

WOMEN IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Cvetanka Ristova¹; Tanja Angelkova Petkova²;

Abstract

In the 21st century, the hospitality industry has become an economic and social phenomenon, and therefore makes a significant and important contribution to employment. Hospitality is now being the second fastest growing economy sector after health care, with the highest job opening rate in the last few years. Within the hospitality industry, women represent nearly 70% of the workforce, however paradoxically there is a marked under-representation of women in senior positions, with women holding less than 40% of all managerial positions, less than 20% of general management roles and between 5-8% of board positions. This paper was conducted mainly with a view to identify and summarize the information about challenges and opportunities in women's employment in the hospitality industry. Narrative review was used where related articles, reports and studies were selected and later, compared and summarized.

Key Words: *hospitality, employment, challenges, opportunities, women*

JEL classification: *E24, J16, J21, L83, Z32*

Introduction

Hospitality constitutes the largest part of tourism industry and one of the world's fastest growing industries (Angelkova Petkova et al., 2016). The ability to help someone, meet their needs, or simply make them feel at home is an important component of every hotel policy. That means hospitality industry affects employment in order to fill the positions and form beneficial relationships with guests and tourists. Nowadays, women

¹ Cvetanka Ristova, MSc, PhD candidate, Teaching Assistant, Goce Delcev University of Stip, Faculty of tourism and business logistics, Macedonia, e-mail: cvetanka.ristova@ugd.edu.mk

² Tanja Angelkova Petkova, PhD, Assistant Professor, Goce Delcev University of Stip, Faculty of tourism and business logistics, Macedonia, e-mail: tanja.angelkova@ugd.edu.mk

represent a significant employment force of organizations and economies in most countries. While women are recognized as a critical business asset and a fundamental driver of corporate performance, winning the "job position" is seen as a significant challenge, particularly in the hospitality industry. Even though in the 21st century, hotels remain labor intensive, fragmented, and multi-faceted service organizations, there is no doubt that serious barriers remain and continue to stall women's career development. Women are still poorly represented in hospitality and this paper explores the pivotal role of hospitality in employment, especially in addressing retention and recruitment challenges and barriers of women in hospitality. Women's employment is analyzed first through overview of women's entry in the hospitality industry and current status, then identifying, providing insight in gender issues, pay gap in hospitality and the possibility of a women's career progression seen through the various challenges, that we hope later on will arise and address future recommendations for acknowledging the role of women as employee in hospitality.

Hospitality industry: An overview

The hospitality industry is part of the travel and tourism industry and it's a wide category of sectors. Hospitality is estimated at several billion dollars, which primarily depends on leisure time and available revenues (Ristova, 2015). Over the past few decades, the hospitality industry has experienced continued growth and diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Hospitality has become one of the major players in international commerce, and represents one of the main income sources for many developing countries and destinations. This growth has also resulted in greater diversification and competition among hotels. One of the benefits of this global spread of hospitality is that it produced employment benefits in the many sectors of hospitality such as: food industry, lodging, recreation and travel and tourism.

Hospitality industry, generator of employment

Hotel products and services are about people. The hospitality industry has contributed to the enormous growth of employment just by offering services for accommodation and food (Ristova & Angelkova, 2015). The hospitality industry is heavily dependent on the human factor to ensure delivery and quality of its products and services, since hospitality is all about friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests or

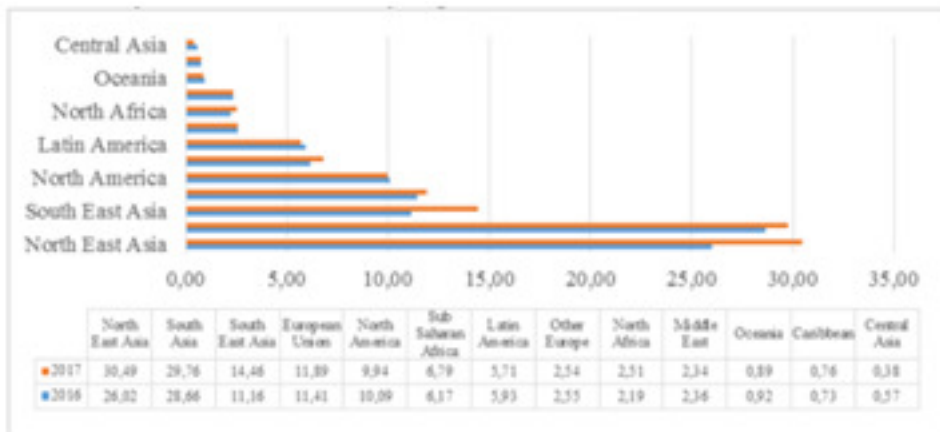
tourists. Furthermore, many hotel products include people as an integral part of the products and services that are offered, so they are clearly central for an effective operation and further development of the hospitality industry. Many jobs in the hospitality industry involve dealing with customers face-to-face in a variety of ways. But there are also behind-the-scenes jobs that include positions in sales, marketing, and accounting. Food services jobs also abound in hospitality industry, including wait staff and food preparation jobs. There are many management-level jobs across these areas as well, including hotel managers and executive chefs. Hence, hospitality is extremely labor intensive and a significant source of employment. It is among the world's top creators of jobs requiring varying degrees of skills and allows for quick entry into the workforce for every gender and age (Aynalem et al., 2016). According to Miceva & Ristova (2018) "jobs in hospitality are frequently the first paid work that many young people undertake" (p.8). Given this range, jobs in the hospitality industry can either involve a lot – or very little – customer interaction. Many jobs are entry level, but hospitality is an area where you can climb the ladder to a managerial role accompanied by more responsibilities, along with a higher salary.

In the world of hospitality, employers are not limited to just one lowly position. They are not limited to just working in hotels or restaurants. And they are not limited to working in one place. Hospitality industry still remains remarkably open and there are many General Managers who have started in entry level jobs. Others who make it to front office or who excel in bar or restaurant service are "poached" to work in finance or sales because of their social and hospitality skills. Hospitality is one of the world's most exciting and continuously evolving industries. By 2025, 10.5% of all jobs worldwide will be in hospitality and tourism and it is expected to contribute a gargantuan \$11.3 trillion to the world economy in GDP (Glion, Institute of Higher Education, 2017).

Looking at the growing impact of hospitality and the positive side effects it can have, it indeed seems unreasonable to not recognize the need for comprehensive statistics on employment in the hospitality industry. The authors want to emphasize the need for reliable statistical indicators on employment, occupations, income, compensation, hours of work of person employed and their conditions of work in the hospitality sector in order to measure various dimensions of hospitality labor market. As already mentioned, a limited number of statistics for the hospitality industry are available, even for the travel and tourism industry, so

therefore, the given data statistics from the portal Statista about the global employment in travel and tourism industry will be analyzed for 2016 and 2017 by regions. No data were available before, and data statistics for 2018 are still not available. From 2016 to 2017, 7 regions out of 13 have registered growth; North East Asia accounting for 14,6%, South Asia for 0,3%, South East Asia for 2,2%, European Union for 4%, Sub Saharan Africa for 9,1%, North Africa for 12,7% and Caribbean for 3,9%. The other 6 regions have registered a decline in employment: North America, accounting for -1,5%, Latin America for -3,8%, Other Europe for -0,3%, Middle East for -0,8%, Oceania for -3,3% and Central Asia for -50%.

Figure 1: *Direct contribution of travel and tourism to employment worldwide from 2016 to 2017, by region (in millions)*



Source: *Statista, 2018*

From the given data statistics, the authors discuss that travel and tourism industry is seeing exciting developments in technology and customer experience, leading to more diverse and specialized employment opportunities.

Meaning, new technologies threaten to render many careers redundant and tourism and even hospitality jobs are expected to survive the dangers of automation, hence the different growth of employment in different regions worldwide.

Nevertheless, World Travel & Tourism Council in their publication "Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2018 World" stated that "Travel & Tourism generated 118,454,000 jobs directly in 2017 (3.8% of total employment) and this is forecast to grow by 2.4% in 2018 to 121,356,000 (3.8% of total employment). This includes employment by hotels, travel

agents, airlines and other passenger transportation services (excluding commuter services). It also includes, for example, the activities of the restaurant and leisure industries directly supported by tourists. By 2028, Travel & Tourism will account for 150,139,000 jobs directly, an increase of 2.2% pa over the next ten years" (p.4). As for total contribution World Travel & Tourism Council stated that "The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment (including wider effects of investment, the supply chain and induced income was 313,221,000 jobs in 2017 (9.9% of total employment). This is forecast to rise by 3.0% in 2018 to 322,666,000 jobs (10.1% of total employment). By 2028, Travel & Tourism is forecast to support 413,556,000 jobs (11.6% of total employment), an increase of 2.5% pa over the period" (p.4). Although the lack of proper data statistics is noticed, hospitality industry, in general, is confirmed to be one of the world's fastest-growing divisions of the travel and tourism industry in the world. Individual region reports such as Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Industry Reference Committee (IRC) in Australia in their "Tourism, Travel and Hospitality IRC's 2017 Skills Forecast" have stated that "hospitality industry has been growing steadily over the past 5 years with the growth attributed to factors such as a growing "foodie" culture, the popularity among many individuals to owning a hospitality business, population growth and an increase in consumer demand. Employment levels in the hospitality industry are projected to grow, from 828,700 in 2015 to 921,300 by 2019 and is projected to grow slightly to 970,000 by 2023" (p.15). Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Industry Reference Committee (IRC) have stated that "the strongest growth is expected for Chefs and Waiters with over 15%, followed by Café and Restaurant Managers (14%), Bar Attendants and Baristas, and Housekeepers (13%) and Kitchenhands (12%)" (p.18-26).

Hospitality Careers Online, Inc. (Hcareers) a Virgil Holdings company located in Canada in their last report "Hospitality Employment Trend Report for Q2 2018" reported that worldwide "hospitality sectors enjoyed continued growth in Q1 with a steady increase in the number of employees. In total, hospitality employed 16,256,000 people in the first quarter of 2018, which is a 3% gain from 2017 (p.2), as such, job openings have continued to increase, reaching a peak high in December 2017 with 31% YoY growth and a similarly impressive number in January 2018 at 24% YoY growth" (p.3). As for wage trends, Hcareers reported that in the US "hourly wages in hospitality continued to rise incrementally year on year. In Q1, hospitality employers in the US paid an average of \$15.81 per hour, which is a 3% increase from 2017" (p.6).

In other words, the mentioned reports offer us only a glimpse of what impact the hospitality industry has on the employment growth. Hotels are always open, and employment importance of hospitality becomes even larger, since trips are becoming shorter but more frequent, with new market niches and hospitality is now aiming even more to customer satisfaction which leads to creating many sectors generating jobs. From research conducted by TINYpulse, in the Best Industry Ranking Report, hospitality was ranked sixth. Surveying over 30,000 employees at more than 500 companies, the report predominantly focused on their overall job satisfaction (Siu, 2015). But why is everyone so satisfied? Well, as the industry has traditionally had a high turnover rate, many hotels have redoubled their efforts to increase workplace happiness and productivity.

Women in the hospitality industry

The word "Hospitality" refers to having a relaxed and good time and it is all about the art of entertaining or receiving guests. The image of the industry is depicted by pleasant atmosphere, wine glasses, good food, luxurious amenities, exclusive service, pampering and finally the feeling good environment (Peshave & Gupta, 2017a). Thus, workplace environment impacts the level of motivation that affect employee performance (Nanzushi, 2015). As an industry that does not sleep, employees work in groups and need to have excellent staff interaction, since they work long number of hours during the day and night on the clock in and out every day. For tipped employees and in-demand chefs, hospitality can be lucrative, fun, and exciting. But, regardless of which hospitality sector employees are in this field of work, job requirements conditions accentuate and perpetuate gender related stereotyping. Female employees are often the only one in the room, and when a woman is a token or significantly in the minority, that brings out a lot of gender stereotypes. Also, the hospitality industry is one of the most diverse industries in terms of employment, and this diversity is often accompanied by a set of complex gender-related challenges. Different cultures mix gender and business in different ways (Axtell, 1990). For instance, if a customer's understanding of the requirements of a barmaid includes services the female employee does not feel obligated to provide, problems are likely to result (Brownell & Walsh, 2008a).

Today, the entry of women into the hospitality industry is highly compared with that of men. However, in spite of the strong overall female presence, it is observed that there is an unequal distribution of the key

managerial and executive positions in the industry among women and men (Nyataya & Kiage, 2016). According to Richter (1995), women's employment in hospitality is both horizontally and vertically segregated, with the majority of female workers located in subordinated posts, receiving lower levels of payment. Horizontally, women are segregated into particular jobs and areas of operation (Ng & Pine, 2003) - women are employed as receptionists, waitresses, room attendants, cleaners, etc., while men are employed as barmen, porters, gardeners, maintenance staff, etc. Purcell (1996) stated that "vertically women are concentrated into jobs regarded as low in skills and consequently low in status " (p.18). Women in hotels in the U.S.A. tend to be marginalized in "pink ghetto" jobs, the lowest paid jobs with limited or less obvious career paths (Woods & Viehland, 2000). This shows that, regarding their competitiveness in jobs in the hospitality industry, women are perceived with only domestic skills and "feminine" characteristics. Women are not only capable in the front office department, housekeeping department and kitchen department, at present they are also able to work in the accounts department, human resource department and maintenance department. They are very keen to do all the work inside the hotels (Bithushan & Jegathasan, 2017).

Women as hospitality leaders

Many advancements have been made in empowerment of women, but women are still far from enjoying the same basic rights, privileges and benefits that men do. Women still earn much less than men, do a disproportionate amount of housework, have fewer rights, less social mobility, and limited access to resources. The hospitality industry has no shortage of women entering the business, but senior management positions seem to be dominated by men, especially general managers at major hotel properties. Many authors agree that today's successful organizations are team-oriented, agile, flatter, flexible and holistic in their vision and strategy (Appelbaum et al., 2003). Irrespective of how we define a leader, a leader has to have a futuristic vision and knows that he or she needs to prove to be a difference maker between success and failure. Over the years, numerous studies have tracked women on their way to the top of organizations and confirmed that all of this women tend to be more organized, non-coercive, comprehensive thinkers - who are skilled at building work relationships and fostering collaborative teams (Pounder & Coleman, 2002; Birute & Lewin, 2003; Gipson et al, 2017; Lambe & Maes, 2018). In addition, many authors believe that women

have the right stuff to be leaders. When it comes to honesty, intelligence and a handful of others character traits valued highly in leaders, these skills are abundant in men (Al-Shamali & Al-Knoury, 2015).

Still, knowing this, hospitality is not able to create environments that encourage, recognize and reward women’s contributions, and women are encountering gender-related obstacles to their career development. On the leaderships career path in the hospitality industry for women there are two distinct ways in which women are disadvantaged. Women face the formal or visible aspects of male exclusionary practice – the way that jobs and working hours are constructed – present in bureaucratic organizations. Poulson (2009) discusses "that long hours are frequently cited by women as a reason for leaving" (p.27). Timo & Davidson (2002) stated that "In Australia both "visible" and "being there" styles of hotel general management embedded in the "job" have given rise to managerial practices which are informal, paternalistic, and authoritarian in nature" (p.192). Guerrier (1986) comments on the need for female hotel General Managers being "visible" to fulfil the necessary social element of the job and the discomfort of being conspicuous in a working world where they are trying to blend in with male norms. Women with young children, as in the majority of cases are challenged with the fact of remaining the primary caregiver with the added responsibility of household organization (Lopez-Claros & Zahidi, 2005). Because in this culture, the women are seen as ones who are picking the kids up after school, taking them to soccer, all of those things that you do after school.

Figure 2: Women’s % of Hotel Company Leadership



Source: *The Castell Project. Analysis of the STR Directory of Hotel & Lodging Companies, 2012, 2016*

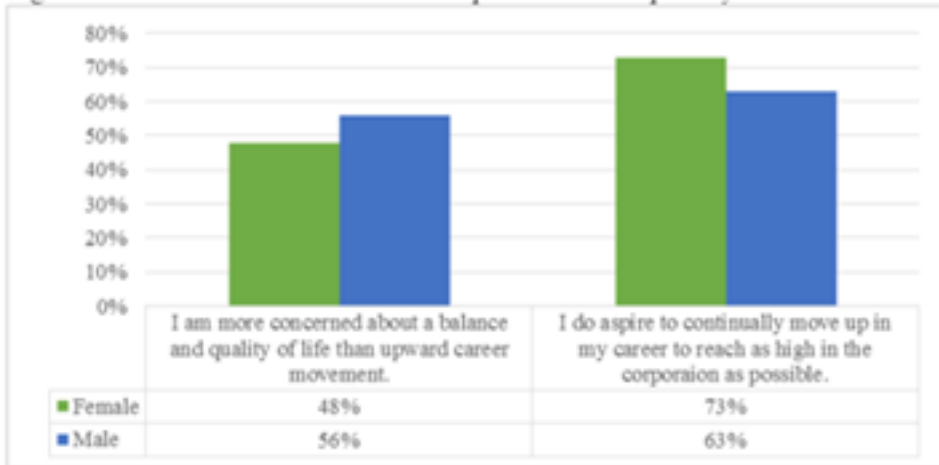
Secondly, the "hidden", invisible and less tangible aspects, that underlies expectations of hotel management reflect organizational cultures that reproduce corporate patriarchy, characteristically found in bureaucratic organizations (Green & Cassell, 1996). Broadbride & Hearn (2008) stated that "Homosocial practices such as marginalisation and competitiveness are demonstrated in organizations where male managers show a preference for "men and men's company"" (p.44).

Castell Project, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, which is focused on increasing diversity in hospitality industry leadership, published, the publication "Women in hospitality industry leadership 2017" in which they have stated that "In the hospitality industry, as of 2016, men have been 10 times more likely to be promoted to the principal/partner or president levels than women, 4 times more likely to be promoted to the EVP/group president level and more than twice as likely to be promoted to the senior VP, VP, or district level. To align with the market at the upper levels, the industry must address the odds against women getting promoted to lower and mid-level executive positions" (p.2). Castell's publication is also giving us an insight into the women's share of hotel company leadership at all levels from 2012 to 2016, illustrated in Figure 2. A sample of 12,731 names of the directories for 2012 and 2016 was used in the Castell Project for the Women's % of the Hotel Company Leadership analysis. From 2012 to 2016, the analysis show that no change was noticed in the CEO position, while the women's % of hotel company leadership in the positions: President, Principal/Partner and Chiefs recorded growth of only 1% for 4 years. 2% growth was recorded in the positions: Senior/VP/Manager/Director and VP/District Director in terms of 4 years. 4% growth of women's % was noticed in EVP/Group President position. Again, the authors discuss that there is a failure to recognize the importance of women's empowerment in hospitality employment and in leadership.

Castell Project conducted an attitude survey with Georgia State University and Lodging Magazine in 2017 illustrated in Figure 3, regarding the fact the women are considered to be homemakers and hold all caring responsibilities for their household, representing another barrier to employment. Work-life balance is one of the biggest challenges for all those working in hospitality, but the results from the survey undermine the many statements that women do not get to be limited by so many defined gender roles. Men are at least as concerned about balance and quality of life as women, and women have even higher career aspirations

than men as the survey results suggest. Among employees and managers, neither aspiration nor commitment seems to be driving the low rate of promotion for women relative to men in the hospitality industry.

Figure 3: *Women’s commitment and aspiration in hospitality*



Source: *The Castell Project. Attitude Survey with Georgia State University and Lodging Magazine, 2017*

In general, research by Korn Ferry reveals that women make up 25.5 percent of senior executives across the hospitality industry and occupy 28% of places on the boards of the listed organizations (Korn Ferry, 2018a).

Not surprisingly, in addition to finding limited opportunities to advance, women also experience a pay disparity (Brownell & Walsh, 2008b). Most recently, a Polish nationalist member of the European Parliament, Mr. Janusz Korwin-Mikke debated that "And of course, women must earn less than men because they are weaker, smaller and less intelligent" (BBC News, 2017). The Polish politician has been suspended for only 10 days, but afterwards no penalty was given (Brzozowski, 2018) which again allowed us to witness how discrimination towards women is so unfair yet has been embedded in the society to an extent that women’s lower income than men’s is perceived as a common sense. Women in hospitality face "gender pay gap" as well as "equal pay". Women carry the same or similar work as men in hospitality, but are not paid the same; which is unlawful to pay men and women differently since 1970. Beside this, they face gender pay gap where hourly earnings of women within hospitality are expressed as a percentage of men’s earnings. The hospitality industry

has a variety of sectors and roles offering rapid career progression and it can be financially rewarding and incredibly enjoyable work, but a number of different factors come into play affecting its gender pay gaps. Analysis by the Fourth of their clients’ operational data in March 2017 showed that women’s average pay was a little higher than that of men’s across the quick-service restaurant sector and the hotel-restaurants sector, but across the pub sector and restaurant sector, women typically earn less on average than males (Korn Ferry, 2018b).

In 2018, Gecko Hospitality, a national hospitality recruitment company released its "2017 Hospitality Management and Restaurant Salary Survey Report" and the results shed light on the gender pay gap, where men earn an average of \$4,728 per year, more than women with bonuses and starting pay and women made an average of \$0.76 less per hour than men. Of those surveyed, 601 were female and 1488 were male.

Table 1: *Average starting salaries in 2017*

Position	Female	Male
<i>Assistant Manager</i>	\$46,746	\$49,586
<i>Catering/Sales/Events Manager</i>	\$52,635	\$61,589
<i>Corporate</i>	\$63,000	\$78, 546
<i>Director of Operations</i>	\$89,500	\$97,118
<i>District/Multi-Unit Manager</i>	\$82,136	\$65,600
<i>Executive Chef</i>	\$61,500	\$66,647
<i>General Manager</i>	\$53,556	\$61,354
<i>Hourly</i>	\$12,53	\$13,29
<i>Kitchen Manager</i>	\$45,816	\$52,430
<i>Sous Chef</i>	\$46,010	\$53,727

Source: *Gecko Hospitality. Management Salary & Trends Report 2017, 2018*

Table 1 shows that the pay discrepancy between men and women is still a prevalent issue within the hospitality industry. The report found that consistent gender-based pay gap between starting salaries is present for all measured categories, except one: District/Multi-unit manager. From the report, we got results that women tend to make up the majority of catering, sales, and event-managerial positions, while men were the majority of executive chefs, sous chefs, kitchen managers and general managers. Even though the pay gap between men and women is still an ongoing issue, among the managers who obtained a managerial position

with a new hotel business, 37% of women received a salary increase, compared with 31% of men. The report also broke down salary trends by industry segment and region, indicating that women are taking the lead in some areas, where female corporate executives had an average starting salary of \$100,000 last year, compared to \$72,000 for males in the same position.

Another data statistic with positive figures in the industry were recorded in the Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington, London, reporting that women were paid a median average hourly rate 11% higher than men, where in contrast Meridian Hotel Operations reported a median gender pay gap of 49% in favor of men. The company is part of the Arora Group, which owns hotels including the InterContinental London at the O2 and Hilton at London Gatwick Airport (Lake, 2018). As of 2016, Marriott, which is one of the Largest Hotel Chains in the world has been regarded as the most innovative and successful hotel chains thanks to its inspiring Nine Decades of Women's leadership. It has also been ranked as one of the top 100 best workplaces for women (Marriott News, 2016). Regardless of all the data statistics, it is still clear that the pay disparity between women and men is still a prevalent issue within the hospitality industry.

Challenges for women in hospitality

The challenges in the hospitality industry for women's employment highlight a range of barriers. The women face those diverse sets of challenges at various stages in their career. These included long work hours, work life balance, geographical mobility, sexual harassment, old boy network, lack of role model, mentoring and glass ceiling (Peshave & Gupta, 2017b).

1. Long work hours.

Brownell, (1998) expressed that "Hospitality management is a 24x7 job contradictory to a 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. job. To be successful in this industry, it demands long working hours, a good skill of handling disaster management and problem solving. These all factors together create a demanding and grueling work experience" (p.117). They set a challenge where women feel they should not seek work in this industry.

2. Work life balance.

Since women are often still considered homemakers and they should care for children and older family members, trying to keep work-life balance, work can go against their ability to fulfil both roles. Women bear more

responsibility for managing their family lives regardless of their own job requirements. This dual status, often leaves women feeling exhausted, pulled, and fragmented. Many female managers have reached to a point where they were forced to decide between a family and career advancement.

3. Geographical mobility.

Geographical mobility is a positive feature in the hotel sector, a factor that is associated with more career opportunities, promotion and higher salary levels (Carbery et al., 2003). For younger women at the start of their career, this offer is more alluring because they focus on their career, but as for women who are more established in their career and find themselves thinking of having a family in the future, geographical mobility can represent a problem.

4. Sexual harassment.

Hospitality industry as a socially interactive place sometimes requires a specific dress code, may keep long uncertain and unusual working hours, where employees may be more susceptible to suggestive comments and interaction with customers or managers. The hospitality industry is prone to sexual harassment and related issues. Although both men and women might happen to experience sexual harassment, women are more susceptible to the issue (Do Le, 2017). Women in hospitality are particularly susceptible to sexual harassment because men make up the majority of management and higher-paying roles, then there is still hospitality business that praises the policy that the customer is "always right" and run the business, in which women are expected to use their appearance as part of the service experience. Therefore, sexual harassment can be one of the reasons causing women to retreat from the hospitality industry.

5. Old boy network.

The informal "old boy network" has been recognized as a main obstacle for women to job success and career progression (Brownell, 1994). In hospitality, women report that they have been excluded from these informal social systems within the formal organizational structure, and in order to weaken the impact, hospitality needs to encourage women to interact with both women and men in order to form stronger working relationships.

6. Lack of role model.

Today's hospitality industry has a surplus of male role models, but very few female. Women need role models to learn from the best, be inspired by them and inspire future generations to pursue a career in one of the most dynamic industry. Role models, create a positive narrative about

women in leadership positions and opportunities for others. They can help tell a story, and attract and retain talented women, but according to Korn Ferry and their publication "Women in Hospitality, Travel, and Leisure 2020 WiH2020 Review" "there are very few female role models, CEOs and Chairmen in hospitality (p.8), but from a recent research, women (74%) have stated that female role models are a major source of inspiration for them, and agree that role models have inspired them to develop their careers" (p.12).

7. Mentoring.

Since experience and relationships can be invaluable in the hospitality industry, mentoring can be an opportunity for women to have hands on experience, learn from and be inspired. Mentoring relationships can help women with formal and informal networks such as offering ways for women to test ideas, find solutions to common problems, and obtain empathy and support, because mentors are present to share their knowledge, which can't be found in books.

8. Glass ceiling.

The metaphors "barrier", "glass ceiling" and "glass wall" arise from a particular way of thinking about gender inequality in the public realm" (Connell, 2006). The glass ceiling phenomenon describes the barriers blocking women's advancement into leadership. The previous data statistics analyzed in this paper show that women still continue to face the glass ceiling problem when it comes to the top management positions. Only when hospitality will start offering more support to women returning from career breaks, promoting shared parental leave, establishing mentoring programs and using technology to facilitate more flexible working, women can find themselves up to the top and bursting through the glass ceiling – shattering it to smithereens.

The several listed challenges in women employment in the hospitality industry may have a positive impact in sense of becoming a base for some more practical recommendations, that hospitality needs to take on how the role of the women can be improved and appreciated within the hospitality industry.

The authors list several recommendations:

1. Actively involving community leaders and government bodies to changing the perceptions of female participation in the hospitality industry (removal of practical obstacles to female participation in the hospitality workplace and dismissing the traditional "female roles" in the hotel – an important initiative to enable progression to leadership positions);

2. Providing hospitality skills training with an emphasis on simultaneously growing the talent pool and actively encouraging the inclusion of women into the hospitality industry;
3. Family-friendly policies & In-house initiatives - flexibility for women to stay in their roles and initiatives to encourage them to return to work after childbirth, also with rising concerns of women with regard to their safety, flexibility in working hours and pleasant work environment, the industry has to consider initiatives like car drop after working hours, flexible timings, and maternity benefits.
4. More robust dialogue between hospitality enterprises and women for keeping in mind that their needs and the various responsibilities they juggle. Options may include: extended maternity leave beside the usual maternity leave, other leaves and options for sabbaticals, flexible timings and work-from-home, support for more suitable childcare provision to enable women to remain within the workforce.
5. Various engagement activities, women-centric forums, including women managers into critical decisions, ensures a comfortable space and environment for everyone.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. The lack of worldwide reliable statistical indicators on employment, occupations, income, compensation, hours of work of person employed and their conditions of work in the hospitality sector in order to measure various dimensions of hospitality labor market represent the primary limitation in order to begin discussing the issue of employment in hospitality. Another important limitation addressing the issue is that there are also no reliable statistical indicators on women employment in hospitality, as well as up-to-date statistics for gender pay which introduces some limitations in the research of this paper. But, since the environment of the hospitality industry is very dynamic and the exact statistics used in the current paper can change quickly, this paper provides only a brief picture of current situation of women employment in the hospitality industry.

Conclusion

While women have made immense progress in the hospitality industry in recent decades, they still face certain barriers that stop them from equal participation in the labor market. Women seem to have no problem entering the industry at the beginning of a career, however, they may be

more likely than men to leave the industry in the period of starting a family. Women in hospitality are not encouraged or expected to succeed. They are facing numerous barriers to equal access, but the issue of gender inequality, unequal pay and the other barriers won't be solved overnight.

Only by reviewing and analyzing the status of women in hospitality, the hospitality industry will be able to take appropriate measures to improve the representation of women at all levels and develop women-friendly policies to assist them in their career progression and work. While there is confirmation and awareness of women's abilities to lead, the career progression is still a daunting task for most women, but there are signs that the tide is changing and that women are poised to play a far more prominent role in the years to come. Therefore, as the hospitality industry is expanding and growing rapidly, the industry has to consider both male and female candidates equally for positions that traditionally have been dominated by men.

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