

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF FEMALES IN THE HOTEL
SECTOR BREAKING THROUGH THE GLASS CEILING IN SEKONDI-
TAKORADI METROPOLIS

LUCY ASSIBI AYOMBISAH

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TAKORADI METROPOLIS

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

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Signature: Date:

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

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ABSTRACT

Female employees in the hotel industry are sometimes unable to compete with their male counterparts on an equal level due to several visible and invisible barriers and challenges such as the demands of marriage and motherhood, gender and sex discrimination, sexual harassment among others. In Ghana very little is known about the problems females face in the hotel industry and how these create challenges for them. This study therefore explores prospects and challenges that prevent females working in hotels from advancing in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis. Both questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data from hotel managers and employees. Convenient and purposive sampling methods were used to gather data from the respondents from 20th June to 22nd August, 2014. A total of 201 respondents participated in the study, out of which 196 responded to questionnaires, with 5 managers being interviewed. Tabulations procedures such as frequency distributions, percentages and factor analysis were used to analyse the quantitative data, while the qualitative data was analysed manually. The study revealed challenges associated with work-family conflicts and how these in turn reduce the confidence levels of females' workers thereby leading to unstable minds and attitudes toward work. Comparatively men enjoy better chances of advancing their careers and being promoted to management positions unlike women. The study therefore recommends the implementation of affirmative action policies and quota system, which permit the allocation of a certain number of positions to women. Such system ensures equal representation of women in management and leadership positions, and also guarantees equal treatment for both women and men.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my entire family especially to my husband, daughters, parents and siblings for their support.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GIS	-	Geographic Information Systems
GTA	-	Ghana Tourism Authority
KMO	-	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
MA	-	Masters of Administration
STMA	-	Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

In recent years females have realized considerable gains in educational achievements and entry positions in many sectors of the labour market. There are people who sincerely believe that females have managed to get an equal position in society compared to men and that women have real equal opportunities as men do (Meharroof, 2009). However, there are other people with a totally different view on the position of females in modern society. The entry of women into the professional world has, without a doubt, changed the dynamics of the workplace over the past few decades. Mooney, (2007) observed that women bring an element of diversity in the workplace that cannot be ignored. Williamson, (2008) emphasized on the role of women in management as a competitive advantage and noted that it was important for businesses to recognize that female managers are part of a talent pool that is essential to be retained and developed. However, Li, Tse, & Xie, (2007) observed that although women have become a larger percentage of the workforce and a good number of women promoted to higher positions, he was quick to note that women continue to be underrepresented in management positions compared to their overall employment. Studies by Poulston, (2008) found that in most organizations there was a tendency for women to be over represented in the lower levels of an industry; but underrepresented at senior levels and that they are also inequitably hired, promoted and rewarded. Due to what some refer to as the glass ceiling; they have not achieved similar success in advancing their careers. Some suggest that, the glass ceiling is

rooted in cultural and economic factors that vary among societies. In contrast to these societal level factors, it is also known that certain employment sectors and organizations are more opened to the advancement of females than others, even though there are not many females in management positions. Females tend to be more famous in the fields of nursing, library, and education, in contrast to the male-dominated fields of business, engineering, medicine, law, and the military (Bain & Cummings, 2000).

According to Oakley (2000), there are two types of explanation concerning the lack of females in management positions. The first type is related to barriers created by corporate practices that tend to favour recruitment, retention and promotion of males over females. The second type of explanation is related to culture and behaviour that revolve around the problems of stereotyping, preferred leadership style, and 'old boys' network.

According to Besen and Kimmel (2006) the disproportional representation of females in managerial positions is due to the glass ceiling or blocked opportunities for females, while some argue it is due to the sticky floor: keeping females in lower paying jobs. As far as females' share of managerial positions is concerned, the rate of progress is slow and uneven. Females are not given equal opportunities as males to do the more demanding responsible jobs, which would advance their careers (Wirth, 2004).

The hospitality and tourism industry remains male-dominated, mostly at the management level (Masadeh, 2013). Although the majority of males and females are promoted based on performance, a gender gap still exists in the rate of promotions of females, and they are at a disadvantage (Cobb & Dum lop, 2009). Females therefore have not made considerable

progress in the hotel industry because they do not have the required educational background, skills, and work experiences to enable them compete at the same rate as their male counterparts and become managers as compared to their male colleagues (Myerson, 2001). Not many females have managed to go beyond the “glass-ceiling” and proceed into management positions (Davidson, 2001). In fact, it has been noted that “glass-walls”, also referred to as functional segregation prevent females from attaining management experience.

Notwithstanding the considerable number of females working in the hotel sector worldwide, in Ghana few of them have succeeded to reach managerial positions. It is essential to acknowledge that females’ inability in competing with their male counterparts in management position is not limited to the hotel industry only but to other sectors as well (Anewu, 2010). The experience of many females striving for management positions in business survives, accompanied by the fact that they must work harder, often struggling with unexpected demands on their personal lives to earn the same acknowledgment or success as males (Sparrow, 2009).

In the Ghanaian society, there are few females who hold managerial positions. Generally, only 10 percent of Ghanaian females are found in management positions regardless of the fact that they constitute 51 percent of the total population of the country (Anewu, 2010). Ninety one percent (91%) of Ghanaian females are found in the informal sector, and are largely concentrated in non-managerial positions (Anewu, 2010). Female employees in the hotel industry are sometimes unable to compete with their male counterparts due to several visible and invisible barriers and challenges. These

barriers include motherhood, discrimination and sexual harassment (Pinar et al, 2011). As a result of these challenges females' desire to advance to the top becomes difficult.

Interestingly, the 1992 constitution of Ghana, Article 17 sub section (1) provides that "All persons shall be equal before the law". Article 24 sub section (1) equally provides that "Every person has the right to work under satisfactory, safe and healthy conditions, and shall receive equal pay for equal work and without distinction of any kind". Article 27 is specifically devoted to the rights of females and provides under sub section (1) that "Special care shall be accorded to mothers during a reasonable period before and after child-birth." While sub section (2) provides that "Facilities shall be provided for the care of children below school-going age to enable females, who have the traditional care for children, realize their full potentials. In addition, sub section (3) grants that "Females shall be guaranteed equal rights to training and promotion without any impediments from any person" (Constitution of Ghana, 1992).

More females are entering the business world but at lower levels, whereas those who are opportune to hold middle level positions find it difficult to advance their careers (Zhong, 2006). The above issue has a key impact in the workplace. It increases chances of gender discrimination and stereotypes that males can perform certain tasks better than females. For this reason, females have the tendency to become less motivated to advance in their careers, the less chances of career advancement in the workplaces (Reddy, 2006).

Traditional demands in the Ghanaian context require that at a certain stage of a woman's life, she expected to get married and form a family (Nukunya, 2003). As a result of these expectations, females are not able to advance their careers once they get married because they are expected to combine family responsibilities with those of the office which is very difficult for most females and eventually affects their career progress. Despite all these challenges, we still have few Ghanaian females who are at managerial positions. The focus of this study was to explore the prospects and challenges of females in the hotel sector breaking through the glass ceiling and how they made it.

Statement of the Research Problem

Females have always been dominated by males in workplaces because of the traditional view that a man is the breadwinner or financial provider, while a woman is considered as a house-keeper. A study by Zhong, (2006) indicates that women are struggling to reach the top in the hospitality industry, and that women are subordinate to men. In recent years, due to globalization and formal education this traditional view has changed and more females are working, but their under-representation in management positions and their inability to progress in their careers, remain major issues. Richardson (2003) shows that most hotel industries do not recruit, promote and support females on an equal basis as males, and that once females get jobs, they experience difficulties in advancing their careers.

Opoku-Agyemang (2006) shows that job placements in hospitality differ between males and females. Females have the majority of jobs at the base of the hospitality employment hierarchy while males have almost all the jobs at

the top. There is division of labour by sex at all levels of the hotel and tourism hierarchies. Cooks and waitresses tend to be females and are found in the lowest paid parts of the food sector. For instance, while cooking is historically a female task in most societies, it becomes an irresistible male niche in the fancier restaurants where salaries are substantial (Opoku-Agyemang, 2006).

Few studies have attempted to examine various factors that affect females to attain management positions in the hotel industry (Lam, 2006). The relative failure of females to advance to management positions in the hotel industry in Ghana is an important issue given that an increasing number of females are in the industry. The significance of the absence of females in the highest and most visible positions in the industry should not be ignored.

Within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, scanty information currently exists on the prospects and challenges that affect female career advancement in the hospitality industry and how these factors can effectively influence the advancement of females in hotels. It is within this context that this study sought to explore the prospects and challenges of females breaking through the glass ceiling in the hotel sector within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Research Objectives

The main objective of the study was to explore prospects and challenges of females working in the hotel sector. The specific objectives were to;

1. Assess challenges associated with females working in the hotel sector.
Identify the prospects of females' working in the hotel sector.
2. Identify the prospects of females' working in the hotel sector.

3. Examine the effects these challenges have on females working in the hotel sector.
4. Assess coping mechanisms to the challenges faced by females who work in the hotel sector.

Research Questions

- (1) What are the prospects of females working in the hotel industry?
- (2) What are the challenges faced by females working in the hotel industry?
- (3) What effect do the challenges have on the career progression of females working in the hotel sector?
- (4) How can females in the hotel sector overcome these challenges?

Significance of the Study

Kavoo, Willie & Damary, (2010) and Kirai & Elegwa, (2012) among other researchers focused on the barriers faced by female managers in several industries. However, limited researchers have been able to do any structured research into prospects and challenges of females in hotels. This situation raises concern and warrant research to determine the factors that affect female career progression in hotels.

This study, therefore explain why females were under-represented in certain parts of the hotel sector. The study also provides guidance to the hotel industry on how the can help females to overcome some of the challenges they face at the workplace, since it was indicated that females turn to reduce their confidence level as a result of work-family conflict. This study help policy makers and stakeholders in the hotel industry to design ways of preparing

females for career advancement and relevant education programmes that could help reduce some of these challenges, since the study revealed that mentorship and employee training can help reduce these challenges.

It has also provided valuable information regarding the challenges that exist in hotels, especially those facing females such as gender discrimination, sexual harassment and lack of mentors. Therefore, the outcomes of this research enabled females who have experienced these challenges at various stages of their careers, the firm, and similar institutions, to understand the issues at hand and how to manage such challenges. Additionally, findings of the study contributed to knowledge, especially to the body of literature on female challenges and their prospects in the study area and related organizations. The study also serves as a source of reference to future researchers who are doing similar studies.

Finally, the study serves as guideline for managers to identify managerial female problems, the ways to overcome those challenges, students; as a reference material for their studies, policy makers; making and improving policies in organizations with regard to females, and other relevant organization and especially for all female workers. It is also important for future researches and future job holders as it provide more knowledge on the prospects of females and how they can overcome these challenges.

Structure of the Thesis

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one provides the background to the study, research problem statement, research objectives, research questions and significance of the study. Chapter Two provides the theories informing the study, literature on prospects and challenges of females

in the hotel sector, how they can overcome these challenges and the conceptual framework. Chapter Three deal with methodology. It discusses the research philosophy, research design, and sources of data. It further examines the target population, sampling procedure, sampling size, method of data collection, data analysis procedure and ethical issues. Chapter Four presents the analysis and discussion of the data that was gathered from the field while Chapter Five discusses summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter seeks to present the prospects and challenges of females in the hotel sector with the support of relevant literature, theoretical and conceptual frameworks. So much change has taken place which has brought about recognition of females in the world of work comparatively. It is mainly recognized that females formed part of the disadvantaged groups. Today females are accepted in organizations; however there are still challenges which prevent them from reaching their full potentials. What are their prospects in the hotel sector? All these will be discussed in this chapter. The chapter begins with the theories informing the study, narrowing it down to the hotel sector.

Theories Informing the Study

Several theories attempt to explain the different situation of men and women in the labour market. Morrison & VonGlinow (1990); Savickas, (2005) and Feyerherm & Vick (2006) observed that theories focusing on women deficiencies in management roles have been proposed and explored over time. One of the most popularly used frameworks was developed by Caroline Moser. It is based on her concepts of gender roles and gender needs, and policy approaches to gender and development planning. An important strength of Moser framework is that it conceptualizes planning and aims to challenge unequal gender relations and support women empowerment. Among the many theories and conceptual frameworks that have arisen in the last two decades with regard to women include Gottfredson (1981), developmental

model which was very significant and addressed the role of gender in career aspirations and development. The model is highly appropriate for women especially because of its concepts of circumscription and compromise relating to socialization and sex roles. As observed by Schreiber (1998), the workplace has been male dominated for a long time. Career development theories have been developed for men and may not represent the nature of women careers. A male dominated environment requires women to imitate male traits in order to break the glass ceiling. Masculine traits, to a degree, help females to succeed in their careers by requiring them to adopt the male model and the male cultural standards (Bierema & Cseh, 2004). One trait, for example, is being non-emotional. Unfortunately females are often blamed of being too emotional.

Supply-side theory addresses the ability and motivation factors that are thought to distinguish between male and female managers. Supply-side explanations for the glass ceiling all argue that, on average, there are important attribute differences between males and females that tend to prevent females from breaking through the glass ceiling. These explanations can take many forms. Some are based on human capital theory (Becker, 1985; Blau & Ferber, 1992), and reason that females tend to accumulate less human capital (investments in education and careers) than men and are therefore less likely to reach management. Others suggest that sex role socialization beginning early in life leads to the development of gender specific managerial styles that advantage men when they pursue management careers (Henning & Jardim, 2007).

According to Baird and Kaufmann (2008) conflict theory stresses the competition between groups over limited resources. Conflict theorists believe that groups in power use their power to maintain their favourable position and to keep those without power from gaining so they will not jeopardize their position. Models and theories have guided some of the research on gender based income disparity. Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1985) and The New Home Economics Theory (Becker, 1985) have been the most popularized theories. The Human Capital Theory suggests that those with a larger investment in themselves have greater career opportunities and are therefore efficiently sorted into higher paying jobs. The New Home Economics theory argues that households maximize their use by dividing labour so that, in most households, men specialized in market work and women in domestic work. The male to female wage gap is an outcome of this decision making process. Bierema & Opengart, (2002) argued that most theories of women career development indicate that, women have been devalued both in theory and in social context. However, Savickas, (2005) observed that there are differences of opinion as to whether observed gender differences in behaviour and personality characteristics are, at least in part, due to cultural or social factors, and therefore, the product of socialization experiences, or to what extent gender differences are due to biological and physiological differences. Ladkin, (2002) and Francisco & Savickas, (2005) explained that the social role theory proposes that the social structure is the underlying force for the gender differences. Social role theory proposes that the sex differentiated behaviour is driven by the division of labour between two sexes within a society.

Savickas, (2005) again examined theories which stress the biological differences between males and females and suggested that some behaviours and attitudinal differences are biologically determined. He observed that the sociological theories hold that women are socialized into particular roles, which have been socially constructed. The concept of roles theory is based on the view that adults are capable of handling conflicts from a variety of roles, which are determined situational (Kantar, 2007). Akrivos, Ladkin, & Reklitis, (2007) held that women career development, should be considered interdependent rather than independent. This study focused on theories related to women career development and have explored theories of sex and gender differences (Kantar, 2007).

Functional Theory states that society tends to maintain its equilibrium and that any change disrupts this equilibrium. Therefore, women joining the workforce have met a lot of resistance, and society has to make changes elsewhere to compensate for these changes in order to reach equilibrium again (Sparrow and Iverson (1999). The New Home Economics Theory (Becker, 1985) has been one of the most popularized theories. The male to female wage gap is an outcome of this decision making process. The Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1985) suggests that those with a larger investment in themselves have greater career opportunities and are therefore efficiently sorted into higher paying jobs. This study will focus on factors affecting women career progression in the hotel industry. While supply side theories have played a role in understanding male and female differences in career attainment, reviews of the empirical evidence do not show that they

provide a complete explanation for why few females reach management (Powell, 2009).

According to Okin (2009) liberal feminist theory is an outgrowth of the general movement to empower females worldwide. Feminism can be defined as a recognition and critique of male dominance combined with efforts to change it. Liberal feminism's primary goal is gender equality in the public sphere. They believe in equal access to education, equal pay, ending job sex segregation, better working conditions gained primarily through legal changes. Private sphere issues are of concern mainly as they influence or hinder equality in the public sphere. Gaining access to and being paid and promoted equally in traditionally male-dominated occupations is an important goal.

Liberal feminism theory focuses more on issues like equality in the workplace, in education and political rights. Where liberal feminism looks at issues in the private sphere, it tends to be in terms of equality: how does private life hinder or enhance public equality. Thus, liberal feminists also tend to support marriage as an equal partnership, and more male involvement in child care (Okin, 2009). The application of the supply side theory and liberal feminism theory to the glass ceiling phenomenon will lead to the prediction that, over time, opportunity for females will improve as more women will choose to enter previously male dominated managerial hierarchies. This suggests that, as female representation in managerial positions increases, it is just a matter of time before females break the glass ceiling.

According to Bierema and Opengart (2002,), glass ceiling remains a key setback, which hampers females from pursuing their careers. Whether this glass ceiling occurs at the work place or in politics it is basically a sign of

collective and economic gender disparity that affects females' career progress. With the accomplishment of educational difference and changes in social attitudes in the direction of males and females roles, it is belief that females would speedily progress up the career ladder.

Importance of the Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry is one of the oldest businesses in history and as well as the fastest growing industries of our time (Farrar, 1996). The industry alone is a multi-billion dollar and growing enterprise that offers unlimited opportunities. The industry is diverse enough for people to work in different areas of interest and still be employed within the hospitality industry. Any destination that could serve as a tourist attraction needs to have a hospitality industry. Tourists need food and accommodation, so restaurants, guesthouses and hotels are a necessity to make their stay enjoyable. The amount of revenue generated from tourism and hospitality globally is significant, with some places reaping up to 90 percent of their gross domestic products from tourism (which, naturally, cannot function without the hospitality industry).

The level of job creation that comes with a successful hospitality industry is substantial. Concierges, chefs, and hotel management staff all need to be hired in order to ensure that every guest or patron is taken care of. Thousands of jobs are created annually as a direct result of the hospitality industry. It is because of the dynamic nature of the hospitality industry that it has become so important worldwide (Farrar, 1996).

Prospects of Females

According to Eyring and Stead (1998), the likelihood for firms to modify their corporate policies and practices and know the positive impact that females can make in advancing their careers is possible. Oakley (2000) appears less optimistic the prospects of females and propose that females can only improve their prospects by becoming entrepreneurs themselves.

In contrast to the liberal feminist theory which states that power relationships can be made more equitable through reform, Oakley (2000) argues instead that females are likely to be disturbed by the fact that power in organizations continues to be held primarily by men. The outlook for the future does not appear promising, given that ‘gender-based stereotyping and the closed circle of the “old boy network” are strong social forces that are slow to change. Instead future changes in socialization patterns will not occur from females breaking through the glass ceiling, but instead through the increasing numbers of female owners of small businesses (Oakley, 2000).

With regard to employer policies meant to address females’ problems, the risk is that they make females feel insufficient and recipient of special treatment. This is likely to create bitterness among men and a belief that those females who succeeded did not do so on merit. What such equality approaches fail to do is to expose the current organization of the workplace as built around, and hence favouring, male needs and ways of working (Liff & Ward, 2001).

Sayles and Strauss (1999) noted that modern women have had their roles prolonged with regard to changes in cultural ideas and norms, wider spread of birth control, family planning and decrease in family size. Also

women are becoming more independent. In addition, there are day care centre's, house boys, cleaning services and many others around thereby relieving women of the burden of house tasks. Hence, they are moved to dedicate all their concentration to office duties. Due to all these changes women appear to have more employment opportunities.

Working Conditions and how it affect Females' Prospects

Consumer demand patterns in hotels and restaurants require working conditions that are frequently characterized as unsocial and irregular working hours in the form of split shifts, weekend shifts, night shifts, or work during holiday periods. These working conditions increase stress on workers with family responsibilities, particularly females who carry the majority of the care burden for children and the elderly as well as for household chores (Wirth, 2004).

Much of the work in hotels and restaurants is of a strenuous nature and may involve long periods of standing, a lot of walking (often in uncomfortable shoes for females), carrying (heavy) loads, repetitive movements, working in painful positions and walking up or down stairs. There is thus a heavy workload coupled with high levels of stress resulting from time pressure and constant customer contact (Baum, 2013). As a result of the demanding nature of the hotel industry coupled with that of the household it seems there are no any prospects for females especially those who do not have higher qualifications

Important Roles Played by Females in the Workplace

Gregg and Johnson (2000) conducted a study, which shows that energy and hard work are the most important qualities that females have in the workplaces. Furthermore, Gregg and Johnson (2000) noted that the females in their study felt that they had to work twice as hard or more than their male colleagues in order to show they deserve promotion and because for them there was no room for mistakes. Moreover, other features noted in females incorporated good communication skills, trust and persistence. Brownell (2004) discovered that females are capable of dealing with a multi-cultural workforce and are able to organize others around a common goal. He further explained that in a second study on personality, he found the following qualities in female managers: fairness, hard work, ability to motivate others, determination, calmness, assertiveness, competitiveness, enthusiasm, deliberateness and detail-oriented, all of which contribute towards success of the organization. Females do indeed play an important role in the workplace.

Challenges facing Females

Even though it is accepted that advancements have been made concerning the position of females to access entry level of management positions, there are definite challenges which obstruct them from breaking through the glass ceiling. A number of studies reveal that problems that surround females' advancement lie in the history, social attitudes and direct experience of work. These challenges are as follows:

Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment

Woods and Kavanaugh (2004) found that more than 80 percent of males and females see gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace as an ongoing challenge. Sexual harassment is simply not basing employment decisions on an individual's approval or refusal of sexual advances. Sexual harassment is constantly staring provocatively and passing uncomfortable comments about a person (Woods & Kavanaugh, 2004).

Sexual harassment in the work environment is a form of unfair discrimination and is prohibited on the grounds of sex and or gender and sexual orientation. Sexual harassment has been recognized as one of the most persistent and severe challenges females experience in the workplace (Fitzgerald & Betz, 2003; Gutek, 2005). It devalues females' abilities and slows down their career advancement (Gilbert, Hallett & Eldridge, 2004).

According to Nieva and Gutek (2001), sexual harassment impacts on females in both the short and long term. In the short term, females may lose self-confidence and quit their jobs. In the long term, career advancement is affected and gender inequality is maintained in organizations. Even though most organizations are supportive of females who are sexually harassed, securing concrete evidence of the harassment is not easy and complex (Gilbert, et al., 2004). One of the major reasons is the fact that females have a lesser amount of power in organizations and the harasser is usually a person in management who has more power than the female (Prekel, 2000).

The main cause of discrimination stems from powerfully held attitudes towards females' and males' social roles and performance. If one compares the efficient roles performed by females and males rather than

looking at females as disadvantaged group, it becomes evident that each has diverse rights to use resources, job opportunities and positions. The cost of gender inequalities includes females being "packed" into a thin scope of jobs where there is lesser amount of task and or lesser pay, or having to work part time, where there are fewer chances for advancement. Despite the fact that this circumstance can be explained to some extent by male and female perceptions of their individual social roles, these roles, have in fact, been undergoing significant changes in recent years. Labour force involvement patterns of male and female, and social attitudes, have been steadily developing to reflect these issue of sexual harassment (Wirth, 2004).

In view of the fact that the arrival of the females movement, changes in social approval of gender, equality have been mainly due to varying perceptions between females and males themselves. In recent years, females working lives have been regarded as permanent labour force membership. Females have entered a lot of professions formerly retained for males, and their wages have become an important part of family income. Furthermore, Wirth (2004) indicated that both visible and invisible rules have been constructed around the "male" norm, which females sometimes find not easy to contain. Aside these, it is normally said that developing and maintaining most excellent talent is paramount to remaining competitive in a comprehensive business world and an ever-changing surroundings. In order for organizations to attain this it is paramount to begin by breaking down the stereotypes around females, and removing gender discrimination (Burton, 2001).

Studies by Burton (2001) disclose that females have the wish and capability to attain to break the glass ceiling; however gender discrimination remains the main restriction. It is further indicated that people react in different ways toward females compared to their male colleagues in career advancement. According to the study of females in corporate leadership by Catalyst (2003), when it comes to management or leadership, immediate social structures cancel and demean females' attempts to be efficient, prominent and great. In support of Catalyst's study, Stewart, Malley and LaVaque (2007) indicate that females are expected to merge management with kindness. They are obligated to soften their management styles in order to get support of their workers otherwise they risk being disliked or being less powerful, while males face no such obligation to be pleasant whilst exercising authority. Catalyst (2003) explained that females who manage with an authoritarian approach are targets of more disapproval, but males may choose the same management style and experience no such discrimination.

In the same study by Catalyst (2003), it was indicated that female respondents reported that they did not feel that they were listened to, and that when they spoke in meetings their comments and suggestions were ignored or belittled, but the same or similar comments and suggestions from males, made an impact. This feeling is in line with the field studies of small group meetings in organizations, which proved that females are targets of more displays of depressing emotions than males, even when both are viewed as being equally competent (Brown & Ralph, 2004).

According to Stewart *et al.* (2007), for females to be accepted in management roles, they should have external approval such as training, task-

related proficiency. Catalyst (2003) revealed that when it comes to a set of job performance expectations, females in most cases walk a narrow path, since for them there is no room for mistakes in relationship to their male colleagues. Females argue that they are persistently held to a lower paradigm than their male counterparts. Faced with clear discrimination based on gender, Catalyst's (2003) revealed that quite a large number of females from the study pointed out that they had to employ a number of strategies in order to get ahead their careers, which included: exceeding performance expectations, successfully managing others, developing a style which male managers are comfortable with, having recognized expertise in a specific content area and taking on difficult or highly visible assignments. Under these conditions, how easy is it for females to break the glass ceiling while gender discrimination seems to be a fundamental problem worldwide?

Gender Roles and Personal Factors

Holland (2007) and Bierema and Opengart (2002) have a similar or same belief that one of the factors which have an effect on females advancement is gender role. Hartmann, Stephen, and Lovell (2006) indicate that one of the challenge is the hope for females to bear children and be accountable for family work, which contributes to their families not being willing to invest in girls' education and female careers. Furthermore, Hakim (2007) revealed that in some countries, female labour force participation is seen to clash with the traditional roles of females as carers, and despite their level of education, females may have to prioritize their family responsibilities over employment or career choices.

Myerson (2001), states that quite a lot of researchers found that females are more at risk to role stress due to several role demands, which are natural when running a career, while also running a home. In the long run, the achievement of these females is often at considerable rate to their individual lives. Myerson (2001) further explains that due to challenging jobs, females have to work lengthy hours and may have to refrain from long-term relations and opportunities to have children, if they wish to advance to management levels of their careers.

Qin (2000) highlights a significant point, which contributes to females' lack of interest to advance. He indicates that not only in African societies, but also in China, males have a tendency of choosing family-oriented over career oriented wives. As a result, females would rather choose to be family-oriented, as they do not want to be viewed as being more competent than their husbands. It has become clear that, females are in fact torn between work and family demands since they do not want to be housewives, but at the same time they are challenged to be great females. They wish for but fear opportunities and challenges which the external world offers.

Work-family Commitment and Work-family Conflict

Bierema and Opongart (2002) and Super (2007) are in support of the principle that females often find it difficult to balance their work and family commitments. They indicate that, overall, females try to balance work and family responsibility by working part-time or flexible hours. However, in terms of family responsibilities, females may be underprivileged beyond a certain level where a hundred percent commitment to the organization may be

expected, because this expectation is perceived in those who are willing to work long hours, to undertake extended travel, and to place the needs of the organization first (Super, 2007).

Nevertheless, Super (2007) further explains that females are more concerned with meeting their family responsibilities than work demands, or focusing on changing or advancing their careers. Is it fair that females are expected to solely take responsibility to raise their children while less parental care is expected from males? Scott (2004) points out that some employers have trouble tolerating the policies which will encourage females in the workplace make good industry practice. They believe that standard and productive employees for the companies are males as they generally find it easier than females to combine family and work, since they rely greatly on females to bear family responsibilities. This is a reason why some females find it difficult to concentrate on their careers (Scott, 2004). Leonie (2002) advises that new policies and strategies to cope with family responsibilities should be included in all levels of the workplace so that a more reasonable use of males and females' time becomes the norm. In addition, employer's perceptions of males' and females' abilities and eagerness to dedicate time and effort to work should be more in tune. On the contrary, it has been argued that females are often unwilling to run for leadership positions. This is mainly because such positions require extensive travel, spending nights away from home and sometimes going into bars (Tripp, 2001). Nonetheless, for females who contest such positions, they fear the risk of being regarded as loose or unfit as mothers and or wives and being socially stigmatized, which is often the case in African societies (Zhong, 2006). This shows that for females to take part in

leadership positions and to advance to the top of their careers, they should be bold.

Females who mix challenging careers with raising families, experience a variety of trouble and conflicts (Russell, 2004). They may meet practical problems daily for example, limited time or professional problems, coupled with the dominance of their husbands' careers. The fact that many females still bear primary responsibility for the home and childcare has led to many females experiencing a "second shift" condition (Hochschild, 2009). The "second shift" condition refers to females holding two jobs. The first job being paid employment and the second being family responsibilities. According to Barnett and Rivers, working mothers spend roughly 80 hours at work, on childcare and on household chores, while working fathers spend an average of 50 hours per week on the same activities (Barnet and Rivers, 2004).

According to White, Cox and Cooper (2002), this is one of the reasons why few females occupy fulltime jobs during their child rearing years. Females experience guilt for placing their careers before their children, for not finding sufficient time for household chores, and not being able to take time off to care for their children (Russell, 2004). Puckrin (2000) also points out that females also experience guilt for leaving their children in the care of strangers, which contradicts societal norms.

In a study conducted by Burkes and Stone (2003), it was found that females perceive their family obligations as an obstacle to their advancement. Research conducted by Engstrom and Ferri (2000), supports this finding. In this study, it was found that females experience difficulty in managing their roles at home and at work and find it impossible to devote time for their

personal lives while trying to advance in their careers. Generally, African men are regarded as heads of households, and they expect the woman to attend to all their needs irrespective of whether she works or not.

In recent decades, research has shown that work-family conflict also affects females' progression. Mallon & Cassell (2009) found that the expectation of long hours was a significant challenge to seeking promotions for many females in the hotel sector (Mallon & Cassell, 2009). It is alleged that females traditionally would be concerned with childcare and housework, which was viewed as their duty as mothers. Working in a hotel is not a 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. job. Success in the industry demands long hours and requires a huge deal of emergency management and problem solving.

These factors join to create a demanding and very tiring work experience (Brownell, 2004). There are opportunities in the rapidly growing industry, but people must be aware of the requirements of long hours, pressure and loss of quality time with their families. People in the industry must balance success and cost, and struggle with work and family conflicts, especially those who are single parents.

Liu and Wilson (2001) revealed that work-family conflicts are experienced when pressures from work and family roles are mismatched since contribution in one role makes it difficult to participate in another, and this makes it difficult for female to advance their careers. Additionally, Myerson (2001) illustrates that the difficulty of balancing work and family occurs largely because females are assigned majority of childbearing responsibilities and carry out a large share of the household tasks. Failure or inability to balance the two results in work and family conflict. Many females, especially

those in management positions often choose to be single or married with no children in order to avoid such conflict. Brownell (2004) identified another source of conflict as the fact that advancement usually requires leaving home, relatives and the family to move across the country for better opportunities and, therefore, this means loss of quality time with families.

In addition, Myerson (2001) explains that the issue of work and family conflict does not only limit females from getting ahead, but it also creates occupational segregation. The reason for this is that females still hold the belief that they are completely responsible for taking care of family responsibilities. They continue to choose occupations that are more flexible as a way of trying to balance family and work in order to avoid any conflict. Myerson (2001) cautions that work and family conflict will remain a major problem unless males cease to place family care and pressure entirely on females while organizations realize the direct and indirect costs created by work and family conflicts on both females and the organization itself. The gender division of time between work and family is most likely the most important gender issue of all and explains most of the differences between the work patterns and job types of males and females.

Bierema and Opengart (2002) are of the same opinion with Burton (2001) that some of the factors which contribute to the slower career progress of females and fewer opportunities for them because of stereotypes against females. This is as a result of traditional approaches and models of careers in organizations which were based on the experience of males negative attitudes toward females who seek career advancement in the workplaces. Moreover, Crystal, Owen and Todor (2003) revealed the following stereotypes

concerning females: females tend to place family demands above work consideration and hence loss interest in their jobs, females work for supplemental income and hence lack the necessary drive to succeed in business, females are unsuitable for management positions because they are too emotional and lack aggressiveness, females are not as committed as males to their careers (Korn and Ferry, 2002).

As a matter of fact, stereotypes against females stem from African societies where Grant (2005) clarifies that it is believed that males lead and females follow. Fink (2007) and Stewart *et al.* (2007) indicate that traditionally, the management field was perceived as a male activity, thus suitable for males. For this reason, females who held management positions would be considered as less proficient than their male counterparts and, therefore, be given less pay and fewer promotions despite their performance. Eagly and Johnson (2000) argue that the concern that males make better leaders than female is not always factual. They are supported by Growe and Montgomery (2000) and De la Rey (2005) who found that there seems to be enough evidence that females lead differently. They mention that females represent a more participatory approach, are more independent, allow for power and information sharing, are more nurturing than males, and enable others to make contributions through delegation. While in contrast to these features of females, males lead from the front and attempt to have all the answers by stressing job completion, attainment of goals and hoarding information and winning (Growe & Montgomery, 2000).

Consequently, what impact do these negative stereotypes have on females? Crystal et al (2003) assert that slight discrimination occurs; at times a

decision is made to offer an important task to a man rather than to a woman based on the belief that females are not free to take time-consuming jobs because of family commitments.

Lack of Mentors and Limited access to Informal Networks

Nies and Wolverson (2000) are of the view that lack of mentoring is a challenge to females' career progression. A study conducted on career progression for females in higher education by Maack and Passet (2004) revealed that those females in higher education who have been mentored have attained higher levels of career advancement than females who have not been mentored. Moses (2008) states that recognizing the important role of mentors in the careers of successful people has led to an increasing number of organizations and corporations establishing formalized mentor programmes. This is mainly because mentoring is viewed by most organizations as gainful staff advancement, as it provides an individual with an opportunity to move across a wide range of areas and levels to share knowledge and experience. On the contrary, the opposite is obvious with reference to lack of mentoring (Moses, 2008).

Astin and Leland (2001) refer to mentors and role models as "individuals who give authorization to aspire, act and go beyond certain given gender roles". Mentoring is considered to be a crucial part for the professional development and advancement of males and females in any organization (Hunsaker & Hunsaker, 2001). In most organizations, males hold management positions and this disadvantages females because they lack the chance to mingle with and develop mentoring relationships which might help prepare them for management positions. (Chi-Ching, 2002).

Ackah and Heaton (2003) found that females felt isolated and disturbed in male dominated organizations. Kahn (2004) contends that a lack of role models in organizations is known to have a strong effect on females' success, driving force, associate conduct, and concern levels. Chi-Ching (2002) affirms the above position by stating that females are at a disadvantage as a result of their restricted access to organizational power and mentors. According to Stickel and Bonett (2001) the opportunity to learn from the success of others is restricted due to the lack of female role models in male dominated careers. Also Betz and Fitzgerald (2007), "literature regarding the selection of occupational role models points out that, males almost always report other males as significant role models and persons of influence, while females are likely to report both male and female role models"(pg46). According to Russell (2004), mentoring is needed at two stages of females' career advancement. In the early stage, mentoring teaches females the internal workings of an organization and shows them how to build their image and become team players. In the later stages, mentoring provides endorsements for females who want to apply for promotions into management. Finally, it is important for females in management to ensure that other females are fairly mentored and promoted to encourage career advancement. However, it is equally important that females do not fall into the trap of establishing a "pink-collar ghetto" around themselves (Coetzer, 2005). This implies that females in management positions should be careful not to be surrounded by females only as this could lead to further segregation.

Networking entails association and communication between individuals at all levels in an organization (Russell, 2004). It often takes place

through conferences, workshops, mutual friends, and after-hour gatherings, and is often regarded as an “old boy’s network”. Successful managers use networking to exchange information, trade practical know-how, and gain support (Kaplan, 2004). According to Oakley (2000), the “old boys’ network” works within and stretches across organizations. However, in most cases it excludes less powerful males and females from membership (Oakley, 2000). Females express disappointment at being disqualified from informal networks in organizations (Russell, 2004). Worldwide estimates indicate that more than 50 percent of most management positions are obtained through personal contacts (Lemons, 2003). This view is affirmed by females in the foodservice industry who list exclusion from informal networks of communication as one of the main challenges they experience (Doss, 2000). Super (2007) further explains that females are more concerned with meeting their family responsibilities than work demands, or focusing on changing or advancing their careers. Is it fair that females are expected to solely take?

Undertaking Challenging Assignments

Challenging assignments involve adding an employees’ responsibility and this gives the employee a sense of recognition as they stand out (Aswathappa, 2005 and Olsson & Walker, 2004). Armstrong & Murlins, (2004) observed that recognition is necessary in career advancement and may be achieved by accepting challenging assignments which stretch and compliment one’s knowledge and then learn as much as one could. Lee, (2002) found that ability to take challenging assignments helped computer professionals to fulfill growth needs. Cox and Cooper, (2002) pointed that women who had succeeded in their careers had been given challenge early in their career and that gave them

opportunity to prove their abilities. Studies done by Zhu, (2002) showed that women who had advanced in their careers rated challenging assignments as important for career progression.

Dressler, (2008) noted that challenging assignments provide employees with opportunities for achievement and also motivation. The study viewed challenging assignments as developmental opportunities. This study found that women had great difficulty in getting geographic mobility opportunities and that they needed to be proactive to get such assignments. Undertaking challenging assignments entails ability and willingness to assume a heavy workload and putting in long face hours because this demonstrates commitment to the organization and career due to the increased responsibilities. Research done by Vinnicombe & Colwill, (1997) indicated that many successful women attributed their career success to hard work which led to good performance.

Ng and Pine, (2003) in Zhong, (2006) in her study recommended that women must stand out through hard work and being good at what they do. In contribution to heavy work load, Lee (2002) observed that apart from assuming long and flexible working hours by extending the work environment to working outside of normal hours, heavy work load also entails having a preoccupation with work related issues and this could be an indication of commitment to the job and organization.

Factors that can help Females to overcome some Challenges

The review of literature reveals that energy and hard work are presented as the most important qualities that make it possible for females to be able to break through the glass ceiling. Gregg and Johnson (2000) noted

that females felt that they had to work twice as hard and do twice as good a job as their male colleagues in order to prove they deserved a promotion. Other qualities included effective communication, confidence, and determination. Suggestions are given to females to stand out by hard work, being good at what they do, networking, relocating, or changing companies (Ng & Pine, 2003).

Knutson and Schmidgall (2009) noted that having an appealing quality is an effective approach and that females believe that to break the glass ceiling they must develop a style with which males are secure. Brownell (2004), described the hotel manager who rises as a leader in the 21st century as males and females who deal efficiently with a multi-cultural workforce, present their ideas clearly, and are able to assemble others around a common goal. Brownell (2004), in another study on personality and career development, found the following traits of hotel managers: hard work, fairness, the ability to inspire others, determination, calmness, assertiveness or competitiveness, interest, deliberateness and detail-orientation. Skills and intelligence also are vital, such as communication skills, leadership skills and interpersonal skills. Networking and mentoring have been identified as two methods to help females overcome the glass ceiling. Fagenson and Jackson (2003) stated that some females in high level have benefited from networks. Furthermore, females need to set up their networks and participate in males networks. Many females have accepted the help of mentors who helped them to enter the old boy networks.

General Perceptions Concerning Females' Advancement

The most common view concerning females' career advancement is that of the glass ceiling phenomenon. It is believed that the invisible, generally artificial barriers are some of the key factors that stop females from advancing within their organizations and attaining their full potential (Knutson and Schmidgall, 2009). Another perception is that of females being traditionally considered as child bearers or family carers, which make it difficult for them to advance. Therefore according to Wirth (2004), more females, than males, delay marriage or having a family in order to establish their careers first. Accordingly, this expectation puts more stress on a woman to pay more attention to family commitments than her job or career, since she is perceived as less capable if she fails to balance her work and family pressures.

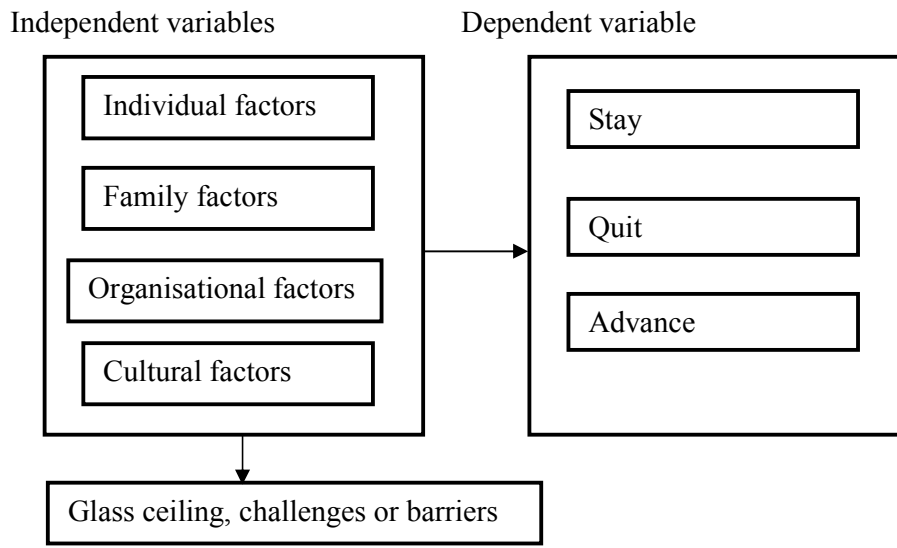
Stein (2002) concurs with Wirth (2004) on the above matter that males have much greater flexibility in deciding if and when they involve themselves more in family and parenting, however, females are tied to their natural clocks. Hakim (2007) revealed from one study that what also holds back females from advancing is the issue of females being traditionally under-represented in management positions. Apart from these challenges, human capital and exchange theories state that marital status of females' play a major role as a primary limitation to their career advancement. Meyerson (2001) believes that our culture encourages females to develop a sense of self from being selfless, by giving to everyone else first and foremost and placing their ambitious goals at the bottom of their priority pile. This is one of the reasons why so many females simultaneously crave for and fear determined goals and in the long run drop-kick their dreams.

Conceptual Framework for the Study

The conceptual framework for the study is based on the theory of glass ceiling which is referred to as an invisible, generally artificial barriers that put off qualified individuals, especially females, from advancing within their organizations and reaching their full potentials (Knutson & Schmidgall, 2009). The term was popularized in the 1980s when it became a major perception in the workplace in the United States. It describes a tendency for females to be more represented in the lesser levels of an industry, but underrepresented at management levels. Although great change has taken place in recent years, there remains space for development. Generally male and female colleagues and customers do not automatically see females as equal to males since females tend to work much harder than males to prove themselves while sometimes having to get used to male working styles and attitudes more than necessary.

Billy and Manoochehri (2005) described the growth of females' role in history: traditionally, females' role has been in the home, taking care of children and husband. During World War II, females went to work because males were at war. After World War II, females were sent back home again to be wives and mothers. Their shorter work experience has impacted females in history. Since the 1960s, more and more females have entered the workplace and 30-40 years later they have stayed in the workforce so that the number of working females will constantly increase. While females constitute almost half of the workplace, the number of females in management is still low.

The Glass Ceiling Framework



Source: Adapted from (Bombuwela & De Alwis, 2013)

The main idea emphasized by the conceptual framework is that, glass ceiling has an influence on females' advancement, quitting or staying on the job. Therefore, cultural factors, individual factors, organizational factors and family factors act as the independent variables that constitute the glass ceiling, barriers or challenges of females. On the other hand, advancement, dropping, or staying act as the dependent variables. Therefore, females' advancement, dropping, or staying will depend on independent variables. If females are able to overcome these factors then they will advance on the other hand if they are not able to overcome these factors it will lead to quitting which eventually leads to glass ceiling. Cultural factors consist of beliefs and stereotypes, individual factors is regarded as of lack of self-confidence, personal trait and inability to market oneself, organizational factors include organizational policy and management style and finally family factors include childcare and house chores. The measurement of glass ceiling is based on these four variables.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents methodological issues such as the profile of the study area, research methods, research design, data and sources, target population, sampling procedure, sampling size, methods of data collection, data analysis procedure and ethical issues. It also presents the challenges encountered during the fieldwork

Profile of the Study Area

The study site is the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis of the Western Region of Ghana. The area is a site comprising two joint cities; Sekondi and Takoradi, with Sekondi being the capital of the Western Region of Ghana. Sekondi-Takoradi is the Western Region's largest city and an industrial and commercial centre with a population of 445,205 people. The Western Region covers an area of approximately 2,391 square kilometres, which is about 10 percent of Ghana's total land area (Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly, 2014).

The Metropolis is bordered to the north by Mpoho Wassa East, to the south by the Gulf of Guinea, to the west by Ahanta West District, and to the east by Shama Ahanta East District (Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan Assembly, 2014).

Sekondi is the administrative capital of the metropolitan area while Takoradi is the commercial capital. The metropolis is the most developed district among 13 districts in the Western Region of Ghana (STMA, 2014).

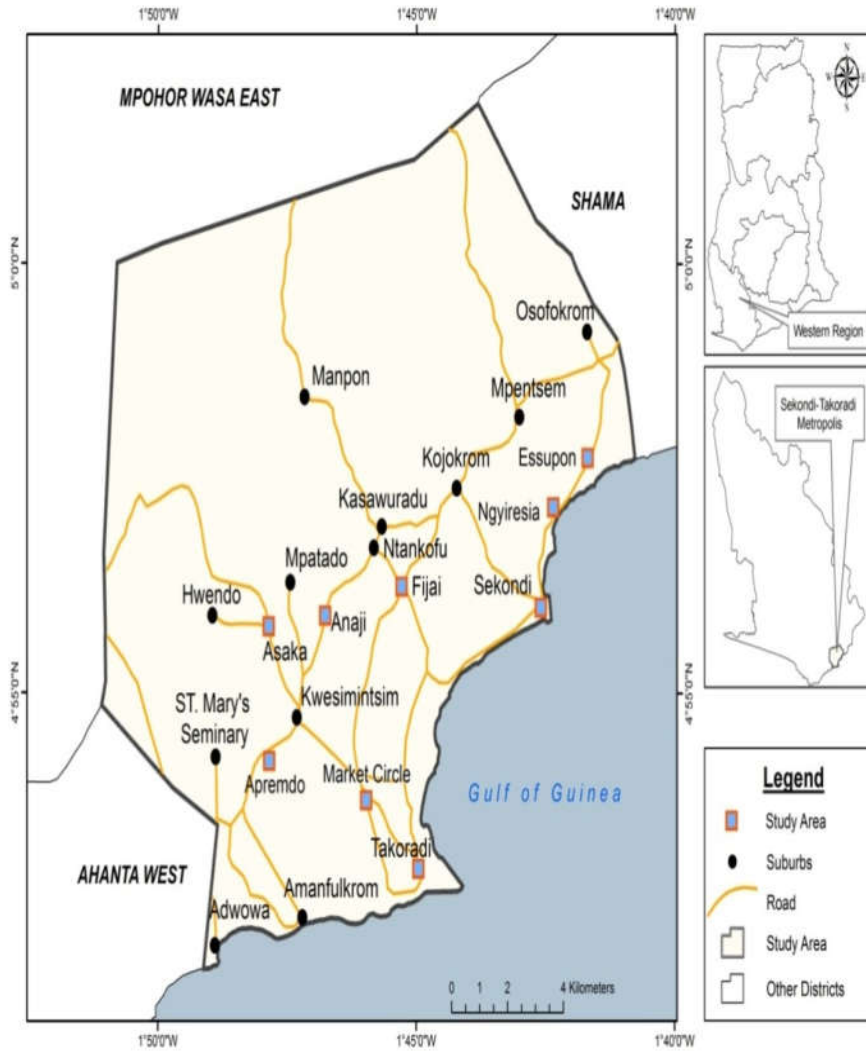


Figure 2: Map of Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis in regional context

Source: GIS Remote Sensing and Cartography unit, University of Cape Coast (2013)

The research was conducted in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis because with the recent discovery of oil in the region it has become the hub or centre of investment for most businesses with the hotel industry not being an exception. The hotel industry was selected for the research because about 90 percent of females work in hotels but they are underrepresented at the managerial level and rather segregated at the lower levels to do menial jobs.

Research Philosophy

A research philosophy is a belief about the way in which data about a phenomenon should be gathered, analyzed and used. The research used both positivism and the interpretive philosophies. Positivists believe that reality is stable and can be observed and described from an objective viewpoint (Paul, 2004), without interfering with the phenomena being studied. They contend that phenomena should be isolated and that observations should be repeatable. This often involves manipulation of reality with variations in only a single independent variable so as to identify regularities in, and to form relationships between, some of the constituent elements of the social world. Predictions can also be made on the basis of the previously observed and explained realities and their inter-relationships. Positivism has a long and rich historical tradition. It is so embedded in our society that knowledge claims not grounded in positivist thought are simply dismissed as scientific and therefore invalid (Paul, 2004). There has, however, been much debate on the issue of whether or not this positivist paradigm is entirely suitable for the social sciences. On the other hand, interpretive contend that, only through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality that, reality can be fully understood. The study of phenomena in their natural environment is key to the interpretive philosophy, together with the acknowledgement that researchers cannot avoid affecting those phenomena they study. They admit that there may be many interpretations of reality, but maintain that these interpretations are in themselves a part of the scientific knowledge they are pursuing (Paul, 2004).

Rationale for Choice of Approach

It has often been observed accurately that, no single research methodology is intrinsically better than any other methodology. Equally, some institutions have tended to adopt a certain style of methodology. This seems to be almost in defiance of the fact that, given the richness and complexity of the real world, a methodology best suited to the problem under consideration, as well as the objectives of the researcher, should be chosen (Cohen & Morrison, 2011).

In this research, the researcher tried to avoid what may be characterized as methodological monism, the usage of a single research method. This is not due to an inability to decide between the various merits and demerits of the various alternatives. Instead, it is believed that all methods are valuable if used appropriately, that research can include elements of both the positivist and interpretive approaches, if managed carefully. Our overriding concern is that the research undertaken should be both relevant to the research questions (Cohen & Morrison, 2011). The researcher used both philosophies because they provided better understandings of the research problems than either approach alone. It also helped the researcher to tackle the issues from both angles, which help to prevent or avoid bias in the study. It also provided strengths that helped to offset the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research. When one type of research is not enough to address the research problem or answer this approach is useful. Again method encourages the use of multiple world views rather than the typical association of certain paradigms for the study. Both methods were used because it is practical in a sense that the researcher is free to use all the methods possible to

address a research problem. It allows the researcher to solve problems using both numbers and words (Creswell, 2003).

Research Design

This study is mainly a descriptive one. It must be emphasized that descriptive research does not fit neatly into both quantitative and qualitative research, but instead it can utilize elements of both, often within the same study. Descriptive study seeks to gather information so that a description of what is going on can be made. It may be designed to discover whether there is any relationship between two or more variables (Creswell, 2003). Three main reasons for carrying out research are to describe, explain and validate findings. Description emerges following creative exploration and serves to organize the findings in order to fit them with explanations, and then test to validate those explanations (Gay and Airasan, 1999). The flexibility inherent in this research design is what attracted the researcher to use it. The descriptive research design also permitted the exploration of the subjective experiences of challenges of females in the hotel sector. Descriptive research design was chosen for the study because, the study objectives were to explore the challenges and prospects of females working in hotels from advancing, assess challenges associated with females working in the hotel sector, identify the prospects of females working in the hotel sector who wish to progress in their careers, examine the effects the challenges have on females who want to advance in their career and examine ways of overcoming the challenges faced by females who wish to advance in the hotel sector.

Data and Sources

The data used for this study consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary data is data that was collected or gathered from the hotel employees and female managers. This type of data included information that was obtained from interviews conducted for female managers and questionnaire that were administered to female employees in hotels. Secondary information such as number of hotels in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis and names and contacts of registered star rated hotels in the metropolis were obtained from the Ghana Tourism Authority (GTA), Western Regional Office. Secondary information also included data from GTA, review articles, journals and text books.

Target Population

According to Gay and Airasan (1999), the population of a research comprises all the elements (individuals, subjects and things) that are likely to be affected in one way or another by the outcome of that study in a given environment. The target population for the study comprised all female managers in hotels and female employees in hotels such as waitresses, front desk officers, housekeepers and cooks in hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis. The study was focused on females mainly because the research was to explore their experiences, perceptions and expectations on the prospects and challenges of females in hotels. The respondents were selected from all the departments such as front office, accounts, house-keeping, food and beverage and stores.

Sampling

The study involved a total of 215 respondents. Questionnaires were administered to 210 respondents and 5 female managers were interviewed, out of the 210 questionnaires that were administered, 196 were retrieved. Five female managers working in hotels were selected for the interview out of these five females three were hotel general manager and two hotel front office managers. The study utilized a semi-structured interview method with the female managers. The semi-structured interview was necessary because it gave the researcher the opportunity to formulate specific questions and to probe where necessary.

Sampling Technique or Procedure

Two forms of techniques- questionnaires and interviews were used for the data collection and three types of sampling techniques were also utilized for the study. The sample for the administration of the questionnaires was drawn through the convenience sampling technique. This method was employed because of the employees' availability and willingness to take part in the study. Secondly, the sample for the interview was drawn through the purposive sampling technique. Maxwell (1996, pg129) defined purposeful sampling as "a strategy in which particular settings, persons, or events are selected deliberately in order to provide important information that cannot be gotten from other choices". In other words, respondents were selected because they were the most appropriate people to address the research questions and the phenomenon being studied. Whereas the sample for the hotels was drawn through stratified sampling technique, it allowed the researcher to group the hotels into their various categories.

In Ghana, hotels are classified or grouped according to their ratings. They are grouped into Budget hotels, Guest Houses, 1 Star, 2 Star, 3 Star, 4 Star and 5 Star hotels (Ghana Tourism Authority, 2014). Of all the categories, only the 4 Star and 5 Star hotels were not found in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis. Since Ghana Tourism Authority has no records of the total number of employees in the hotel sector in the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis, but the registered number of hotels, the registered hotels were used for the study. This study however made use of the 1, 2, and 3 Star hotels, guest houses and budget hotels respectively. In all, seventy-eight (78) hotels were found in the star rated categories. However, 24 of the star rated hotels selected for the study. These included two 3 Star hotels, nine 2 Star hotels, six 1 Star hotels, four guest houses and three budget hotels. Strydom and Venter (2002) explain that it is difficult for a researcher to involve the entire population in the study. It is in this regard that the researcher drew up a sample from the population. It is important to ensure that the sample is as representative as possible, in that all the elements present in the population are represented in the sample.

Table 1: Summary of Sampling Procedure

Hotel category	Total number of registered hotels	Number of hotels that participated in the study	Usable respondents from the study
3-star	2	2	24
2-star	13	9	94
1-star	20	6	41
Guest houses	14	4	22
Budget hotels	29	3	15
Total	78	24	196

Source: Fieldwork (2014)

Research Instrument and Data Collection Procedures

Interviews and questionnaires were the two main methods of collecting data. The researcher conducted individual one-on-one, face to face semi-structured interviews. The interview schedule used involved a list of open-ended questions, which covered themes such as age, challenges and prospects of females, and coping mechanisms that were of importance to the study. The interview schedule was used to support the questionnaire data. To capture the respondents' personal experience and expectations, in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interviews were conducted for female managers. The one-one semi-structured interview permitted the interviewer to ask in-depth questions and allowed the respondents to express their lived experiences in their own words with the use of probes and prompts. Generally themes that evolved into questions during interaction between the interviewer and the respondents were included. This gave the researcher the chance to probe for further understanding of responses. This helps the researcher to gain insight into the individual experiences of their lived experiences in a sense that the interviews focused on their experience rather than assumptions. This strategy was utilized because it allows for rich data, through responses, probing, and clarification of meanings. The in-depth interview allows the study to fully understand the meanings that females ascribed to their lived experiences, perceptions and expectation (Creswell, 2003). The interviews were conducted in English since all the respondents could express themselves in English language. Interviews were recorded and later transcribed. The researcher also took notes during the interviews.

The questionnaire on the other hand included both closed and open ended questions. The closed ended questions included a range of specific answers that the respondents were required to choose from, while the open ended obtained information about their opinion on the challenges. The study employed self administered questionnaires which Bailey (1994) describes as instruments of data collection that are handed out to respondents and are filled by them without any assistance from the researcher. The questionnaires were administered personally at some hotels; while some were given to front desk officer to be administered to the employees. The questionnaire consisted of five (5) sections. Section one identified the challenges females employees face working in hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi; section two dealt with issues of work and family, section three dealt with issues of mentorship while section four dealt with females prospects and section five dealt with coping mechanisms for female challenges in hotels. This instrument was used because it helps cover a large representative sample of the respondents. As Creswell (2003) observed, self- administered questionnaires are cheaper to use and can be distributed on a large scale. Questionnaires were used because they offer greater assurance of anonymity of the respondent. The items on the questionnaires allows the female employees to rate their level of agreement with each statement on a five-point likert scale, which rates from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Pre-testing

According to Marshall and Rossman (2010), pre-testing is very useful for any investigation not only for trying out strategies but also to buttress the argument and rationale for the type and strategy. Pre-testing was

conducted in Cape Coast on the 3rd and 4th of June, 2014 to test the instruments, using twenty (20) hotel employees. Testing of instrument was done in Cape Coast, because the pre-test sample was not part of the study sample and as such made way for revision of instruments. Yin (2008) noted that, pre-testing helps to improve and modify interview strategies, questionnaires and try out different approaches. The testing was done to validate the appropriateness of the questionnaire and interview guide. Some questions were reviewed after the pre-testing.

Fieldwork and Related Challenges

Three (3) field assistants were recruited to help collect the data, two of the field assistants were senior high school graduates, whilst one was a university graduate. They were trained for five days. The training covered the objectives of the study, significance of the study, content of the questionnaire, and how to communicate with the participants. The actual fieldwork lasted for two months (20th June to 22nd August, 2014). Field assistants helped with administration of the questionnaires to the employees of the various hotels in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. The purpose of the study was first explained to respondents before questionnaires were given to them to fill. Respondents were also assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

The researcher encountered a number of challenges. Some of the hotel employees were unwilling to participate in the study. Their reason was that they do not gain or benefit from the various research works that they have participated in. Also they do not have time to fill out the instruments. However, further explanation on the purpose of the study and encouragement led to their participation. Also, some respondents demanded payment before

participating in the study. Again, some questionnaires were misplaced by the respondents making retrieval very difficult. However, extra copies were made available to the respondents who misplaced their instrument but were willing to participate in the study. It took the researcher two to three weeks to retrieve questionnaires from the respondents. However, some facility owners and managers declined to take part in the study. The reason given was that past researchers did not give any feedback on the studies conducted in their facilities and their outcomes. Introductory letter from the Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management of the University of Cape Coast helped the researcher to get the permission to conduct the research but others did not give the permission.

Data Management and Analysis

This part often indicates how the data collected were analyzed to answer the research questions. As asserted by Patton (2002), analysts have an obligation to monitor and report their procedures, meaning the researcher is as well required to report on the analytical processes that were employed. In descriptive research the most vital thing is for the research to transform the gathered data into information, insights and knowledge and this section seeks to do that. Data management involves the process of making out essence from trivia. This section reports on the analysis of both interview and questionnaire data.

The analysis of the interview was done manually, using thematic content analysis as outline by Maseko (2003). Thematic content analysis is defined as an analytic strategy with an objective of taking a complex whole and resolving it into parts (Maseko, 2003). Data was organized according to

themes, concepts and other categories. After using analytical reasoning, themes were analyzed in order to generate explanations for the phenomenon.

With regard to management of the interview data, the researcher first listened to the tapes and then transcribed the interviews words for words. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 was used to analyze and manage the data gathered from the questionnaires administered. Data were edited and coded. All errors and inconsistencies in the collected data were corrected and numbers assigned to variables categories for the closed-ended questions. Tabulations procedures such as frequency distributions, percentages and factor analysis were used for the analyses of the questionnaires administered.

Identifying Themes

The researcher identified important themes under which the data was sorted. The categories and themes in the interview guide served as a preliminary tool against which the data was evaluated (Maseko, 2003). New themes that evolved during the interview process were also generated through the identification of recurrent words and ideas, phrases and patterns of beliefs and descriptive accounts. The researcher then categorized the data by putting together materials with the same or similar views. Then the researcher applied creative and analytical thinking to determine categories of meaning to the data.

Developing Explanations

A critical analysis of the data, helped in finding explanations and making meaning to the problem. In addition to clear reasons in the data, the

researcher also drew from other empirical studies and the theoretical frameworks to inform the data analysis.

Ethical Issues

Prior to commencing the study research authorization was obtained from the department of hospitality and tourism management. Ethical clearance was sought from the hotel authorities for permission to conduct the study. Respondents were informed of the purpose of the study. The information gathered was treated with confidence and was for academic research only.

Extra care was taken during the data collection. Permission was sought from the respondents before the interview was conducted. The respondents actually gave their consent verbally after reading the introductory letter from the school. Ethically, high professional standards were employed with regard to gathering and processing of data, also the relevant research methodology and techniques were applied. With regard to conducting interviews absolute care was taken in order not to intrude in the interviewee privacy, the respondents were informed of the sensitivity of the research. Again respondents participated at their own will; they were free to also withdraw when they deem it necessary.

Summary

This chapter focused on the methodological issues used in this study. This chapter dealt into matters such as the profile of the study area, the research design, nature and sources of data and information, sampling methods, the research instrument, data processing and analysis were discussed. It also covered pre-testing, fieldwork and related challenges and ethical issue.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the results, analysis, and discussion of data collected from the field in line with the objectives of the study. Issues covered included the socio-demographic and work characteristics of hotel employees, employee's factors that account for female prospects in the hotel industry, experiences of the few female managers who have managed to advance, perceptions on challenges facing females in the hotel, factors influencing female challenges in the hotel industry and coping mechanisms.

The chapter draws on both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the field; the quantitative data focused on the perceptions on challenges faced by female employees in hotels while the qualitative relates to the lived and phenomenological experiences of female managers in hotels.

Profile of Hotel Employees

This section discusses the socio-demographic characteristics of the employees in the hotel sector. It draws from the quantitative data the socio-demographic characteristics covered include marital status, age, working experience, educational qualification, current position and the departments of the respondents. This is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Hotel Employees

Socio-demographic characteristics	Frequency (n=196)	Percentage (%)
<i>Age</i>		
19-25	81	41.3
26-32	75	38.3
33-39	31	15.8
40 and above	9	4.6
<i>Marital status</i>		
Married	71	36.2
Unmarried	115	58.7
Divorced	10	5.1
<i>Educational status</i>		
Tertiary	58	29.6
Secondary	108	55.1
Basic	30	15.3

Source: Fieldwork (2014)

A total of 196 female respondents were involved in the data collection process from the questionnaires and their responses are as shown in Table 2. The age distribution of the respondents indicates that the majority 187 (95.4%) are in their youthful ages since they fall between the age brackets of 19 - 39 years and 9 respondents constituting (4.6%) fall between 40 years and above. What informed the age distribution was that a person can be allowed to work in the hotel sector if he or she is eighteen years and above.

With marital status, more than half of the respondents constituting (58.7%) were unmarried, 36.2% were married whereas the remaining 5.1% divorced. This marital distribution implies that the hotel industry is

characterized by young people in the work force who are not married thereby confirming the findings of Mallon and Cassell (2009) that females who aspire to get to management ranks are likely to be unmarried with few or no children. They also believe that working in a hotel is not a 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. job but that success in the industry demands long hours and requires a huge deal of emergency management and problem solving which married women may not be able to achieve.

In relation to educational levels, the table shows that more than half of the respondents (55.1%) had attained secondary education, followed by 29.6% having gone through tertiary education whilst 15.3% had attained only basic education. This supports the assertion made by Myerson (2001) that females' do not make considerable progress in the hotel industry because they do not have the required educational background.

Demographic Characteristics of Interviewed Female Managers

The socio-demographic characteristics of the five female managers who were interviewed are also presented below. Three were general managers while two, were front office managers. The managers were between the ages of 33 to 55 years. On marital status, three of the female managers were married; one was single and the other a divorcee. With regard to the number of children they had, Linda had two children, Efua had four children, Mary had three children, Vida had one child and Joyce had five children, which indicates that they all had children to cater for, coupled with their jobs. The following names used in the write up are not their real names, they are pseudonyms, and pseudonyms are used to protect the respondent's identity.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of Interviewed Female Managers

Names	Age	Position	Marital status	No. of children	Years of experience	Educational level
Linda	40	Front office manager	single	2	6	Degree
Efua	38	General manager	married	4	5	Master's degree
Mary	33	General manager	married	3	4	Master's degree
Vida	46	Front office manager	married	1	4	secondary
Joyce	55	General manager	divorced	5	8	secondary

NB: * Not their real names

Source: Fieldwork (2014)

In relation to their working experience, Joyce had the highest working experience of eight years, while Linda had six years working experience with Efua having five years working experience. Mary and Vida on the other hand had four years working experience each.

On their educational background of the female managers, two of them Efua and Mary had their masters degree, (M.A), while Linda had her first degree. The remaining two Vida and Joyce had secondary education. Vida and Joyce did confirm that the hotels belong to their families hence their ability to hold managerial positions with secondary education certificates.

Work Characteristics of Employees

In terms of working experience, table 5 presents the frequency distribution of years spent on the current job of the respondents. Those with

work experience of 1 to 4 years represented 50.5% constituting more than half of the total number. Respondents who had worked for 5 – 9 years constituted 33.2% whilst 10 years and above constituted 11.2% of total. This means that females often stick to a particular position for long.

Table 4: Work Characteristics of Hotel Employees

Work experience	Frequency	Percentage%
1 to 4 years	109	55.6
5 to 9 years	65	33.2
10 to 14 years	22	11.2
<i>Sub-total</i>	196	100
<i>Position in hotel</i>		
Housekeepers	56	28.6
Cooks	37	18.9
Receptionist	36	18.3
Supervisors	23	11.7
Store keeper	15	7.7
Waitress	27	13.8
Administration	2	1.0
<i>Sub-total</i>	196	100
<i>Department in hotel</i>		
Accommodation	75	38.3
Food and beverage	77	39.3
Front office	42	21.4
Administration	2	1.0
<i>Sub-total</i>	196	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

In relation to positions occupied, housekeepers represented 28.6% of the various positions held by females in the various departments, whilst cooks and receptionist represented 18.9 % and 18.3% respectively. Less than fifth (11.7%) respondents were supervisors whereas the administrative staff represented the least percentage of 1.0% of the respondents.

The accommodation department encompasses house keepers and four people working at the laundry and store whereas the food and beverage department constitute cooks and waitresses and those in the pantry. Front office department include receptionist and porters and the administration department has the secretary and the accountant.

From Table 4 it is evident that, more than one-third of the respondents (39.3% and 38.3%) were in the food and beverage department and accommodation departments respectively. One percent of respondents were in the administration department. The remaining 21.4% were those who work at the front office.

Aspiration for Next Two Years

The results demonstrate that in two years time; 51.8% representing more than half of the total respondents intend to go for further studies. Another 39.1% of them seek to get more challenging jobs; with the remaining 9.1% seeing themselves as general managers in the same organizations. In other words, they see it as a transition position rather than a permanent job since advancement is often low in the hotels.

Table 5: Aspiration for Next Two Years

Aspiration for next two years	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Pursue studies	102	51.8
Undertake challenging job	77	39.1
Become manager	18	9.1
<i>Total</i>	197	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

**Frequency exceeds 196 due to multiple responses*

The result shows that more than half of respondents expressed their interest to further their education or find more challenging jobs. The issue of further studies, personal training and development is understandable because people with higher educational qualification tend to seek for opportunities that offer them a wide range of benefits including becoming general managers.

Myerson (2001) found that people with higher education have the desire for achievement which in turn leads to organizational commitment. Therefore if the need for achievement is not met, they seek other alternatives that meet those needs. From the interview data, one of the managers, Efua, when asked whether she had any intentions of furthering her studies she responded,

“Yes I intend going for further studies but the nature of the hotel job is so demanding that you can hardly have time to do other things. But that notwithstanding I plan doing my PhD. Currently I am doing online programme” (Efua, General Manager, 38 years).

Linda also said the following;

“I do not plan going for further studies, but who knows I might change my mind someday” (Linda, Front Office Manager, 46 years).

Vida and Mary also made mention of doing some online programmes very soon. In addition to their degree(s), they all had obtained additional education and training to further their knowledge in the field. The education and training mostly took place through the respondents companies, educational institutions, professional organizations and conferences attended. Although Linda, Efua and Mary indicated that their education prepared them adequately for their careers, they all mentioned subject areas they would have liked to have emphasized more in their education. The subject areas most frequently mentioned by that needed more emphasis in their education included: business management, interpersonal management (e.g., communication, human relations and presentation skills), strategic management, event management customer care and organizational management.

Responses from the five female managers on how they got to the manager's rank revealed the following; Linda and Mary said they were not employed as front office manager and a general manager from the start and that it took them hard work, determination, perseverance, working experience and education to get to where they are today. They further explained how they got these positions as follows;

"I was employed as a receptionist after my first degree and I worked for two years and went for my second degree and when I came back I was promoted as the front desk manager for some years before I finally became the general manager"(Mary, General Manager, 33 years). She further stated,

"I think to be a manger entails a lot of things, therefore as females we should work really hard and be determined if only we want to be managers"(Mary, General manger). This is in line with the findings from Brownell, (2004) that

concluded that the following qualities in females' managers: fairness, hard work, ability to motivate others, determination, calmness, assertiveness, competitiveness, enthusiasm, deliberateness and detail-oriented, contribute toward the success of the organization. Linda further elaborated on this as follows; *"I acquired this position through my educational qualification and working experience in my previous job"* (Linda, Front Office Manager, 40 years).

Vida and Joyce attained those positions because the hotels belong to their families. Regarding their source of motivation, Efua said,

"My director is my source of motivation. I am saying this because he is so hard working that I admired the way he works and so whenever I see him I am motivated to work harder and become like him" (Efua General Manager, 38 years). Mary also stated;

"My mother and my lecturer were my motivators, my mother once told me that I will do very well in the hospitality industry and she urged me to be serious with my studies because the future will be very bright for me if only I am serious with my studies. My lecturer on the other hand kept telling me that my God given talent was the hospitality programme therefore I should be serious with my studies" (Mary General Manager, 33 years).

Factors that Account for Female Career Prospects in the Hotel Industry

This section is in response to research question 1 which seeks to find the prospects of females in hotels. Oakley (2000) appears less optimistic and proposed that females can only improve their prospects by becoming entrepreneurs themselves. The female prospects represented 67.8%,

mean=1.49, which indicate that respondents strongly believe that there are prospects for females working in the hotel sector.

Table 6: Respondents Agreement on Prospects

Statement	Frequency	Percentage in agreement	Mean responses	Standard error
<i>Prospects</i>				
Firms will form policies	196	78.1	1.33	0.661
Females will soon be managers	196	69.9	1.41	0.685
Females will be at par with males	196	65.8	1.52	0.781
Females will be recognized	196	57.7	1.70	0.875
<i>Overall prospects</i>	196	67.8	1.49	0.750

*Mean (1.0-1.49=Strongly Agree; 1.50-2.49=Agree; 2.50-3.49=Uncertain; 3.50-4.49=Disagree; 4.50-5.0=Strongly Disagree)

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

From the result respondents strongly agree that organizations will soon form policies that will favour females advancement in hotels (78.1%, mean=1.33). This is in support of a study by Eyring and Stead (1998), it appear positive that the likelihood for firms to modify their corporate policies and practices and know the positive impact that female can make. The respondents also agree that females will soon be managers of big organizations (69.9%, mean=1.41). The outlook for the future does not appear promising, given that ‘gender-based stereotyping and the closed circle of the “old boy network” are strong social forces that are slow to change’. Instead future changes in socialization patterns will not occur from females breaking through the glass ceiling, but instead through the increasing numbers of female owners of small businesses.

This notwithstanding, respondents agree that females will soon be at par with males representing 65.8%, mean=1.52, this findings support Oakley (2000) that females are likely to be disturbed by the fact that power in organizations continues to be held primarily by men. Also respondents agree that females will soon be recognized in hotels and given better positions. This in line with a study by Sayles and Strauss (1999) that women are becoming more independent. In addition, there are day care centres, house boys, cleaning services and many others around thereby relieving women of the burden of house tasks. Hence, they are moved to dedicate all their concentration to office duties. Due to all these changes, women appear to have more employment opportunities. The respondents indicated there are prospects for females working in the hotels. According to Vida, a front office manager,

“The hotel industry is one of the best places females can ever work because with the development of modern hotels there are opportunities for females to become managers of the various departments and even directors.”

The factors given by the respondents that influenced their choice of career in the hospitality field included: many different job opportunities, challenging field, interesting and fun field, good job market, and high opportunity to meet different people. Efua was influenced to enter a career in the hospitality field in the following way,

“I had some friends, who were hoteliers, and at that time, I saw that my friends were doing really fun, interesting and challenging things in their jobs and making really good money. So, essentially I decided to pursue a degree in hospitality when I was 26 years old” (Efua General Manager, 38 years).

Linda also said the following; *“I found the field of hospitality intellectually challenging because I like to solve very complex problems. I also like to continuously learn new things, so I like the fact that hospitality is a dynamic and changing field and you have to stay on top of things so that everyday you have the opportunity to make a difference”* (Linda Front Office Manager, 40 years).

On their career goals, Linda, Efua and Mary had career goals when they started their careers. They indicated that it was self-generated with help and assistance from parent(s) and from managers who took interest in their career progression. These individuals provided encouragement, support, and advice on how to move forward in their careers. The personal sacrifices made by the respondents included the following: time spent with family (spouse, children), personal and free time, social time and friendships, and travel too much on travel related activities. The respondents stated that the majority of the personal sacrifices made for their careers were made by choice, without regret.

Efua captured this statement as follows: *“I would call them choices [instead of sacrifices] because in all things in life, you make choices. We each make choices and for every fork in the road you take, you sacrifice the other fork in the road and both could be equally interesting”* (Efua General Manager, 38 years).

The functions performed by the companies to help the respondents succeed included the following: career opportunities or challenges (e.g., promoted, challenging assignments), training and development opportunities (e.g., internal and external programmes), provided supportive and

collaborative work environment. All the respondents indicated that the companies they had worked for had helped them succeed in their careers by giving them challenging job opportunities, opportunities to develop different skills, and advancement and promotional opportunities. In addition, they cited training and development opportunities as being helpful to their career development. They cited opportunities such as leadership programmes and other related courses, exposure to professional development conferences, seminars, and women professional organizations as being helpful. They indicated that their companies provided them with a supportive and collaborative work environment. They indicated that their work environments relied on open, honest communication and the sharing of knowledge and information in all directions. They further specified that the interactions among employees were based on honesty, mutual respect and integrity.

The findings reveal that all the respondents considered demonstrated competency on the job (produced high quality work), hard work, willingness to take risks, mentors, educational credentials, and continuous learning and training development as the factors most important to their career advancement and success.

In addition, other factors that were mentioned as important to their career advancement and success in the field included: being flexible or adaptable to change, interpersonal skills, focus on success and delivery of results, and depth and breadth of knowledge about the industry. Demonstrating competency on the job, producing high quality work, getting results, being accountable, knowing their job, willing to take risk, and being consistently outstanding were mentioned by the majority of the respondents as

prerequisites for a successful career. They indicated that they had made job changes that were regarded as exceptionally risky. For example, a move into an unfamiliar area of business, taking on new assignments, a huge leap in responsibility, a transfer into a lower-level job that afforded a better shot at advancement, or relocating (sometimes to another place). They reported having a high level of motivation to be successful and to make the companies they work for successful. They felt that their high level of energy and enthusiasm was related to their high level of motivation, which was then related to working hard. Efua remarked on this as follows: *“You are not going to work hard and put in a 60 plus hour week, if you are not focused and really motivated”* (Efua, General Manager 38 years).

Career Challenges in Hotel Sector

This section is in response to research question 2 which addresses challenges faced by female hotel workers. It starts with a discussion on the career challenges drawing on quantitative data, specifically the use of factor analysis. According to Pallant (2005) factor analysis is a data reduction procedure that summarizes data. Therefore for the factor analysis to be considered appropriate, the Bartlett’s test of sphericity should be significant at 0.05 while the Kaiser-Meyer-Oklun (KMO) index should be 0.6 which is recommended as the minimum.

The KMO value calculated for challenges was 0.650 and the Bartlett’s test of sphericity was also significant at 0.05 significant level (0.000). The KMO value for prospects was 0.603 and the value for the Bartlett’s test of sphericity was 0.05. This therefore confirms the suitability of the data for Factor Analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklun (KMO) measure of

sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were examined to determine the factorability of the data. The KMO result was 0.600 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was 1726.864 with a P-value of 0.000 which supports the factorability of the data.

Table 7: Factor Analysis

Variables	Factor loadings	Eigen values	% of variance	Cronbach's alpha
<i>F1: Female discrimination</i>				
Females advancement is slow in hotels	0.510 0.510			
Females are discriminated at hotel	0.442			
Females are not promoted in hotels	0.442			
Females are not motivated to work	0.441			
Females are less paid in hotels	0.410			
Lack of training affects females	0.401			
Single parenting affect females work	0.399	9.294	25.461	0.866
Females are sexually harassed in hotels	0.378			
Females have less job know how	0.369			
Organizational factors affect females	0.363			
Females are not committed	0.361			
Females are not determined	0.363			
Personal factors affect females	0.356			
Marriage affects female jobs	0.333			
Gender roles differ	0.323			

Table 7 continued

Females are less important	0.345
Females lack family support	0.350
Females are less competent	0.532
Lack of equity in pay affects females	0.542
Females are not hardworking as males	0.516
Females lack mentors	0.501
Females are responsible for child care	0.453
Females face problems than males in hotels	0.432
Females are stereotype by males in hotels	0.431
Females lack networking opportunities	0.422
Females are less educated	0.393
Females constitute large number in hotels	0.379
Females occupy low positions in hotels	0.385
Females cannot be at par with males	0.365
<i>F2: Family conflict and mentor issues</i>	
Not responding to work leads to work conflict	0.455
Mentoring helps to balance work and home duties	0.445
Mentoring occurs when there is support	0.437

Table 7 continued

Family conflict occurs as a results of spending time at work	0.419	4.763	9.611	0.801
Family conflict occurs when one sacrifice her family time	0.387			
Work and family conflict affect females	0.394			
Females need mentors	0.339			
Females need mentors advise	0.308			
<i>F3: Prospects of females</i>				
Females will be managers	0.738			
Females will be at par with males	0.723			
Firms will form policies to advance careers	0.522	4.413	3.508	0.766
Females will be recognised soon	0.486			
<i>Total variance explained</i>			52.256	

The KMO result was 0.600 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was 1726.864 with a P-value of 0.000. Source: Fieldwork (2014)

According to Pallant (2005) a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 or more indicates a significant reliability of the scales used, though few items may produce low values. Here, all the items used for the analysis had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of approximately 0.700. It is therefore evident that all scales have internal reliability

Factor analysis was used to determine female's challenges and prospects in hotels. Forty seven items were subjected to Principal Component Analysis and forty one items were extracted under three factors.

With reference to Pallant (2005), any variable that had factor loading of 0.30 or higher is suitable for factor analysis. The four main groups had

Eigen values greater than 3.0 and the total variance of 52.256 percent. The four main factors are presented in table 8. The factors are also discussed as follows:

Factor 1: Female Discrimination

The first factor which is female discrimination consists of twenty-eight (28) items which included females advancement in hotels are often slow with a factor loadings of 0.510 and an Eigen value of 9.294. It also contributed 25.461 percent of the total variance explained, and confirms the assertion by Bible and Hill (2007), that as far as female's share of managerial positions is concerned, the rate of progress is slow and uneven. Other factors including females are discriminated against in hotels, females are often not promoted, organizational and personal factors with gender roles differ between males and females contributed a factor loading of 0.323 as some of the challenges females faced in hotels. The other factors included females constitute a larger number of work forces in hotels, females occupy lower positions in hotels, females are less competent, females' are less educated, with lack of equity in pay affecting females having the highest factor loading of 0.542 and the least being females cannot be at par to males with factor loadings of 0.365. This finding is in line with Burton (2001) and Catalyst (2003) that females have the wish and capability to attain to break the glass ceiling; however gender discrimination remains the main restriction. It is further indicated that people react in different ways toward females compared to their male colleagues.

Factor 2: Family Conflict and Mentor Issues

Family conflict and mentor issues contains eight (8) items that include family conflict occurs as a result of spending more time at work, mentoring is having someone to guide you, mentoring helps balance work and not responding to work duties can cause work conflict. These factors contributed a total variance of about 9.611 and an Eigen value of 4.763. This notwithstanding, not responding to work duties can cause work conflict has the highest loading factor of 0.445. Meanwhile mentoring occurs when there is a mentor to advise you as the lowest factor loadings of 0.308. This outcome confirms the findings of Liu and Wilson (2001) that work-family conflicts are experienced when pressures from work and family roles are mismatched since contribution in one role makes it difficult to participate in another, and this makes it difficult for female to advance their careers.

Factor 3: Prospects for Females

The last factor was females' prospects; it contains four (4) items. It has the highest factor loadings among all the factors with the least total variance of 3.508 percent and an Eigen value of 4.413. Females will soon be managers recorded the highest value of 0.738 while females will soon be recognized in hotels recorded the least (0.486). This is in support of the findings by Eyring and Stead (1998) which indicate a positive likelihood that firms to modify their corporate policies and practices and know the positive impact that female can make.

To sum it all, four factors were extracted from the factor analysis. All the three factors together explained approximately 52.256 per cent of the total variance of prospects and challenges of females in hotel sector. On the

basis of this it can be concluded that factor analysis technique was successful in its application to the study, and that the remaining 47.744 percent could be due to other factors that account for the low advancement among hotel employees.

Employees' Perceptions of Challenges facing Females in the Hotel Sector

Female employees in the hotel industry are sometimes unable to compete with their male counterparts due to several visible and invisible barriers and challenges. These barriers include motherhood, discrimination and sexual harassment (Pinar et al, 2011). The study seeks to assess the perception of females on the challenges they face working in the hotel sector.

Table 9 presents the frequency distribution of the responses to each of the statements. The table depicts that the respondents generally agree that the challenges affect females working in the hotel sector.

Table 8: Respondents Perceptions on Challenges

Statement	Frequency	Percentage in agreement	Mean responses	Standard error
<i>Female challenges</i>				
Females advancement is slow	196	68.9	1.49	0.781
Females are discriminated against	196	57.7	1.59	0.762
Sexual harassment is a challenge	196	62.2	1.49	0.691
Gender roles differ between males and females	196	62.8	1.58	0.816
Personal factors	196	50.0	1.77	0.849
Work and family conflict	196	53.1	1.74	0.859
Cultural stereotype	196	44.9	1.81	0.823

Table 8 continued

Limited networks	196	50.5	1.81	0.885
Excessive work commitment	196	49.0	1.80	0.859
Concern over childcare	196	50.5	1.76	0.842
Lack of equity in pay	196	50.0	1.79	0.867
Lack of training	196	52.0	1.74	0.846
Inadequate job know how	196	57.1	1.66	0.834
Organizational factors	196	59.2	1.58	0.764
Marriage affect females	196	57.7	1.69	0.870
Single parenting	196	63.3	1.56	0.792
<i>Overall challenges</i>	196	61.0	1.68	0.822
<i>Gender issues at work</i>				
Females face gender problems	196	73.5	1.39	0.704
Female constitute large numbers	196	61.2	1.57	0.784
Females are important	196	63.3	1.48	0.698
Advance through determination	196	63.3	1.56	0.792
Mentoring is a way to advance	196	53.1	1.70	0.825
Females cannot be at par with males	196	49.5	1.80	0.865
Education can break gender gap	196	53.6	1.69	0.822
<i>Overall mentor</i>	196	63.7	1.54	0.787

*Mean (1.0-1.49=Strongly Agree; 1.50-2.49=Agree; 2.50-3.49=Uncertain; 3.50-4.49=Disagree; 4.50-5.0=Strongly Disagree)

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

Factors Influencing Female Challenges in the Hotel Industry

It is evident from the findings that respondents agree females face challenges in the hotel sector which hinders them from advancing in their careers. The responses given by the respondents shows that they strongly agree that females advancement in hotels are often slow (68.9%, 1.49), and this confirms Bible and Hill (2007), view that as far as female's share of managerial positions is concerned, the rate of progress is slow and uneven. Moreover the findings also strongly agree that female sexual harassment (62.2%, 1.49) is also a strong factor that affects female advancement in the hotel industry. This is also in line with a study conducted by Fitzgerald & Betz, (2003) and Gutek (2005), indicated that sexual harassment has been recognized as one of the most persistent and severe challenges females experience in the workplace. Mary responded as follows: *“There have been several times when I have had male colleagues come up to me and say in a spiteful way that they want my job or that they are going to take my project away from me. This type of thing has happened to me throughout my entire career and I know that other women have had similar experiences. Most of the time I do not let it bother me, but sometimes it bothers me and I feel very uncomfortable and it can be very hurtful major mistakes”*(Mary, General manager 33years).

Furthermore the respondents agree that the other challenges are also factors that affect female workers in the hotel sector, though they did not strongly agree to these challenges. From Table 9, it can be seen that respondents perceive that females are discriminated against (57.7%,

mean=1.59). This confirms the study of Woods and Kavanaugh (2004), that found out that more than eighty percent of males and females see gender discrimination in the workplace as an ongoing challenge. Single parenting was also seen as a challenge (63.3%, mean=1.56), and this is in line with (Russell, 2004) finding that females who mix challenging careers with raising families, experience a variety of troubles and conflicts. They may meet practical problems daily (e.g. limited time) or professional problems, coupled with being single parents.

On the other hand, gender roles differ between females and males at the work place, this represents 62.8% and mean of 1.58 from the analysis and confirms the study results of Hakim (2007), which revealed that in some countries, female labour force participation is seen to clash with the traditional roles of females as care takers, and despite their level of education, females may have to prioritize their family responsibilities over employment or career choices.

Also work and family conflict constitute 53.1% and a mean of 1.74 which is also in line with study conducted by Engstrom & Ferri (2000), which showed that female experience difficulty in managing their roles at home and at work and found it impossible to devote time for their personal lives while trying to advance in their careers. On this issue Efua responded as follows:, *“Balancing work and life responsibilities has been a major challenge in my career and indicated further that it has been difficult to achieve balance in work and life. This attributed to having to put so many hours at work to succeed in her position”*. Meanwhile cultural stereotype represented 44.9% with a mean of 1.81. As a matter of fact, stereotypes against females stem

from way back, especially in African societies where Grant (2005) clarifies that it is believed that males lead and females follow. Fink, (2007) and Stewart *et al.* (2007) indicate that traditionally, the management field was perceived as a male activity, thus suitable for males. For this reason females who held management positions would be considered as less proficient than their male counterparts and, therefore, be given less pay and fewer promotions despite their performance. Linda also responded as follows: “Often *I was given very tough assignments. Also I sometimes encountered difficulties in dealing and relating to people at different levels of the organization, understanding how others feel, motivating employees toward superior performance, and establishing networks*” (Linda Front Office Manager, 40 years). Mary also responded as follows: “*There have been several times when I have had male colleagues come up to me and say in a spiteful way that they want my job or that they are going to take my project away from me. This type of thing has happened to me throughout my entire career and I know that other women have had similar experiences*” (Mary, General Manager, 33years).

Lack of mentors by females (49.0%, mean=1.77) and excessive work commitment by females (49.0%, mean=1.80) are also considered as the factors that challenge female advancement by the respondents. The lack of mentors is in line with education by Maack and Passet (2004) which revealed that those females in higher education who have been mentored have attained higher levels of career advancement than females who have not been mentored. Brownell (2004) supports this statement by demonstrating that in a study of 91 female college presidents, the majority who were presidents had primary mentors and were also mentors to others. Again mentoring is also seen as one

of the factors that can help females to advance in the careers. According to the respondents they strongly agree that if females get people to guide them in their careers (69.4%, mean=1.48), they will be able to breakthrough in their careers. This is in line with Moses (2008), who viewed mentoring by most organizations as a gainful form of staff advancement, as it provides an individual with an opportunity to move across a wide range of areas and levels to share knowledge and experience. On the contrary the opposite is obvious with reference to lack of mentoring (Moses, 2008).

Other factors also indicate that mentoring is very important for the growth of any organization as the respondents also agree to these factors that if females are mentored it can help their career progress and the opposite is true. Moreover whenever you read a collection of stories of successful females commenting on their careers, you will certainly find reference to a mentor (Moses, 2008). This finding is in line with the fact that females often find it difficult to balance their work and family commitments. The respondents indicated that, overall, females try to balance work and family responsibility by working part-time or flexible hours. However, in terms of family responsibilities, females may be under privileged beyond a certain level where hundred percent commitment to the organization may be expected, because commitment to the organization is perceived in those who are willing to work long hours, to undertake extended travel, and to place the needs of the organization first (Super, 2007).

Limited networking opportunities for females (50.5%, mean=1.81) and (50.5% mean=1.76) also contribute to females inability to break through the glass ceiling. A study by Super (2007) support the assertion that females

are more concerned with meeting their family responsibilities than work demands, or focusing on changing or advancing their careers. Is it therefore fair that females are expected to solely take responsibility to raise their children while less parental care is expected from males? Polly (2008) observes the reality that, if females do not care enough for their children, they know that their children risk neglect.

Super (2007) further explains that females are more concerned with meeting their family responsibilities than work demands, or focusing on changing or advancing their careers. Again marriage (57.7%, mean=1.69) is also considered an important factor when it comes to female advancement in the industry. This is in support by Wirth (2004) who stated that more females than males delay marriage or having a family in order to establish their careers first. Linda said this about having supportive parents, *“My parents were key influences in my career. They always told me that I could do anything I wanted to do if I set my mind to it. They provided a really good and supportive environment for me. My parents were both school teachers and they provided me with a lot of encouragement to do well in my education and in everything else I did. They also provided me with a lot of discipline and told me to work hard and do well, and that good things would happen to me”* (Linda, Front Office Manager, 40 years). Having a supportive and encouraging spouse was also mentioned by the participants as having a positive impact on their career advancement. These participants indicated that their spouses were extremely influential in their careers and without them it would have been difficult to succeed. Vida said this regarding the role of her parents in her career advancement. *“Early in my career when I started to advance, my husband told*

me that I was going to go higher and was going to start to make more money than him and that he was okay with it. He has been incredibly supportive and has taken more and more responsibilities at home, as my travel schedule has increased. There is no way I could be doing what I am doing without this kind of support” (Vida, Front Office Manager 46 years). This result draws one back to what was earlier discussed, namely that, when it comes to family responsibilities or involvement in household tasks, everyone mostly expects a woman to be perfect, even though it takes both a man and a woman to make that possible. Accordingly, this expectation puts more stress on a woman to pay more attention to family commitments than her job or career, since she is perceived as less capable if she fails to balance her work and family pressures.

Lack of training (52.2, mean=1.74) also accounts for females inability to become managers, in the sense that training is one of the most powerful tool an organization can ever have if only they want their employees to produce good results and advance in their careers. Lack of equity in pay and lack of job knowledge also affect female’s progress, since it is believed that experience can help one to advance even without educational qualification. The results from the table indicates that employees strongly agree that females face gender problems more often than males in hotels (73.5%, mean=1.39). This shows that because of the problems females face in hotels they are usually placed at the lower ranks in hotels, which make them do the menial jobs. This finding support the view expressed by Opoku-Agyemang (2006) that job placements in hospitality differ between males and females. Females have the majority of jobs at the base of the hospitality employment hierarchy while males have almost all the jobs at the top. There is division of labour by

sex at all levels of the hotel and tourism hierarchies. Cooks and waitresses tend to be females and are found in the lowest paid parts of the food sector.

Again respondents are in agreement that females are important to every organization (63.3%, mean=1.48). This also shows that respondents strongly agree that every female contributes significantly in one way or the other to the organization in spite of her position. This supports Moutlana (2001) view that even though staying at the top for females is not automatically always rewarding, they are hard workers. Other factors contributed a mean of more than 1.5. This means that all the respondents agree that females working in the hotels actually face challenges of breaking through the glass ceiling. Moreover respondents agree that work and family conflict also affect females since females are expected to manage the home as well as the office responsibilities, the overall agreement was (64.3%, mean=1.53).

From the table, respondents agree that work and family conflict occurs when one has to struggle between gender roles (73.5, mean=1.43). Hartmann, Stephen, and Lovell (2006) indicated that one of the challenges is the hope for females to bear children and be accountable for family work. This contributes to their families not being willing to invest in girls education and female careers. Furthermore, Hakim (2007) revealed that in some countries, female labour force participation is seen to clash with the traditional roles of females as care takers, and despite their level of education, females may have to prioritize their family responsibilities over employment or career choices.

The other factors contribute a mean of 1.6 and above which also signifies that the respondents still agree that females' advancement is affected by these factors too. This finding study is also in support of Scott (2004) study

which points out that some employers have trouble tolerating the policies which will encourage females in the workplace make good industry practice. They believe that standard and productive employees for the companies are males as they generally find it easier than females to combine family and work, since they rely greatly on females to bear family responsibilities. This is the reason why some females find it difficult to concentrate on their careers.

The major challenges reported by the interview respondents included the following: work and life balance, extremely difficult and challenging job assignments, dealing with interpersonal and people issues, dealing with company politics, gender discrimination and harassment, lack of mentors and male dominance in management positions in hotels.

According to Woods and Kavanaugh (2004) more than eighty percent of males and females see gender discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace as an ongoing challenge. All the respondents indicated that gender discrimination was a major challenge in their careers. They believed that because they were women, they had advanced more slowly, were not given promotions that they deserved, had to work harder to prove themselves, were not taken seriously or were treated with less respect. Linda indicated that it was not easy working for bosses who had difficulties dealing with women, or they did not believe in the development or advancement of women.

The respondents indicated that gender discrimination was often very delicate in form. For example, they were often excluded from meetings in which all male peers were invited. They were often unable to participate in valuable informal business discussions. Being excluded and not having access

to valuable inside information many times hindered these respondents' advancement opportunities.

In addition, the respondents indicated that male dominance in management was a major challenge in their careers. They indicated that female role models and mentors were difficult to find in the hospitality field because it is mostly male dominated. They felt that having female role models to look up to and having the opportunity to talk and share your experiences with a female mentor was important for building self-confidence. These participants were many times made to feel like outsiders or were intimidated by male colleagues, which created challenges to their career advancement.

All the respondents' indicated that making mistakes has been their primary learning path. The major mistakes reported included the following: not communicating my ideas more effectively, underestimated the importance of human relation skills, setting the wrong priorities at work, not succeeding at a major job assignment, and taking on too many job related responsibilities at one time. Not communicating my ideas more effectively had been a major mistake in her career. She indicated that in the past she had difficulties communicating her ideas effectively. She felt that she had to be more vocal and assertive in communicating her ideas, especially to top management. However, she indicated that she had to be careful not to come across as overly aggressive when communicating her ideas.

“I learned that I had to stand up for my ideas more strongly, but in a careful way. I had to do it in a way that was perceived positively. I could not do it the same way men do it. I could not emulate their behaviour and get away with it, because that is not acceptable and that is not okay. I just had to figure out

what was acceptable for me and make it work to my advantage” (Mary General Manager, 33 years).

Joyce reported underestimating the importance of human relation type skills was a major mistake she made in her career. She indicated that at the beginning of her career she only focused on getting the job done and really did not bother getting to know people. She soon realized that having good-working relationships with people was essential to getting her work done. At first, she felt awkward and uncomfortable dealing with people, but after a while she learned how to establish rapport, trust, and good working relationships with the people in her workplaces. She said, *“At first I had to learn just very simple people skills, such as saying good morning, how are you, and ask them (co-workers) something about their lives, before bringing up work issues”*(Joyce General Manager 55 years).

The respondents identified events that they have encountered in their personal or family life that have hindered their career advancement and also events that they have encountered in their personal or family lives that have been helpful to their career advancement. More than half of the respondents could not identify events in their personal and family life that hindered their career advancement, and less than half of the study participants identified events in their personal and family life that hindered their career development. The most frequent personal and family life events reported by the study respondents included the following: difficulty in balancing work and family responsibilities slowed down career progression to have children, and marriage difficulties.

The respondents who identified having difficulties balancing work and family affairs indicated that they had too many work and family responsibilities and sometimes they did not have time to accomplish everything effectively. To them, time management was the biggest challenge and trying to do everything well and not feeling guilty if something did not get done. Some of the study respondents indicated that their careers were slowed down in order to try and have children. They deliberately turned down promotions so that they could reduce their travel schedule, reduce the stress at work, and concentrate on trying to start a family. They stated that this slowed their career advancement, but they also indicated this was a conscious choice that they made, without regret. Having marriage difficulties created conflict between work and family for three of the respondents. These marriage difficulties sometime resulted because of working tremendous amount of hours, having to relocate, or not having time to socialize. Having to manage the effects of marriage difficulties and the demanding requirements of work made it extremely hard for these participants to continue to progress in their careers.

Also on events in their personal and family life that helped in their career advancement. The respondents experienced the following: supportive and encouraging parents, supportive and encouraging spouse, learning the value of hard work and good work ethics from parents, parenting and raising children, and supportive children. Linda and Efua indicated that having supportive and encouraging parents has had a positive impact on their career advancement. In other cases having supportive family and parents meant having parents who encouraged them to do well in school, helped them

address personal barriers that they encountered in their lives, encouraged them to take advantage of opportunities that were presented to them, and encouraged them to take risks.

Meanwhile Joyce identified parenting and raising children as having a positive impact on her career advancement. She indicated that being a parent made her a more balanced person. In addition, the lessons she learned from parenting in her personal life many times extended to her professional life. Joyce said, *“I have five kids and I have learned not to put them on the defensive, because as soon as they are on the defensive, everything shuts down and everything is over. Clearly that is the same in the workplace. If there is a problem you need to approach it with respect and allow the other person to talk and take ownership of the problem without making them defensive”* (Joyce General Manager, 55 years).

Effects of Challenges on Female Career Advancement in the Hotel Sector

This part explains the effects of challenges and their impact on the career progression of females in the hotel sector in response to research question three that were gathered from the female managers. Responses indicate that, even though females play vital roles in contributing to high outcomes and quick expansion of the sector, the effects are generally negative on their career advancement. Female advancement within the sector therefore becomes difficult due to some form of external or internal forces involving their work. Among which are issues of sexual harassments, cultural stereotype, lack of mentorship, excessive work commitment, poor networking and work-family conflicts, among others.

Work-family conflicts turn to reduce the confidence levels of females at work places and as a result leading to unstable minds and attitude toward work. This brings about undue pressure and conflicts among females at their work places. Liu and Wilson (2001) agree that work-family conflicts are experienced when pressure from work and family roles are mismatched since contribution in one role makes it difficult to participate in another. As a result of the challenges faced, some females impose barriers on themselves due to the lack of self confidence. Due to this, majority of them prefer to quietly remain in their current post rather than voicing out discontent about discrimination and unfair treatment meted to them. Another effect is the poor work output which is caused by low financial incentives given to females at work places which makes working for organizations that do not provide them with flexible work arrangements to end up damaging their careers. Also inadequate access to information and professional advice makes it difficult for female to advance their careers.

After assessing the effects, the underlining issue arrived at is that so long as females are not given enough assistance to prove what they can do at the work place, it will be very difficult for them to compete with their male counterparts and as well progress at their various work places. It is however important to emphasis that whatever challenges that are encountered, attempts made toward addressing these challenges do not seem encouraging as per the respondents' perspectives. Females working within the hotel sector in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis will be willing to unravel their ideas to contribute at work toward production if given enough mentor support and development training regarding their work.

Coping Mechanisms

Coping mechanisms are ways that employees can use to help themselves reduce the challenges faced females working in hotels. This section is in response to research question four. The coping mechanisms represented 61.6%, in agreement and mean of 1.56%, which indicated that all the respondents agree that with these mechanisms they can break through the glass ceiling.

Table 9: Coping Mechanisms

Statement	Frequency	Percentage in agreement	Mean responses	Standard error
<i>Coping mechanism</i>				
One must be hard working	196	78.1	1.33	0.670
Change attitude	196	62.8	1.53	0.747
Must be mentored	196	64.3	1.48	0.712
Effective communication	196	59.7	1.58	0.771
Solving problems	196	61.2	1.59	0.802
Make sacrifice	196	59.2	1.62	0.811
Update job knowledge	196	58.7	1.59	0.770
Further studies	196	58.2	1.62	0.804
Join network	196	53.6	1.71	0.841
Need family support	196	63.3	1.53	0.761
Need training	196	63.8	1.53	0.767
Get a challenging job	196	60.2	1.61	0.818
Overall coping mechanisms	196	61.9	1.56	0.772

*Mean (1.0-1.49=Strongly Agree; 1.50-2.49=Agree; 2.50-3.49=Uncertain; 3.50-4.49=Disagree; 4.50-5.0=Strongly Disagree)

Source: Fieldwork, 2014

It is obvious from table 11 that 78.1%, mean=1.33 of respondents strongly agree that females can advance in their careers by being hardworking. This assertion confirms that of Gregg and Johnson (2000) who noted that females felt that they had to work twice as hard and do twice as good a job as their male colleagues in order to prove they deserved a promotion. That notwithstanding, the respondents also strongly agree that females must be mentored (64.3%, mean=1.43), if they want to be promoted to managerial rank.

Coping mechanisms such as employees must change their attitude toward the way they work, must learn good and effective communication skills, learn how to solve problems at the work place, make sacrifices for the job, update job knowledge, go for further studies, join available network opportunities, get support from their families, go for training and lastly do challenging jobs, this represent a mean of 1.5 and support Brownell (2004), on a study on personality and career development, which reported the following traits of hotel managers: hard work, fairness, the ability to inspire others, determination, calmness, assertiveness or competitiveness, interest, deliberateness and detail-orientation. Skills and intelligence such as communication skills, leadership skills and interpersonal skills are also vital. Networking and mentoring have also been identified as two methods to help females overcome the glass ceiling.

Fagenson and Jackson (2003) stated that some females in high level have benefited from networks. Furthermore, females need to set up their networks and participate in males networks. Many females have accepted the support of mentors who helped them to enter the old boy networks.

The results show that female employees are interested to be given enough attention coupled with better work conditions as in promotions, favourable work environment, gender equality, career advancement training and the likes. Basically females will go for an organization that has their personal development at heart and seek to provide opportunities for training and development. They are also comfortable with a good interaction between employees and management. One main driver of overcoming the challenges is provision of training in professional development. This is an important contributory factor to employee satisfaction because this seeks to advance their career no matter the position they occupy.

Management of organizations should learn to create good quality relationships between employees and supervisors. This will build the confidence of females and in turn allow them voice out any issues of importance to the benefit of both the employees and the organization as a whole. Strategies used in overcoming the challenges included role models. Efua and Linda indicated that they did have role models during the time they chose their careers whilst Mary, Vida and Joyce indicated they did not have role models.

The three most frequent role models mentioned by the Linda and Efua included: senior level executive (director and above), father, and manager. The five most frequent ways in which role models influenced their career choice included the following: shared their expertise with them, gave them useful career advice, encouraged them to meet high performance standards, oriented them to job or career opportunities, and believed in their potential. According to Linda, *“It just happened that I became friends with two*

females working in a hotel and I was very curious about what they did on their jobs. What they shared about their jobs seemed to be so fun, challenging, and interesting that I thought this is what I would like to do. I think it was just luck that I happened to meet and become friends with these ladies and had the opportunity to learn from them what hospitality was all about” (Linda, Front Office Manager, 40 years).

Efua indicated having mentors during her professional career helped her a lot. A variety of functions were performed by the mentors that assisted her career advancement. According to her the most frequent functions performed by mentors included the following: provided me with job opportunities and challenges to demonstrate my skills and abilities, suggested strategies for advancing in the career, believed in my potential, encouraged me to take risks, shared his or her expertise with me and gave me useful career advice. Her mentors helped her to stay focused and not to get distracted from her career goals and what I try to accomplish. Efua also had this to say: *“He told me to ask myself everyday if I was doing what I needed to accomplish my career goals and if I was not, then I needed to change things. He told me not to let events drive me, but that I should drive the events” (Efua General Manager, 38 years).*

Linda also had this to say on this: *“He was the general manager in charge of the division I was in and he held a considerably higher position in the organization than I was, but he took the time and interest in me. He discussed career choices with me and the kinds of experiences that I needed to have to be competitive in the job market. He also assisted me in selecting the positions that would give me the best balance of experiences and help my career the*

most” (Linda, Front Office Manager, 40 years). Their mentors also assisted them in handling difficult situations on their job. Vida also said the following: *“I had a formal mentor as part of my company’s development programmes. He was a male. We met once a month to discuss what I was accomplishing and specific issues I was struggling with in my position. He gave useful advice on how to handle difficult situations that I was facing in. He would actually talk through with me how to handle these situations, he was extremely helpful”* (Vida, Front Office Manager, 46 years).

They also observed and learned from their mentors’ successes. Efua encountered the following regarding lessons learnt from mentors: *“She was the first female executive I had ever worked with closely. I observed and learned that she had her own style of how to get things done that was different from the men around us, but just as effective. So I learned that you can have different styles and you do not have to emulate the ones you see around you. You can be yourself and have your own style and still be very effective”* (Efua, General Manager 38, years).

The respondents were also asked to think back over their careers and to consider those people who have significantly helped and influenced their career development. They were asked to select the people who have provided them with substantial help, and without them their career progress may have been hindered or made considerably more difficult. All the respondents indicated that their mentors were the individuals who helped and influenced their career development most.

Summary

This chapter looked at empirical results on the effects of challenges females face in the hotel sector as well as the prospects and coping mechanisms in breaking through the glass ceiling within the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis. Efforts were also made to find out the causes of the challenges and to find possible solutions to the problem. From the analysis work experience indicated most employees had worked for only 1 to 4 years. With regard to positions occupied, low figures were recorded. Challenges identified during the study were observed to cause negative effects on the career advancement of females. In the midst of all the challenges, employees still believed that there were a number of prospects for them. Some these included firms forming policies that favour females, females soon becoming managers of organizations and also females recognized and given better positions at various workplaces. Employees' preferred adopting some coping mechanisms in order to stay in the sector. Some of these mechanisms are mentoring, joining networks, being hard working and attitudinal change by supervisors.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, key findings, conclusions, recommendations and areas for further studies. It summarizes the key findings of the study and draws conclusions on the basis of the findings. The chapter also makes recommendations towards improving the condition of females' hotel employees in the Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis.

Summary

The main objective of the study was to explore the prospects and challenges that prevent females working in hotels from advancing in their career. On the other hand the specific objectives seeks to identify the prospects of females working in the hotel, assess challenges associated with females working in the hotel sector, examine the effects the challenges have on females who want to advance their career in the hotel sector and assess coping mechanisms to the challenges faced by females who work in the hotel sector.

Conceptual framework guiding the study was adapted from Glass Ceiling Theory by Bombuwela & De Alwis (2013). The study also made use of Liberal Feminist Theory by Okin (2009) and Supply Side Theory by Powell (2009). The study used both quantitative and qualitative data. Regarding the quantitative data questionnaires were administered to 196 respondents; while with the qualitative information 5 female managers were interviewed. The results for the quantitative survey were analyzed using Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS Version 16). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies

were used to present the data. The results of descriptive statistics were presented using frequency tables. Factor analysis was also used to determine challenges and prospects in hotels.

Key Findings of the Study

Based on the study it was revealed that:

- The overall female prospects represented (67.8%), which indicated that respondents strongly believe that there are prospects for females working in the hotel sector. It was also observed that, hard work, willingness to take risks, mentors, educational credentials, and continuous learning and training development were revealed as some of the most important factors to females' career advancement and success.
- The findings revealed that sexual harassment (62.2%) is also a strong factor that affects female advancement in the hotel industry. The finding also revealed that, management field was perceived as a male activity, thus suitable for males. For this reason females who held management positions would be considered as less proficient than their male counterparts and, therefore, be given less pay and fewer promotions despite their performance. Some challenges faced by women who want to assume management positions include: disapproval and intimidation by male colleagues; not being listened to; and not being given equal access to opportunities, such as opportunities to carry out special assignments or opportunities for career advancement.

- The study also revealed that, the effect of challenges indicated that work-family conflicts turn to reduce the confidence levels of females at work places as a result leads to unstable minds and attitude toward work. This brings about undue pressure and conflicts among females at their work places. It was also revealed that so long as females are not given enough assistance to prove what they can do at the work place, it will be very difficult for them to compete with their male counterparts and as well progress at their various work places.
- The coping mechanisms represented (61.6%), which means that all the respondents agree that with these mechanisms they can advance in their careers. They believed management of organizations should learn to create good quality relationships between employees and supervisors. This will build the confidence of females and in turn allow them voice out any issues of importance to the benefit of both the employees and the organization as a whole.
- In addition, the research disclosed that in some organizations unequal balance in power and opportunities persists. In most cases men are given better chances of advancing their careers and promoted to management positions in comparison to women.
- The study revealed that female managers are as hard working as male managers. Some of the best traits noted in women include: fairness, hardworking, ability to motivate others, determination, calmness, assertiveness, competitiveness, enthusiasm, deliberateness and detail-oriented, which all contribute to the success of the organization. It was also noted that women are under-represented in management positions

because of the fear that they are not confident enough to act as managers. The reason is because society generally perceives that women do not and cannot function effectively as managers. It is believed that management is best suited for men; therefore, women cannot handle authority as competently as men do. In addition, it was found that some organizations are not gender neutral. In most cases, requirements for one to enter management excluded female representation at the management level.

- The study revealed that women who are not mentored are likely to face problems such as a lack of equity in pay or training in their organizations, unlike those who have been mentored. The study discovered that women have a desire to advance their careers, but are limited by the following key factors: gender role; work-family commitments; personal factors; stereotype of women as managers; male-dominated environment; organizational structure and culture; gender discrimination; sexual harassment; lack of mentoring and coaching
- The revealed that certain biographical characteristics such as age and marital status play a role in career advancement. It was found that the younger people are, the more keen they are to advance their careers, but the older they become, the less eager they become to advance their careers. In addition, it was noted that women in different marital groups (single, married, divorced) have a desire and willingness to advance their careers, but are deterred by particular marital concerns or commitments.

- The study disclosed that the majority of women have been working for their organizations for relatively a long time, but a few or none of them have been promoted to new positions once or twice while some have never been promoted at all. From one study, a woman declared that, there is nothing as frustrating as working so hard expecting to be promoted, yet it takes a long time to be promoted.

Implications for Management

When more women hold senior management positions, companies earn a higher return on equity than those with fewer women at the top. Female managers have the potential to contribute to organizational learning of its employees as well as organizational development and performance. Organizations should play their role through organizational development in providing support and induction programmes to newcomers and current employees, so that employees are guided in their future career-decisions and career advancement.

Subsequently, career development programmes which empower managers to engage in proactive behaviours should be designed. By taking part in career enhancing strategies, managers' managerial competencies and skills can be upgraded and enhanced. Specifically, managers should engage in career planning by setting career goals and formulating strategies for the achievement of those goals; managers should engage in instrumental and expressive networking to add to their managerial visibility within and outside their organizations. Managers should update their computer skills in order to keep abreast with current management issues and tools.

Conclusion

Based on the objectives and the resulting findings of the study discussed, it can be concluded that:

- Women in the hospitality industry continue to be under-represented in management positions. In addition, they tend to be reluctant to advance their careers once they are promoted. The study examined the factors behind women's under-representation in management positions and their reluctance to advance their careers. It is believed that the information provided and the topics covered will make it easy for organizations to know which direction to take to improve conditions for women and to find ways to eliminate constraints to women's career advancement.
- In the same manner, women will know what to do to keep on fighting for their rights, and to break through the glass ceiling phenomenon. It is essential for organizations to understand the importance of granting equal opportunities to all individuals regardless of gender, including chances for career advancement. Career advancement does not only benefit an employee, but also an organization in a variety of ways. Acquiring new skills and knowledge helps to improve an individual's work performance, which, in turn, increases organizational profitability. Women as well play a vital role in the effectiveness of the organization and they deserve to be given equal opportunities.

Recommendations

In order to ensure an effective functioning of the organization, the following recommendations should be considered:

- Organizations should develop recruitment and selection processes that encompass women for home-based and international assignments. Organizations should go beyond masculine stereotypes when attracting individuals for certain positions. In addition, recruitment processes should be evaluated to identify possible constraints to women's career advancement; Women themselves should create a culture, which will change the deep-rooted traditions, which dictate that women should or should not do or be.
- Organizations should develop mechanisms to address gender imbalances and promote fair discrimination and equality at all times in terms of hiring, training, pay, promotion and so on. Some of the best strategies to achieve these are through: Affirmative action, the quota system which enables allocating a certain number of positions to women, ensuring equal representation of women in management and leadership positions, and developing policies which guarantee equal treatment for both women and men.
- Eliminate penalties for marriage and motherhood, and adopt work, life and family-friendly policies. These should include flexible hours, job sharing, telecommunicating, day-care programmes, and so on. Family-friendly policies would encourage men and women to share domestic and child care responsibilities more equitably, and improve

organizations productivity, since workers can focus on their jobs without stressing about non-job related matters.

- Ensure equivalent opportunities for all. This should include opportunities for career advancement, joining professional associations, networking or going on special assignments. As mentioned, affirmative action is the best tool to achieve this.
- Human resource policies should cover and guarantee elimination of any form of stereotypes and sexual harassment. Such policies should be discussed with employees on a regular basis.
- Establish support mechanisms or structures that are clear and helpful to all employees such as coaching, mentorship programmes and counseling to assist employees who experience difficulties in dealing with work and family pressures, financial matters, personal issues, and so on.
- Abolish the traditional view that there are “male and female professions”. It is advisable to recruit and place suitably qualified individuals in spite of gender in those professions that were traditionally viewed as male and female professions.
- The human resources department should take proactive action to implement career advancement programmes or strategies such as providing training that is related to one’s profession. Organizations should emphasis the link between employee development and advancement programmes to break the glass ceiling phenomenon. This can be done by, re-examining organizational culture; re-evaluating workplace policies and practices; establishing and leading change

management programmes; ensuring regular staff development; guaranteeing support for women in career advancement; and assigning mentors for staff.

Suggestions for Further Research

To get a richer and more insightful study on the issue, a full qualitative study should be considered in the future. This will probe into why females are underrepresented in management levels in hotels.

Finally further studies should involve both males and females to throw more light on the problem and also a comparative study can be done to get a better understanding of the problem.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

TOPIC

**PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF FEMALES IN THE HOTEL
SECTOR BREAKINGTHROUGH THE GLASS CEILING IN
SEKONDI-TAKORADI METROPOLIS.**

The aim of this questionnaire is to explore the prospects and challenges of female employees in the hotel sector. It would be greatly appreciated if you could complete these questionnaires. This research is mainly for academic purposes. You are therefore assured that all information provided will be confidential and strictly used for academic purposes. I therefore count on you for your cooperation.

Thank You

lucyayombisah@yahoo.com

This questionnaire is divided into four sections. Please follow the instructions provided for each section:

- A. Socio-demographic characteristics
- B. Challenges and
- C. Prospects of females
- D. How to overcome the glass ceiling

Section A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

- (1) Gender: Female ()
- (2) Marital Status:
 - 1. Married ()
 - 2. Unmarried ()
 - 3. Divorced ()
- (3) What is your age?
- (4) How many years of working experience do you have in the hotel?
- (5) What is your highest level of educational qualification?
 - 1. Tertiary ()
 - 2. Secondary ()
 - 3. Basic ()
- (6) What is your current position in the hotel?
- (7) In which department are you in the hotel?

Section B. CHALLENGES

8. Challenges facing females in the hotel sector

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following challenges.

1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5 = Strongly Disagree

A. Challenges of females career advancement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Females advancement in hotels are often slow	1	2	3	4	5
2. Females are usually discriminated against by males at the work place	1	2	3	4	5
3. Sexual harassment is a challenge to females at the work place	1	2	3	4	5
4. Gender roles differ between females and males in hotels	1	2	3	4	5
5. Personal factors by females hinder their advancement	1	2	3	4	5
6. Work and family conflict is a setback to females advancement	1	2	3	4	5
7. Cultural stereotype is a form of career challenge that affect females at work	1	2	3	4	5
8. Lack of mentors by females affect their work	1	2	3	4	4
9. Limited access to networking opportunities affects females work	1	2	3	4	5
10. Excessive work commitment and limited time are challenges females face	1	2	3	4	5
11. Females concern over home and childcare affect their work	1	2	3	4	5
12. Lack of equity in pay affects females than men	1	2	3	4	5
13. Lack of training limit females performance at work	1	2	3	4	5
14. Inadequate job know how prevent females from advancing	1	2	3	4	5
15. Organizational factors sometimes affect females advancement	1	2	3	4	5
16. Marriage to some extent limit females advancement	1	2	3	4	5
17. Single parenting affects females work	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

B. Gender issues	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Females face gender problems more than males	1	2	3	4	5
2. Females constitute larger number in the hotels	1	2	3	4	5
3. Females are important to every organization	1	2	3	4	5
4. Females can advance through determination and hard work	1	2	3	4	5
5. Mentoring is a way of advancing females jobs	1	2	3	4	5
6. Females can never be at par to males	1	2	3	4	5
7. Education is a way of breaking the gender gap between females and males	1	2	3	4	5
8. Working experience can help females to advance their careers	1	2	3	4	5
9. Females are less paid in the hotel sector	1	2	3	4	5
10. Females do menial jobs	1	2	3	4	5
11. Females are often not promoted due to invisible barriers	1	2	3	4	5
12. Females are not motivated to upgrade and advance their careers	1	2	3	4	5
13. Females are considered less competent to manage	1	2	3	4	5
14. Females are considered not hardworking as males	1	2	3	4	5
15. Females often occupy lower positions in hotels	1	2	3	4	5
16. Females are better managers compared to males	1	2	3	4	5
17. Females are their own enemies	1	2	3	4	5
18. Females place is the home not the office	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

C. Work and family conflict issues	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Work and family conflict occurs when one struggles between work and family roles	1	2	3	4	5
2. Family conflict occurs when one is not spending time with family	1	2	3	4	5
3. Family conflict occurs when one sacrifices in the career at the expense of the family	1	2	3	4	5
4. Not responding to work duties can lead to work conflict at work	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

D. Mentor support	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Mentor support occurs when one turns to someone for counseling	1	2	3	4	5
2. Mentoring occurs when there is someone to guide you do the right thing	1	2	3	4	5
3. Mentoring occurs when someone teaches you how to balance work and family commitment	1	2	3	4	5
4. Mentoring occurs when one has someone to look up to in order to build a better future	1	2	3	4	5

Section C: PROSPECTS

9. Prospects of females in the hotel sector

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following factors.

Female prospects	SA	A	N	D	SD
1. Firms will form policies that will enhance female advancement	1	2	3	4	5
2. Females will soon be managers of hotels	1	2	3	4	5
3. Females will be at par to males in hotels	1	2	3	4	5
4. Females will be recognized in hotels	1	2	3	4	5

Section D: COPING MECHANISM

10. How to overcome those challenges

Please indicate your level of agreement to the following factors.

Coping and overcoming mechanisms for females	SA	A	N	D	SA
1. One must be hard working	1	2	3	4	5
2. Attitude toward work must change	1	2	3	4	5
3. One has to be mentored	1	2	3	4	5
4. Learn effective and good communication skills	1	2	3	4	5
5. One must be good at solving problems	1	2	3	4	5
6. One should be willing to make personal sacrifice for the job	1	2	3	4	5
7. One should learn to update the job knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
8. One must go for further studies	1	2	3	4	5
9. Joining the available networking opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
10. Family support is needed to help females	1	2	3	4	5
11. Go for training when the need arise	1	2	3	4	5
12. One should learn to do challenging jobs	1	2	3	4	5

(11) Have you ever been promoted?

(12) Which of these training have you receive?

1. Formal ()

2. Informal ()

3. In-house ()

4. None ()

(13) Where do you see yourself in the next two years?

1. Going for further studies ()

2. Get a more challenging job ()

3. General manager ()

4. Others (specify)

(14) Are they any prospects for females in the hotel sector?

1. Yes ()

2. No ()

THANK YOU

APPENDIX TWO

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DEPARTMENT OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT

AN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FEMALE MANAGERS

TOPIC

**PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES OF FEMALES IN THE HOTEL
SECTOR BREAKINGTHROUGH THE GLASS CEILING IN
SEKONDI-TAKORADI METROPOLIS.**

This is an M. Phil in hospitality thesis. The main objective is to explore the challenges and prospects of females in the hotel sector. I have chosen your organization as my study area. This research is mainly for academic purposes. You are therefore assured that all information provided will be confidential and strictly used for academic purposes. I therefore count on you for your response. Thank you.

A. Biographical Information

- (1) What is your current position in this hotel?.....
- (2) Which department are you?.....
- (3) Gender: Female ()
- (4) Marital Status: Married () Single () Divorced ()
- (5) What is your age?
- (6) How many years of working experience do you have in this hotel?
- (7) How many children do have?

B. Educational Qualifications

(7) What is your highest level of educational qualification?

Tertiary () Secondary () Basic ()

(8) Do you intend to go for further studies?

Questions

(1) How did you rise to this level?

(2) What is your source of motivation?

(3) Do you have any career goals? Probe

(4) Describe any things about your life situations that influence your career advancement?

(5) Did you attend any management training to help you attain this position?
Probe

(6) Describe some of the personal characteristics that influence your career advancement?

(7) Do you have any mentor? Probe

(8) Have you ever thought of making any compromise to help you get to where you are now?

(9) What challenges do you face as a female manager? Probe

(10) What are some of the barriers you have to overcome to enable you to become a manager?

(11) How do your colleague males relate to you as a female manager?

(12) What are your views about women in management positions?

(13) Do think is easy for females to overcome the challenges they face?

(14) What are the strategies that can be put in place to overcome the challenges females face at the work place?

(15) Do you think there are any prospects for females in the hotel sector?

(16) What advice do you have for females who wish to be managers in hotels?

THANK YOU