Women and the glass ceiling in the community of Madrid hotel industry

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Abstract: The hotel industry labour market has a strong female presence, although women have limited access to management positions. The gender gap in the industry must be identified in order to overcome it. This research is based on a census designed to analyse the participation of women in management positions at the corporate headquarters of hotel chains and 3, 4 and 5 star hotels (independent and related to a chain) in the community of Madrid. The study concludes that there is a glass ceiling due to the male dominance of management and the stereotyping of certain positions (vertical and horizontal segregation). Nevertheless, a change in the trend has been observed and new positions have appeared as a result of ITCs.

Keywords: hospitality; discrimination; gender gap; glass ceiling; tourism; profile of women managers; Madrid; women; vertical segregation; horizontal segregation; human resources management.


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1 Introduction

The globalisation of the tourism market has created new opportunities for the professional development of women (McKenzie, 2007). Growth in the hotel industry in recent decades has been in line with that of the tourism industry, undoubtedly resulting in important professional opportunities at a global level. According to World Tourism Organization figures (UNWTO, 2015), tourism accounts for nearly 10% of the world’s GDP, 6% of global trade and one in 11 jobs in the world, being one of the most resilient sectors of the economy. This global phenomenon also means professional opportunities for women, who represent 34 to 40% of people employed in tourism and 48% in the hotel and catering industry. It is therefore one of the areas with the greatest participation of women (UNWTO, 2015).

However, the tourism industry is associated in general with low salaries and very few fringe benefits (Skalpe, 2007; Blake et al., 2008; Muñoz-Bullón, 2009; Lacher and Oh, 2012). In addition, Lawson et al. (2012) show how the leisure and hotel industries have
one of the highest rates of rotation, when compared to other areas of the economy. This rotation is due and adds to the fact that employment opportunities in tourism have lower average levels of quality, lower salaries, more part-time contracts and more seasonal work (Seckelmann, 2002; Blake et al., 2008; Lacher and Oh, 2012).

This is particularly evident in the case of women. As in many other markets, the tourism labour market features a strong female presence in certain positions (administration and services), but limited access to management positions (Muñoz-Bullón, 2009; Clevenger and Singh, 2013; Santero-Sánchez et al., 2015). Compared to other industries, there is also a greater trend towards gender stereotyping of certain jobs (Santero-Sánchez et al., 2015).

Women have increased their presence in the market, both from a quantitative as well as qualitative point of view, but they are still faced with numerous barriers created by labour discrimination (Ramos et al., 2002; Döbrich et al., 2014). This situation is the result of an assignment of tasks based on gender (division of labour according to gender) and the greater value given to work performed by men as opposed to women, which gives rise to a devaluation of the work performed by women and to different salaries (OIT, 2004; Cohen and Huffman 2007). Amongst other issues, this significantly affects job satisfaction (Tomaževiè et al., 2014).

Aware of the situation facing women in this sector and the importance of women in society as well as in the economy, the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2011) considered one of its prime objectives for the millennium to be the elimination of gender inequality in the tourism industry. It is therefore seen as particularly important to research gender inequality in the Spanish tourism industry, which has the third highest number of tourists in the world after France and the USA. With regard to revenue, Spain is in the second position, following the USA (WEF, 2015a).

1.1 Research objective

The purpose of this study is to analyse the participation of women in management positions in the community of Madrid hotel industry, at both independent hotels as well as hotel chains and their corporate levels, with the aim of detecting the existence of horizontal and vertical segregation and therefore of a glass ceiling (GC). Given the lack of primary data on the sector, the three objectives were:

a to carry out a census in order to determine the women management positions existing in each area, the corporate headquarters of hotel chains and 3, 4 and 5 star hotels

b to analyse the number of permanent women employees in relation to the average number of permanent hotel employees and the relationship between the former and the type of position held by women

c to detect the existence of a GC and vertical and horizontal segregation at the corporate headquarters of hotel chains and 3, 4 and 5 star hotels in the community of Madrid.

The findings from this study can provide researchers with a better understanding of the existence of a GC in the hospitality industry and the need to eliminate the differences for better development.
2 Literature review

2.1 Women and the GC: present situation and future prospects

Women in top management positions have been and are still a controversial issue. Despite extensive research (Newman, 2016), the existence of barriers preventing women from reaching top executive positions of responsibility in companies and organisations is still questioned. At the same time and in spite of research supporting the fact that women in management positions generate positive differences in results in the organisation (Adler, 1998; Welbourne, 1999; Ross-Smith et al., 2005; Catalyst, 2007; McKinsey and Company, 2010; Dezso and Ross, 2011; Zahiruddin et al., 2014), there has been no substantial improvement in the percentage of women in top positions. Leveraging diversity involves organisations drawing upon the diversity of its members to not only benefit the organisation in terms of profit margins, but also for the individual’s career experiences (Bristol and Tisdell, 2010).

Balancing the rights and opportunities available to women with those of their male counterparts would achieve a qualitative improvement in society and modern day economies (Mishra et al., 2015) however there are still professional and personal circumstances that prevent women from promotion. As Poloński (2001) shows, prejudice about women’s status and role in society, cultural prejudice, formal educational schemes and organisational obstacles are only the most common and most influencing constraints.

The concept of a GC first appeared in the ‘80s, as a metaphor to describe the invisible and artificial barriers preventing women from moving up in the hierarchical organisation of companies (Johns, 2013; Patton and Haynes, 2014). In defining the concept of a GC, Albrecht et al. (2003) explain it as a phenomenon in which women progress normally in working environments until a restriction appears to limit their chances of promotion. There are four specific criteria for a GC to exist (Cotter et al., 2001). A GC represents the existence of inequality in:

- professional opportunities that are not based on a worker’s specific characteristics
- certain corporate parameters: the number of men or women in a particular position or salary levels based on gender
- the possibilities of promotion to a higher position
- increased inequality throughout a person’s career.

In recent years, women have increased their presence in management, but not in the highest positions (Clevenger and Singh, 2013) and they continue to be under-represented in corporate leadership roles (Patton and Haynes, 2014). A GC is therefore comprises a series of factors combining vertical segregation or the stereotyping of certain positions (Pichler et al., 2008; Santero-Sánchez et al., 2015).

Even in jobs predominantly held by women, there also exists ‘vertical occupational segregation’, in which it is more likely for men to hold the highest and best paid positions (UNWTO y UNWOMEN, 2011). Despite the slow but steady increase in the percentage of women professionals in companies, the nature of the professional options available to women continues to prevent them from progressing up the scale in the organisations in which they work [e.g., Gander (2014) points out that young women entering the workplace are subject to direct discrimination]. When qualified women are hired, they are
generally assigned lower value jobs in terms of qualifications required and remuneration, holding positions considered as ‘non-strategic’, instead of operational positions that give them specific integrated experience in management that leads to senior executive positions. They therefore become support staff for their male colleagues, who are strategically better placed (UNWTO y UNWOMEN, 2011). However, Poloski et al. (2016) showed that the existence of gender segregation is far less present among highly educated women.

In addition, Hultin (2003) suggests that men who perform typically female work have more chances of promotion than women with the same qualifications, which supports the idea of a glass escalator, meaning that men reach positions of greater responsibility faster than women.

One of the most frequent obstacles to analysing the reasons behind a GC is that, on many occasions, neither companies nor women themselves acknowledge its existence. In this regard, the study by Ryan et al. (2007) concluded that while women are more likely to acknowledge its existence, danger and injustice, men are more likely to question the existence of a GC and minimise the risks.

Hoobler et al. (2009) propose a model that helps to explain one of the reasons for the existence of GCs. They conclude that, irrespective of gender, managers believe that women have a conflict of interests between work and family life. Executives believe that women cannot dedicate their time to both functions and therefore do not adapt as well to the organisation and their jobs. This belief on the part of management results in fewer possibilities of internal promotion. In later research, Hoobler et al. (2010) confirm that the conflict between family and work also has a more objective effect, on salary. However, Yonetani et al. (2007) pointed out that organisational family supportiveness has no significant effects either directly on turnover intention or indirectly on work–family conflict.

GCs are a global reality, but even so, do not have consistent effects in all regions and countries. The global gender gap index developed by the WEF shows that in 2014, Spain was in 29th position, having seriously worsened its position in recent years, with the crisis being particularly cruel to women in the labour market. The study by De la Rica et al. (2008) shows another interesting fact about Spain. These authors observe that the salary gap has improved in mid-management, but increased in higher positions, especially at top level. GCs are predicted to continue to be a problem faced by women for at least the next 50 years. Progress towards gender equality in leadership in the last decade has been slow. Fain (2011) concluded that achieving equality in lower positions on the scale takes less time than in positions of greater responsibility. In the latter case, equality could take up to 60 years.

2.2 Women and the GC: the tourism industry

As mentioned above and also in the case of other industries, studies such as those of Vázquez (2008) and McKinsey et al. (2012) confirm that tourism companies whose boards of directors contain both women and men improve their results and profitability, due to increased diversity, creativity and business innovation (Robinson and Dechant, 1997; Adler, 2001; Carter et al., 2002; Tyson, 2003; Redondo and Jimeno, 2005; Catalyst, 2007).
The study by Marco (2012) on the Spanish hotel industry concludes that if demographic and financial variables remain the same, the results relating to total sales, total assets and the number of employees are better in hotels managed by women than those managed by men. The same study nevertheless indicates that the majority of work is considered as domestic service (Bolles, 1997; Faulkenberry et al., 2000; Lindsay and McQuaid, 2004). As a result, the hotel industry has been traditionally accused of perpetuating the roles normally associated to women, given that women have traditionally held lower and less qualified positions (Sinclair, 1997; Hunter and Watson, 2006).

Muñoz-Bullón (2009) shows that there is a salary gap in the Spanish tourism industry. The differences in the salaries paid to men and women are due to occupational segregation, the type of contract and the level of education required. Even so and according to the study, 12% of the gap cannot be explained using these variables and could therefore be considered as discrimination.

According to a study Kara (2012) carried out on the Turkish hotel industry, women are still at a disadvantage as they face more barriers than men; barriers associated with education, family and the workplace. The professional barriers faced by women include: social practices, educational experiences, family roles and a lack of business contact networks. Another recent study on the Portuguese hotel industry claims that, despite having higher levels of education, women are more prevalent in low qualified jobs, whereas men are more likely to hold executive and management positions. Moreover, the salaries paid to women are consistently lower (Carvalho et al., 2014).

During the last few years, however, more women have reached management positions, basically due to three main factors (Marco, 2012):

1. growth in the industry which, in itself, has enabled women to increase their presence in management positions
2. the increased and improved training of women (Ng and Pine, 2003; Armstrong, 2006)
3. the idea that companies should take advantage of the know-how and skills of both men and women, which can produce higher profits (Kochan et al., 2003; Merilainen et al., 2009).

Another factor to take into account is the higher level of empowerment of women, due to the increased number of women in executive positions (Wren, 2006; Kara, 2012). However, in spite of this increase, the percentage of women in relation to men that occupy management positions in hotels is still very low.

There are practically no studies on the number of women executives in the Spanish tourism industry. The only study identified is that of Marcé and Milán (Hosteltur, 2011), which states that in the City of Barcelona, with 220 5, 4 and 3 star hotels, only 69 are managed by women; a ratio of 31%.

The analysis of the existence of a GC could help to improve women’s job satisfaction. Previous work has confirmed the relationship between a GC and job satisfaction (Smith et al., 2012). If women believe their work can be recognised, their engagement and job satisfaction will improve (Hoigaard et al., 2012; Jung and Yoon, 2015). With regard to this last objective, this research analyses the existence of horizontal and vertical segregation and, therefore, of a GC.
3 Methodology

To analyse the presence of women in management positions in the community of Madrid hotel industry, a census of the women holding management positions in 3, 4 and 5 star hotels and in hotel chain headquarters was conducted.

3.1 Population and sample

The targets of the study were 3, 4 and 5 star hotels (Decree 159/2003, of 10 July on the organisation of hotel establishments in the community of Madrid) and headquarters of hotel chains. The hotels represent 80% of the beds available in the region. Hotel chains constitute 49% of all hotel beds and the majority of the hotels belonged to a national chain (80%) with a large number of hotels.

Owing to the differences in the type of work performed, it was necessary to distinguish between women working in hotels (independent hotels or hotel chains) and at the corporate headquarters of hotel chains (executive positions).

The research population was therefore comprised of 261, 3, 4 and 5 star hotels and the top 25 hotel chains in Spain, according to the 2013 Hosteltur ranking. In both cases, the survey was sent to the management (directors of hotels and human resources directors).

Finally, in the case of hotels, the sample consisted of 115 valid questionnaires, with a response rate of 44%. In the second case, the corporate headquarters of hotel chains, the rate of response was much higher, reaching 60% (15 main hotel chains).

3.2 Data collection

There was no real and reliable data on the number of management positions held by women at hotels in the community of Madrid, which made it was necessary to prepare the census subject to the study. Furthermore, the population of the study was extremely diverse, due to the differences in the size and category of the (3, 4 and 5 star) hotels and whether or not they belonged to a chain. As a result, the census survey was based on a questionnaire designed firstly to identify the general features of the hotel and the management positions per area and, secondly, the positions held by women.

In order to consistently and accurately define the types of positions existing at hotels and corporate headquarters of hotel chains, taking into account previous literature (Talón and González, 2002), a list of the existing management positions was prepared. A ‘management position’ was defined as a position that involved decision-making tasks and the coordination of teams.

Owing to the diversity of the hotel industry and recommendations by experts from the Spanish Confederation of Hotels and Tourist Accommodation (CEHAT) and its foundation, the tool used to gather information consisted of two electronic questionnaires, distributed to both types of hotel (independent hotels and hotel chains) and corporate headquarters of hotel chains. The questionnaire contained questions on the existence of a particular position and whether or not such position was held by a woman, in addition to the number of permanent positions. Corporate headquarters of hotel chains were also asked to indicate the number of managers (men/women) in the community of Madrid, as
well as the number of board members (men/women). The questionnaires were revised by CEHAT experts, hotel chain executives and hotel managers before being published.

Once the sample was obtained, it was weighted according to a well-known fact about the population: the real weighting depended on the number of stars of the hotels. In fact, given that the questionnaire was self-administered and the census survey sent to the entire population, the sample structure was not determined a priori, but rather adjusted later according to the proportion of the variable that defined the population. The differences between the proportion of a variable in the sample and its actual proportion in the population were adjusted by weighting coefficients, which can be observed in Table 1.

### Table 1  Weighting of the sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of hotel</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Response achieved in relation to the population to date</th>
<th>Weighting coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>N %</td>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel 3 star</td>
<td>35 30.4</td>
<td>84 32.2</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 star</td>
<td>68 59.1</td>
<td>153 58.6</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 star</td>
<td>12 10.4</td>
<td>24 9.2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115 100.0</td>
<td>261 100.0</td>
<td>44.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.3 Statistical data analysis

Data analysis was performed using the statistical package for social science (SPSS for Windows 20.0). Descriptive statistics were calculated for the variables studied. The results are shown in absolute and relative terms, with central trend measures. To measure and evaluate the degree of association between the different variables, a comparison of mean squares was used, with analysis of variance (ANOVA) using the F-test.

Finally, it should be pointed out that in considering the management positions at hotels belonging to hotel chains, a distinction was made between hotels with more or fewer than 200 rooms. The reason is that in hotels with fewer than 200 rooms, the actual management positions were fewer than those initially calculated. This reduced the population considerably. 70% of the hotels that replied to the census survey belong to a chain and only 44 have more than 200 rooms.

### 4 Results

As shown above, the results of the census study are divided into two groups: 3, 4 and 5 star hotels in the community of Madrid and corporate headquarters of hotel chains. The preparation of statistics on the presence of women in management positions involves the difficulty of determining the different management positions, as differences may exist between hotels and the corporate headquarters of hotel chains. Talón and González (2002) established a list of management positions in each department present in hotels and hotel chains, which was contrasted by CEHAT experts, hotel chain executives and hotel managers before being published.
4.1 Women management positions

4.1.1 3, 4 and 5 star hotels

The types of positions at hotels and the identification of those held by women were determined per type of management:

a. hotels belonging to a chain (and those belonging to a chain with more or less than 200 rooms)

b. independent hotels (see Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotels related to a chain</th>
<th>More than 200 rooms</th>
<th>Less than 200 rooms</th>
<th>Independent hotels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total no.</td>
<td>% in relation to men</td>
<td>Total no.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant management</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services management/resident manager</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reception management</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant reception management</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night audit management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reservations management</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>68.0%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household management</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant household management</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant maintenance management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial management</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and marketing management</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales management</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue management</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human resources management</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training management</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Crossed out numbers corresponds to ‘at hotels with less than 200 rooms, only general and assistant hotel management positions were considered’.

Source: Own data
Table 2  Types of positions at hotels and identification of the positions held by women (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hotels related to a chain</th>
<th>Independent hotels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>More than 200 rooms</strong></td>
<td><strong>Less than 200 rooms</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total no.</strong></td>
<td><strong>% in relation to men</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration management</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and beverage (F&amp;B) management</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant kitchen management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant maître D/restaurant management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant maître D</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement management</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissary management</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality control management</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events management</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>84.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information system and/or technology management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spa centre management</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>282</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of women in management positions</td>
<td>617</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Crossed out numbers corresponds to ‘at hotels with less than 200 rooms, only general and assistant hotel management positions were considered’.

Source: Own data

According to this distinction and bearing in mind that at hotels with fewer than 200 rooms, only general and assistant hotel management positions were considered. A total of 617 women held executive positions.

Data in italics text represents positions at which women are under and over represented. The data obtained shows that in hotels with fewer than 200 rooms that are related to hotel chains, the percentage of men and women in hotel general management positions is balanced (47.5% of women), whereas in hotels with more than 200 rooms, the percentage drops to 10%, showing that the percentage of women in management positions is higher in smaller hotels. In the case of independent hotels, 32.8% are managed by women. The percentages are particularly low in larger hotels, showing that the higher the position and responsibility, the greater number of men, as observed in previous studies (De Anca and Aragón, 2007; Marcé and Milán, 2011). It should therefore be highlighted that it is at larger hotels belonging to hotel chains where the presence of women executives is lower, followed by independent hotels. This fact
highlights the existence of vertical segregation in the sector. Nevertheless, these figures are higher than those obtained in the study carried out by CETT (Hosteltur, 2011) in the city of Barcelona, in which only 31% of the 3, 4 and 5 star hotels were managed by women.

In addition, similarities were observed between hotels belonging to a chain and independent hotels with regard to the positions held by men and women. The results leave no room for doubt that job stereotyping exists. Household management positions were exclusively held by women, as were assistant household manager and reception management positions. On the contrary, the presence of women is practically inexistent in the positions of maintenance manager, assistant maintenance manager, computer systems and/or information technology manager and security manager (see Table 2). Accordingly, the study shows that horizontal segregation exists in the industry.

In conclusion, greater discrimination is observed towards women in larger hotels and in independent hotels. Similarly, in both cases, there exists horizontal segregation, due to stereotyped management positions in the Madrid hotel sector.

4.2 Corporate headquarters of hotel chains

As shown, very few women hold the position of President at the corporate headquarters of hotel chains in the community of Madrid (Table 3). The top level management positions are mainly held by men and the presence of women is even lower than in the case of hotels. Therefore, in the case of corporate headquarters of hotel chains, it was also proven that vertical segregation exists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Total no.</th>
<th>% compared to men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice-president</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Manager</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Relations Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Manager</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Systems Manager</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Systems Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Manager</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Manager</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Relations Manager</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Control Manager</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own data
The highest number of management positions held by women at corporate headquarters of hotel chains is in marketing, training, revenue management, CSR and communications. There is no female presence in the core administration positions of the chains, such as business development, strategic or business management. The same situation occurs in more technology-related positions such as computer systems, technology, innovation and information technology and communications management. Horizontal segregation is evident.

### 4.3 Permanent women employees

#### 4.3.1 3, 4 and 5 star hotels

The average number of women is approximately half the total number of permanent hotel employees (see Table 4 and Figure 1), although a high standard deviation can be observed in the data, due to the diversity of the hotels analysed.

Although, a priori, this finding may reflect the absence of discrimination against women with respect to the temporary nature of the jobs in this sector, we should be cautious with this statement, since jobs outsourced are not included which usually produced greater temporality. According to Cañada (2015), female outsourcing means in Spanish hotels between 20% and 30% of the workforce.
The study analyses whether or not general hotel variables, such as the size of the hotel (number of rooms), category (number of stars), type of management (if it belongs to a chain or not) and the total number of permanent employees (men and women) influence the greater or lesser presence of women as permanent employees.
It was observed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the size of the hotel and the number of permanent women employees ($F = 43.282$, $p = 0.00$; $\eta^2 = 0.978$, $p = 0.000$). It was also observed that the more rooms, the greater the presence of permanent women employees. In addition, a moderate relationship was observed between the category of the hotel and the number of permanent women employees ($F = 38.076$, $p = 0.000$; $\eta^2 = 0.479$, $p = 0.000$). At five-star hotels, there are more permanent women employees than at lower category hotels (three and four stars) (Table 5).

However, there is no statistically representative relationship between the type of hotel management and the number of permanent women employees ($F = 2.024$, $p = 0.156$; $\eta^2 = 0.088$, $p \geq 0.05$). The fact that a hotel belonged to a chain had no effect.

Finally, if we analyse the relationship between the total number of permanent employees and the total number of permanent women employees, we see that there is also a statistically significant relationship ($F = 548.604$, $p = 0.000$; $\eta^2 = 0.997$, $p = 0.000$). Accordingly, the more permanent employees, the greater presence of permanent women employees.

In reply to the opinion that the lack of women in management positions is due to a lack of representation, in other words, to the lower critical mass of women that could be promoted, one of research objectives was to analyse the relationship between the number of permanent women hotel employees and the type of position held. The statistical analysis carried out in this research allowed us to rule out any association whatsoever in this regard, showing that the presence of women in management positions is not due to number, but rather to other factors. Therefore, other associations were sought, such as the type of hotel, number of stars or total number of employees, however no significant relationships were observed. The explanation was not due to critical mass, nor to the other factors analysed, but rather to other causes, such as social and cultural factors in the industry.

According to average and median data, in corporate headquarters there are approximately 50% women with permanent contracts, although with very high standard deviations (see Table 6). Since outsourcing is not common in corporate headquarters of hotel chains (Magma Hospitality Consulting, 2014) this result appears more reliable than in the case of hotels. This may be a reflection of greater equality with respect to the temporary nature of contracts between men and women at a corporate level.

**Table 6** Comparison of the number of permanent women employees with the total number of employees at corporate headquarters of hotel chains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Min.</th>
<th>Max.</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>S. deviation</th>
<th>Median</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. chain’s hotels</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>3,436.00</td>
<td>288.80</td>
<td>876.16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of permanent</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>11,585.00</td>
<td>1,874.93</td>
<td>2,894.95</td>
<td>996.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chain employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. permanent women</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>5,816.00</td>
<td>972.00</td>
<td>1,468.57</td>
<td>484.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chain employees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Own data
4.3.2 The existence of a GC and vertical and horizontal segregation in the hotel industry: discussion

According to the census data, a total of 617 women hold management positions in three, four and five star hotels in the community of Madrid (261 hotels). At 87 of such hotels, the position of general manager is held by a woman (33%). This constitutes a minor advance with respect to the findings of Marcé and Milán (2011), which stated that in the City of Barcelona, with 220 hotels of a 5, 4 and 3 star category, only 69 were managed by women; a ratio of 31%. However, it is true that the presence of women is still clearly a minority, as a first indication of the vertical segregation found in the hotel sector of Madrid.

Similarly, the lower presence of women in positions of greater responsibility in the sector is observed, as indicated in previous studies (De Anca and Aragón, 2007; Marcé and Milán, 2011). The results also support the findings of Bolles (1997), Faulkenberry et al. (2000) and Lindsay and McQuaid (2004) in the sense that the majority of female work is considered as domestic, given that 100% of the household managers at hotels are women. In addition, they disappear in the areas of food and beverages and technology; positions originally dominated by men.

In the case of corporate headquarters of hotel chains, there is a very low or even non-existent presence of women in core administration positions, such as business development, strategic or business management, which also occurs in the areas of computer systems, technology, innovation and IT and communications. Specialisation and the differences that exist between the management positions held by men and women clearly indicate horizontal segregation, in line with Santero-Sánchez et al. (2015) in the tourism industry in general.

In addition, this study coincides with Muñoz-Bullón (2009), Clevenger and Singh (2013), Santero-Sánchez et al. (2015) in the fact that women are under-represented in the best remunerated areas of business in the tourism industry, and the tourism labour market features a strong female presence in certain positions (administration and services), but limited access to management positions. As observed, the presence of women decreases even further in the case of corporate headquarters of hotel chains, which is where the positions of greater responsibility and remuneration are located. The number of women that hold the position of President is practically testimonial, which supports the statements of Kara (2012) that women are still at a disadvantage as they face more barriers than men. Along the same lines, Carvalho et al. (2014) claimed that women are more prevalent in less qualified jobs, whereas men are more likely to hold executive and management positions, which is consistent with our study findings that there are still undoubtedly many stereotypes and women normally hold management positions in soft areas of the organisation (more related to customer service). This clearly shows the existence of vertical segregation in the sector.

This under-representation of women in certain positions and the limited access to management positions probably influences their work engagement and job satisfaction and therefore the quality of the service offered in the hospitality industry (Karatepe, 2013; Jung and Yoon, 2015).
The differences between the hotels and central services of hotel chains, which is pointed out for the first time in this study, prove its use, given that the comparison of the situation faced by women in the two environments shows the higher pre-eminence of vertical segregation which, together with the horizontal segregation found, confirms the existence of a major GC in the Madrid hotel sector.

5 Conclusions and implications

The existence of GC in the Madrid hotel sector has been proven in this study, as it was able to confirm:

a Vertical segregation: there is a minority percentage of women with top management positions at hotels, which is even more evident at the corporate headquarters of hotel chains. These positions are mainly held by men. In addition, vertical segregation is higher at larger hotels belonging to hotel chains and at independent hotels. Only at hotels with less than 200 rooms that are related to chains is the percentage of men and women in hotel management positions balanced (47.5% women).

b Horizontal segregation: the difference between the number of management positions held by women and men is still obvious. Men perform tasks in top management, technology and food and beverages, areas traditionally dominated by men, while women normally carry out management tasks relating to areas such as reception, household, training and customer relations. In the case of corporate headquarters of hotel chains, men dominate the highest management positions and those with the highest remuneration, whereas women are concentrated in positions considered as soft areas. Nevertheless, it is true that more women are achieving newly-created positions of importance at companies, such as those of community manager (soft area) and revenue manager (hard area). The presence of women in these positions indicates that they are beginning to position themselves well in newly-created positions in the tourism industry, even in more strategic roles.

c Permanent women employees: our findings contradict certain previous studies (Santero-Sánchez et al., 2015) and the data from the EPA (2015) relating to higher temporary female employment. As mentioned above, this may be because the outsourcing, that hotels especially perform, has not been considered. However, it was observed that category and size do influence the increase in the number of female permanent contracts at hotels.

On the other hand, this study refutes the claim made on occasion that the lower presence of women in management positions is due to the lower number of women and, therefore, to the lower critical mass available for promotion. The statistical analysis performed did not allow all associations in this regard to be discarded, meaning that the presence of women in management positions does not depend on the number of women, but rather on other factors. The study also searched for other associations such as type of hotel, however no significant relationships were found. The explanations can undoubtedly be found in other factors of a social and cultural nature, which should be the subject of further research.

Finally, the data provided by the empirical study on 3, 4 and 5 star hotels and the corporate headquarters of hotel chains confirms the existence of a ‘GC’, due to the male
Women and the glass ceiling in the community of Madrid hotel industry

dominance of the most important hotel management roles and the stereotyping of certain positions. This has resulted in a major loss of female talent, which also limits the increase in profits and results at companies with greater inequality between men and women in management positions, as highlighted by other authors. This means that the diversity, creativity and innovation provided by the parity of both groups are being wasted. On the other hand, the existence of a GC also has a probable impact on work engagement and job satisfaction (Giallonardo et al., 2010) and should therefore be reduced to improve service in the hospitality sector.

However, a change in future generations, supported by the greater presence of women in newly-created positions, is likely. Therefore, after identifying the existence of vertical and horizontal segregation in the hotel industry, a proposal of measures is essential to prevent the loss of talent and improve competitiveness and the future of a sector of such vital importance to the Spanish economy.

6 Limitations and futures areas of research

Although this is a preliminary and eminently descriptive study, it highlights the existence of vertical and horizontal segregation and therefore of a GC in the opportunities available to women to reach certain management positions in the community of Madrid, at both the corporate headquarters of hotel chains and 3, 4 and 5 star hotels. Nevertheless, the study was limited to the community of Madrid and should be extended to cover all of Spain.

The preparation of a census to analyse the participation of women in management positions at hotel chains and 3, 4 and 5 star hotels in the community of Madrid was particularly cumbersome. The main obstacle was the difficulty in identifying the management positions and obtaining replies, basically due to the reluctance in the sector to provide information on internal management. The hotel industry is traditional and male-dominated, which complicates the obtaining of data, especially for this research on the possible gender discrimination in access to management positions.

Female outsourcing, as shown in other studies, is very high in hotels, but was not taken into account. It may therefore be advisable to consider this information in the future (number of subcontracted people) to determine the actual situation of women with regard to temporary employment in the sector.

The statistical analyses carried out as part of this research do not provide data on the reasons behind the results. In future research, it will therefore be necessary to analyse the causes that intervene in the opportunities available for women to reach management positions at such hotels and corporate headquarters and the factors that are producing the GC. Only then will it be possible to design policies that enable women to participate more in the management of the companies operating in the sector.

References


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