

Title: The Glass Ceiling of Women in Management: An Investigation of the Hotel Industry in Chiang Mai

Researcher: Kafira Nitida Lake

Degree: Master of Business Administration (International Business)

Advisor: Dr. Wanniwat Pansuwong

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Institution: Payap University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated whether or not women managers in the hotel industry in Chiang Mai perceived a glass ceiling to be in place. Coupled with this it explored and identified factors that create or maintain the glass ceiling experience for women managers in the industry. This was achieved by conducting and analysing in-depth interviews with ten women managers from 4-5 star hotels in Chiang Mai. A qualitative approach was chosen utilizing convenience sampling, a non-probability technique.

The participants of this study were women managers evenly distributed across different managerial positions in the hotel structure and comprised of Senior Assistant Managing Director; Quality Continuous Improvement Manager; Director of Rooms; Front Office Manager; Admin Supervisor; Assistant Housekeeper; Assistant Learning and Development Manager; Assistant Human Resource Manager; Rooms Division Manager; and Club Manager. The majority of respondents were 39 years of age or younger and married with at least one child. Most of the respondents had a bachelor's degree or higher and 19 years or less of working experience.

The findings from the study showed a strong aversion to the perception of a glass ceiling among women managers in the Chiang Mai hotel industry. In contrary there was a high degree of consensus that the industry provided equal opportunity for career

advancement for both men and women at a comparable rate. However, it was also revealed that women managers did struggle to find a work-life balance. Women managers believed that time management coupled with family understanding and support was vital in coping with this conflict.

The problems associated with maintaining a work-life balance were further fuelled by the nature of the hotel industry. The hours are long and often unpredictable as confirmed by the women managers, which means that work and family responsibilities come into conflict.

The study also supported that Thailand has one of the highest percentages of women in management in the world and illustrates that the study is relatable to the hotel industry in Chiang Mai. However, as the research only takes into consideration the hotel industry and the city of Chiang Mai, the findings could not be generalized and thus might not be applicable to other industries or the larger demographic scales. Thus, future research should be expanded to include other industries and geographical locations.