

Women's Perception of Career Barriers According to Life Stages: A Case of the Malaysian Banking Industry

Pah Yen Fang

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan

Farida Binti Abdul Halim *

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan

Email: ahfarida@unimas.my

Agatha Lamentan Anak Muda

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan

Nur Fatimah Abdullah Bandar

Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan

** Corresponding Author*

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine women's perception of career barriers in the banking industry according to their life phases.

Design/methodology/approach: The Career Barriers Inventory - Revised (CBI-R) of Swanson, Tokar and Daniel (1991) is adopted to measure the 13 dimensions of career barriers. The design of this study is cross-sectional with data collected via questionnaires. This study is conducted in 24 local banks both in Kuching and Kuala Lumpur. The population identified for this study is a group of women employees and the final sample consists of 98 female employees. The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) Version 20.0 is used to analyse the data.

Findings: The results showed that there were no significant difference between the perceptions of women in life phases 1, 2 and 3 towards sex discrimination, racial discrimination, disapproval by significant others, decision-making difficulties, discouraged from choosing non-traditional career and job market constraints as career barriers. However, there are significant differences between the perceptions of women in life phase 1, 2 and 3 towards lack of confidence, multiple role conflict, conflict between children and career demand, dissatisfaction with career, disability and health concerns and difficulties with networking or socialization as career barriers.

Research limitations/implications: This research confirms the existence of barriers towards women in the banking industry.

Practical implications: The findings indicate the importance for the banking industry to move towards greater gender inclusiveness in their management and administration activities.

Originality/value: Although women career barriers research is plentiful, studies on specific dimensions of career barriers such as this are scarce.

Keywords: Women's Career Barriers, Life-phases, Banking Industry