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Gender and career progression in the financial services

An Irish case-study

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy to the University of Dublin, Trinity College

2013

Maria Quinlan
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Maria Quinlan
Abstract

This thesis is an exploration of gender and how it affects career progression within the financial services in Ireland. Research has found that the financial services is a particularly difficult industry for women in terms of the gendered organisational structures and cultures which predominate in these companies. (Catalyst, 2001a, 2002; Ogden et al, 2006; EHRC, 2009)

There has been little research carried out on gender within the financial services in Ireland, despite it being a very important sector of the economy, and despite it having the largest gender pay gap of any industry in Ireland (Forfás, 2007; CSO 2006). The aim of the study was thus firstly to understand if the vertical and horizontal gender segregation that has been found in international studies of the financial services is replicated here in Ireland; and secondly, if these organisations are found to be gendered, to understand why this is the case.

Of particular interest to this study was to understand whether person-centred factors such as individual choice and preference were more important than organisational factors in hindering women’s progress in this industry.

Using a mixed methodological approach, a quantitative and qualitative study was carried out on two companies operating within the financial services in Ireland. An online survey was used to capture the attitudes, perceptions and behaviours of men and women in these companies; and in-depth qualitative interviews were carried out with men and women to get a more nuanced understanding of the organisational dynamics and how this affects the lived lives of workers in the sample.

On the basis of the findings from this study, this thesis argues that organisational factors play a very important role in determining how women progress within the financial services. While both companies are found to be male dominated, with significant vertical segregation present in both, two different organisational contexts emerge in the data. One company is more gendered than the other, and this less-equal organisational structure and culture has a more negative effect on women in the sample. Ultimately what emerges is that individual career choices and ability to progress is heavily mediated by the organisational context within which women find themselves. The more equal, meritocratic the company, the more positive the outcomes for women.
Summary

This thesis outlines the findings from a study of gender and career progression within the financial services in Ireland. Taking two companies operating within the sector, a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods was used to gather data on the lived lives of workers in these two companies.

The data from which the findings from this thesis are drawn consists of 251 survey responses from a population of over 750 employees within the two companies (33% response rate); and in-depth qualitative interviews with 39 men and women across both organisations. Both the survey sample and the interview sample broke down relatively evenly on gender lines. Thus giving a rich sample from which to draw my findings. The mix of men and women allowed for a detailed exploration of which factors related to career progression, both positive and negative, can be said to be gendered and which can be said to be gender neutral.

The aims of this study were to firstly understand what patterns of gender segregation exist within the case-study companies; and then to secondly to explore why this is. Of particular interest was to try to ascertain whether individual factors such as choice or preference are why women are not represented to a high degree at the top of these companies, or whether organisational factors are a key barrier. I wished to understand the inter-play of individual choice and organisational dynamics, and the influence one had over the other.

To answer the first of these questions, ‘where are the women?’ - the data showed clearly that both companies are gendered male from a vertical segregation perspective. So what can be termed the ‘glass-ceiling’ exists in both companies. However, one company was found to be more ‘gendered’ than the other.

Allied to the male domination of senior roles, Company A (‘InvestCo’) also had a large degree of horizontal gender segregation, with women less likely than men to be working in the core, most powerful functional department. Thus it displayed ‘glass-walls’ to complement its ‘glass-ceiling’. InvestCo was also found to be more male-dominated as a company overall, with men accounting for 60% of all employees.

In contrast, Company B (‘AccountCo’) was found to be far less segregated from a gender perspective – while it too had a glass-ceiling, this ceiling was further up in the organisation, in that women were rising higher in the company; coupled with this there was no functional
gender segregation found to be present, with women as likely as men in the sample to be working in the power-bases of the company. Women were also found to dominate AccountCo overall in terms of total employee numbers, accounting for 54% of all employees in the company.

These two different organisational structures revealed two different organisational cultures. The experiences of women in both companies reflected the different organisational contexts within which they operated. Within InvestCo’s less equal structure of glass-ceilings and glass-walls, women were found to be outside of the power-loop, and to have the most negative experience of their organisational culture of any cohort in the study. There are gendered hierarchies; gendered career routes; and gendered power-dynamics in InvestCo – all of which women in the company are more likely than men in the sample to be outside of.

In contrast women within AccountCo had a more positive experience overall of the culture within which they work. This company was found to be a more liberal meritocratic organisation, and women (and men) had a more positive experience within this organisational context. Several features of AccountCo’s organisational culture seem to allow women to fulfil their potential to a greater degree than is possible in InvestCo. These features include; more formalised promotional procedures; more detailed and formalised performance appraisals; and the presence of positive female role models who have combined having children and getting to the top.

In terms of how organisational factors interact with personal choice and preference, this study finds that the organisational context within which women work is more influential on their progress than person-centred factors such as family-commitments, lack of ambition or desire to progress. Thus women’s choices are found to be influenced and ultimately ‘constrained’ by the organisational contexts within which they operate.
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THESIS OVERVIEW

Despite the fact that women in Ireland are better educated than their male counterparts and that girls now outnumber boys when it comes to graduating from college, women remain under-represented in senior positions in both the public and private sectors (CSO, 2011). My research starting point was to try to investigate why this is.

Taking one particularly industry, the main research aim was to explore gender and career progression specifically within the financial services industry in Ireland. This study focused on the high-end side of corporate banking, asset management and professional accountancy services. Using a mixed quantitative and qualitative approach, data was gathered from two case-study companies operating within these fields. The first company, InvestCo, is a global asset management company with an operational hub in Dublin, while the second company, AccountCo, is the Irish operation of one of the Big-four professional services firms.  

Reviewing previous studies of the financial services and on women and employment generally, two main themes emerge. Firstly that women face direct and indirect organisational, structural and cultural barriers in the workplace that inhibit their progress (Kanter, 1977; Acker, 1990). Secondly that women are held back by their own choices, and their own preference not to progress (Hakim, 2002; Belkin, 2003)

This study sought to explore which of these barriers is most important – are women held back by the organisational cultures and structures within which they operate, or is their equal opportunity in this regard? And if they are not held back by organisational factors, then is the lack of women at the top of the financial services merely a case of women choosing not to go for these top jobs?

Background:

In October 2003 Lisa Belkin wrote an article in the New York Times which kick-started a large debate in the U.S. regarding educated women and their willingness to participate in the paid workforce (Belkin, 2003). In her article Belkin posed the question 'why don’t women

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1 The 'Big 4' are the four largest international accountancy and professional services firms, which handle the vast majority of audits for publicly traded companies as well as many private companies
run the world?’ and then suggested that the answer is that they simply choose not to. This sparked my interest in the topic of what relationship Irish women have with the paid workforce – in particular how ambitious women are to succeed to the highest levels of management, and in what way person-centred and structural issues act as barriers to their success in reaching the higher echelons of the paid workforce. I am interested in investigating how women’s career choices are made and rather than merely ‘choosing not to’ get to the top in their careers, whether issues of gendered organisational structures; stereotypical social role expectations, gender role socialization, social constructs of work and what it means to be a leader, act as barriers to women climbing the career ladder in Ireland.

Women’s relationship with the workforce is a complex one. Women’s ability to compete in the workforce can be said to be influenced by a multiplicity of factors, including organisational factors, childcare responsibilities, the gendered nature of work and ambition; and the persistence of gender role stereotypes. This research aims to investigate to what extent these factors influence women’s participation within the financial services sector in Ireland.

As IBEC (Irish Business and Employers’ Confederation) has noted, outside of the public sector, very little research has been done on the barriers and enablers to women’s progress in the workplace in Ireland. In order to get some detail on this issue, they surveyed 297 companies, which covered over 51,500 employees and of which 6,187 were at management level. IBEC found that women made up only 8% of CEOs, 21% of senior managers, 30% of middle managers, and 45% of junior managers in the companies surveyed. IBEC’s report found that even though there are obvious economic imperatives to retain and promote women in business, barriers still exist which stop women from fulfilling their full-potential in the Irish workforce. (Coughlan, 2002)

When it comes to progressing to the top echelons of power within business, do Irish women simply choose not to? As the theories of Belkin (2003) and Pinker (2008) would suggest, do women simply not want to compete for these top jobs. They posit that, having different priorities in life, women have embraced the choices which characterise this post-feminist era and have chosen to ‘opt-out’ of the race to reach the boardroom. Is it the case that the glass ceiling is well and truly cracked, and women are just not interested in top jobs, and if such a

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thing as the glass ceiling exists today is it in essence ‘self-imposed’ as some researchers seem to suggest (Cross and Linehan, 2006)?

Or is it more complex than that? – is the glass ceiling cracked or to paraphrase Mark Twain, are rumours of its demise greatly exaggerated? Recent studies would suggest that the glass ceiling is well and truly intact. (Kumra and Vinnicombe, 2008; Gammie et al, 2007) In fact, along with the glass ceiling, women must negotiate ‘maternal walls’, ‘mommy-tracks’, and ‘glass-cliffs’ - women appear now face a ‘labyrinth’ when it comes to career progression. (Eagly and Carli, 2007), Catalyst has found that even when women ‘do all the right things’, they still face barriers to their progress (Catalyst 2011)

According to Eagly and Carli (2007), the reasons behind women’s absence in leadership positions within society have been ‘misdiagnosed’. They posit that rather than coming up against a ‘glass ceiling’ at one specific point in their careers, women instead face what they term a career “labyrinth” with twists, turns and obstacles all along the way. My proposed research aims to investigate these obstacles, looking particularly at the interplay between structural and person-centred factors; and attempting to understand whether the gendering of work and financial services organisations can impact negatively on women’s career progression.

The research around why women do not make it to the top in business is vast and at times contradictory, for example while some studies finds that in order to reach the top women are required to be “childless superwomen”, (Liff and Ward, 2001; Barker and Monks; 1998) another finds that women who have reached the top were able to do so while balancing having a family and rich home life (Gammie et al, 2007). While some studies report than women ‘opt-out’ of going for promotion, perpetuating a ‘self-imposed’ glass-ceiling (Cross and Linehan, 2006; Hewlett, 2005; Gammie, 2007), others find that women and men have the same aspirations for their careers, and that women are every bit as ambitious as their male counterparts. (Barker and Monks, 1998; Catalyst, 2004)

This research aims to uncover what the experience is for women working within the financial services sector in Ireland. What are the barriers and enablers to career success for them, and do they have ambitions of a successful high flying career, or do they hold themselves back, somehow ‘auto-discriminating’ in order to maintain a more balanced life. (Russell Hochschild, 1989: xii)
Research questions

The ultimate aim of this research is to understand to what extent person-centred barriers vis-à-vis organisational-centred barriers can be said to be responsible for women’s lack of representation in senior roles within the financial services?

In order to try to answer this question a case study approach is taken to investigate the organisational culture and structure of two financial services companies based in Dublin. Quantitative and qualitative data is gathered and analysed to ascertain the following:

- Where are men and women located within these case study companies? The aim of this being to understand to what extent vertical and/or horizontal segregation exists?
- What are the attitudes, perceptions and experiences of employees towards their career progression? – Are there any gender differences in this regard?

What organisational characteristics serve to facilitate or hinder career progression for both men and women?

1.2 GENDER & EMPLOYMENT IN IRELAND

To look first at the overall participation of Irish women in the paid workforce and the positions of influence they reach, the CSO has reported that in 2011 56% of women in Ireland were in paid employment, compared with 63% of men (CSO, 2011). Ireland has a slightly lower rate of female participation in the workforce than is average in the EU (58%) lags significantly behind countries such as Sweden and Denmark, who have female workforce participation rates of 70.3% and 71.1% respectively. Ireland’s female participation in the workforce also lags that of our closest neighbour, the UK, by over eight percentage points. (CSO, 2011)

During the years that have come to be known as the ‘Celtic Tiger’ period, Irish women’s participation in the workforce grew more rapidly than the average female employment growth rate in the EU, rising almost 15% to 58% in Ireland in 2006 as compared to 56.3% in the EU. (CSO, 2006) During the same period, the male workforce participation rate in Ireland also grew, but not by as much as the female rate. The male participation rate grew by approximately 10%, from 67.5% in 1996 to 77.3% in 2006. These figures have obviously
family status, particularly in relation to whether people have children, also sheds some further light on women’s participation in the labour force. According to the CSO, their data “gives an indication of the effect that having young children in the family has on female employment rates” (2006: 13). In 2011, 62.2% of women aged between 20 and 44 were in the labour force. However, this rate varied from 83.3% for women who had no children, to 52% for women whose youngest child was aged between four and five. (CSO; 2011)

Women face a ‘dual burden’ of family responsibilities and workplace responsibilities, and the reconciliation of these can be difficult. According to the ESRI, (McGinnity, and Russell, 2008) the distribution of paid and unpaid work amongst Irish men and women remains highly gendered, with women doing the predominant amount of unpaid labour. Women’s total weekly hours of work (paid and unpaid) were found to be almost five hours more per week than men’s, and despite this extra work, almost a day’s extra work per week relative to men, women in Ireland are still on the wrong end of the gender pay gap, which was approximately 15.7 per cent in Ireland in 2009. (CSO, 2011)

These CSO findings echo the United Kingdom, where a report by the Equalities Review found that women with children are the most discriminated group within the workforce; “Our new research reveals clearly that there is one factor that above all leads to women’s inequality in the labour market – becoming mothers……in contrast, men’s employment rates are not affected by fatherhood” (Equalities Review, 2007: 66-67)

Ireland now has the highest fertility rate in the EU (CSO, 2011), so issues around how motherhood affects women’s participation within the workforce is obviously an important one for this country.

According to the CSO, women are far more likely to work part-time than men. Men worked an average of 39.4 hours a week in 2011 compared with 30.6 for women (CSO, 2011). The responsibility for child-care falls predominantly to women in Ireland - 98.6% of people who work on “home duties” in Ireland are women.
When it comes to understanding what occupations women are engaged in, the CSO reports that almost 21% of women in employment were employed in clerical and secretarial occupations, as compared with just over 5% of men. The most gender balanced occupations are the professional occupations, where women represented approximately half of people employed in these roles.

Women in Ireland display high levels of ambition when it comes to their educational achievements, as the ESRI has noted... “Although fewer women than men work, those that do are, on average, of higher education attainment” than men. (Lunn et al, 2007). Over 60% of those entering third level courses requiring 450 points or more in 2006 were female. In 2011, 53% per cent of all women between the ages of 25 and 34 had third level degrees, as compared with only 39% of men of the same age. (CSO, 2011) And yet, women do not participate in the labour market to the same degree as men, and those women that are in the workforce are predominately engaged in occupations which attract lower levels of pay (DJELR, 2007).

The press-release from the most recent CSO report on Women and Men in Ireland (2011) was headlined.... ‘Men leave school earlier and women are more highly qualified’ (CSO, 2011), yet to look at the statistics outlined within the report is to understand that despite this human capital, women are not fairly represented in decision-making positions in government, public or private sectors. (CSO, 2011)

My research seeks to look beyond the statistics to examine the *whys* behind these numbers. The issue that this study seeks to address is why women working specifically within in the financial services in Ireland continue to be under-represented in senior positions within the industry, and continue to be paid less than their male counterparts (CSO, 2006).

**Women in decision-making positions in Ireland**

In terms of women and men in decision-making positions in Ireland, in 2011 only 15% of TDs in Dail Eireann were women, this is well below the EU average rate of approximately 25%, and farther still from the ‘best-practice’ Swedish rate of 45%. It is not just in the political arena that women lack representation at decision-making levels, women account for less than 20% of representatives of both local authorities; just over a third of members of State Boards. (CSO 2011)
This trend for under-representation is echoed in the private sector where women account for only 8% of CEOs in Ireland, 21% of senior managers, 30% of middle managers, and 45% of junior managers. (Coughlan, 2002)

A similar pattern can be seen in both the health and education professions in Ireland. These two sectors employed almost 30% of all women who were in the labour market in 2011. In the health service in 2011 only 36% of consultants were women, while women 79.6% of employees in the Irish health service as a whole. In 2011, 85% of primary school teachers were women, but women only account for 53% of school managers.

According the government’s *National Women’s Strategy 2007-2012*, despite the fact that women outnumber men by three to one in the education sector, men’s average hourly earnings is 28% higher than that received by women in this sector, “This probably reflects the significant numbers of men in senior positions” within education (Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2007: 32). “It is probable that a similar analogy can be drawn for the health services where the variation in average hourly earnings is 21% and where women outnumber men by four to one” (Ibid).

If women in Ireland are not represented in decision-making areas, then how can women realistically participate in setting the agenda, how can women’s concerns be accurately reflected in government policy and so forth. Are all decisions to be made via a ‘male prism’? (McBroom, 2000).

The challenge therefore according to the *National Women’s Strategy 2007-2012* is to find the structural and/or personal reasons why women do not advance in greater numbers to the highest levels (Ibid).

Women in employment have been shown to have higher educational qualifications than their male counterparts. There are therefore other factors which clearly impact on the ability of women to translate educational qualifications into greater participation in higher paid employment. (Ibid:33)

It is these “other factors” which this PhD study seeks to investigate and understand.
1.3 RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

The Financial Services sector is a particularly interesting sector to study as it is a hugely important sector in the Irish economy, with employment growing by approximately 70% in the past decade. (Forfas, 2007). Many companies operating in this industry have a publicly stated commitment to attracting, retaining and promoting women, and operating as they do in a highly-competitive global marketplace, Financial Services firms understand the value of managing their talent. However they operate within an industry which research in the U.S. and the U.K. has found can be a particularly challenging industry for women to succeed in. Several studies have found that the so-called ‘glass-ceiling’ of invisible barriers to women’s career progression is still very much intact in the Financial Services industry internationally. However, very little research has been done on career progression within this important industry in Ireland - my research seeks to fill this gap.

The gender pay gap in the financial services is the biggest in any sector in the Ireland, a finding echoed in UK. According to the CSO, across all industry sectors in Ireland men earn more than women, with women earning on average 86.2% of male hourly earnings. The biggest gender pay gap however is in the financial services sector, with women earning on average just 72.4% of male earnings. So we can see that while this sector employs substantially more women than men, there is a large gender pay gap in men’s favour. (CSO, 2008: 8) Irish studies have revealed that female accountants earn significantly less than their male counterparts (Ogden, 2006; Brennan and Nolan, 1998; Barker and Monks, 1998).

Despite the apparent existence of gender inequalities within this industry, little research has been done on this subject within an Irish context. As the Irish Business Employers Confederation’s (IBEC) 2002 report Women in Management in Irish Business noted, outside of the public sector, very little research has been done on women and the glass-ceiling within the private sector in Ireland. (Coughlan, 2002) IBEC’s report sought to fill some gaps by

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conducting a survey across the manufacturing, services, distribution and sales industry sectors. However this study did not include information on gender disparities within the Financial Services industry. The exclusion of the Financial Services sector is echoed in a 2002 study of the gender pay gap in Ireland (Indecon, 2002)

Meanwhile, general studies on the Financial Services sector in Ireland have failed to address any issues of gender representation, or the impact of the hidden-brain drain of women from the workforce on this knowledge-intensive sector of the economy. For example Forfas’s 2007 report on the future labour requirements of the financial services industry makes no mention of potential problems with female drop-out from the workplace as a potential factor which may impact Ireland’s competitiveness in this area, despite the fact that women are increasingly graduating in higher numbers than men from the business-related disciplines which serve as a path into the Financial Services industries. (Forfas, 2007; Deloitte, 2004, HEA, 2007: 36)

Thus, I feel that the financial services are an interesting sector on which to focus this study of gender and career progression in Ireland.

Overview of the Financial Services sector in Ireland

The financial services sector is a hugely important sector in the Irish economy. Currently, over 85,000 people are directly employed in the sector. Over the last decade employment has grown by approximately 70%, with the sector contributing over 5% to annual GDP and the industry directly contributing about €3.6 billion to the economy in wages paid to employees and in spending on goods and services.4

Since the early 1990’s, Ireland has established itself as a leading international financial services centre, and has set about attracting large multinational banks to this country. (Forfas, 2007). This study will focus on the high-end of the international financial services industry (i.e. corporate banking, wealth management, fund administration, and professional services).

The term international services is typically used to describe three industry sectors; banking and capital markets; investment management and insurance. The professional services firms which provide accountancy and tax consultancy, are described by Forfas as “key industry

4 IBEC www.ibec.ie
enablers” (Forfas, 2007: 12). For the purposes of this study, companies operating within the sectors of banking and capital markets; investment management; and the professional services of accountancy and tax consultancy have been chosen for examination.

The international financial services sector is estimated to employ approximately 19,000 people in Ireland (excluding insurance and the professional services). The Big Four professional services firms operating in Ireland employ approximately 6,200 further people. So companies operating within the areas of the financial services under examination in this study employ approximately 25,200 people in total. Details on how this employee base is broken down by gender or management level is unfortunately not currently available (Forfas, 2007). What we do know is that as of October 2006, what the CSO term the financial services sector, (which includes all companies operating within the domestic as well as the international financial services sector, and excludes the insurance industry), employed 86,000 people in Ireland; 34,600 or 40 per cent of whom are men, and 51,700, or 60 per cent of whom are women. (CSO, 2008)

1.4 THESIS STRUCTURE

Chapter Two - Literature Review

The literature review explores studies of women in the financial and professional services, and highlights the key themes that emerge in terms of understanding why women are so absent from the top in this industry.

It places this PhD study in the context of what has been carried out in terms of research on this issue.

Chapter Three - Research methods

Taking two case-study companies operating in different areas of the industry, a mixed methodological approach was used to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. Chapter two outlines the methodological approach in detail; from research design through to access negotiation and implementation.

Information gathered from the websites of KPMG, PwC, Ernst and Young and Deloitte
The data for the study is taken from three sources:

a) Employee data from the companies

Company A – INVESTCO

Human Resources in InvestCo provided the researcher with a list of employees by management level; gender; department; nationality; length of service and job title. This is a very comprehensive overview of the employees in the company and allowed for detailed analysis of vertical and horizontal gender segregation. It also allowed for an analysis of the role of nationality which is a key feature of InvestCo’s culture.

Company B – ACCOUNTCO

Human Resources in AccountCo provided the researcher with a list of employees by management level and by gender. This data is far less comprehensive than what was provided by InvestCo, however it allowed for a detailed exploration of vertical gender segregation in the company. The survey and interview data was then used to explore issues of functional segregation, length of service and so forth.

b) Online survey

An online survey of 38 questions was sent to 752 employees, and elicited 251 usable responses (33% response rate, equal split of women and men). The survey aimed to capture attitudes and perceptions towards career progression, and towards the culture of the companies. It contains 38 questions, consisting of a mixture of single question items and Likert-type scales.

c) In-depth interviews

Interviews were conducted with 39 members of staff (21 women/18 men). They were in-depth and semi-structured and lasted for between one and one and a half hours on average. The aim of the interviews was to get a nuanced understanding of what has enabled and what has constrained employees’ career progression. Drawing from the literature, a topic guide was developed, covering items such as; career history; human and social capital issues; work-life balance; career goals and ambitions and so forth.
Junior, middle and senior managers were interviewed so as the experiences of those who have made it to the top could be explored, as well as the experiences and ambitions of those in the pathway to leadership roles.

Chapter Four - Exploring the organisational structures

Drawing on the employee data, and on some sections of the survey data, chapter four outlines the pattern of gender segregation in each company.

It provides an overview of each company in terms of what they do, the nature of the jobs in each, and how the company is structured. What we find in this chapter that InvestCo is more gendered as a company overall. It has more vertical and functional gender segregation than is found in AccountCo. What we will look at next in Chapter 5 is the survey data to see what impact this gendered structure has on perceptions and attitudes of staff in the company.

Chapter Five - Perceptions and attitudes of women and men in the organisations

Drawing on the findings of the quantitative online survey, Chapter Five explores whether women and men’s perception and attitudes are influenced by the organisational structures that were explicated in Chapter 4.

The survey included several questions which sought to understand in what way organisational and/or person-centred factors impact on women’s progress in the case-study companies. These included questions on barriers and enablers to career progression; ambition and commitment scales; human capital; and social capital.

The general pattern which emerges from the survey is that there are some strong differences between the organisational culture of both companies and the impact of these two different cultures is what comes across most strongly as an influencer of women’s progress in the survey data. Reflecting the more unequal structure outlined in Chapter 4, women in InvestCo are the cohort with the most negative attitude and perceptions towards their opportunities to progress.

At the outset of this study, it was person-centred factors which this researcher was most interested in exploring, however what the quantitative data reveals is that these factors are much less important than structural factors in explaining women’s absence in senior roles in these companies. What emerges instead from the data is the negative impact that the gendered nature of InvestCo has on women’s progress; and on the other-hand it shows the
positive impact the more ‘equal opportunity’ culture of AccountCo has on women in the sample.

Chapter Six - Impact of the gendered organisation

Following on from the exploration of the quantitative data in Chapter Five, chapter Six explores the impact of the gendered nature of these companies in more detail. Drawing on the qualitative interview data, this chapter provides a more nuanced understanding of the lived lives of women and men in both companies, and explores the ways in which the different organisational cultures serve to help and hinder career progression.

While senior management is heavily male-dominated in both companies, the fact that there are slightly more women at senior levels in AccountCo, and that the overall company is numerically female dominated, impacts positively on women’s progression in the company. This coupled with the presence of positive senior role models (particularly of women who have made it to senior roles while having a family), and the absence of functional gender segregation, results in much more gender convergence in terms of experience and opportunities to progress in AccountCo.

In contrast, female interviewees feel more consciously outnumbered and more ‘other’ in InvestCo. There are fewer senior female managers within InvestCo than in AccountCo, and functional gender segregation is also a prominent feature of InvestCo. This functional segregation is cited by interviewees as a reason for women’s poor representation in senior roles within the company. The ‘power base’ of the organisation is Investments and, as outlined in Chapter Four, this is a heavily male dominated department. It is also the department with the most opportunities for progression. In contrast, women are at the very heart of what AccountCo do, they are more present in the money-making departments in the company than they are in InvestCo, and resultantly are more likely to get the same access as their male colleagues to the opportunities to progress in the company.

Motherhood in particular seems to be a major career inhibitor in InvestCo – it is simply not the ‘done thing’, while some mothers have gotten ahead, the perception is that they do not in general, and certainly not in the powerful Investments department. In AccountCo on the other hand there are visible and positive role models of women who have made it to the top of the organisation with children, and so there is a feeling amongst the female interviewees that it is possible, it can be done. Whereas in InvestCo women report having only negative female
role models who reinforce that combining family with a senior position in the company cannot be achieved.

Insofar as a long-hours and inflexible work culture can be said to be inherently ‘gendered’ male, this is a feature of both companies. However, women work like men do in these companies – with no significant gender difference found regarding how many hours respondents work in either company.

Chapter Seven – Conclusions

Finally Chapter Seven draws together the overall conclusions of this thesis, and explores the theoretical implications of the findings. It also outlines some suggestions for further research in this area.

In summary this study finds that structural barriers are the key factor in women’s lack of representation in senior roles. Person-centred factors such as ambition and commitment are much less important in explaining why women are not at the top of these companies.

While women are not very well-represented in senior positions in either company, several features of AccountCo’s organisational structure/culture seem to allow women to fulfil their potential to a greater degree than is possible in InvestCo. These features include; no functional gender segregation; more formalised promotional procedures; more detailed and formalised performance appraisals; hands-on transformational leadership; and the presence of positive female role models who have combined having children and getting to the top.

In contrast, InvestCo does not engage in employee development to anything like the same degree, and a combination of organisational factors such as functional gender segregation and a patriarchal, macho culture combine to create an organisational culture in which women struggle to progress.
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

When we begin to review the literature on women and the workplace, we can see that over the past two decades the competing explanations for why women are still not represented at equal levels to men in senior roles in public and private sector organisations have crystallised into two main camps. On one side are those that stress the importance of 'person-centred' barriers such as women’s own lack of commitment and ambition for their careers (Hakim 1995; 2002; 2006; Gammie and Gammie, 1995; 1997; Bernardi; 1998; Cross and Linehan, 2006) and on the other there are those who find that situational, structural, and normative factors remain key in inhibiting women’s progress in the workplace (Gerson, 1985; Acker, 1990; 1992, 1998, 2009; Breuegel, 1996; Ginn et al, 1996; Crompton and Harris, 1998, 1999; Fagan, 2000; Himmelweit and Sigala, 2003; McRae 2003; Duncan and Irwin 2004; Crompton and Lyonette 2005; Halrynjo and Lyng 2009).

Thus on the one hand we have theorists who give ascendency to individual preference, and choice as the key factor – the most notable of these being Hakim’s Preference Theory, (Hakim 1995, 2000, 2002, 2006, 2007), while on the other hand we have those who see it as more complex than that – viewing women’s (and men’s) career choices as remaining constrained by a variety of situational and structural factors such as availability of childcare; organisational cultures; gendered social roles; welfare policies and labour market dynamics (Acker, 1990, 1992, 1998, 2009; Ginn, et al. 1996; Crompton and Harris 1998, 1999; McRae 2003; Crompton and Lyonette 2005; Eagly and Carli, 2007).

As this study is particularly concerned with whether individual preference or workplace culture is more important in inhibiting women’s career progress this literature review will look specifically at these issues. Firstly the person-centred explanations, particularly Preference Theory and the critiques of this will be reviewed; and secondly we will look at organisational-centred theories, most notably Acker’s theory of the gendered organisation, looking particularly at studies of organisational culture within the financial services sector.

2.2 PERSON-CENTRED THEORIES

2.2.1 PREFERENCE THEORY

Over the course of several publications from 1995 to 2007 Hakim has proposed and developed the idea of what she terms Preference Theory (1995, 2000, 2002, 2006, 2007). Hakim’s thesis is that in
liberalised economies such as the UK and the US, women are not equally represented in senior management positions, and will never be so, because of their innate preference to either prioritise family life completely, or to at least seek to balance family work with paid employment. By doing so women effectively choose not to devote the time and effort necessary to succeed in progressing to the top in the world of paid employment. Thus the central tenet of Preference Theory is that individual agency - i.e. women's individual choice not to prioritise paid employment - is the key factor in women's lack of representation in senior roles in the workplace.

Hakim does allow that social structural and economic environment to some extent still constrain women's choices but believes that these are declining in importance, and that in societies such as the UK and US we are at a point in time where women now have 'genuine choices' and that “...core values become [more] important predictors of behaviour” than structural factors (2006: 286).

In terms of the empirical basis for Preference Theory, it is derived from a mixture of secondary analysis of studies of women's labour force participation; analysis of the US’s National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) and the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID); and similar European surveys. Having developed the theory on these data sets, Hakim then sought to operationalise and test preference theory by carrying out primary survey research in the UK from 1998-2003.

In her analysis of this various data Hakim finds that women can be categorised into three main overall lifestyle preference typologies - they are either 'home-centred'; 'adaptive'; or 'work-centred'. Importantly Hakim argues that these preference typologies are found in all women regardless of levels of education or socio-economic background. (Hakim, 2002: 434)

Home-centred women are those who prioritise having and rearing children over paid employment, preferring to stay at home with their children full-time and Hakim finds they account for circa 20% of all women. Adaptive women are those who want to combine paid work with family work, and Hakim finds they account for circa 60% of all women. These adaptive women choose part-time or ‘women-friendly’ occupations such as teaching in order to get the ‘best of both worlds’ according to Hakim. (Hakim, 2004: 13). Work-centred women, as the name suggests, prioritise paid work, fitting family obligations around their careers, and are focused on ‘competitive activities in the public sphere’. (Ibid)

According to Hakim, men are twice as likely than women to be work-centred, and she posits that “preference theory predicts that men will retain their dominance in the labour market, politics and other competitive activities...because only a minority of women are prepared to prioritise their jobs...in the same way as men” (Hakim, 2004: 13). It is the work-centred individuals of both sexes who make it to the top of increasingly greedy organisations, and there are simply more men in this
work-centred category than women. Hakim argues that the majority of women are simply not committed enough to put in the time necessary to progress to the top. She contends that the high-level of commitment, dedication and effort required to get to the top in any career is incompatible with working intermittently or part-time as many women who have children choose to do (2006: 282).

Hakim posits that mothers want short predictable hours as contrasted with unpredictable long hours required of senior managers, thus she argues that “in the long run it is work-centred people who are most likely to survive, and become high achievers, in greedy occupations” (Hakim, 2006: 289)

Hakim (1995) posits that working part-time and not working at all outside of the home are ‘choices’ women make, and does not give any credence to what might cause these patterns of behaviour – i.e. gender role socialisation, the high-cost of childcare and so forth.

**Workplace structures and preference theory**

When Hakim turns her attention to workplace structures, she appears to see organisations and the way in which work is done as being gender-neutral and ‘common-sense’. For example, she contends that not all jobs can be ‘domesticated’ – that is not all jobs can be done part-time or in a non-linear fashion with a tolerance for breaks in service that are required for reproduction. Even with an open-ness by employers to creatively redesign such roles, Hakim contends that some occupations will remain “inevitably more greedy or ‘hegemonic’” than others (2006: 281).

Rather than seeing any inherent gendering within organisational structures or in how work is constructed, Hakim sees workplaces as inherently or intrinsically requiring a certain kind of ‘always-on’ commitment from workers. For example she contends that “extensive amounts of travel are intrinsic to certain occupations, such as investment banking….such occupations, and the careers based on them, are never going to be family-friendly” (2006: 282). This seems to disregard the idea that the way in which work is structured is gendered or socially constructed rather than ‘intrinsically’ necessary. For example one could certainly argue that front-line workers such as accident and emergency hospital staff need to work unsocial hours due to the very nature of their jobs, but can we really say that ‘extensive amounts of travel’ are somehow intrinsic in order to work in investment banking? – it may well be true in terms of how commitment is currently measured in these roles, but is it the ‘nature’ of the job or is it rather how ideas of ‘commitment’ have been constructed over years within male dominated industries? Are they just ways of working that are socially constructed and based on gendered notions of the ideal worker as male and unencumbered by commitments to life outside of work as Acker has argued? (Acker, 1990)

Hakim concedes that preference theory does not apply to women in all countries; rather it applies to women in liberal societies which have undergone five specific historical changes. The five changes
are the contraceptive revolution; the equal opportunities revolution; the expansion of white-collar occupations; the creation of jobs for secondary earners - people who do not want to give priority to paid work at the expense of other life interests; and the increasing importance of attitudes, values and personal preferences in the lifestyle choices of affluent modern societies.

These changes are producing what Hakim terms a 'new scenario' of options and opportunities for women. Hakim says that the five changes do not necessarily occur in all modern societies, and do not always occur together, but that their effects are cumulative. According to Hakim, both the US and the UK are examples of societies where all five of these historical changes have been completed, and thus what she terms the 'new scenario' was firmly established in both countries by the last 20 years of the 20th century.

2.2.2 CRITIQUES OF PERSON-CENTRED EXPLANATIONS

Hakim's thesis that women's own lack of dedication to their careers is the main reason for their absence in senior positions within the world of paid employment, and her assertion that social structures are of much less importance than individual agency in this regard, has proven controversial and has provoked much debate amongst scholars working in this area. These other scholars argue that situational and structural factors such as a country's welfare policy; labour market dynamics; female education levels; cultural norms and values regarding how motherhood is constructed - all play a part in constraining women's choices when it comes to labour force participation (Gerson, 1985; Breuegel, 1996; Ginn et al, 1996; Crompton and Harris, 1998, 1999; Fagan, 2000; Himmelweit and Sigala, 2003; McRae 2003; Duncan and Irwin 2004; Crompton and Lyonette 2005; Halrynjo and Lyng 2009).

The main critiques of preference theory and of person-centred explanations of women's under-representation at senior levels in the workforce in general, is that firstly they are overly simplistic and stop short of fully contextualising 'choices' within the wider structural, social and cultural landscape which both women and men live. Rather women (and men's) career choices are found to be influenced by both structural practicalities and social constructions of what it means to be a 'good worker' and a 'good mother/father'. As McRae (2003) puts it “explanations of women’s employment choices after motherhood that ...stop short of considering constraints in favour of preferences – are simply incomplete” (2003: 330). Secondly, critics argue that the relationship between 'preferences', behaviours and attitudes is complex and often contradictory, and that therefore preferences are not always a predictor of behaviour or vice versa. (Breuegel, 1996)
Hakim’s preference theory has been tested and disproven by many studies. For example Crompton and Harris (1998) find that while “preferences may shape choices…they do not, contrary to Hakim’s assertions, determine them” (Crompton and Harris 1998: 131). Rather Crompton and Harris find that both men and women’s choices are constrained by situational and structural factors such as welfare regimes and overall labour market conditions – for example availability of childcare, parental leave policies and so forth (Crompton and Harris 1998).

This echoes Ginn et al (1996) who note that women’s preferences in terms of working full-time in paid employment, not-working at all, or working part-time, must be understood in the context of ‘second-shift’ domestic and childcare responsibilities, in terms of the demands on their time and the cost of childcare, which they argue limits women’s employment options more than men’s. (Ginn et al, 1996: 169)

While Hakim sees women’s choices in liberalised economies such as the US and the UK as unconstrained by issues of lack of equality of opportunity etc., echoing Crompton and Harris (1998) Fagan’s (2000) cross-national study found that mothers’ attitudes and choices regarding their working life are influenced and structured by both state economic and welfare policies, and their own family economic conditions – finding overall that mothers choices are ‘bounded’ by their circumstances.

In McRae’s (2003) examination of Hakim’s preference theory amongst mothers in the UK and North America, she finds that while employment careers are centrally important to only a minority of women, as posited by Hakim, once again little evidence is found that preferences are the reason for this. Rather McRae finds that amongst women with similar preferences, the presence of differing constraints and the differing levels capacity to overcome them resulted in different work outcomes. McRae (2003) once again fails to find evidence to support preference theory, and finds that women do not live in a world of unconstrained genuine career choices. It is the ‘ability to act upon’ preferences that differentiates women according to McRae, rather than innate lifestyle preferences.

McRae contends that the structural factor that affects mothers’ choices most considerably is the availability of work and the affordability of childcare. Lack of educational qualifications, and early pregnancy were also found to curtail women’s choices, contradicting Hakim’s contention that preference theory cuts across socio-economic backgrounds.

“The ability to overcome constraints is patterned by social structure/class whether manifested through differing qualifications, social networks or income (cf. McRae 1993). Preferences alone, in other words, are only part of the story of most women’s lives.” (2003: 334)
This finding is echoed by Crompton and Lyonette (2005) who’s cross-country study of the US and Europe found that having higher levels of educational qualifications was associated with being in a higher social class, and that women who were more ‘traditional’ in attitude and behaviour (i.e. those who would fit into Hakim’s home-centred grouping) had significantly lower levels of educational attainment than women who showed a high commitment to their careers.

Their study found that several factors determine attitudes, and that preferences are socially constructed rather than innately ‘essential’ to women. They also posit that in the same way that couples’ working arrangements are influenced by certain factors (including attitudes); attitudes may also be influenced by contextual factors, including couples’ working arrangements. Thus they question the causal links – what comes first the behaviour; the ability to ‘act-upon’ certain preferences by having the opportunity, the skill, the affordable childcare etc.; or the attitude? (Crompton and Lyonette, 2005).

This reconfirms an earlier Crompton and Harris (1998) study which found that women ‘work on’ their lives and make their choices in relation to their ‘perceived possibilities’. They contend that “these possibilities vary relationally as well as culturally and historically” (1998: 124), and that people adapt to the choices available to them. Thus they conclude that;

“...one-sidedly voluntaristic explanations of women’s (and men’s) economic behaviour, in which 'orientations to work' and corresponding choice of economic activity are regarded as the major explanatory variables in respect of women's (and men's) economic behaviour, are inadequate and potentially misleading” (1998: 131)

**Motherhood and ‘choice’**

Several studies have found that socially-constructed norms and values regarding what it means to be a mother are important factors which can influence and constrain career choices for women, once again highlighting the apparent over-simplification adopted by Hakim in her thesis.

For example in examining UK mothers’ perceptions and choices in combining mothering with paid work; in allocating roles with their partners; and in choosing childcare, Duncan and Irwin (2004) find that mothers choices are influenced and constrained by “socially negotiated accounts of what is morally adequate” and that these choices are influenced by social class and ethnicity (Duncan and Irwin 2004: 391)

Echoing this in separate studies Fagan (2000) and Halrynjo and Lyng (2009) have also found that a woman’s identity as a ‘mother’ is presented, negotiated and experienced in the context of social
expectations which in turn influence choices regarding how to combine paid employment with being a mother.

Workplace structures and preference theory

The complex interplay of gender with workplace structures is something which Hakim appears to ignore in her Preference Theory thesis. Hakim describes Gerson’s (1985) analysis of career and family choices amongst college-educated women in the US as being ‘brilliant’ (Hakim 2002: 439) – despite the fact that Hakim then ignores Gerson’s findings which point to the large constraints placed on these women’s choices by structural barriers in the workplace.

Gerson (1985) found increased opportunities for career advancement resulted in increased levels of career ambition for women in her sample, while for women who saw their “workplace aspirations coded”, mothering and marriage became their ‘career’. Rather than putting this merely down to different ‘preferences’ as Hakim does (Hakim, 1995; 2002; 2006) Gerson notes that dissatisfaction with blocked opportunities in the workplace and the “the relatively flat mobility structure of ‘women’s work’ promoted domesticity and the defusing of ambition”. She found that limited access to career advancement reduced women’s motivation to work, but also increased the attractiveness of life as a home-maker.

Gerson’s finding that “disenchantment with work created the context that made mothering attractive” (Gerson, 1985: 114), echoes McCrate (1998) who argues that women learn to ‘prefer’ motherhood due to the lack of alternative opportunities, seeing it as an adapted preference rather than as an innate one as Hakim contends (Gerson, 1985; McCrate, 1988; Hakim 2002).

Gerson found that coming up against structural barriers to opportunities in the workforce was a significant factor in women lowering their career aspirations, and ultimately ‘opting-out’ of the workforce. When it comes to ‘downsizing’ workplace ambitions, Gerson found that it was difficult to distinguish preferences from real choice in women’s lives. “A series of not altogether satisfactory trade-offs” seems to have marked the choice patterns of the women in her study, (Gerson, 1985: 114), a finding echoed in Hewlett el al’s more recent work (2005).

In the following section we will look specifically at this argument that organisational structures remain a key factor in blocking women’s progress in the workplace.
2.3 ORGANISATION-CENTRED THEORIES

While on one end of the spectrum we have Hakim (1995; 2002; 2006) and her theory that individual agency is now the key factor in women’s continued under-representation at the top level in the workplace; on the other end we have theorists who believe that work organisations are culturally and structurally gendered to suit men and the traditional male breadwinner lifestyle model - thus making it inherently difficult for women, especially those who are mothers, to progress.

In her seminal study in the 1970s, Kanter (1977) found that gender differences in organisational behaviour are due to the workplace structure and cultures rather than to characteristics of women and men as individuals (1977, 291-92). She argued that the problems women have in large organizations are consequences of their structural placement, crowded in dead-end jobs at the bottom and exposed as tokens at the top. According to Kanter (1977) “organizations clearly reproduce themselves. People in power (who are mostly masculine men) mentor, encourage, and advance people who are most like themselves” (1977: 72).

Acker (1990, 1992, 1994, 1998, 2006) built upon Kanter’s findings and in her 1990 article proposed her theory of the gendered organisation. While Acker (1990; 1998; 2009) theorised the gendered organisation in quite a new and ground-breaking way, many others have both built upon and provided further support for Acker’s theory (O’Leary, 1997; Wajcman, 1998; Maier, 1999; Hewlett et al, 2005; Eagly and Carli, 2007).

2.3.1 ACKER AND THE GENDERED ORGANISATION

From 1990 to 2009 Acker has developed the idea that far from being gender neutral sites, gender is in fact embedded within organisations – in their processes, structures and sub-structures. This gendering reflects wider societal trends and thus female employment is contextualised within the wider attitudes, norms and values of the society within which the organisations operate.

Acker (1990) argues that ‘abstract jobs’ and organisational hierarchies assume what she terms a ‘disembodied universal worker’ - but that this ‘disembodied’ worker is not gender neutral, rather it is gendered male. The very nature of the roles and responsibilities required of this so-called ‘universal’ worker mean that it presumes a high level of commitment, with little responsibilities outside of work. The very notion of ‘jobs’, ‘workers’ or ‘hierarchies’ are gendered terms and are constructed to suit the male breadwinner model of linear, straightforward career progression – one which does not expect an organisation to accommodate a worker for reproductive breaks in service, or expect a worker to have extensive family commitments outside of work. (Acker, 1990)
That the ideal worker is gendered male has been confirmed by several other studies, and the negative impact this has on women, and mothers in particular is clear (Crosby et al, 2004). Kumra and Vinnicombe (2008) find that women simply do not ‘fit the mould’ of what it takes to be a senior manager. As Wajcman notes, within the workplace, “men are still constructed as the universal standard, and it is women who are marked as ‘gendered’, the ones who are different, the inferior other” (Wajcman, 1998: 160). This echoes De Beauvoir’s (1949) notion of women as ‘other’ - with men having claimed the category of Self or Subject for themselves within the workplace, women and their associated needs in terms of flexible hours; breaks for maternity leave and so forth, are relegated to the status of ‘other’, (De Beauvoir, 1949).

In terms of how the overall process of gendering occurs within organisations Acker (1990) argues that it happens via five interacting processes. At the first level is gender segregation in the workplace, the labour market overall and the family. Occupational, vertical and horizontal gender segregation within the workplace is well documented with women ‘taking care’ while men ‘take charge’ (Catalyst, 2005).

The second process by which organisations are gendered according to Acker is via the construction of symbols and images that explain, express, and reinforce, these gender divisions. For example the enduring stereotypical image of a leader as a dominant man in a suit.

The third process involves how women and men inter-act with each other in these organisations – the accepted norms and behaviours that each gender must follow. Acker contends that “men are the actors, women the emotional support” (1990: 147). Leaders are defined in male terms – this is echoed by several other studies of workplace culture, with the presence of traditional gender stereotyping which perpetuates the notion that good managers are male, (Heilman, 2001; Ridgeway, 2001; Powell et al, 2002; Eagly and Steffen, 2004; Schein, 2007) and that portraying the agentic traits associated with being a good leader is often found to have negative consequences for women as doing so violates “prescriptions of feminine niceness” (Rudman and Glick, 2001 Babcock and Laschever, 2007).

These three processes help produce the fourth element of how organisations are gendered. They assist in producing what Acker terms “gendered components of individual identity” by affecting how women and men see themselves – how they choose work ‘appropriate’ for their sex ; their choice of language, how they dress and overall how they present themselves as a gendered member of an organization. (Acker, 1990: 147)

The final element of the gendered organisation is in how gender as an overall organising process in society helps to frame the underlying relations of other structures, including workplaces. (Acker, 1990). The gendered organisation is essentially a reflection of the wider gendering or social roles, and
of cultural norms and values in a society. It reflects the wider gender divisions of labour in society, and traditional gender stereotypes and expectations about what it means to be an ‘ideal worker’; a ‘leader’ and so forth (Acker 1990).

More recently Acker has explored the idea of how organisations are effectively ‘inequality regimes’ that serve to obstruct barriers according to gender, race and class. She references and builds on Eagly and Carli’s ‘labyrinth metaphor’ (Eagly and Carli, 2007) to explore the complex interplay of barriers to women’s progress in work organisations (Acker, 2009).

Acker identifies several variables which interact to affect the degree of inequality in an organisation; firstly is the steepness of hierarchy - with inequality being more pronounced the higher you get in an organisations hierarchical structure (Acker, 2009: 203); secondly is the degree and pattern of gender segregation; third is the gender pay gap; fourth is the severity of power differences between workers and managers – level of unionisation for example; and the final element is the general requirements of work in organizations - in most cases, work is organized on the image of an unencumbered worker who is totally dedicated to the work and who has no responsibilities for children and family demands other than earning a living.

Thus gendering is embedded at many levels in the organisational structure and processes and these ways of ‘doing business’ are so taken for granted that they are effectively ‘invisible’ now according to Acker (2009). She cites the invisibility of the “systematic inequalities” as one of the key impediments to organisational change (Acker, 2009: 210).

Apart from the ‘corpracric linear career model’ being inherently gendered (O’Leary, 1997; Wajcman, 1998) – these taken-for-granted norms which shape the very nature of how work is done, when it is done etc. has been found to stymie women’s progress. According to Kumra and Vinnicombe, work practices which act as barriers to women’s career advancement “are all examples of how gender-based norms pervade organizational life” (2008: 72). They are examples of what Acker terms the “masculine substructure of organizations” (Acker, 1992: 252) or what Maier terms “corporate masculinity” (Maier, 1999). As Maier notes “…organizations implicitly, extensively, and consistently favour the masculine worldview” (Maier, 1999: 89)

2.3.2 FROM THE GLASS CEILING TO THE ORGANISATIONAL LABYRINTH

Building on Acker’s gendered organisation theory, Eagly and Carli (2007) argue that the reasons behind women’s absence in leadership positions within the workplace have been ‘misdiagnosed’. They posit that rather than coming up against a ‘glass ceiling’ at one specific point in their careers, women instead face what they term a career “labyrinth” with twists, turns and obstacles all along the
way. They believe that the glass-ceiling metaphor is misleading on several levels – it suggests that there is only one obstacle that women face, and that it is something which they come up against only as they are within touching-distance of the ‘top’ - having risen unimpeded through entry and mid-level management positions. They also argue that the glass-ceiling metaphor suggests an ‘unseeable’ and therefore unavoidable barrier to women’s progress – whereas in fact they posit that some barriers are clear and can be overcome by women and by organisations who wish to retain and promote the best staff.

They outline five elements which make up the ‘labyrinth’ as they see it – these are a mix of structural; bias and situational factors – with little emphasis given to women’s own preference not to want to pursue these types of senior roles. The first element of the labyrinth is a basic form of sex discrimination, or ‘vestiges of prejudiced’ as Eagly and Carli (2007b) call it. This incorporates a general bias against women which they say appears to operate with approximately equal strength at all levels. “The scarcity of female corporate officers is the sum of discrimination that has operated at all ranks, not evidence of a particular obstacle to advancement as women approach the top.” (Eagly and Carli, 2007b: 65)

The second element leads on from this gender discrimination and manifests itself as what they term an overall ‘resistance to female leadership’. They describe this as being a combination of stereotypical beliefs about women and men that incorporate;

“...a set of widely shared conscious and unconscious mental associations about women, men, and leaders. Study after study has affirmed that people associate women and men with different traits and link men with more of the traits that connote leadership. .... In the language of psychologists, the clash is between two sets of associations: communal and agentic” (Eagly and Carli, 2007b: 65/66).

This is the so-called ‘double-bind’ issue that women in leadership positions face – too weak and feminine or too strong and masculine. Either way they are not fitting the role of ‘strong leader’ or ‘feminine woman’, and are thus operating outside of their socially constructed gender role.

This in turn leads onto the third element of the labyrinth – an overall problem with leadership style that women appear to struggle with. Eagly and Carli contend that in trying to be all things to all people, to be soft yet strong, female leaders “often struggle to cultivate an appropriate and effective leadership style – one that reconciles the communal qualities people prefer in women with the agentic qualities people think leaders need to succeed.” (Eagly and Carli, 2007b: 66).
The fourth element of the labyrinth is the demands of family life – the issue of the real glass-ceiling being at home as Hirshman has argued (2005), with women facing a ‘second-shift’ of family responsibilities allied to their working day. They say that for many women

“...the most fateful turns in the labyrinth are the ones taken under pressure of family responsibilities. Women continue to be the ones who interrupt their careers, take more days off, and work part-time. As a result, they have fewer years of job experience and fewer hours of employment per year, which slows their career progress and reduces their earnings.” (Eagly and Carli, 2007b: 68).

This is echoed in studies in Ireland and Europe generally – we see in time-usage studies that women do more hours of work in total than men when time spent on childcare and domestic chores is added to time in paid employment. (Burchell et al 2007; McGinnity and Russell, 2008). There appears no doubt that motherhood, and the associated increase in this so-called ‘second-shift’ domestic tasks can impact negatively on women’s career progression as many scholars have discussed (Horchschild, 1989; Burchell et al, 2007; McGinnity and Russell, 2008; Hirshman 2005; O’Leary, 1997; Williams, 2001; 2006; Hewlett, 2002, 2005; Crosby et al 2004).

The fifth and final element in the Eagly and Carli’s (2007b) labyrinth metaphor is what they describe as women’s own underinvestment in social capital. Rather than suggesting this is down to women’s preference not to bother with building their professional networks etc., Eagly and Carli argue that this is again due to the complex work/family balancing act that women need to do more often than their male colleagues – leaving women little time for out-of-hours informal networking.

2.3.4 FINANCIAL SERVICES AS A GENDERED SECTOR

When we turn our attention to the literature which looks specifically at the financial services – to their organisational cultures and how women progress within them, we can see clearly that both Acker (1990, 2009) and Eagly and Carli (2007) provide theories which help us to understand why this is a particularly tough industry for women to progress within.

Acker contends that masculinity “pervades organizational processes, marginalizing women and contributing to the maintenance of gender segregation in organizations.” (Acker, 1990: 139).
Organisations operating within the financial services sector do not appear to be exceptions to Acker’s theory. Study after study finds the financial services to be imbued with masculinity, in for example how organizations within the industry are overwhelmingly male dominated; in the way career paths are structured; in the way women are segregated into less prestigious areas of the business; and in terms of dominant management styles (Kerfoot and Knights, 1993; Maupin, 1993; Parker et al, 1998; Quack and Hancke, 1999; Woodward and Ozbilgin, 1999; Liff and Ward, 2001; Metz, 2003; Granleese; 2004; Smithson et al, 2004; Ogden et al, 2006)

The overall culture of the financial services industry has been found to be ‘male’ and ‘boysy’ and a place where ‘male bravado’ predominates (Ogden et al, 2006: 47) with “a high ‘stereotypic masculine’ orientation” found to be key to advancing in financial services organisations (Maupin and Lehman, 1994: 435).

Looking at both public and private financial institutions within Europe, Quack and Hancke (1999) found that women were still “largely absent from top level decision-making in political financial institutions of EU member states” (Quack and Hancke, 1999: 26). While they found women entering the financial services in ever greater numbers, men were found to still dominate the most important roles and that “at the very top, decision-making concerning “big money” still seems to be very much male dominated” (Quack and Hancke, 1999: 41). The reason for this absence of women in powerful roles was put down to cultural and structural barriers. Male values were found to dominate corporate culture in many respects; “they are implicit in the requirement to be available full-time for the job, they are hidden agenda in recruitment and promotion procedures and they may affect the availability and support from mentors for potential candidates for higher management” (Quack and Hancke, 1999: 57).

In a study of women within UK high-street banking, Parker et al (1998) found that gender stereotypes remained a barrier to women’s progress, with “engagement, marriage, and especially motherhood….still seen as likely to damage male managers’ perceptions of women’s abilities and commitment” (Parker et al, 1998: 159) They also note that even though formalized recruitment process had replaced the old style ‘tap on the shoulder’ ways of doing promotion, which had in the past favoured men more than women, the “management structures, the culture of expectations and most key decisions about who gets promoted remain in men’s hands” (Parker et al, 1998: 159).

With regard to occupational segregation within the financial services, Parker et al noted that “gendered career routes” remain. (Parker et al, 1998: 160) They found that while more rigid of what was deemed ‘women’s’ and ‘men’s’ work had “softened”, they had not disappeared, and that in fact some aspects of “dual career structures” had merely become more subtle than in the past, with those women that do make it to management positions often finding themselves “side-lined in new ways”
due to the presence of 'glass walls' where women remain in functional or specialist areas while not progressing in the main operational centres of companies. (Parker et al, 1998: 160). This form of occupational segregation of women into support-functions was echoed in Granleese’s study of the UK banking sector, (Granleese, 2004), and is also corroborated by findings in the financial services sector in Australia (Still, 1997), the EU (Quack and Hancke, 1999) and in Barker and Monk’s study of female accountants in Ireland (Barker and Monks, 1998)

Smithson et al note, (2004) that in the context of the UK accountancy profession, concerns about recruitment and retention, especially among younger women accountants, have led to some high-profile campaigns on flexible working and work-life balance in large firms. However this has coincided with “pressures to work longer hours and produce work to tighter budgets and deadlines (Lewis, 2001)” (Smithson et al, 2004: 120), so as jobs become more “extreme” (Hewlett et al, 2007) demanding ever-more commitment and efficiencies from employees and organizations get more “greedy” (Smithson et al, 2004) in their demands on workers time, reduced working hours is the antithesis of what employers want, and reward.

Granleese (2004) notes that while banks have been at the forefront when it comes to promoting equality polices, with job sharing and career breaks now used by banks as retention strategies, studies of women in banking in the UK find that “men’s power in higher management positions can still be used to obstruct women’s advancement”, and that this power often contradicts formal policies that seek to promote the idea that career and motherhood are compatible” (Granleese, 2004: 219)

In study of the Australian financial services industry in the late 1990s, Still (1997) found that despite cultural and structural changes in the industry over recent years,

"...career and promotional opportunities have not changed and continue to reflect traditional, male models.....the greatest hurdles to overcome in banking and finance appear to be traditional organizational culture, as well as the structural problems of the 'ghettos' of women in part-time work, where training and career options are generally poor (Still, 1997: 2)

Still’s found there to be a working environment that favours men, and that despite being numerical in the majority within the industry, women feel they are ‘outsiders’ in organizations within this industry. Women in her sample felt that it was clear that they did not ‘fit’ with what was considered management material in this industry. (Still, 1997: 41)

This ‘lack of fit’ notion is echoed in a more recent study of a Big-Four professional services firm in the UK (Kumra and Vinnicombe, 2008). They found that there is a clear mould into which potential partners have to ‘fit’ – and this mould was found to be gendered in nature (2008: 69). They found that
in order to advance within the company employees had to emulate the prevailing model of success, to fit into the pre-existing ‘mould’ of what a partner is, and overwhelming Kumra and Vinnicombe found that the “model against which ‘success’ is measured is predominantly male” (2008: 70).

Thus we find a consistency emerges within studies of the financial services, with the persistence of a ‘dominant male culture’ being seen as a key factor in why there are so few women in top jobs in the industry. (Maupin, 2003; Parker et al, 1998; Granleese, 2004; Kumra and Vinnicombe, 2008)
2.4 CONCLUSION

"Most of us spend most of our days in work organizations that are almost always dominated by men. The most powerful organizational positions are almost entirely occupied by men... Power at the national and world level is located in all-male enclaves at the pinnacle of large state and economic organizations." (Acker, 1990: 139)

This opening statement of Acker's seminal article on gendered organisations is as true today as it was when she wrote it over twenty years ago. Within the literature, the argument that emerges is not over whether this is true or not – the facts and statistics speak for themselves and thus we know that men still predominantly occupy these powerful positions. Rather the argument is why this is the case.

Hakim (1995, 2000, 2002, 2006, 2007) argues that despite public policy intervention, it is because women have made their 'choice' and have opted for a life where family is preferred over paid employment. The notion that women's under-representation at senior levels in the workplace is merely a reflection of women's 'choice' not to progress to the top, has also been posited by others researching this area, including those examining the financial services sector (Gammie and Gammie, 1995; 1997; Bernardi, 1998), and those examining women in the Irish workplace (Cross and Linehan, 2006).

However these studies have been criticised for stopping short of fully-analysing the issue, of examining the reasons behind the choices women make when trying to balance their work and family lives. As discussed in this chapter, others have highlighted the fact that situational, structural and normative factors remain important barriers to women sharing an equality of opportunity in the workplace with their male colleagues.

Rather than over-simplifying the issue as Hakim and others have been criticised for doing, (Ginn et al, 1996) scholars such as Crompton and Harris (1998), Fagan (2000), McRae (2003), Crompton and Lyonette (2005) attempt to highlight the complex reality of women and men's lives and the constant negotiation and renegotiation of roles, expectations; choices; and preferences which shape their career choices. These scholars show that work preferences are influenced and limited by the practicalities of a constrained reality, and that these constraints change over time depending on family status; age; educational attainment, welfare policies and so forth. These scholars seek to contextualise female employment decision-making in wider societal factors – rather than bring it down to mere 'choice', unconstrained and unbounded by situation or structure as Hakim seems to suggest.

Bringing it further down to the meso, organisational level, Acker (1990; 2009), Eagly and Carli (2007) and others contextualise female employment decision-making further by exploring the
gendered nature of organisations and how this gendering creates barriers which serve to exclude women and further constrain their opportunities to progress in the workplace. Acker's analysis goes far deeper than Hakim's preference theory – looking at the structures, and processes of an organisation and how they construct and reinforce notions of gender inequality. Choices are made within structures and frameworks that are inherently 'gendered' and thus cannot be said to be unconstrained.

The literature on person-centred versus organisational-centred barriers to women's workplace progression has been drawn on to both contextualise and to inform the research methodologies used for this PhD study. In the following Chapter 3, the methodology used to explore this issue of personal preference versus organisational context in this study is outlined in detail.
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

3.1.1. EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND ONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

My methodological approach was influenced by my epistemological and ontological perspectives. From an ontological perspective, my personal view as a researcher is that there are multiple constructed realities rather than one reality, and thus I would approach research via a constructionist tradition and understanding of what constitutes social reality (Bryman, 2004; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). From an epistemological perspective I would view knowledge and how it is produced via an interpretivist lens (Bryman, 2004; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Thus I approached this study from the perspective of a researcher who believes that there are multiple truths, multiple realities and that meaning is constructed rather than fixed. I would reject the positivist tradition of viewing social phenomenon as something which can be neatly measured and deduced via a mathematical equation. Rather I approach research in an inductive fashion, aiming to explore social phenomenon by allowing theories to emerge and by being led by the data.

Following on from these epistemological and ontological stand-points, my preference in research is to follow qualitative methods which I believe give voice to the complex and nuanced social phenomenon which I wish to explore. It is not my view that trying to objectively measure an occurrence and somehow deduce from that the reasons behind complex social realities is the most appropriate method to approach social research.

Hakim (2002) has contended that “feminist orthodoxy has replaced dispassionate social scientific assessment” of women and work. However I do not believe that a researcher can ever be ‘objective’, or that assessments of social phenomenon are ever ‘dispassionate. Rather I believe it to the case that every decision made during the research design process, from what research topic to examine, to what survey question to ask, and how to interpret it, is influenced by the researchers’ subjective view of the social world, their view of what constitutes reality and what constitutes knowledge.
Despite Hakim’s contention, I believe that feminist research traditions do bring a more nuanced understanding of women’s lives into focus. Holland and Ramazanoglu (Holland & Ramazanoglu, 2002:154), say that feminist researchers;

...developed face to face, qualitative and interactive methods as the most appropriate way to produce data on the realities of women’s lives. This approach was specifically taken in opposition to a particular positivist methodological position that assumed quantitative data could best represent reality, and was also intended to counter the absence of knowledge of women’s lives. It encouraged researchers to give a voice to personal, experiential and emotional aspects of existence (which dependence on ‘scientific method’ had ignored, or marginalised as ‘subjective knowledge’). These approaches to data production are valued for respecting the understandings and experiences of research subjects, and making explicit the politics of knowing and the possibilities of empowerment. (Ibid: 155)

Qualitative methods are therefore seen as an important research tool for this proposed study into Irish women’s working lives. As Tim May contends;

...personal experience is frequently devalued as being too subjective, while science is objective. There is much to be gained from exploring the lives and experiences of women in understanding society and correcting the silence which surrounds women’s voices....this is a fundamental aspect of research methods. (May, 2001: 21)

Having said all this, my primary aim in this research was to be as thorough and as comprehensive as possible in terms of what data I gathered in each company. Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2005 contend that “mono-method research the biggest threat to the advancement of the social sciences” (Onwuegbuzie & Leech 2005). Having secured access to private sector companies in a very under-researched sector of the Irish economic landscape, I wanted to take full advantage of this opportunity and gather as much useful data as possible. I wanted to be a ‘pragmatic’ researcher, and to thus allow my research question to dictate my methodology, rather than to allow my own personal ideologies to take precedence.

With this aim in mind I took what Ritchie and Lewis (2003) describe as the ‘toolkit’ approach to social research. That is appreciating the benefits of both qualitative and quantitative methods, and using them as appropriate to meet the needs of the research question.
Examining my overall research aim and individual research questions is became clear that my study had factors which required ‘measurement of some kind but also greater understanding of the nature or origins of an issue’ (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003: 38). There was a need to examine both the ‘number and nature’ of this phenomenon. I wanted to understand where the women were located in these organisations and to also capture some attitudinal and perception data. Allied to this I wanted to understand the ‘whys’ behind this. If women were in certain roles, at certain levels, and displayed certain attitudes or perceptions, then I wanted to get under the skin of that and give voice to their experience. Thus a mixed methodological approach was decided upon.

3.1.2 RESEARCH DESIGN - MIXED METHODOLOGY

This study used a mixed methodological approach to study a cross-section of the types of firms which operate within the financial services in Ireland. Drawing on the methodological approach of similar studies of the financial services sector in the UK (Ogden et al, 2006; Maxwell et al, 2007; Blair-Loy, 1999), quantitative and qualitative data was collected from employees of two companies operating in different areas of the financial services sector.

A recent ESRI (2009) report noted that more individual company case-studies would be useful in examining the question of women’s under-representation within top management in Ireland.

“These, while limited to those working in that company, allow us to combine both organisational level detail with substantial detail about women’s motivations and aspirations, and tease out the processes by which women come to be under-represented in managerial positions” (Russell et al 2009:59)

The research took the form of qualitative, in-depth semi-structured interviews, coupled with an online survey. Mixing the qualitative in-depth interviews with a quantitative survey allows for triangulation in terms of the research design, providing a more nuanced understanding of women and men’s career ambitions and personal experiences of climbing the corporate ladder. (Bryman, 2004: 275).

The aim of the survey was not to generalize findings, but rather to capture attitudes and perceptions, as well as some basic demographic information and some career progression indicators. The survey could then be used to identify overall themes and to provide a backdrop and context within which to better understand the interview data.
Both women and men were included in this research so as to ascertain what issues can be said to be gender-specific and what are common to both men and women. As Wajcman notes; “only half the story is told”, if men are omitted from this kind of study of gender and the workplace. (Wajcman, 1998: 158)

Fieldwork was carried out between the beginning of July 2008 and September 2008

3.1.3 SURVEY

The survey aimed to capture attitudes and perceptions towards career progression. It contained 38 questions, consisting of a mixture of single question items (e.g. demographic information) and Likert-type scales. It took roughly 15 minutes to complete, and was delivered online, with the web link emailed to the relevant survey sample. (Please see Appendix D for survey instrument)

The survey was circulated to over 750 employees within the two case-study companies, and elicited 251 usable responses (51% male, 49% female), giving a response rate of approximately 35%. Detailed response-rates by company are provided in section 3.4.

Survey design and implementation

The survey instrument was designed according to the best-practice questionnaire guidelines as outlined by Dillman (1998), Oppenheim (1966, 1982), Babbie (1990), May (2004) and Burgess (2001). HR in each company provided me with the necessary detail needed to tailor the survey instrument for each particular company.

The first consideration was to ensure that the questionnaire addressed the needs of the research aims. To this end a wide-ranging review of the literature was done so that the survey instrument could be rooted in the literature, and could leverage on what other studies had found. The aim was to cover a range of potential barriers and enablers to women’s progress in the workforce in as succinct a manner as possible. This review generated a lot of potential topics to cover, and over time and following iterations and piloting this was summarized down to nine key topics.

The final selection of questions was chosen to reflect the overall research questions and aims. Drawing on the literature, the survey sought to capture information on the following:
• Basic demographics; and basic questions regarding what role and position the respondent held in the company.

• Career progression indicators – how many promotions, how many subordinates; salary level (drawn from Metz and Tharenou, 2001; Tharenou, 1999; Lyness and Thompson, 1997; Stroh et al, 1992; Wood and Lindorff, 2001)

• Ambition – this was measured using a 12-item scale adapted from ambition scales developed by Korabik and Rosin, (1995); Metz, (2005); Hannson, (1983); and Nauta et al, 1998)

• Commitment – this was measured using a five-item scale adapted from the Life Role Salience Scale’s Occupational Role Commitment sub-scale, developed by Amatea et al, (1986)

• Managerial gender stereotypes – this was measured using a five-item scale adapted from ‘Stereotypical Beliefs about Women Managers Scale’ developed by Moore et al, (2004)

• Human capital (education, years worked, length of service in current company)

• Social capital - role models, mentors, networking (drawn from Kumra and Vinnicombe, 2008)

• Organisational factors – perception of equality and promotional procedures.

• Barriers/enablers to career success – (drawn from Tharenou et al, 1994; Loughlin, 1999; Ragins et al, 1998; Still, 1997)

Several scale measures were included in the survey to capture information such as levels of ambition and commitment. As Babbie contends scales are useful as it is “...seldom possible to arrive at a single question that adequately represents a complex variable” (1990: 147). Scales also avoiding the biases inherent in single items (Ibid)

Much care was given to avoid instrument uncertainty and instrument bias. To this end care and attention was given to ensuring that the questions were clear and unambiguous; that the lay-out and sequence was appropriate; and to avoid leading questions.

The method of delivery chosen was online, as this was considered most appropriate given the work-setting of the research participants. The survey monkey www.surveymonkey.com online survey tool used was used.
The design had to balance covering the wide-range of topics I wished to gain insight into, while not making it so long and unwieldy that respondents failed to complete it.

In order to enhance the possibility of achieving a good response rate, categorical response options were used in the vast majority of cases. This was done for two reasons – firstly for ease of use – a mere click of a mouse could be used to answer all questions, thereby making completion time faster than having to type in an answer. Secondly this was used so that people would feel more comfortable indicating sensitive information such as their salary, age and so forth, as they were grouped into categories rather than asking for specific details.

The survey was circulated via email to all relevant staff in each company. The survey was given a two week window for completion and the first invitation was followed up with two reminders from HR in an effort to maximize response-rate.

At 38-questions, the survey was long, and piloting showed that it took 15 minutes to complete. Despite the length, the online design ensured that it was clear and well-presented, and that questions could automatically be skipped depending on answers given. Thus for example if a person indicated that they did not have children, the survey skipped all child-related questions automatically.

The particular topic salience was considered strong, thus again this was considered when deciding the keep the survey at 38 questions. I felt that the topic was of interest to the sample, and was presented in as interesting a fashion as possible, with the benefits and value of completing it made clear in the invitation to participate.

3.1.4 INTERVIEW DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

I carried out interviews with 39 members of staff in the two case-study companies. This was made up of 21 women and 18 men. These were in-depth and semi-structured and lasted for between one and one and a half hours on average. They were digitally recorded so that they could be comprehensively transcribed for analysis purposes, and also so that I could concentrate on actively listening rather than note-taking during the interviews.

The aim of the interviews was to get a nuanced understanding of what has enabled and what has constrained employees' career progression, and to explore how gender segregation and equal opportunity policies are experienced within an organisation. Drawing from the
literature, a topic guide was developed, covering items such as; career history; human and social capital issues; work-life balance; career goals and ambitions and so forth. (Please see Appendix C for the interview topic guide)

Senior managers were interviewed so that the experiences of those Who have made it to the top can be understood and the differences in what it took to get there for men and women can be explored. By interviewing the next three reporting levels down from senior management, the experiences and aspirations of those who are effectively in the ‘pipeline to leadership’ could be examined.

The interviews provided an opportunity to explore the lived lives of women and men in the companies, and the topic guide was used to guide interviewees when necessary to prompt and guide the interviewees. The interview guide combined structure with flexibility. I was informed by feminist research methods and aimed to be reflexive and interactive in approach, maintaining a sensitive and adaptive method throughout the course of the interviews.

Guidelines of the Sociological Association of Ireland were followed in conducting the interviews. Following these best practice guidelines I ensured;

- Provision of information to the participants on the research project before the interview in order to prepare themselves (See Appendix C for participants interview guide);
- The confidentiality of the participants (see Appendix C for copy of consent forms);
- The interviewees were assured that participation was voluntary and that they could their right to withdraw from the study at any time, decline to be recorded or answer any question or topic that they wished to.

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6 See the SAI website for further information as to the best practice guidelines when conducting research by interview.

http://www.sociology.ie/index.php?service=ethi13&pagid=ric1b00003&useid=sok1213696686s2
3.2 ACCESS AND SAMPLING

The term international services is typically used to describe three industry sectors: banking and capital markets; investment management and insurance. The professional services firms which provide accountancy and tax consultancy, are described by Forfas as a “key industry enablers” (Forfas, 2007: 12). For the purposes of this study, companies operating within the sectors of banking and capital markets; investment management; and the professional services of accountancy and tax consultancy were chosen for examination.

3.2.1 CHOOSING THE COMPANIES

Previous studies of the financial services sector in the UK had used a selection of companies which cut across the different sectors within the Financial Services, (Ogden et al, 2006; Maxwell et al, 2007; Blair-Loy, 1999), and drawing on this approach I wanted to incorporate three companies into this study. Using Forfas’s study (2007) as a guideline for what types of companies operate in this sector, I wanted to have a large American multi-service financial services institution; one of the Big-Four accountancy firms; and one Investment bank or asset management company. I believed this sampling strategy would allow me to get a good cross-section of the types of companies that work in the complex industry that is the financial services.

With this end in mind I approached two of the Big-Four accountancy firms, and one large American multi-service financial services company directly. This purposive sampling strategy allowed me to pick out the kinds of companies that I directly wanted to include in this study. I knew from examining the literature that I wanted to include an accountancy firm within the study, thus I approached two of the largest in Ireland. The American financial services company was targeted particularly because of its size – it is one of the largest financial services companies in the world – and because it has a stated aim of attracting, retaining and promoting women.

All three companies received a short research proposal, (Appendix A) outlining the planned study and asking for access to their employees in order to carry out this research. Along with contacting these three companies directly, this proposal was also circulated to human resource contacts in approximately 100 companies operating within the international financial services.
services industry in Ireland. These contacts were made via the Irish Business Employer’s Confederation (IBEC), who agreed to circulate the proposal on my behalf.

Out of this sampling strategy three companies overall agreed to participate – firstly one of the Big-Four firms which I contacted directly agreed to partake in the study; secondly the large American financial services company that I approached directly also agreed to participate; and finally an asset management firm responded to the proposal which IBEC sent out on my behalf and agreed to also take part in the study.

This provided a good balance of companies operating in different sectors of the financial services industry; of different sizes; with different ownership structures; and different cultural backgrounds. The Big-Four firm (‘AccountCo’) is national in focus and in ownership, in that its customer base, employees and owners are predominantly Irish, and Ireland-based. The American company (‘BankCo’) provided a much larger and more complex structure in terms of the nature of the businesses it is involved in, the cultural impact of being an American company, and in the size and scale of its operation. Finally the asset management company (‘InvestCo’) provided yet another different set of organisational dynamics – being European-owned, internationally-focused in terms of its customer-base, and also operating in a very specific sector of high-end financial services.

The asset management company, which for the purposes of this study will be called ‘InvestCo’ proved to be a very important addition to the study. It is quite unique in an Irish context in having a large ‘front-office’ operation. That is, it is involved in the strategic investment of funds and not just in the ‘back-office’ work that is more commonly found amongst the Dublin-based operations of international companies locating in Ireland. Thus it is considered an elite company within an Irish context.

While research was carried out in three companies, for the purposes of this PhD thesis, I have only used the data from two of the companies. Therefore I will only go into detail on the sampling strategy used within the two relevant companies – AccountCo and InvestCo.

Why I did not use data gathered in BankCo

Once all the data was gathered and a first stage analysis was carried out, it became clear that attempting to compare and contrast three organisations across the range of metrics and topics which this PhD study seeks to explore was too complex and unwieldy given the time and scope limitations of a PhD thesis.
BankCo was the most obvious choice to leave out for several reasons; the sampling selection was highly mediated by BankCo HR due to the size and complexity of its organisational structure; this in turn produced the smallest sample size of the three companies (survey N=250; and 11 interviews were carried out). The small sample size was contrasted with the fact that BankCo had the largest and most complex organisational structure of the three companies. Thus I felt that it was better to concentrate on the companies where I felt the data had given me a more in-depth and firmer understanding of the organisation. It also became apparent that InvestCo and AccountCo had provided very rich and nuanced data – and this could only be fully explored if the breath of the study was narrowed, thus allowing greater depth of analysis within two of the companies.

3.2.2 NEGOTIATING ACCESS AND SELECTING A SAMPLE

Once the companies had agreed in principle to participate, I met with their HR departments to present them with a more detailed overview of the study I wished to carry out; my research design and strategy; and what support I would need from them in terms of facilitating my study. I was very conscious of trying to make my research study as unobtrusive as possible in terms of the effort required from the companies; and in terms of the time requirement from employees. I tried to provide each company with a high-level of comfort in this regard, outlining clearly my research plan, my expectations of them, what they could expect from me in terms of ethical-standards and professionalism; my time-lines and my outputs.

Due to the real-world nature of these study-sites, some limitations were put on my study. These were predominately relating to timing and sampling. I had a limited period of time to carry out my fieldwork within these companies; and also had to negotiate with HR in terms of how I would be allowed to access and choose my research sample within each.

AccountCo

After my initial presentation to HR within AccountCo and InvestCO, I was assigned a HR contact in each to facilitate the day-to-day requirements of the study. In the first instance I needed their agreement on the survey instrument and interview topic-guide I planned to use.

They were happy for me to use the survey instrument that I had designed, but asked me to make one change – to remove the question on pay. They felt that their employees would not be comfortable disclosing their level of pay and so I removed this question from the survey
instrument. Apart from this one concession, they did not ask for any other changes to either
my survey instrument or to the interview topic guide.

**AccountCo sampling strategy**

As this study sought specifically look at the ‘pathway to leadership’; the management grades
which could be most closely described as junior management; middle management and senior
management were selected as the study population. This means that N=395 staff at five
grades; Assistant Manager, Manager; Senior Manager; Director and Partner were included in
the sample.

**Online survey**

AccountCo HR sent out an email invitation with a link to my online survey to all staff at the
five selected grades. The known sampling frame meant that probability sampling could be
used in the study, and results could be generalized to the total survey population.

I provided HR with wording to use in the email invitation. This meant that the survey was
sent to a known, quantifiable survey population. As it was sent by HR, it provided the survey
with on the one hand a certain level of legitimacy in that the company was ‘buying-into’ it
and encouraging staff to participate; while on the other hand it has the potential to make the
study seem less ‘independent’. There are pros and cons to each – however ultimately I had to
use the method which the company was most willing to use.

**Interviews**

Again AccountCo HR sent out an email invitation on my behalf to staff at the relevant
grades. Those wishing to participate contacted me directly. Once again the pros and cons of
the mediating influence of the company must be considered. I would ideally have liked to
have randomly chosen a certain number of men and women from each grade and functional
area, using an anonymous list of employee numbers. This would have allowed me to lessen
the degree of self-selection bias, and also to ensure a good mix from functional areas et
cetera. Once again however, the balance between gaining access and using the most ‘ideal’
sampling strategy needed to be struck. In order to be allowed access I had to use the sampling
method that the company was most comfortable with. In the end this did provide me with a
good selection of interviewees from different functional areas; ages and so forth. However it
did introduce the issue of self-selection bias.
Both sampling strategies used for the survey and interviews are open to self-selection bias.

**InvestCo**

Similar to how the process worked within AccountCo, after my initial presentation to HR within InvestCo, I was assigned a HR contact to facilitate the day-to-day requirements of the study.

They were happy for me to use the survey instrument that I had designed as it stood without any changes, and similarly had no issue with any of the topics covered in the interview topic guide.

**InvestCo sampling strategy**

A wider sample was used for InvestCo than was taken from AccountCo in that it included all levels of employees from those with no-title through to the top level of senior management (N=357). The decision was taken to include all Dublin-based staff in this study due to the difference in nature of the business. Unlike AccountCo it does not have a large layer of 'trainee' or graduate recruits. Rather it generally employs more seasoned professionals, who have at least a few years post-graduate training. This sampling strategy still ensured that those in the most important 'pathway to power' grades were included in the study.

**Online survey**

InvestCo HR sent out an email invitation with a link to my online survey to all staff working within the Dublin-based operation of the company. I provided HR with wording to use in the email invitation. This again meant that the survey was sent to a known, quantifiable survey population. The known sampling frame meant that probability sampling could again be used in the InvestCo study, and results could be generalized to the total survey population.

**Interviews**

InvestCo provided me with an anonymised list of employees, which listed their gender, job title, grade, nationality, department and length of service. From this list I chose a purposive sample of 90 people, half men and half women. They were chosen to give a balance of gender, departments, and grades. This meant that I was able to in some ways introduce a degree of purposive sampling into the methodology, while also negating some self-selection
bias by expressly ‘choosing’ a selection of staff to invite to interview. Obviously within the 90 I selected ultimately the ones who responded to the invitation did ‘self-select’.

Again InvestCo HR sent out an email invitation on my behalf to all of the staff I chose and those wishing to participate contacted me directly.

3.3 CONTEXTUAL INTERVIEWS WITH HUMAN RESOURCES AND PILOTING

Gaining access and agreeing a sampling approach and survey instrument design, required detailed involvement from the human resources (HR) departments of both companies. In both companies the HR employees were very interested and accommodating of this research. They were keen to understand the attitudes and behaviours of their employees and so buy-in from HR was an integral support in gaining access, piloting and carrying out the research.

After gaining access to each individual company, I met with HR to discuss my planned approach with regard to the survey instrument I wished to use; the method of dissemination (in this case online) and the assistance I required from them to carry out my fieldwork.

In the first instance in both companies I met with the HR director and another member of HR who would be my primary point of contact for the duration of the study. Contextual interviews with these two people provided me with an overview of the company, insights into the organisational structure and cultural dynamics and effectively set-the-scene, deeply enhancing my understanding of the company.

These interviews were also opportunities for me to identify the support I needed in gaining access to the sample, and in gaining access to quantitative employee data which would allow me to set my survey sample into context, and assist my understanding of the level and nature of gendered segregation within the company.

Pilot

There were limitations when doing research in these organisations. These are very busy companies, with very busy employees and getting time to carry out a large-scale pilot was not possible. The approach taken was to do a small survey pilot within InvestCo – and then to
take the first five interviews from the company as pilot ones, but which would ultimately be included in the study.

InvestCo agreed that I could pilot my study on the staff within the HR department. Even though it was only a small department, with circa 11 members of staff, as HR professionals they were effectively ‘expert’ participants. They were able to provide me with invaluable feedback which included their own learnings from conducting surveys and focus group research in-house on their employees. As well as filling out the online survey, thus testing the web link and ease of use technically of the survey instrument, and providing me with some cases to analyse, the HR staff also met with me once they completed the questionnaire to share their experiences. This provided invaluable feedback and insight into the quality and usability of the questionnaire. Learnings from the pilot were incorporated into the final survey instrument. As a result of the pilot feedback, I removed or reworded some questions which were found to be confusing or ambiguous in terms of their meaning; I also was able to make some technical changes to the flow of the survey instrument, picking up some technical flaws in the design.

Once I began my pilot interviews it became clear that I needed to make a number of changes to my approach to interviewing and to the amount of questions I asked. I had begun with a large topic-guide and it soon became apparent that my focus on getting my preconceived list of topics ‘covered’ distracted from the flow of the interviews and took away from the aim of allowing themes to emerge, and allowing interviewees to tell ‘their’ story. Thus the way I conducted the interviews changed over time. I let the interviewee do the talking in a more free-flowing fashion, and used the topic-guide as a prompt if needed.

**Employee Data**

**InvestCo**

Human Resources in InvestCo provided me with a list of employees by management level; gender; department; nationality; length of service and job title. This is a very comprehensive overview of the employees in the company and allowed for detailed analysis of vertical and horizontal gender segregation. It also allowed for an analysis of the role of nationality which is a key feature of InvestCo’s culture.

The HR team within InvestCo also gave me access to the findings of an internal employee satisfaction study which was carried out at the beginning of 2008 by a third party research
consultancy on behalf of InvestCo. Both of these data sources were analysed as a precursor to this PhD study and provided valuable background data and context-setting for the study.

**AccountCo**

Human Resources in AccountCo provided me with a list of employees by management level and by gender. This data is far less comprehensive than what was provided by InvestCo, however it allowed for a detailed exploration of vertical gender segregation in the company. The survey and interview data was then used to explore issues of functional segregation, length of service and so forth.

### 3.4 DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE

An online survey, consisting of 38 questions relating to career progression was circulated via email to all Irish-based staff within InvestCo, excluding Human Resources. Allied to this, 24 InvestCo employees participated in a one-hour in-depth interview where similar career progression issues were discussed.

#### 3.4.1 INVESTCO SAMPLE

The InvestCo study sample was drawn from Irish-based staff, of all nationalities and all corporate titles within InvestCo, as outlined in Table 3.1. Overall, the survey was circulated to 357 staff, consisting of 214 (60%) men and 143 (40%) women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Male N=214</th>
<th>Female N=143</th>
<th>Total N=357</th>
<th>Percentage staff by level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>214</strong></td>
<td><strong>143</strong></td>
<td><strong>357</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The percentage of men and women in InvestCo at each grade is shown in Table 3.2,

**TABLE 3.2: PERCENTAGE SPLIT OF INVESTCO STAFF BY GENDER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Male N=214</th>
<th>Female N=143</th>
<th>Total N=357</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60%</strong></td>
<td><strong>40%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Survey response rate**

Out of the 357 members of staff who received the online survey, 135 responses were received, as shown in Table 3.3, giving an overall response rate of 38%.

As the number of staff at Director; Executive Vice President and Senior Vice President levels within InvestCo is relatively small at just 44 in total, only six of whom are female, the survey results for these top three grades have been pooled, so these top three grades are reported together as ‘senior management’ (Dir/EVP/SVP). This allows for the maintenance of anonymity which would not be difficult to maintain if each of these three grades’ responses was reported separately.

The sample consisted of 66 men and 69 women in total; eight Director/EVP/SVPs; 27 Vice Presidents; 49 Associates; and 51 employees with no title.

**TABLE 3.3: INVESTCO SURVEY SAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Male N=66</th>
<th>Female N=69</th>
<th>Total N=135</th>
<th>Percentage staff by level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>66</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>135</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 33 outlines how the survey respondents were split in terms of gender by corporate title. Forty-nine per cent of respondents were male, and 51% were female. As shown previously in Table 3.4, we know that the real gender split within InvestCo is 60% men to 40% women, so men are under-represented and women are over-represented in this survey sample.
As can be seen from Table 3.5, while the overall response rate to the survey was 38%, this varies by gender and by corporate title. Overall women have a higher response rate of 48%, with men having a lower response rate of 31%. Respondents with either an Associate corporate title or no title have a response rate of 45% and 47% respectively, while respondents at the Vice President and Director/EVP/SVP levels have lower response rates, at 28% and 18% respectively. So employees at Director/EVP/SVP and Vice President levels were under-represented in this survey while employees at Associate and 'no title' levels were over-represented.

Weighting

In order to make the sample as representative as possible, statistical weighting was applied for both gender and corporate title. This was done so that the over-representation of women and the under-representation of men could be accounted for; and that the over-representation of those with Associate and no corporate titles, and the under-representation of those with Director/EVP/SVP and VP corporate titles could also be balanced out. By applying these weights, we can now infer that the survey results can be generalized to all Irish-based staff within InvestCo.
Table 3.6 outlines the weights which have been applied to the data.

### TABLE 3.6: INVESTCO WEIGHTING APPLIED TO SURVEY DATA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level and Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of N</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>% of n</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP and Female</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.268907563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP and Male</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2.052821128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President and Female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0.843568197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President and Male</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1.782713085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate and Female</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0.728291317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate and Male</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0.979755539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title and Female</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>0.756302521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title and Male</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>0.871392035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>357</td>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to how data is presented in the tables within this thesis; all ‘N’ frequency values are reported as un-weighted, while all percentages presented are weighted, unless indicated otherwise.

All significance/inferential tests have been carried out on unweighted data.

**Interview Sample**

For the interview element of the study, 24 members of staff agreed to participate. As outlined in Table 3.7, the sample consisted of 12 women and 12 men, five of whom were Director/EVP/SVPs; 13 of whom were Vice Presidents; and six of whom were Associate/No Titles.

The sample included employees for a variety of functional areas; from Investments, Risk, Compliance, Sales and Marketing, Product Management, and Finance. There was also a mix of ages, and people with and without children in the sample.

### TABLE 3.7: INVESTCO INTERVIEWEES BY LEVEL AND GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Level</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Vice President</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4.2 ACCOUNTCO SAMPLE

An online survey, consisting of 36 questions relating to career progression was circulated via email to all Irish-based staff at Assistant Manager through to Partner level within AccountCo. Allied to this, 15 AccountCo employees participated in a one-hour in-depth interview where similar career progression issues were discussed.

The AccountCo study sample was drawn from Irish-based staff, of all nationalities, from Assistant Manager through to Partner level within AccountCo, as outlined in Table 3.8. Overall, the survey was circulated to staff 395 members of staff, consisting of 225 (57%) men and 170 (43%) women.

**TABLE 3.8: ACCOUNTCO STAFF FROM WHICH THE STUDY SAMPLE WAS DRAWN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/Snr Consultant</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Manager/Supervisor</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>225</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.9 shows the gender split of staff within this study sample.

**TABLE 3.9: PERCENTAGE SPLIT OF ACCOUNTCO STAFF BY GENDER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/Snr Consultant</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Manager/Supervisor</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Survey response rate**

Out of the 395 members of staff who received the online survey, 116 completed responses were received, giving an overall response rate of 29%.

As shown in Table 3.10, the sample consisted of 63 men and 53 women in total; 14 Partners; 27 Directors; 27 Senior Managers; 32 Managers and 19 Assistant Managers.
As shown previously in Table X, we know that the real proportion of Directors within AccountCo is 15%, while Directors accounted for 23% of the responses; Assistant Managers account for 21% of staff within the AccountCo sample, but they accounted for 16% of the actual responses. Thus, Assistant Managers are under-represented and Directors are over-represented in this survey.

Table 3.11 outlines how the survey respondents were split in terms of gender by management level. Fifty-four per cent of respondents were male, and 46% were female. As shown previously in Table X, we know that the real gender split within AccountCo is 57% men to 43% women, so men are very slightly under-represented and women are very slightly over-represented in this survey.

As can be seen from Table 3.12, while the overall response rate to the survey was 29%, this varied by gender and by management level. Overall women had a slightly higher response rate of 31%, with men having slightly lower response rate of 28%. The highest response rates were elicited from female Directors and female Partners who had a 54% and 50% response rate respectively.
Weighting

In order to make the sample as representative as possible, statistical weighting was applied for both gender and management level. This was done so that the slight over-representation of women and the under-representation of men could be accounted for; and that the over-representation of those at Director level, and the under-representation of those at Assistant Manager level could also be balanced out. By applying these weights, we can now infer that the survey results can be generalized to all Irish-based staff within AccountCo.

**TABLE 3.13: ACCOUNTCO WEIGHTING APPLIED TO SURVEY DATA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level and gender</th>
<th>N=395</th>
<th>% of N</th>
<th>n=116</th>
<th>% of n</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male and Partner</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.086207</td>
<td>0.587341772.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female and Partner</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.034483</td>
<td>1.174683544.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and Director</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.172414</td>
<td>0.545388788.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female and Director</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.060345</td>
<td>0.704810127.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and Senior Manager</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.094828</td>
<td>0.790652386.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female and Senior Manager</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.112069</td>
<td>1.201380898.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and Manager</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.112069</td>
<td>1.051032645.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female and Manager</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.163793</td>
<td>1.287633885.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and Assistant Manager</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.077586</td>
<td>1.350886076.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female and Assistant Manager</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.086207</td>
<td>1.142053446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>395</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>116</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interview Sample**

For the interview element of the study, 15 members of staff agreed to participate. As outlined in Table 3.14, the sample consisted of nine women and six men, three of whom were Partners; 5 of whom were Directors; four of whom were Senior Managers and three of whom were Managers.

The sample included employees for a variety of functional areas; from Tax, Audit, Consultancy, Corporate Finance, and Marketing. There was also a mix of ages, and people with and without children in the sample.
### 3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

#### Employee data analysis

As part of the preparation for this study, InvestCo Human Resources provided me with a list of all Dublin-based staff split by gender; corporate title; job title; nationality and start date. This employee data was transferred from excel into SPSS and analysed for significant differences between groups using non-parametric chi-square tests.

#### Survey analysis

Completed questionnaires were collected via the online repository and were filtered for valid responses. The survey responses were downloaded from survey monkey in Excel format and exported into SPSS where the data was cleaned up and coded.

Due to the relatively small sample sizes (InvestCo n=135; AccountCo n=116) and to the use of mainly nominal/categorical measures, non-parametric tests were used in most cases. Thus the survey design considerations influenced what statistical testing could be carried out. Categorical variables were used to increase/promote a higher response rate, but then this limited my ability to carry out parametric or multi-variate statistical tests. For the purposes of this study, the survey instrument was required to set the scene and provide context for the qualitative data, and so for these purposes bi-variate analysis provided much rich data.

Post-stratification weights were used so that under/over representation by gender or management level could be mediated against. The study overall is not aiming to be representative, but having access to a sampling frame, I thought it at least valuable to apply
weights to my sample as required so that I could generalize to the particular survey population within each company.

When analysing the data, there was a focus on identifying statistically significant gender differences in the sample. Chi-square tests were the predominant statistical test used to analyse the relationships between the variables. This allowed relationships between variables to be identified, but ‘causal’ links were not looked to be established.

**Interview analysis**

The digital recording from each interview was transcribed into a written document. The interviews were coded ‘up from the data’, in that the interview transcriptions were reviewed in detail and free nodes were created using NVIVO software. This method of analysis ensured that I was thoroughly familiar with the data.

This open coding method was used to track emerging themes and to develop concepts in the data. Once a set of emerging concepts was identified, code books were created in NVIVO which allowed for a cross-sectional analysis of the data by theme. While this method was useful in the first instance to identify and isolate certain themes and emerging concepts, it did serve to decontextualize some of the data, and in some cases it felt as if I was losing the essence or voice of the interviewee as their responses were cut and segmented.

This led me back to my original transcripts whereby I reviewed them again using a more case-study focused approach; building up descriptive accounts of each and then developing more explanatory accounts. Theoretical memos were used to flesh out emerging categories and further assisted in moving up the hierarchy of abstraction.

**3.6 CONFIDENTIALITY**

All study participants were assured of confidentiality. With regard to the survey sample, the online survey tool used was configured so that it would not capture and store IP addresses of respondents. Thus no unique identifier was taken that could lead responses to any individual computer. Care has been taken not to report any findings which could result in someone being identified. In cases where the numbers in a particular grade or functional area are too small to protect an individual’s identity, respondents have been aggregated together into larger groups. For example within the InvestCo sample results for the top three grades have been aggregated into one ‘senior management’ level. This is done due to the very small
number of women at the top two levels in the company. The variety of data captured on a survey respondent is such that if combined together, a respondent may be easily identifiable—for example a combination of gender, grade, nationality, functional area, age, marital status and whether they have children, could potentially narrow down a respondents identity to only one or two potential people. Thus great care has been taken to keep the reporting of survey data to a high-enough level to ensure confidentiality of research participants remains intact.

Interviewees signed a consent form which outlined the nature of the study and which assured them of confidentiality⁷. When interviewees are quoted they are identified only by gender, grade and occasionally department. Pseudonyms are used and minor details which are irrelevant for the purposes of this study, but which could potentially identify an interviewee, have been changed where necessary.

The two companies were also assured of anonymity in this study. As one is a Big-Four professional services firm, this obviously narrows down the potential companies somewhat, however several other studies on the Big-Four have located them within this context, i.e. called them a ‘Big-Four’ firm, and so by calling them ‘AccountCo’ it was felt that enough anonymity was provided in this context. The second company is part of a wider pool of asset managers and investment banks operating in Dublin, and thus has been called ‘InvestCo’.

The issue of nationality and the impact that has on organizational culture is an important factor in InvestCo, however to protect their anonymity rather than revealing their precise country of origin, they are referred to as ‘Southern European’. In the following chapters were nationality is discussed, employees who are from InvestCo’s country of origin are either referred to as ‘Southern European’ or as ‘InvestCo country of origin’ workers.

The data is stored under codes designed to anonymise the data. Where professional third-party transcribers have been used for the interviews, they signed confidentiality agreements with me to ensure the data-protection and confidentiality of the research participants.

3.7 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter, the reasons for adopting a mixed methodological approach to the exploration and analysis of gender and career progression within the financial services have been

⁷ See interview consent form in Appendix C
outlined. The methods used, and access, sampling and analysis considerations have been discussed.

The next chapter provides an overview of each case-study company in terms of what they do, the nature of the jobs in each, and how the company is structured. It answers the first question of this research study – ‘where are the women?’ Drawing on the employee data, and on some sections of the survey data, the next chapter outlines the pattern of gender segregation in each company.
CHAPTER 4 - EXPOSITIONS OF GENDERED ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

This chapter will look at the organisational structures of the two case-study companies, outlining the patterns of horizontal and vertical gender segregation within both. It aims to ascertain where the women are located in these organisations - what management levels do they occupy, what jobs do they do, and in which functional sections of the business do they dominate?

It provides an overview of each company in terms of what they do, the nature of the jobs in each, and how the company is structured.

4.1 INVESTCO COMPANY OVERVIEW

InvestCo is a global asset management company, based in Dublin. It has approximately 2,000 employees globally, 380 of which are based in its Dublin office. It is owned by a large European banking group, and has been operating in Ireland since 1994.

InvestCo is relatively unique in the Irish financial services market, in that it has a large ‘front-office’ operation. As outlined in Chapter One, the international financial services sector in Ireland is dominated primarily by what are termed ‘back office’ operations - that is the administrative side of stock trading; and reconciliation of sales, rather than the ‘front office’ operations where investment decisions are actually made. In that way it is seen as a prestige company within the Irish market. As one interviewee puts it;

"....from ....an asset management perspective in Dublin, [InvestCo] would be the best place to work in terms of the types of stuff that we do. ..... we're most kind of complex in terms of the instruments that we do and then kind of the number of people and the kind of range of activities that are carried out here in Dublin. It would be equivalent of a decent kind of player in London." [RF female VP]
4.1.1 DEPARTMENTS, ROLES, NATURE OF WORK

4.1.1.1 CORPORATE TITLES

In InvestCo an employee’s corporate title indicates their level of seniority within the organisation. Each corporate title confers on an employee a specific set of benefits, such as a particular number of day’s annual leave, but is not linked to a specific pay scale, or to a specific set of responsibilities or roles.

There are five corporate titles, starting with the most senior, these are as follows:

- Director
- Executive Vice President (EVP)
- Senior Vice President (SVP)
- Vice President (VP)
- Associate

A large minority of staff, 31% in all, do not have any corporate title and are referred to as ‘No Title’ throughout this dissertation.

4.1.1.2 DEPARTMENTS

There are six main functional areas within InvestCo, these are;

- Investments
- Sales and Marketing
- Corporate Administration
- IT and Operations
- Products
- Projects

Working outside of these main departments there are 16 general administrative employees, consisting of personal assistants, receptionists, and facilities management staff.
In InvestCo there are two functional areas which can be described as the 'power-bases' of the company and then there are four support functions which are seen as less powerful.

The Investments department and the Sales and Marketing department are the core power-bases of InvestCo’s business. They are the money-making departments, and all of the other departments are seen as support functions for these two sections of the company. As one senior manager puts it;

"...there are ...two big power brokers in the company which are Sales and Investments – it makes sense because we only do two things, one is we collect assets and we manage assets – so they are the two more important – and everybody else is in between." [WW, male SVP]

The Sales and Marketing department is responsible for attracting new business in the form of investors, and for managing InvestCo’s relationship with these clients. The Investment department is then responsible for investing the clients’ money.

As the title of the company suggests, the main business of InvestCo is investing clients’ money, so the Investments department is the key ‘power base’ of the company, where ‘big-money’ decisions are made.
Investments is the largest department in InvestCo’s Dublin office - with 129 members of staff it accounts for 38% of the total staff in Dublin. There are two main job roles in Investments – ‘investment research analysts’ who research the market to identify and analyse companies worth investing in, and ‘portfolio managers’ who use this information to decide on where best to invest their clients’ money.

Corporate Administration consists of general business support functions such as human resources; finance; legal; risk; and compliance.

The Products team is responsible for researching and developing new product offerings for customers. Finally the Projects department is a small team who project manage company-wide initiatives, such as new IT roll-outs etc.

4.1.1.3 DIVERSITY OF CAREER ROUTES

Within InvestCo we see a diversity of career routes, with opportunities to progress differing from department to department.

**Investments – ‘own-account’ workers**

Within Investments, research analysts and portfolio managers can be described as akin to ‘own-account’ workers. Not in the strict meaning of the term, as they are employees of InvestCo, but in the essence of how they work. Research Analysts and Portfolio Managers work quite individually, in that they do not necessarily have a hands-on day-to-day manager who oversees their work and advises them. Rather they operate within a very ‘hands-off’ management culture. Experienced professionals are recruited, often from abroad, and there is little or no graduate recruitment or in-house training or development.

Investments staff are hired, valued and rewarded for their ability to make good investment decisions; the traditional route to progression via managing staff or an operational function does not necessarily apply to them. Their job is to out-perform the market with their funds, and if they do this they are rewarded financially and via an increased level of Corporate Title. Hence we see that Investments is the department with the greatest opportunity for getting promoted – you are in charge of your own destiny as a worker here. If you make good investment decisions you will be rewarded, you do not have to wait for an opening as a
functional or people manager in order to be promoted to a higher corporate title. As will be outlined later in this chapter, Investments department has the highest number of senior managers of any department in the company. The majority of roles in Investments are described as meritocratic because in essence you are being judged on your stock performance, which is a very objective, performance-based measure. As one senior manager in Investments puts it;

"...every day you can see .... how my job has gone. It's not that you wait until a year .... at the end of the day it matters - you've bought what you've lost, you've sold what you sold, and it was done properly" [AB male VP]

Support functions – limited opportunities

Outside of Investments and Sales are what interviewees describe as the ‘cheap seats’ – the support functions which help the Investments and Sales teams operate efficiently and legally. These are areas such as Finance, Compliance, Risk and IT.

Within these support departments, the structure is more traditionally hierarchical, in that there is generally a limited number of functional managers (described as ‘Heads Of’ an area), and beyond this there is little room to naturally progress upwards. Unlike in Investments where staff are promoted, i.e. given more money and higher corporate titles, based on their own bottom-line performance.

Hence we see a diversity of career routes within InvestCo, with not all ladders leading to the top. For example within Compliance, there is only one ‘Head of’ in the department and so with little opportunity to progress within this area, all other staff have to move out of the department in order to progress, or wait until the current head of the area moves on. Within the support functions, workers are in a generalist managerial structure with limited opportunities – only a few can rise to the top.

Complex global matrix structures

InvestCo operates within the fast moving, dynamic global financial market. It has operations in 26 countries, and Dublin is one of its three global investments hubs, the others being major
cities in the US and UK. Due to its global nature, management within InvestCo operates within a matrix structure with staff reporting to a mixture of local and global managers. So for example, a member of staff in Dublin might be part of a team which is split between several countries, and may have multiple managers, one local manager based in Dublin, with other global managers who are based in operational hubs outside of Ireland.

This leads to a complex reporting structure – as described by one interviewee working within Investments:

"...we report to ....the Chief Investment Officer [in Dublin] so we’re a small group .... We also have a team in X, one in Y and a guy working in Z as well. And then there’s a Global [manager] I would sort of report into, there’s a Global Head of Investment ....and we all report into the various CIOs (Chief Investment Officers) in the different locations" [PQ, male VP]

4.1.1.4 WHERE ARE THE WOMEN?

In the following sections we will look at gender and staff distribution within InvestCo. Patterns of vertical and horizontal gender segregation will be explored, drawing on the data provided by InvestCo Human Resources (HR) and from the online survey, as outlined in the research methodology in Chapter 3.

In order to understand more fully where power is located in the company, pay and the number of subordinates a person has working for them will also be explicated, and whether these issues are gendered will be explored.

Finally, the role of nationality in InvestCo will also be explored. The company’s international ownership structure means that power, nationality and gender are closely associated.
4.2 VERTICAL SEGREGATION

4.2.1 GENDERED COMPANY PROFILE

InvestCo has approximately 368 employees in its offices in Dublin. Eleven of these are Human Resources staff who have been removed from the analysis. This leaves 357 employees (143 women, and 214 men). So men dominate the company in terms of overall staff numbers, accounting for 60% of employees.

Figure 4.2 shows the gender and staff distribution within InvestCo. The management levels where women predominate are indicated in pink, while the levels at which men predominate are indicated in blue. A cursory glance at this chart shows clearly that women are predominately in the lower echelons of the company; while men dominate the top levels.

FIGURE 4.2: INVESTCO – DUBLIN-BASED STAFF BY MANAGEMENT LEVEL [EXCLUDING HR STAFF]

As outlined in Table 4.3, we can see that while there are relatively equal amounts of women and men at the junior levels of Associate and No Title, when we move up to middle and
senior management levels, the representation of women declines considerably. At the most senior levels of the company, Director/CEO and Executive Vice President, there are no women. At the next level down, Senior Vice President, just 16% are women, and at the middle management level of Vice President, 31% are women.

TABLE 4.3: INVESTCO DUBLIN-BASED STAFF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/CEO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Vice President</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Vice President</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>214</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4.4: INVESTCO DUBLIN-BASED STAFF – PERCENTAGE BY CORPORATE TITLE AND GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/CEO</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Vice President</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Vice President</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4.5: INVESTCO DUBLIN-BASED STAFF - PERCENTAGE BY GENDER AND CORPORATE TITLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/CEO</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Vice President</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Vice President</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following discussions with InvestCo HR, it became clear that the Corporate Titles of Director, Executive Vice President and Senior Vice President could be described as senior management; Vice President could be described as middle management; and Associate/No Title could be described as Junior members of staff. In Table 4.6 and Figure 4.7 below, the
management levels have been consolidated into these senior, middle and junior levels. When this is done we can see that women account for just 14% of what can be termed ‘senior managers’ within InvestCo. Out of a population size of N=44, just six are female.

A Chi square test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and corporate title, $\chi^2 (3) = 24.858, p = 0.000$; Cramer’s $V = 0.264, p = 0.000$, with male respondents more likely than female respondents to be a senior manager.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.6: CONSOLIDATED CORPORATE TITLE BY GENDER</th>
<th>CORPORATE TITLE % SPLIT BY GENDER</th>
<th>GENDER SPLIT BY % AT EACH CORPORATE TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Title</td>
<td>% Male</td>
<td>% Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/No Title</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So it can be said that vertical gender segregation exists within InvestCo, with the vast majority of female employees (n=108 or 75%), holding either an Associate corporate title, or no title at all, and only n=35 (24%) of female employees holding a title of Vice President or
above. On the other hand, while $n=110$ (52%) of male employees hold either an Associate corporate title, or no title at all, a further $n=104$ (49%) hold a title of Vice President or above.

**CHART 4.8: TOTAL STAFF N=357**

**CHART 4.9: FEMALE STAFF N=143**
4.2.2 MANAGERIAL OPPORTUNITIES AND NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES

While a respondents' corporate title can tell us a great deal about their position and standing within a company, the number of people they have working for them can often give us some further indication of how much responsibility they have. Managing people has also been identified as an important skill required to progress to senior management positions (London Business School, 2007). In the online survey, respondents were asked to indicate how many people they currently have working for them.

A statistically significant difference was found between male and female respondents with regard to the number of subordinates they have, with men more likely than women to have more than five people working for them, as shown in Table 4.11.

A Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and the number of subordinates a respondent have; $\chi^2 (2) = 8.377, p = 0.015$; Cramer's $V = 0.250, p = 0.015$

While the majority of female respondents (68%) are found to have no subordinates, less than half of male respondents indicate that they have no subordinates. Of the female respondents who do have subordinates, the vast majority have less than five.
TABLE 4.11: NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>Male N=66</th>
<th>Female N=68</th>
<th>Total N=134</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Five</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six or more</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>66</strong></td>
<td><strong>68</strong></td>
<td><strong>134</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted

TABLE 4.12: PERCENTAGE OF SUBORDINATES BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>Male N=66</th>
<th>Female N=68</th>
<th>Total N=134</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-Five</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six or more</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted

As male respondents are more likely than women to hold a senior management position within InvestCo, we would expect to find that male respondents have a larger number of subordinates than female respondents in general. However when we break the data down further by corporate title and by gender, as shown in Tables 4.13, we can see that even when they hold the same corporate title, male respondents appear to have on average more people working for them than female respondents do. For example while 40% of female VPs have no subordinates, only 21% of male VPs have no subordinates; and at Associate level, 68% of female respondents as opposed to 59% of male respondents indicate that they have no subordinates.

\[8\] The sample is too small to carry out significance testing on.
TABLE 4.13: PERCENTAGE NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES BY CORPORATE TITLE/GENDER

% OF SUBORDINATES BY CORPORATE TITLE

MALE RESPONDENTS N=66

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>DIR/EVP/ SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One - Five</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six or more</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FEMALE RESPONDENTS N=68

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>DIR/EVP/ SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One - Five</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six or more</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted

4.2.3 PAY - TOTAL COMPENSATION FOR 2007

Remuneration is obviously a clear indicator of a person’s career success and progression, and so survey respondents were asked to indicate the total compensation package (salary and bonus) that they received for 20079.

According to the Central Statistics Office (2011), across all industry sectors in Ireland men earn more than women, with an hourly unadjusted gender pay gap of 15.7%. When part-time workers are taken out of the analysis, the average gender pay gap amongst full-time workers in Ireland is 9.1%. The financial services have one of the biggest average gender pay gaps of any industry sector in Ireland. At 28.6% for full-time workers, it is over three times the overall average.10 This is echoed in the UK. The UK’s EHRC has conducted two studies into gender inequality within the Financial Services industry in recent years, and their findings show it to have a bigger gender pay gap than any other sector of the economy – at 55%, the gender pay gap is almost double the overall UK average11.

---

9 The survey was carried out in 2008, and so 2007 was the last full-year salary to draw on for analysis purposes


11 EHRC 2010 – Financial Services Inquiry: Follow-up Report
As outlined in Table 4.15 some disparity is evident between the total compensation received by male and female respondents. While the majority of female respondents (78%) earn less than €79,000, only 43% of male respondents earn less than this. While 57% of male respondents earn €80,000 or more, only 22% of female respondents do so.

Table 4.14: Total Compensation for 2007 (EUR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Compensation €</th>
<th>Male N=64</th>
<th>Female N=66</th>
<th>Total N=130</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;40,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40,000 - 49,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 - 59,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60,000 - 69,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70,000 - 79,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80,000 - 119,000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120,000 - 179,000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180,000 - 299,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;/= 300,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted

When split into the following four categories; less than €60,000; €60,000 – €79,000; €80,000 – €179,000; €180,000 or more, a significant association between gender and salary was found;

A Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and Total Compensation for 2007; $\chi^2 (2) = 12.053, p = 0.002$; Cramer’s $V = 0.304, p = 0.002$.

Female respondents are more likely than male respondents to earn less than €60,000; and male respondents are more likely than female respondents earn more than €80,000
TABLE 4.15: TOTAL COMPENSATION FOR 2007 BY GENDER

REMUNERATION - TOTAL COMPENSATION 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Compensation €</th>
<th>Male N=64</th>
<th>Female N=66</th>
<th>Total N=130</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 60,000</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60,000 - 79,000</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80,000 - 179,000</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;/= 180,000</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted

4.2.3.1 REMUNERATION BY CORPORATE TITLE AND BY GENDER

Obviously as male respondents are more likely than female respondents to be older and in senior management positions within the company, some gender pay gap on these grounds would be assumed. However from Table 4.16 below we can identify some differences in remuneration between male and female respondents, even when they are of the same management level. While the sample is too small to carry out significance tests when the data is split by gender and by corporate title. We can see for example that while 92% of male respondents who are at Vice President level earned EUR 80,000 or more in 2007; only 70% of equivalent management level female respondents earned EUR 80,000 or more. A similar pattern can be seen amongst respondents at Associate and at No Title level, with 27% of males at Associate level earning EUR 80,000 or more, while only 5% of female respondents at this level earned this amount.

This appears to echo Parker et al (1998) and Woodward and Ozbilgin (1999) whose studies found that even though more women are making it to management positions within the financial services, they are to positions which carry less authority (as we have seen already in this chapter, female respondents at senior management have fewer subordinates than equivalent level males in the sample), and fewer financial rewards than their male counterparts.
TABLE 4.16: SURVEY RESPONDENTS – REMUNERATION BY CORPORATE TITLE/GENDER

REMUNERATION BY CORPORATE TITLE

MALE RESPONDENTS N=64

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>&lt;60,000</th>
<th>60,000 - 79,000</th>
<th>80,000 - 179,000</th>
<th>&gt;180,000</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FEMALE RESPONDENTS N=66

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>&lt;60,000</th>
<th>60,000 - 79,000</th>
<th>80,000 - 179,000</th>
<th>&gt;180,000</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Director/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Title</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted

4.2.3.2 REMUNERATION BY DEPARTMENT

When we look at remuneration levels by department, we can see that 52% of staff within Investments earned more than €120,000 in 2007, compared with 22% in Operations and IT; 13% in Sales and Marketing; and 8% in Corporate Administration. The sample is too small to carry out significance testing on, but we can see that in keeping with its role as the ‘power base’ of the company, Investments is the department where the highest earners are predominantly located.

TABLE 4.17: REMUNERATION BY DEPARTMENT

ALL RESPONDENTS N=130

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>&lt;€60,000</th>
<th>€60k-€79k</th>
<th>€80k-€119k</th>
<th>€120k-€179k</th>
<th>€180k+</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments (n=29)</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;M (n=17)</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp Admin (n=30)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations &amp; IT (n=54)</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>101%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted Percentages

4.2.3.3 REMUNERATION BY PARENTAL STATUS

Statistical tests were carried out on the survey data to ascertain whether a respondents’ remuneration was impacted in any way by having children. Results show that having children
positively affects salary, with those who have children more likely than those who do not to earn €80,000 or more.

A Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant association between parental status and Total Compensation for 2007; $\chi^2 (2) = 22.240, p = 0.000$; Cramer’s $V = 0.450, p = 0.000$

When the data was split further by gender, a significant association was found between male respondents’ parental status and remuneration. Having children appears to be positively associated with remuneration for the male respondents in this sample. The sample of female respondents with children was too small to carry out significance tests on.

A Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant association between male respondents’ parental status and Total Compensation for 2007; $\chi^2 (2) = 13.360, p = 0.001$; Cramer’s $V = 0.493, p = 0.001$

FIGURE 4.18: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASSOCIATIONS WITH REMUNERATION
4.3 HORIZONTAL SEGREGATION

Drawing on the employee data provided by InvestCo HR, this section explores patterns of horizontal gender segregation within the company. Tables 4.19, 4.20 and 4.21 show how many staff work in each department within InvestCo by gender. These tables show considerable differences in the gender composition of different sections of the company.

When the proportion of male and female employees in each department is analysed it is clear that horizontal gender segregation, what has been termed the ‘glass-wall’ phenomenon (Cooper Jackson, 2001)\(^\text{12}\) is present within InvestCo. For example as outlined in Table 4.20, the Investments department is 77% (n=99) male, while the Sales and Marketing department is 63% (n=29) female.

A Chi square test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and what department staff work in, \(\chi^2 (4) = 26.194, p = 0.000\); with an effect size of Cramer’s \(V = 0.283, p = 0.000\). Male respondents are more likely than female respondents to work in Investments, while female respondents are more likely than male respondents to work in Sales and Marketing.

TABLE 4.19: DEPARTMENT BY GENDER\(^\text{13}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Male N=210</th>
<th>Female N=133</th>
<th>Total N=343</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Administration</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT &amp; Operations</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>210</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>343</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) CEO; 13 Unknown


\(^{13}\) Excluding Human Resources
TABLE 4.20: DEPARTMENT BY GENDER – PERCENTAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Male N=210 (%)</th>
<th>Female N=133 (%)</th>
<th>Total N=343 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Administration</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT &amp; Operations</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>61%</strong></td>
<td><strong>39%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 4.21: GENDER BY DEPARTMENT – PERCENTAGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Male N=210 (%)</th>
<th>Female N=133 (%)</th>
<th>Total N=343 (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Administration</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT &amp; Operations</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Sales and Marketing is considered a power-base within the company, and has significantly more women than men working in it, once we look at this department in more detail it is clear that women dominate the typically ‘female’ support areas of this function, rather than the more powerful strategic areas.

The Corporate Administration department is the most gender-balanced overall, with 55% (n=27) male employees and 45% (n=22) female employees.

Out of the 16 employees who come under the general ‘administration’ function, which includes personal assistants; receptionists; and facilities management staff, 75% (n=12) are female.
The presence of this kind of occupational segregation is important in terms of understanding women’s place in InvestCo and their opportunities to progress. In Figure 4.22 below, the functional areas where women dominate are coloured pink; while the areas where men dominate are in blue. It is a classic segregation of the ‘women take care’ while men ‘take charge’ variety. Women dominate in traditional ‘female’ areas which are either caring (Human Resources/Administration) or somewhat creative (Sales & Marketing). Women are less likely to be present in the power bases of the company where ‘big-money’ decisions are made.

The employee data provided by InvestCo contains details of each staff member’s job title. The list of job titles was analysed so that it could be ascertained what section of a particular functional area an employee works in. So for example, we can tell from the list of job titles provided by InvestCo whether a specific employee within Investments is a Portfolio Manager, or an Analyst, or works in Investment Operations. This gives the data a deeper
level of granularity, and allows for an analysis of gender segregation of specific functional areas.\textsuperscript{14}

Based on what had been discussed by interviewee participants regarding the power bases within the company, and regarding specific sections which are referenced by them as having a high level of gender segregation, (for example the Compliance section of the Corporate Administration department), three departments were analysed in this further level of detail; Investments; Sales and Marketing and Corporate Administration.

As already noted, chi square tests for independence carried out on the employee data reveal that Investments is male dominated, while Sales and Marketing is female dominated.

As can be seen from Table 4.23, the two main roles within Investments, Portfolio Manager and Analyst are considerably male dominated, with men accounting for 81\% (n=58) and 77\% (n=37) of these positions respectively. Operations is essentially a small ‘support’ role within the Investments area (n=7), and is more gender balanced with 57\% men and 43\% women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.23: INVESTMENTS BY ROLE AND BY GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INVESTMENTS - IRELAND-BASED STAFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolio Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When we look at the Sales and Marketing department in more detail, the findings are more complex. As we can see from Table 4.24, while female employees dominate, accounting for 58\% (n=23) of all staff in this department overall, and 71\% (n=5) of the sales team, male staff dominate the strategy section, and also outnumber female staff in the client management function of this department. These are the ‘power-broker’ sections of the department. Female staff overwhelmingly dominate the marketing section, which contains traditional ‘female’ functions such as communications and event management – very much ‘support’ functions to the main business.

\textsuperscript{14} Some job titles were missing or could not be interpreted by the researcher as fitting into any specific section – 21 employees in total fell into this category. There is also just one CEO, so he has been excluded from this analysis also.
TABLE 4.24: SALES AND MARKETING BY SECTION AND BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESS UNIT</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>N=37</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>N=23</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Management</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing Strategy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUSINESS UNIT % SPLIT BY GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales &amp; Marketing Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finally if we analyse the Corporate Administration department in some further detail, we can see that as outlined in Table 4.25, while this department is quite gender balanced overall, with 53% male staff and 47% female staff, this hides some gender segregation.

For example, the Risk function is heavily male dominated, with men accounting for 70% of staff here (n=7); while on the other hand the Compliance function is heavily female dominated, with women accounting for 88% (n=7) of the staff here.

The Finance and Strategy functions of this department also contain more male than female staff, with men accounting for 59% (n=13) and 67% (n=2) of staff in these areas respectively.

TABLE 4.25: CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION BY SECTION AND BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION - IRELAND-BASED STAFF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BUSINESS UNIT % SPLIT BY GENDER</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENDER SPLIT BY % IN EACH BUSINESS UNIT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.1 CORPORATE TITLE AND DEPARTMENT

The InvestCo employee data also reveals the mix of management levels within each functional area, allowing us to identify what departments contain the most senior managers.

A Chi square test for independence confirms that there is a significant association between corporate title and what department people work in, \( \chi^2 (8) = 25.497, p = 0.001 \); with an effect size of Cramer’s \( V = 0.197, p = 0.001 \).

15 1 cell (6.7%) has less than 5
Results show that there is a significant association between being a senior manager and being in the Investments department; and a significant association between being a junior manager and working in IT. As can be seen from Table 4.26, while 20% (n=26) of staff who work in Investments are senior managers, just 4% (n=3) of those in IT are at the senior management level.

Overall 62% of all employees who are at senior management level work within the Investments department. This data ties in with the qualitative data gathered through in-depth interviews with staff within InvestCo. Investments is identified as being the department where staff have the best opportunities for progression. As we have already seen it is also a department which has significantly more male employees than female. This will be discussed further in Chapter 6 where the qualitative data will be explored.

It is also interesting to note that in the female-dominated Sales and Marketing department, just 7% (n=3) of staff are senior managers, while 70% (n=32) are junior members of staff. While Sales might be identified as an important power base in the company, the roles based in Ireland do not appear to be the most powerful senior positions within this department.
TABLE 4.26: CORPORATE TITLE BY FUNCTIONAL AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Corp Admin N=49</th>
<th>Investments N=129</th>
<th>IT N=80</th>
<th>Products/Projects N=23</th>
<th>Sales &amp; Marketing N=46</th>
<th>Total N=327</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dir/CEO/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/No Title</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>129</strong></td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
<td><strong>327</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% OF STAFF BY CORPORATE TITLE IN EACH FUNCTIONAL AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Corp Admin N=49</th>
<th>Investments N=129</th>
<th>IT N=80</th>
<th>Products/Projects N=23</th>
<th>Sales &amp; Marketing N=46</th>
<th>Total N=327</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dir/CEO/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/No Title</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% OF STAFF BY CORPORATE TITLE IN EACH FUNCTIONAL AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Corp Admin N=49</th>
<th>Investments N=129</th>
<th>IT N=80</th>
<th>Products/Projects N=23</th>
<th>Sales &amp; Marketing N=46</th>
<th>Total N=327</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dir/CEO/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/No Title</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15%</strong></td>
<td><strong>39%</strong></td>
<td><strong>24%</strong></td>
<td><strong>7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>14%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.1.1 CORPORATE TITLE BY DEPARTMENT SPLIT BY GENDER

Tables 4.27 and 4.28 below show the employee data split by corporate title, functional area and then by gender. We can see that the male senior managers (Director, EVP, and SVP) and middle managers (Vice President) are concentrated in the Investments department. Female SVPs and VPs on the other hand are more dispersed in other areas of the business.

As these tables also show, even when the functional area is female dominated overall, such as the case with Sales and Marketing, men are more likely to be senior managers. For example, 12% of all male staff in Sales and Marketing are SVPs, and 35% are VPs, compared with just 3% and 17% respectively of women in that department.
### TABLE 4.27: DEPARTMENT BY CORPORATE TITLE BY GENDER – MALE RESPONDENTS

**MALES N=210**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>DIR/EVP</th>
<th>SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp Admin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MALES N=210**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>DIR/EVP</th>
<th>SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;M</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp Admin</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted Percentages

**MALES N=210**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>DIR/EVP</th>
<th>SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;M</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp Admin</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
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<td>14%</td>
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<td>71%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted Percentages
### TABLE 4.28: DEPARTMENT BY CORPORATE TITLE BY GENDER – FEMALE RESPONDENTS

#### FEMALES N=133

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>DIR/EVP</th>
<th>SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;M</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp Admin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### FEMALES N=133

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>DIR/EVP</th>
<th>SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;M</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp Admin</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted Percentages*

#### FEMALES N=133

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>DIR/EVP</th>
<th>SVP</th>
<th>VP</th>
<th>ASSOCIATE</th>
<th>NO TITLE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investments</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;M</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corp Admin</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted Percentages*
4.4 THE IMPACT OF NATIONALITY

As we can see from Table 4.29 below, 60% of staff within the Dublin office of InvestCo are Irish, 14% are ‘Southern European’ and the rest are of other nationalities.

*A Chi square test for independence indicates a significant association between gender and nationality, \( \chi^2 (4) = 10.687, p = 0.030; \) Cramer’s \( V = 0.174, p = 0.030, \) with female respondents more likely than male respondents to be Irish.

We can see that 63% (n=31) of ‘Southern European’ employees based in Dublin are male, while 37% (n=18) are female. Similarly, the majority of British employees 79% (n=19) are male.

TABLE 4.29: NATIONALITY BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern European</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>212</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*No Missing Values

| | Male | Female | Total |
| Iris | 54% | 46% | 100% |
| Southern European | 63% | 37% | 100% |
| British | 37% | 21% | 100% |
| Polish | 40% | 60% | 100% |
| French | 75% | 25% | 100% |
| German | 64% | 36% | 100% |
| American | 100% | 0% | 100% |
| Other | 76% | 24% | 100% |
| Total | 60% | 40% | 100% |

| | Male | Female | Total |
| Iris | 53% | 69% | 60% |
| Southern European | 15% | 13% | 14% |
| British | 9% | 4% | 7% |
| Polish | 2% | 4% | 6% |
| French | 3% | 1% | 2% |
| German | 4% | 4% | 4% |
| American | 2% | 0% | 1% |
| Other | 12% | 6% | 18% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |
In order to identify if nationality is in any way associated with career progression, the data was then analysed to identify how many employees of the most prevalent nationalities are at each management level. As outlined in Table 4.30 below, on average 12% of staff based in Ireland are at the Senior Management level. While 8% of all Irish employees are senior managers, this figure rises to 24% for ‘Southern European’ employees and 38% for employees who are British.

A Chi square test for independence\(^{16}\) indicates a significant association between corporate title and nationality, with being ‘Southern European’ or British associated with being a senior manager; \( \chi^2 (6) = 34.810, p = 0.000; \) with an effect size of Cramer’s \( V = 0.222, p = 0.000 \)

As already noted, the majority of both InvestCo’s ‘country of origin’ and British employees based in Dublin are male. InvestCo is a ‘Southern European’-owned company and as such, its ‘power-base’ can be said to be ‘Southern European’. Its ‘Southern European’ HQ is where decisions get made, and ‘Southern European’ staff are overwhelming more likely to work in the ‘big money’ area of Investments than in any other department (n=37/79%). British staff are also most prominent in Investments (n=13/59%).

This reflects the tendency of the company to ‘buy-in’ Investment expertise from abroad. Aside from the company’s connection with Italy, the UK is the other natural market for such talent. As one of the largest financial hubs in the world, London provides a large pool of experienced financial services professionals for Dublin-based companies to attract. The vast majority of British staff are male (79%, n=19).

The data in Table 4.30 shows that people at the top, and who are in the most powerful roles and departments are more likely to be from InvestCo’s ‘Southern European’ country of origin.

| TABLE 4.30: CORPORATE TITLE BY NATIONALITY |

\(^{16}\) 1 cell (8.3%) has less than 5
The data was also analysed to ascertain whether nationality has any impact on what department people work in. The feedback received from interview participants suggests that the Investments department in particularly is dominated by ‘Southern European’ members of staff, and an analysis of InvestCo’s employee data confirms that this is the case.

A Chi square test for independence\(^\text{17}\) indicates a significant association between being ‘Southern European’ and working in Investments, and with being Irish and working in IT; \(\chi^2 (12) = 58.408, p = 0.000\); with an effect size of Cramer’s \(V = 0.245, p = 0.000\)

\(^{17}\) 5 cells (25% of cells) have less than 5
As outlined in Table 4.31, the majority of staff within Investment, (59%, n=75) are non-Irish, with ‘Southern European’-nationals accounting for 29% (n=37) of staff in this department. Table 4.31 shows that 79% (n=37) of all ‘Southern European’ employees based in Dublin work in the Investments department.
When we analyse this data further and look specifically at the Investments department, we can see that even though there are more Irish staff (40%, n=51) working within Investments...
than ‘Southern European’ (29%, n=37), ‘Southern European’ employees dominate at the more senior levels of the department.

As outlined in Table 4.32 below, 46% (n=12) of senior managers within the Investment department are ‘Southern European’; 23% (n=6) are British and 19% (n=5) are Irish.

TABLE 4.32: INVESTMENT DEPARTMENT – BY NATIONALITY AND CORPORATE TITLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Irish (N=51)</th>
<th>InvestCo Country of Origin (N=37)</th>
<th>British (N=13)</th>
<th>Other (N=25)</th>
<th>Total (N=126)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dir/CEO/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/No Title</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% OF STAFF BY NATIONALITY BY CORPORATE TITLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Irish (N=51)</th>
<th>InvestCo Country of Origin (N=37)</th>
<th>British (N=13)</th>
<th>Other (N=25)</th>
<th>Total (N=126)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dir/CEO/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/No Title</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% OF STAFF BY NATIONALITY BY CORPORATE TITLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Irish (N=51)</th>
<th>InvestCo Country of Origin (N=37)</th>
<th>British (N=13)</th>
<th>Other (N=25)</th>
<th>Total (N=126)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dir/CEO/EVP/SVP</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate/No Title</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Both vertical and horizontal gender segregation exist within InvestCo. Women account for just 14% of senior managers; 31% of middle managers; and are more likely than men to work in ‘peripheral’ functional areas such as Compliance, rather than in in strategic ‘power’ areas such as Investments. Investments has more senior managers than any other department within the company, and as such is the fast-track to the top in InvestCo. It is also predominately male, with men making up 77% of all staff in Investments.

When the data is examined in detail we can see that there is a strong link between gender, nationality, functional area, and seniority within the company. Figures 4.33 and 4.34 below give a high-level overview of ‘where’ the men and women are both vertically and horizontally within the company. As we can see the variables associated with leadership are; being male; ‘Southern European’ or British; and working in Investments. Talent for the top jobs is effectively ‘bought-in’ from abroad – and that talent is most likely to be male. These diagrams present the ‘chicken and egg’ scenario that seems such a feature of the wider issue of identifying why there are not more senior women in the industry. Do they ‘choose’ the wrong functional areas? Are they less-likely to be internationally mobile?

FIGURE 4.33: INVESTCO CHARACTERISTICS OF MALE EMPLOYEES
As outlined in Figure 4.35 below, even when at the same corporate title, women and men are not truly ‘equal’ in InvestCo, so just looking at the representation of women at certain management levels does not reveal the true picture of hidden inequalities. Women, even while at the same level as men, are likely to have less staff working for them, more likely to be paid less, and to be working in less prestigious areas of the business. When remuneration and number of subordinates is analysed, we can see that not all corporate title grades are created equal. Not every Vice President will earn the same or have similar levels of responsibility, which is not in itself a surprising finding. However when the data regarding these variables is analysed, it seems apparent that gender plays a role in this, with women, even when at the same level of corporate title as men, likely to have less people working for them and to be paid less.
FIGURE 4.35: INVESTCO GENDER DIFFERENCES WHILE AT THE SAME MANAGEMENT LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(even when at same management level as men)</td>
<td>(even when at same management level as women)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earn less money</td>
<td>Earn more money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have less people working for them</td>
<td>Have more people working for them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in less-prestigious areas of the business (with less routes to senior roles)</td>
<td>Work in more prestigious areas of the business (with more routes to senior roles)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6 ACCOUNTCO COMPANY OVERVIEW

AccountCo is one of the ‘Big-Four’ international Professional Services firms. The ‘Big Four’ are the four largest international accountancy and professional services firms which handle the vast majority of audits for publicly traded companies as well as for many private companies. They are Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu, Ernst and Young and KPMG.

AccountCo operates as a globally connected network of member firms, with operations in over 150 countries and staff of almost 200,000. Each local firm provides services in its local geographical region. For the purposes of this study, AccountCo refers specifically to the Irish operation, which consists of over 1,000 people spread throughout three locations in Ireland - Dublin, Cork and Limerick. AccountCo provides audit, tax, consulting, and corporate finance services to public and private clients across multiple industries in Ireland.

4.6.1 DEPARTMENTS, ROLES, NATURE OF THE WORK

4.6.1.1 MANAGEMENT LEVELS

There are seven main grades within AccountCo, starting with the most senior these are:

- Partner
- Director
- Senior Manager
- Manager/Senior Consultant
- Assistant Manager/Supervisor
- Senior/Consultant
- Trainee/Junior/Analyst

4.6.1.2 DEPARTMENTS

The company is comprised of four main client-facing departments, and four internal support functions. The client-facing departments are:

- Audit
- Tax
- Consulting
• Financial Advisory Services

The internal support functions are;

• Human Resources
• IT and Operations
• Finance Administration
• Marketing and business development

AccountCo’s organisational structure is outlined in Figure 4.36. Each of the client-facing departments is headed by a Partner and each sub-division of the department also has a partner in charge of it. Each of the internal support departments also has a ‘client-facing’ Partner at its head.\(^{18}\)

**Figure 4.36: AccountCo Functional Areas**

![Organisational Structure Diagram]

Figure 4.37 outlines the number of Partners by functional area and by gender in the company.\(^ {19}\) Of the four main client-facing departments, Audit and Tax can be described as the ‘bread and butter’ of AccountCo’s business. With 19 Partners in Audit and 17 in Tax,

\(^{18}\) Source: AccountCo memo to researcher

\(^{19}\) Information in this chart is taken from AccountCo’s website
these two departments account for 75% of all partners. Seven of the eight female Partners work in these departments. So the women who have come up the ranks, either within AccountCo or in other professional services firms before moving to AccountCo, have done so via the two dominant, traditional departments, rather than through the newer areas of the business.

FIGURE 4.37: PARTNERS BY FUNCTIONAL AREA/GENDER – FROM ACCOUNTCO EMPLOYEE DATA

Audit

AccountCo’s audit department conducts company financial audits as per statutory legal requirements; and provides expert technical accounting advice to companies. This department also provides specialised services for the insurance industry, including actuarial services. The audit department contains five sub-divisions:

- Consumer Business
- Technology, Media and Telecoms
- Financial Services
- Small Medium Enterprise solutions
- Enterprise Risk Services
Tax

AccountCo has one of the largest teams of taxation experts in Ireland. Their tax department provides a full range of business and personal taxation services to a wide range of clients (from multinationals to small businesses). The tax team is divided into a number of specialist divisions who advise companies on corporation tax, income tax, capital taxes and indirect taxes. They provide financial tax services via their global network of member firms, offering services designed for financial institutions in the banking, securities, insurance and investment management sectors. Sub-divisions of the Tax department include:

- Corporate tax
- Private clients
- Global employer solutions
- Indirect tax
- Capital tax
- Company secretarial and legal.

Consulting

AccountCo’s consulting division advises companies on their overall business strategy; on how to improve financial and accounting management; on organisation performance, including how to manage their human resources. It supports companies in rolling out major IT and business change programmes. There are four main sub-divisions in the consulting department:

- CFO Services (advice on improving the efficiency of financial processes)
- Strategy and Operations
- Technology Integration
- Human Capital

Financial Advisory Services/Corporate Finance

AccountCo’s Financial Advisory department advises corporate clients, private equity/venture capital firms, financial institutions, entrepreneurs and government. Specialist finance teams include:
4.6.1.3 GRINDERS, MINDERS AND FINDERS

AccountCo recruits trainees every year to each of the four client-facing departments. Similar to all of the Big-Four professional services companies, AccountCo hires on junior staff straight from college to complete their training as accountants, tax consultants, or general business consultants. These staff are given fixed-term contracts which cover two to three years of training. In this time they work in the company, along with taking professional exams in either accountancy or tax depending on which department they are recruited into.

Once the ‘training contract’ is completed, the company decides how many to keep and how many to let go. Many trainees also just choose themselves to leave once their training contract is fulfilled. As can be seen from Figure X, the most junior intake grade is the largest of the grades numerically, with 417 members of staff at Trainee/Junior/Analyst level. This accounts for 43% of all of AccountCo’s staff in Ireland. This 417 is juxtaposed with the 48 who have made it to Partner, the most senior level in the company. Even in the next grade up from the Trainee level, the number of staff drops from 417 to 153. So based on a crude analysis of this data, only one in three trainees will remain in the company once they have finished their training.

Professional services companies have a reputation for working junior staff very hard, and industry slang for the various levels of hierarchy in these companies is ‘grinders, minders and finders’. The grinders are the lower level trainees and managers. They are ‘putting in their time’; paying their dues so to speak and therefore are the ones out doing the grunt work when it comes to physically carrying-out client audits etc.

The Senior Managers are the ‘minders’ – they supervise the lower-level grinders, liaising with the customer, overseeing the quality of their work, and ensuring the customer is satisfied with the service they are receiving.

The Finders are the most senior staff in the company, Directors and Partners, and it is their role to ‘find’ the work. They develop new business, win tenders and leverage their skills and
expertise to win clients for the company. They are also however very involved in the day-to-
day client work, advising junior staff on complex technical issues, and signing-off on the 
work done by more junior staff. It is very clear from the interviewees that the management 
style of Partners is hands-on and ‘open-door’, with a lot of day-to-day interaction with staff at 
all levels.

Part of being a Partner or even a Director is being a ‘brand ambassador’ for the company. 
Showing off the range of talent and expertise present within the company is a key way of 
attracting clients. Having specialists in certain areas (e.g. international corporation tax) is key 
to attracting clients – with clients paying for your knowledge and advice on technical 
financial matters. The Finders promote themselves and raise the profile of the company by 
writing articles for trade publications; by being involved in industry bodies; by speaking at 
conferences and generally getting themselves and their company’s talents, skills, expertise 
‘out there’.

The Partnership structure of these kinds of professional services companies differs from other 
companies in that once you are made Partner, you receive an equity stake in the company, 
and so essentially become an owner. There is also a particular ‘up or out’ promotional policy, 
whereby after a designated period at a particular grade, staff are either promoted or leave the 
company. However this ‘up or out’ policy is not completely rigid. While in the past, the 
ultimate goal was to be on ‘partner track’, there are now routes available to those who do not envision themselves as Partners, so effectively a ‘non-partner’ track. Several interviewees talk of the possibility of stopping at Director level, in a role seen to be akin to being a ‘non-
equity’ Partner. This will be further explored in subsequent chapters.

4.6.1.4 NOTE ON THE DATA

AccountCo Human Resources (HR) provided details of the number of staff at each level in 
the organisation split by gender, but not by functional area. Functional area information is 
thus taken from the survey sample. AccountCo HR requested that the question regarding 
remuneration be removed from the online survey, and so no gender pay gap analysis can be 
done on this sample.
4.7 **VERTICAL SEGREGATION**

AccountCo has 1054 employees between its offices in Dublin, Cork and Limerick; 574 women and 480 men. Women dominate the company slightly in terms of overall staff numbers, accounting for 54% of all employees.

Figure 4.38 shows the gender and staff distribution within AccountCo, and is derived from data provided by AccountCo HR. The blue levels of the pyramid indicate the grades at which men dominate and the pink levels indicate the grades at which women dominate. As we can see, there is again classic vertical gender segregation in existence within AccountCo, with men occupying the positions of power, while women dominate in the junior positions.

However while men do dominate in the top three management tiers we can see a 'pink creep' occurring. Women dominate in all trainee; and junior management levels; and account for 44% of the middle management grade of Senior Manager (the 'minders'). Meanwhile, at the lower levels women dominate in terms of graduate intake, and according to one Partner interviewed for this study it is the female employees who are showing the most potential;

"...the girls are better than they guys by and large. That's my experience.....the people who are progressing...are females. The real talent at the emerging level is all female"  
[JQ, Male Partner]

This tallies with the overall educational statistics in Ireland. Girls in Ireland are outperforming boys at leaving certificate level, and are increasingly out-numbering male graduates when it comes to the business subjects which are the traditional route into the professional services. (HEA, 2007: 36)
As shown in Table 4.39, women predominate at the five lowest grades in the company, while men account for the majority of staff at the remaining three most senior levels. At the most senior levels, we find that there are only eight female Partners (17%) out of 48 in total; and thirteen female (21%) Directors out of 61 in total.

In AccountCo, the Finders are predominantly male; the Minders are fairly gender balanced; while the grinders are predominantly female. There are a further 89 support/administrative staff who are not on the main ‘partner track’ hierarchy of the company – these are overwhelmingly female (98%).

**TABLE 4.39: ACCOUNTCO TOTAL IRELAND-BASED STAFF**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corporate Title</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=480</td>
<td>N=574</td>
<td>N=1054</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/Senior Consultant</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Manager/Supervisor</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seniors/Consultants</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainees/Juniors/Analysts</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff/Admin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>1054</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.7.1 GENDERED SURVEY POPULATION

As this study sought specifically look at the ‘pathway to leadership’; the management grades which could be most closely described as junior management; middle management and senior management were selected as the study population. As outlined in Table 4.43, this means that N=395 staff at five grades; Assistant manager/Supervisor through to Partner were included in the survey population. When the lower grades are removed from the population, we can see that women no longer dominate numerically within the sample. Men make up 57% of the population and women account for 43%.
A Chi square test for independence carried out on the survey sample indicates a significant association between gender and management level; $\chi^2 (4) = 9.407, p = 0.009$; with an effect size of Cramer’s $V = 0.285, p = 0.052$.

**FIGURE 4.42: ACCOUNTCO SURVEY POPULATION/SAMPLE BY GENDER/GRADE**

- **POPULATION:** N=109 (N=88 MALE (81%)/N=21 FEMALE (19%))
- **SAMPLE:** N=41 (38% RESPONSE RATE): (N=30 MALE (73%)/N=11 FEMALE (27%))

**SENIOR MANAGER** 20%

- **POPULATION:** N=80 (N=45 MALE (56%)/N=35 FEMALE (44%))
- **SAMPLE:** N=24 (30% RESPONSE RATE): (N=11 MALE (46%)/N=13 FEMALE (54%))

**MANAGER/SENIOR CONSULTANT** 32%

- **POPULATION:** N=125 (N=57 MALE (46%)/N=68 FEMALE (54%))
- **SAMPLE:** N=32 (26% RESPONSE RATE): (N=13 MALE (41%)/N=19 FEMALE (59%))

**ASSISTANT MANAGER/SUPERVISOR** 21%

- **POPULATION:** N=81 (N=35 MALE (43%)/N=46 FEMALE (57%))
- **SAMPLE:** N=19 (23% RESPONSE RATE): (N=9 MALE (47%)/N=10 FEMALE (53%))

**TABLE 4.43: ACCOUNTCO SURVEY POPULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCOUNTCO SURVEY POPULATION</th>
<th>CORPORATE TITLE % SPLIT BY GENDER</th>
<th>GENDER SPLIT BY % AT EACH CORPORATE TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Title</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>N=225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Manager</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager/Service Consultant</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Manager/Supervisor</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.8 NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES**

The vast majority of respondents within AccountCo (89%) have at least one person reporting to them; 41% of respondents have between one and five subordinates; 20% have between six and ten subordinates and 28% have more than ten subordinates. In contrast to InvestCo where men are significantly more likely than women to have a greater number of people working for them, there is more gender convergence found in AccountCo, with no significant gender association between respondents regarding how many subordinates they have.
A Chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between gender and the number of subordinates a respondent has: $\chi^2 (3) = 2.867, p = 0.413$ – another key difference amongst the companies it seems?

Tables 4.44 and 4.45 outline the number of subordinates male respondents and female respondents have, and is split by corporate title. While no significant difference was found overall between men and women, there are some interesting figures to note. For example male respondents at all grades are more likely to have more than ten subordinates than female respondents – except at the Director level, where women have more subordinates. Eighty-six per cent of female Directors (n=4) have more than ten subordinates compared with 32% of equivalent male Directors (n=13).

### TABLE 4.44: NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES BY GRADE - MALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>Partner N=11</th>
<th>Director N=13</th>
<th>Sen Man N=13</th>
<th>Manager N=16</th>
<th>AM/SUP N=9</th>
<th>Total N=62</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One - Five</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six - Ten</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Ten</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted

### % NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES BY CORPORATE TITLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>Partner N=11</th>
<th>Director N=13</th>
<th>Sen Man N=13</th>
<th>Manager N=16</th>
<th>AM/SUP N=9</th>
<th>Total N=62</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One - Five</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six - Ten</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Ten</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>101%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted Percentages
TABLE 4.45: NUMBER OF SUBORDINATES BY GRADE - FEMALE RESPONDENTS

**FEMALE RESPONDENTS N=51**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>Partner N=3</th>
<th>Director N=4</th>
<th>Sen Man N=10</th>
<th>Manager N=19</th>
<th>AM/SUP N=15</th>
<th>Total N=51</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One - Five</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six - Ten</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Ten</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subordinates</th>
<th>Partner N=3</th>
<th>Director N=4</th>
<th>Sen Man N=10</th>
<th>Manager N=19</th>
<th>AM/SUP N=15</th>
<th>Total N=51</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One - Five</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Six - Ten</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; Ten</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted Percentages*

### 4.9 FUNCTIONAL SEGREGATION

AccountCo HR did not provide employee data split by functional area, so the information in this section is taken from the online survey carried out amongst the AccountCo sample. Tables 4.46, 4.47 and 4.48 show how the survey sample breaks down by department and by gender.

The department most represented in this survey is Audit, with 43% (n=50) of all survey respondents indicating that they work in this area. This is followed by Tax, with 35% (n=40) of respondents indicating that they work here. Eight per cent (n=9) of respondents work in Consulting; a further eight per cent (n=9) work in Financial Advisory Services; 3% (n=3) work in HR; 2% (n=2) work in Financial Administration, and 1% (n=1) each work in IT & Operations, and in Marketing & Business Development.
### TABLE 4.46: DEPARTMENT BY GENDER [TAKEN FROM ONLINE SURVEY DATA]

**ACCOUNTCO - FUNCTIONAL AREA BY GENDER (SAMPLE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Male N=65</th>
<th>Female N=50</th>
<th>Total N=115</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Advisory Services</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT &amp; Operations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Business Development</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>65</strong></td>
<td><strong>50</strong></td>
<td><strong>115</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted

### TABLE 4.47: DEPARTMENT BY GENDER – PERCENTAGE

**ACCOUNTCO - FUNCTIONAL AREA % BY GENDER (SAMPLE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Male %</th>
<th>Female %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Advisory Services</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT &amp; Operations</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Administration</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Business Development</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>57%</strong></td>
<td><strong>43%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted

### TABLE 4.48: GENDER BY DEPARTMENT

**ACCOUNTCO - GENDER SPLIT BY % IN EACH FUNCTIONAL AREA (SAMPLE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional Area</th>
<th>Male %</th>
<th>Female %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Advisory Services</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT &amp; Operations</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Administration</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and Business Development</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted
Without knowing how the company actually breaks down by gender and functional area there is no way of knowing whether this is representative sample of the company by functional area overall. However significance tests were carried out on this data to at least understand if there was a pattern of gender segregation within the survey sample. The two dominant departments in the company, Audit and Tax are relatively gender balanced in the survey sample. Audit (N=50) is 58% male and 42% female; while Tax (N=40) is 53% male and 47% female.

Due to the small sample sizes, in order to carry out significance testing on this data the categories were grouped into Audit, Tax and Other. No statistically significant gender difference was found with regard to which functional areas respondents work in.

\[ \chi^2 (2) = 0.690, p = 0.077 \]

Thus it can be surmised that there is no horizontal gender segregation within this study sample. However as mentioned this data is not a complete picture – the nuances of each functional area were not fully-captured in the quantitative survey research, and will be explored further in the qualitative data in Chapter Six.

The quantitative data does indicate that there are pockets of gender segregation within the company, and this is echoed in the qualitative interviews. For example, there are 89 support/administrative staff who are not on the main ‘partner track’ hierarchy of the company, and these are overwhelmingly female (98%). We can also see from Table 4.48 that while it is not found to be statistically significant, the Consulting, Financial Advisory Services (FAS) and IT/Operations departments are quite male-dominated; while Marketing/Business Development is female-dominated.

Caution must be taken with these figures due to the small sample sizes. While there is some clear functional segregation at administration level within AccountCo, the interview data reveals that the company is quite gender balanced at the ‘core-function’ level, i.e. within the main client-facing departments. While the interviews do reveal some pockets of segregation, it is a lot less present or important to female interviewees in the company than it is found to be in InvestCo. The only area that was specially mentioned as being male dominated was the FAS department, as will be discussed further in Chapter Figure 4.49 shows the departments
which are predominantly male coloured in blue and those which are predominantly female coloured in pink.

FIGURE 4.49: GENDER BY FUNCTIONAL AREA – SURVEY SAMPLE N=115

4.10 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

While we do find a pattern of vertical gender segregation within AccountCo, there is far more gender convergence overall than was found in InvestCo. AccountCo is overall female dominated, with women accounting for 54% of all employees, and women are well-represented at all but the top two levels in the company.

While there are indications that some pockets of horizontal gender segregation are present within the company, there is no statistically significant gender difference within the AccountCo survey sample – with women well-represented in the important ‘big money’ functional areas of Audit and Tax. There is also no significant gender difference regarding the number of subordinates’ survey respondents have working for them; or in relation to nationality.

There is a lot less complexity in terms of organisational structure and culture within AccountCo than is found in InvestCo. For example issues of nationality or global management structures do not play a large role in the day-to-day operations as they do in
InvestCo. AccountCo is focused on the domestic Irish market, and its clients are companies and institutions operating within Ireland.

4.11 CONCLUSION

Within both companies, women are definitely ‘present’; they account for 40% (n=143) of all staff in InvestCo’s Ireland-based organisation (N=357); and for 54% (n=574) of AccountCo’s (N=1054). However when we look at where they are within both organisations, we can see that vertical gender segregation or what has been termed the ‘glass-ceiling’ phenomenon is evident in both companies.

Men dominate at senior levels in both. AccountCo does however have a little more gender balance overall. AccountCo has a slightly greater number of women at the top level (19%) than InvestCo (13%). AccountCo also has a greater gender balance at the middle management level. This grade is effectively the ‘pathway to leadership’ in that it is the pool from where the top managers are taken from. Forty four per cent of staff at this grade in AccountCo is female, as compared with 30% in InvestCo. As will be discussed in the next chapter, a lack of senior female role models is cited by women in the sample as one of the key barriers to their progression, thus the power of even these small differences in numbers of women at the top cannot be underestimated.

In both companies we can see elements of what Catalyst [2005] have described as women ‘taking care’ while men ‘take charge’. As outlined, men dominate the most senior grades in each company, and in InvestCo they also dominate the most powerful functional areas within the company AccountCo does not have the same level of functional gender segregation. Women are much more likely to be ‘present’ in the key areas of the business, and are well-represented within the core functions of Audit and Tax.

In the next chapter we will explore if women and men’s perceptions and attitudes towards both their own career progression and the cultures within which they work are influenced by the different organisational structures within which they operate. InvestCo has more gender segregation and is the more male-dominated of the two companies, and so we would expect to find that women’s experience of this organisation is more negative than is found within AccountCo.
CHAPTER 5 - IMPACT OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES ON ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF WORKERS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four has shown the gendered nature of both companies, however gender divisions were found to be more pronounced in InvestCo in contrast with AccountCo. In this chapter we will explore the quantitative survey data to ascertain to what degree these different gendered organisational structures impact on attitudes and perceptions of both male and female workers.

Included within the online survey were several questions which sought to shed some light on how men and women in each company perceive the culture of the organisation that they work in, and their opportunities to progress within it.

The survey data will be explored to ascertain whether predicted differences emerge from the structure of each company – i.e. do women in InvestCo have a negative outlook on the company they work in, and on their opportunities to progress within it; and in contrast do women in AccountCo view their company and prospects more positively?

This study also aims to understand why the companies are gendered as they are – why are women at the bottom in InvestCo and in the less important functions; and why do they seem to progress better in AccountCo? As Chapter Two’s literature review outlined, the reasons for women’s absence at the top in the workplace is attributed by some to the organisational structures and cultures within which women operate (Acker, 1990; Kanter, 1977) while other theorists point to women’s own actions and choices as the reason why they are not represented more in senior roles (Hakim, 1994, 2005). Through a series of questions the survey questionnaire aimed to capture to what extent person-centred factors and organisational factors influence women’s position in these organisations and this chapter will explore that quantitative data.
5.2 PERSON-CENTRED VERSUS ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS

At the outset of this study, the issue of most interest to the researcher was whether women are effectively to ‘blame’ for their own lack of progression to senior roles. Prompted by the work of Hakim (2005), and within an Irish context by the work of Cross and Linehan (2006), and their theories of ‘self-imposed’ glass ceilings, and women’s general ‘preference’ for not being as career-focused as men, this study sought particularly to examine whether the reason for women’s absence at the top of this industry was really just a matter of them ‘choosing’ not to progress.

The idea that if women just choose to they can succeed in progressing to the top in the workplace has become almost accepted as fact within the general discourse, with a movement in both the academic literature and in public discourse away from a 1970’s focus on ‘structural-barriers’ towards the idea of post-feminist ‘choice’ (for example Hakim 1996; 2005). As a 2003 headline in the New York Times posited; ‘Why don’t women run the world? – they choose not to’ (Belkin, New York Times 2003). More recently, in response to the increased responsibilities faced by companies to ensure equal pay in the new Equality Act 2010 in the UK, the Director General of the Institute of Directors’ Miles Templeman was quoted as saying that “‘hard evidence...shows that choices made by women at the pre-employment stage are what generally lead to average gender pay differences” (Peacock, December 2010). Whether through the career pathways they choose, or via creating a ‘self-imposed’ glass-ceiling, women are increasingly seen to be responsible for their own lack of progression.

However this PhD study seeks to look deeper than this, it aims to test whether Gerson’s theory that women face a “series of unsatisfactory trade-offs masquerading as ‘choice’” is as true today as it was when she wrote it in the 1980s? (Gerson, 1985)

According to a recent report published by Catalyst, even when women ‘do all the right things’ they have been told will help them get ahead, they still do not succeed at the same rate as their male counterparts (Carter and Silva, 2011). So it appears that the issue is deeper than mere ‘choice’, or women’s behaviour and actions. This study posits that looking only at person-centred issues cannot explain the full picture; rather the organisational structures and

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cultures within which women operate must be examined in order to attempt to understand the issue.

For the purposes of this study person-centred barriers are defined as those factors which can be attributed to a person’s own agency - what they do in terms of their own actionable sphere of control to progress in their career. This includes factors such as ambition and commitment; human capital factors such as a person’s educational credentials, their level of work experience; the effort they put into their job in the form of hours worked, promotions applied for and so forth. It also includes choices around whether to take time out of one’s career for family responsibilities.

Organisational barriers are inhibitors to a person’s progress which can be attributed to the organisational structure and culture within which people work, and refer particularly to the idea that women are disadvantaged due to the traditional patriarchal structures inherent in organisations. For example in how jobs are structured; the kinds of ‘family friendly’ initiatives in place; how promotional procedures operate; the impact of vertical and horizontal gender segregation and so forth. These are the variables which can be said to be within the company’s sphere of control and influence, and can include formal procedures as well as the more informal/tacit understanding of ‘how things are done’ in a particular company.

5.2.1 SURVEY QUESTIONS

Drawing on the literature, the survey questionnaire was designed firstly to measure behaviours, attitudes and perceptions about the organisational culture of the case-study companies, and secondly to capture person-centred factors such as how ambitious men and women are; and their level of commitment to their career and so forth. The aim being to understand the role of the individual versus the role of the company in career progression, and to ascertain whether any gender differences emerge.

5.3 STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

Firstly this chapter will outline the survey findings from each company, focusing on the similarities and differences between men and women to understand whether any gender-specific barriers emerge. It aims to understand what factors are common to both men and women, and what barriers are experienced more strongly by women.
Secondly there will be a cross-company analysis, looking at how workers’ experience in InvestCo compares with that of workers in AccountCo. This aims to understand to what extent the different organisational factors impact on workers and if there are more gender differences in one company or another.

The results from the survey data will expose whether person-centred or organisational factors, or a combination of both, can be said to cause women’s lack of representation in these companies.

5.4 PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

As part of the online survey, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with a selection of statements related to their company’s organisational culture. They could choose to either ‘strongly agree’; ‘agree’; ‘neither agree/disagree’; ‘disagree’; or ‘strongly disagree’ with each statement. In this section we will look at the results of six of these statements. These are as follows:

1. There is a fair representation of women and men at senior levels in this company
2. Men have an easier route to the top in this company than women with equivalent levels of education and experience
3. Who you know is equally or more important than what you know if you want to progress in this company
4. Promotional procedures are fair and transparent
5. There are many opportunities to progress my career
6. Progressing to the top of this company is not worth the personal sacrifice

This data builds a picture of how women and men perceive the organisations that they work in and how the organisational structures and cultures serve to influence men and women’s career progression positively and negatively.

5.4.1 INVESTCO

Beginning with InvestCo, Table 5.1 outlines the percentage of male and female respondents who agree and disagree with each of the six statements\(^\text{22}\). As highlighted in grey, there is a

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\(^{22}\) For the purposes of analysis and reporting, ‘agree’ is a combination of those who either ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ with this statement; while ‘disagree’ is a combination of those who either ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement. The table does not include the percentage of respondents who ‘neither agree/disagree’ with the statement.
significant gender difference regarding respondents' attitude to whether there is a fair representation of women and men at the top of the company; and to whether it is easier for men to get ahead.

There is a significant gap in perception around fair representation of women at the top of the company, with 42% of men agreeing that women are fairly represented in senior roles, while just over one fifth of women (27%) think that this is the case. Again a similar perception gap is found with regard to how much men and women differ about what they perceive is the level of difficulty of women reaching the top. While more than half of women (53%) in the sample agree that men have an easier time progressing in InvestCo than women in the company, only 13% of men agree that this is in fact the case.

This indicates that men in this company perceive a degree of fairness with regard to equality of gender representation, and ease of passage to the top, when it doesn’t appear to exist as borne out by the findings in Chapter Four.

**TABLE 5.1: INVESTCO ATTITUDE TOWARDS CULTURE BY GENDER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INVESTCO</th>
<th>Male N=64 Agree</th>
<th>Male N=64 Disagree</th>
<th>Female N=67 Agree</th>
<th>Female N=67 Disagree</th>
<th>Total N=131 Agree</th>
<th>Total N=131 Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotional procedures are fair and transparent</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are many opportunities to progress my career</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressing in this co is not worth the personal sacrifice</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair rep of women and men at top</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have easier route to top</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who you know as/more nb than what you know if you want to be srn mgr</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Neither agree nor disagree* not reported in this table
A sizeable number of both men and women in InvestCo agree that ‘who you know’ in the company is as, or even more, important than a persons’ skills and experience when it comes to progressing to senior management within the company. While no significant gender difference is found, it is again women in the sample who agree with this in larger numbers, with 55% of female respondents compared with 40% of male respondents agreeing that this is the case.

Promotional procedures and opportunities for progression

As outlined in Table 5.1, while it is not a statistically significant difference, 39% of men compared with just 24% of women in the sample agree that promotional procedures are fair and transparent within InvestCo. While 47% of men, compared to 34% of women agree that there are many opportunities to progress their career in the company.
Again, while not statistically significant, more women than men in the sample agree that progressing in InvestCo is not worth the personal sacrifice necessary. Over half of female respondents (54%) and 39% of male of male respondents agree that this is the case.

**Conclusion**

In every case it is women in InvestCo who have the more negative attitude towards the culture within the company overall. Over half of the women in the sample agree that men have an easier time getting ahead; that who you know is more important than your skills and experience in making it to senior manager; and that progressing to the top is not worth the personal sacrifice required of you in InvestCo.

Women are less likely than men to agree that there is a fair gender representation at the senior levels of the company; that there are many opportunities to progress in InvestCo; and that promotional procedures are fair and transparent.

**5.4.2 ACCOUNTCO**

Looking secondly at AccountCo, Table 5.3 outlines the percentage of male and female respondents who agree and disagree with each of the six statements. As highlighted in grey, echoing what was found in InvestCo, there is a significant gender difference regarding respondents' attitude to whether there is a fair representation of women and men at the top of the company; and to whether it is easier for men to get ahead. In both cases women are significantly more likely than men to agree that there are not enough women at the top of AccountCo and that men have an easier time getting there.

Forty-five per cent of women compared with 59% of men in AccountCo agree that women are fairly represented at top of the company. However while men are significantly more likely to agree that this is the case than women in the sample, a sizeable minority of women in the sample also agree that the gender balance at the top of the organisation is fair. This is in keeping with the findings from Chapter Four, where AccountCo was found to have a relatively more equal hierarchical structure. Forty-one per cent of women compared with 9%

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23 For the purposes of analysis and reporting, 'agree' is a combination of those who either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with this statement; while 'disagree' is a combination of those who either 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with the statement. The table does not include the percentage of respondents who 'neither agree/disagree' with the statement.
men in AccountCo agree that men have an easier route to the top than women. Here we find a more stark contrast between women and men in the sample, with a sizeable minority of women agreeing that in effect being a woman in AccountCo is a barrier to progression.

TABLE 5.3: ACCOUNTCO ATTITUDE TOWARDS CULTURE BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCOUNTCO</th>
<th>Male N=62</th>
<th>Female N=53</th>
<th>Total N=115</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional procedures are fair and transparent</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are many opportunities to progress my career</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressing in this company is not worth the personal sacrifice</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair representation of women and men at top</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have easier route to top</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who you know is as/more important than what you know if you want to be senior manager</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages
Neither agree nor disagree' not reported in this table

CHART 5.4: ACCOUNTCO ATTITUDE TOWARDS CULTURE BY GENDER

* PERCENTAGE IN RED INDICATES SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCE

- Who you know is as or more important than what you know if you want to be senior manager in AccountCo
- Men have easier route to the top in AccountCo
- There is a fair representation of women and men at top in AccountCo
- Progressing in AccountCo is not worth the personal sacrifice
- There are many opportunities to progress my career
- Promotional procedures are fair and transparent
When we look at the other four statements regarding the culture of the organisation, we see more gender convergence than difference emerging within AccountCo. The findings also suggest a generally positive attitude amongst respondents towards the culture in the company. As outlined in Chart 5.4, just one quarter of both men and women in AccountCo agree that 'who you know' in the company is as, or more, important than your skills and experience when it comes to progressing to senior management level within the company. This indicates that respondents perceive the company to be relatively meritocratic.

When it comes to the personal sacrifice required to progress to the top, just 30% of female respondents and 26% of male respondents agree that it is not worth the sacrifice necessary to become a senior manager in AccountCo. This indicates that the effort and sacrifice necessary to progress in the company is not perceived as being overly-prohibitive by the majority of the sample.

**Promotional procedures and opportunities for progression**

There is a positive perception overall regarding promotion, and opportunities to progress within AccountCo. Fifty-five per cent of men and 57% of women agree that promotional procedures are fair and transparent; while 69% of men and 68% of women agree that there are many opportunities to progress in the company. There is more gender convergence than difference regarding these issues in AccountCo, with an equality of opportunity displayed in the company.

**Conclusion**

While women are significantly more likely than men in AccountCo to agree that it is easier for men to progress in the organisation, and that women are not fairly represented at the top, overall the findings show more gender convergence than difference regarding how respondents perceive the culture in AccountCo.

There is an equality of opportunity displayed, with over half of all women and men agreeing that promotional procedures are fair and transparent; and that there are many opportunities to progress in the company.

Respondents perceive the company to be generally meritocratic, with 'who you know' not being considered overly important to career progression. Respondents also do not view the personal sacrifice necessary to get to the top as being overly-prohibitive to their progression.
Overall we find a generally positive attitude towards the culture in AccountCo and more similarity than difference between male and female respondents.

5.4.3 COMPANIES COMPARED

Gendered nature of organisational cultures

In both cases, across both companies, women are significantly more likely than men to agree that there are not enough women at the top and that men have an easier time getting there.

While women and men differ significantly regarding their views on these issues, there are some interesting points to note when comparing the two companies. For example while men in both companies are more likely to agree that there is a fair representation of women and men at the top of the company, men in AccountCo (59%) are more likely to agree that this is the case than men in InvestCo (42%), as per Chart 5.7. Women in AccountCo (45%) are also more likely than those in InvestCo (27%) to agree that this is the case.

### TABLE 5.5: FEMALE RESPONDENTS ACROSS BOTH COMPANIES COMPARED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INVESTCO</th>
<th>ACCOUNTCO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALL FEMALE RESPONDENTS N=120</strong></td>
<td>Females N=67</td>
<td>Females N=53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair rep of women and men at top</td>
<td>Agree 27%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have easier route to top</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages
Neither agree nor disagree' not reported in this table

### TABLE 5.6: MALE RESPONDENTS ACROSS BOTH COMPANIES COMPARED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INVESTCO</th>
<th>ACCOUNTCO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALL MALE RESPONDENTS N=126</strong></td>
<td>Males N=64</td>
<td>Males N=62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair rep of women and men at top</td>
<td>Agree 42%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men have easier route to top</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages
Neither agree nor disagree' not reported in this table

The facts as outlined in Chapter Four confirm that there are certainly more women at the top in AccountCo than in InvestCo, so this is obviously a reflection of that.
There is a large gender perception gap in both companies regarding whether men are perceived as having an easier time getting ahead. In both companies just small percentages of men (13% in InvestCo and 9% in AccountCo) agree that this is the case, while over half of women in InvestCo and 41% of women in AccountCo perceive this to be true.

These findings show that perceptions of equality are gendered in both companies, and reflect the gendered organisational structures common to both as outlined in Chapter Four.

In keeping with the less equal organisational structure explicated in Chapter Four, it is women in InvestCo who have the most negative perception of the culture within which they are working. They are the cohort most likely to think that men have an easier time progressing, and the cohort least likely to think that there is a fair representation of women at the top, as highlighted in Chart 5.7 below.

**Chart 5.7: Percentage of respondents who agree with this statement by company and by gender**

These kinds of gender ‘perception gaps’ are of importance, particularly in companies such as these where men outnumber women substantially in the top-level decision-making positions.
For example in InvestCo’s case, if over 40% of men believe that women are fairly represented at senior levels within the company, (and only 23% of men disagree that women are not), when there are no women in the top tier of executives, and women account for only 18% of senior managers, then this is potentially problematic in terms of whether any significant change in representation could or would be promoted or facilitated by senior management.

5.4.3.1 PROMOTIONAL PROCEDURES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESSION

The quantitative data reveals differences between the attitude of women and men in each company to both the promotional procedures and opportunities for progression in InvestCo and AccountCo. Both men and women in AccountCo have a more positive experience of these issues than those in InvestCo. There is also more gender convergence found in AccountCo.

As outlined in Table 5.8, when we compare women across both companies, the contrast in attitudes is quite stark. While 57% of women in AccountCo agree that promotional procedures are fair and transparent, only 24% of women in InvestCo agree that this is the case; and while 68% of women in AccountCo agree that they have many opportunities for career progression in the company, 34% of women in InvestCo feel the same way.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5.8: FEMALE RESPONDENTS ACROSS BOTH COMPANIES COMPARED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INVESTCO</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females N=67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional procedures are fair and transparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are many opportunities to progress my career</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male respondents in AccountCo are similarly more likely to agree that promotions are fair and transparent than men in InvestCo [55% vs. 39%]; and that there are many opportunities to progress in the company [69% vs. 47%]
TABLE 5.9: MALE RESPONDENTS ACROSS BOTH COMPANIES COMPARED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>INVESTCO</th>
<th>ACCOUNTCO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males N=64</td>
<td>Males N=62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotional procedures are fair and transparent</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are many opportunities to progress my career</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

Neither agree nor disagree' not reported in this table

CHART 5.10: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO AGREE WITH THIS STATEMENT BY COMPANY AND BY GENDER

The quantitative data shows considerable differences in perception of equality of opportunity between both companies, suggesting differences in the organisational cultures of both. As can be seen clearly from Chart 5.10, there is far more gender convergence present within AccountCo, and once again it is women in InvestCo who have the most negative perception of the promotional procedures and opportunities to progress in the company.

It is also clear from the data that men in InvestCo have a more negative attitude than those in AccountCo – indicating the negative impact of the gendered hierarchical company structure has on men in the sample too. A more equal company with open and transparent procedures is more positive for all workers.
5.4.3.2 WHO YOU KNOW VERSUS WHAT YOU KNOW

Both women and men in InvestCo are more likely than those in AccountCo to agree that they operate within a culture where ‘who you know’ is as or more important than what you know if you want to be a senior manager. As we can see from Table 5.11 below, while over half of female respondents in InvestCo [55%] agree that this is the case, only one quarter [24%] of women in AccountCo agree that this is true. Men in the InvestCo sample [40%] are also more likely to agree that knowing the right people is important than men in the AccountCo sample [26%]. As outlined in Chapter Four InvestCo is heavily male-dominated at senior management level, and this gendered nature of top management is especially problematic where there is a culture of progressing on the basis of ‘who you know’. Previous studies of the financial services have found that promotions are often based on affinity with senior managers, which can lead to a reproduction of the gendered nature of senior management (Kumra and Vinecombe, 2008; Woodward and Ozbilgin, 1999). As Kanter (1977) has posited, people in power, who are in both case-study companies most likely to be male, tend to ‘..mentor, encourage, and advance people who are most like themselves’ (1997: 72). As will be discussed in more detail when the qualitative interview data is explored in Chapter Six, this is definitely something which is found in InvestCo, and which is problematic for women in the sample, whereas in AccountCo this is much less of an issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 5.11: ALL RESPONDENTS ACROSS BOTH COMPANIES COMPARED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACCOUNTCO</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male N=62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who you know is as/more important than what you know if you want to be senior manager in this company</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

*Neither agree nor disagree* not reported in this table
5.4.3.3 THE PERCEIVED COST OF PROGRESSION

While there is no statistically significant gender difference found in either company, women in InvestCo are the cohort most likely to agree that progressing in their organisation is not worth the personal sacrifice. As outlined in Chart 5.13, 53% of female respondents in InvestCo agree that this is the case, as compared with 39% of their male counterparts in InvestCo; 30% of females in AccountCo and just 26% of males in AccountCo.

As will be explored in Chapter Six, the interview data reveals that the kind of personal sacrifice associated with getting to the top for women in InvestCo appears to include forgoing personal relationships and children. In some ways this is perception rather than reality, as some married women with children have progressed well in the company, but the number of these is small compared with AccountCo. In AccountCo there are much more positive senior female role models which women in the sample cite as proof that it is possible to be a Partner and have a family as a woman in the company.
As Chart 5.13 shows, there are large inter-company differences on this issue. Both women and men in InvestCo are more likely to agree that the personal sacrifice necessary to progress is off-putting. Again it is women in InvestCo who are the cohort with the most negative perception in this regard.

It is also worth noting that once again men in InvestCo have a more negative attitude towards the culture than men in AccountCo. This shows the negative impact InvestCo’s organisational structure and culture has on both women and men in the sample.

**Conclusion**

As would be expected due to its more gendered organisational structure, it is InvestCo which proves to be the more problematic company for women in this sample. While it is women in InvestCo who have the most negative attitudes and perceptions regarding the company they work in, both men and women in AccountCo have a more positive experience of the culture than those in InvestCo.

In AccountCo both men and women are more likely than those in InvestCo to agree that;
• Promotional procedures are fair and transparent
• There are many opportunities to progress
• There is a fair representation of women and men at top of the company

Whereas in InvestCo, both men and women are more likely than those in AccountCo to say that

• Who you know is more important than what you know
• Progressing in this company is not worth the personal sacrifice

There is more perceived equality amongst the sample in AccountCo which links in with the Chapter Four findings which outlined that AccountCo is less gendered in terms of its organisational structure overall.

5.5 SELF - REPORTED CAREER BARRIERS

A survey question was designed to capture what respondents perceive to be the factors which have hindered their career progression to date. Drawing on the literature review as per Chapter Two, seventeen potential career barriers were chosen and survey respondents were asked to indicate whether each has been ‘very important’; ‘important’; ‘somewhat important’; or ‘not important at all’ to their own career progression.

As this study seeks to understand to what degree career progress is held back by an individual and their own behaviours versus how they are held back due to the organisational culture within which they work, the barriers were divided into organisational factors and person-centred factors.

Ten of the seventeen potential barriers included in the survey question are what can be termed ‘person-centred’, they are:

• Lack of desire to reach senior levels
• Lack of ability to reach senior levels
• Lack of commitment to your career
• Lack of career planning
• Commitment to family/personal responsibilities
- Having children
- Ineffective leadership style
- Unwillingness to take risks
- Lack of awareness of organisational politics
- Lack of line management experience

The other seven of the seventeen potential barriers are related to organisational factors, they are:

- Inhospitable corporate culture
- Lack of opportunities to take on visible/challenging assignments
- Exclusion from informal networks
- Managers' preconceptions regarding your commitment to the job
- Lack of role models
- Lack of mentoring
- Your gender

Notes on the data:

- When an inhibitor is described as being 'important' it is an amalgamation of the total number of respondents who cited that inhibitor as being 'very important' and 'important'. This was done so that significance tests could be carried out on the data due to the relatively small sample size.
- When an inhibitor is described as gender 'neutral' these are barriers which do not have a statistically significantly association with gender, and which have a less than 10% difference between how often they are cited as 'very important'/important' by men and women in the sample.
5.5.1 INVESTCO

5.5.1.1 ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS

Table 5.14 and Chart 5.15 below outline the percentage of respondents in InvestCo who cite each organisational barrier as important in terms of how it has impacted on their own career progression.

When we look at the barriers which come out at the top overall, it indicates that progression in InvestCo means belonging to the right networks, being a ‘chosen one’ who gets access to the important projects which lead to increased visibility.

As we can see from Table 5.14, ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments’ comes out as the top organisational barrier with 47% of all respondents citing this as important. This is followed by ‘exclusion from informal networks’ which is cited as important by 46% of all respondents; and ‘lack of mentoring’ cited by 36%. This indicates a sense of shared exclusion amongst the InvestCo sample. In keeping with the hierarchical structure as outlined in Chapter Four, Senior Managers account for just 12% (n=44) of all Irish-based staff in InvestCo (N=357), so only a small number of people, men or women, reach that level in the company.

This data does show however that organisational barriers are not completely gender neutral. When we split the data by gender we find that women in the sample are significantly more likely to cite four out of the seven barriers than equivalent males. These four barriers are highlighted in grey in Table 5.14.

TABLE 5.14: ORGANISATION BARRIERS – ALL RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS - TOTAL BY RANK N=108</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Inhibitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*
Gender influence on organisational barriers

As outlined in Table 5.16 below, the top organisational barrier for men in InvestCo is ‘exclusion from informal networks’, with 51% citing this as an important inhibitor. The second most cited barrier for men is ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible/challenging assignments’, with 38% citing it as important.

TABLE 5.16: ORGANISATION BARRIERS - MALE RESPONDENTS
ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS - MALES BY RANK N=55

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager's preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages
For women in the sample, ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible/challenging assignments’ is the top organisational barrier, with 61% citing it as important. This is followed by ‘lack of role models’ which is cited by 41% of women in the sample.

**TABLE 5.17: ORGANISATION BARRIERS – FEMALE RESPONDENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS - FEMALES BY RANK N=53</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Inhibitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and/or challenging assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

It is interesting to note where the gender differences emerge within this sample. In four cases women cite organisational barriers significantly more often than men in InvestCo. This indicates that women in InvestCo have a more negative experience of organisational culture than equivalent males.

Women are significantly more likely than men in the sample to cite; ‘lack of role models’; ‘manager’s preconceptions regarding your commitment to your job’; ‘inhospitable corporate culture’ and ‘gender’ as being barriers to their career progression.

While 41% of women in InvestCo say that a lack of role models has been a barrier to their progression, just 13% of males in the sample have found this to be an important issue for them. This ties in with the findings from Chapter Four where it was outlined just how male-dominated InvestCo is as a company, with few women in senior management positions. That women feel that a lack of role models has held their career-progression back echoes Brockbank and Traves’s (1995) findings which identified a lack of role models as part of the deficit in social capital which serves to inhibit women’s progress. Liff and Ward (2001) found that lack of female role models at senior levels who specifically managed to combine being a mother with being a senior manager caused women in their study to express concern that having children would mean the end of their career. This will be explored further in Chapter Six where the qualitative interview data analysis is outlined.
Almost 40% of women and one fifth of men cite ‘managers’ preconceptions about your commitment to the job’ as important. Over one third of women (36%) and 23% of men consider inhospitable corporate culture a barrier to their progress. While in neither case is this barrier cited by a majority of women in the sample, it is interesting to note that women in InvestCo do experience these barriers significantly more than men in the sample, and it indicates the negative impact of the gendered organisation on women in InvestCo.

One quarter of women cite their gender as an important barrier, of which nine per cent cite it as being ‘very important’. On the other hand, no men at all cite their gender as being a barrier. While it is still a minority, that over a quarter of women feel the very fact of being ‘female’ has held them back in their career needs further exploration and will be elaborated on further in Chapter Six. The interviews reveal a clear sense of what might be termed ‘traditional’ gender bias; that is, women feeling like, ‘the other’ in the workplace. In InvestCo female interviewees report that female attributes are not valued the same as male attributes in the organisation; women are seen as too weak to handle the tough male characters; and they describe becoming ‘out of focus’ in terms of being considered for big projects or promotions once they have married or become pregnant.

‘Exclusion from informal networks’ is the only organisational barrier which men cite more often than women, with 51% of men citing it as important compared with 39% of women. This is not a statistically significant gender difference, but it is an interesting point to note how men can also feel excluded from certain ‘cliques’ even within what has been described as ‘boys club’ by a majority of women in the InvestCo sample (70%).

5.5.1.2 PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS

Table 5.18 and Chart 5.19 below outline the percentage of respondents in InvestCo who cite each person-centred barrier as important in terms of how it has impacted on their own career progression. As we can see ‘lack of awareness of organisational politics’ comes out as the top person-centred barrier with 38% of all respondents citing this as important. This is followed by ‘lack of career planning’ which is cited as important by 35% of all respondents; and ‘commitment to family/personal responsibilities’ cited by 34%.

This data shows that person-centred barriers are not completely gender neutral. When we split the data by gender we find that women in the sample are significantly more likely to cite two out of the ten barriers than equivalent males. These two barriers are highlighted in grey
in Table 5.18. This is fewer significant gender differences than were found for organisational barriers, where women felt four out of the seven barriers more keenly than men in the sample. There is thus there is more gender convergence found regarding person-centred barriers than was found for organisational barriers in InvestCo.

TABLE 5.18: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS – ALL RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS - TOTAL BY RANK N=108</th>
<th>Females N=53</th>
<th>Males N=55</th>
<th>Total N=108</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*

CHART 5.19: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS – ALL RESPONDENTS

- **PERCENTAGES IN RED INDICATE A SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCE**
Gender influence on person-centred barriers

As outlined in Table 5.20 below, the top person-centred barrier for men in InvestCo is ‘lack of awareness of organisational politics’, with 37% citing this as an important inhibitor. The second most cited barrier for men is ‘lack of career planning’, with 36% citing it as important.

### TABLE 5.20: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS - MALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For women in the sample, as per Table 5.21, ‘lack of awareness of organisational politics’ is similarly the top person-centred barrier, with 41% citing it as important. This is followed by ‘lack of line management experience’ which is cited by 39% of women in the sample.

### TABLE 5.21: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS - FEMALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*
There are significant gender differences on just two of the ten person-centred barriers, thus we find that men and women are more similar than different when it comes to the perceived impact of person-centred barriers on their careers.

Differences emerge for ‘lack of line management experience’, with 39% of women citing this compared with 14% of men. This is noteworthy in the context of the significant functional gender segregation in InvestCo which was outlined in Chapter Four. Women in InvestCo are more likely to work in areas which are not the company’s ‘power base’, and which have fewer senior managers; women are also more likely to have fewer subordinates even when they are at the same level as men. So it all appears to tie-in and makes sense; women aren’t being given, or are not taking, the opportunity to go for roles where managing people is a big element. Managing staff is necessary experience which women in InvestCo are excluded from in their vertically and horizontally gender segregated company.

There is also a significant gender difference regarding whether ‘having children’ has hindered career progression, with women again citing this more often than men in the sample (34% vs. 11%). It is the least-cited barrier for men in InvestCo. This indicates the different career-impact of becoming a parent on women and men in the sample.

It is interesting that the two person-centred barriers which have a significant gender difference are barriers which could be said to be quite permeable from a person/structural categorisation perspective. In some ways they are barriers which can be said to be out of the control of an individual, and more in the company’s sphere of control. ‘Lack of line management experience’ as we have noted, may be caused or at least exacerbated by a highly occupationally segregated company, where women are in departments with less senior management opportunity. With regard to ‘having children’, the polices and supports given to women by a company, and the overall culture of the organisation, can impact on whether a woman can successfully ‘on-ramp’ again once they have taken time out to have a baby. This will be explored further in Chapter Six where issues of motherhood are more fully-explored within the qualitative data.

Similarly ‘ineffective leadership style’ [which is not significantly different, but which has an 18 percentage point difference between women and men in the InvestCo sample], appears in the first instance to be a very ‘personal’ issue in the sphere of control of the individual, but ‘leadership style’ is subjective and imbued with stereotypical social role expectations of what a leader should be. Stereotypical agentic leadership qualities are often gendered male and
women in the InvestCo interview sample criticise the company for not valuing ‘female’ attributes as much as it values ‘male’ ones;

“...there’s no value placed on non-male attributes. The whole structure is so male orientated and male dominated” [DD, female Associate]

“My perception [is that] a lot of the women who do well are very aggressive and very manly and......I think it’ll take a good while, particularly in Ireland or, you know, before the kind of women act in a senior management role as themselves and not trying to replicate any kind of aggressive or bullshit behaviour” [RF, female VP]

On the other hand, a key finding from this data is that there is more gender convergence than difference found regarding the person-centred barriers which could be said to be associated with Hakim’s preference theory (1996; 2005) and Cross and Linehan’s (2006) ‘self-imposed’ or ‘psychological glass ceiling’. For example, similar numbers of men and women cite their commitment to family responsibilities (37% of women and 32% of men); and a lack of commitment to their career (18% of women and 16% of men) as barriers to their progress. Thus this data indicates that women in InvestCo are not any less committed to their career than men in the sample.

5.5.1.3 IMPORTANCE OF ORGANISATIONAL AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS COMPARED

It is especially noteworthy for this study to examine what particular barriers women report as feeling more keenly than the males in the sample, and how these barriers break down between person-centred and organisational factors. The aim of this is to understand firstly what particular barriers can be said to be gendered within this organisation, and secondly whether the most important factors holding people back from progressing is themselves - i.e. their own choices and behaviour - or the particular organisational structures and cultures within which they work.

The findings from this particular survey question allow us to understand what respondents themselves perceive to be the most important obstacles in their own careers.

We have already found from the data outlined in the previous two sections that women in InvestCo are significantly more likely than men in the sample to cite four out of the seven organisational barriers and two out of the ten person-centred barriers as inhibitors to their
career progress. Overall there is more gender convergence found when it comes to person-centred factors than is found for organisational factors. *Thus indicating that organisational barriers are more important overall in hindering women’s progress in InvestCo.*

Here we will now compare how important person-centred and organisational barriers are to women and men overall.

**Male Respondents**

Table 5.22 and Chart 5.23 outline the percentage of male respondents who cite each barrier, both person-centred and organisational, as important in hindering their own career progress. This allows us to see how important person-centred barriers are relative to organisational factors.

**TABLE 5.22: INVESTCO PERCENTAGE OF MALE RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THE LISTED 'CAREER INHIBITORS' AS VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT TO THEIR CAREER PROGRESSION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weighted percentages**

In Chart 5.23, the green bars indicate an organisational barrier while the yellow bars indicate a person-centred barrier. As we can see, the top two barriers overall for men are organisational, with 51% citing the top barrier of ‘exclusion from informal networks’, and 38% citing ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments’.
From a person-centred perspective, lack of awareness of organisational politics and a lack of career planning make it into the top five for men in the sample. Commitment to family and personal responsibilities also ranks relatively high for men, with 32% citing it as a barrier. This gives some indication of the impact of family-life on men in the sample, and will be explored further in Chapter Six.

**CHART 5.23: INVESTCO PERCENTAGE OF MALE RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THE LISTED 'CAREER INHIBITORS' AS VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT TO THEIR CAREER PROGRESSION**

- **GREEN BARS = ORGANISATIONAL BARRIER**
- **YELLOW BARS = PERSON-CENTRED BARRIER**
- **PERCENTAGES IN RED INDICATE A SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In hospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Female Respondents

Table 5.24 and Chart 5.25 below outline the percentage of female respondents who cite each barrier, both person-centred and organisational, as important in hindering their own career progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager's preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

In Chart 5.25, the green bars again indicate an organisational barrier while the yellow bars indicate a person-centred barrier. As we can see, the top two barriers for women are also organisational, with 61% citing the top barrier of ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments’; and 41% citing ‘lack of role models’.

From a person-centred perspective, lack of awareness of organisational politics and a lack of line management experience make it into the top five for women in the sample. Commitment to family and personal responsibilities also ranks relatively high for women, with 37% citing it as a barrier. This gives some indication of the impact of motherhood on women in the sample, and again will be explored further in Chapter Six.
Thus the findings show that both men and women feel organisational barriers have been most important overall relative to person-centred factors, with organisational barriers coming out on top for both male and female respondents in the sample.

5.5.1.4 CONCLUSION

From a self-reported basis, women and men in InvestCo overall blame organisational factors rather than person-centred ones when it comes to identifying what has held them back in their careers.

Women in InvestCo experience the organisational culture more negatively overall, citing a lack of role models; managers’ preconceptions regarding their commitment to the job;
inhospitable corporate culture and their gender, significantly more often than men in the sample.

Women also significantly more likely than men to cite the person-centred barriers of lack of line management experience, and having children as important barriers to their progress. However on person-centred issues such as commitment; desire and ability to succeed; no significant gender differences are found.

5.5.2 ACCOUNTCO

5.5.2.1 ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS

Table 5.26 and Chart 5.27 below outline the percentage of respondents in AccountCo who cite each organisational barrier as important in terms of how it has impacted on their own career progression. As we can see ‘exclusion from informal networks’ comes out as the top organisational barrier with 40% of all respondents citing this as important. This is followed by ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible/challenging assignments’ which is cited as important by 38% of all respondents; and ‘lack of mentoring’ cited by 35%. This indicates again a sense of shared exclusion amongst the AccountCo sample. In keeping with the hierarchical structure as outlined in Chapter Four, Partners and Directors account for just 10% (n=109) of all staff in AccountCo (N=1054), so only a small number of people, men or women, reach that level in the company.

This data does however that organisational barriers are not completely gender neutral. When we split the data by gender we find that women in the sample are significantly more likely than male respondents to cite three out of the seven barriers as having been important in hindering their career. These three barriers are highlighted in grey in Table 5.26.
TABLE 5.26: ORGANISATION BARRIERS - ALL RESPONDENTS

ORGANISTATIONAL BARRIERS - TOTAL BY RANK N=94

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Females N=40</th>
<th>Males N=54</th>
<th>Total N=94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

CHART 5.27: ORGANISATION BARRIERS - ALL RESPONDENTS

- PERCENTAGES IN RED INDICATE A SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCE

Gender influence on organisational barriers

As outlined in Table 5.28 below, the top organisational barrier for men in AccountCo is ‘exclusion from informal networks’, with 41% citing this as an important inhibitor. The second most cited barrier for men is ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible/challenging assignments’, with 37% citing it as important.
TABLE 5.28: ORGANISATION BARRIERS – MALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In hospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*

For women in the sample, ‘lack of role models’ is the top organisational barrier, with 48% citing it as important. This is followed by ‘exclusion from informal networks’ which is cited by 40% of women in the sample.

That women in AccountCo cite ‘lack of role models’ as the top barrier is interesting to note, especially in the context of their feelings regarding the representation of women in the company overall as discussed earlier, almost half (45%) of female respondents agree that there is a fair representation of women and at senior levels, despite the fact that out of forty-eight Partners, only eight are women. This is somewhat paradoxical, in that structurally, the lack of female role models at the top is clear, and women obviously feel this and see it as a barrier to their progress, but at the same time a very large minority still think the representation of women at the top in the company is fair.

TABLE 5.29: ORGANISATION BARRIERS – FEMALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In hospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*
In the three cases where the gender differences emerge within this sample it is women who cite organisational barriers significantly more often than men in AccountCo. This indicates that women in AccountCo have a more negative experience of organisational culture than equivalent males.

Women are significantly more likely than men in the sample to cite; ‘lack of role models’; ‘manager’s preconceptions regarding your commitment to your job’; and ‘gender’ as being barriers to their career progression.

While 48% of women in AccountCo say that a lack of role models has been a barrier to their progression, just 14% of males in the sample have found this to be an important issue for them. This ties in with the findings from Chapter Four where it was outlined how male-dominated AccountCo is at the most senior two levels of the company, with few women in senior management positions. This will be explored further in Chapter Six where the qualitative interview data analysis is outlined.

Almost 40% of women and just one fifth of men cite ‘managers’ preconceptions about your commitment to the job’ as important. Looked at in more detail, we can see that of the 40% of women who cite this as a barrier, 23% rank this as a ‘very important’ barrier, as compared with just nine per cent of men in the sample. Again this indicates the negative impact of the gendered organisation on women in AccountCo, with women in the sample more likely than men to have faced this kind of biased attitude from their managers.

Over one quarter of women (28%) cite their gender as an important barrier, of which 16% cite it as being ‘very important’. On the other hand just 7% of men cite their gender as being a barrier. Again when we isolate just those who cite it as being ‘very important’, we can see a big gender difference, with 16% of women saying it has been ‘very important’ compared with naught per cent of men. So gender has not been a ‘very important’ barrier to any men in AccountCo; and as we saw earlier, it was not even ‘important’ to any men in InvestCo at all. While this is still a minority of women in the sample who have found their gender has held them back, the difference between men and women’s experience of this is important to note, and will be elaborated on further within the qualitative data in Chapter Six.

On the other four organisational barriers, women and men share a similar experience, with overall more gender convergence rather than difference emerging with regard to ‘exclusion from informal networks’; ‘inhospitable corporate culture; ‘lack of opportunities to take on
high visibility/challenging assignments’ and ‘lack of mentors’. This indicates that while women perceive certain organisational factors have been more important in their career than men in the sample do, there is an overall shared experience of the organisation, suggesting more equality of opportunity than was found within InvestCo. This also reflects the more gender equal structure of AccountCo as outlined in Chapter Four.

Inhospitable corporate culture is one of the least important organisational barriers for both men and women in the AccountCo sample, with roughly one fifth of both men and women citing it as an important barrier. This finding is borne out by the rest of the quantitative and qualitative data. AccountCo is a company which makes an effort to nurture and develop staff through formal Human Resource ‘talent management’ policies, and these policies coupled with a transformational, hands-on management culture creates an environment where both men and women feel that they have decent opportunities to progress within the company.

5.5.2.2 PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS

Table 5.30 and Chart 5.31 below outline the percentage of respondents in AccountCo who cite each person-centred barrier as important in terms of how it has impacted on their own career progression. As we can see ‘commitment to family/personal responsibilities’ comes out as the top person-centred barrier with 35% of all respondents citing this as important. This is followed by ‘lack of awareness of organisational politics’ which is cited as important by 31% of all respondents; and ‘lack of line management experience’ cited by 34%.

This data also shows that there is more gender convergence than difference regarding person-centred barriers. When we split the data by gender we find no significant gender differences between men and women in the AccountCo sample. There is thus more gender convergence found regarding person-centred barriers than was found for organisational barriers in AccountCo.
### TABLE 5.30: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS – ALL RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Females N=40</th>
<th>Males N=54</th>
<th>Total N=94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

### CHART 5.31: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS – ALL RESPONDENTS

- PERCENTAGES IN RED INDICATE A SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCE

**Gender influence on person-centred barriers**

As outlined in Table 5.32, the top person-centred barrier for men in AccountCo is ‘lack of awareness of organisational politics’, with 32% citing this as an important inhibitor. The
second most cited barrier for men is 'commitment to family/personal responsibilities', with 30% citing it as important.

TABLE 5.32: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS – MALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS - MALES BY RANK N=54</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Inhibitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

For women in the sample, as per Table 5.33, 'commitment to family/personal responsibilities' is the top person-centred barrier, with 39% citing it as important. This is followed by 'lack of line management experience' which is cited by 35% of women in the sample.

TABLE 5.33: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS – FEMALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS - FEMALES BY RANK N=40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Inhibitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

As outlined, 'commitment to family/personal responsibilities' makes it into the top two for both men and women in AccountCo. It is interesting to note that this is a gender neutral barrier, as it is in InvestCo, going against the stereotypical notion that family is something
which only has the potential to impact negatively on women’s career progression. As will be explored further in Chapter Six, male interview participants report complex role conflict between the desire to be an ‘active’ father and the desire/necessity to be the breadwinner for their family.

While there is no statistically significant gender difference on person-centred barriers, there is a gender difference of \( \geq 10\% \) on four of the variables. In each case it is women who cite the particular inhibitor in greater numbers than men in the sample.

Differences emerge for ‘ineffective leadership style’, with 32% of women citing this as important compared with 15% of men. There is also a gender difference regarding whether ‘lack of commitment to your career’ has hindered career progression, with women again citing this more often than men in the sample (28% vs. 17%). However as will be discussed later in this chapter, no significant gender difference was found for the scale measurement of commitment which was also included in the survey questionnaire. This suggests that women overall are not any less committed than men in AccountCo.

‘Lack of line management experience’ is also cited by more women (35%) than men (21%) in AccountCo, as is ‘having children’, with 32% of women citing this as a barrier to their career progression, compared with just 12% of men. ‘Having children’ is the fourth most-cited person-centred barrier for women, while it is the least-cited person-centred barrier for men in AccountCo. The only barrier men in AccountCo cite even less than ‘having children’ overall is their gender.

Time spent out of the workforce having and rearing children is considered the number one reason for women’s absence in senior roles from the Professional Services industry generally by both male and female respondents in AccountCo. Within the interview data motherhood is considered, if not completely prohibitive to progress, than certainly problematic for women in AccountCo. While having children is categorised as a person-centred barrier for the purposes of this question, the organisational culture of an organisation obviously impacts considerably on the ease with which women and men in the sample can combine being a parent with progressing in their careers. This will be explored more fully in Chapter Six.

5.5.2.3 IMPORTANCE OF ORGANISATIONAL AND STRUCTURAL BARRIERS COMPARED

We have already found from the data outlined in the previous two sections where the gender differences emerge on organisational and person-centred barriers in AccountCo. Women in
AccountCo are significantly more likely than men in the sample to cite three out of the seven organisational barriers as inhibitors to their career progress. Overall there is more gender convergence found when it comes to person-centred factors, with no significant gender differences found. Thus indicating that it is organisational barriers which are more gendered overall in AccountCo.

Here we will now compare how important person-centred are relative to organisational barriers for women and men in AccountCo.

**Male Respondents**

Table 5.34 and Chart 5.35 below outline the percentage of male respondents who cite each barrier, both person-centred and organisational, as important in hindering their own career progress. This allows us to see how important person-centred barriers are relative to organisational factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager's preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*

In Chart 5.35, the green bars indicate an organisational barrier while the yellow bars indicate a person-centred barrier. As we can see, the top three barriers overall for men are organisational, with 41% citing the top barrier of ‘exclusion from informal networks’; 37%
citing ‘lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments’; and 34% citing ‘lack of mentoring’.

From a person-centred perspective, ‘lack of awareness of organisational politics’ and ‘commitment to family and personal responsibilities’ make it into the top five for men in the sample.

CHART 5.35: ACCOUNTCO PERCENTAGE OF MALE RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THE LISTED ‘CAREER INHIBITORS’ AS VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT TO THEIR CAREER PROGRESSION

- **GREEN BARS** = ORGANISATIONAL BARRIER
- **YELLOW BARS** = PERSON-CENTRED BARRIER
- **PERCENTAGES IN RED INDICATE A SIGNIFICANT GENDER DIFFERENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In hospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Female Respondents**

Table 5.36 and Chart 5.37 outline the percentage of female respondents who cite each barrier, both person-centred and organisational, as important in hindering their own career progress.
### TABLE 5.36: PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE RESPONDENTS WHO IDENTIFIED THE LISTED ‘CAREER INHIBITORS’ AS VERY IMPORTANT/IMPORTANT TO THEIR CAREER PROGRESSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*

In Chart 5.37, the green bars again indicate an organisational barrier while the yellow bars indicate a person-centred barrier. When we look at Chart 5.37 we can see how the yellow ‘person-centred’ factors are clustered mainly at the bottom of the chart; while the green ‘organisational’ barriers are more prominent at the top. This gives an indication of the relative importance that organisational versus person-centred factors have had in hindering the progress of women in AccountCo, with organisational factors coming out as most important overall.

As we can see, the top two barriers for women are again organisational, with 48% citing the top barrier of ‘lack of role models’; and 40% citing ‘exclusion from informal networks’.

From a person-centred perspective, ‘commitment to family and personal responsibilities’ is the only person-centred barrier that makes it into the top five for women in the sample, with 39% citing it as a barrier.
Thus the findings show that, as was found in InvestCo, both men and women in AccountCo also feel organisational barriers have been most important overall relative to person-centred factors, with organisational barriers coming out on top for both male and female respondents in the sample.

5.5.2.4 CONCLUSION

From a self-reported basis, women and men in AccountCo overall blame organisational factors rather than person-centred ones when it comes to identifying what has held them back in their careers.

While overall there is more gender convergence than difference within the sample, where there are small pockets of significant difference, it is in relation to organisational barriers, and
it is women who express a more negative experience of the organisational culture. Women in AccountCo cite a lack of role models; managers’ preconceptions regarding their commitment to the job; and their gender, significantly more often than men in the sample.

When it comes to person-centred factors there is more gender convergence found in AccountCo, with no significant gender differences found for any of the barriers.

Overall the findings reflect the more gender equal organisational structure explicated in Chapter Four. Suggesting, as would be expected, that a more equal structure impacts positively on perceptions of equality within an organisation.

As will be outlined in more detail in the coming sections, this gender convergence is echoed in other quantitative and qualitative findings within AccountCo. Overall it has a culture and organisational structure which promotes equality of opportunity for both men and women and so organisational issues in particular are not as pronounced for women in AccountCo as is found in InvestCo.

5.5.3 COMPANIES COMPARED

In this section the findings in relation to self-reported barriers in the two companies are compared. By comparing the experiences of men and women in each company we can see how the more gendered organisational structure and culture of InvestCo impacts on workers experience of career barriers in this company.

5.5.3.1 ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS COMPARED

Table 5.38 outlines the seven barriers which survey respondents were asked to rate in terms of importance in hindering their own career progression to date. Highlighted in grey are the barriers where a significant association with gender is found in each company. We can see that there are more significant differences between the sexes in InvestCo than in AccountCo overall. Both companies share significant gender differences on three organisational barriers; ‘lack of role models’; ‘managers’ preconceptions regarding your commitment to the job’ and ‘your gender’, however ‘Inhospitable corporate culture’ is also significantly gender different in InvestCo, but not in AccountCo.
Thus we see that in AccountCo, the company which has a more equal, organisational structure and culture, fewer gender differences emerge.

Table 5.38 compares women in InvestCo with women in AccountCo. There is an \( \geq 10\% \) difference on two out of the seven organisational barriers between women in both companies.

As outlined in Chapter Four, in InvestCo women experience more exclusion overall than women in AccountCo. This is reflected in the self-reported barriers, with women in InvestCo citing problems with navigating through the inhospitable corporate culture, and not being given access to the visible ‘juicy’ projects which have the power to make people visible and lead to more responsibility and greater progression.

While having a lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments is considered to be an important barrier by 61\% of women in InvestCo, fewer women in AccountCo have experienced this with 38\% citing it as important.

Similarly, while 36\% of women in InvestCo consider working in an inhospitable organisational culture has held them back, just 19\% of women in AccountCo cite this as important for them.

An interesting point to note is that the starkest difference between the companies regarding self-reported barriers is found regarding the variable ‘inhospitable corporate culture’. While there is a statistically significant gender difference on this variable in InvestCo, with women citing it significantly more than men in InvestCo, it is gender neutral in AccountCo. This finding reveals a lot about the different cultures in which women are located, reflecting the more positive and gender equal culture present within AccountCo.
These findings tie in with earlier findings which showed that women in InvestCo have the most negative attitude towards the culture of their organisation than any other group in the sample.

Another impact of the gendered nature of these companies is the resulting lack of senior female role models for women to look up to. This has been cited as a key inhibitor of career progression for women in the sample. In InvestCo it is the second most important barrier for female respondents, with 41% of women citing it as a career inhibitor. In AccountCo it is the number one barrier cited by female respondents, with 48% agreeing that a lack of role models has held them back.

One effect of a lack of senior female role models has been found to be that it makes women in such companies concerned as to whether they could have children while reaching the top. Positive senior female role models who have done both are a powerful encouragement to other women (Liff and Ward, 2001). Findings from the qualitative data show that women in both case-study companies express this concern, however as is outlined in Chapter Six, it is again women in InvestCo who find this most problematic. Indicating that such a barrier is influenced by the gendered nature of senior management within that company, and also showing that this is a barrier which can be mitigated by company policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS - FEMALE RESPONDENTS</th>
<th>InvestCo Females N=53</th>
<th>AccountCo Females N=40</th>
<th>SIMPLE AVG TOTAL FEMALES N=94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.40 compares men in InvestCo with men in AccountCo. There is an $\geq 10\%$ difference on two out of the seven organisational barriers between men in both companies. Men in InvestCo [51\%] are more likely than men in AccountCo [41\%] to say that being excluded from informal networks has held them back in their career; while men in
AccountCo more likely than men in InvestCo to feel that a lack of role models has had a negative influence on their progress.

That men in InvestCo feel that being excluded from informal networks has held them back to a higher degree than men in AccountCo is an indication of how the hierarchical organisational structure in InvestCo affects men in the sample. It is not just women in InvestCo who have a negative experience of the culture within InvestCo. As outlined in Chapter Four it is a company which buys in senior talent from abroad, and which has a certain level of exclusivity associated with nationality at senior management level. As will be explored further in Chapters Six senior managers tend to be appointed from an exclusive group of ‘chosen-ones’ rather than all staff having the opportunity to go through open promotional competition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>InvestCo Males N=55</th>
<th>AccountCo Males N=54</th>
<th>SIMPLE AVG TOTAL MALES N=40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion from informal networks</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhospitable corporate culture</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager’s preconceptions re your commitment to the job</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of role models</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your gender</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weighted percentages**

5.5.3.2 PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS COMPARED

As already outlined in previous sections, there is overall more gender convergence than difference in both companies regarding how important respondents feel person-centred barriers have been in their career to date.

As highlighted in grey in Table 5.41 below, there are just two variables where there is a statistically significant gender difference in InvestCo, and in AccountCo there are no significant gender differences at all.

Thus we see again that in AccountCo, the company which has a more equal organisational structure, fewer gender differences emerge.
### TABLE 5.41: PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS BY COMPANY BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS</th>
<th>INVESTCO N=108</th>
<th>ACCOUNTCO N=94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>Females N=53</td>
<td>Males N=55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>Females N=40</td>
<td>Males N=54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

**Female Respondents**

Table 5.42 compares women in InvestCo with women in AccountCo. While there is a good deal of similarity between the experience of women in both companies, they differ =/>10% on three out of the ten person-centred barriers.

In InvestCo women are more likely to say that a lack of awareness of organisational politics has held their progress back, with 41% citing this as an important barrier compared with 27% of women in AccountCo. This again gives an indication of the impact that the different organisational cultures present in each company has on women in the sample. AccountCo is emerging as having a more equal, and open culture than InvestCo. As was outlined earlier, InvestCo is a company where ‘who you know’ is considered as or more important than ‘what you know’ by over half of women in the company, and 40% of men. This gives some indication of the politicking required to create the right impression and connections to get ahead.
TABLE 5.42: ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS - FEMALE RESPONDENTS

PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS - FEMALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career inhibitors</th>
<th>InvestCo Females N=53</th>
<th>AccountCo Females N=40</th>
<th>SIMPLE AVG TOTAL FEMALES N=94</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

The two barriers which are significantly gender different in InvestCo but which are not in AccountCo are:

- Lack of line management experience
- Having children

These two issues are explored further in the interview data. Both motherhood and lack of line management experience, either through choice or through circumstance, do emerge as themes for women in InvestCo as will be discussed in Chapter Six. However as already mentioned, they are both barriers which are permeable from a person versus organisation categorisation perspective. While they can in one way be said to be person-centred, both are very much influenced by the organisational structure and culture within which women are located in InvestCo.

In InvestCo women are more likely to work in peripheral functions of the business where opportunities for promotion and to manage staff are limited. The nature of many jobs in the powerful Investments department in InvestCo means that being a ‘specialist’ and progressing within the company without managing staff is possible, however the most senior roles do require that you manage a function and people, and is cited by men in the interview sample as something which they are aware of and which they have actively tried to do. In this way men in the sample do appear more ‘clued-in’ to the importance of line management experience to their progression.
So on the one hand we can see that women seem to exclude themselves from the pathways that lead to promotion, but on the other hand, departments which offer these opportunities, such as Investments within InvestCo, are seen as ‘macho’ and ‘aggressive’ and places which value stereotypical ‘male’ traits over female ones. So there is a complex push/pull of factors which will be teased out in the interview data.

In contrast, the more formal, and hierarchical structure in AccountCo means that all staff very quickly get line management experience as they progress; and this coupled with the absence of functional gender segregation again seems to level the playing field more for women in AccountCo. Opting in or out of roles which involve managing staff is not an option in this company, so these ‘choices’ are taken out of the individual’s hand. Women in the AccountCo interview sample do not express any of the preferences to not have staff reporting to them that we find in InvestCo.

Motherhood is also more problematic for women in InvestCo than for women in AccountCo. As will again be explored in Chapter Six, combining motherhood with progressing in your career is seen as much more difficult for women in InvestCo – they have few senior female role models to learn from in this regard, and the nature of the work that they do, and how their jobs are structured make having children and progressing seen as difficult. Women also cite the ‘greedy’ nature of their jobs; a lack of tolerance for flexible working; and an outright bias against mothers as issues in InvestCo.

**Male Respondents**

Table 5.43 compares men in InvestCo with men in AccountCo. Here we see a lot of shared experience between men in each company, with no person-centred barriers cited by \( \geq 10\% \) of men in one company over the other. This suggests that the impact of the different organisational structures outlined in Chapter Four does not influence men’s experience of person-centred factors as strongly as it impacts on women’s in the sample.
### TABLE 5.43: ORGANISATIONAL BARRIERS - MALE RESPONDENTS

#### PERSON-CENTRED BARRIERS - MALE RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Inhibitors</th>
<th>InvestCo Males N=55</th>
<th>AccountCo Males N=54</th>
<th>SIMPLE AVG TOTAL MALES N=40</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of awareness of organisational politics</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of career planning</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to family/personal responsibilities</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of desire to reach senior levels</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwillingness to take risks</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ability to reach senior levels</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of line management experience</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of commitment to your career</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective leadership style</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having children</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Weighted percentages*

### 5.5.3.2 CONCLUSION

The general pattern which emerges from the self-reported barrier survey question is that there are some strong differences between the organisational culture of both companies. These differences provide the context in which women operate, and the impact of these two different cultures is what comes across most strongly as an influencer of women’s progress the survey data.

The findings show the effect that organisational culture has on women in each company. As was outlined in Chapter Four, InvestCo is the less ‘equal’ of the two case study companies when it comes to organisational culture and hierarchy. The inequality at the top in InvestCo is reflected in the types of barriers women report facing in their careers. There are more statistically significant gender differences in InvestCo than in AccountCo, and women in InvestCo cite organisational barriers in greater numbers than women in AccountCo.

In AccountCo there is more gender convergence overall, more shared experience of the company between men and women. The data shows that women’s experience of this culture in InvestCo is far less positive than is found in AccountCo.

Men’s experience is more similar across the two companies than is found amongst the female sample. The differences in the culture and structure of the companies impacts women more strongly than it does men in the sample. However men in InvestCo do feel the impact of
being excluded from the networks which are important to progression in their company more than men in AccountCo.

A key finding regarding person-centred barriers is that there is more gender convergence than difference regarding the barriers which could be said to be associated with Hakim’s preference theory (2005) and Cross and Linehan’s ‘self-imposed’ or ‘psychological glass ceiling’ (2006). For example barriers such as lack of desire to reach senior levels; lack of ability to progress; and prioritising family commitments, are gender neutral in both companies - with women and men citing these barriers in relatively equal numbers.

5.6 AMBITION, COMMITMENT AND HUMAN CAPITAL

As well as the self-reported barrier question, several other questions were included in the online survey in order to ascertain to what degree person-centred factors impact on women’s progress in the case-study companies. These included scale measurements of ambition and commitment, and questions relating to human capital such as educational credentials and years’ work experience.

5.6.1 AMBITION AND COMMITMENT

Ambition and commitment are two key person-centred career concepts which this study sought to measure amongst men and women in the sample. That women lack the ambition and commitment to make it to the top in their careers has been cited by theorists as a potential reason for the absence of women in senior management positions within the world of business (Fels, 2003; Hakim, 2004)\textsuperscript{24}. Scale measurements were used to measure ambition and commitment levels within the online survey.

\textbf{Ambition scale}

Ambition was measured using a scale measure consisting of six statements devised by Korabik and Rosin (1995) to measure a respondents’ level of career ambition.\textsuperscript{25} Respondents


can choose to strongly agree; agree; neither agree/disagree; disagree; or strongly disagree with each statement. Possible scores on this Ambition Scale range from six (very ambitious) to 30 (not ambitious at all).

**Commitment Scale**

Commitment to one’s career was measured using an amended version of the Occupational Role Commitment Scale, consisting of four statements which measure a respondent’s commitment to their job, as devised by Amatea et al (1986). Again respondents can choose to strongly agree; agree; neither agree/disagree; disagree; or strongly disagree with each statement. Possible scores on this Commitment Scale range from four (very committed) to 20 (not committed at all).

5.6.1.2 INVESTCO

**Ambition Scale Descriptives**

This scale (N=126) was found to have a similar Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.76 when used on the InvestCo sample. According to Pallant (2007) while Cronbach’s Alpha value over 0.8 is desirable, a value above 0.7 is considered acceptable. Pallant also notes that short scales (i.e. those with fewer than ten items such as this scale) often have quite low Cronbach’s alpha, and in those cases it may be more appropriate to report the mean inter-item correlation, which for this scale was 0.342. This is within the optimal range of 0.2 to 0.4 as recommended by Briggs and Cheek (1986).

This scale was found not to be normally distributed. This fact, combined with the fact that the sample (N=126) is relatively small, meant that non-parametric tests were considered the most appropriate for analysing this data.

---

Findings (unweighted)

No statistically significant difference was found between male and female respondents' scores on this scale. As can be seen from Table 5.44, for both mean and median scores, there is very little separating male respondents' and female respondents' scores.

TABLE 5.44: INVESTCO AMBITION SCALE RESULTS BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>12.42</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>12.65</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Respondents</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>12.55</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>3.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted

No significant gender difference

A Mann Whitney U test revealed no significant difference in ambition levels of males (Md = 12.5, n = 60) and females (Md = 12, n = 66), U = 1960.000, z = -0.098, p = 0.922 in InvestCo. Tests were also carried out on this data to ascertain whether a respondents' management level; their age; their parental status; their marital status; the number of hours they work; the work status of their partner/spouse; whether they are the primary earner in their family; whether they have a mentor; and finally if they use flexible working options, have any impact on their scores on this Ambition scale. No significant difference was found for any of these variables.

Commitment Scale Descriptives

This scale (N=126) was found to have a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.57 when used on the InvestCo sample, a value below what is considered acceptable according to Pallant (2007). As this was a short scale, with fewer than ten items, it is deemed more appropriate to report the mean inter-item correlation, which for this scale is 0.219. This is within the optimal range of 0.2 to 0.4 as recommended by Briggs and Cheek (1986).

This scale was found not to be normally distributed. This, combined with the fact that the sample size (N=126) is relatively small, meant that non-parametric tests were considered most appropriate for analysing this data.
Findings (unweighted)

There was no significant association found between gender and scores on this commitment scale. As outlined in Table 5.45, both mean and median scores for male and female respondents is quite similar, averaging overall at a mean score of 10.52, and a median score of 10.00. A Mann Whitney U test revealed no significant difference in commitment levels of male respondents (Md = 11, n = 61) and female respondents (Md = 10, n = 65), U = 1838.500, z = -0.709, p = 0.478

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>126</td>
<td>10.52</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>2.61</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Unweighted

No significant gender difference

Tests were also carried out on this data to ascertain whether a respondents' management level; their age; their parental status; their marital status; the number of hours they work; the work status of their partner/spouse; whether they have a mentor; and finally if they use flexible working options, has any impact on their scores on this commitment scale. No significant difference was found.

Conclusion

The data shows that men and women within InvestCo share similar levels of ambition and commitment when it comes to their career. Thus this study finds that women's poor representation at senior levels and in the powerful departments in InvestCo cannot be explained by a lack of ambition or commitment to progressing.

This finding therefore does not support Hakim's preference theory (Hakim 2004), which posits that women are less career-oriented than men. Rather this data supports other studies which have found that women and men are more similar than different when it comes to their levels of ambition for their career. (Brockback and Traves, 1995; Catalyst, 2004)
5.6.1.3 AccountCo

**Ambition Scale Descriptives**

This scale (N=108) was found to have a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.89 when used on the AccountCo sample. This scale was found not to be normally distributed. This fact, combined with the fact that the sample (N=108) is relatively small, meant that non-parametric tests were considered the most appropriate for analysing this data.

**Findings (unweighted)**

A Mann Whitney U test revealed no significant difference in ambition levels of males (Md = 12, n = 59) and females (Md = 12, n = 49), U = 1730.500, z= 1.773, p = 0.76 in AccountCo.

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<td>11.95</td>
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<td>4.46</td>
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*No significant gender difference*

Tests were also carried out on this data to ascertain whether a respondents’ management level; their parental status; the work status of their partner/spouse; whether they are the primary earner in their family; and the average hours worked per week has any impact on their scores on this ambition scale. No significant difference was found for any of these variables.

**Commitment Scale Descriptives**

This scale (N=108) was found to have a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.69 when used on the AccountCo sample, a value below what is considered acceptable according to Pallant (2007). As this was a short scale, with fewer than ten items, it is deemed more appropriate to report the mean inter-item correlation, which for this scale is 0.342. This is within the optimal range of 0.2 to 0.4 as recommended by Briggs and Cheek (1986).
This scale was found not to be normally distributed. This, combined with the fact that the sample size (N=108) is relatively small, meant that non-parametric tests were considered most appropriate for analysing this data.

**Findings (unweighted)**

There was no significant association found between gender and scores on this commitment scale. A Mann Whitney U test revealed no significant difference in commitment levels of male respondents (Md = 12.8, n = 60) and female respondents (Md = 13.5, n = 48), U = 1173.500, z= -1.656, p = 0.098 in AccountCo.

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<td>All Respondents</td>
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<td>13.21</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>3.37</td>
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</table>

Unweighted
No significant gender difference

Tests were also carried out on this data to ascertain whether a respondents’ management level; their age; their parental status; the work status of their partner/spouse; whether they are the primary earner in their family; whether they have a mentor; has any impact on their scores on this commitment scale. No significant difference was found for any of these variables.

**Conclusion**

Again men and women in AccountCo are found to be equally ambitious and committed to their careers. Thus this study finds that women’s poor representation at the most senior levels in AccountCo cannot be explained by a lack of ambition or commitment to progressing.
5.6.2 HUMAN CAPITAL

When it comes to career progression a person’s level of ‘human capital’ is often seen as a predictor of their career success. Human capital’ is a term used to describe a person’s level of educational attainment; the amount of work experience they have; their level of job skills and so forth. In order to measure employee’s level of human capital in this study, survey respondents were asked to indicate their highest level of educational attainment; how many total years of work experience they have; and how many years’ experience they have of working with their current employer.

When the findings relating to these human capital factors are analysed women are found to be more similar to men than different when it comes to what they are bringing to the table in both companies.

In both InvestCo and AccountCo there is no statistically significant gender difference found with regard to the level of educational attainment; the length of service a respondent has within the company; or the total years’ work experience a respondent has overall.

The survey also captured data relating to average hours worked per week, so as to ascertain whether women are committing to the long-hours culture that dominates both companies. Again no statistically significant gender difference is found in either company.

Thus this study finds that women are not held back by issues within their individual control such as getting a degree or working long hours. They are also experienced employees, suggesting that the idea that women are just not long enough in the workforce is not a factor in relation to this sample.

5.6.3 CONCLUSION

Rather than revealing any large gender differences which could explain the lack of women in senior positions within these companies, again more gender convergence is found overall.

No significant gender difference was found in either company with regard to levels of ambition or commitment, or in relation to human capital variables.

This suggests that it is organisational factors rather than factors which are in control of the individual which halts women’s progress in these companies.

5.7 CONCLUSION

At the outset of this study, it was person-centred factors which this researcher was most interested in exploring, however what the quantitative data shows is that these factors are much less important than organisational factors in explaining women’s absence in senior roles in these companies. What emerges instead from the data is the negative impact that the gendered nature of an organisation can have on women’s progress; and on the other-hand it shows the positive impact a more ‘equal opportunity’ culture can have.

The quantitative data reveals that the culture within InvestCo is more ‘inhospitable’ overall, and more problematic for women in InvestCo than is found in AccountCo.

Following on from the exploration of the quantitative data explored in this chapter, this next chapter (Chapter Six) will explore the impact of the gendered nature of these companies in more detail. Drawing on the qualitative interview data, Chapter Six provides a more nuanced understanding of the lived lives of women and men in both companies, and explores the ways in which the different organisational cultures serve to help and hinder career progression.
CHAPTER 6 – THE IMPACT OF THE GENDERED ORGANISATION ON THE LIVED LIVES WORKERS IN THE SAMPLE

As outlined in Chapter Four, while senior management in both InvestCo and AccountCo is male dominated, AccountCo has a more ‘equal’ organisational structure overall. It has less functional gender segregation, a greater representation of women at middle and senior management; and more women at the lower-level intake grades also. In Chapter Five the impact of the more gendered organisational culture was explored within the quantitative survey data. As would be expected women in InvestCo were found to have the more negative experience of, and attitude toward, the organisational culture within which they operate.

Following on from the exploration of the quantitative data in Chapter Five, this chapter will explore the impact of the gendered nature of these companies in more detail within the interview sample. This chapter will look at how the gendered organisational structures and cultures influence the day-to-day working lives of men and women within the companies; exploring issues such as gender bias; the impact of vertical and functional gender segregation; gendered working patterns; and of being a parent.

6.1 INVESTCO

As we saw from Chapter Five, the gendered organisational structure outlined in Chapter Four impacts negatively on the experience of workers in InvestCo. In particular women in the InvestCo sample have a more negative view of the opportunities to progress in the company. Women experience organisational barriers to a greater degree than men, and over half of women in the survey sample think that men have an easier route to the top in the company.

In this section the interview data will be explored so that a more nuanced understanding of these quantitative findings can be understood.

6.1.1 GENDER BIAS

Echoing the quantitative data in Chapter Five, the mere fact of being a woman in InvestCo is seen as problematic for women within the interview sample. There is a gender bias seen to permeate the culture. A woman’s place in InvestCo is at the bottom, taking care of things,
rather than at the top taking charge of things. Chapter Four exposed these facts regarding where women are in the company, and within the interview sample we get an insight into what that means in the everyday lived lives of women in InvestCo.

There is a definite sense amongst several of the female interviewees that women struggle to be taken seriously, or to find their place in the company. As outlined in Chapter Four, women in InvestCo [53%] are significantly more likely than men [13%] in the sample to think that men have an easier route to the top in the company than women. Findings amongst the female interviewees reinforce this point and shed some light on why this might be the case. MT believes that men generally do not have to work as hard to get ahead in InvestCo. She describes a culture of informal boys-clubs being prevalent, with people who are ‘smoking buddies’ or ‘one of the lads’ – seeming to be the ones who get the promotions when they are going:

“...a lot of the senior people in here like VP kind of, probably VP and higher are all like – they’re nearly all kind of the same boys kind of that all kind of hang out together at the same meetings and it’s all kind of – they all network together and whatever but – yeah they always seem to move up at the same, you know, at the same stages but below that you do not really see it.... I think in here I think the guys get a lot easier time, an easier ride. You do not have to, you know, graft as much and kind of put your neck on the line as much to kind of – to get that promotion.” [MT, female VP]

As to why she thinks this is the case, she cites the overall male-dominated nature of the company and the influence of the ‘Southern European’ power-block. MT says that;

“It’s the culture of the company, like it’s very ... it’s the whole ['Southern European'] side of things and okay, I mean in Dublin, alright we’re not the management team aren’t, you know, aren’t – I do not know what percentage there would be of 'Southern European’s – probably 20% or so, but it is that whole ethos has kind of working down like – like nearly all, you know, the women in here are kind of PAs, the Secretaries, whatever but there’s very few ....managers that are women here so it’s not quite equal at all.” [MT, female VP]

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For RF, another female VP, women are marginalised in InvestCo, they are not taken seriously and the dominance of the ‘Southern European’ culture within the company plays a role in adding to the sexist nature of the organisation.

“I think just the fact there’s more men, that it’s harder for a woman .... I do think ‘Southern European’ men are a bit more sexist in terms of like, you know. A lot is judged on appearance, you know. I don’t think women are really viewed that seriously from [the ‘Southern European’s] perspective, you know. I think if you’re attractive and you’ve a lovely figure and you’ve nice clothes....you might do well, you know, just because somebody fancies you like, you know. I do think it’s quite a bit like that, you know, but there are not that many women anyway” [RF female VP]

DD, a female Associate shares the view that the ‘Southern European’ culture is somehow innately sexist, and thus has an impact on how women are viewed in the company. As a woman she does not think you are even in the running when it comes to the more senior roles;

“It’s a boys’ club .....I think the ‘Southern European’ way is very, it is very influential and ‘Southern European’s are known for very traditional gender roles and that’s very pervasive the whole way throughout it and I think how – there is definitely a glass ceiling but try – I can’t describe it and I find it very difficult to vocalise or put words on – it’s just – your contribution is never going to be as valued, never will be. You’re not even in the running is what I perceive to be the reality.” [DD, female Associate]

For HH, while being a woman has not affected her negatively thus far in her career, she feels that it probably would hold her back if she were to try to progress further in the company. She is currently at the junior management grade of Associate, and in her experience women do not seem to make it past middle management in InvestCo. This is backed up by the employee data as outlined in Chapter Four. Up to middle management progression is not a problem according to HH, but beyond that for women it seems to be difficult to progress, and she is unsure as to why this is the case;

“Well it [my gender] hasn’t [held me back] to date but I think it would now in the future. I think you come to a certain level, middle management, and I don’t think gender comes into play but I think when you come to senior management it
does.....Because there’s very, very few senior managers that are female in InvestCo. I don’t think that we’ve any Directors” [HH, female Associate].

Many senior management positions are recruited externally so she wonders about this process – whether women do not put themselves forward or are excluded somehow;

“I don’t know. I don’t know. I mean a lot of the managers at that level are hired-in externally not necessarily appointed from within...So I don’t know what goes on in those recruitment processes, is it a case that ..... women don’t put themselves forward for the positions, or that they do and they’re not getting the jobs?. So I don’t know .... I just don’t know why they’re not getting those directorship positions or senior management positions.” [HH, female Associate]

From men in the interview sample we get a mixture of viewpoints emerging. On the one hand there are some men who are not oblivious to the impact that the male-dominated nature of the company can have on women. While on the other hand some men in the sample believe that merit is all that counts when it comes to progressing within the company, and thus gender is irrelevant.

For example, in terms of why there are not more women in senior roles in the company BD, a male VP says that the lack of women in senior roles cannot be put down solely to women ‘choosing’ to prioritise family over career. The ‘male-oriented’ nature of InvestCo is also a factor he believes;

“..... I think it is a bit too ..... male oriented, to be honest with you. I don’t think it can all be attributed to women leaving the workforce, you know, families, et cetera. So I’m not really sure. You know, maybe there is a gender imbalance built in somewhere.....the senior management in the company is very heavily male dominated.” [BD, male VP]

Another male VP, CC agrees that the male dominated environment is a contributor to why women do not do so well in the company. He also highlights the latent sexism which is a feature of the industry;

“..... it still is a male dominated environment there’s no getting around that. ...there’s a few [women] that are working on desks here but there’s none that I think are senior, not that I can recall anyway. .... and it probably is, it must be harder for them
because you know it’s just, [a] male dominated environment, there’ll always be chauvinists around and especially because it is an old-boy market as well, and the old-boys tend to be the biggest chauvinists around.” [CC, male VP]

On the other hand WW, a male SVP, believes that while “it hasn’t hurt” to be a man in an industry known for its lack of female representation, he thinks that men and women have an equal opportunity to shine in the company. The characteristics he looks for in employees are not gendered;

“Financial Services are notorious for lack of females. We would have had a good number of females working in the division, I mean we’ve had some really, really good individuals. We tend to look for particular types, you know, out of college....clear ability and then you build people into realising what they can do and build out, you know. the role for us. And that’s not down to gender.” [WW, male SVP]

PQ a male VP agrees that gender is not something which would affect your progression in InvestCo, particularly not in the Investments division. However he does note that maternity leave plays a part in taking women out of the running;

“I don’t see that [it helps to be a man] .....there’s been a few girls have joined like and have been here for like a reasonably long period of time and haven’t maybe progressed but some of them have certainly gone off on maternity leave. ....I think if you were good at your job, certainly in the Investments division, if you were good at your job ...you’d be promoted to the appropriate rank I think, I don’t think there’s any doubt about that. Whether or not it’s the same throughout the whole company I don’t really know......

‘Female’ traits do not get rewarded

The male-dominated work culture puts women outside of the ‘norm’. Both RF, a female VP, and DD, a female Associate talk of the need to be ‘cut-throat’ in this company and both also talk of how so-called ‘male’ attributes are the only ones valued. Stereotypical ‘female’ attributes are not respected or valued in the same way.
For example RF thinks she has in some ways been held back by being too ‘nice’, too easy-going and accommodating – ultimately traits which are not valued or rewarded by the company in her experience;

“..... I think I’m more easy going, flexible.... but I think I’m probably too nice in a way. ...I think maybe.... if I had been more aggressive and a bit more kind of, you know, cut throat, I would have done better.....” [RF female VP]

For DD, it is hard to understand what role women have in InvestCo – how it’s possible to be a woman and be successful in this company. She thinks that the ‘Southern European’ culture of machismo and traditional gender role expectations permeate the company. As to why there are not more women in senior positions within the company, she says;

“Were they ever in with a shot? Were they ever going to? .....What does it take to be - I think to answer that questions properly I’d need to fully understand what does it take to be successful in InvestCo and I think I do but are there women cut throat enough for that or do they have to be ten times as cut throat as the men and ..... there’s no value placed on non-male attributes. The whole structure is so male orientated and male dominated that I can’t figure out. Unless it was to change and become less of what it is, how does a woman succeed in it?, I don’t know.” [DD, female Associate]

The idea that male traits are required in order to get ahead is further compounded by the lack of female role models that show women that they can act as ‘themselves’ and still get ahead in the company. For example, RF says that she does not have any female role models in InvestCo that she can readily name, and that in order for women to get ahead in her opinion, they must act aggressively, outside of their ‘normal’ behaviour. Women must suppress their real selves and act in a ‘manly’ way to get ahead. She believes that it is too early for women in Ireland to be able to ‘be themselves’ in this industry. Stereotypically ‘male’ values, traits and characteristics appear to be the norm in terms of what is accepted and expected of people in senior positions within InvestCo.

“To be honest I think, you know, it’s too early – in a way at the moment I think it’s a bit early for women. My perception [is that] a lot of the women who do well are very aggressive and very manly and..... I think it’ll take a good while, particularly in Ireland .... before .... women act in a senior management role as themselves and not
trying to replicate any kind of aggressive or bullshit behaviour...... I think women need a bit of time to – their true abilities and the way they act normally, to come in where those women are actually in senior positions like, you know.” [RF female VP]

Several female interviewees cite women they find to be ‘inspirational’ as being women who have not had to sacrifice their femininity to advance to senior levels. It seems that these women are the exception rather than the rule in the company and are selected as positive examples because of this.

For example MT identifies her manager’s manager as a woman who is ‘softly-spoken’ and very good at her job and getting things done while leading with a ‘feminine’ style so to speak, rather than having to conform to male stereotypical ‘male’ leadership traits. MT also reiterates RF’s contention that it is women who conform to a stereotypical ‘macho’ style of management who get ahead in this company.

“.....there is my boss’s boss in Italy, like she is really kind of aspirational woman .... very, very good, very fair – not your kind of typical kind of female style in here – very softly spoken, gets the job done, rolls up her sleeves, kind of thing ........here there’s kind of a perception that like a lot of women are – and from dealing with them they can be a bit nightmarish, you know, you know, screaming matches or kind of – I don’t know, you just kind of think if you catch them on a bad day then, you know, you’re never going to get anything done, kind of thing....but...I suppose there’s not really a lot of women to compare it to as well.” [MT, female VP]

The professional and pleasant leadership style, which is tough but fair is a contrast to the aggressive management style that some women in the interview sample believe is tolerated, and effectively promoted within the InvestCo culture.

6.1.2 FUNCTIONAL SEGREGATION

As outlined in Chapter Four, there is significant horizontal gender segregation found within InvestCo, with women less likely than men to work in the core functional department of Investments. The investments department is where the company’s core operations are carried out, and as such is the department with the most power and influence in the company. As also outlined in Chapter Four Investments has the highest number of senior managers of any department.
In this section the nature and impact of this functional gender segregation will be teased out and explored further within the interview data. This gives a more in-depth insight into how the functional segregation manifests itself and the impact that it has on women’s opportunity to progress within InvestCo.

**Power of Investments and nature of support functions**

The interview sample confirms that Investments is the power base of the organisation and sheds light on what this means in terms of the day-to-day lives of workers in InvestCo.

HH, a female Associate who works in a Corporate Administration support function outlines how Investments is the most important and high profile department in the company. She makes the point that being in one of the higher-profile departments is good for your personal profile in the company.

"I think it very much depends on the department that you're working within as to how your profile or how you could progress within the company....I think certain departments are favoured over others. So depending on the department you work in, some departments are always going to be better looked after than others.....And I think there's a bit of inequality between departments, yeah.....That's just it, you know.....Investments ...they're always going to be the ones fighting, you know, for the bigger budgets and the bigger salaries to retain the staff whereas Corporate Administration divisions in general I mean they are absolutely critical but they're not as critical, do you know ..... personally I don't think that they would be probably as well looked after as Investments ....." [HH, female Associate]

Staff within Investments are seen as being particularly important, and are treated as such in terms of their remuneration packages, and their level of corporate titles. HH highlights that particularly within a Dublin context, InvestCo’s staff would be considered the cream of the Industry;

"...you're dealing with Investment staff who are, you know, real elite Investment staff ...these guys would be the best we have in Ireland." [HH, female Associate]

It is seen as easier to be promoted to a higher corporate title in Investments than in any of the other departments. As JJ, a female VP says;
“Well like at the end of the day for most of them [in Investments] like they would obviously be senior, right. They are the core business, you know, they are the ones who make the money, they are the ones that add value in terms of like – as [some staff in Corporate Administration] would say “Well we're sitting in the poor seats”, you know. .... it's obvious the difference. . .” [JJ female VP]

RF, a female VP in Corporate Administration reiterates the power of Investments, and gives examples of how individuals in that area use their power to leverage better remuneration, higher-level corporate titles et cetera;

“......in the good times, they've massive leverage, you know what I mean, and ... you know, you hear that people are being accommodated to a ridiculous level.... practically flying their granny over and, you know, buying them a... fur coat, you know. .....which is very unfair.... Like I mean I think you obviously have to keep people happy, but ... it's absolutely ridiculous. So – and that happens quite a bit in, I would say, in Investments. .......I think certain areas, they're aware of their power.” [RF female VP]

The way that interviewees describe Investments paints a portrait of a department which is elite, powerful and in control. In contrast the ‘support’ functions where women are more likely to work are less powerful and are tasked with keeping their Investments colleagues happy. Corporate Administration which includes departments such as Risk, Compliance and Finance, provides support for the Investments department and helps to keep it running smoothly and efficiently. The roles within these departments are what can be termed ‘housekeeping’ functions.

Even within the areas of Risk and Compliance which are considered to be more ‘control’ than ‘support’ functions, in that they are protecting the company from making bad or illegal decisions which could expose the company from a risk perspective, we find that they are more facilitative and supportive than powerful and controlling.

In describing the role of the area she works in, RF gives an insight into the power-differential between the ‘support’ functions and Investments, and how this manifests itself in the day-to-day activity of the company. Staff in the ‘cheap seats’ must kow-tow to their powerful Investments colleagues and try to influence them using subtle, supportive means rather than being forceful and demanding of them to follow protocol. It is a delicate balancing act of
trying to comply with regulatory requirements of the industry while also allowing the Investments team to keep pursuing opportunities to make money by whatever means they consider necessary.

"...the culture in investments is extremely strong, do you know what I mean, and you have to agree with investments and keep them happy, which is — obviously you don't want to do things that they're not interested in but in a certain level your job is to make them unhappy in some circumstances. So for example they do things like, you know, really funky stuff in an emerging market, you know what I mean? Which we don't have the systems [to support], all this kind of stuff, you know... They're creative people..... So they do things, you know, that... [can] be on the edge. But, you know, there's still an onus on you not to make them unhappy, you know what I mean? " [RF female VP]

Obviously this power-differential within InvestCo between the importance put on departments such as regulatory compliance versus money-making is interesting to note in the context of the global financial crisis, and suggests that it may contribute to the risk-taking behaviour in the Industry. The power differential between the ‘support’ functions such as Risk and Compliance, and the ‘power-bases’ such as Investments may make it hard for the Investments team to be ‘reigned-in’ from their more risky endeavours.

**Impact of gendered functional segregation on opportunities to progress**

Given the fact that women are less likely to be in the powerful Investments department, the gendered nature of the power-base has implications for women’s progression. Promotional opportunities are more limited, remuneration is not as good, and high-level corporate titles are harder to come by.

There is a general agreement amongst both male and female interviews that the functional segregation which is prevalent in the company contributes to women’s absence from senior positions. Glass walls predominate in the Financial Services as CC a male VP says, and it is no different in InvestCo;

"...what you get in [the] financial services sector ....is males on the dealing desk, males on the fund management, females in the settlements and back office areas, and
like HR, probably all females apart from one male...and Compliance is all female, you know....it's weird it's like it's something that stuck.” [CC, male VP]

This is echoed by PQ and FF two other male VP's who acknowledge that Investments as a department is particularly male dominated, and again highlight the role that this functional segregation plays in why women are not making it to more senior positions in the company;

"... I would think it would be certainly be more fellas working here than girls. ...in Investments they are vastly outnumbered, men to women. You probably, if you could look at maybe the length of time they've been here and the roles they were working in I think, and this is not being disparaging at all, but I think a lot of the girls are working sort of operational activities where you probably don't have the scope to be moving up to maybe VP level...” [PQ, male VP]

“You see a lot of those higher ranking corporate titles would be - you know basically everyone in Investments is nearly a VP or better and I don't know the reason why there are more males in the investment team than females. Maybe it's just not an area where, you know, that females traditionally have gone into, you know what I mean. Maybe it's just been a male dominated sector as opposed to stopping females from moving on up the ladder....Like it's not as if in the Investment team you've got loads of females at the lowest level and all the men are at the top level, you've got a lot more men than females at the lowest level...” [FF, male VP]

Women in the interview sample who are not in Investments certainly agree that their scope for progression is limited due to the nature and structure of the support departments that they work in.

RF believes glass walls play a big role in why women are not better represented in senior positions within the company - the support functions where women predominate do not have as many opportunities for seniority as areas such as Investments. This is something which is borne out by the company employee data as presented in Chapter Four – most senior managers are in Investments, and most are male;

“Well my thoughts [on why there are not more senior women in the company] would be because of the activities that they do, you know. The areas that they're in are probably – so just say compliance, you know, you have a Head of Compliance but then the rest are just compliance people. So they're kind of trapped in the kind of
lower rungs of jobs anyway, you know. So I think for those people to get a VP job, they’d have to be boss and ... that’s not going to happen. So they have to move elsewhere and the same like, you know, probably a lot of, you know, in the Investment Operations, there’s a lot of women there, but again it’s just admin-y operational sort of stuff. So again those jobs wouldn’t kind of align to more senior titles, you know. And then a lot of the [corporate] titles, probably the meatier – you know, like in Investments it’s predominantly men but, you know, a lot – even ... a Senior Portfolio Manager might have a Senior VP title. Whereas, in another comparative area, you know, you’d have to be a head of function to have that [Corporate Title]. ... There’s probably [a] higher distribution of those kinds of titles in Investments, because to be honest, you’re attracting guys from London. I don’t think there are that enormous opportunities for women to progress, even for me....” [RF, female VP]

She also believes that as a company InvestCo is more comfortable with having women in the ‘care-taking’ roles rather than in the power bases;

“....if I was a bloke .... I would do better I think, definitely. I do think like, whether it’s conscious or not, I do think it’s like guys do better like in general, you know what I mean. I don’t think there’s any question of that. I think they’re, you know – a lot of the time they’re more comfortable keeping girls doing – like if you look at anything. Like all our Compliance Department is practically women, you know what I mean. .... All those kinds of roles, it’s like they’re – women can do well in those, you know what I mean. Control areas probably they do well like. Whereas, investments and those – it’s more male dominated and I think if you’re a bloke they’re less likely to kind of make you unhappy or maybe just naturally that they just don’t do that to men. You know, they just – I think that it is, sex, you know, or gender is a factor like, you know.” [RF female VP]

The interviewees highlight the importance of being in the ‘right’ functional area within InvestCo, and also highlight the nature of support functions – they are in effect quite limited in terms of the scope for progression and in overall visibility within InvestCo

MT, a female VP working within the Corporate Administration department echoes other interviewee’s experience in that being outside of the big power bases of the company means
that there is a limited career path open to her. She doesn’t see any ‘next step’ for her within InvestCo;

"...[the department she works in is] quite a small group. In Dublin its four plus one Head ....there’s probably not a lot of other opportunities – there’s no next step, ... although I’m probably the most experienced of all of them .... I would like to get a more senior position or move up....I don’t know kind of what next choices are kind of thing really.... promotions don’t really come that easily here I think in general terms like." [MT, female VP]

There are limited opportunities within the support functional areas and a general perception that this is one of the reasons that women are not in more senior roles in the company. Not all career ladders are equal in InvestCo – some departments are dead-ends, and women are more likely to be in those departments.

**Career-routes in Investments**

There are some women within the interview sample who work within the Investments department, and their experience sheds some light on the different career routes available within this department.

TR is a female who works as an Analyst within Investments. Her role is to analyse companies’ performance and to then select certain stocks to recommend to the Portfolio Managers. The role of analysts is key within the asset management industry. She describes her role as follows;

"...basically I’m in charge of a small sector of the whole market ..... I look at companies [within that sector] that are listed on the European Stock Exchanges .... I would analyse and then I would try to pick the best companies that I think we should invest in, kind of build an investment case in it, present it to the PMs [Portfolio Managers] in our stock meetings and then buy it in the research fund because we have a research fund that the Analysts run so I would be responsible for buying my portion of that and then hopefully if the PMs agree then they’d buy it across their funds then as well" [TR, female Associate]

Unlike other asset management companies, analysts within InvestCo become what they term ‘career analysts’. That means that there is the possibility of progressing up the ranks and
making a career out of analysing companies, rather than graduating from analysing companies to doing the investing (i.e. becoming a Portfolio Manager), as would be the traditional route for analysts in most asset management companies. In becoming a career analyst, an employee is assigned a particular industry to analyse, and they are responsible for that industry for the rest of their career, effectively becoming an expert in that field.

Career progression for TR thus means becoming more of an expert on her sector and becoming more trusted by the Portfolio Managers in terms of them choosing to take her advice regarding whether to invest their clients’ money in a company or not. Progression in her department is not about being ‘promoted’ to a certain role, rather it is about increasing financial rewards and gaining higher status in the company as your experience develops and your performance regarding stock-picks grow;

“...there's not a formal, kind of you get promoted to this or ...... it's more say like, our salary would be based, would be apportioned round our bonus as well and the bonus is based on how much you out-perform your index so it's more based on out-performing really. ...it doesn't matter whether [you're a] Senior [Analyst] or not...all you do is look after your sector and out-perform.” [TR, female Associate]

TR highlights the essentially ‘meritocratic’ nature of her role. Once she picks the right stocks then she has performed well in her role, and stock-performance is a very objective measure of success. She describes the career path open to her as follows;

“...... it's really about just learning your companies a lot better than being able to – it's all about the amount that you out-perform, ......the aim of the career definitely would be to consistently out-perform the benchmark and then you become more kind of respected or listened to by the PMs and say take over another sector..... we're measured very strictly on how we out-perform our benchmarks so if the market goes up by 10% [and] our stocks go up by 12% then we've done okay so kind of the career progression would be to consistently out-perform the benchmark and if you do that over a number of years then you kind of gain a lot more credibility from the PMs and I suppose it makes the job easier, they'd be inclined to follow you in your investment cases a lot easier and that.” [TR, female Associate]

TR’s description of her boss shows the value that these analysts bring to their role and to the company. They are ‘own-account’ style workers who work as individuals rather than as a team; and their power is in their knowledge of their industry sector.
“...what I’m saying to you now [makes it sound] like there’s not much of a career progression but .... there is because if I see the senior people here like say....my boss....if he said that he’d agreed to buy this [stock]...he’d present it to the PMs and then the whole lot of the European PMs would follow him with their portfolios as well so you do have an awful lot of kind of responsibility ...there is kind of a ladder to climb just kind of on experience and working, getting to know the companies better before the PMs will trust you really....so there is more career progression than it sounds” [TR, female Associate]

GD is a female VP working as a Portfolio Manager (PM) within the Investments department. She was attracted to the area of Investments from the start of her career because of its integral role in these companies;

“.... you’re actually generating revenue and you’re not just, you know ...... supporting the revenue generation, you’re actually involved in the revenue generation and therefore, I mean, you remuneration is much better as well” [GD female VP]

She echoes TR in believing that working in Investments means that you are judged fundamentally on your performance. It has a clear merit-based nature due to how performance is measured – you make money, and you get rewarded.

“... if you’re working as a sales person or if you’re working as a trader, you are – the bottom line is very clear, I mean, if you sell a trade to a client and you make $10,000 commission on it as a trader, as a salesperson, you’re the one that’s been on the phone to the client so that credit goes to you, as a trader if you trade a position and you say that’s great, because you’ve executed the order, that credit goes to you. . .” [GD female VP]

GD’s experience highlights two interesting points, firstly that there is something innately more performance-based about being in the Investments function in these companies compared with other support or control roles in the business. As we have seen, women in InvestCo are more likely to be working in these support/control functional areas where performance is more subjective to measure in terms of output. Both TR and GD, stress the overall meritocratic nature of their jobs. The bottom line is all that counts – if they make the right investments and make money for their clients; then they will be rewarded. This makes it
in many ways a more straightforward prospect than other departments in terms of understanding what you need to do to progress.

Secondly there is also a sense of a clear career path – you keep making money, become more trusted etc., and you then get higher bonuses and higher status in terms of your corporate title. As TR says;

"... you can definitely see that the Senior PMs that are out-performing and that are ... doing the best job they can definitely they're the ones that progress and get the most respect than all the rest and ... it is very much performance based and out-performing so say me knowing, me being good friends with the Senior Analyst would have no bearing on whether I [progressed] .... it's so visible if you're doing well in your job and when I say doing well in your job [it] is out-performing the benchmark.....once you beat the benchmark then .... everything else kind of falls into place after that because the PMs listen to you more and you get more responsibility and everything else." [TR, female Associate]

Even though the Investments department is a ‘boys-club’ in terms of the number of men in Investments compared to women, TR doesn’t feel that being a woman would hold her back – performance is key nothing else. She can see a clear path ahead for her in terms of her career progression, and feels she knows what she needs to do to make it happen keep doing well, out-performing the benchmark and the rewards will follow.

From the accounts of women in the sample, there appears to be a clear disparity in terms of the progress you can make in ‘support’ functions as compared with Investments. In the bottom line of your performance is very objective. You can control your progress to a higher degree than possible in other departments, and you do not need to wait for an opening of a ‘head of’ function in order to progress upwards, your skill and expertise is rewarded on its own merit. This is in contrast to the limited opportunities we have seen within the various functional areas which sit within Corporate Administration – for example Risk, Finance and Compliance. Women here have far fewer opportunities to progress in these functions, and these structural barriers can lead to a ‘downsizing’ of ambition.

For example MT [female VP] describes how the lack of opportunities to progress within InvestCo have turned her from a career-centred, ambitious person, into someone who now views their career as less of an overall priority in her life. The impact of facing organisational
barriers to her career progress has decreased her levels of ambition and motivation for her career;

"Yeah I do think it [my career] is important but I suppose in the last year or two I've kind of been feeling that it's kind of taken more of a back burner... over other priorities... And I usen't to be like that, I used to be always like alright, you know, I want the next job and I'm not happy until I get it but now I'm kind of, I don't know whether it's in here... I know it's not going to be possible and that's kind of made me change my mind but yeah, it's becoming less a kind of priority for me."

[MT, female VP]

DD, another woman who works in a support functional area says she has become disillusioned due to the structural barriers she has faced in the organisation. She has applied and been unsuccessful for several promotions within the company, but has a very limited career path open to her due to the nature and small size of the department she works in;

"...[you] do the best that you can with the position that you're going to be allowed to do but I mean it's like, why keep banging, why keep banging your head against the brick wall?"

[DD, female Associate]

Vroom’s expectancy theory of motivation (Vroom, 1995) can add somewhat to our understanding of these women’s predicament. If they have no expectation of succeeding then their motivation to keep trying wanes, and appears to lead to the ‘declining work aspirations’ found by Gerson (1985: 103), or what Hewlett terms a ‘downsizing of ambition’ [2005]

**Merit gets you ahead in Investments – gender not an issue?**

For women working in Investments, the inherent performance-based nature of the roles they do means that gender is somewhat irrelevant to a person’s progression. However there is some ambivalence amongst the sample about whether being a woman is in fact a barrier to progress in Investments.

For example for TR, a female analyst the facts speak for themselves in that there is a dearth of senior females in the company; but on the other hand the performance-based nature of Investments means that everyone has the same opportunity to shine and progress;
GD thinks on the one hand that being female certainly does not do you any favours in this industry, due to the inherent 'maleness' of it, but on the other hand, in terms of whether she feels that her gender has held her back personally she says that it has not, but that it is nonetheless frustrating to be so outnumbered by men in the industry. She says that in her experience investment banking is very male dominated and she does think that trading desks would be very different if they were more gender balanced, less aggressive perhaps, and less focused on the pursuit of money above all else. So while open direct discrimination may not exist, the subtle drawbacks of working in a very male dominated industry and workplace can have negative effects on female employees;

".... I never felt in a particular point of time I was particularly hindered because I was a woman... [but] .... I do get very frustrated sometimes when I go to conferences or when I get, when I, you know, am in a work environment and it is just all with men and I just think, why does it have to be like this? Because it's a minority, you know, and it would be more comfortable sometimes just being a bit more kind of, or a bit more balanced, so." [GD female VP]

6.1.3 GENDERED CULTURE OF INVESTMENTS

Despite its performance-based nature, there is no doubt that Investments is very male-dominated, and TR and her female colleagues seem conscious of how few women are present, not just in senior roles but in the Investments area generally. As women TR and GD are the exceptions rather than the rule in Investments. There are very few female Portfolio
Managers overall, and within TR’s team, out of approximately 20 analysts, there are only three women, including herself.

“......certainly ...within Investments there’s very little females there, like .... we have a morning meeting every morning at a quarter past nine where a lot of the people from the floor would come and I was just looking around the floor today and again there was 30 something lads there and four females so [it is] definitely very skewed.....” [TR, female Associate]

This male-domination has an impact on the culture within the department. For example in GD’s experience while she finds InvestCo to be less ‘macho’ than previous bank’s she has worked in, she still feels the impact of the male-dominated nature of the company;

“...I mean it’s less so than at an Investment Bank for sure, I mean definitely less so, but it’s still – it’s not as macho no, but it still is, I guess, quite male dominated, male orientated so....there’s one other.... girl doing Portfolio Management on the other Desk and, I’m trying to think, I mean there are a few women around the Investment floor ....” [GD female VP]

As to why she thinks Investments is such a male-dominated field in general, she thinks that it is the subtle ways that being ‘outnumbered’ as a woman in these roles makes you feel ‘other’. It’s not a case of straightforward discrimination, rather it is the subtle norms and values and overall lack of diversity that makes it problematic for women;

“...I think it’s a very male dominated environment that I think becomes incredibly, just becomes incredibly male and if you’re not male, you probably find it a bit of- putting really .....the dynamics of a Desk would be so much different if there was 50% women and 50% men on it..... and [men] don’t understand that because .... they’ve always worked in a male environment ....I’m not saying it would be necessarily much better, but I certainly don’t think it would be as aggressive, I don’t think it would be as, you know, as money driven to the point of view of like about acquiring money for the sake of it as a status and maybe as a result it would be, you know, more interesting for other women to work in that environment.” [GD female VP]

RF also uses the word aggressive when it comes to describing the culture of the Investments department. She believes that softer management skills which are stereotypically associated
with women are not valued in the Investments culture. Rather an aggressive approach to business dominates and is seen as the accepted way of operating in this department.

"Yeah, definitely I would think, you know, [being so male-dominated] would affect the culture. I don’t think it’s necessarily kind of like a real blokie place, you know. ....but I just think the fact that it is mainly men, you know, and all the contacts – it is difficult as a woman to get in there or to be, you know. Like I’ve seen .. some really great girls [in investments] who were really very good, you know. And like I remember [her] saying that, you know .... “There’s different ways of skinning a cat, you know, and the style of management, you know, of being aggressive kind of pushing you is not the only way, you know.” And I think my perception was that.... she didn’t like that kind of culture, you know what I mean, and I wouldn’t like it myself either...... ...... [RF female VP]

This view of Investments as having an aggressive culture is echoed by other women in the sample. HH for example highlighting the ‘roaring and screaming’ nature of the department, and puts it down not only to the culture of the department but also to what she describes as the ‘dramatic’ ‘Southern European’ culture. As was outlined in Chapter Four, senior management is dominated by ‘Southern European’s within InvestCo.

“Well I mean you would get, you know, on the ‘Southern European’ side, there would be occasionally ... management within Investments roaring and screaming, it’s not a personal thing ..... it’s cultural. I mean, you know, they are not giving out to you but they are used to roaring and screaming ....” [HH, female Associate]

In terms of how the male-dominated nature of Investments affects the women who actually work there, while TR does not feel that she is treated in any way unfairly in here day-to-day job, she touches on some of the sexist behaviour which is often synonymous with certain parts of the financial services;

“They’re a bunch of lads and yeah kind of – probably had example like but say I went out with my [boss and two other colleagues]. and I was the only female there and we went out for dinner and again you know the conversation is based around going to a strip club in Germany and stuff like that, which - there was nothing wrong with it but I just thought it wasn’t very appropriate me being the youngest female with a bunch of older men kind of – I just thought it was strange......in our day to day work you
wouldn’t come across [this kind of thing] at all, like in fairness when you’re at work there’s absolutely no kind of backlash against women. Women are very much treated exactly as fairly and as I say, a lot of the women in InvestCo are very good at what they’re doing so they’d have very – the PMs would have an awful lot of respect for them but I suppose on nights out you kind of inevitably get kind of these comments...”

[TR, female Associate]

Women turned-off investments by macho culture

Both the quantitative and qualitative data examined thus far clearly highlights that both the highest paid staff and the most opportunities for progression lie within the Investments department. So why are so few women working there? Two main themes emerge within the interview sample. Firstly there are the women who started off on the path of wanting to work in Investments at the beginning of their career, but who were put off by the aggressive nature of the business. Secondly it is clear from how roles are described that combining motherhood with working in such a department is seen as effectively incompatible and thus problematic for women who hope to have children while also maintaining a career.

RF started out with a clear interest in the ‘front-office’ side of the business, and worked in two front-to-middle positions in other asset management companies in Dublin before joining InvestCo. She was attracted to InvestCo for its global-nature and large front-end operation. She took a role in Corporate Administration as a ‘stepping stone’ to a role in Investments, but has stayed in Corporate Administration for several years now. The more she came to understand what Investments do and are like in InvestCo, the less interested she was in moving there. Aggressive is again the word that characterises her experience of the Investments culture within InvestCo.

“...... my perception is, is it’s a more aggressive environment to work in, you know...certain areas [within Investments] are very aggressive. ....just certain key people in investments are very aggressive.” [RF female VP]

HH is a female Associate working in Corporate Administration, and her experience echoes that of RF. Despite having a seemingly clear goal in college to work in investment banking, with New York/London in her sights, she has worked in Corporate Administration for her entire career. She thinks that while many women would like the opportunity to work in
Investments, a lack of confidence plays a factor in putting them off such roles. She herself interviewed for an Investment dealer role at the start of her career and describes how she felt she ultimately lacked the confidence necessary for the role;

"...the whole thing....London, New York – big investment banks, yeah I wanted it ...I wanted to get into investment banking....I think a load of girls would love the opportunity to get involved in Investments as well. I think, you know, it's probably confidence, ....when I came out of college first, I did an interview....for kind of a dealership role and the interview was going well but then he was asking these questions and he was trying to determine how confident I was, you know, and I can still remember to this day and he was asking me "Okay, the client is on the phone and he's demanding a price, but you are told you can't go below a certain price, what do you do? What do you do?" and he was probing me to see, you know, how competent and confident I would be in a certain job.....and I suppose I was giving a typically girly answer kind of saying, you know, but I can imagine a fella would have stuck to his guns and would have been all, you know, confident about it........ the man will bull shit his way through....I think that was why I couldn't get into Investments day one ... ..." [HH, female Associate]

For her to move now to Investments would require her to take a step backwards in her career, something she is not interested in doing now, but she does regret not having had the chance to get into that side of the industry earlier on in her career;

"I think for me to move into the whole Investment area I'd have to take a backward step to move forward again....And it's a pity because if I'd got a chance earlier on I would probably have taken it but I just couldn't get that opportunity earlier on." [HH, female Associate]

TR picks up on the issue of confidence as a differentiator between men and women in Investments. Similarly to HH, she also thinks that men in her area are a lot more naturally confident and sure of themselves.

".....just in general [men would] be a lot more vocal and kind of confident. Just I think as men often are kind of rather than women so..... you have to kind of stick by your idea and try to convince the PMs so you need to be kind of confident in your views and that....when you're in front of the PMs and you're trying to convince them
of something, you have to be very kind of vocal and outspoken and I just generally am not really like that. ...the lads in the team they’d be kind of very confident and sure and they be able to just ramble on about their idea without kind of wondering oh the PMs are thinking I’m wrong here or anything you know like that so maybe – it’s taught me over time to be more confident and to kind of just get your thoughts out there and go with it.” [TR, female Associate]

There is a recurring theme in amongst the female interviews regarding how they feel men can ‘bull shit’ their way through meetings et cetera while women are more honest and will say when they do not know the answer to something. HH and her female colleagues in Corporate Administration think that women have greater ‘attention to detail’ and therefore excel more in ‘control’ functions;

This is interesting to note within the wider context of the roles and traits which are most powerful and most valued within the company. As one female Associate puts it is the ‘talkers’ who get ahead within InvestCo rather than the people who have a strong attention to detail. DD describes the people who do best in the company as being;

“......like really confident, aggressive, people people, political people.....it’s not the very detail orientated people, not doers so much as talkers” [HH, female Associate]

This makes sense in terms of where power lies in the company, within the department which values confidence, and aggression rather than in the ‘housekeeping’ departments where the more routine functions are carried out.

6.1.4 IMPACT OF PARENTHOOD

There is clear agreement amongst both male and female interviewees that having children restricts women’s progress within InvestCo. While interviewees may disagree on whether gender alone is a barrier to women’s success, there is a convergence of opinion that once a woman has children, her prospects in the company become less promising. Where the interviewees differ on this is with regard to whether mothers’ progress is stymied by their own ‘choice’ to prioritise their families at the expense of their careers, or whether organisational barriers push mothers out of InvestCo. There is a gender perception gap amongst interviewees, with men mostly putting the lack of women/mothers at the top down to choice, and women mostly putting it down to organisational barriers and discrimination
against mothers. However there is more complexity to it – we have men in the sample who desire to be more active parents and experience the kind of role conflict more stereotypically associated with women. We also have women in the sample who are career-focused breadwinners but who are constrained from taking on this role in their family by a lack of flexibility in InvestCo in terms of how roles are structured.

**Impact of children on career**

From the online survey it was found that motherhood is seen a problematic issue for women in InvestCo with regard to how they perceive it impacts on their potential to make it to the top of the organisation. Chart 6.1 details the percentage of male and female respondents who agree that having children has restricted their career. While the sample size is too small to carry out significance testing on, it is nonetheless interesting to note that women in InvestCo are the cohort most likely to agree that this has been the case. They overwhelmingly agree [80%] that having children has restricted their careers. In contrast, just 19% of men in the InvestCo sample agree that having children has held them back.

**CHART 6.1: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS (WITH CHILDREN) WHO AGREE THAT HAVING CHILDREN HAS RESTRICTED THEIR CAREER, BY GENDER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Having children has restricted my career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INVESTCO FEMALES N=10 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INVESTCO MALES N=26 19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

28 This only includes women and men who have children
As noted in Chapter Five, women in InvestCo cite ‘managers’ preconceptions regarding their commitment to the job’ as an important barrier to their career progression significantly more than men in the survey sample. When this is split between those who have children and those who do not, we can see that again it is women with children in InvestCo who feel the most negative impact of children on their career [please note this is a small sample size N=9]

As outlined in Chart 6.2 below, 32% of women without children cite this as an important barrier compared with 63% of women with children. Interestingly men with children [29%] are also more likely than men without children [13%] to cite this as an important barrier.

CHART 6.2: INVESTCO PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO CITE MANAGERS PRECONCEPTIONS RE THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE JOB AS A BARRIER TO THEIR CAREER PROGRESSION, BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of respondents who agree that</th>
<th>Managers’ preconceptions re your commitment to the job has been a barrier to their career progression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females without children N=40</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females with children N=9</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males without children N=29</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males with children N=24</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Women who succeed do not have children

As outlined in Chapter Four, senior women are few on the ground in InvestCo, and there is a perception amongst the interview sample that those women who do make it to the top do not have children. For example, echoing what other female interviewees have said about the absence of positive senior female role models, DD says that;

“It’s mostly men [in senior roles] ..... there aren’t very many senior females – I’ve worked with a few very inspirational women but they’re very much in the minority
and they would have no children and would have made a choice – it’s career or kids ... there aren’t any [female] Senior Managers as a mentor or, you know, somebody to look up to and go this is how it’s done…” [DD, female Associate]

MT, a female VP, agrees that women without children are the ones who can get ahead in InvestCo;

“Well the women that have done that [made it to SVP or EVP], they’ve made a choice, they haven’t had families, they’re all either single women or they’re married and they’re in their 40s or late 30s and they’re gone passed having families ... so they’ve made that career choice but yeah, that’s why you don’t have that many [senior women] here in Dublin.” [MT, female VP]

The quantitative data captured in the online survey supports this view, and provides some further insight into the demographics of the sample. Men are significantly more likely than women in the sample to have children overall. While 56% of male respondents (N=55) have children, just over one fifth (21%) of female respondents (N=57) have children. Having children is significantly associated with being older and being more senior in the company. As the male respondents are significantly older and more likely to be senior managers than females in this sample, these findings regarding children are not necessarily surprising, or associated with gender per se.

TABLE 6.3: PARENTAL STATUS BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INVESTCO</th>
<th>Males N=55</th>
<th>Females N=57</th>
<th>Total N=112</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have children?</td>
<td>Yes 56%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No 44%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

When the data is split by management level and then further split by gender, it becomes too small to carry out statistical significance tests on. However, as outlined in Table 6.4 below, we can see that at Vice President level, male respondents are far more likely to have children than female respondents at this level. While 80% of male Vice Presidents have children, just 30% of female Vice Presidents do. This pattern carries through at Associate and No Title levels also. This finding echoes what other studies of the financial services internationally
which have found that women who make it to positions of power are significantly less likely to have children than their male counterparts (Lyness and Thompson, 1997; Granleese, 2004)

TABLE 6.4: PARENTAL STATUS BY MANAGEMENT LEVEL BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental status by gender and management level</th>
<th>Senior Manager N=6</th>
<th>Middle Manager N=11</th>
<th>Junior Manager N=19</th>
<th>No Title N=19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you have children?</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

INVESTCO - FEMALE RESPONDENTS N=57

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental status by gender and management level</th>
<th>Senior Manager N=1</th>
<th>Middle Manager N=11</th>
<th>Junior Manager N=23</th>
<th>No Title N=23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you have children?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

Mothers 'choose' to opt-out

Overall men in the interview sample share the view that motherhood, and the choices women make around it, is a large factor in why women are absent from senior roles. The combination of taking time out to have children, and then of requiring flexible work options or in other ways not being able to give one hundred per cent commitment to the job, means that women do not make it to senior roles.

For example PQ, a male VP believes that taking time out for maternity leave is problematic for women in InvestCo, and that in contrast women who do not have children have progressed to senior positions unimpeded;

"I think it [having children] definitely does affect [women] but I think it affects them because of the fact that they're not there and if you – and I think it's reasonable too, I mean if you were going to be a manager of a team and you're going to disappear for 9 months or a year, you can't be there to manage them and I think whether you're a fella and you were sick or you were constantly sick the same would apply. I think if you were there you'd get the job, you know, and that's definitely girls who takes
maternity leave or probably not promoted as much as they would be if they weren't taking the maternity leave. Like there's certainly some girls in here who haven't families and they've made up through the management definitely." [PQ, male VP]

While WW, a male SVP admits that the company is not 'covering itself in glory' with regard to the number of women at the top, he thinks that ultimately it is again down to women's choice to prioritise their families over their careers, rather than being down to any organisational barriers;

"I don't think there were a lot of – there wasn't a lot of women that worked with the groups generally speaking, those that did would have got married and possibly had kids so they made a choice on their career – or it's certainly perceived as a choice....And then when they were coming back after maternity the balance is much more shifted for them and I think it's much harder overall.....we're definitely not covering ourselves in glory anyway that's for sure" [WW, male SVP]

There are women in the sample who also think that women are not in more senior roles because they simply 'choose' to opt-out for family reasons. As JJ, a female VP who does not have children yet, but is planning to have them, puts it;

"In general my own thoughts ... is that women just – a lot of women just make the choice that that's not what they want. They've made the choice of family over – for me you're never going to have 50/50, you're probably going to have, I don't know, whatever it is, is what it is......It's all about choice but as long as the choice is there and if you choose to do something different and you choose to want to make it to the top...." [JJ female VP]

However overall women in the sample express the view that women who have children do not simply 'choose' to opt-out of their careers, rather they are pushed out by organisational factors.

Organisational barriers faced by mothers

While MT does not currently have children she thinks that being a woman of child-bearing age who has recently got married means that she would be considered as someone who it
would be risky to promote. She believes that preconceptions about her future choices would put off managers from promoting her within InvestCo;

"... I think to be able to move on as a woman, you know, you have to be that wee bit more mature, you have to be that wee bit older, like the stage I'm at now like, you know, I got married last year so everybody's kind of like looking at me like “oh God, is she going to pop next kind of thing” so I'm not going to be offered anything in the next few years like until I have my family and until kind of that's all over with and established then I'm not going to be able to move on to that next level..... It wouldn't have been a problem in my last company, they were very kind of open to it but – yeah, in InvestCo that's the way it's seen. Like I've had one of the Senior Managers like once said to me like oh you know... when was I going to be going out kind of [on maternity leave], you know, in joking and I wouldn't have known him very well so I thought it was completely inappropriate ..." [MT, female VP]

She feels this is one of the reasons why she was unsuccessful in a recent interview process for the head of her department;

"..... it probably was in the background as well, like I mean why would you give it to me when, you know, if she's going to be looking for maternity leave in the next year, kind of going to leave the team.....I think that probably was a factor in it as well. [MT, female VP]

DD's experience is somewhat similar. She has felt the negative impact that getting married and having children has had on how she is perceived within InvestCo, and says it is hard to separate out that from how women are treated overall in the company;

"It's hard for me to separate [having children] from the way it is anyway ... and the attitudes that are so pervasive anyway. I think the more distinguishing thing is when you have a baby then in my view there is a definite mummy track.....[I'm] not sure whether getting married is quite as decisive but it certainly shifts you out of focus..." [DD, female Associate]

She says that once then you have children you become even more invisible in the company;

"..... it's as if you don't exist. They talk about people on maternity leave as if they were already gone and the positions are obviously kept open and everything is done
properly but, you know, if you want flexible working hours it would be described as part-time, even though you’re still putting in your hours... You’re still doing 37½ hours a week. You’re almost treated as a part-time employee.” [DD, female Associate]

Motherhood incompatible with Investments

While TR, who is one of only a small number of women in her area of Investments, does not think that being a woman in this male-dominated area would hold her back in itself, she does think that both the time needed away from work to have a child, and then the potential need for flexibility when you return to work to accommodate childcare, would be problematic in Investments. Out of all the Investments team, she knows of only one woman who has children, and that woman is a Personal Assistant, not a ‘real’ member of the Investments staff per se. This shows the overarching male domination of the area and of the homogeneity of experience – there is a large lack of gender diversity, and a lack of mothers in particular in the Investments department.

“...looking down the line, if any of us want to have kids well then I would think say just being a typical family life you could have issues where you’d have to, I don’t know the child could be sick or... or collecting them from crèche or anything like that. ... if one of your company reports you would need a good deal of time to have analysed that and be able to give your view in the morning meeting but if you have to drop your kid to crèche or if you’ve anything wrong with your kid ...... and you’re not there to speak about your company and it’s an important set of results then I think the PMs would kind of lose heart in you in a big kind of – they’d maybe - compared to someone that would be always at their beck and call ... they wouldn’t think you’d be as reliable maybe.....but like say kind of balancing family life and work life kind of I suppose no there isn’t really because we don’t – there isn’t any females with a family or we don’t know enough about the females ...... we were talking about this recently with one of the other [female analysts] and ....as far as we know out of the whole lot of Investment staff, one woman has had a baby .... in the last few months and without sounding kind of condescending here or anything but she’s ..... a Personal Assistant so she’s not kind of [Investments proper as such]... So as far as we know, out of all of the Investment staff there is no mothers there at all......” [TR, female Associate]
She sees no real role models for progressing as a mother in her area, the precedent seems to be that women leave after they have children, or they are at the very least side-lined when they return from maternity leave.

"We don't know you see [how it could work]... there's not one positive role model...we only have one example of a colleague... in the [X country] office...she was an Analyst anyway and she went off on maternity leave and in [X country] they get a year maternity leave...she went off on maternity leave and we recruited another Analyst for her sector in Dublin and she since has resigned...I don't know the ins and outs of that...it could be all, she could have been sat down and explained...exactly what's going to happen and........it really could have been fine, I don't know but, but I guess maybe that's another thing like the females there saw that the one female in the whole team that had children and her sector was recruited off to somebody else” [TR, female Associate]

TR’s description of the role and career path for an analyst within InvestCo highlights how the structure of certain roles/career paths can also be somewhat problematic for women. For example how one progresses in the role of ‘career analyst’ proves problematic when breaks in service are required. If for example a female analyst were to take time out for maternity leave the company would be losing its specialist in a key industry, and the analyst would potentially lose their industry, as someone else would need to come in to analyse it in their absence. The analyst would lose the tacit knowledge of what has gone on in their industry for the past year or so. This scenario is a cause of concern amongst women in Investments. As TR says, merely taking the time out necessary to have a child is seen as problematic in a role such as hers.

6.1.5 GREEDY JOBS WITH AN INTOLERANCE FOR FWO

The quantitative data gathered in the online survey gives some insight into the level of time-commitment required of workers in InvestCo. The majority of survey respondents (70%) work more than 40 hours per week, while senior managers regularly work more than 45 hours per week. Part-time working is virtually non-existent.
Overall there was no statistically significant difference found between male and female respondents with regard to the average number of hours they work per week.

A Chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between gender and the average number of hours worked per week; $\chi^2 (3) = 5.095, p = 0.165$

Statistical tests were also carried out on the data to ascertain whether there was any significant association between average hours worked and whether respondents have children. Again no significant association was found – having children does not appear to affect how many hours’ respondents work per week.

A Chi-square test for independence (with Yates Continuity Correction) indicated no significant association between having children and the average number of hours worked per week by all respondents; $\chi^2 (1) = 1.095, p = 0.295$.

The gendered nature of flexible work options

In terms of the availability of flexible work options [FWO] there are no formal policies in place and they are available within InvestCo only on an ad-hoc basis. Decisions regarding whether an employee is facilitated in availing of such flexibility in their work day is very much at the discretion of their particular line-manager. Tables 6.5 outlines the current uptake of FWO by gender.

The sample size is too small to carry out significance testing on this data. While it is not proven to be statistically significant, it is nonetheless interesting to note that of the few people who do work part-time, all of them are women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of flexible working arrangement</th>
<th>MALE N=54</th>
<th>FEMALE N=52</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compressed work week</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommuting/working from home</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced work schedule/part-time</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible arrival/departure time</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages
Once the data is split by gender and by parental status, it is again too small to carry out statistical significance tests on. Despite this we can see from Table 6.6 that female respondents with children appear to be the cohort most likely to currently use a FWO.

For example, while 20% of female respondents with children currently telecommute/work from home, only 4% of females without children, and 8% of males with children currently use this FWO. No male respondents without children currently telecommute.

Similarly while 20% of female respondents with children currently work part-time, just 2% of females without children and no male respondents at all use this FWO.

Another interesting finding to note is that having children also appears to be associated with an increased use of FWOs for men in the sample. For example 8% of men with children telecommute while no men without children do; and 27% of men with children use flexible arrival/departure times while only 7% of men without children do this.

We can see that the use of FWOs is somewhat gendered in nature, echoing Smithson et al’s (2004) study of the financial services. However, despite the gendered nature of the use of FWO’s, it is clear from the interviews conducted with InvestCo employees that work/life balance is far from being just a ‘woman’s issue’. Male interviewees, particularly those with young children expressed a desire to achieve a balance between their work and their home lives.

TABLE 6.6: FWO CURRENTLY USED BY GENDER AND PARENTAL STATUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of flexible work arrangement</th>
<th>Male N=54</th>
<th>Female N=54</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children N=25</td>
<td>No Children N=29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compressed work week</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommuting/working from home</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced work schedule/part-time</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible arrival/departure time</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career break/sabbatical</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

Attitude towards the use of FWO

In InvestCo, while overall the majority of respondents (68%) disagree with the idea that it is possible to be a senior manager and work a reduced schedule, a significant gender difference was found in respondents’ answers, with male respondents more likely to disagree, and
female respondents more likely to agree with this statement. As outlined in Table 6.7, while 39% of female respondents agree that it is possible to work at a senior level part-time, only 9% of male respondents agree that this is possible. The vast majority of male respondents (81%) disagree that combining a senior role with a part-time work schedule is possible.

\[
A \text{ Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and whether respondents feel that it is possible to combine being a senior manager with working part-time; } \chi^2 (2) = 15.688, p = 0.000; \text{ Cramer’s } V = 0.374, p = 0.000
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.7: Investco Respondents Attitude Towards FWO by Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude towards work/life balance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MALES N=55</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is possible to be a senior manager and work part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who work part-time or use other FWOs are not as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

While overall a majority of respondents (58%) within InvestCo do not believe that people working part-time or using other FWOs are less committed to their careers than those who work full-time, a significant gender difference was found, with male respondents more likely than female respondents to agree that part-time workers are less committed. While 32% of male respondents in InvestCo agree that part-time workers are less committed than those who work full-time, only 17% of female respondents feel that this is the case. The vast majority of female respondents (79%) disagree that part-time workers are less committed.

\[
A \text{ Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and whether respondents feel that people working part-time or who adopt other flexible work patterns are as committed to their careers as those who work full-time; } \chi^2 (2) = 13.703, p = 0.001; \text{ Cramer’s } V = 0.350, p = 0.001
\]

So we can see that in InvestCo there is a quite a gender perception gap with regard to what respondents’ think is possible with regard to adopting FWOs at senior management levels. In
a study of accountants, Smithson et al (2004) found that the perceived negative effect of adopting a FWO on a person’s career progression was a major barrier in the uptake of FWOs.

**Qualitative findings regarding FWO**

In general, both male and female interviewees feel that ultimately adopting FWOs is career-limiting, in that it can lead to you being seen to be less committed to your career, and also in that it decreases your visibility – a case of ‘out of sight, out of mind’ – which ultimately has negative consequences for your chances of career progression.

Regarding the impact of taking a flexible working options RF says that it is akin to career suicide;

“Like women I’ve seen who’ve had kids and then want to go four days a week, they might as well just of put a gun in their mouth like, you know....Like if you can’t accommodate work in terms of maybe you need to work later ....Any senior woman has no kids and she’s dedicated to the job” [RF female VP]

The way work is structured within the Investments department is seen as prohibitive to flexible working.

“No-one where I work do that [adopt flexible work schedules], no there’s no-one....I’m not sure but I think they have it in some kind of departments in InvestCo but certainly not in Investments, no....it’s not something that I’d think they’d look very favourably at, no.” [TR, female Associate]

**Experience of flexible working**

Of those within the interview sample who have themselves used FWO’s in InvestCo, there is a mix of experiences. On the one hand there are some who see it as something which has not held back their career at all, while others feel it is the death knell for their potential to progress.

DD currently works a four-day week, having negotiated that after she returned from maternity leave on her second child;
“...I opted to go reduced hour working contract and, to be fair they were actually very, you know, they were very accommodating about that and it wasn’t a battle, I was expecting a huge battle simply because there had only been one other person in the department that had had a baby before me, then there’s another person – sorry, two before me and then one at the same time as me and I think the first two possibly did pave the way” [DD, female Associate]

While she did not have to fight for the four day week, she does think that people who work these kinds of reduced schedules are seen as not very committed to their jobs, and not respected to the same degree as full-time employees are;

“...but at this point I’m kind of thinking well you might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb anyway....I’m already pegged as being one of those people so.....they just don’t have the same respect [for people on reduced work schedules]” [DD, female Associate]

HH has on the other hand had a positive experience of FWO’s within the company. She relocated to Galway, and now works from home for the majority of the week. In her experience it has not had a negative effect thus far on her progress. For her the people who are accommodated with FWO’s such as hers are the InvestCo insiders, the ‘chosen-ones’;

“.... when I look at other people who I know might do maybe a 4 day week in the office and then 1 from home or ...maybe have very irregular hours because they are commuting long distances. I think the people who have been allowed to do that are real kind of InvestCo people, do you know what I mean?.......I think for people who maybe ...the company view as having a long term future we’re worth making these arrangements for ...” [HH, female Associate]

*Changing gender roles – rise of the active father*

While it is not the dominant theme amongst fathers in the interview sample, there are examples of men who have made conscious choices to prioritise seeking a balanced work and family life. This is interesting to note, as it shows that women are not the only ones facing role-conflicts in the sample, or having to restrict their progression for the sake of being involved active parents.
PQ a male VP in Investments has negotiated a flexible working schedule, whereby he starts early and finishes early two days a week. He wants to be an involved active parent to his children and so is demanding some balance and flexibility from his employer. In an example of how gender roles are evolving, he is not content to leave the child-rearing up to his wife, and to only see his children at the weekend;

"... the reason [for adopting the flexible work schedule] ...was really to help my wife.....so really part of the reason for me trying to get home was to give her a hand in the evening that at least a couple of evening she can have an hour to herself or whatever, you know..... for the first 6 months there I didn’t see [my son] from Sunday night until Saturday morning, so that was part of the reason I wanted to push to try and get home early at least a couple of days a week to see him, you know. ” [PQ, male VP]

His experience of the management within Investments is very positive with regard to how flexible working options are viewed, compared with how it is experienced by women in the interview sample;

"...the CIO [chief investments officer] here is very understanding and....I think he’s very well balanced, his impression is you have to look after your family and spend time ...he’s quite a sort of Irish mentality on some things, [even though he is ‘Southern European’] you know, very easy going and a great way with people and he understood fully [he] is a guy who I think understands families and understands what you need to do...” [PQ, male VP]

While PQ doesn’t think this has been career limiting thus far, again echoing other men and women in the sample who have made similar choices, he acknowledges that in order to make it to the very top that he would have to sacrifice this balance, and that is not something he is prepared to do. The senior roles in the company are seen as ‘all-consuming’;

"...I think you need to make a choice. I don’t think you can have a – if you want to get to the top you really have to concentrate on it and go 100% I don’t think you’d get away with being able to have a balanced family life and that as well ....I think really you’d need to be totally focused on your career...if you went much above my level like, as I say, I’m probably middle management or whatever but if you went much above that you would need to be available for emergency meetings and meetings
running late into the night and maybe conference calls with the Far East or [US] and
doing an awful lot of travel as well and I don’t think you could balance the two. I
think once you go up much above me I think you need to sort of make that decision.
And that’s part of the reason maybe that I’m not pushing myself so much. ... I think
that you’d have to change your route and put your family on the back burner...[and]
concentrate more and give more time to the job.” [PQ, male VP]

PQ highlights an important point regarding senior roles in this company – they require a very
high level of time-commitment, and personal sacrifice and very few people, either male or
female, make it to this level.

BD is another example of a male in the interview sample who is making a conscious ‘choice’
to seek balance in his work and family life since having children. Even though he is adopting
a traditional male breadwinner role within his family, he wants a hands-on role in his
children's life and so does not work very long hours, and has taken parental leave in the past.

“...I find even now, you know, there’s little enough time. You know, I might get home at
seven ... and they’re in bed at eight. You know, it’s an hour. And then there’s the weekends,
then there’s holidays. But that’s, you know, there’s not an awful amount of time, you know
what I mean?...So if you miss a day or if I’m working late at all, they’re gone to bed when I
get home so that I don’t see them at all...I have taken parental leave in the past as well as
paternity leave and it’s something I would consider doing again....I took off about a month.
You know, a few years ago, before my second daughter was...was born, just to spend some
time with my other daughter before she went to school in the summer...” [BD, male VP]

He talks of how, for most people the crucial time for building career usually coincides with
the time when you will want to start a family and that this can cause difficulties in terms of
striking a work/life balance. It is not just women who are affected by becoming a parent;

“...I think it’s a case with everybody, those years always coincide with kind of
crucial points in your career path as well....Where you’re in, you know, your
thirties, mid-thirties, you know, late thirties. And sometimes you have to make a
decision on it and I definitely consciously have made a decision that, you know,
I’m going to try and balance my personal life with my work life, even if it costs
me, to a certain extent, in my work life.” [BD, male VP]
BD does think that his career has been held back by his decision to try to be an active parent. It is clear from him and others that having children is not impact-less on a man’s career either. It may not have the same dramatic effect that it can have on women, but it can nonetheless hinder men who do not follow the traditional ‘give all’ culture of ‘extreme jobs’;

"I would say the only thing that held me back would be that I balance my personal life, I don’t work particularly long hours. ... I’m sure that will have held me back a bit, but that’s a decision I made. I have a young family, I don’t want to regret, in years to come, that I was working instead of – you know, I have two daughters who are – one’s in school, one’s not even two yet......I think the only way probably I could have improved ... management perception, improved my prospects, would have been by ...working longer hours ....I could have done it at the expense of being at home, but I don’t think it’s worth it....but it’s a choice, I said no. [BD, male VP]

People in the company have commented to him that he is more interested in his work life balance than climbing the ‘greasy pole’ of his career. In this he could be said to be displaying the same kind of ‘self-imposed’ glass-ceiling that Cross and Linehan (2006) found to be a feature of women in their study.

6.1.6 MANAGEMENT STYLE AND CULTURE

The way in which InvestCo’s Dublin-based operation has grown and developed as an organisation appears to have influenced the way in which it manages, develops and promotes its employees. The nature of its business and the roles within the organisation also impact on how staff are managed.

InvestCo has been the subject of a series of mergers and take-overs and grew rapidly in Ireland from the late 1990s to 2008 (the year when the fieldwork for this study was carried out). During this period of rapid growth, the employee base in Ireland grew by almost 500% from approximately 60 people to roughly 350 in 2008. The global financial services industry, of which InvestCo is a part, is a dynamic and volatile marketplace. A combination of needing to react to this volatility coupled with its own rapid growth and development as a business, has impacted the organisational structure and culture of the company. Teams and functional areas have evolved and grown organically, and there seems to have been a lack of time and/or leadership strategy regarding the area of people management.
Operating as it does in a fast-changing global financial services environment means things happen very fast and interviewees talk of there being no clear people management strategy in the company.

‘Hands-off’ style of management

Staff within the key functional area of Investments are essentially ‘own-account’ workers in that they work quite autonomously, as individuals rather than as part of a team. They gain higher status and salary increases via their own bottom-line performance on their investments decisions, rather than by managing staff or functional areas. The management style within InvestCo reflects this individual style of working, and is in essence ‘hands-off’. Staff are not nurtured and developed via regular performance appraisals and goal-setting procedures.

As outlined, Southern European and British employees are over-represented at senior management level in InvestCo. There is clear sense from the interviewees that external candidates are very often chosen over internal candidates to fill senior management positions. This ‘buying-in’ of expertise at the senior level is also reflected in the management style – InvestCo does not need to develop staff internally when they prefer to go externally and look to the open market for senior roles. Some employees have progressed from junior positions right up to senior management within the company, but they appear to be the exception rather than the rule.

In InvestCo senior managers have little engagement in the day-to-day work of their staff. Interviewees report a pattern of a ‘hands-off’ management style, with their bosses often located in another country, and often not being ‘present’ in an employees working life in any real way except to tick-off formalities such as yearly performance reviews.

Promotional procedures - lack of open competition for senior roles

Promotional procedures in InvestCo are characterised as informal and lacking transparency by the interviewees. Reflecting the fast-pace of change and growth in both the industry and in the company, and roles are filled in an ‘appointed’ way rather than via open competition. Managerial positions in particular are not likely to be openly advertised, with the ‘juicy’ roles being kept for those ‘chosen’ by the senior management team. Managerial roles are for the most part not advertised, they are merely ‘appointed’, sometimes as a shock to both the staff who will be working for the new manager, as well as to the newly appointed manager themselves.
As functional areas grow and develop, 'known' safe-pairs of hands are given extra responsibility and promoted to lead functional units. Senior managers reserve the right to make appointments as they see fit, rather than via a formal policy of open competition.

As the company expands roles are 'created' for certain people in a haphazard rather than planned fashion—staff are kept in the dark, which makes planning a career route or understanding the criteria for promotion difficult.

A lack of opportunity to compete for jobs, coupled with a lack of formal appraisals/performance management, means that staff within InvestCo are often in the dark as to what is required to be promoted to the next level.

More women than men in the interview sample have had a negative experience of the promotional procedures in the company, they are more likely than men in the interview sample to have also been on the wrong side of InvestCo's informal way of handling how roles are filled.

A lack of opportunity to apply for roles and to go through a formal interview/feedback process, coupled with a lack of proper performance management can leave staff in the dark as to what they need to do to develop and progress in InvestCo.

The lack of planning regarding people management is referenced as an issue by many interviewees, both those who have managed to progress well in the company and those who have not. The sense of organic growth that has been a feature of the company's development over the past decade is focused on meeting business needs while the needs of staff in terms of development of career paths, formal promotional and performance management procedures seems to have taken a back seat.

What emerges strongly in the qualitative data is that the closed and informal nature of InvestCo's policies has a negative effect on the women and men in the sample who are not the 'chosen-ones'. In InvestCo there is a lack of transparency regarding what jobs are advertised and who gets them.

There are wide variations in terms of how promotions are handled, as well as in the availability of opportunities to progress, across different departments. The nature of the company and roles within it mean that there is very little sense of career development happening for staff outside of the Investments department. Employees are unclear as to what
opportunities exist for them in the company, and their bosses are generally not involved in the
development of their career plans et cetera. As an employee you are effectively on your own in InvestCo, with managers taking a ‘hands-off’ approach to your career development.

The lack of clear career paths and opportunities is particularly problematic for women in InvestCo, and the source of much frustration. Female interviewees feel held back, not the ‘chosen’ ones. Promotional procedures appear non-existent, with people just ‘appointed’ to roles which are a surprise sometimes even to themselves. This leaves little opportunity for others to apply for managerial positions and thereby showcase their skills and be ‘made visible’ to powerful senior managers through the interview process.

6.1.7 CONCLUSION

The data in this chapter gives some idea of what it means to be a woman in InvestCo. The frustration amongst some of the women in the sample comes across clearly in their accounts. Their opportunities are limited by the functional areas that they work in; by their gender; and by whether or not they have children. They face barriers which appear to be inherently gendered, and which they have limited scope to control.

Women in InvestCo appear side-lined and silenced in comparison to their male colleagues. There is clear gender bias as well as maternal wall barriers which serve to hinder women’s progress in the company. The aggressive culture of Investments, combined with work structures which require linear, break-free service serves to push women out of this most powerful of functional areas. Instead women are more likely to work in departments where they have much less visibility and far fewer career opportunities open to them.

6.2 ACCOUNTCO

As outlined in Chapter Four, while vertical gender segregation is a feature of AccountCo, women are better represented in senior roles than is found in InvestCo. Functional segregation is not a feature of AccountCo, with women as likely as their male counterparts to be in the ‘power-bases’ of the company. There are more women in AccountCo than men overall, with women outnumbering men in the junior management grades.

The impact of this more ‘equal’ organisational structure was felt in Chapter Five. There is more gender convergence found overall in the survey sample with regard to men and women’s experience of their opportunities to progress in the company. Women in AccountCo
were found to have a more positive attitude towards the culture of their company than was found amongst the InvestCo female sample.

In this section the impact of this more equal organisational culture will be explored within the AccountCo interview sample. Again this will provide for a more detailed and nuanced understanding of the lived lives of women and men in the company.

6.2.1 GENDER NOT AN BARRIER TO WOMEN IN ACCOUNTCO

While AccountCo’s structure and culture may appear more equal and ‘female-friendly’ when compared in relative terms to a company such as InvestCo, that does not take away from the fact that AccountCo is still considerably male-dominated at the most senior levels of Director and Partner. Out of the 109 senior managers in the company, just 21 are women. That means that women occupy only 19% of the most powerful roles in the company. Findings from the quantitative data show that 41% of women [N=53] in the sample agree that men have an easier route to the top in AccountCo than women do. This is significantly higher than men, with only nine per cent of men [N=62] agreeing that men have it easier. From the male interviewees perspective this tallies with the survey sample in that they agree overall that there is no bias against women in terms of how well they can progress. Men believe that women have equal opportunities in this regard within AccountCo. Interestingly overall the women in the interview sample believe this too. Thus despite the relatively small representation of women at the top, the women in the interview sample feel that being a woman is not in itself a barrier to their progression within AccountCo.

Men and women in AccountCo are less likely to reference structural barriers such as inherent gender bias as inhibitors to women’s progress, and more likely to cite timing and family prioritisation as the key reasons for women’s absence from the most senior roles.

There is also a clear understanding that making it to Partner level is something which is very difficult and requires a huge dedication and time commitment. This is something which both men and women must make personal sacrifices for, and men as well as women, fathers as well as mothers must make ‘choices’ in this regard. So it is not just women or mothers in the sample who face role conflicts and who make active choices to slow-down career progression for the sake of family-life, men also must choose how to best balance their life.
The male perspective

According to men in the interview sample, gender is not an issue for women when it comes to career progression within AccountCo. Rather there is a clear sense amongst the male interviewees that the company is being increasingly feminised and that it is only a matter of time before women are in the ascendency.

According to JQ who is a male Partner, the company does not have any male cliques or ‘old-boys network’, rather it is an inclusive firm which recognises and promotes talented females;

‘...certainly there’s no ‘old boys network’. This is a complete meritocracy...If [women] are good enough they’ll get on...some of the other [Big Four] firms have a bit of a name for that...but we are absolutely just nothing like that in here....it’s an inclusive firm’ [JQ, male Partner]

While he acknowledges that things were very male-dominated in the industry when he started out in the 1980s, he believes that things have changed and that the ‘emerging talent’ in the company is now predominately female;

‘....I would say nowadays....[in AccountCo] ..the girls are better than the guys by and large. That’s my experience and in my group we have had a lot of girls coming through in the last three to four years who have been promoted now although we still don’t have a female director. But we’ll get there next year I think....the people who [are progressing]...are females. The real talent at the emerging level is all female, which is interesting and...if you looked at our promotion for the last two or three years you would probably see....a huge number of females” [JQ, male Partner]

Again when it comes to gender, MR a male Director reflects the predominant view amongst the male interviewees that the lack of women in senior roles is either a timing issue, or a matter of women ‘choosing’ to prioritise their family responsibilities, rather than an organisational culture issue. Regarding whether your gender has any impact on your career progression in AccountCo he says:
"I'm not a great believer in that. I mean I think rather than gender...I think family commitments can change things but I have to confess I think it's often used....I use my boss [who is a female Partner] as a prime example. She's very, very good at what she does and she doesn't use her gender as an excuse or as a benefit. ....I think that, regardless of your gender, if you're good enough and if you work hard enough you'll get there...." [MR male Director]

He makes the point that the issue that can affect a person's progress is whether or not they have children and how they choose to manage this, rather than whether or not they are a man or a woman;

"...I don't think it's necessarily gender. Kids affect men as well when they make partner. You've the same sacrifices. I do appreciate it's generally women end up sacrificing a bit more in that regard and that's the line rather than the male/female divide, to me is the issue” [MR male Director]

Echoing the male Partner JQ, MR also puts the lack of top women down to historic factors. Women are the 'emerging talent' in the company and it is just a matter of time before they are represented at the top in equal numbers to men. As gender roles change within the family, women are less-likely to 'step-back' when they have children he believes;

"There's a historic thing as well...going back a generation and I suppose it's still the thing that men probably....you know, women had kids, they decided to step back. I know the partner that was in my group before ....she had kids and stepped out and I think you see that perhaps a bit more often actually even at director level. It's changing because coming through the junior ranks there's more and more women” [MR male Director]

Again according to KK, a male Manager, the company is being increasingly feminised and gender is definitely not something which holds women back in AccountCo.;

"Definitely not. I'd say, particularly in tax, I would imagine the balance of females to males, not at partner level yet but say, at a manager/senior manager level, I'd say the
female....There was intake about three years ago; there was one lad and nine girls. I think my intake there was two lads and six girls. So definitely there is more females coming through and I think at manager level there [are] more females as well. But I don't think that really has any impact on where you get.” [KK male Manager]

The female perspective

Similar to the gender convergence found regarding attitudes towards, and experience of, the culture within AccountCo that was outlined in Chapter Five, women within the interview sample share the male view that gender is not an issue that holds them back within the company.

Women in the interview sample have not experienced any direct gender bias themselves within AccountCo, and can readily cite many very visible positive senior female role models. These female role models provide evidence for women at more junior levels that it is possible to combine being a Director or being a Partner with having a family. These role models are powerful and further reinforce the idea that being a woman or being a mother is not inherently a barrier to making it to the top within AccountCo. Again, echoing the men in the interview sample, it is the choices women make regarding motherhood that women in the interview sample see as causing a block to women’s progress. In contrast to InvestCo however, motherhood in and of itself is not seen as prohibitive to a woman progressing, and women feel that they have more of a ‘real’ and unconstrained ‘choice’ regarding how they decide to balance career and family life.

For EQ, a woman who has made it all the way to Partner level, while also having two children, her gender has obviously not been a barrier to her success;

“No, none whatsoever in my mind! I don’t think that’s ever been an issue.” [EQ, female Partner]

For BC, a female manager, her experience in AccountCo is that being a woman has in many ways been a positive enabler of success rather than a barrier. She displays a ‘post-feminist’ attitude towards gender, and at the age of 29 and in a junior management position, has thus-far at least not felt the impact of any female-related barriers to her career.
"...these days it’s [being a woman is] probably more in my favour than to hold you back....I don’t know whether it’s AccountCo or...a general trend these days but they really are trying to put women forward and stuff. So ...it’s probably to my advantage nearly now.” [BC, female Manager]

GG, a female Senior Manager echoes other women in the sample in saying that she does not feel that being a woman has held her back in AccountCo. If anything she acknowledges how female dominated the intake into the company has become; to the point where the few male recruits are divided up so as to balance the different areas in the department out;

“There’s a lot of females at our level. Even the intake coming in now, there’s a lot more females than male. So they’re trying to monitor that and distribute the colleagues evenly so that every group has a couple of guys. But definitely, to date I haven’t felt any difference. I don’t feel like I’ve been promoted as a token; it’s just because in a particular year it was all females or there was more females. .... I think it’s quite fair in the process. I haven’t seen where there would be a distinction made between a male and a female if everything else is equal.” [GG, female Senior Manager]

As to why this female-dominance is not represented at the top of the organisation, she believes that this is a timing issue, coupled with women choosing to opt for shorter weeks or flexible work options, which are in general viewed as career-limiting;

“.... there would be quite a big age gap between say me and some of the male....partners ..... there are a number of the male partners but it’s kind of nearly for historic reasons and I’d say in another couple of years the balance will be a little bit different. But I suppose it’s that women tend to start working shorter weeks, as in a three day week or whatever ....” [GG, female Senior Manager]

In terms of feeling excluded from networks or otherwise being discriminated against because she is a woman, again RS a female Director agrees that this has not been her experience in AccountCo, although echoing other women in the sample who do not currently have children, she acknowledges that things might be more problematic if she did;
“No definitely not..... I wouldn’t see any issue with being a woman. Then I suppose I don’t have children. I suspect it could be a lot different if you had children that you had to run at five o clock.” [RS, female Director]

It is being a mother rather than being a woman which could potentially create some limitations to her progress in the company. However while combining motherhood and becoming Partner is seen as something which is difficult, it is still seen as being possible if she wanted to choose that option;

“No, I don’t think it [my gender] has made any difference. I wouldn’t think so. I don’t think you are viewed any differently. Now I do think it would be more difficult if you were married with children because it has to be. ...... I definitely haven’t seen [gender discrimination] in AccountCo, there’s a good few partners, female partners, married with children who seem to manage it. Now I think it would be an extremely difficult life to lead, as a partner with children.” [RS, female Director]

In terms of why she thinks it would be difficult she says it is a time-commitment issue;

“Time wise....if you were a partner here you really need to be available 24/7. If you are a partner anywhere you need to be available 24/7 and I think if you had children your focus would shift.” [RS, female Director]

With regard to her own aspirations for making Partner she is ambivalent about it, the main thing stopping her is the issue of trying to be a Partner and a mother. In terms of whether making it to Partner is her goal she says;

“It is and it isn’t. If my circumstances changed....I’m not married without children, I could well like to progress. If I did have children, I don’t think I would be going to partner level. That will probably be a personal decision because I just think it would be too much.” [RS, female Director]

She says she would still work, she would have no intention of giving up completely, she just would not see herself progressing to Partner, instead she would continue as Director. A similar compromise to that which other parents, both male and female, in the sample talk of making.
In terms of why there aren’t more women Directors and Partners in the company, she says that it’s not just children that impact on women’s lack of progress. She also thinks the stress of being a Partner can be quite difficult to handle, and so pregnancy is in some ways an ‘escape hatch’ so to speak for those women who want to ‘bow out gracefully’ from the rat-race;

“I think people find the stress. It’s very stressful and time consuming. I’d say maybe some people use the child as an excuse to bow out gracefully. But having said that, if I had a child I don’t know if I’d be able to do it. But I’d like to have some kind of a career...... Certainly I know some of my friends in [another Big 4 firm] say they can’t wait to get pregnant just to get out.” [RS, female Director]

However again this is something which is not limited to women it seems, this use of children as an ‘excuse’ to downshift their career. PP, a male Director says that he is not the most career-focused person and that;

“...sometimes I use the kids as an excuse for [not getting involved in networking opportunities etc.] as opposed to actually just not having the time” [PP, male Director]

While as outlined earlier BC believes that being a woman is a positive rather than a negative thing in AccountCo, she acknowledges, as do most of the other single and child-free women in the sample that once she has children this will probably change. Merely being a woman doesn’t hold you back in AccountCo she believes; once you are capable of doing the job, you will be given the opportunities but once you have children this is when the impact on career progression becomes potentially problematic;

“...now I have to say if I had kids it would probably be very different. That’s when the expectations change” [BC, female Manager]

BC is clear that from her perspective, the lack of women at senior levels in AccountCo is due to the ‘person-centred’ barrier of choosing to prioritise family, rather than to organisational barriers. For her the reason for so few female Partners is that biology is ultimately destiny;

“...I would be very much along the lines of women have babies. If they want to go and have babies things have to change. Your focus does change. So I don’t think [being a
woman] holds you back. I think if men were the ones having babies then the women would be ruling the world. ...Some people will try and say it’s not fair and it holds you back but I don’t agree.....I think it honestly is the fact that women get married and stay at home sometimes” [BC, female Manager]

So she’s conscious of how being a mother does change how you are perceived in the company; but that ultimately it is up to the individual how they choose to handle this. It is up to the individual to manage their own career within the structures that AccountCo operates in.

*Indirect impacts of male-domination*

While no statistically significant gender differences are found amongst the survey sample with regard to which functional area respondents’ work in, there are clearly sections of the organisation which have a little more female representation at senior levels than others. LP a Senior Manager, is a woman who feels that she could realistically expect to progress to the top of the organisation. She works in a department which has no women at Director or Partner level. For her, being the first woman to break through to Director level would be a big personal achievement. The department is historically a male-dominated one, which again is being ‘feminised’ as more and more women join the firm;

“.... I’ve spoken with [the Partner in charge of my area] and we’ve talked about moving towards partner, which is obviously the next step after Director. It would be something I’m definitely interested in, a bit of an ego thing as well because we have no female partners in [my department]. And even if I make Director there are no female Directors either. So I think that’s kind of an added achievement that I would be striving for.” [LP female Senior Manager]

LP says that as a department, and as an area of the industry generally, her department would be quite a male-dominated area relative to some of the other functions in the company;

“.....I think it’s probably a case of [my department] wouldn’t have been a very .... female orientated business. It would have been very much [a] boys’ club, a boy’s thing and it still is very much to this day. But I think now in AccountCo, for ages there were no women at all and now the numbers are just changing. There are quite a few
of us now that I would say are Senior Managers or Managers who are women and I think it's just coming through the ranks really........ It's interesting; when I joined there was only one or two other professional women in the department. Now we've got a lot of women but they're all sort of coming up underneath me.” [LP female Senior Manager]

Despite the increasing ‘feminisation’ of the department at the lower levels, the impact of the male-dominated nature at the top of the area she works in can be felt in a series of subtle and not-so-subtle ways. Firstly in terms of how work is structured, she believes that the fact that all the top managers are male means that how and when work is done is designed in ways that suit their lifestyle choices. For example she sees no reason why work cannot be structured in ways that are more compatible with having a family, but that the men in her department do not have to consider such things. It is however something that she will have to take into account when deciding whether to pursue Partnership;

“...really I just need to think about it from a family and personal point of view as well, whether it's something I would be willing to do, to really go out there........ there are definitely ways [that balancing work and a family] can be done but there has to be a huge mind shift in the powers that be in the department. .......I just think, at the moment Director up, it is completely male oriented. I think a lot of them, for their own personal decisions, have made that they're the ones who are working those sorts of hours and there is the support there at home, be it wife or whoever or girlfriend who are doing the arrangements.... They're just there and they will be in the office and will do whatever time needs to be done. So there hasn't been anyone who has been on the other side. No-one's like, no I have to go and get the children or whatever. So I don't know, I think it could work. They're all great guys and they're not all against women or anything like that. But I'm just waiting to see what happens in reality when it's tested” [LP female Senior Manager]

LP notes that it is not some kind of male conspiracy to ‘push women out’, rather the norms and expectations of how and when work is done is very much designed and viewed through a traditional male-breadwinner lens. However, as will be outlined later, it is not just women/mothers in the sample who find the way work is structured potentially problematic; men who do not fit into traditional male-breadwinner family-units also struggle to fit the mould.
The second noticeable impact of the male-dominated nature of the department, as far as LP is concerned, is in how it serves to reinforce male networks. Golf and rugby play a role in the informal client networking that is a necessary part of the job if you want to progress to Director or Partner level. In terms of whom gets invited to partake in such events, tickets for rugby matches et cetera are given out to staff according to seniority. This means that because the senior management levels in the department are male, it is mostly men who get invited to these events. Again this is not seen as intentional and she has positive experiences of the department in terms of her own progression;

"...from that sort of female point of view, I wouldn't have a problem. Sometimes you do feel that there is still a bit of boys' club but I don't know if it's a boys' club......if I played golf I could go and that would be fine. Sometimes some of the things are they get tickets to whatever and it is, rugby or whatever and it's kind of the boys. But also that's kind of because everything starts at partner down and the partners are all male. But sometimes, sometimes there is the feeling well it's rugby so it's the guys that will go...I don't think it should be a male/female thing. I think it should be open to whoever is interested. And I think probably starting to do that on seniority level is probably the fairest and you just work down. That's just the way it is. I think it's more just at this moment in time they are all males so it just seems like it's a real boys' club but that's just - that's what it is." [LP, female Senior Manager]

Similar to other senior women in the interview sample, LP is conscious of her potential role as a positive role model for other women in her department. She wants to progress and she wants other women to progress. She makes the point that while the lack of female Directors and Partners in her department may just be a timing issue, it is important that the women in the department do not just stop at the middle management grades, but that they instead keep pushing on to the next levels.

"...there is a feeling that it is a very male orientated small boys' club. We've got a lot better in AccountCo but we don't have that many female Directors in comparison to say, the partners .... There's a lot of women are coming up in our department and they actually feel it's very negative that there are no women at the highest roles in our department. They have much more of a sense of that than I probably ever did coming up. What I say to them is it's a whole lot better than when I first joined and it's a case of people coming through the ranks. The most important thing is that we keep going
up through the ranks and we don’t all just stop at senior manager level. ....A lot of our good people are the women as well and for them to see that I can go right up to the top level, because it will be important to keep those people and we can show them that they can go right through and as far as they want to go.” [LP, female Senior Manager]

Latent sexism in the wider-industry

While BC thinks that being a woman is in her favour now in the industry, her experience highlights some lingering sexist attitudes in the industry amongst the clients she works with. She mentions how she ‘gets away’ with things as a young female because there is perhaps less expected of her than there would be of an equivalent male. She sees the positive in this, in that clients are less likely to give her a hard time, but it is obviously an attitude steeped in social role stereotyping. She speaks of her current client which is a company that is very male-dominated at the senior levels and says that;

“There’s certain clients that...might be a bit nicer to you because you’re a girl. They probably don’t expect as much of you so then they’re nearly a bit shocked when you actually can produce the work ......I know that they’ve definitely been nicer to me than they would have been to some of the AccountCo guys and I don’t know whether it’s because of the work I’ve been doing or whatever...” [BC, female Manager]

This experience of not being taken seriously in the industry, by clients rather than by managers in AccountCo, is echoed by LP a female Senior Manager. However, LP finds that ultimately your skill shines through via how your technical expertise can benefit the client;

“.....[As a] younger woman ..... there is a lot of patronising behaviour from men. They don’t take you seriously at all but they do when they realise you’re going to save them that money or whatever.” [LP female Senior Manager]

While again AB, a female Partner has not experienced any negative gender bias within AccountCo, she did feel some exclusion as a woman in the previous Big-Four firm that she worked in. In terms of the male domination of the professional services and how that has
impacted on her, she says that the numerical domination of men at the top did make her feel excluded at the previous firm she worked in (X);

"...at X it was just very male dominated- full stop. The power of the partnership was held by the men. There is no two ways about it and just given the numbers of male partners versus female partners. So to feel excluded, yeah I think that's exclusion."

[AB, female Partner]

She thinks that despite the fact that AccountCo is also male dominated at the top levels, its impact is not felt as much, it is “less obvious” according to AB;

"...I don’t feel it as much here because in fact I have so many; it’s funny because most of my team ... who are actually at the senior management level are women. So that’s a time thing and thankfully a lot of senior managers and directors are women. Now you might say okay, ratio-wise there is not a huge number but I suppose what I would also say is that for each promotion to partner you’ve had a woman partner in there. I think our ratios are still probably better than most of the other firms. But I genuinely don’t feel that being a woman is an issue, whereas I would have felt it at X [her previous Big-Four firm]. I think if the person is good enough and they want it, then and even giving testament to that I had, we had promotions just at the beginning of this week, 1st September and one of the girls who was promoted to manager, for example, had just come back from maternity leave a week earlier. And she was promoted to assistant manager while she was on maternity leave. So I mean there is one person we’ve promoted effectively. She’s had two kids and both times she was promoted immediately.... I think at least there are role models here and they see women with children and still hopefully functioning somewhat normally."  [AB, female Partner]

6.2.2 IMPACT OF PARENTHOOD

Chart 6.8 details the percentage of respondents in AccountCo divided by gender, who agree that having children has restricted their career\(^\text{29}\). While the sample sizes are too small to carry out significance testing on, it is nonetheless interesting to note that having children does

\(^{29}\) This only includes women and men who have children
impact on women more than men in the sample, with just over one quarter agreeing that it has restricted their career, compared to just six per cent of men. While women do feel the negative impact of having children in higher numbers than men, this number is still far smaller than is found in InvestCo, where 80% of women with children found that to have restricted their career. The interview sample reveals that women in AccountCo have positive senior female role models that show that combining motherhood and reaching the top can be achieved.

CHART 6.8: PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS (WITH CHILDREN) WHO AGREE THAT HAVING CHILDREN HAS RESTRICTED THEIR CAREER, BY GENDER

As noted in Chapter Five, women in AccountCo are significantly more likely than men in the sample to agree that ‘managers' preconceptions regarding your commitment to the job’ has been a career inhibitor, however there is not a big difference between women who have children and women who do not on this issue. As outlined in Chart 6.9, 38% of women without children and 44% of women with children cite this as an important barrier.
As touched on, there is a general agreement in the interview sample that while being a woman is not a barrier to progression within AccountCo, being a mother is more problematic. Similarly to what was found in InvestCo, what is problematic about motherhood in AccountCo is needing time off or wanting flexible work options – the needs of the client must come first. Where AccountCo differs from InvestCo however is that women do not feel inherently discriminated against merely for getting married or having children as they do in InvestCo. Rather women in AccountCo see motherhood as something which presents them with very real challenges, but also very real choices - they are choices which are seen as more legitimate than is the case in InvestCo, where ‘choices’ are seen as enforced or at the least ‘constrained’.
The majority of women within the interview sample do not currently have children, and overall the perception amongst this group is that becoming a Partner and also having children would be difficult but certainly possible.

There is a perception that AccountCo is the kind of company where you can attempt at least to ‘have it all’ as a woman. For example BC, a female Manager who does not have children yet herself, cites the number of people who are currently off on maternity leave as an example of this and also mentions the fact that there are female partners here that combine that senior role with having children;

“...here it’s very much they’ll [women] go off, they’ll get married, they’ll have their kids, they’ll come back to work ...So here it can be done and there [are] female partners here. There’s not a massive amount but there is and they do all have kids and that and I think they can just manage their time....” [BC, female Manager]

The presence of positive senior female role models makes being a mother and a Partner sound doable as opposed to scarily undoable as it seems to be in InvestCo. This gives younger women in AccountCo confidence that they can achieve this both from an ability perspective; from an organisational cultural perspective, and from a family perspective.

While there is a general consensus amongst the female interviewees in AccountCo that getting to the top while having a family is possible it does not mean that they are necessarily embracing the idea with open arms however. There is a very real understanding that irrespective of family-circumstances, the role of Partner is not for the faint-hearted. The role is seen as very time-consuming, and along with the day-to-day responsibilities of looking after clients comes business development; staff management; and a variety of other bureaucratic tasks associated with being an equity Partner. These are ‘greedy’, all-consuming jobs which demand a very high level of commitment, and the people doing them are highly motivated career-centred individuals, who ‘make it work’.

With regard to whether the job is possible with children BC says that it is possible, but that it has the potential to negatively affect both your output and how you are perceived in the company;
"It's hard to manage but people do manage it...but I think it's a very hard one to manage because it's not 9-5. It's definitely a hard one but I suppose you just get into a routine...I probably say yes to things when I shouldn't but if I had kids ...I'd just have to manage my time better. And you know, you just can't. I definitely think your output reduces and I'm not saying that in a bad way but people change and it's not fair of other people to expect as much from them. So maybe people's perceptions of them change.....If there is [a negative perception about women who have children] nobody says it but I...have my own sneaky perception on the sly....so if I'm thinking that I wonder if other people are thinking it." [BC female Manager]

There is an acknowledgement of the fact that the job does not lend itself to working in a routine way. Staff need to show flexibility around when they can work, and must 'pitch-in' when needed, even if it is late into the evening. She echoes others in the sample in acknowledging that she can be flexible now and work late, but that if she had children then this would have to change.

GG is a Senior Manager, and she again echoes the other child-free women in the sample in thinking that progressing to Partner while also having children would be difficult, but possible. She cites female Partners who have made it to that position while also having children as positive role models.

"Yeah I think it would be very difficult but it would be possible. There's a quite recent tax partner who had a child within a couple of months of getting to partner and she seems to be able to cope. So I think it is possible but I think it is definitely tough. ....So there are a few partners that do it and I think it is tough and at times the family do lose out but they do seem to be able to juggle both." [GG female Senior Manager]

As discussed earlier, while functional gender segregation is not a feature of AccountCo, pockets of gender segregation do exist and the impact of a lack of senior females who have also have children is felt in these areas. For example for LP who works in a particularly male-dominated section of the company, there are no positive role models in her department of senior women who have combined having a child with making it to Partner or even Director level. The only woman who has had a child has been 'side-lined' according to LP.
The return of a second woman who is currently on maternity leave, is being anticipated by LP and the other women in the department to see whether progressing and being a mother can actually be done in their particular area;

"...we've only had one lady with children and she's definitely been side-lined. She's gone down to three or four days a week and I think she's been side-lined. So there is one manager currently on maternity leave and will be back towards the end of the year. And some of us other ladies are interested to see how that goes when she gets back. She would be ... project based like I would, which means you have no control over the day and you could easily be here very late at night many days in a row. So we're just interested to see how that goes." [LP female Senior Manager]

LP has definite aspirations to go all the way to Partner level, but she is also thinking about the reality of being able to do this and be a mother. She cannot see how it is compatible with the work they do in her area, but is 'waiting to see' how her colleague returning from maternity leave works out;

"...I can only talk about [my department]. I can't talk about the rest of the firm but I don't think, I think it's going to be very difficult in the work that we do to be able to leave to go home to children and whatever arrangements you might have about childcare and things like that. I don't think it's going to be that easy in our type of work and that's why I'm very interested to see what happens when X comes back at the end of the year [from maternity leave] and see how that is managed. There is great talk about that they'll do whatever they have to do and they'll be flexible and everything but I'm just waiting to see what happens in reality." [LP female Senior Manager]

In terms of the woman with children who currently works part-time, and who LP says has been side-lined, she explains that this woman has effectively been 'parked' because the management do not seem to know how to use her properly on the team. This is obviously a very negative role model for other people in the area thinking of reducing their hours. With regard to the impact that this reduced work schedule is likely to have on this woman's promotional prospects, LP gives quite a damning indictment of how part-time workers are viewed in the company;
"I wouldn't envisage that anyone would see her probably advancing any further."
[LP female Senior Manager]

**Partners and mothers**

Interviewees within the AccountCo cite several female Partners who have children as positive role models. Two of these female partners were interviewed as part of this study and their experiences are interesting to explore as they give templates of what it takes to make it as a woman and as a mother in this organisation.

In terms of their commonality of experience of becoming parents, both made clear and calculated choices regarding when to have children and how to manage their childcare so that it had minimum impact on their work-life. Both also delayed having children until they had reached Director level and both also took relatively short maternity leave. In a more general context, both are clearly what Hakim (2005) would describe as work-centred – they enjoy what they do and are passionate about it. They also give a huge level of time-commitment and focus to their jobs, and derive much satisfaction and self-worth from their careers.

AB, a female Partner has split her professional life between AccountCo and another Big-Four professional services firm which we will call ConsultCo. Having started her career in ConsultCo and progressed to Director there, she was head-hunted by AccountCo and joined as a Director and was subsequently promoted to Partner. Her experience of ConsultCo versus AccountCo is interesting, and shows how far the industry has developed in terms of accommodating women’s child-bearing and rearing needs in the ten years from when she had her first child to now;

"In ConsultCo at that time there wouldn’t have been an awful lot of married women still working in ConsultCo because, to be honest, most people, if they got married and wanted to have kids, they left ConsultCo. You could not work and have a family and career. It just wasn't happening. There were very few female partner roles there, very few successful females. I mean I knew a lot of Directors that I worked with that had left because they were just knocking on the ceiling and not getting anywhere....So not a very good role model I would have to say" [AB female Partner]
She describes how even in the space of her own career, there is a ‘completely different dynamic’ in the industry now in terms of being a woman. This shows perhaps that the view amongst the interview sample that the lack of top senior women in the industry is a timing issue which will even out as time progresses is justified.

“I was one of the most senior women there. ...and the very public partner management conferences where you had senior partners who were obviously males saying they couldn’t possibly envisage having female partners. So it was a completely different dynamic than it is now. ....I was the first person in [my area] that they ever gave maternity leave to ... and they didn’t know what to do with me...They never had a woman at that level having a baby. And that will tell you a lot about the business. As I said, most people who would have been my peers had already left because they had got married and they did want kids ......so nobody had done this before” [AB, female Partner]

AB’s experience highlights how ‘other’ mothers were in the industry at senior levels even a decade ago. Being a mother at such a senior level was unchartered territory.

Despite this lack of positive female role models and general difficulty with fitting in as a woman and a mother at senior levels in ConsultCo, AB forged ahead with her own career progression. She was conscious of the impact she could have on other women in showing that being a mother and a Partner could be achieved AB is right in thinking that she has paved the way for women or at the very least that her progress is noticed by other women coming up through the ranks. She, along with other female Partners, is cited by other female interviewees as positive role models. AB is someone who gives younger women confidence that they too could make it to Partner level while also having children. She has also taken her experience and used the learning’s from it to promote and retain women in her department.

To progress and have a family within the male-dominated context that she was operating in was not done without focus, determination and sacrifice. She describes how she made the decision to have children in a calculated fashion, putting it off until she had reached a certain level in the company and then only taking a minimum amount of maternity leave.

She describes how she wanted to get back to work quickly after having her first child because she was afraid she would be forgotten about or that she would lose her clients;
"...you did feel very much under pressure to get back to work immediately. I mean at that time I think maternity leave was 14 weeks and I took the 14 weeks but ... I should have taken more time. ...But I wanted to get back because I didn’t want people stealing my clients, I didn’t want to feel that I was out of the office and they would forget about me. I went back very purposefully …. but I wouldn’t make the same mistake and I would advise, I advise my own team take your time. But I went back literally when he was 12 weeks old and straight back into it." [AB, female Partner]

AB shows the positive impact of women on top in AccountCo, she is using her experiences to advise and mentor her female staff.

AB highlights the role of organisational culture, and organisational infrastructure in providing the right environment that allows women to progress and keep operating at a high level even when they have children. Her experience shows that with the right organisational factors in place, the maternal-wall is no longer such a major barrier to mothers. In contrast to ConsultCo, she was attracted to AccountCo for its more work/life balance-accommodating culture;

"when I moved [to AccountCo] it was mainly because I felt it was a culture that was accommodating, was accepting that you had a life outside of just your work and respecting that you were a complete person and not just a work person. The big change for me was I genuinely moved for a lot of those reasons because I still got very good work in ConsultCo, I get very good work in AccountCo but I just felt that this was a culture that was more aligned to mine, to be perfectly honest. So that’s why I moved." [AB, female Partner]

As AB’s experience shows, the impact of organisational culture can be huge – she went from one culture where women ‘opted-out’ because their needs as mother’s were not accommodated, to one where she can shine and add huge value to the company while also flourishing as a person, and as a mother. Looking at AccountCo’s record of promoting women overall, as a Partner in the company AB appreciates the importance of positive female role models, but also acknowledges the choice that women often make to prioritise staying at home to raise their children at the expense of their career. AB also points out that while it is possible for women to be a Partner and have children, it does take a lot of effort, over and above what most men have to do - due to the fact that most women do not have
‘stay-at-home’ husbands who will pick up the second-shift reigns while the woman works full-time;

“I think that’s really important because without those role models, it seems too hard and that makes it that nobody wants to follow in your path anyway. Yeah of course we could do better; there is no two ways about it. I think our intake is probably 50/50 but people make certain choices too. And sometimes, not being funny and this sounds terrible, but sometimes women do feel and I think every woman probably questions themselves sometime on “well am I better off staying home rather than working?” particularly if you have two or more children. Even the economics comes into it as well..... So unless you really, really want a career and let’s face it, most of us very often you want a child and you want a career but there are practical challenges around that. ..... So I think it just means how much you want it. And I don’t mean that in a negative way. And it’s still hard to get away from that traditional model where the man works and the woman stays home.” [AB, female Partner]

EQ is another female Partner who has combined making it to the top in AccountCo with having children. Similar to AB, she has found AccountCo to be understanding and accommodating of her responsibilities as a mother. EQ had her first child just as she was in the process of being considered for Partnership. Similar to AB, while ultimately having children has not stopped her becoming a Partner, she also was conscious of needing to get to a certain level in the organisation before having children.

“Initially yes, I felt I needed to get to a certain point ... with the first one I’d say I probably did delay because I felt I needed to get to a certain level.” [EQ, female Partner]

Again, as was the case with AB, she did not take extended maternity leave and was concerned about coming back to work fast after having her first child. Whereas on her second child, having reached Partner level she was more confident in taking more time away from the office;

“The first, well ....I took a little less than the three months [that was the statutory allowance] because I went back, one for the partner assessment and then I had a client that I had to get back to ...... [whereas on her second child] I took the statutory
plus the allowed unpaid that you could take. So I ended up having six months with her..." [EQ, female Partner]

For EQ, how you balance having children with progressing in your career boils down to the choices you make as an individual. For her, the realities of the job are the realities of the job, and you must choose whether you can commit to these or not. While in her experience AccountCo does provide a good degree of flexibility and support, ultimately no amount of flexibility from AccountCo can change the fact that the nature of work that AccountCo does puts limitations on the kinds of FWO that could realistically be adopted;

"Well I'd be lying if I said [having children] doesn't impact what you'd like to do versus what you actually get to do. But once again I would say it boils down to choices that you make as to how you want to manage that for yourself. One thing I would be very clear on is, AccountCo as an organisation does allow flexibility, does allow you to try and structure your lifestyle around that. But you do have to accept that, whether it was AccountCo or anyone else, my job is a client facing job so I have to do a certain amount of work otherwise my job would never work and I would be of no use to AccountCo in the role that I'm in. But I still structure my time such that I can give as much time as I believe I need to my kids in my set up." [EQ, female Partner]

She believes that AccountCo is the kind of place where you can get to the top ranks without having to sacrifice having a family life, but that it also depends on where you are in the organisation. EQ believes that the further you get to the top, the more flexibility you can have to manage your schedule in a way that is most effective for you and your family.

Flexibility comes with seniority - the higher you get in a company, and the more expertise you have, the more valuable you are to the company, and consequently the more they will do to accommodate you;

"...once you get to a certain level you have a value in the organisation and if you can still deliver that value no matter what your circumstances ..... AccountCo would be a very young firm in a lot of ways. I think that's very beneficial in terms of outlook for people coming through the ranks in terms of not having any more waiting for male versus female in terms of the promotion process. I think if you were in a firm that there was a lot more old school individuals who would have stay at home spouses,
that they do find it very difficult to understand what it is you're potentially dealing with as a female in a role like this. But I have - honestly, I don't feel that it's affected me negatively in any way. I don't feel that I need to push for certain things especially for me and I do think that the partners in this firm, whatever area they're in, fully understand that that's life. You have things outside of work that have to be dealt with and you just work around it.” [EQ, female Partner]

She makes an interesting point regarding how she behaved when she had her first child, trying to fit back into work as if nothing had changed, trying to show her managers and colleagues that having a child was not going to impact on her commitment to the job. On her second child however, she says she was more relaxed and understands now that the pressure to deny her family-commitments was something she put on herself, something which she perceived to be required of her from AccountCo, but which in reality AccountCo does not demand;

“...the way I did it with the first one versus the second one is very different. I probably would have tried to, if I could say, pretend that I don't have a child and it doesn't affect my working career, I would have been very focussed on that. I would have become a lot more relaxed with the second one and I suppose experience gives you that in saying that actually that's a part of me. It doesn't make me any less capable of doing my job. It just means that I need people to understand that I can't always be available at the drop of a hat for certain things. I will do my utmost, I will accommodate but there are times when I will clearly have to say no." [EQ, female Partner]

Again she emphasises heavily that it really is all about personal ‘choice’ – the job is the job, and if you want to do it you have to choose how you manage it all, how you shuffle it around. She's still very career-centred, but now makes different choices to be at home for dinner and then to start working again after that at home rather than to stay in the office – but either way she works until she gets her work completed, showing the kind of very strong work ethic which characterises both men and women in these senior roles;

“My choices are now I leave by a certain time, I get to go home, I have dinner with my kids, do whatever and then I will sit down and work in my office at home until whatever time to get the work completed. So I would have shuffled that in the busy
season. In the quieter times...if I know that my day is a little bit more relaxed and there’s nothing that’s absolutely vital [I] might ...shuffle my day around, come in earlier but then leave a bit earlier, if we ever get the weather, to maybe go and do something.” [EQ, female Partner]

Her experience gives an example of the time of time commitment that is required of the Partner role, and is obviously not for the faint-hearted. We can understand perhaps where women without children in the sample are coming from when they question whether they could manage to combine having children with Partner-level commitments. However again EQ says that having proven herself able to deliver, both her colleagues in AccountCo and clients outside of the company trust that she will deliver, even if she has to do so at times that suit her rather than them.

6.2.3 GREEDY JOBS WITH AN INTOLERANCE FOR FWO

The quantitative data gathered in the online survey gives some insight into the level of time-commitment required of workers in AccountCo. Again we find the intensive long-hours culture to be a feature of this company. The majority of survey respondents (77%) work more than 40 hours per week on average, with Partners and Directors saying that they regularly work more than 45 hours per week. Part-time working on the other hand is virtually non-existent.

Overall there was no statistically significant difference found between male and female respondents with regard to the average number of hours they work per week.

A Chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between gender and average number of hours worked per week; \( \chi^2 (2) = 5.638, p = 0.060 \)

There is a definite sense amongst the interview respondents within AccountCo that putting in extra effort, showing your commitment to the job through hard work and dedication, putting in the hours and being flexible when it comes to the hours that you work is a key enabler of success within AccountCo. As one female manager says:

“"It’s a bit indoctrinated into me to go the extra mile or whatever” [BC]
And it appears to be explicitly believed that this 'extra mile' is required in order to reach the senior levels within AccountCo. Another male Director cites working long-hours, and "pitching-in" when required as key enablers in his career progression. Visible productivity is a requirement for selection to senior positions:

"I don't work nine to five; I'll put it that way....I work late and I'm prepared to pitch in. At the moment I'm working on two very big transactions and it's rare I'll be out of here before eight in the evening....I don't think that's essential but being seen to get the work done and get it done efficiently" [MR]

Statistical tests were also carried out on the data to ascertain whether there was any significant association between average hours worked and whether respondents have children. Again no significant association was found – having children does not appear to affect how many hours' respondents work per week.

A Chi-square test for independence indicated no significant association between having children and the average number of hours worked per week by all respondents; \( \chi^2 (2) = 0.078, p = 0.962 \)

**Availability of flexible work options**

Globally and within Ireland AccountCo is seen as a leader with regard to the policies and initiatives it has introduced to retain and develop its staff. It is consistently voted amongst the top 100 companies to work for in Europe (www.greatplacestowork.com) and in 2010 was named as one of the top 10 companies to work for in Ireland, achieving a special award for promoting work-life balance (www.greatplacestowork.ie)

AccountCo has several initiatives in place that aim to help staff manage their work and life balance. These include an option to work a compressed work week during the summer, which allows staff to finish work at 2.00pm on a Friday once their target hours for the week have been reached. They also offer a flexible working day option, which consists of eight options to start work at some point between 8.00 and 10.00; and to finish between 4.15 and 6.15.

This flexible working day option is predominantly used by office-based staff, with client-facing staff having to work client hours. Client-facing staff are allowed to use the flexible working day option when they are based in the office (i.e. between client-facing jobs). On a
less formal basis, home working is facilitated on a case-by-case basis, with grade and performance being key measures used to ascertain whether someone is a good candidate for it. According to AccountCo HR, some departments support this mode of working more than others, with the majority of home-workers based in the audit department.

Official figures from AccountCo HR (as per end 2008) show that two staff job-share, and ‘a number’ of staff work term-time. There are also staff working reduced hours/part-time, four days per week predominantly – with no hard figures from AccountCo on this. The decision to allow this kind of working is made on a case-by-case basis, and business needs are taken into consideration. AccountCo make it clear that FWOs will only be accommodated within the context that the demands of the company to remain ‘competitive’ come first. There is a three month ‘trial’ period when an employee starts using an FWO, and after this period whether it is working out for the company and the employee is evaluated.

Despite the publicly-stated commitment to promoting work/life balance, and the very real commitment to this displayed by the Human Resources team within AccountCo, reality does not appear to tally fully with the public persona – interviewees report not being able to take advantage of the FWOs due to the demands of the job/time commitment necessary to do the job, and the level of commitment employees must show in order to be promoted.

While the ‘real world’ availability and use of FWOs is questioned by interviewees in the sample, it appears to have nonetheless contributed to a certain degree of uptake amongst the survey sample. As outlined in Table 6.10, respondents in AccountCo are more likely to use FWOs than those in InvestCo. Specifically roughly a third (36%) use flexible arrival/departure times, compared to 17% in InvestCo; and one third uses a compressed work week, compared with just 1% in InvestCo. This is obviously connected to the availability of such options; as outlined earlier, in InvestCo no formal FWO policy exists and any staff that currently use them do so on an ad-hoc basis that is agreed with their manager.

No significant association was found between gender and the use of any FWO apart from reduced schedule/part-time working. Naught per cent of men currently work part-time thus a chi-square could not properly be run on this piece of the data. While it is therefore not proven to be statistically significant or insignificant, it is nonetheless interesting to note that of the few people who do work part-time, all of them are women.
TABLE 6.10: CURRENT USE OF FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS IN ACCOUNTCO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of flexible working arrangement</th>
<th>MALE N=55</th>
<th>FEMALE N=44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compressed work week</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommuting/working from home</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced work schedule/part-time</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible arrival/departure time</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

Attitude towards the use of FWO

In AccountCo, overall the majority of both male and female survey respondents disagree with the idea that it is possible to be a Partner and work a reduced schedule. While 19% of male respondents agree that it is possible to work at a senior level part-time, only 9% of female respondents agree that this is possible; however no significant gender difference was found in respondents’ answers.

TABLE 6.11: ACCOUNTCO RESPONDENTS ATTITUDE TOWARDS FWO BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude towards work/life balance</th>
<th>MALES N=57</th>
<th>FEMALES N=45</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can use a FWO without jeopardising my career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advancement</td>
<td>Agree 55%</td>
<td>Disagree 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is possible to be a Partner and work part-time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People who work part-time or use other FWOs are not as</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>committed to their careers as those who work full-time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree 19%</td>
<td>Disagree 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree 23%</td>
<td>Disagree 52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree 26%</td>
<td>Disagree 50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Weighted percentages

Roughly one quarter of both men and women in the AccountCo survey sample agree that people working part-time or using other FWOs are less committed to their careers than those who work full-time. In AccountCo there is no significant gender difference, with men and women sharing a similar attitude on this issue. Roughly half of both men and women disagree that people using FWOs are less committed than full-time workers, and one quarter agree that this is the case.

So we can see that in AccountCo while there is more gender convergence on than was found in InvestCo on these issues there is still somewhat of a gender perception gap with regard to what respondents’ think is possible with regard to adopting FWOs at senior management levels. There is a significant difference between men and women’s answers regarding the
potential impact of using FWO on a person’s career, with women more likely than men to think that adopting a FWO would be bad for their career progression prospects.

Despite the availability and promotion of work/life balance initiatives, women are more likely than men to think that they are ultimately carer-limiting. Just roughly one third of women there (35%) agree that using them is not harmful to your career, while 55% of men think that they can be used without a negative career impact.

\[ A \text{ Chi-square test for independence indicated a moderately significant association between gender and agreement/disagreement with this statement; } \chi^2(2) = 6.858, p = 0.032; \text{ Cramér's } V = 0.259, p = 0.032 \]

**Qualitative findings - career-limiting nature of FWOs**

As the survey results show, AccountCo is certainly what can be described as a ‘greedy’ organisation where traditional gendered patterns of working predominate. While some flexibility can be developed in your role, for example taking work home to fit around family responsibilities, there is no room for working part-time in AccountCo.

JQ, a male Partner is open and honest regarding the challenges women face as mothers, and the challenges that AccountCo faces in having so many talented females and trying to accommodate their needs for reduced hours while also meeting the needs of the business.

"There are challenges in terms of the early 30s, particularly when children start arriving mid-thirties and we’ve had a number of girls now just getting married. So there is inevitability there about families and that’s going to have to be managed very carefully because some of these people we’ve a huge dependency on. They are extremely good at what they do. They’re at senior manager level, they definitely have realistic aspirations to be directors and it’ll be difficult for them but it will be difficult for us if we got into a cycle of them being out for a couple of years on maternity leave because it is just so difficult for them to manage the challenges when they come back. The first child is usually ok but the second one is a tough ask and personally, I don’t think three-day weeks work for those sort of people. It just doesn’t work in our environment.” [JQ, male Partner]

Here we see a clear opinion from the top of the organisation that flexible working options [FWO] just do not work in this kind of environment. However he is clear that the company
needs to do something to retain these women – there is an understanding from those at the top that it is required, but it is unclear how the balance between family needs and work needs can be struck.

In so far as traditional working hours and full-on commitment to your job can be said to be gendered male, AccountCo is certainly a representation of that kind of working style. AccountCo is in the business based of selling ‘what’s between your ears’ as they say, so making sure you have the best talent is very important. The dilemma that emerges when the best talent coming through the ranks is female is problematic for the company and for the women involved. As far as JQ is concerned FWO’s are just incompatible with running a good business – or at least with the traditional idea of how a business should be run.

“We try to do everything we can – or I think we do anyway – to try to encourage...first of all I think all the really talented females have been promoted. There’s absolutely no gender issue there and then I think we’ve tried a lot to try and facilitate keeping the really good females working with us but it is a really tough ask”

[JQ, male Partner]

It is not easy to combine a ‘greedy job’ with having a family, and it is not seen merely as a ‘woman’s issue’ in AccountCo. EQ, a female Partner talks of how gender roles are changing in society and AccountCo reflects that, and she for one encourages her male staff to say when they need time out for family/childcare reasons.

“..... these days men are very much in a similar situation to us. They need time off for family and they have family crises they’ve got to deal with etc. etc. etc. .... you would have more [men] that wouldn’t be in that traditional role of having a stay at home wife and are fortunate enough to have that support system. So I think they are getting a better understanding of what potentially impacts you and I must say I do try and almost push it with the men .....to say, don’t hesitate to say that you need the family time because that’s part of life and it's no longer just, I suppose in our society, only a women’s role to deal with that. Both parents have to deal with the situation. So they mustn’t hesitate to say, “I need to deal with that” and we make a plan around it. I suppose more to demonstrate that it isn’t one person only as opposed to another.”

[EQ, female Partner]
The variable nature of when you might be asked to stay late et cetera can make it very difficult to plan your life outside of work, and this has implications for people with caring responsibilities outside of the office. Regarding what kind of people end up working late BC says they are invariably the people without family commitments;

"...of course [they are], unless they’re the Partners and they’ve got their wives or whatever sitting at home looking after their kids" [BC, female Manager]

BC’s comment highlights the perception that Partners have a traditional support system in that they are predominantly men who have stay-at-home wives.

There are sections of the business who’s work lends itself more to having flexible work schedules; PP a male Director says for example that the nature of Consulting is that you are on the client-site when doing your job, so it doesn’t lend itself as readily as other functions such as Tax and Audit to adopting flexible working arrangements.

"I think there’s very flexible practises for some of the service lines. So for tax or audit, where a lot of it is behind the scenes work for a client, it’s analysis, it’s reviewing, it’s turning figures out, it can be done at three o’clock in the morning, it can be done on Sundays or whatever as long as, at the appropriate time, the answer is there. Consulting is very much nine to five doing the work and then any kind of.....it’s at the client site, it’s high visibility, it’s scheduled work with their guys. So to a certain extent you can’t really say Saturday, Sunday, whenever. So I think it doesn’t really work so well for consulting." [PP, male Director]

He makes an interesting point regarding the productivity-based nature of some roles and how they lend themselves more to flexible working; whereas consulting is more about the client-led demand for meetings etc., which makes it more about visibility and less about output that you can do at the weekend etc.;

"...I guess, if this was audit or tax or one of the other areas where there is not the same level of client focus, not even client focus, but not the same level of client contact, I think absolutely. I think there’s no reason why the working week can’t be a seven day working week but shorter working days and more flexibility; absolutely no reason why that couldn’t be the case....and certainly with more flexibility from an
employer perspective and expectations of clients, if that changed, then certainly there's no reason why we couldn't be more flexible right the way through.” [PP, male Director]

6.2.4 MANAGEMENT STYLE AND CULTURE

The management style within AccountCo can be characterised as transformational (Bass, 2006), in that managers view identifying the potential of their employees, and helping them to develop it, to be an important part of their roles as managers. Managing people is a key skill in AccountCo, and is a key requirement of those who hope to progress in the company.

The nature of how work is done in AccountCo means that there is more integration between managers and their staff than is found in InvestCo. The most senior managers in the company, Partners, are ‘hands-on’ in both their approach to day-to-day work and in terms of how they manage and develop the people working for them. It is in a Partner’s interest to have the best team of people around him or her – the value of his team is judged by their technical skill and ability to win business. Thus Partners are keen to attract, retain and develop staff with those skills.

Performance management

Each staff member in AccountCo is assigned an ‘appraiser’ who conducts a twice-yearly performance review with them. For many of the interviewees this person is a clear ‘sponsor’ who pushes them to develop their weak areas, identifies opportunities for progression, and generally acts as a mentor along the pathway to promotion. In sharp contrast to how things are done in InvestCo, there is a clear sense that there is a continual dialogue between interviewees and their superiors within AccountCo about where they are going in the company, what they need to do to get to the next level, and what support the appraiser can offer along the way.

Promotional procedures

AccountCo Human Resources’ policy is to outline their promotion model clearly to staff in order to provide transparency, and to ensure a consistent approach to promotions.

Promotions are conducted twice yearly in AccountCo, and are done via a nominations and approval process. So it is not a straightforward case of applying for roles, rather it is a formalised and structured process whereby the more senior members of the team (senior
Managers and above) nominate junior members of their teams to go forward for promotion to the next level. The nominations are agreed by the management team (which consists of Senior Managers and Directors), and then put to the Partners for approval. Up until Manager grade, this is a straightforward nominations and approval process, but once it gets to Senior Manager level the process becomes more formal.

Figure 6.1 below outlines the competencies required in order to achieve a promotion to the next level. These competencies are drawn from official AccountCo HR material combined with an amalgamation of findings from the survey and of the interviews. AccountCo outline a minimum set of criteria that must be achieved by employees in order to move up each level within the company. Each grade must in theory be stayed at for a minimum amount of time, and for the lower grades this is generally kept to due to the ‘learning your trade’ element of these roles.

AccountCo hires in a large number of graduates whom they sign up for a three year fixed-term training contract, after which they are either offered a permanent role or leave the company. During their training period they take professional exams in either tax or accountancy, unless they are in the consultancy business which does not require formal technical training. Once the initial training period is completed and the employees who have been made permanent are on a management track, timings of promotions can be influenced by an individual’s particularly strong performance.

The overall structure of professional services firms which are based on a partnership model is that they are in essence ‘up or out’ in nature. They are lean operations with only a certain amount of staff kept at each level, and while there are instances of people becoming in effect ‘career Directors’, for the most part if you are not progressing up through the organisation, you will be leaving it.

There is a consistency of experience across the interviewees regarding how promotions work and amongst those at the middle management grade of ‘Senior Manager’ there is a consistency of timing regarding how long it has taken them to reach that point. This consistency cuts across gender and department – there is no sense from the interviewees that the rate of promotions is influenced substantially by the area you work in or by your gender.
What it takes to be promoted at each level:
[client-facing staff – rather than internal support functions]

**PARTNER**
- Excel at role - being seen as an 'industry expert' in your area of specialisation
- High-profile - internally and externally - e.g. sitting on/chairing industry groups, writing articles
- Time commitment - being seen to 'pitch in' - do the hours necessary. Technology allows you to be 'always-on' - blackberry/logging on from home in the evenings
- OFFICIAL HR REQUIREMENT: Minimum rating requirement 1. Demonstrate above average ability in generating work from both clients and non-clients. Development of a service line. Provide technical solutions and in-depth knowledge on client issues. Demonstrate strong people management responsibilities

**DIRECTOR**
- Being very good at your job is considered a basic; must show commitment to your job via long hours/flexibility
- Ability to create work - to win business from clients - new and existing
- Proactively networking internally and externally - making sure profile is raised with Partners outside your immediate area (as they sit on interview panel for Director roles)
- OFFICIAL HR REQUIREMENT: Minimum rating requirement 1. Leading major projects; responsibility for ongoing revenue generation on key client accounts; Proactive involvement with people management, retention, development of staff; Providing professional expertise in service areas

**SENIOR MANAGER**
- Proficient at job/length of service
- OFFICIAL HR REQUIREMENT: Minimum rating requirement 1. Managing more than one key client account; Leading projects and taking responsibility for revenue generation; involvement with people management, retention, development of staff

**MANAGER/SENIOR CONSULTANT**
- Proficient at job/length of service
- OFFICIAL HR REQUIREMENT: Minimum rating requirement 1. Managing at least one key client account, leading projects and taking responsibility for revenue generation; involvement with people management, retention, development of staff

**ASSISTANT MANAGER/SUPERVISOR**
- Proficient at job/length of service
- OFFICIAL HR REQUIREMENT: Minimum rating requirement 1. Managing at least one key client account, leading projects and taking responsibility for revenue generation; involvement with people management, retention, development of staff

[Image of a promotional pathway diagram with levels from Partner to Assistant Manager/Supervisor]
AccountCo’s formal appraisal and promotional procedures make progression appear much more straightforward and transparent for staff there. Clear criteria for getting to the next level are outlined by AccountCo Human Resources (HR) for all staff, and regular appraisals with senior managers allow staff to understand clearly what they need to personally develop in order to progress in the company.

Prior to Partner level, the experience of promotional procedures described by interviewees seems very straightforward and ‘understood’. In this understanding people are set free to navigate their own way and to be in ‘control’ of their career progression.

6.2.5 CONCLUSION

The more equal organisational structure outlined in Chapter Four appears to have a more positive impact on the lived lives of workers in AccountCo. For both women and men, gender is not seen as a factor that impacts negatively on a person’s opportunity to progress within AccountCo. The company is seen as becoming increasingly feminised, as was supported by the company data outlined in Chapter Four. Both men and women in the interview sample agree that it is only a matter of time before the increased numbers of women in the organisation is felt at Partner level. The only issue which is seen as holding women back from progressing is their own choice with regard to taking time out to have children, and subsequently deciding to work reduced schedules.

AccountCo has an intensive long-hours’ work-culture, and while flexible work options are available and workers are facilitated in using them, ultimately they are perceived as career-limiting. Making it to Partner requires extreme dedication and time-commitment and requires personal-life sacrifices whether you are male or female, a mother or a father.

6.3 CONCLUSION – COMPANIES COMPARED

When we compare the two companies we can see how influential organisational structure and culture is on an individual. The frustration and side-lining of women in InvestCo is palpable and is contrasted with the overall positivity of women in AccountCo. Women in InvestCo are side-lined and silenced — there is evidence of gender discrimination; and a macho hyper-masculine culture which does not value other ways of working. Women are demotivated and have down-sized their ambition.
With AccountCo we see an opposite set of factors exposed – there is no overt sexism experienced by women in the sample. Gender is not seen as a barrier to progression per se, but combining a senior role with being a mother is seen as problematic. However in comparison to the maternal wall limitations found in InvestCo, there is a much greater sense that while being a mother and a Partner in AccountCo is no-doubt difficult, it is definitely possible. This makes the ‘choice’ faced by women in AccountCo seem much more legitimate. Even if only a few women decide to continue up to partnership level, there is a real sense amongst the female sample that this is something that is theirs to actively ‘choose’. This is not to say that there is not some indirect discrimination at play in AccountCo, in the way that work is done in an all-consuming way which is in keeping with traditional norms/male-breadwinner model patterns of working; or in the subtle norms and values that arise within any organisation dominated by one group – by definition women are the ‘other’ at Director/Partner level in the company. However the rules of the game are seen as the same for both men and women in AccountCo – whether they have children or not, if women ‘do all the right things’ they can progress. That is not to say it is easy, and only a small number of people, regardless of their gender will ever make it to Partner – but at least there is a feeling of equality of opportunity amongst the sample, that career routes are not inherently gendered.

While senior management is heavily male-dominated in both companies, the fact that there are slightly more women at senior levels in AccountCo, and that the overall company is numerically female dominated, impacts positively on women’s progression in the company. This coupled with the presence of positive senior role models, particularly of women who have made it to senior roles while having a family, and the absence of functional gender segregation, results in much more gender convergence in terms of experience and opportunities to progress in AccountCo.

In contrast, female interviewees feel more consciously outnumbered and more ‘other’ in InvestCo. Women are the exceptions rather than the rules; in terms of their place in the hierarchy; in how they are valued; and in how their needs and life stages are seen as ‘outside the norm’.

Functional gender segregation is a prominent feature of InvestCo. This functional segregation is cited by interviewees as a reason for women’s poor representation in senior roles within the company. The ‘power base’ of the organisation is Investments and, as outlined in Chapter Four, this is a heavily male dominated department. It is also the department with the most
opportunities for progression. In contrast, women are at the very heart of what AccountCo do, they are more present in the money-making departments in the company than they are in InvestCo, and as a result are more likely to get the same access as their male colleagues to the opportunities to progress in the company.

Motherhood in particular seems to be a major career inhibitor in InvestCo – it is simply not the ‘done thing’, while some mothers have progressed, the perception is that they do not in general, and certainly not in the powerful Investments department. In AccountCo on the other hand there are visible and positive role models of women who have made it to the top of the organisation with children, and so there is a feeling amongst the female interviewees that it is possible, it can be done. Whereas in InvestCo women report having only negative female role models who reinforce that combining family with a senior position in the company cannot be achieved.

Insofar as a long-hours and inflexible work culture can be said to be inherently ‘gendered’ male, this is a feature of both companies. At the most basic level of the time-commitment required to make an impression and be successful at getting noticed for promotion, at the heart of these organisations is a long-hours’ work culture, these are ‘greedy’ jobs. However, women work like men do in these companies – with no significant gender difference found regarding how many hours respondents work in either company.

Where there is some gendering regarding the working pattern is in relation to the use of flexible working options (FWO). In both companies FWO are seen as career limiting and they are not widely used. Use of part-time working is very rare, and where it is used it is very much gendered female. There is a lack of tolerance for working outside of the norm. AccountCo do ‘talk the talk’ when it comes to promoting a work-life balance culture. However despite the availability of certain FWOs, the reality for staff in AccountCo appears to be that, similarly to InvestCo, progressing to senior roles requires a large degree of time commitment which is incompatible with working flexibly or in a reduced schedule capacity.

This chapter sought to explore the general themes and implications of the gendered organisations which were explicated in Chapter Four on the lived lives of women and men in the two companies. Chapters Seven will explore and outline the overall conclusions and theoretical and policy implications of this study.
CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

This thesis draws upon rich empirical data to shed light on the position, attitudes and experiences of women and men in the financial and professional services in Ireland. By using both quantitative and qualitative methods, this thesis gains a valuable insight into the organisational structure and culture of these companies; exploring where women are located within them; and why women are in the positions they are in.

The thesis adds to the literature by providing a detailed account of two elite, private sector firms. These types of companies have been under-researched within an Irish context. These companies contributed to economic growth experienced over the so-called ‘Celtic Tiger’ period in Ireland, and are part of the labour market explosion that took place over that time. However little research has been done to understand what impact these companies have had on women’s qualitative experience of labour-force participation. Women have entered the work-force in record numbers over the past two decades in Ireland (CSO, 2011) and yet we know little about their real status in these organisations, the work that they do, the choices they are making, the career routes they are taking, and how they experience these organisational cultures.

The findings from this thesis show clearly where women are in the two case-study companies; and go some way to understanding why they are in the positions they are in. In this chapter, the key findings and the theoretical implications that these findings have will be outlined and explored.

When we look back at the overall research question – whether person-centred or organisational-centred barriers are more important contributors to women’s absence in senior roles within the financial services, it is clear from the data outlined in Chapters Four, Five and Six that organisational factors are more important than individual ‘choice’ in hindering women’s progress in this industry.

Choice and preference are not unconstrained as Hakim would contend; rather they are influenced by the gendered organisational contexts within which women in the sample find themselves.

We find these organisations to be gendered structurally and culturally to differing degrees; and this concluding chapter will examine how this gendering fits into Acker’s (1990)
gendered organisation theoretical framework. It will also outline how the empirical data does not support Hakim’s preference theory (1995, 2006). Finally this chapter will also touch on the important impact of country-of-origin influences on the culture and dynamics of Irish subsidiaries of international companies.

7.1 BOTH COMPANIES ARE GENDERED ORGANISATIONS – BUT TO DIFFERENT DEGREES

Acker’s definition of a gendered organisation is one where “advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine” (Acker, 1990: 146). There are two levels to this gendering in the case-study companies. There is firstly the structural level of where women are located in the organisational structure and hierarchy, and then secondly there is the cultural level of norms and expectations; ways of doing business; management styles; and gender role stereotypes.

While women are ‘present’ in both companies; there are gendered hierarchies, gendered career routes and gendered power dynamics present to a degree in both. We do however find this is more pronounced overall in InvestCo than in AccountCo. As outlined in Chapters Four, Five and Six, while neither company is a gender neutral site, InvestCo is found to have a particularly male-dominated structure and culture, with men dominating the most senior grades, and the most powerful functional areas within the company. On the other hand, AccountCo is found to have a more equal organisational structure, which in turn is reflected in its organisational culture. AccountCo is being increasingly feminised as a company, with women dominating in the bottom four levels in the company, and making inroads into the final three top management levels. There is an acknowledgement from senior management that the emerging talent in AccountCo is female.

The organisational structure and culture of each company is influenced by the nature of the work that they do, the nature of how they do business; their ownership structures and so forth. Both the structure and culture of these workplaces has implications for the differing levels of persistence of glass-ceilings and glass-walls.
Gendered hierarchies - senior management gendered male

While women are certainly making more inroads into senior levels within AccountCo than is found within InvestCo, nonetheless senior management is gendered male in both companies.

If we look at the characteristics of the employees within the organisations who make it to the top, we can see that these organisations are structured along very traditional lines of what it means to be a ‘worker’ and a ‘male breadwinner’, with women remaining very much the ‘other’ at senior management level. For example, as outlined in Chart 7.1, in InvestCo, senior managers are most likely to be male; aged 40 or older; to be married with children; and to be the main breadwinner in their households. They are also more likely to work 45 hours or more per week and to regularly start work early and finish late. We find a similar set of characteristics amongst senior management in AccountCo, as outlined in Chart 7.2.

CHART 7.1: PROFILE OF SENIOR MANAGERS IN INVESTCO
In both companies we see what has been termed a 'masculinised structure of work', in that these are greedy organisations which demand consistent, linear and intensive working. Work is organised around the notion of a male breadwinner who is free to participate in full-time employment as he does not have to worry about family responsibilities (Marchbank and Letherby 2007). These are 'greedy workplaces' (Smithson et al, 2004) which promote a certain kind of 'ideal worker' that is gendered male and which remains incompatible with notions of what it means to be an active parent. To set this kind of long-hours' work culture in context nationally, only 10% of the Irish population work an average of 45 hours or more per week (CSO, 2011).

Lack of female role models

Another impact of the gendered nature of these companies is the resulting lack of senior female role models for women to look up to. This has been cited as a key inhibitor of career progression for women in the sample. This ties in with Brockbank and Traves's (1995) findings which identified a lack of role models as part of the deficit in social capital which serves to inhibit women's progress. Liff and Ward (2001) found that lack of female role models at senior levels who specifically managed to combine being a mother with being a senior manager caused women in their study to express concern that having children would
mean the end of their career. Women in both case-study companies express this concern, however it is again women in InvestCo who find this most problematic.

Echoing Kanter (1977), we find the management ethic to be predominantly masculine in InvestCo. In AccountCo, while senior management is also gendered male, there are more women at senior level than is the case in InvestCo and the impact of this female leadership can be felt in the company. We see the power of female leaders in AccountCo, and how they are changing the norms and values around how work is done. They have a more expansive attitude to where work can be done; and to how committed mothers can be to their careers.

The positive impact of senior women is felt in AccountCo, both in terms of providing positive role models to younger women in the company; and in terms of positively influencing; promoting, championing and sponsoring their female staff in particular. There are examples of female Partners in the sample who are proactive appraisers, consciously helping staff to reach their full potential. There is a definite sense that female Partners are making an impact, passing on their strategies to the next level of women in the organisation. The female Partners in the sample are also mothers, and so their own experience shows them that mothers can be as committed to progressing to the top as any other person. Thus they bring a different set of cultural norms and values to the table. As Acker contends “organizations are one arena in which widely disseminated cultural images of gender are invented and reproduced” (Acker 1990: 140). In AccountCo positive senior female role models serve to invent and reproduce the idea that a leader can be female, and can be a mother, and still deliver for the company.

**Gendered career routes - impact of functional gender segregation**

As outlined in Chapter Six, the functional segregation present within InvestCo impacts on women’s progress within the company. The peripheral functions where women are more likely to be working provide less opportunity for promotion than is found within the male-dominated Investments department. Thus a pattern of gendered career routes emerges, with Investments offering more opportunities to progress; higher salaries and higher-level corporate titles. As men as more likely than women in InvestCo to be in the Investments department, their opportunity set is wider than is available to women in the sample.
In keeping with Moss Kanter’s (1977) findings, women are more likely to be in the ‘dead-end’ departments within InvestCo. There are large underlying housekeeping layers found in InvestCo which offer little opportunity for upward mobility.

In a study of the UK banking sector, Parker et al. (1998) found that while gendered career routes have softened, they were still prevalent within the industry, with women more likely to remain as functional specialists while not progressing to the operational centres of the company. We can see a similar pattern within InvestCo, with women dominating in areas such as compliance, administration and marketing, while being much less visible in the core business function of investments, sales and strategy areas. In InvestCo men are the actors and women are the regulators.

Occupational segregation in the workplace has been found to be associated with both the gender pay gap (EC, 2007), and with disillusionment amongst female employees as they are confined to the less prestigious and more routine functions of their profession (Gammie and Gammie, 1997). This feeds into what both Gerson (1985) and Hewlett (2005) found to be a lessening or ‘downsizing’ of ambition amongst women. The more women are confined to what Naomi Wolf termed the ‘pink ghetto’ (Wolf, 2002: 26) of lower-paid, less interesting work, the more they recalibrate their expectations and ambitions for their careers downwards. Both of these are found within the InvestCo sample, the departments with the highest paid staff are male dominated; and in the InvestCo qualitative data we find that women in ‘support’ functions have less opportunity for promotion and that this serves to block their progress and lead to a degree of demotivation. We also find that women are paid less in InvestCo, even while at the same corporate title as men in the sample. (See Chapter Four)

As explored in Chapter Six, functional gender segregation is cited by both men and women in the interview sample as a key reason for women’s absence from senior roles in InvestCo.

When we compare this to AccountCo a different and much more gender-equal pattern of career-routes is found. The structure of the company means that there are four core functional departments; Audit and Tax being the two largest and most important. There is no significant functional gender segregation found within the AccountCo sample. Functional segregation or gendering of career routes does not come out as an issue in either the quantitative data or the qualitative data in AccountCo. Rather what is found is a consistent and clear Human Resources policy which explains the career route for all four core departments.
There is a much smaller ‘house-keeping’ layer of departments and staff found within AccountCo than is found in InvestCo, and while some gender segregation emerges, for example Human Resources and Marketing are quite female-dominated, the size and impact of this segregation is less than is found within InvestCo. Women in AccountCo are present in the ‘big money’ departments and have equal access to the fruitful career routes which these offer.

7.1.1 GENDERED CULTURE - WOMEN OPERATING IN TWO DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXTS

In both companies we find a degree of cultural gendering. This is described by Eagly and Carli (2007) as a process whereby “as managers follow precedents set out by their colleagues, informal norms develop, consensus emerges about what is appropriate, and guidelines becomes hardened into bureaucratic rules...organisational leadership inevitably has come to embody the preferences, lifestyles, and responsibilities of the men in charge” [2007: 139]

While there is some gendering found in both, it is InvestCo that displays the most gendered organisational culture. In terms of the norms and values which surround how business is done; how employees are managed; the management style; and overall culture of gender bias, InvestCo is found to be inherently more ‘male’ than AccountCo.

The taken for granted norms and ways of doing business are socially constructed rather than inherently necessary to get the job done. For example, as noted in Chapter Six, there is an intensive long hour’s culture present within both companies. However in both companies interviewees acknowledge that there could be more flexible and different ways of doing their jobs, if the creative, lateral thinking required to re-imagine work-practices was present amongst senior leaders.

Again we find that AccountCo is the more forward-thinking of the two organisations in this regard, with formal flexible work options in place and a commitment shown from leadership to try to understand how best to retain employees who have family commitments. This is especially true regarding their efforts to retain and promote mothers in the company. This is not to say that they are a perfect example of how to do this, or that they are succeeding, but relative to InvestCo their culture has more positive outcomes for women in the sample.
As outlined in Chapter Six, the gendered culture of InvestCo manifests itself in terms of how work is done, in for example how early morning meetings and the structure of careers which require linear, break-free service are taken for granted as being something which employees can buy-into. This working style is fine for those who ‘fit the mould’ (Kumra and Vinnecombe, 2008) of senior management. It suits the classic ‘male-breadwinner’ family unit.

As described in Chapters Four and Six, the Investments department is the core functional area within InvestCo. It appears to have almost its own ‘micro-culture’ within the company. It is where power, money and status are located in the company. The Investments department is where the ‘big money’ decisions are made and the culture within this is described by interviewees as what can be termed ‘hyper-masculine’ – it is described as macho and aggressive. It is a certain kind of masculinity which is defined in very narrow traditional terms, which women in the sample describe as very off-putting and which not all men in the company conform to or are comfortable with either.

Preconceived notions about what women are good at, and the roles women should adopt in society are perceived by women in the sample as permeating the InvestCo organisational culture. We see male traits valued over female ones, and traditional gender role stereotyping perceived as seeping in via the ‘Southern European’ cultural influences.


Gender categorisation plays a continuing role in how jobs are labelled in a gendered fashion, and gender-stereotypic beliefs are used to justify gender segregation (Ridegeway, 2001).
Thus in InvestCo Compliance is female-dominated because women are more ‘detail-oriented’ while Investments is male because men are more ‘aggressive’.

**AccountCo**

In AccountCo we see a different cultural context emerging. One based more on developing and nurturing talent, and on understanding that employees have commitments outside of the workplace which need to be accommodated if those employees are to be able to commit fully to a career in AccountCo. There is an acknowledgment amongst senior management in the company that business needs demand that quality staff be retained. As women account for a lot of their human resource capital, the company is keen to understand and accommodate the diversity of needs which women bring to the table. Thus the company is proactive in introducing flexible working and so forth, and a focus on productivity means that employees have greater flexibility regarding where and when they get their work completed, without the need for office presenteeism. That being said, there is an intensive long hours work culture in AccountCo which means that to truly progress requires a huge level of time commitment.

There is no apparent overt sexism experienced by women in the AccountCo sample. Gender is not seen as a barrier to progression per se, but combining a senior role with being a mother is seen as problematic. However in comparison to the maternal wall limitations found in InvestCo, there is a much greater sense that while being a mother and a Partner in AccountCo is no-doubt difficult, it is definitely possible. This makes the ‘choice’ faced by women in AccountCo seem much more legitimate. Even if only a few women decide to continue up to partnership level, there is a real sense amongst the female sample that this is something that is theirs to actively ‘choose’.

There is nonetheless some indirect discrimination at play in AccountCo, in the way that work is done in an all-consuming way which is in keeping with traditional norms/male-breadwinner model patterns of working; or in the subtle norms and values that arise within any organisation dominated by one group – by definition women are the ‘other’ at Director/Partner level in the company. However the rules of the game are seen as the same for both men and women in AccountCo – whether they have children or not, if women ‘do all the right things’ they can progress.
That is not to say it is easy, and only a small number of people, regardless of their gender will ever make it to Partner – but at least there is a feeling of equality of opportunity amongst the sample, that career routes are not inherently gendered.

**Talent management versus hand-off management style**

In Chapter Six the management cultures within both companies were explored. In AccountCo we find a focus on ‘talent management’, that is an importance given to nurturing and developing home-grown talent within the company. To this end there are very clear and formal career paths which are explicated widely to junior staff as they enter the company as trainees. It is made clear what it takes to make it to Partner, and regular structured appraisals are combined with formal and relatively consistent promotional procedures. This open and structured style of management results in a sense that careers are ‘co-managed’ by managers and their employees within AccountCo. Support and encouragement is provided to help employees make it to the next level.

In contrast there is a sense that employees are very much on their own in InvestCo. Lack of formal appraisals or career planning, and a closed promotional system which is lacking in transparency combine to create a very ‘hands-off’ management style where individuals must take responsibility for their own career paths and career development. There is less clarity around what career paths are available, and how to go about progressing to the next level in the company. Again the gendered functional segregation has a particularly negative effect on women in the sample, as they are more likely to be in departments where there is ‘no next step’ as one female interviewee describes it.

In AccountCo career-paths are more straight-forward, the path to partnership is outlined clearly and explicitly and junior employees clearly understand ‘what it takes to make it’. This proves more meritocratic and fairer to all – both men and women in AccountCo believe promotions are handled more fairly than either men or women in InvestCo. There is an understanding and trust of the process and of the leadership within the company. As outlined in Chapter Five, within AccountCo we find that both men and women are more likely than men and women in InvestCo to think that there are many opportunities to progress within their organisation and that promotional procedures are fair and transparent.

While AccountCo’s promotional procedures are characterised by structured, formal processes which are standardised across the company, InvestCo is much less structured, with wide
variations in terms of how promotions are handled, as well as in the availability of opportunities to progress, across different departments. In InvestCo there is a lack of transparency regarding what jobs are advertised and who gets them versus the more transparent process in AccountCo.

In InvestCo there is more cloudiness around career routes; what opportunities to progress are available, and how to go about this. There is less understanding of what performance is required to get you to the next level, particularly amongst women in the sample.

7.2 IMPACT OF GENDERED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND STRUCTURE

When we compare the two companies we can see how influential organisational structure and culture is on an individual. In keeping with the less equal organisational structure explicated in Chapter Four, and the gendered cultural dynamics explored in Chapter Six, it is women in InvestCo who have the most negative perception and experience of the culture within which they are working.

In contrast there is an equality of opportunity found within AccountCo which is not found within InvestCo. Overall we find a generally positive attitude towards the culture in AccountCo and more similarity than difference between male and female respondents.

It is also clear from the data that men in InvestCo have a more negative attitude than those in AccountCo – indicating the negative impact of the gendered hierarchical company structure has on men in the sample too.

Impact of organisational factors on career choices

Choice and preference are not gender neutral – rather they are influenced by the gendered organisational contexts within which women in the sample find themselves.

Chapter five explored the attitudes and perceptions of workers in both organisations. We see from this data the mediating effect of organisational context/dynamics on a person’s individual agency. As expected, InvestCo, the company with the less ‘equal’ structure (as outlined in Chapter Four) has the more negative effect on women. They are more likely to
think that men have an easier route to the top; that women are not well represented in senior roles; that opportunities to progress are more limited and so forth.

This has implications for Hakim’s preference theory (2002). While Hakim acknowledges that social structures and institutions do impact somewhat on women’s and men’s work choices, she does posit that the equal opportunity revolution has ensured women in western societies have ‘equal access to all positions, occupations and careers’ (2002: 434) - but this seems to be a very optimistic view. While we do see some real choice emerging for women within AccountCo, with equality of access present, in InvestCo women have less equality of access it seems.

Echoing Moss Kanter (1977), the two case-study companies show that even with similar levels of human capital, and commitment and ambition for their careers, women’s experience of work is mediated by strong organisational cultural and structural factors. These organisational factors serve to limit the real choice of women in InvestCo, not allowing them to reach their full potential and having a demotivating effect as posited by Ridgeway (2001).

A key finding from this data is that there is more gender convergence than difference found regarding the person-centred barriers which could be said to be associated with Hakim’s preference theory (1996; 2005) and Cross and Linehan’s (2006) ‘self-imposed’ or ‘psychological glass ceiling’. For example barriers such as lack of desire to reach senior levels; lack of ability to progress; and prioritising family commitments, are gender neutral in both companies - with women and men citing these barriers in relatively equal numbers.

The data shows that men and women within InvestCo and in AccountCo share similar levels of ambition and commitment when it comes to their career. Thus this study finds that women’s poor representation at senior levels and in the powerful departments in InvestCo cannot be explained by a lack of ambition or commitment to progressing.

This finding therefore does not support Hakim’s preference theory (Hakim 2002), which posits that women are less career-oriented than men. Rather this data supports other studies which have found that women and men are more similar than different when it comes to their levels of ambition for their career. (Brockback and Traves, 1995; Catalyst, 2004)

Moss Kanter (1977) contends that gender differences in organisational behaviour are due to structural influences rather than to the characteristics of women and men as individuals (1977, 291-92). She argues that the barriers women have in progressing are consequences of
their structural placement, predominating as they do in lower-level dead-end jobs. We can certainly see her theory confirmed when we compare and contrast women's placement and experience in these two different organisational contexts. Moss Kanter posits that people's behaviour and choices in respect of their working lives and how they progress in organisations is largely influenced by the structure of the work systems within which they operate. My study seems to echo and reconfirm her findings:

"Life does not consist of infinite possibility because situations do not make all responses equally plausible or equally available. But the limits are not as much internal and disproven, rooted in the person as they are structural and situational" (Kanter, 1977: 10)

In the two case-study companies we have a good site for comparison. We can clearly see Kanter's contention manifest itself in both companies, to more negative effects for women in InvestCo and more positive effects for women in AccountCo.

Organisational barriers – more important than family or person-centred factors

Chapter Five explored the barriers which respondents in the survey sample identified as being important to hindering their career progression. Within both companies, it is organisational rather than person-centred factors which emerge as being most important for both women and men.

While obviously person-centred factors such as a willingness to work hard; an ambition to succeed in one's career; the choices individuals make around their family-life commitments et cetera no doubt influence a person's career success, the findings from this study show that organisational barriers have a potentially larger impact on a person's ability to progress.

Organisational barriers such as exclusion from informal networks; lack of opportunities to take on high-visibility projects and a lack of role models come out as more important amongst women in both companies than issues such as family commitments or having just less of an interest in progressing.

To go back to one of the starting points of this thesis, Lisa Belkin's 2003 article in the New York Times, headlined 'why do not women run the world? – they choose not to' (Belkin, 2006), it seems clear from the findings in this study that this is far too reductionist an
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One issue which emerges in this study is that being a mother is problematic for women’s progress in both companies. It is worth considering then the role of organisational culture specifically on this issue.

Both companies are greedy organisations where commitment is measured by hours put in, being ‘always-on’ and being flexible to work above and beyond when the need arises. This can be problematic for anyone with fixed commitments outside of the workplace. However once again we see that organisational factors compound the problems faces by mothers in InvestCo.

There is direct and indirect discrimination against mothers in InvestCo, with gender bias and preconceived notions about level of career commitment. There is more presenteeism required in InvestCo, and the roles and departments where promotions are more possible/plentiful are the ones with more rigid work patterns and career routes. For example taking even a few months off to have a baby can spell the end of a career for a research analyst in Investments. This is less of function of the role I would venture, and more a function of how it is seen to be done, how it is believed it ‘must’ be done. Many women and men in the sample see no reason why certain roles need to be as office-based or inflexible as they are, but norms and values have developed from years of viewing them through the lifestyle choices of male-breadwinners and so are socially constructed as needing to be done a certain way. Mothers in InvestCo are also the people within the sample with the most negative experience of organisational culture overall.

In AccountCo being a mother and a senior leader is not seen as being incompatible, although it is seen as being very difficult from a time-commitment perspective. There are visible and positive role models of women who have made it to the top of the organisation with children, and so there is a feeling amongst the female interviewees that it is possible, it can be done. Whereas in InvestCo women report having only negative female role models who reinforce that combining family with a senior position in the company cannot be achieved.

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Thus in InvestCo Compliance is female-dominated because women are more ‘detail-oriented’ while Investments is male because men are more ‘aggressive’.

**AccountCo**

In AccountCo we see a different cultural context emerging. One based more on developing and nurturing talent, and on understanding that employees have commitments outside of the workplace which need to be accommodated if those employees are to be able to commit fully to a career in AccountCo. There is an acknowledgment amongst senior management in the company that business needs demand that quality staff be retained. As women account for a lot of their human resource capital, the company is keen to understand and accommodate the diversity of needs which women bring to the table. Thus the company is proactive in introducing flexible working and so forth, and a focus on productivity means that employees have greater flexibility regarding where and when they get their work completed, without the need for office presenteeism. That being said, there is an intensive long hours work culture in AccountCo which means that to truly progress requires a huge level of time commitment.

There is no apparent overt sexism experienced by women in the AccountCo sample. Gender is not seen as a barrier to progression per se, but combining a senior role with being a mother is seen as problematic. However in comparison to the maternal wall limitations found in InvestCo, there is a much greater sense that while being a mother and a Partner in AccountCo is no-doubt difficult, it is definitely possible. This makes the ‘choice’ faced by women in AccountCo seem much more legitimate. Even if only a few women decide to continue up to partnership level, there is a real sense amongst the female sample that this is something that is theirs to actively ‘choose’.

There is nonetheless some indirect discrimination at play in AccountCo, in the way that work is done in an all-consuming way which is in keeping with traditional norms/male-breadwinner model patterns of working; or in the subtle norms and values that arise within any organisation dominated by one group – by definition women are the ‘other’ at Director/Partner level in the company. However the rules of the game are seen as the same for both men and women in AccountCo – whether they have children or not, if women ‘do all the right things’ they can progress.
That is not to say it is easy, and only a small number of people, regardless of their gender will ever make it to Partner – but at least there is a feeling of equality of opportunity amongst the sample, that career routes are not inherently gendered.

**Talent management versus hand-off management style**

In Chapter Six the management cultures within both companies were explored. In AccountCo we find a focus on ‘talent management’, that is an importance given to nurturing and developing home-grown talent within the company. To this end there are very clear and formal career paths which are explicited widely to junior staff as they enter the company as trainees. It is made clear what it takes to make it to Partner, and regular structured appraisals are combined with formal and relatively consistent promotional procedures. This open and structured style of management results in a sense that careers are ‘co-managed’ by managers and their employees within AccountCo. Support and encouragement is provided to help employees make it to the next level.

In contrast there is a sense that employees are very much on their own in InvestCo. Lack of formal appraisals or career planning, and a closed promotional system which is lacking in transparency combine to create a very ‘hands-off’ management style where individuals must take responsibility for their own career paths and career development. There is less clarity around what career paths are available, and how to go about progressing to the next level in the company. Again the gendered functional segregation has a particularly negative effect on women in the sample, as they are more likely to be in departments where there is ‘no next step’ as one female interviewee describes it.

In AccountCo career-paths are more straight-forward, the path to partnership is outlined clearly and explicitly and junior employees clearly understand ‘what it takes to make it’. This proves more meritocratic and fairer to all – both men and women in AccountCo believe promotions are handled more fairly than either men or women in InvestCo. There is an understanding and trust of the process and of the leadership within the company. As outlined in Chapter Five, within AccountCo we find that both men and women are more likely than men and women in InvestCo to think that there are many opportunities to progress within their organisation and that promotional procedures are fair and transparent.

While AccountCo’s promotional procedures are characterised by structured, formal processes which are standardised across the company, InvestCo is much less structured, with wide
variations in terms of how promotions are handled, as well as in the availability of opportunities to progress, across different departments. In InvestCo there is a lack of transparency regarding what jobs are advertised and who gets them versus the more transparent process in AccountCo.

In InvestCo there is more cloudiness around career routes; what opportunities to progress are available, and how to go about this. There is less understanding of what performance is required to get you to the next level, particularly amongst women in the sample.

7.2 IMPACT OF GENDERED ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND STRUCTURE

When we compare the two companies we can see how influential organisational structure and culture is on an individual. In keeping with the less equal organisational structure explicated in Chapter Four, and the gendered cultural dynamics explored in Chapter Six, it is women in InvestCo who have the most negative perception and experience of the culture within which they are working.

In contrast there is an equality of opportunity found within AccountCo which is not found within InvestCo. Overall we find a generally positive attitude towards the culture in AccountCo and more similarity than difference between male and female respondents.

It is also clear from the data that men in InvestCo have a more negative attitude than those in AccountCo – indicating the negative impact of the gendered hierarchical company structure has on men in the sample too.

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This indicates that the strength of maternal wall-bias experienced by women is influenced by the gendered nature of senior management within a company, and by the organisational culture. It also shows that this is a barrier which can be mitigated by company policy.

7.3 POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ORGANISATIONAL FACTORS FOR WOMEN

By comparing women and men’s experience in both companies we can see the contrast between how the more ‘equal’ organisational structure and culture of AccountCo impact more positively on women’s experience, attitudes and behaviour in the sample; while the more negative organisational dynamics of InvestCo impact negatively on women in that company. A combination of organisational structure and cultural characteristics combine to make AccountCo a company where women’s prospects of progressing are better than is the case of InvestCo. From a structure perspective - while senior management is heavily male-dominated in both companies, the fact that there are slightly more women at senior levels in AccountCo, and that the overall company is numerically female dominated, impacts positively on women’s progression in the company. This coupled with the presence of positive senior role models (particularly of women who have made it to senior roles while having a family), and the absence of functional gender segregation, results in much more gender convergence in terms of experience and opportunities to progress in AccountCo.

Several features of AccountCo’s organisational culture seem to allow women to fulfil their potential to a greater degree than is possible in InvestCo. These features include; more formalised promotional procedures; more detailed and formalised performance appraisals; having ‘automatic’ influential sponsors due to the structured way in which performance appraisals are carried out; and the presence of positive female role models who have combined having children and getting to the top.

AccountCo does not do any of these things perfectly, and men still dominate numerically at the top from a power perspective, but the effort that the company puts into ‘talent management’ appears to pay off in terms of how it helps to retain and promote women, and how women perceive their career prospects in the company.
Gendered power dynamics

The organisational structural and cultural dynamics combine to create a different set of gendered power dynamics in each company. Throughout the InvestCo data we see ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ – women outside the power loop again and again; and this is found to a much lesser degree in AccountCo. The fact that there are more women overall in AccountCo, that they are in powerful roles in powerful departments; that the nature of management style and the nature of the work they do means that they have access to influential sponsors combines to situate women quite firmly inside the power loop in AccountCo. This has an overall positive influence on women in AccountCo, they are more likely to think they have opportunities to progress in this company, and are trusting in the legitimacy of how promotions are handled. It is a virtuous circle of factors, as outlined in Chart 9.4

In contrast, women in InvestCo are firmly outside of the power loop. The factors affecting this appear to be firstly the male domination of the company overall. Secondly functional segregation further compounds their position outside the power loop as they have shorter career ladders, with less opportunity for promotion in these peripheral functions. They also have less access to influential sponsors and the roles that they do are seen as less valuable overall. This all goes towards having a demotivating effect on women in InvestCo, and so is a vicious circle, which further effects women’s confidence in building the social capital required to progress.
CHART 7.3: INVESTCO – WOMEN OUTSIDE THE POWER LOOP

INVESTCO

Women outside the Power Loop

Lack confidence in own abilities

Not in the right departments - in 'peripheral' functions

Less likely to be 'key' specialists; so less likely to have powerful sponsor fighting for them

Not getting/wanting line management experience

Less access to people with the power to promote
Key organisational success factors for women

Chart 7.5 summarises what emerge as the key positive and negative organisational factors which impact on women in the sample.

Women do better in an organisation where productivity and technical ability are the measures of success. Where there is a ‘hands-on’ management culture where employees are nurtured and supported in developing their skills and in progressing to the top. Where human capital is valued, and the importance of social capital is understood, explained and nurtured by senior management – women are as comfortable and successful in using impression management as men are.

Intensive long-hours’ work cultures seem irrelevant – women seem to be able to go toe-to-toe with men in this regard. The organisational context which is found to be more positive for women in one which includes; clear career routes, with a clear understanding of ‘what it takes to make it’; formal promotional procedures which are standardised and viewed as fair and meritocratic; regular performance appraisals; feedback from managers on what needs to be developed to get to the next level; and an overall hands-on management culture, where work is done in team-based units.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Positive senior female role models</td>
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7.4 INTERNATIONALISATION OF THE IRISH FINANCIAL SERVICES - COUNTRY OF ORIGIN EFFECTS IN INVESTCO

The international focus of InvestCo’s business, and of its management and ownership structure, impacts on the company’s organisational structure and culture. As outlined in Chapter Four, there is a strong link between gender, nationality, functional area, and seniority within InvestCo. The variables associated with leadership in the company are; being male; being from InvestCo’s country of origin (i.e. ‘Southern European’) or British; and working in Investments. Talent for the top jobs is effectively ‘bought-in’ from abroad – and that talent is most likely to be male, and from InvestCo’s ‘Southern European’ country of origin.

Much has been written on the effect of international companies’ home culture and human resource management policies on the ‘host’ countries in which they locate and on the workers within those host countries (Ferner, 1997; Guest and Hoque, 1996; Muller 1998; Geary and Roche, 2010). Geary and Roche (2010) conclude that within the Irish context the country of origin influence of multinational companies is more dominant than host-country effects – that is the ‘imported’ culture, norms and values of the multinational company dictate how things are done within their Irish operations, and are found to be more influential on how those companies operate than local Irish work practice norms. Locating this PhD study’s findings within the context of this previous literature helps us to further understand the culture of how things are done within InvestCo, and the impact it has on workers in the company.

That the ‘Southern European’ culture and workers dominate the Irish operation is referred to regularly by interviewees, who describe the power and influence in the company being controlled by a Southern European ‘inner circle’. The ownership structure of the company means that the Southern European Headquarters (located in InvestCo’s country of origin) is where control is located and where all important decisions are made.

There are 49 ‘Southern European’s in the Irish-based operation of InvestCo, accounting for just 14% of the total staff based in Dublin. Despite their small representation overall, they are overly-represented in senior roles, with a significant association found between being ‘Southern European’ and being a senior manager [SVP and above] - 27% of all senior managers are ‘Southern European’, and this figure rises to 46% if we look at Investments in isolation. They are by far the most dominant cultural block in Investments senior
management. Most of the ‘Southern European’s working in Dublin work in the most powerful functional department of Investments [79%], and most are male [63%]

Men in the sample (who are predominately Irish) are more likely to see the ‘Southern European’ influence in a relatively positive way, seeing the Southern European’s are loyal and as rewarding loyalty. Men describe how the ‘Southern European’ managers have a family-like culture and feeling towards their employees. However women in the interview sample report feeling more excluded by this ‘Southern European’ power base and influence. There are several references made to how the ‘Southern Europeans’ have a particularly traditional stereotypical view of gender roles which women in the sample perceive has a negative impact on women’s progression within the company.

As Acker (1990) contends organisations reflect the overall gender relations of the society within which they operate and we find here that internationalisation brings with it cultural dynamics which add to the complexity of the labyrinth women face within these workplaces. Hofstede’s (1985) work on how the value systems of organisations reflect the national value systems of their country of origin can help further understand the dynamics at play here.

Hofstede (1985) posits that organisations have dominant value systems which inform and drive the culture of the organisation, and that there is a national dimension to this value-system. Hofstede identified four dimensions that help inform national work-related value-systems – they are power distance; uncertainty avoidance; individualism and masculinity. Echoing Acker (1990) he argues that companies are imbued with the norms and values of the culture within which they operate – and he further contends that they export these country-of-origin value-systems when they locate in a foreign country.

Hofstede has researched where each country falls in relation to these four cultural dimensions, and his analysis allows us to map out and compare Irish dominate work-place culture with that of InvestCo’s Southern European country-of-origin30. This comparison is outlined in Chart 7.6.

30 Countries can be compared on each power dimension on Hofstede’s website http://geert-hofstede.com/ireland.html
We can see from this chart that there is a similarity between the two countries on individualism and masculinity/femininity – with both countries having workplace cultures in which employees are expected to be self-reliant and display initiative; and which is highly success oriented and driven. Where differences emerge is in relation to both power distance and uncertainty avoidance.

Power distance refers to the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. At 28 Ireland has a relatively low ranking on this metric, and is thus a society that believes in having as few inequalities as possible. This manifests itself in an organisational context where “hierarchy is established for convenience” rather than to distance the management from the workers (Hofstede, 2013). There is a collective mind-set adopted by both superiors and their employees. There is an open sharing of information, and the culture is characterised by Hofstede as being consultative, informal, and participative.
At 50 InvestCo’s country of origin sits in the medium rankings of the power distance scale, and is thus described by Hofstede as a society that believes that hierarchy should be respected and inequalities amongst people are acceptable. In companies from this type of ‘Southern European’ country it is normal for a high level manager to have special benefits that his subordinates have not, i.e. a reserved parking place, larger office, personal secretary and so forth. As outlined in Chapter Two, Acker (2009) identifies high power distance as one of the key contributors to gender inequality within organisations.

Uncertainty avoidance is what Hofstede (1985) describes as being the degree to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or uncertain events. At 35 Ireland has a relatively low score on this dimension, meaning according to Hofstede that Irish businesses embrace creativity and like to approach problems by thinking ‘outside of the box’. On the other hand at 75 InvestCo’s country of origin has a high score on uncertainty avoidance which Hofstede says means as a nation ‘Southern European’s’ are not comfortable in ambiguous situations. Formality in ‘Southern European’ society is therefore an important antidote to uncertainty, with lots of formal procedures, codes, bureaucracy etc. put in place. This is something which comes across within the qualitative data, particularly in relation to promotional procedures, however it is a complex and ambiguous ‘formality’ in that it does not refer to formalised human resource promotional procedures, but rather a kind of ‘code-of-honour’ amongst managers and their subordinates, whereby employees must pay their dues, and earn promotions by loyally serving the company diligently and relatively subserviently over a long period.

Thus this study finds that the internationalisation of the financial services in Ireland brings with it an added cultural dimension which adds to the complexity of how women in particular must navigate the routes to the top.

7.5 NOTE ON MEN IN THE SAMPLE

This study sought to understand why there is a dearth of women at senior roles within the Financial and Professional Services, and so the discussion within the thesis has focused on women’s experience and on highlighting gender differences. However there is a vast amount of data on men in the sample which this study has not been able to fully explore and explicate
in this PhD thesis. While men do have more positive career progression outcomes than women in both companies, ultimately very few people get to the top and exclusion exists for men as well as women. There are male voices that share the exclusion, pain and frustration of a similar and different kind to women in the sample, and which could be the subject of another thesis. It is important to note that men’s experience is not plain sailing.

An interesting finding from this study is how children impact on the career choices of men. There are many in the sample who would like to have more flexibility in their working lives so as to partake more actively in childcare. However within these male-breadwinner dominated companies, this need is not recognised or seen as valid. This is further compounded by the lack of statutory paternity leave in Ireland, which further cements men’s role as the breadwinner and women’s role as the care-giver.

Thus many men in the sample face a constrained choice also. Nobody it seems can ‘have it all’ in these greedy, extreme organisations.

7.6 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Change in these companies is driven by the economic bottom-line and the factors which affect that. Change therefore comes either due to an economic imperative to retain and promote women as is the case in AccountCo, or via public-relations concerns whereby positive steps to retain and promote women are seen as providing pay-back in terms of good press, in that companies can ‘be seen to be’ good corporate citizens, and/or as a placation of shareholders. Therefore it seems clear that for real change to occur companies have to have some imperative to make that change. While AccountCo has acted independently for its own set of reasons and benefits to create a culture that is ‘female-friendly’, equality of access is not something which can be left in the hands of the vagaries of a companies’ bottom-line. Legislative intervention would seem appropriate.

These are not altruistic organisations that can be coaxed along and supported in helping create a more equal access to opportunity for women – unless there is something in it for them. Rather they are organisations driven solely by a capitalist imperative to make more money, thus if the financial crisis has taught us anything it is that ‘light-hand’ regulation is not applicable in this industry. This goes the same for equal opportunities legislation. Investments banks and accountancy firms, who between them have been responsible for major failings in management and over-sight of the financial services industry, have proven
themselves incapable and unwilling to self-regulate on several fronts and thus a legislative remedy would seem an appropriate course of action when it comes to gender equality in the industry.

The organisational practices of financial services companies have received large amounts of negative attention from governments within the wake of the global financial crisis, and the increased legislative attention may be a route whereby the issues of glass-walls and glass-ceilings in the industry can be explored more fundamentally.

**Gender quotas**

Not every company needs or sees the value in adopting the nurturing ‘talent management’ approach to leadership that is found in AccountCo, thus realistically, focusing on retaining and promoting women is a bottom-up endeavour which is driven by the company seeing the real value and need to manage people in this way. The pros and cons of gender quotas is outside the remit of this study, however on face-value it would seem clear that in companies such as InvestCo, little real change in the position of women will occur until there is a very real presence of women at the top and in the nitty-gritty ‘big-money’ areas of the company. Thus minimum gender quotas at senior management level would seem to be a potential solution.

**Equal pay audits**

A policy focus on equal pay audits would also be a good idea. Enforced audits provide a ‘name and shame’ consequence which is negative press that most companies are eager to avoid.

Voluntary gender pay reporting was brought into practice in the UK via the Equality Act 2010 which asks employers to audit the pay of male and female employees, with a view to remedying unequal pay differentials. A system which would force companies to publish the pay differences present amongst male and female employees is threatened as a consequence of companies not voluntarily looking at this issue.

While mandatory reporting would be the best option, even the introduction of a voluntary system such as exists in the UK would be welcome within an Irish context.

**Statutory paternity leave**
An area of potential future conflict and change in these organisations is the challenge laid down to the rigid corporate structures by the rise of the ‘next-generation’ father, who has a greater interest and social demand to be an ‘active’ parent, and who thus clashes with the traditional corporate norms of what it means to be an ‘ideal worker’.

The lack of paid paternity leave in Ireland is not in keeping with the changing gender roles and changing expectations of fatherhood. The introduction of statutory paid paternity leave would allow fathers to take on the role they wish to have as active parents. It would also go some way to reversing the gendered social role stereotype of the mother as the only caregiver which is reinforced by current maternity/paternity leave entitlements.

7.7 SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

While this study provides valuable insight into an under-researched and somewhat ‘closed’ world of high finance and professional services in Ireland, it is still just a small-scale study, and is limited in scope. While the case-study approach fills a gap in the current knowledge and lifts the bonnet somewhat on this industry, the findings cannot be generalised beyond the case-study companies.

Thus more research is required to truly get under the skin of this industry and to examine the different sub-cultures within what is one of the most important sectors of our economy, nationally and globally.

There is evidence from the InvestCo case-study of the impact of glass-walls may have had on the global financial crisis, with women more likely than men to be acting as ‘regulators’ in compliance department, while men were the creative ‘actors’ in the more powerful Investments department. It would be worthwhile to investigate the impact of this functional segregation further. The regulatory departments are seen as less powerful than the ‘money-making’ areas and this has potential impacts for how seriously compliance is treated in these companies. This research was carried out in 2008 before the worst of the financial crisis took hold, so perhaps these companies are giving greater power and influence to these regulatory departments than was the case in this study’s findings.
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Research Proposal

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Research Aim

To explore the attitudinal and structural barriers and enablers to career progression within the Financial Services sector. I am seeking access to a Financial Services company to carry out this research.

This research seeks to:

- Investigate what organisational characteristics serve to facilitate or hinder career progression for both men and women.
- Identify the traits of those individuals who have made it to the top of their organisation.
- Examine the attitudes and perceptions of employees towards their career progression – and to explore if there are any gender differences in this regard.

Overview

The main aim of the study is to try to explore and understand what enables and what constrains people from reaching senior positions within the Financial Services. By surveying and interviewing women and men from middle management through to senior management level, it would allow for an exploration of what it takes to make it all the way to the top, while also examining the attitudes, perceptions and aspirations of those people who are effectively in the ‘pipeline to leadership’. Carrying out this research on both men and women allows for a comparative analysis of whether gender has an impact on career progression.

Despite the fact that women in Ireland are better educated than their male counterparts and that girls now outnumber boys when it comes to graduating from college, women remain under-represented in senior positions in both the public and private sectors. Women make up only 8% of CEOs, 21% of senior managers, and 30% of middle managers in Ireland. My proposed research aims to investigate why this is, and what can be done to stem this brain drain.

The Financial Services sector is a particularly interesting sector to study as it is a hugely important sector in the Irish economy, with employment growing by approximately 70% in the past decade.

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Many companies operating in this industry have a publicly stated commitment to attracting, retaining and promoting women, and operating as they do in a highly-competitive global marketplace. Financial Services firms understand the value and necessity of managing their talent. However, despite this, research in the U.S. and the U.K. has found that the financial services industry can be a particularly challenging industry for women to succeed in. Several studies have found that the so-called ‘glass-ceiling’ of invisible barriers to women’s career progression is still very much intact in the financial services industry internationally.\(^\text{32}\) However, very little research has been done on career progression within this important industry in Ireland - my research seeks to fill this gap.

**Rationale for this study**

Women’s increased participation in the workforce over the past decade has been a key driver in the economic growth which has characterised the Celtic Tiger period, and recent reports from the ESRI and Forfas stress the importance of women’s continued participation in the workforce for Ireland’s future economic growth\(^\text{33}\). Companies therefore need to focus on ways of retaining female staff if they are to successfully stem the female brain-drain. Such a brain-drain can severely constrain a businesses growth prospects, as reports by Catalyst and others have shown.\(^\text{34}\)

As IBEC has noted, outside of the public sector, very little research has been done on the barriers and enablers to women’s progress in the workplace in Ireland.\(^\text{35}\) Meanwhile there have been some very interesting studies done on the private sector in both the U.S. and the U.K. over the past five years which have sought to look beyond clichéd notions of the ‘glass-ceiling’ to approach women’s relative scarcity in the workforce in a new manner. Drawing on this new international work, my research aims to investigate how both women and men in Ireland are negotiating the twists and turns of their career progression.

**Proposed Research Design**

The research will take the form of in-depth interviews, coupled with an online survey.

Interviews would be held with between 25 and 50 members of staff (both male and female) at middle and senior management levels. These will be in-depth, semi-structured interviews which will last for roughly one hour. Interviewees would be asked about their experiences in relation to their career progression thus far, and their hopes and aspirations for their future career progression. The aim of the interviews would be to get a nuanced understanding of what has enabled and what has constrained employees’ career progression.

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Senior managers will be interviewed so that the experiences of those who have made it to the top can be understood and the differences in what it took to get there for men and women can be explored. By interviewing the next three reporting levels down from senior management, the experiences and aspirations of those who are effectively in the 'pipeline to leadership' can be examined. Interviews will be completely confidential, only aggregate results would be reported, thereby ensuring that no individual would ever be identifiable.

Secondly, an online survey would be circulated via email to all staff at middle and senior management level. The survey aims to capture attitudes and perceptions towards career progression – it would be very simple to complete and would take no more than twenty minutes. The survey would also be completely confidential, with no individual's answers ever being identifiable.

**Outputs**

- The findings of this research would form the basis of a PhD dissertation.
- A detailed report and presentation of the findings would be produced for the participating company.
APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

Career Progression in the Financial Services

Objectives

- To explore the attitudinal and structural barriers and enablers to career progression within the Financial Services sector.
- Investigate what organisational characteristics serve to facilitate or hinder career progression for both men and women.
- Identify what motivates and enables people to progress to the very highest levels in their careers and what are the barriers to that progression.
- Examine the attitudes and perceptions of employees towards their career progression.

Introduction

- Introduce study; confidentiality; timing.

SECTION 1 – Introduction/Current Role

- Intro topic in a general way – tell me a little bit about yourself and your life/biography to date - where they were born, went to school, parents, siblings etc, college – ‘warm up’ – gives context for subsequent probes and prompts.
- Role in ‘InvestCo.’ – position/team structure/subordinates/responsibility for budget?
- Department – how it’s structured/hierarchy/gender balance
- Typical day – responsibilities/hours worked etc.

SECTION 2 – Education/Career History

- Educational background
  -  Third level qualifications
  -  Acquisition of qualifications part of long-term career plan?
  -  Any further educational ambitions?
  -  Gender segregation at second level school?

- Career History
  -  Can you map out your career history from when you started working to date
    -  Probe whether it was planned carefully, or if it evolved by chance/organically?
  -  Critical decisions/turning points/breakthroughs
    -  Probe for times when transitions occurred and career successes, failures, challenges and opportunities were experienced.
    -  Career set-backs – how were these handled?
  -  Promotions – how many, how did they occur?
  -  How many years line management experience do you have?
How have you gotten to where you are today? How have you achieved your success to date – what do you put it down to?
- What are the main strategies that have helped your career advancement
- What factors have hindered your career progression?
- International assignments – How many have you had/would you be willing to move if it was good for your career progression?
- Triumphs/regrets?

SECTION 3 – FS/InvesttCo. Structural Issues

- Management style/culture in InvesttCo.
  - Political org? – do you use political strategies to get on/what do you perceive to be political strategies?
  - Probe whether impression management techniques are perceived as important? – ability to self-promote/gain high-visibility assignments etc?
- In terms of commitment to career – what do you think that means in this org? – e.g. long hours/ impression management.
- Does culture differ by department?
- Financial Services culture in general
  - Old boys club/macho culture?
- Do you have a clear idea of what you need to do to make it to the top in InvesttCo./FS industry in general? – what do people have to do to be promoted?
  - Perception of senior jobs – would you be discouraged from seeking promotion because of the characteristics of these senior roles?
  - Especially re Investment side of business – management style/culture/ - what kind of people succeed in this area? – can you describe the kind of person who seems to make it to the top? - what does it take to make it?
- Training and development opportunities in InvesttCo.?
- Promotional procedures – fair and transparent?

SECTION 4 – Career Goals/Plans/Aspirations

- Current role
  - A promo from last position?
  - Opportunities to develop/scope for growth and learning?
  - How long do you plan on staying in this role/company?
- What does success mean to you
  - What drives/motivates you? – money, power, status, satisfaction of reaching full potential etc.
  - What influence has your definition of success had on your career progress?
  - In terms of priorities in your life, where does career fit?
  - What does having a career mean to you?
  - How important is career success to success in your life as a whole?
- Do you have a career plan? – do you have 5/10 yr goals?
- What are you goals/ambitions for your career?
  - How many levels from where you are now would you like to progress to?
  - What do you think you need to do to achieve your career goals? – e.g. what jobs do you think you need to be going for next/what gaps are there in your experience that you need to fill to progress?
  - In future, what do you think might be the main obstacles to you achieving your career goals? And what do you think might facilitate your goals?
  - Do you think your goals are realistic/achievable?

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• Satisfaction with career progress to date?/progress relative to others/pay/fulfilment of your potential

SECTION 5 – Work/Life Balance

• How would you describe the relationship between your personal and professional life?
• What are your thoughts on your own W/L balance?
• FWO available in ‘InvesttCo.’?
• Have you ever used them/would you like to in future
  o If they were widely used/accepted would you like to use them?
• Thoughts on FWO/Attitude in ‘InvesttCo.’ to FWO – supportive of W/L balance or FWO seen as career limiting? are people who use them likely to be promoted? – are people who use them ultimately not really as committed to career advancement as a F/T worker?
• Long-hours culture? – culture of ‘presenteeism’?
  o How many hours on average per week do you work?
  o Do you take work home/work on holidays etc?
• Do you think this is the kind of job you could do with small children etc?
• Career interruptions – ever taken sabbatical/career break? – any plans to in the future? – do you think you could sustain the career progress you have made if you were to take a break from work to travel/look after kids etc?
• Would you accept slower career advancement for greater work flexibility?

SECTION 6 – Family Background

• Parents occupations
• Parents level of educational attainment.
• Siblings/position in family
• Parental encouragement for career?

SECTION 7 – Spouse/Children

• Spouse
  o Occupation?
  o Perceived importance of spouse’s job/how much does spouse contribute to household income?
• Children
  o Childcare arrangements
  o What impact has having children had on your career?
    ▪ In terms of practicalities of working as well as impact on goals/ aspirations etc?
  o Family responsibilities explored
  o Patterns of occupational behaviour, especially re timing of marriage/childbirth.
  o Priority placed on family and work roles explored and how/if these priorities changed over time
  o Issues of role conflict and overload should be investigated along with coping mechanisms adopted
  o Contribution partner makes to childcare and running of household, and the extent to which paid home help is employed.

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o Can you talk about children etc in work or do you think this is perceived as a potential weakness?
o Career advancement perceived as dependent on putting career before personal/family life.
o Do you think you could combine being a parent with reaching the very top in this company/profession/industry?

SECTION 8 – Social Capital

- Networking
  o Are you involved in any formal networking groups internal/external to ‘InvesttCo.’?
  o Informal networking? – social events etc
  o How important do you think networking is in this industry?/in ‘InvesttCo.’?
  o Is there an ‘old boys’ network?
  o Is ‘who you know’ important in this business?
  o How important has networking been to your career development?
- Role Models
  o Who are your role models
  o Key characteristics of each person cited
  o Relevance of each RM for own career
  o What have you learnt from this role model
- Mentors
  o Male/female
  o Formal/informal
- Career encouragement from colleagues/superiors/family – encouraged to go for promo?
  o If you wanted career advice who would you go to?

SECTION 9 – Gender

- Do you think your gender has had any impact on your career progression?
  o E.g. working in a predominantly male environment – does it help to be a man?
- Can you describe an incident in which gender affected your career?
- Do you think there is a fair representation of women at senior levels in ‘InvesttCo.’?
  o If no, why do you think this is?
- Out of 184 employees at VP thru to Director, there are only 47 women (74%:26%) – why do you think this is?
- Female interviewees – ask what advice they would give to aspiring career women; and whether they are affiliated with any formal women’s networks – views on these kinds of groups?

SECTION 10 – Wrap-up

- What would be your advice to someone entering this profession on how to succeed in this business?/in ‘InvesttCo.’?
  o Anything you’d advise them not to do?
- If you were to be looking back in 20/30 yrs time, what would you hoped to have achieved in your career?
- Is there anything we haven’t discussed that you’d like to mention?
APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Written Informed Consent:

In-depth interview as part of a PhD study on career progression in the Irish Financial Services Industry

Who am I?

I am a PhD candidate in the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin (TCD) and I am conducting a study into what hinders and what facilitates people’s career progression within the financial services in Ireland.

What am I asking you to do if you take part?

As part of my PhD research project, I would like to ask you to answer a number of questions about your life in an interview. These questions will be related to your career choices, development, progression and aspirations. The interview will take place in a location that suits you and at a time that suits you. The interview will last approximately one hour. Because I want to make sure that I remember everything that you say, I would like to tape record our interview. You would not be required to do anything special to prepare for this interview.

Privacy and Confidentiality

With your permission, I will audiotape the interview to help me to record your story accurately. In other words, the tapes will be used only for keeping track of what we said. I will turn off the recorder if at any time you wish that some part of the interview not be recorded. After the interview, I will listen to the recording and type up what we said. Once the study is over, the recordings will be destroyed.
What you say in the interview is completely confidential, which means that whatever is discussed or spoken about in the interview will not be communicated to other people.

If there is a question you do not want to answer for any reason, you will not have to. If you feel distressed at any time while answering any of the questions, you do not have to finish the interview.

**How Long will it take?**

Each interview will last about one hour and will take place at a time and place that suits you. We will arrange this together if you agree to take part.

**Is taking part in the study my choice? What happens if I decide I do not want to take part?**

Taking part in the study is voluntary. You are free to refuse to answer any questions and stop taking part in the study at any time, without giving any reason. Please take time to think about whether you want to take part in this research or not. If you have any questions, you can contact me at the number or e-mail address provided below. If you do want to take part, I’ll ask you to sign the consent form and keep a copy of this information so you can refer to it again.

**What happens to the information I provide?**

The information will be written up into a PhD thesis. The information may also be presented at conferences or in other publications. Real names or any information that might identify you are any other person will not be used in any of these reports or publications.

**Contact Details**

Maria Quinlan
School of Social Work and Social Policy
Trinity College Dublin

Phone 087 2242123
INFORMED CONSENT FORMS (PARTICIPANTS OVER 18 YEAR)

DECLARATION

I have read this consent form and have had time to consider whether to take part in this study. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the research at any time without disadvantage. I agree to take part in this research.

I understand that, as part of this research project, audiotapes of my participation in the research will be made. I understand that my name will not be identified in any use of these records. I am voluntarily agreeing that the audiotapes may be studied by the PhD candidate for use in their PhD research project and used in scientific publications.

If you do not wish the interview to be recorded please tick here

[ ]

Name of Participant (in block letters) _________________________________

Signature _________________________________

Date / /
Survey on Career Progression in the Financial Services

What it Takes to Make it Career

Progression within the Financial Services

School of Social Work and Social Policy

Trinity College Dublin

July 2008

This questionnaire is part of a research project which I am undertaking as part of a PhD dissertation in Trinity College Dublin. It aims to examine what motivates and enables people to progress to the very top of the career ladder, and what factors serve to hinder that progress. My research is focused specifically on the Financial Services industry.

Your views, experiences and opinions on this issue are what this questionnaire seeks to capture. I am very interested in hearing your views on this subject, and I would be very grateful if you would take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your participation would be hugely appreciated!

This questionnaire is COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL and ANONYMOUS. The questionnaire will come directly back to me and all data that I receive will be in a format that does not and cannot ever identify an individual person. I will not be able to identify individual respondents in any way and all data will be treated in complete confidence.

The questionnaire will take approximately 10-15 mins to complete.

Demographic Information

1. What is your age group?

2. What is your nationality?

3. Sex

4. What is your marital status?

5. What is your highest level of educational attainment?

6. Do you hold a Professional Qualification? (e.g. Accountancy, Law, CFA etc)

7. With regard to your job in ‘X Company’, in what location are you primarily based?
Questions Regarding your Current Job

1. What Corporate Title do you hold?

2. How many people do you have working for you?

3. In which Functional Area do you work?

4. How long have you worked in ‘X Company’? (rounded up to the nearest year)

5. How long have you spent in your present position (rounded up to nearest year)

6. How many years work experience do you have in total? (i.e. including years worked in companies other than ‘X Company’)

7. On average, how many hours do you work per week?

8. Please indicate the total compensation (i.e. Salary plus Bonus) which you received in 2007, within the ranges provided (if you were not in ‘X Company’ for the whole of 2007, please indicate your expected total compensation for 2008)

9. How many times have you applied for a promotion in ‘X Company’? (For the purposes of this survey, a promotion is defined as including not only increases in the hierarchical level, but also job changes or transfers involving significant increases in responsibility)

10. How many times have you been promoted in ‘X Company’?

11. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements with regard to ‘X Company’

   - Promotional procedures here are fair and transparent
   - There are many opportunities to progress my career
   - I am regularly assigned important/high visibility projects
   - Working long hours is essential to progressing in ‘X Company’
   - In ‘X Company’, it’s important ‘to be seen’ to be working long hours
   - Networking is essential to progressing in ‘X Company’
   - You must ‘self-promote’ in order to advance in ‘X Company’
   - Progressing to the top in ‘X Company’ is not worth the personal/family sacrifice
   - ‘X Company’ has a fair representation of women and men at senior levels
   - Men have an easier route to the top in ‘X Company’ than women with equivalent levels of education and experience
   - Who you know is equally or more important than what you know if you want to be a senior manager in ‘X Company’
Questions Regarding your Career in General

1. How many levels up from the position you now hold do you aspire to reach (either within ‘X Company’, or in your profession generally)

2. Please indicate your extent of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements
   - It is important to me to keep advancing in my career
   - It is important for me to be seen as very successful
   - I very much want to 'make my mark' in my career
   - Meeting my own inner standards of success is most important to me
   - I am prepared to work long and hard to gain prominence in my career
   - My goal is to reach the 'top' in my career
   - With my knowledge and expertise I can easily get a job outside of this company
   - I am satisfied with my career progression to date
   - Progressing to the top of my industry is not worth the effort
   - I've gone as far in my career as is possible
   - I would accept slower career advancement for greater work flexibility
   - I have a well-defined career plan

3. Do you have a mentor?

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements
   - I want to work, but I do not want to have a demanding career
   - I make as many sacrifices as are necessary in order to advance in my work/career
   - I devote a significant amount of my time to building my career and developing the skills necessary to advance in my career
   - I devote whatever time and energy it takes to move up in my job/career field.
   - The goal of my life is to have an interesting career

Facilitators and Barriers to Career Progression

1. Please indicate which, if any, of the following you think have been important in helping your career progression to date
   - Consistently exceeding performance expectations
   - Successfully managing others
   - Seeking high-visibility assignments
   - Having recognised expertise
   - Moving to different functional areas
   - Initiating discussions with superiors about your career aspirations
• Being willing to work long hours/weekends
• Networking with influential colleagues
• Developing and adhering to your own career goals
• Having an influential mentor or sponsor
• Gaining line management experience
• Gaining international experience
• Being willing and able to relocate
• Changing companies
• Upgrading your educational credentials
• Being seen to have a strong commitment to work
• Lobbying and pushing hard for promotions
• Being politically savvy

2. Please indicate which, if any, of the following you think have been important in *hindering* your career progression to date

• Lack of opportunities to take on visible and/or challenging assignments
• Exclusion from informal networks
• Your gender
• Lack of role models
• Lack of line management experience
• Lack of awareness of organisational politics
• Lack of mentoring
• In hospitable corporate culture
• Commitment to family/personal responsibilities
• Your lack of desire to reach senior levels
• Your lack of ability to reach senior levels
• Ineffective leadership style
• Your lack of commitment to your career
• Managers' preconceptions re your commitment to the job
• Your lack of career planning
• Unwillingness to take risks
• Having children

*Work/Life Balance*

1. Please indicate if you currently use, have used in the past or would like to use, any of the following *Flexible Work Arrangements*

• Compressed work week
• Telecommuting/working from home
• Reduced work schedule/part-time
• Flexible arrival/departure time
• Career break/sabbaticals

2. Have you ever done the following in order to balance work and personal life (please tick all that apply)

• Chosen a position with fewer responsibilities
• Declined a promotion
• Taken parental leave
• Left the workforce temporarily
• Left or downsized your career in order to support your spouse/partners career advancement
• None of these
• Other (please specify)

3. How many hours per week would you estimate you spend on household chores (including childcare if applicable)?

4. Please indicate how often you do the following

• Work weekends
• Check work email and/or take work calls outside of normal office hours
• Travel internationally on business
• Start work early
• Work late
• Bring work home
• Work during your holidays

5. Does your partner/spouse work outside of the home?

6. Between you and your partner/spouse who earns the most money?

7. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements

• I find it difficult to balance the demands of my work and personal/family life
• I believe I can use a flexible work arrangement without jeopardising my career advancement
• I have had to put personal goals on hold in order to get where I am in my career today
• During my career, I have had to put my career goals on hold in order to achieve my personal/family aspirations
• It is possible to be a senior manager and work part-time
• It is difficult to combine a senior management position with family responsibilities
• If necessary, I sacrifice family time to ensure work commitments are met
• People who work part time or adopt other flexible working patterns are not as committed to their careers as people who work full-time

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• To advance in 'X Company' career must come before personal/family life

8. Do you have children

Questions regarding Children

1. How many children do you have?
2. What are the ages of your children?
3. Have you ever taken Maternity/Paternity Leave?
4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements
   • If I could afford to give up work and look after my child(ren) full-time I would
   • Having children has restricted my career

Questions regarding Gender and the Workplace

1. Consider your beliefs and feelings towards women managers at 'X Company'. Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements about women managers
   • Women managers have their ideas challenged more often than male managers do
   • Women managers have to perform much better than male managers in order to succeed
   • Women managers must behave in a typically "masculine" way in order to be taken seriously
   • Compared to male managers, female managers must continually prove themselves
   • Women managers have their work judged more critically than male managers do

2. There are much fewer women than men at senior management levels within the Financial Services sector in Ireland, please indicate by stating your agreement/disagreement with the following statements, why you think this is?
   • Women have not been in the workforce long enough to make their mark yet
   • Women prioritise family commitments over their careers
   • Women are less willing than men to incur the personal costs of leadership
   • Women fail to apply for senior positions, even when qualified
   • Having a challenging career is more important to men than to women
   • Women aren't willing to 'give what it takes' to secure a top flight position
   • Women lack good career strategies
   • Women lack confidence in their own abilities
   • Time spent out of the workforce having and rearing children holds women back
   • Lack of organisational support
   • Preconceptions about women's abilities and suitability for certain roles can hold women back
   • There is a lack of suitably qualified women for senior management positions
   • Women don't have the same access to informal networks and mentors as men do
- Corporate cultures are often hostile to women
- Financial Services is still very much a 'boys club'
- Women lack senior female role-models
- Women lack the aggression needed for senior positions
- Women lack the competitiveness needed for senior positions