this question, it can be stated that the most common unequal perspective is huge difference in positional wage benefits. In most of the organisations, who give opportunities to the women of being promoted to the upper position, they do not give proper remuneration to most of them. This is often known as strategic opposition, as they know that without getting proper payment, women would not retain their designated position, and therefore, while replacing, organisations can easily set their male employees in that designation. On the other hand, the other two common reasons are Glass ceiling and Sex stereotyping or Societal thoughts, due to which it is observed that male get more chances of promotion, even in case of they have less experiences and less educational attainment from the women. Another significant factor for women is unfriendly corporate culture, as 16% of the respondents stated that women, after being promoted in senior most positions, often forced to leave their designations due to the presence of sexual harassment, mobbing, and bullying. Additional to this, in 12% cases the main issue becomes less balance personal and professional lives.

7. How far do you agree that the under-representation of women employees in the senior positions affect the national and economic growth?

| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Strongly agree | 32 | 100 | 32 |
| Agree | 22 | 100 | 22 |
| Neutral | 20 | 100 | 20 |
| Disagree | 16 | 100 | 16 |
| Strongly disagree | 10 | 100 | 10 |

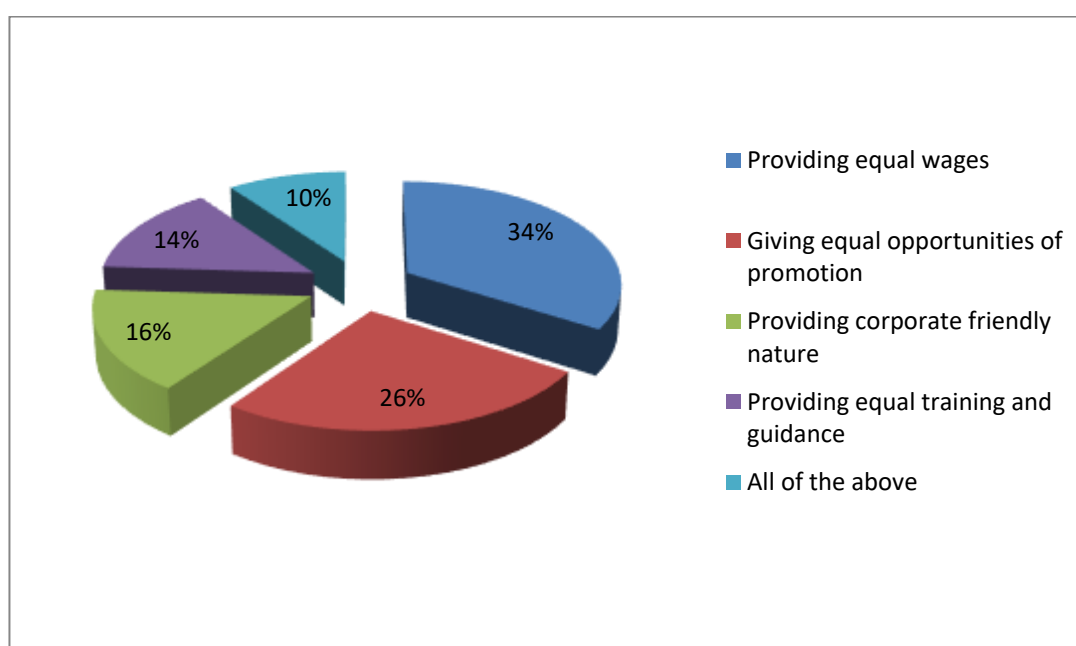


Analysis: 32% of the respondents stated that the obstacles created in the women career pathways often become disadvantageous for the entire nationality and economic growth. Evidence suggests that preventing women in being promoted to the senior positions or the gender discriminations against the women does not only affect their life or professional growth, it actually diminishes the complete growth of the country's economic wages. Due to the reduction in the tax income rate, the GDP per capita could not be improved in the ongoing years. On the other hand, the occurrence of less participation in the labour force and higher unemployment of the women often leads to high amount of economic loss as well as financial inequality,

due to which a broader unequal situation might often be created inside the country, along with the increasing rise of poverty.

8. According to you, what measures should Irish corporate takes in order to nurture gender equality?

| Options | Number of respondents | Total number of participants | Percentage (%) |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Providing equal wages | 34 | 100 | 34 |
| Giving equal opportunities of promotion | 26 | 100 | 26 |
| Providing corporate friendly nature | 16 | 100 | 16 |
| Providing equal training and guidance | 14 | 100 | 14 |
| All of the above | 10 | 100 | 10 |



Analysis: While asking for the recommendations in order to prevent the situation of gender disparity in senior position, it is observed that 34% of the respondents stated that the foremost applicable strategy is providing equal wages and reducing the wage gaps between male and female employees. Along with this, 26% of the respondents stated that giving equal opportunities to all the employees for being promoted in the management and leadership position is also required. However, literature finding suggests that in case of equal opportunities, the decision board requires focusing on proper communication and interaction with all desired male and female candidates. Apart from this, ensuring the safe and friendly corporate culture for the women and providing equal chances of being trained is also supported by 16% and 14% of the respondents, which shows that these factors are also considerable in case of bringing gender equality.

4.1.2 Analysis of the interview data (Qualitative questions)

In this case, the researcher(s) has selected 2 male and 2 females working in different Irish companies and positioned in the senior management designation. The 2 male participants are Production Head (M1) and Business Development Manager (M2), whereas the 2 female participants are positioned as Administration Head (F1) and Selection and Recruitment Head (F2).

Q1. As per your understanding, do you think that Irish women still lack opportunities or chances for being positioned at the higher corporate designation?

| | |
|----|---|
| M1 | As per the statements given by the participant, it can be stated that the women population obviously face certain lack in the opportunities; however, this is extremely negotiable. If one woman wants to achieve high designation in her career, she would get numerous opportunities of doing so. |
| M2 | From the viewpoint of M2 during the interview session, it has been interpreted that women are suffering from serious lack in getting the opportunities of being positioned as a leader or manager. Although they have proper skills, knowledge, and experience, they could not get promotion in proper time due to some irrelevant reasons. |
| F1 | F1 stated that lack of proper opportunities for being employed in corporate field and being promoted to upper designation is still |

| | |
|----|---|
| | beyond the thought for the Irish women population. Several internal and external factors are there for preventing women in being progressive during their employment phase. |
| F2 | As per the viewpoint of F2, although the level of gender discrimination is higher for women employees, they can easily handle the situation through accepting the fact that they could not be equal like their male co-workers in workplaces. |

Q2. What do you think about the most predictable reason behind the under-representation of women in senior managerial positions?

| | |
|----|--|
| M1 | As per the statement of M1, one of the most predictable reasons behind the absence of women in the senior leadership position is lack of proper desire of being promoted and sufficient motivation. Apart from this, the participant also stated that since women could not be equal in physical as well as cognitive factors, therefore, they could not be successful as the male employees in the senior leadership position. |
| M2 | The participant stated that the significantly predictable reason is presence of the traditional thought of societies regarding the role of women, such as women are suitable for the family-oriented working, they could not provide all their attention on their profession, they could not get over the family-oriented conflicts, and so on. Such stereotyping mentality is one of the main reasons behind the back pushing of women. On the other hand, organisations often think that women do not have proper leadership skills and traits, thus, they could not manage the decision making process. |
| F1 | As per the statement of F1, the main barrier for women in being promoted is presence of biasness towards the male employees. Organisations often prefer short-listing the name of desired male employees instead of females, while looking for promotion. On the other hand, an external factor is the presence of improper work-life |

| | |
|----|---|
| | balance between their personal and professional life, due to which it is often thought that they could not give their best performance after promotion. |
| F2 | F2 stated that since the gender disparity against women is not prominent, therefore, there are no prominent barriers associated with this case. However, in case of through interpretation, it can be observed that women generally have less problem solving and decision-making skill, which ultimately creates obstacles in their promotion pathway. |

Q3. In what way, the ‘push-back’ events occurred with women affects the national as well as economic growth, as per your perspective?

| | |
|----|---|
| M1 | From the perspectives of M1, it has been interpreted that the obstacles and prevention of the women in being promoted to higher designation might affect very little or even could not affect the national and economic growth. The little impacts can be eliminated from the economic perspective, as according to M1, male officers are talented enough for dealing with the certain adversities. |
| M2 | Through analysing the response given by M2, it has been analysed that the presence of gender discrimination is obviously a backward context in every national and international culture. The gender discrimination is not only an issue of women, but it is a general issue and it has destructive impacts on the societal and national growth, along with the GDP increment level. |
| F1 | According to the statement given by F1, it has been mentioned that the push-back events occurred to the women can greatly affect the national and economic growth. The less presence of Irish women in national labour force as well as the high unemployment level often causes increment in the national poverty level. |

| | |
|----|---|
| F2 | From the statements of F2, it has been interpreted preventing women from career progression might affect the entire society, nationality, and economic growth, as it can affect the economic growth, taxation rate, and employment percentage of the country. |
|----|---|

Q4. What could be the recommended strategies for empowering women in senior position and minimising gender inequality?

| | |
|----|---|
| M1 | According to the viewpoint of M1, the problem of discrimination is not obvious against women, however, if required, then motivating and empowering women for using their internal strength is essential. |
| M2 | M2 suggested that the society requires changing their mind set about the role of women, as women can be successful in both of their personal and professional lives. Less stereotyping and stigmatisation is essential for improving the overall career progression level of the Irish women population. |
| F1 | F1 suggested that corporations needed to incorporate the codes of conduct regarding equality and diversity, through which they require elimination of the biased mentality associated with the women empowerment. Apart from this, providing equal opportunities to all the women employees and supporting them in progressing their career is required to be supported from the end of Irish government. |
| F2 | From the viewpoint of F2, it is essential to incorporate some specific policies in every organisation for ensuring that certain percentage of the corporate sector would be reserved for the women, and they would get promotion after certain number of years, based on their age and performance level. |

4.2 Summary

The chapter includes a brief description of the findings, along with its proper discussion and interpretation of the survey and interview questionnaire. At the first part, the chapter starts with a short introductory paragraph. After that, the analysis of quantitative data is included along with the questions, tables, graphs, and analytical viewpoints. At the last part, the interpretation of the interview questions, i.e. responses of the interview participants are also mentioned in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendation

5.0 Conclusion

After completing the entire process of data collection, it is the time of drawing the conclusion, which is a challenging task of every research study. Concluding the study with the main points and outcomes, interpreted from the findings is critical. The chapter mainly includes the part of conclusion, recommendation, and future scope.

5.1 Recommendation

Based on the evidence collected during the research study, it can be mentioned that either high or low; women are obviously and continuously facing issues due to the presence of gender discrimination as well as disparities in the current societies of Ireland. Not only in Ireland, preventing women in being promoted to the leadership position can be considered as global issue. From the interpretation of data collected through survey and interview, it can be assumed that there is a mixed review regarding the under-representation of Irish women in senior management position. Based on the statements of the employees and managers engaged in the study, it is necessary to take certain steps for reducing or eliminating the issue of gender discrimination from the business contexts. As per the situations, the possible recommendations would be as follows-

- ✚ Incorporation of different legislations- In the Ireland business contexts, all the organisations need to follow properly the codes of conducts associated with the equality provision, in which gender is one of the main terms for maintaining the equality. The organisations require proper incorporation of the Employment Equality Act 1998, which is actually the combined outcome of Employment Equality Act 1977 and Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act 1974. The legislation mainly focuses on eliminating the discriminative practices on 9 different grounds, which are age, disability, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, family status, marital status, and traveller community membership. There are numerous scopes associated with this legislation, such as accessing to the employment, advertising, improving employment conditions, and equal pay for equal value-based work, promotion, training, work experience, and collective agreements. The legislation can give proper protection to the women employees, in both the public as well as private sector, while they face biasness or discrimination during the time of promotion or equal wage structure (Genderequality.ie, 2019). Apart from this,

there are several other acts also required to be included in the corporate organisations, such as Equal Status Act 2000. This act is a complementary version of the Equality Act 1998, which states that every employee has the right of being participated in every type of societal activities. Everyone should also be entitled to the similar opportunities in both societies as well as corporations. Therefore, companies also need to provide equal rights to their female employees for taking active participation in the labour force, along with progressing in their career (Genderequality.ie, 2019).

- ✚ Policy change- It is observed from the previous studies that over 50% of the women population belong from the above-15 age group, are currently associated in the Irish labour force. Besides this, the female workers develop around 46% of the national employment ration. However, the studies also suggest that occupational contexts in Ireland is highly segregated, due to which most of the women working in the Irish business contexts are paid much lesser than the men employees (NWCI.ie, 2019). Therefore, it is necessary to eliminate such discriminatory policies from the business world, and bring equal policies for both the employees. According to the reports of Irish government, the main policy, which is required to be changed, is Gender pay gap. In most of the cases, women employees are paid lesser than their male co-workers are; even they have higher knowledge, skill, and experience. Therefore, incorporation of Equal Wage policy is essential. Apart from this, Health and Safety Policies are also required to be followed properly for ensuring the safety of women employees (Europarl.europa.eu, 2019). Additionally, Irish government also requires focusing on the increase economic participation of the women employees in different corporate sector.
- ✚ Unbiased decision- Apart from the absence of proper inclusion of legislative and policy-oriented activities, another main reason behind the under-representation of women power in senior position is presence of stereotyping mentality among the corporate management authorities. For example, people often think that women could not manage the working patters of the leaders and managers, and therefore, they often take biased decision of promoting the male employees. On the other hand, subordinates often think women leaders could not provide them adequate knowledge regarding the tasks, roles, and responsibilities. Besides this, the higher authority often thinks that women do not have proper knowledge or skills of leadership and management, as they think from emotional perspective, not from

mindfulness. Such types of biased thought process often become obstacle for the women growth (Armstrong *et al.* 2015).

- ✚ Corporate governance- Implication of all the laws, policies, and unbiased mentality is not enough; it also depends upon the structure of corporate governance they follow. According to the statement of Aguilera *et al.* (2018), all the organisations require following some strict principles of corporate governance, including the internal audit, government audit, monitoring and evaluation of all the activities. Through the internal audit and government audit, the application of policies and laws could be measured, along with interpreting the areas of problematic situation still faced by the women employees. Based on the audit and corporate governance reports, people could take further necessary steps for eliminating the gender gaps and providing equal opportunities to all the women working in different Irish corporate.

5.2 Future scope

In this research, myriad quantity of statistical and descriptive data regarding the reasons and barriers of women's under-representation in the senior most position are included. Since the research subject is a bit off-topic, therefore, much evidence directly related to this topic is not present in the previous literature or research articles. Besides the literature-based information taken from the previous journals, real-time data collected from the survey and interview is also present in the study, which provides a real-time viewpoint about the current position of women in Ireland. Apart from this, according to the range of internal and external factors, several recommendations are also suggested at the end of the project, for improving the women's position in career progression or in being promoted to the senior most designations. For interpreting and understanding the real-time contexts, the data collected from primary research is valuable and usable in the further studies. Therefore, it can be stated that the research paper can be used as a secondary source of this topic, which could be understood by the future researchers while doing study on the similar topic. Apart from this, the recommendations are given on real-time contexts associated with under-represented situations of women in senior positions, which could be followed by the different Irish sector companies for eliminating the gender disparity from their business schedule.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire

1. Please, state your gender.
2. Please state your age.
3. How far do you agree with the statement that women could not get proper opportunity of being promoted to senior position?
4. How far are you satisfied with the appraisal techniques that your organizations apply?
5. To what extent you believe that your organisation takes unbiased decision while giving promotion?
6. Following the list below, according to you, what is the most significant barrier to women's professional career?
7. How far do you agree that the under-representation of women employees in the senior positions affect the national and economic growth?
8. According to you, what measures should Irish corporate takes in order to nurture gender equality?

Appendix 2: Interview Questionnaire

Q1. As per your understanding, do you think that Irish women still lack opportunities or chances for being positioned at the higher corporate designation?

Q2. What do you think about the most predictable reason behind the under-representation of women in senior managerial positions?

Q3. In what way, the 'push-back' events occurred with women affects the national as well as economic growth, as per your perspective?

Q4. What could be the recommended strategies for empowering women in senior position and minimising gender inequality?