DO PERSONAL ISSUES REPRESENT BARRIERS FOR WOMEN IN AND ASPIRING TO BE IN, HOTEL MANAGEMENT?

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Signed Statement

I Claire Garnett, declare that this dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except where otherwise stated.

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Abstract

This dissertation has set out to explore the extent to which personal issues can impede on a woman’s success within hotel management. The author achieved this aim through the interviewing of female hotel managers and female hospitality students and was able to compare these results in order to gauge the current attitudes and perceptions surrounding personal issues representing barriers. The author used White’s (2011) ‘Power Mechanism’s’ model as a conceptual framework in order to shape the study and tested the value of this model against the data collected from the interviews and focus group. The author was then able to develop a new model that was applicable to aspiring and current female hotel managers and represented the power field surrounding the personal issues the research had identified.

Within this dissertation, a critical literature review has been undertaken that justifies the study’s place amongst other academic research within its field. A detailed outline of the chosen research methods has also been included; as well as in-depth analysis and discussion of the results collected from the raw primary data. The main findings of this dissertation highlight that there are forces embedded within society that can act towards creating personal barriers that prevent women from pursuing their careers within hotel management. The extent to which these personal issues effect a woman’s success is dependent on the individual; however, the power field surrounding the personal issues is identified to be changing with the new generation of aspiring managers – with attitudes seemingly becoming more inclusive, and the women more empowered.

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Contents

1.0 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 2
  1.1 The Hotel Industry ................................................................................................. 2
  1.2 Incentive to Research ............................................................................................. 3
  1.3 Locating and Identifying the Research .................................................................... 3
  1.4 Aim and Objectives ................................................................................................ 4
  1.5 Outline of Dissertation ........................................................................................... 5

2.0 Literature Review ..................................................................................................... 6
  2.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 6
  2.2 Introduction to Feminism ......................................................................................... 6
    2.2.1 Radical Feminism ............................................................................................... 7
    2.2.2 Liberal Feminism ............................................................................................... 8
    2.2.3 Standpoint Feminism ....................................................................................... 8
    2.2.4 Chosen Perspective ......................................................................................... 9
  2.3 Female Managers in Hospitality .............................................................................. 10
  2.4 Personal Influences as a Barrier to Women ............................................................. 11
  2.5 White’s (2011) ‘Power Mechanism’s Model’ ......................................................... 12
    2.5.1 Background to Research ............................................................................... 12
    2.5.2 Explaining the Model ..................................................................................... 13
    2.5.3 Testing the Model ........................................................................................... 14
  2.6 Conclusion .............................................................................................................. 14

3.0 Methodology ............................................................................................................ 15
  3.1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 15
  3.2 The Research Method ............................................................................................. 15
    3.2.1 Secondary Research ....................................................................................... 15
    3.2.2 Primary Research ........................................................................................... 16
    3.2.3 Quantitative v Qualitative ............................................................................. 16
  3.3 The Research Process ............................................................................................. 17
    3.3.1 Identifying and Gathering the Sample ............................................................ 17
    3.3.2 Choosing the Right Research Tool ................................................................. 18
    3.3.3 Developing the Interviews ............................................................................. 19
    3.3.4 Developing the Focus Group ......................................................................... 21
    3.3.5 Ethical Issues and Limitations ....................................................................... 21
    3.3.6 Reliability and Validity .................................................................................. 22
  3.4 The Data Collection Process ................................................................................... 23
3.5 Summary ............................................................................................................. 23

4.0 Results and Discussion ....................................................................................... 25

4.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................... 25

4.2 Interviews ........................................................................................................... 25

4.2.1 Perceptions of the Hotel Industry ................................................................. 26

4.3 Focus Group ...................................................................................................... 35

4.3.1 Perceptions of the Hotel Industry and Attitudes towards Manager Responses ..................................................................................................... 35

4.4 Evaluating White’s (2011) Model .................................................................... 41

4.5 Constructing a New Model .................................................................................. 42

4.6 Summary ........................................................................................................... 43

5.0 Conclusion ......................................................................................................... 44

5.1 Introduction ....................................................................................................... 44

5.2 Revisiting Objectives ......................................................................................... 44

5.3 Limitations of Study ......................................................................................... 46

5.5 Summary of Key Findings .................................................................................. 47

5.5. Recommendations for Future Research ......................................................... 49

5.6 Summary ........................................................................................................... 51

References ................................................................................................................. 52
List of Tables and Figures

Figure 1: White’s (2011) Power Mechanism’s ‘Mirage’ for Elite Culinary Kitchens Model

Figure 2: Example of Osgood’s (1957) Semantic Differential Scale

Figure 3: Development of Focus Group Topics

Figure 4: White’s Model Revisited

Figure 5: Map of Identified Personal Forces that act as Barriers to a women’s career progression in Hotel Management

Figure 6: A Conception of a Power Field Surrounding a range of Personal Issues that may serve to impede a woman’s progression in hotel management

Table 1: Revisiting Aim and Objectives Set
1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Hotel Industry
The hotel industry is one that remains notorious for its “24 hours a day, 7 days a week” structure (Mooney & Ryan, 2009, 197) that often demands its employees to work long, unsociable hours (Purcell, 1996; Kattara, 2005; Kusluvan, 2003, Wood, 1997). The multi-faceted industry is therefore extremely labour intensive and so when regarding hotel management, the managerial positions are often perceived to be full-time commitments (Guerrier, 1986). This perception is further enhanced by the fact that these long working-days are unhealthily accepted by the managers (Radzi et al., 2014) and seen to be imperative to working practices due to the expectation from the industry that managers are seen to be “visible” by their employees (Mooney & Ryan, 2009, 197). As a result of this, managers often find that their work life balance is affected and often not without personal sacrifice (Brownwell, 1994; Kattara, 2005; Purcell 1996).

The amount of women who are managers at junior and middle levels are said to be constantly increasing, (Adib & Guerrier, 2003) however, evidence still exists that indicates there is gender inequality when it comes to the most senior managerial positions (Feng, 2015; Weyer, 2007). It is therefore suggested that women are not reaching the highest levels of hotel management, despite there being more female than male students on hospitality management related degrees (Brownwell, 1994) and no initial problems with entering the hotel industry at the beginning of their careers (Feng, 2015).

If this is the case, what barriers are women finding that are preventing or deterring them from reaching these senior management roles?

This study will focus on identifying the personal issues that current and aspiring female managers feel they face during their career, and will seek to measure the extent to which these effect a woman’s progression within the industry.
1.2 Incentive to Research
Being a female and working in the industry herself, the author began to notice that the majority of senior managers whom she encountered were male. Those few that were female were all unmarried and without children. As a woman who wants to pursue the industry she began to wonder if the most senior positions within the industry were only attainable to her if she made the sacrifice of not having a family. She therefore chose to research the area for her dissertation to see if this perception was a reality.

1.3 Locating and Identifying the Research
The author recognised the gap in research that exists between the perspectives of female managers and female students and so therefore chose to interview both sub-sections through semi-structured interviews and a focus group. These will aim to provide the researcher with comparable perspectives that relate to the perception of personal barriers and will aid the author in measuring the current extent to which these personal issues effect a woman’s progression in the industry.

The students are the author’s peers and are all sourced from Cardiff Metropolitan University; whilst the managers are sourced from three different hotels: Sudbury House (Oxfordshire), Park Plaza (London, Waterloo) and Park Plaza (Cardiff). Whilst the author acknowledges that the locations and size differences in these hotels could influence the perspectives of the interviewees, the author has chosen to not refer to these variables throughout the study so as to not exhaust available resources and to keep the research focussed.
1.4 Aim and Objectives

Aim: To identify and explore the personal issues current and aspiring female managers can encounter in the hotel industry and measure the extent to which they effect a woman’s career progression.

Objectives:

1. To review literature on feminism and establish whether a radical, liberal or standpoint view is to be taken. Then, to critically review feminist literature relating specifically to hospitality in order to support/refute that personal issues pose as barriers to women in the hotel industry.

2. To identify current personal issues female hotel managers can face and to establish the extent to which they are perceived to be a threat, by conducting 4 semi-structured interviews with female hotel managers and analysing their personal experiences and attitudes.

3. To compare female hospitality students’ perceptions of the hotel industry with that of the female managers through the use of a focus group. Then, from the results of both studies establish the current extent that personal issues pose as a barrier to women in and aspiring to be in hotel management.

4. To test and evaluate the value of White’s (2011) “Power mechanisms” model against the results collected and if appropriate, to use it in order to create a new model that is more applicable and illustrates the results from this study.

5. To establish conclusions on the extent to which personal barriers pose as a threat to career progression and to make recommendations for future research based upon the findings.
1.5 Outline of Dissertation
In order to achieve the aim and objectives that have been set, the author has carried out a critical and detailed literature review to provide justification for the research. Following this, the methodology for the project has been outlined and acts to provide reasoning behind the author’s choice in methods of data collection. The results from the data collected have then been critically analysed, with an in-depth discussion behind their interpretation. Finally, the author concludes the results from the research in the last chapter and offers recommendations for future research, based upon the findings.
2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Within this chapter, academic literature relating to the topic will be critically reviewed in order to aid further discussion and also provide justification for the research question by identifying gaps within current research. Due to the research question relating specifically to women within the hotel industry, the following chapter will discuss a variety of feminist perspectives and review whether it is appropriate to adopt one of these in order to direct the focus of the research. In addition to this, White’s (2011) “Power Mechanism” model will be critically reviewed and so the chapter will discuss White’s research further and make suggestions as to how this model could perhaps be applied to the researchers own study. Other literature relating to personal barriers will also be assessed so as to identify what previous research has suggested these to be.

Henceforth, the chapter will be structured as followed: 2.1 Introduction, 2.2 Introduction to Feminism, 2.2.1 Radical Feminism, 2.2.2 Liberal Feminism, 2.2.3 Standpoint Feminism, 2.2.4 Chosen Perspective, 2.3 Female Managers in Hospitality, 2.4 Personal issues as barriers to women, 2.5 White’s (2011) Power Mechanism’s model, 2.5.1 Background to Research, 2.5.2 Explaining the Model, 2.5.3 Testing the Model, and will conclude in 2.6 Conclusion.

2.2 Introduction to Feminism

When it comes to defining feminism, Jardine (1985) notes that this is a very complicated task as even most feminist writers themselves are reluctant to explain what they really mean by the word due to the fact that it often opens them up for backlash and debates. Thompson (2001) explains that every feminist writer usually has their own interpretation of the word but essentially “feminism is a social enterprise, a moral and political framework concerned with redressing social wrongs” (Thompson, 2001, 7).

“The model of the male breadwinner” (Crompton, 1999, 2) depicts how society was notoriously shaped in the past; with men assuming dominant roles in employment and women being left responsible for domestic duties in the home
and with family. Crompton (1999) notes how this model was assumed to be natural rather than reflecting gender stereo-types and social arrangements and this assumption still continues to shape much of how society perceives each gender today. Hamilton (2012) explains that the biological differences between men and women created a patriarchal society and although much has been transformed in the UK today, Saul (2003) suggests that despite the laws that are in place preventing discrimination on the basis of gender, there are still many forces of a patriarchal society that can act as barriers to a woman’s success.

When reviewing feminist literature, authors can approach their arguments from a variety of different perspectives that all vary in regards to what they aim to achieve. Therefore the author must review these approaches in order to establish which perspective is more suited to the study as the chosen perspective will consequently influence the focus points and overall design. Amongst the most prominent of these feminist approaches and arguably the most relevant to modern day feminist arguments are the Radical, Liberal and Standpoint perspectives (Thompson, 2001).

2.2.1 Radical Feminism
Radical feminists distinguish themselves by arguing that women are oppressed by the dominating influence and force of male patriarchy and therefore aim to challenge the norms of society by focussing on a culture change that undermines hierarchical structures (Walby, 1990). If applying this perspective to the research, the study would therefore seek to distinguish patriarchal forces on female hotel managers that are embedded within UK culture and society. Therefore themes and conclusions would focus on the breaking down of patriarchal assumptions rather than making change through legislations. Bell & Klein (1996, 148) indicate that there are many criticisms of radical feminism due to the perception that radical feminists are “narrow, moralistic, judgemental and reactionary” with Walby (1990) expanding on this to suggest that radicals have been criticised for essentialism due to the assumption that they believe women to be a victim in a society of male domination. However, whilst some radical feminists may indeed portray this belief, Thompson (2001, 8) highlights that by using the words “male domination”, radical feminists do not necessarily mean
that all men are oppressive nor that women are passive victims; on the contrary they believe that it is a social system – “a matter of meanings, values, practices and institutions” (Thompson, 2001, 8). Thus drawing back to the fact that radical feminism aims to challenge society and culture, rather than as many would believe, men as a group.

2.2.2 Liberal Feminism
Cain (1989) notes that Liberal Feminism is more focussed on equal rights and opportunities for women but similarly believes in equal rights for men, and so is therefore more focussed on what is best for the individual. This is due to the liberal belief in freedom of expression and the importance of the state endorsing a form of “neutrality” (Schwartzman, 2010, 4). Consequently this perspective takes a less aggressive and far more political approach as it seeks to establish equality through legislations. However, Liberal Feminism is often criticised as being too “abstract” and “individualistic” (Schwartzman, 2010, 7) and so although it takes into account the individual; social structures are disregarded. Moreover, radical feminist Catharine MacKinnon (1989) suggests that Liberal Feminism can often focus on moulding women to become like men and so as a result women are still a victim of a patriarchal society. Consequently if the researcher was to adopt this perspective for the study, the research would be inclusive of the individual opinions and circumstances of both male and female hotel managers and students which would therefore offer a state of neutrality and eliminate bias. However, underlying social structures would not be taken into account and any patriarchal forces would not necessarily be identified or challenged.

2.2.3 Standpoint Feminism
American feminist writer Harding (2004) describes Standpoint Feminism as a perspective that argues that only those in the oppressed social group are able to argue against those oppressing them due to the fact that only they have ever experienced what it is to be a woman.
Anderson (1995) explains this further with the following analogy:

“Auto mechanics are generally in a better position than auto consumers to know what is wrong with their cars. Practical experience in fulfilling the social role of the mechanic grounds the mechanic’s epistemic privilege, which lays a claim to greater reliability than the judgements of auto consumer”

(Anderson, 1995)

Consequently this analogy depicts that only women are able to offer reliable judgements based upon their own experiences. This perspective therefore assumes that women are dominated by men and so strives for women’s opinions to be heard. However standpoint theory can also apply to other minority groups relating to race, sexuality and religion. Criticisms of the concept are similar to those of Liberal Feminism in the sense that one woman’s experience is not universal of the whole gender and so it is therefore only relatable to certain individuals (Harding, 2004). Consequently if the researcher was to use a standpoint perspective the research would not include the opinions of men but the conclusions would typically be more passive and focussed on understanding individual situations. However the results would be hard to generalise as the focus point is entirely on individual experience.

2.2.4 Chosen Perspective

After careful consideration of the above perspectives, the author will be researching the study following a radical approach. This will enable the author to completely disregard male opinions as with a radical perspective, matriarchy is disregarded and therefore only the underlying patriarchal forces will be identified. Although this could create a challenge of bias due to no male participants being used the radical perspective enables the researcher to focus the study and unlike the liberal and standpoint perspectives; will allow the researcher to explore current attitudes on patriarchal forces surrounding the whole industry, rather than just rely on individual experience which is hard to generalise.
2.3 Female Managers in Hospitality

When reflecting on the progress made by women in business, Meyerson & Fletcher (2000) note that many women now hold prominent positions on corporate boards, run major companies and are portrayed as being successful leaders. However, they then go on to highlight that women at the most senior levels of business are still rare and this seems to be particularly true of the hospitality industry, which Brownwell & Walsh (2008) describe as being a particularly tough industry for women looking for career progression and personal success. This is further supported by Walker (2011 cited in Wood, 2015, 125), who suggests that:

“Only 12% of UK company directorships are held by women, dropping to 6% in the hospitality sector”.

Wood (2015) concurs that this is an area of particular interest and one that has attracted a lot of research attention, particularly because there are more women undertaking hospitality higher education courses than there are men, yet this is not being reflected in the amount of women in senior management positions. Brownwell (1994) supports this by noting that female hospitality graduates are three times more likely to leave the industry than their male counterparts. This therefore has many researchers questioning what it is exactly that is deterring or preventing women from attaining the higher positions- despite there being a lot of interest from women at the very beginning of their careers.

“The glass ceiling” is a metaphor that was first coined in the 1980s and refers to the invisible but impenetrable barriers that impede the career development of women and minorities and prevent them from getting to the top of the management hierarchy (Hymowitz & Schellhardt, 1986). The “glass ceiling” and these invisible barriers has therefore been blamed by many researchers as the reason why women are still underrepresented in the most senior roles (Altman et al., 2005; Cave & Kilic, 2010; Weyer, 2007); with research suggesting that they are instead being “horizontally segregated” (Ng & Pine, 2003) into particular jobs and areas of operation that are stereotypically “more suited” to women (Schein, 1973; Wood, 2015).
Boone et al. (2013) has suggested that personal influences now play a big part in creating the “glass ceiling” for women in the hotel industry and so the project will therefore direct the research to focus on female managers’ experiences and perceptions of personal issues in order to identify the current personal forces. Further study will then be given into the current attitudes of female hospitality students with the intention of establishing a relationship between the attitudes of both groups which will enable the researcher to measure the extent to which these personal issues pose as a threat to a woman’s career advancement and evaluate whether these personal issues do play a role in the underrepresentation of women at senior management levels.

2.4 Personal Influences as a Barrier to Women

When examining the personal issues that could pose as a barrier to women, it is important to first identify what previous research has already found them to be. Brownwell and Walsh (2008) highlight that the nature of many hospitality roles include long shift patterns and late nights, which could therefore hinder career advancement if a woman is responsible for a family. Saul (2003) supports this outlining that the best-paid jobs tend to have requirements that are difficult for anyone who is a primary childcare provider to meet, and when women are far more likely than men to be the primary caregivers (Saul, 2003) this puts them at an immediate disadvantage. Liff & Ward (2001) have also highlighted that many women have been told they cannot be mothers and successful career women concurrently, which will therefore cause women to not pursue their careers.

Both Maxwell (1997) and Mooney & Ryan (2009) carried out studies on female managers who had managed to surpass the “glass ceiling”. Both studies made similar comments about their participants, with Mooney & Ryan noting:

“Most of the women who had made it to the top were single and some were lesbian”

(Mooney & Ryan, 2009)

This therefore supports Brownwell & Walsh (2008) and Saul (2003) as it depicts how women with children are rarely seen in the senior positions.
Moreover, the reference to the fact most women were single highlights the difficulties of a work/life balance within the industry and the personal sacrifice that is often made (Brownwell 1994). Maxwell (1997) goes on to note how women starting their career may look at these women and then decide that they do not want to make that sacrifice themselves.

Higgins et al. (2000) depicts how some women within the industry try to balance their dual responsibilities by finding support at home or trying to obtain a reduced work schedule. However Williamson (2008) notes how some employers may see this as a liability and the hours of work are often hard to negotiate (Mooney & Ryan, 2009).

Although research has clearly already identified many personal issues that women within the industry face, the study will aim to identify any new issues and represent this in a model that also encompasses the current extent of their force over current and aspiring female managers.

2.5 White’s (2011) ‘Power Mechanism’s Model’

2.5.1 Background to Research

In his PHD research (2011), Alan White indicated that a 2010 survey of elite kitchens had found “only 5% of senior chefs’ positions were held by women in Michelin rated restaurants in the UK” (White, 2016). Henceforth, the incentive for his research was to uncover what was causing this low level of participation and to discover why it was that women seemed to be being deterred from the senior management positions.

White’s study tackled many gender related debates relating to feminist theories, social status and power, with Bagilhole & White (2011) highlighting that the concept of power is extremely controversial due to the fact it is complex and difficult to measure. Despite this, White sought to identify and analyse the powers that were in play stating:

“If powers operate to prevent women succeeding, what are the powers? How are they resisted? What mechanisms do they use to prevent women from succeeding as senior chefs in elite culinary arts?”

White (2016)
2.5.2 Explaining the Model

From previous and his own research White (2011) identified there as being ten independent power mechanisms that all externally had an effect on women. By conducting eight semi-structured interviews with women who had direct experience working within elite culinary kitchens, White was able to test these powers and develop a theoretical framework to portray his results that depict each of the independent mechanisms. The model is shown below in Figure 1.

Figure 1:

As can be seen in the model above, White identified the ten mechanisms to be: Educative, Careers Information Advice and Guidance, Legal, Health, Environmental, Personal, Systematic, Institutional and Antecedent. The model therefore captures how, whilst society seems to operate with these powers in favour of women, there are underlying ‘forces for exclusion’ (patriarchy) that are pushing females away from reaching the top level of their career and therefore resulting in ‘detachment’.

White (2011)
2.5.3 Testing the Model
The researcher has chosen to test the value of this model with the focus being given to the "personal" power mechanism; aiming to uncover whether the forces for exclusion are indeed stronger than those in favour of "real opportunities for all". In his recent article White (2016) highlights that the personal mechanism represents the internal empowerment of women" and so therefore takes into account factors such as the work/family balance of the woman and the invisible work at home (Saul, 2003). Consequently the researcher will be using White’s model as a conceptual framework for her own study and will be looking to apply this to female hotel managers and hospitality students in order to identify and measure current personal powers and to illustrate these in a new model.

2.6 Conclusion
The background research that is present in this literature review, provides justification for the research project and establishes a solid foundation of background knowledge for the subject matter. The researcher will now be able to test White’s (2011) “Power Mechanisms” model – adapting it so as to focus only on the personal powers that can affect female hotel managers. In addition, after identifying in this literature review that there is a gap in research when it comes to the comparison of attitudes between female managers and students, the primary research will also look to consider a relationship between these groups in order to identify and measure the current personal issues that women in the industry face. The methodology for this primary data collection will be outlined and reviewed throughout the following chapter.
3.0 Methodology

3.1 Introduction
To highlight the importance of an effective methodology Khan (2011, 69) states that “selection and formulation of a proper research scheme is very important and essential for the successful accomplishment of research”. Therefore in order to produce results that provide the most accurate, truthful and relevant information, the researcher must ensure that the chosen research methods are the best appropriate design for the study (Saunder et.al, 2012). Consequently, this chapter will provide justification for the researcher's choice to collect qualitative data only, through the combined use of interviews and a focus group. In addition, the chapter will outline and review the entire research process- from developing the research tools, to executing the data collection. Issues such as ethics and validity will also be reviewed in order to outline and therefore defend any limitations of the methodology that could be encountered.

Thus, the following chapter will be structured as followed: 3.1 Introduction, 3.2, The Research Method, 3.2.1 Secondary Research, 3.2.2 Primary Research, 3.2.3 Quantitative v Qualitative, 3.3 The Research Process, 3.3.1 Identifying and Gathering the Sample, 3.3.2 Choosing the Right Research Tools, 3.3.3 Developing the Interviews, 3.3.4 Developing the Focus Group, 3.3.5 Ethical Issues and Limitations, 3.3.6 Reliability and Validity, 3.4 The Data Collection Process, 3.5 Summary.

3.2 The Research Method

3.2.1 Secondary Research
Secondary research can best be described as the gathering of existing information and data from third party sources (Crowther & Lancaster, 2012). Crowther & Lancaster (2012) highlight that it is important to collect secondary research before any new data is collected, as a similar study may have already been conducted by previous researchers. If, by gathering secondary research it is identified that there is a gap in information, this consequently provides justification for new studies to be conducted, and can also prove to be a useful comparison tool (Stewart & Kamins, 1993). In this case, the researcher is
choosing to use Alan White’s (2011) ‘Power Mechanism’s’ model as a conceptual framework for their own primary research.

3.2.2 Primary Research

Primary research refers to the researcher’s collection of new data through research methods such as observations and experiments (Rugg & Petre, 2006). The data collected is therefore relevant and unique to that study and will therefore enable the researcher to form conclusions based upon their own results (Kumar, 2008). There are a variety of research tools available to a researcher when choosing a method for primary data collection which will either collect qualitative or quantitative data. In this instance the researcher has chosen only to collect qualitative data and will expand on the rationale of this choice throughout the next section.

3.2.3 Quantitative v Qualitative

“A dictionary definition might suggest that qualitative analysis is concerned with describing the constituent properties of an entity, while quantitative analysis is involved with determining how much of an entity there is”

(Smith, 2015, 1)

When it comes to choosing a suitable research method, the researcher must establish what kind of data is going to be best appropriate for the study – whether that be quantitative, qualitative, or a combination of the both. Newman & Benz (1998) note that this decision should be dictated by the nature of the research question.

Quantitative methods are considered to be scientific and include more traditional investigation methods such as surveys and lab experiments (Crowther and Lancaster, 2012). These therefore provide results that can be expressed to a numerical value and so it is consequently argued that this type of data is more objective and reliable (Newman & Benz, 1998). Despite this, the researcher has recognised that quantitative data collection is not appropriate for the study as the nature of the research question demands insightful opinions relating to female experience and attitudes. Consequently, the author has elected to use two qualitative research tools of data collection as qualitative studies are “concerned with the phenomenon and study of human of behaviour”
(Sahu & Singh, 2016, 7). Therefore, these methods will enable the researcher to gain rich, in-depth information that relates directly to participants beliefs and experiences (Ghosh and Chopra 2003). Furthermore, the feminist perspective of the study also pushes the researcher towards qualitative data, as Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011, 23) highlight that “feminist researchers value women’s experiences and unearth women’s subjugated knowledges”- something of which the researcher could not achieve through quantitative data. Moreover, amongst the objectives for the research project is to ‘test the value of White’s (2011) ‘Power Mechanism’s model’ which is subjective itself in nature and therefore impossible to quantify as it is a conceptual model and therefore “related to abstract ideas and theory” (Kumar, 2008, 8).

There are a variety of qualitative methods that a researcher can choose such as: case studies, field studies, observational studies and interview studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2017). For this study, the researcher has chosen to use semi-structured interviews and a focus group and from there, is aiming to cultivate their own abstract theory relating to and illustrating the results of the research.

3.3 The Research Process

3.3.1 Identifying and Gathering the Sample

Hair et al. (2016, 171) define sampling as “the act of selecting a certain subset within the population” and goes on to highlight that there are many different methods of sampling that researchers can use to gather their participants. Due to the researcher choosing to collect qualitative data the study will use “purposive sampling” whereby they use their research question and prior knowledge to choose participants who best meet the purpose of the study (Bailey, 1994). In this instance the researcher identified female hotel managers and female hospitality students as the two subsets to be studied as these are both the focus point of the dissertation.

The researcher elected to conduct four interviews with four different female managers from three hotels: Sudbury House, Oxfordshire and Park Plaza London Waterloo and Cardiff. The names of these managers have been anonymised but positions can be seen here:
F1- General Manager
F2- Hotel Company Director
F3- Food and Beverage Manager
F4- Sales Manager

All four of these participants were sourced from the researchers own contacts within the industry and so in terms of ease of access the researcher had no issues. Similarly the six participants for the focus group were formed from the researcher’s university peers - all undertaking a hospitality related degree.

3.3.2 Choosing the Right Research Tool

“When we choose an approach for a qualitative psychological research project, we are choosing a perspective on the world and on our data. We are choosing to ‘slice’ it in a particular way- when you slice through an object, such as an orange, you give special privilege to the perspective that you have chosen to take”

(Larkin, 2015, 249)

Here, Larkin (2015) highlights how important the selection of an appropriate research tool is as the rest of a study is shaped by the focus perspective that is chosen. When it comes to making the selection, Larkin (2015) goes on to note that researchers should be directed by their research question and should find that their chosen method/s are consistent with their questions “epistemological position” (Larkin, 2015, 253).

For the researcher, the selection of research tools for this project was a straightforward task- the research question demanded unconstrained, personal accounts from female managers; therefore, it was an obvious decision to choose semi-structured interviews as the tool for research as qualitative interviews allow the interviewer to gain “as much understanding, clarification, insight and direction as can be achieved” (Hackett, 2016 147), with the semi-structured interview allowing the interviewee to speak freely on the topics at hand (Bernard, 2000). Meanwhile, the researcher established the need to uncover the current attitudes of female hospitality students and so elected to conduct a focus group in order to initiate discussion and gauge current perceptions (Kreuger, 1988).
The researcher does note that these methods do have drawbacks, with Blaikie (2009) emphasising that they are often particularly time-consuming due to the depth and detail they often exude. Blaikie (2009) also goes on to note how “any form of qualitative interview keeps the researcher removed from the natural setting”. However, due to the fact that the research question only relates to personal experience and opinions being out of a natural setting would not affect the validity. Furthermore, the lengthy time for research would be unavoidable and is a necessary sacrifice for the researcher to make in order to obtain the rich, detailed data that is needed for the study.

3.3.3 Developing the Interviews

Galleta (2013) emphasises that the semi-structured interview should be structured in such a way that specifically targets the different aspects of the research question, whilst “still leaving space for participants to offer new meanings to the topic of study” (Galleta, 2013, 2).

The researcher decided to split the interview into two parts (both of which can be seen in Appendices 1 and 2.

The first section would relate specifically to the participants personal experience within the industry and seek to identify any personal barriers that they had come across within their career. The structure of this section was therefore very dependent on the participant’s answers.

The second section was a questionnaire that the researcher had adapted from White’s (2011) interview questions for women in elite culinary kitchens. The purpose of this questionnaire was to gauge current perceptions on the topic at hand and was structured using Osgood’s (1952) semantic differential scale whereby pairs of opposing adjectives were used on a continuum scale and the respondent was asked to mark where on the continuum their opinion lay in response to the given question (Salkind, 2006). An example given by Osgood et al. (1957) is shown here in Figure 2 with the opposing adjectives being used to describe the item ‘lady’:
Osgood et al. (1957, 81) goes on to explain that these pairs of adjectives each represent three underlying meanings being: evaluation, potency and activity. The questionnaire therefore attempted to establish current attitudes relating to:

1. How good/bad the respondent deemed the situation of the question to be.
2. The strength of the situation in discussion.
3. If the particular situation was changing.

Consequently this method presented the opportunity for discussion and debate and allowed the researcher to probe behind the rationale of their choices. The responses for these interviews therefore formed the topics for the focus group and can be seen depicted in the following flowchart.
3.3.4 Developing the Focus Group

Denzin & Lincoln (2017) note that often focus groups can start without even knowing what the right questions are, yet through the social interaction of the group they will reveal what needs to be known. Therefore, the researcher will present the group with quotes and themes from the interviews and allow the group to express their own opinions relating to the given prompts. The formation of these topics is shown above in Figure 3 and depicts the ‘questionnaire’ and ‘key themes’ as being the starting points for the group discussion. The questionnaire is however broken down more as the researcher chose to pull a selection of relevant quotations relating to each question on the questionnaire. The students would then discuss whether they agreed or disagreed with the quotations, whilst also offering their own insight into the questions. Key themes that the researcher had identified across all the interviews were also presented for discussion.

Wilkinson (1999, 67) supports the use of focus groups for feminist research and highlights that they are “contextual” and “non-hierarchal” meaning that the power of the researcher is removed due to the group situation and so participants are free to debate the topic how they wish without influence from the researchers questions. Therefore for feminist research this means that focus groups offer the perfect opportunity to grasp current attitudes without the participants being directed by the researcher.

A copy of the focus group discussion points can be seen in Appendix 3.

3.3.5 Ethical Issues and Limitations

Any study that collects primary research has to deal with certain complications and limitations with regard to ethics, reliability and validity (Hammersley & Traiano, 2012). “Ethics refers to the morality of human conduct” (Singh, 2017, 47) and so when regarding ethics and ethical procedure relating to research it is simply concerned with what is ‘good’ and ‘right’ and identifying anything that could be ‘bad’ or ‘wrong’ (Hammersley & Traiano, 2012,16). The researcher therefore had to conduct obligatory procedures in order to comply with the ethical code and so ensured that all participants were aware of their rights before the interviews began and also asked permission before any recording.
equipment was turned on. Furthermore issues relating to confidentiality were addressed with the participants and it was agreed that all names would be anonymised throughout. In addition, should the participants realise they had any concerns post interview, the researcher ensured that they were given the researcher’s full contact details so that any queries could be addressed. Due to the personal nature of the research question it was quite possible that the researcher would ask participants potentially sensitive questions relating to their personal lives. Prior to the research taking place the researcher would let participants know they have the right to withdraw at any moment, and would inform them in detail of what the interviews/focus group would entail.

3.3.6 Reliability and Validity
When reviewing the validity of a study Newman & Benz (1998, 29) note that “validity has traditionally meant an estimate of the extent to which the data measures what is intended to be measured”. Due to the qualitative nature of the study, this makes the validity of the research slightly harder to review as the research question and the data is not necessarily ‘measureable’ by strictly objective means. However, the researcher argues that the identification of concurring themes between participants highlights definitive confirmability which therefore increases the validity of the study and further supports the use of semi-structured interviews and a focus group, as being the appropriate tool for research. Furthermore, the participants are all credible individuals with a wealth of experience within their fields which will therefore equate to honest and therefore valid accounts.

Leung (2015, 324-327) highlights that reliability within qualitative research is often challenging but ‘lies with consistency’. The researcher therefore identifies this as a limitation of the study due to the fact that the given time-scale for the project, only allowed for the researcher to conduct four interviews. It is therefore important to note, that had the researcher had more time these interviews would have been repeated in different venues so as to offer further insight into the research question and make the results more reliable.

A further limitation that the researcher has considered is that the participants may have felt unable to say certain things with fear of incriminating the company
they currently work for. Therefore had the researcher had more time, they would have looked to also interview females who had been hotel managers in the past but had left the industry with the assumption that their accounts would be less constrained.

### 3.4 The Data Collection Process

All four of the interviews and the focus group were recorded by the researcher after asking permission from each of the participants. Rogelberg (2002, 167) highlights how it can be very advantageous to record interviews as it allows the interviewer to focus “exclusively on the flow and content of discussion”. In order to make the interviews more relaxed and natural, the researcher chose to rely purely on these recordings for future reference, rather than make notes during the interviews. The researcher notes that relying on recordings can come with problems such as technical issues but chose to take this risk so as to get the most they could out of the interviews without being distracted.

After the interviews had been conducted the researcher began the extremely “arduous and time-consuming” task of transcribing the recordings (Magnusson & Marecek, 2015, 73). The transcriptions of which can be found in Appendix 4. The researcher then analysed the data, picking out key themes that emerged from the interviews with the managers. As previously mentioned, these were then used to form topics for the focus group, as well as selected direct quotations from answers given to the questionnaire. Once the researcher had completed the transcription of the interviews and pulled the key information, the focus group was able to be conducted and in the same way, was recorded and transcribed. The researcher found this significantly more challenging due to the fact that “group discussions are invariably more difficult to transcribe than one-to-one interviews” (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999, 15) and it was often hard to identify who was talking- particularly when more than one participant was talking at a time.

### 3.5 Summary

Throughout this chapter the author has provided justification for their chosen research method and has clearly supported their decision to use semi-structured interviews and a focus group as the tools for primary data collection.
The chapter has also reviewed any issues that the researcher came across relating to ethics, reliability and validity and has appropriately offered suggestions as to how some of these issues can be addressed. In addition, the author has detailed the development of both the interviews and focus group, and accurately described the process of data collection that formed the raw primary data. The researcher is now able to analyse and compare the data from this research- the results of which will be discussed throughout the following chapter.
4.0 Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

Throughout this chapter the results from the four semi-structured interviews will be analysed, followed by the results of the focus group. Due to the qualitative nature of both research methods, the author has chosen to combine the results with the discussion and will look to make connections with some of the theoretical aspects that were discussed within the literature review. This will consequently enable the author to develop a relationship between previous and their own research and will therefore formulate the researchers own contribution to the field of study.

The interviews shall be analysed first – grouped together underneath the five questionnaire questions. The researcher will then analyse the results from the focus group using a similar format so as to create consistency and ease of comparison.

Once the results from both methods have been analysed, the researcher will then evaluate the appropriateness of White’s (2011) ‘Power Mechanism’s’ model - focussing particularly on the ‘personal’ element to establish the force that this has on pushing women towards ‘detachment’. Then, the researcher will create and discuss their own model that illustrates the identified personal forces and is more applicable to hotel management and represents the current force that personal issues have on a woman’s career progression.

Thus the following chapter will be structured as followed: 4.1 Introduction, 4.2 Interviews, 4.2.1 Perceptions of the Hotel Industry, 4.2.1.1-4.2.1.5 Questions 1-5 , 4.3 Focus Group, 4.3.1 Perceptions of Hotel Industry and Attitudes Towards Management Responses, 4.3.1.1-4.3.1.5 Question 1-5, 4.4 Evaluating White’s Model, 4.5 Constructing a new model, 4.6 Summary.

4.2 Interviews

A summary of each of the respondents’ personal circumstances and experiences can be seen in Appendix 5 and will be made reference to in order to support discussion.
4.2.1 Perceptions of the Hotel Industry

All of the interviewees were presented with a five question questionnaire that was used to gauge the current attitudes of female managers within the hotel industry and their perceptions of personal barriers. The researcher asked the respondents to rate where on the semantic scale their opinion of the question lay and to then explain and discuss each question. The author has therefore decided to analyse the results of these questions individually so as to compare and contrast the responses and highlight key themes.

The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 2 and can be referred to for further clarification of the questions that are to be discussed below.

4.2.1.1 Question 1: How should aspiring women hotel managers regard unsocial hours working in the hotel industry?

All four of the respondents agreed that unsociable hours should be regarded as acceptable. One interviewee remarked that:

*I think it must be acceptable. In this case it doesn’t matter if you are a man or a woman. You have to.*

(F3)

This seemed to form the general consensus for all interviewees, with all of them remarking on the nature of the hospitality industry demanding employees to work long hours.

*The hospitality business is 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, and if the business dictates that you have to be here in unsociable hours then you have to be here, particularly in a managerial position, you have to be seen to be managing your team and also being here for the customers as well.*

(F1)

This attitude that all of the managers interviewed seemed to possess therefore echoed what many previous authors had already identified to be the working conditions of the industry, with authors highlighting that the long, unsocial hours, heavy workloads, and labour shortages (Wood, 1997; Kusluv, 2003) are “unhealthily accepted” (Radzi et al., 2014, 280) as being a part of the job role and this does not matter if you are male or female.
When asked to comment on whether these unsociable hours were negotiable or non-negotiable, 3/4 of the respondents said they were non-negotiable.

Now if you have a female restaurant manager who is not prepared to do after 7 O clock, she’s not going to get the job, and I wouldn’t want a restaurant manager in there that’s not going to look after my peak times or Saturday lunches.

(F4)

F4’s perception of the non-negotiable hours therefore justifies Brownwell & Walsh’s (2008) research, whom suggest that the hours demanded for managers in the hotel industry make it difficult for women who are responsible for a family. The fact these are seemingly perceived to be non-negotiable by many indicate that the hotel industry could prove to isolate women from the roles that require them to work unsociable hours.

One respondent also commented on the non-negotiable hours stating:

You always fight to be on the same level as a man.

(F3)

This therefore indicates towards a patriarchal structure within the industry, where women can be made to feel and seen as inferior to their male counterparts if they were to try and negotiate their hours of work. This perception supports the radical feminist arguments (Walby, 1990; Thompson, 2001) and hints at underlying patriarchal forces that can push women to behave in a certain way in order to be successful (White, 2011; Meyerson & Fletcher, 2000).

However, one respondent believed that the unsociable hours were negotiable, relating it to her own experience:

I’ve chosen unsociable hours for me, to be able to push myself to where I want to be, and my next step was never just General Manager, I was already working on to the next one, so I chose unsociable hours. “Kirsty” will make it work with sociable hours, she will find ways and means that she can be the best General Manager she can in sociable hours,

(F2)
Here, F2 implies that women are able to choose what is best for them and make it work according to their personal circumstances. This therefore disagrees with previous research that has deemed hotels to be an extremely unforgiving industry when it comes to hours of work (Brownwell & Walsh, 2008; Higgins et al, 2000). However, the implication that she personally chose to work unsociable hours in order “push” herself towards her next step could indicate that unsociable hours are in fact needed if you aim to progress within the industry.

When asked if the unsociable hours were feminine or masculine, 2/4 of the respondents answered “neither” and one placed their opinion directly in the middle between both. These answers indicate inclusive attitudes that seemingly disagree with the theory of patriarchy (Walby, 1990; White, 2011) as the women do not believe the unsociable hours to favour either gender. This however aligns with their acceptance of the unsociable hours as they perceive the nature of the work to demand long hours which is not dependent on gender.

The respondents were then asked whether they believed the unsociable hours were changing or unchanging within the industry. Half of the interviewees believed that the hours were unchanging, whereas the other half believed the hours were changeable. This divide in opinion could be dependent on the interviewees own personal experience- for example: F3 has had a supportive reaction from her employer about her reducing her hours when she wants to start a family (please see Appendix 5 for more detail). However, the 50/50 split also suggests that there is movement in regard to the unsociable hours and that perhaps the position on the continuum scale is currently in the middle. This consequently suggests that attitudes towards negotiating hours are beginning to change and will currently be dependent on individual hotels, management and the individual.
4.2.1.2 Question 2: Wood 2015 states that only 12% of UK directorships are held by women, dropping to 6% in the hospitality sector, with regard to this sector, how do you view this statistic?

When asked to comment if they thought this statistic was representative, 3/4 of the interviewees felt that it was although believed that the statistic was changing to support women more, commenting that:

*Women are now being recognised by the business.*

(F1)

However, they also noted that women who had dual responsibilities at home are rarely seen to be hotel directors with one interviewee commenting:

*It’s like with any directorship, as soon as you have children then you have to cut back on that and then you just adapt. What’s going wrong? Where are they (women) dropping out? Maybe they’re dropping out when they have children and don’t come back? Maybe that’s what the industry needs to look at?*

(F4)

This suggests that although women are beginning to hold more of these positions, women with children are still perceived to be “dropping out” from the responsibility. This aligns with statements from authors such as Higgins et al (2000) and Brownwell & Walsh (1994) whom have suggested that women often sacrifice aspects of their life for either work or family, or they take themselves away from jobs with greater responsibility. This respondent has therefore suggested that the industry needs to address this situation, implying that women are being deterred away from these positions because of personal barriers and not enough support for their circumstances from the industry.

One interviewee completely disagreed with the statistic and stated:

*Unrepresentative, because gender is absolutely not a factor…. your position is not driven by your gender, at all, whatsoever…. if you want it, you can get it. If I can get it at my age, then anybody can get it.*

(F2)

It is important to note that F2 actually is a company director herself and so speaks from direct personal experience. She therefore believes that gender does not create obstacles for women and suggests through this comment that
it is personal motivation and attitude that gets you to where you want to be, which is not dependent on your gender. Therefore, individual motivation and values could also be identified as forces that can push you in opposing ways, suggesting that it is not only extrinsic forces pushing women towards detachment, but their own attitudes. However, when referring to Appendix 5 it is also highlighted that F2 does not have children and so this will affect her perception of personal barriers.

4.2.1.3 Question 3: A degree of job stereotyping may effect women’s aspirations to be hotel managers; are women’s aspirations....

When asked to comment on women’s aspirations and whether or not they were fulfilled or unfulfilled, 3/4 of the respondents felt as though the question was “impossible to answer” (F4). All three of the respondents that felt this way went on to comment that fulfilling aspirations is:

"Very dependent on the individual and how they were raised." (F3)

This therefore implies that aspirations are not dependent on external forces but on intrinsic motivators and values. However, referring to how someone is raised as being a factor in fulfilling aspirations also suggests that there are external forces acting on women that are deep rooted within society and installed within them during their upbringing. This would therefore support White’s (2011) identified ‘antecedent’ force that suggests past societal structures and traditions (Crompton, 1999) still influence society today.

F3 continued her statement with:

"I think that women are free to do whatever they want to do, they just need to know what they want themselves. Whether that be a career or a family." (F3)

This comment therefore suggests that there is a definitive choice for women between having a career and having a family which supports Liff & Ward (2001) who indicate that women have a pre-conception that they must make that choice. The respondent states that she thinks “women are free to do whatever they want” but obviously believes that you cannot have both a career and a family. It is therefore debatable as to whether women’s aspirations are truly
“free” – despite there seemingly being the opportunities available for them. This echoes Saul (2003) whom indicated that the best-paid jobs often have requirements that make it difficult for primary care-givers and also in turn supports White’s (2011) concept of the “mirage” for inclusion.

F1 commented on the concept of job-stereotyping according to gender and stated:

*There are positions that you can be a little bit more flexible with and there can be more office hours, and I think that women are generally pushed that way but I also tend to think that they gravitate towards those positions as well, naturally, because they know that the hours are more sociable.*

(F1)

This therefore further supports White’s (2011) model and the concept of horizontal segregation (Schein, 1973; Wood, 2015) that channels women into certain roles. Here, F1 refers to there being both extrinsic and intrinsic forces involved with this – further suggesting that there is still a ‘patriarchal’ force embedded within society (White 2011; Walby 1990).

**4.2.1.4 Question 4: Children and marital status have been referred to as personal barriers that can hold back a woman’s career advancement. When referring to hotel management, is this....**

3/4 of the respondents felt like this was typical within the industry with F1 commenting that:

*It goes back again to the unsociable hours, as employers need to broaden their horizons...We are allowing far too many women with children to walk away from this business to work elsewhere.*

(F1)

This therefore depicts the industry for being responsible for creating these barriers to women’s career progression and highlights that change is necessary. When asked to comment on whether that change had begun F1 stated:

*I have seen it change within my career, because they know that women can multi task, and they can have a career at the same time as other commitments. I think that the more women who are in managerial positions that shout about*
what they're doing and if they step up to these positions and talk about these experiences or have interviews in magazines and put themselves out there, the more the attitude would change.

(F1)

Consequently it is depicted that the attitudes are changing and so for aspiring women going into the industry, children may not represent barriers to their progression as much as literature has identified them to in the past (Saul 2003; Brownwell & Walsh, 2008).

F3 believed that children don’t always have to be barriers and suggested that having good support at home would enable women to still pursue their careers and have a family, stating:

*It depends on the role that you are in and how much support you have at home. Maybe then it won't affect the job as much.*

(F3)

F4 added that:

*I just think that younger women are more empowered, and put off having a child till later anyway, so there’s more thought about what they’re doing, and their career path.*

(F4)

This therefore suggests that the new generation of aspiring female hotel managers will have different attitudes to current female managers and so these personal barriers would be seen to be less of a threat. Therefore the concept of the patriarchal force acting against women is potentially weakening for the next generation as attitudes start to change (White 2011). However, it is suggested that if a woman does not have support at home, then children are more likely to still pose as barriers and so the individual’s support/non-support at home can also present to be a barrier in itself.
One respondent completely disagreed that children have ever posed as a personal barrier stating that:

*Let's put it this way, if we're talking about females with children we might as well talk about men with cycling hobbies...or golfing...every single person regardless of their gender have got responsibilities.*

(F2)

The researcher found this to be quite a shocking comparison due to the obvious difference in level of responsibility. It is therefore important to remember that F2 does not have or want children herself and so her own personal circumstances have naturally formed this attitude and disregard for the commitment involved with having a family. It is therefore interesting to compare her views with the respondents that do have or want children as it proves how different backgrounds, personalities and circumstances can change and influence perspectives.

For the two respondents that did have children (F1; F4), both emphasised that it had been important for them to establish their career prior to starting a family:

*Before I had children I really wanted to make sure that I'd advance my career enough, because I knew that once I'd had children I wanted to go back to work at the same level.*

(F1)

Both believed this to be pivotal to their success as it enabled them to establish a reputation within the industry and create connections to enable a smooth transition back after maternity. (Please see Appendix 5 for personal summaries). Their current positions (particularly F1 who is General Manager) and their personal experience suggest that children do not have to pose as barriers to a woman’s success, however the fact they advise women to establish their careers first indicates that pre-existing relationships with employers is necessary and so aspiring women could be held back by their own work ethic if they are not pushing themselves to develop these professional relationships.
4.2.1.5 Question 5: How do hotels make significant attempts to accommodate female managers?

When commenting on the attempts made by hotels to accommodate female managers, F1 stated that:

> Attitudes are changing, they haven’t changed enough yet, and an employer who is looking for a manager, particularly in an operational position are in my opinion looking for a male first. They’re likely to interview women as well, but my guess is that they would normally choose a male one.

(F1)

This suggests that when it comes to the operational side of hotel management, there could still be an element of ‘male bias’ that influences an employer to select male candidates (White, 2011).

However, the other three respondents contradict this view with F2 highlighting how she would make an effort to accommodate a female manager’s needs, stating that:

> For me it’s about the skill of the person bring to the establishment, so if she is more skilful than him and she can achieve more in those five week days than what he would be able to achieve within the mixture of the week and weekend days, I would go for her.

(F2)

F4 further supports this commenting:

> In the hotel industry everybody just judges you on whether you can do the job or not and not what gender you are, and that’s why women quite naturally drop out of being in the front line with long hours, only because it’s their choice, and not because they’re pushed out.

(F4)

Both these statements therefore suggest that the industry judges their employees based on skill and performance, with F2 suggesting that she would make allowances for a skilful woman who couldn’t work certain hours. This once again highlights how an individual’s work ethic is pivotal to their success. F4 does however note that women drop out of the “front line” positions because of the long hours and although she recognises this as being “their choice”; to the researcher this suggests that attempts to accommodate female managers are
not typical of all hotels and managers. F4’s statement also supports Wood (2015) and Schein (1973) and the idea of horizontal segregation as she provides the “long hours” as reason for women leaving “front line” positions and channelling towards ones that are considered more “family friendly”.

4.3 Focus Group

4.3.1 Perceptions of the Hotel Industry and Attitudes towards Manager Responses

The same questionnaire was presented to the focus group along with selected quotes taken from the interviews. The researcher asked the respondents to briefly discuss the questions amongst themselves and to review the responses that the managers had given. Once again, the author will discuss and compare the responses underneath the headings of the questions and will look to make comparisons between the focus group response and the interviews.

The focus group transcript along with the questionnaire and the management responses can be seen in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 and may provide further clarification for the below analysis.

4.3.1.1 Question 1: How should aspiring women hotel managers regard unsocial hours working in the hotel industry?

All six of the respondents remarked that the unsociable hours within the industry have to be regarded as acceptable, with S4 commenting that:

\[
I \text{ don't think that really matters if you're a man or a woman you kind of know what you're signing up for when you take the job.}
\]

(S4)

This correlates with the responses from the managers and so indicates that those aspiring to enter the industry are already aware of the demands of the role.

Whether or not these hours were negotiable or not sparked much debate. Some of the respondents felt as though this would be dependent upon the hotel and the individual, whereas others felt as though it was not an option.
I think that managers that have loads of time off or don’t work weekends or whatever are also less respected by their employees.

(S3)

This comment therefore suggests that if managers do negotiate their hours the industry can view this as a weakness in that individual (Williamson, 2008; Mooney & Ryan, 2009) with S1 commenting that:

It’s not really family friendly is it… I’d much rather work for sales or HR or something that has regular hours…specially when I want to start raising a family.

(S1)

This therefore demonstrates a pre-existing pull towards other roles, despite not even working within the industry yet and consequently supports Wood (2015) and White (2011) by suggesting that there are already hidden forces that push women in a certain way and the fact that S1 is already being deterred from the operational side of hotel management indicates that these forces are embedded within society and education.

F3’s response that “women fight to be on the same level as a man” sparked much controversy within the group. S4 remarked that:

I’m not sure I agree with the fight to be on the same level as a man… cause I think people of both genders fight to get noticed in hotels… its just the industry?

(S4)

Others in the group argued that there is more pressure on women with S6 arguing:

I think there is more pressure on women to act a certain way…it’s a male dominated industry.

(S6)

This conflict divided the group 50/50, with conflicting attitudes as to whether women did have to work harder/act a certain way to be on the same level as men. However, the overall consensus was that the industry as a whole is a battle and that all managers fight to get noticed in some way- often through working long, unsociable hours.
4.3.1.2 Question 2: Wood 2015 states that only 12% of UK directorships are held by women, dropping to 6% in the hospitality sector, with regard to this sector, how do you view this statistic?

The group mostly felt like this figure was representative with S2 stating:

I think female directors are few and far between….I remember sitting in a lecture once with a lecturer saying that if you’re female and want to be a CEO and have a family to forget it… and to be honest I remember agreeing with him. I think if women are directors, they’re definitely a certain type of woman.

(S2)

S4 added:

Yeah they’re obviously extremely career focused and I mean this is probably stereo-typing a bit… but I bet they don’t have families. And that probs doesn’t bother them.. cause that’s just who they are.

(S4)

These comments therefore demonstrate the belief that women are either career driven or family driven, and that only women who do not want children reach the senior positions (Maxwell, 1997; Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Liff & Ward, 2001). Therefore Saul (2003) and Brownwell & Walsh (2008) are supported when they suggest that children pose as a barrier to women’s career progression. The researcher also finds this assumption particularly interesting considering the manager interviewed who was a director (F2), doesn’t have, nor want children. However, the fact the students made this assumption demonstrates how they are looking at women who are successful and already in the industry and make judgements on their lives (Maxwell, 1997). This therefore indicates towards a lack of role models in the industry with the desirable dual lifestyle, which in turn installs fear that the industry will demand them to make sacrifices and so consequently causes them to shy away from the most senior positions. Furthermore, the fact a lecturer has told them that they will be unable to become a director and have a family, highlights that White’s (2011) identified ‘educative’ and ‘CIAG’ forces, can shape ones attitude so that their attitude can actually present to be a barrier itself.
S3 contested the statistic, arguing that:

There is definitely more help out there now for women with families.

(S3)

This implies that the industry and attitudes are becoming more in support of women and suggests that the new generation of aspiring hotel managers may not find personal barriers to pose as much of a threat as the previous female hotel managers. The statement also correlates with opinions of F3 and F4, who both felt as though young women going into the industry will be more supported. However the researcher notes that even with support being in place, if women’s attitudes are still shaped to believe that they cannot have both a career and a family, this will continue to pose as a personal barrier that prevents their progression.

4.3.1.3 Question 3: A degree of job stereotyping may effect women’s aspirations to be hotel managers; are women’s aspirations...

All of the group agreed that whether a woman’s aspirations are fulfilled or not depends on that individual woman, with one respondent believing that women stereotype themselves into certain roles, stating:

I agree with F1 to be honest.. it all has to do with the mind-set.

(S1)

For the researcher this prompted questions into what therefore influences the “mind-set” and reflects research in occupation sex-typing (Schein, 1973; Meyerson & Fletcher, 2000; Wood, 2015) that suggests certain roles within our society are type cast as being more suited to certain genders – therefore acting as a barrier to women’s career progression even before they are properly pursuing their careers. This in turn, supports arguments for “the glass ceiling” effect that suggest there are factors that impede women from reaching the highest positions since gender-stereotyping and attitudes are diverting women horizontally (Cave & Kilic, 2010; Maxwell, 1997 ; Kirby, 2000).

When the group were prompted to explain why they thought this mind-set existed the following comments were made:
People are different aren’t they…I mean I’ve been raised with my mums values and always seen the woman as someone who raises the family.. so quite traditional. A family is all I want I really.. so then my aspirations would be fulfilled.

(S1)

I think it’s just how they were raised like S1 was saying.. it comes down to your beliefs and your work ethics.

(S5)

These views therefore align with those of F3 and suggest that fulfilment of aspirations are dependent on individual personality, values and ambition however antecedent forces also encompass a part of this (White, 2011).

4.3.1.4 Question 4: Children and marital status have been referred to as personal barriers that can hold back a woman’s career advancement. When referring to hotel management, how is this regarded?

This question instigated much debate amongst the students. Those that identified as definitely wanting children felt as though:

You can’t put your 100% into both.

(S3)

One student even commented that she didn’t want to go into the industry anymore because she wanted a family, stating:

I mean I personally don’t even want to go into the hospitality industry anymore because I want a family and the work just doesn’t support women with families. I don’t think I’d even get time for my husband… let alone children!

(S4)

These comments echoed writers that have previously described the industry as having a poor work/life balance that makes it hard for women with dual responsibilities(Saul, 2003; Brownwell & Walsh, 2008) something that has been attributed to the long, unsociable hours and the 24/7 nature of the industry (Wood, 1997). It would therefore appear that the industry does scare women who want families and the fact that this is already worrying them before they work in the industry supports the concept that there are patriarchal forces pushing women towards detachment early on in their professional lives (White, 2011). This statement therefore highlights how fear, attitudes and a desire for work/life balance can all deter women away from the industry.
Some of the students agreed with F3 and felt as though with a strong support system at home, women are able to make having a family and a successful career work. They also mentioned that support from their employers was vital, stating:

To be honest I think it comes down to your individual manager, if you've got a manager that supports you whilst you raise a family… then yeah… you can do it.

(S5)

This therefore mirrors the advice given by F1 and F4, and the students have recognised that establishing a positive relationship with employers can aid an individual’s ability to balance their work and family life.

All of the students found the response from F2 that compares the responsibility of looking after a child to playing golf, extremely amusing; with S2 immediately commenting:

That woman obviously hasn't got children.

(S2)

They also attributed her success as a company director to this fact- once more implying that when children are removed from the equation, success is perceived to be easier (Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Maxwell, 1997).

4.3.1.5 Question 5: How do hotels make significant attempts to accommodate female managers?

All of the students agreed that the attempts hotels made to accommodate female managers could depend on the type of hotel.

Its going to depend on the type of hotel. If its big or small… corporate or leisure.

(S6)

They hypothesised that in larger, more corporate hotels, attempts would be rarer than in smaller, leisure establishments as corporate hotels tend to have a higher staff turnover and so it would be harder to establish relationships with managers.

All students acknowledged that hotels are changing to accommodate female managers more and suggested that this will only continue to improve with the
coming generation of managers. This therefore challenges White’s (2011) model as it suggests the industry to be pushing more towards the inclusion of women. However, despite their acknowledgement of this, three of the students still admitted to not perceiving the industry to be ‘family friendly’ and expressed a wish to either not enter the industry completely, or pursue a career within sales instead. Therefore, despite hotels making these attempts for women with children (e.g., part-time work), the industry is still continuing to be perceived as one that isn’t suitable for women who want families. Therefore, although the industry is pushing towards ‘inclusion’ of women, there are forces within society that are not (Walby, 1990).

4.4 Evaluating White’s (2011) Model

Figure 4:

After analysis it is clear that White’s model is supported as the results suggest that there is an underlying patriarchal force embedded within society. This force therefore influences women’s attitudes and career decisions and pushes women towards detachment. The results have demonstrated that White’s identified antecedent, educative and CIAG forces all in turn influence individual attitudes, fears and stereotype and therefore effectively create personal barriers for aspiring female hotel managers. This can be seen depicted below in Figure 5 along with the other personal forces that the results identified.
However, the results did suggest that the extent to which the forces are pushing towards detachment is changing to become more supportive of women. Therefore the new generation of female managers should face less barriers when it comes to career progression and consequently the amount of senior female hotel managers should be on the rise.

4.5 Constructing a New Model

The researcher has developed a new model that illustrates the determined power field surrounding the identified personal barriers. This is therefore applicable to current and aspiring female hotel managers.
4.6 Summary

Throughout this chapter the results from the interviews and focus group have been analysed with reference made to relevant academia. Many of the results support arguments that were identified within previous academic literature and have also provided a new perspective into current personal issues that can pose as barriers to a women’s progression in the hotel industry. The researcher has included much of the respondents own personal words as the rich, raw data was the focal point of the qualitative research. Throughout the analysis, the researcher tested White’s (2011) model against the results and developed a new model that illustrated the identified personal forces and was more applicable to current and aspiring female hotel managers. The researcher will now summarise the key findings from the research in the following chapter.
5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will re-examine the original objectives that were outlined in Chapter 1 and will assess the research projects ability to fulfil them; discussing each objective individually. Following this, any limitations that the researcher encountered during the period of research will also be acknowledged, with reference made to the effect this had on the results. Finally, the outcomes of the research will be summarised into key themes, commenting on the overall contribution that this research makes to the field of study. From this, the author will then be able to make recommendations for future research.

Thus the following chapter shall be structured as followed: 5.1 Introduction, 5.2 Revisiting Objectives, 5.3 Limitations of Study, 5.4 Summary of Key Findings, 5.5 Recommendations for Future Research and 5.6 Summary.

5.2 Revisiting Objectives

Table 1: Objectives Set

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aim:</th>
<th>To explore personal issues current and aspiring female managers can encounter in the hotel industry and their effect on a woman's career progression.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1:</td>
<td>To review literature on feminism and establish whether a radical, liberal, or standpoint view is to be taken. Then, to critically review feminist literature relating specifically to hospitality in order to support/refute that personal issues pose as barriers to women in the hotel industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2:</td>
<td>To identify current personal issues female hotel managers can face and to establish the extent to which they are perceived to be a threat, by conducting 4 semi-structured interviews with female hotel managers and analysing their personal experiences and attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3:</td>
<td>To compare female hospitality students’ perceptions of the hotel industry with that of the female managers through the use of a focus group. Then, from the results of both studies establish the current extent that personal issues pose as a barrier to women in and aspiring to be in hotel management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 4:</td>
<td>To test and evaluate the value of White’s (2011) ‘Power mechanisms’ model against the results collected and if appropriate, to use it in order to create a new model that is more applicable to the research from this study.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**Objective 5:** To establish conclusions on the extent to which personal barriers pose as a threat to career progression and to make recommendations for future research based upon the findings.

1. Objective 1 was achieved through the critical evaluation of relevant academic literature. The researcher reviewed feminist perspectives and established that the radical approach was the most appropriate for the study. Critical analysis was also carried out on White’s (2011) ‘Power Mechanism’ model, as well as careful review of academia that related to the current position of female managers within the hotel industry and personal issues that have already been identified in previous literature—therefore supporting the need for research.

2. Objective 2 was achieved through the execution of the 4 semi-structured interviews and the analysis of the raw primary data collected. The results from these interviews were structured according to the questionnaire they were given and the researcher was able to distinguish the extent to which their attitudes agreed or disagreed with previous academia that related to personal issues posing as barriers.

3. This objective was achieved by using the questionnaire and key themes from the interviews to form topics for the focus group of students. The students therefore discussed their own attitudes in relation to the managers interviewed and the researcher was able to compare the results from both to note whether attitudes towards personal issues posing as barriers was changing for aspiring female hotel managers.

4. Objective 4 was achieved by critically reviewing White’s model throughout discussion of the results. The researcher was able to make
comparisons with the raw primary data collected and different elements of the model that established the current extent personal issues posed as barriers. From this, the researcher was then able to develop a new model that was more applicable to current and aspiring female managers and illustrated the power field surrounding personal issues that they can face.

5. This objective was met through the illustration of the identified personal forces and the provision of the new model that illustrated the results from the study. Recommendations for how this research can now be used for further research in its field will be included at the end of this section as a form of conclusion.

5.3 Limitations of Study

It is important at this point to acknowledge the limitations of the study that the researcher encountered and to deliberate on how these may have shaped the results:

- The given time-scale meant that the researcher was limited to how many interviews they could conduct. If the study had been conducted on a larger scale the researcher would have interviewed female managers from varied roles, varying locations and from hotels of different sizes in order to offer a variety of perspectives and improve the reliability of the study.

- The researcher originally started with the intent to interview both female and male participants in order to offer a comparison of both genders and the extent to which personal issues pose as a threat to both. However, it was soon realised that this was too much to evaluate with the given resources and so the researcher chose to focus the study on just females. The researcher recognises the study could be challenged as bias, as there is complete disregard for the fact that
these issues could also pose as a threat to males in the industry as well.

- The research is completely focussed on female managers within the hotel industry and there is no examination or comparison with how their perspectives perhaps differ from females who work in entry level roles.

- The researcher only interviewed female managers who were still currently working within the industry. However, the researcher notes that had there been more time, further interviews could have been conducted with female managers who had previously been in the industry but decided to leave.

5.5 Summary of Key Findings

In spite of the limitations identified above, the researcher believes the study offers a solid contribution to current academic literature within its field. The researcher has summarised this contribution into key findings:

- Research suggests that there are patriarchal forces embedded within our society that stem from our history, education and upbringing. These forces therefore shape individual attitudes and values which can in turn result in personal barriers being created that can hinder a woman’s progression within the hotel industry.

- The research from the study identified the personal issues to be as followed: attitudes, fear of the industry demands, self- stereotyping, work ethic, work/life balance, support/non-support at home and children and family responsibilities. The comparison between the management attitudes and student attitudes towards these personal issues, showed the power field surrounding these forces to be slowly changing to favour the inclusion of female managers – the new generation of aspiring female managers likely to experience less
personal barriers and more inclusive attitudes. It was suggested that this would keep improving as more and more women with children start to break “the glass ceiling” and act as role models for those beginning their careers who also want a career and family.

- The extent to which the personal barriers effect a woman is very dependent on that woman’s own individual personality and aspirations. For example, women who don’t want children are perceived to have an easier climb to the top than those who do and so that woman who does not have children and has reached the top may argue that personal issues do not represent barriers.

- The hotel industry is one that naturally demands all managers to work long, unsociable hours and research suggested that all managers should regard this as acceptable whether they are male or female. The research however suggest that hotels could be making more attempts in the form of part-time roles or lenience with hours in order to accommodate the needs of female managers who perhaps have dual responsibilities at work and home.

- Research advised aspiring female hotel managers to establish their career before having children as this will enable them to build up a reputation within the industry which will increase their chances of a manager being understanding about their personal circumstances and making accommodations for them.
5.5. Recommendations for Future Research

When reviewing both the limitations of the study and the contribution the study made to research, the researcher is able to propose a number of directions that the research could be expanded further:

- More interviews could be conducted with more female managers from a wider range of positions, locations and types of hotels. This would therefore allow for more in-depth raw data that could strengthen the research and enable future researchers to draw comparisons of perspectives based upon different variables.
  - Do perspectives of personal barriers change when comparing where the female managers are working – eg. the location of the hotel, the type of hotel?
  - How does the position of the manager effect that manager’s individual experience of personal barriers?

- The current research was focussed on the attitudes of current female hotel managers and hospitality students. However, future research could in addition to this, offer a comparison between those female managers who have chosen to leave the industry and also those who have just accepted graduate positions and are starting their management training. This would therefore enable future researchers to develop a timeline of perspectives and illustrate how the concept of ‘personal issues’ can change at different points in a woman’s career.

- Alternatively, future research could also interview male participants in a similar study that looked to assess whether the power field surrounding personal issues was the same for both genders. This would therefore eliminate any challenge of bias and enable researchers to more easily assess the situation.
To what extent do personal issues pose as a threat to a male’s career progression in hotel management?

Do male personal barriers differ from those identified in the female research?

Is there a significant difference in the extent to which they effect female managers and male managers?

How do male managers regard personal issues faced by female managers?

How do female managers regard personal issues faced by male managers?

Further study could be given into the personality types of female hotel managers. It was noted that those women who don’t want children have an easier road to the senior positions. If this is the case:

- Does the industry favour a certain personality type from women?
- If so, why?
- Are women with certain personality types more attracted to certain roles within the industry?
- Is there pressure on women in the industry to act a certain way?

This research project was primarily focussed on the ‘personal’ force that White (2011) identified in his model. However, future research could seek to test the entirety of the model against hotel management which will therefore better represent the extent to which the powers are pushing female hotel managers towards ‘detachment’ or ‘real opportunities for all’.
5.6 Summary

Through conclusion it is apparent that the research achieved the initial aim that was set by exploring the personal issues that current and aspiring female hotel managers face through the interviewing of female managers and hospitality students. The results of this study produced some interesting results that the author was able to delineate into key findings that represent the most fundamental aspects of the research. The author also acknowledged the limitations of the study and was able to use these, combined with the key findings, to form recommendations for areas of future research. For this reason, the author concludes that there are many aspects of the research that demand further study that incorporates the recommendations. An area that would be particularly interesting and has no current research, would be a comparative study on how personal issues effect female and male managers.
References


