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## **WOMEN PROJECT MANAGERS' WORKPLACE PROBLEMS: A SURVEY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines the extent to which challenges in the workplace may cause women project managers to be in a significantly small minority. A survey of members of the Australian Institute of Project Management in Queensland is described. This compares the experiences and observations of both males and females on various issues related to technical and gender aspects in the project management workplace. The results show that, while female project managers experience many problems, male project managers also experience most of the same problems. Likewise, there are also few differences between the more experienced and less experienced, level of management and types of industries. The differences that do occur include discrimination against women in general, differences in project management styles and the support from other project managers.

**Keywords:** Women, project managers, organisational culture, project culture, mentoring, informal networking, glass ceiling, non-traditional industries.

## INTRODUCTION

There are significantly fewer women than men in managerial positions, particularly in the area of project management. Several reasons have been suggested for this. One is that project managers are mainly found in the construction and engineering industries - which are traditionally male dominated areas where leadership is said to depend on *macho* qualities (Blackburn 1998). In addition, managerial careers have traditionally been male oriented with women being perceived as being less effective in managing, controlling and exerting authority.

However, it is agreed that the involvement of more women could benefit the project management professions by providing new blood and energy (RhysJones, Danity, Neale & Bagihole 1996). Despite this, little change has actually taken place to date (Gale and Cartwright 1995).

A small number of researchers have investigated this empirically. Gale (1993) and Cartwright (1995, 1996), for example, have examined the career progress of women in project management and the relationship between gender and project culture. Snyder, McLaurin, Little & Taylor (1996), Bohlen, Lee & Sweeney (1998) and Lee and Sweeney (2001), on the other hand, have found gender differences in project teams, with women seeming to be better in dealing with teams and having better communication skills than males. In addition, Craig (2000), who was previously a mentor of women project managers, also supported these findings.

To date, there has not been any comprehensive survey of the reasons for the lack of female project managers. The work described in this paper aimed to contribute to this by answering the question “What characteristics of the project management environment render females in general less able than males in general?” This is clearly an empirical issue involving consideration of the challenges at the workplace.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Women in managerial positions**

#### *Women managers in the labour context*

There has been a considerable growth in the numbers of women managers in recent times, with the number of UK women executives more than doubling since the beginning of the 1990s (Double the Number, 1999) and a similar trend in the USA (Sheridan, 1994). However, women are still very much in a minority in managerial positions in general and in project management in particular. In 1998, only 33% of USA managers and administrators, 18% of senior and middle managers, and 4% of directors were women (NMSS 1998), while only 3.5% of Australian managers and administrators were women (Offices of the Status of Women, 1999). Generally, there are more women managers in the professions than in corporate management and, in the USA, in female dominated industries (Reskin and Roos 1990). Only 22% of Australian managers and administrators are women; most of them being childcare coordinators, health services managers, policy and planning managers, with relatively

few engineering, distribution and process managers (Australian Office of the Status of Women, 1999),.

The majority of project management teams are exclusively male, with women in a significantly small minority (Cartwright and Gale 1996). There has been a steady growth in USA Women Project Management Institute (WPMI) members though and this is expected to continue (Day 1998). For the UK, this is less clear as those working in project management functions are not necessarily project managers (Gale and Cartwright: 1995).

#### *Impediments to women's career advancement*

The key reason for the small number of women in top management levels worldwide is the lack of career progress in general (Marongiu and Ekehammar 1999, Rigg and Sparrow 1994). This is attributed to:

- *Women being less motivated than males* because of openly prejudiced beliefs in career management strategies in Australia (Bellamy and Ramsay 1994) and discriminatory selection practices in UK (Davidson and Burke 1994)
- *A mix of conservatism, gender stereotypes and the buddy system* working together against women (Bellamy and Ramsay, 1994) and restricting women managers' freedom to treat women as equal in promotion opportunities (Starke 1979)
- *The use of gender-based schemata of decision makers* (Powell 2000) resulting in being promoted only after they have already proven that they can perform the

tasks required in a new position, with men being promoted because of their perceived potential (Institute of Engineers Australia, IEAust 2000)

- *The 'glass ceiling'* - the transparent barrier that keeps women from rising above a certain level in corporations (Powell and Butterfield 1994)
- *Women being regarded as non-professional* (Gale and Cartwright, 1995)
- *Women being offered fewer training opportunities than males* (Gale and Cartwright, 1995). Australian studies have shown that many organizations do not offer developmental opportunities for people whose work has been interrupted by child rearing (Vilkinas 1991).
- *The attitudes of male managers* (Brenner, Tomkiewicz & Schein, 1989). At the top levels, promotion decisions involve subjective appraisals of candidates' fit with incumbent top managers, disadvantaging female candidates in male dominated organizations (Powell and Butterfield 1994)
- *Higher expectations of women than men*
- *Situational factors* such as domestic roles and limited executive positions
- *Individual factors*, including lack of operational experiences (Bellamy and Ramsay, 1994)
- *Unease about women occupying positions of authority* (Wilkinson, 2001; Carter and Kirkup, 1989)
- *Lack of confidence*, for example, by using tentative language, being less aggressive, domineering and directive (Lahtinen and Wilson 1994). As a result, women inevitably belong to token groups and lack experience of upward mobility (Akande 1994).
- *Women finding the challenges and satisfaction* in a particular job are more important than promotion per se (Marshall, 1984). USA research has shown that,

while traditional male models emphasise objective measures of career success such as salary, title and number levels from the top of the management hierarchy, traditional female models place greater emphasis on subjective measures of career success such as satisfaction with current job and the prospects for future satisfaction at work (Powell 2000, p.244).

- *Women being less aggressive* than men in vying for promotion; in particular, men are more intent on and adept at building informal networks for rapid movement up the hierarchy, whereas women tend to rely more on formal procedures to gain promotion (Hennig and Jardim, 1997).
- *Lack of ability to take risks* or the responsibility of a manager in the organization - having particular difficulty and lack of preparedness in dealing with a highly policed organizational environment (Cartwright and Gale 1995)
- *Innapropriate organisational structure.* Mavin (2000) and Cockburn (1991) have argued that organisational restructuring facilitates women in reaching managerial positions and opens up opportunities for women. Others (Simpson and Holley 2000, Edwards and Woofall, 1996; Wajcman, 1998), however, point out that restructuring involving job losses often has negative effects on women managers' careers. In addition, Dainty, Bagilhole & Neale (2000a) found that UK women managers feared that men's resistance to structural changes (eg., the offer of potential improvement of the cultural environment of their organizations in the long term) might lead to a gradual regression towards conflictual methods.
- *Technology.* New technology provides the opportunities for power redistribution in the organization where women tend to cluster in less powerful jobs, eg., word processing jobs, which continue to promote unequal power relations in the organization (Becker and Levitt 1999).



- *Insufficient mentoring.* Mentoring relationships are considered important career resources for all organization members, in particular for women (Ragins 1994, Akande 1994, Okanlawon 1994). Mentors buffer women from both overt and covert discrimination and help them to overcome obstacles to their attaining management positions (Powell 2000: 244); provide emotional support and help increase confidence (Akande 1994); provide access to informal networks (Okanlawon 1994); and provide opportunities to demonstrate ability (White 1995). Research in UK found it harder for women managers to find the mentors than for males (White 1995, Okanlawon 1994, Akande 1994).
- *Isolation* is claimed as a major barrier for women to succeed in general (Okanlawon 1994). It adversely affects their ability to make strategic decisions, due to the lack of information, co-operation and feedback as well as other issues crucial to effective decision-making (Okanlawon 1994). In addition, UK studies have shown that women are generally not interested in male social events, such as sport and golf, which are acknowledged to have career enhancing benefits, (Dainty, Neale & Bagilhole 1999). The power culture of the organization is also a contributory factor to women's feelings of isolation in UK and Australia, since they are generated from the predominantly male culture of an organisation, which is characterized as unsympathetic, unsupportive, alienating even hostile (Coates 1998, Bellamy and Ramsay 1994). Thus, women find it difficult to conform to line management demands for long working hours, geographical flexibility, and aggressive management behaviour (Bagilhole, Dainty & Neale, 2000). Moreover, women managers in general are isolated and alienated from their male colleagues because of occupying a minority of managerial positions in the organization (Okanlawon 1994) and male colleagues see them as additional

competitors for limited opportunities. In addition, they feel it is hard to receive support from female colleagues in the organization because of competition and jealousy within the organization (Kottis 1993).

## **Women in project management**

### *Can women be project managers?*

Organising under conflict, decision-making ability, cooperative leadership and integrative thinking are important personal characteristics of successful project managers (Hauschildt, 2000). It is agreed that people have different levels of abilities in carrying out these tasks and there is a little evidence relating to possible gender-based causes:

- *Interpersonal communication* is a very important skill for project managers, and many researchers have found that women tend to have greater strengths than males in this area as well as in non-verbal communication (eg., Snyder *et al* 1996).
- *Teamwork*. Bohlen *et al* (1998) found USA women project managers to be better in dealing with teams, with Cartwright and Gale's (1995) UK studies finding that "...women have significantly more of a team management style than do men, characterized by a high regard for people and high regard for task, they are less traditional and more visionary in their approach to business, and they may have a more heightened sense of awareness and a greater sense of cultural incongruence and gender exclusion'. Carmichael (1995) argues that the team-oriented approach

to management and the transformational management style of female managers is important for working in project-based environments.

- *Influence and sensitivity.* Wilkinas and Cartan (1997) argued that females were better at exerting influence on their boss and more sensitive in caring for staff and showing concern than males. They are more capable in interpreting problems and bringing order to their area and are better able to maintain tight control - crucial areas in project management.
- *Motherhood* Hinton (1998) points out the similar skills needed in motherhood and project management - “when managing a project we have a tradeoffs between scope, time and cost – project challenges. When managing our lives we see tradeoffs between taking care of the tasks of a household, activities of the children, and function in the work place – life challenges” (p.1477) Thus, managing the life challenges may help women project managers become better at managing project challenges.
- *Dealing with clients.* In one of the few non-western surveys carried out in this area, Nath’s (2000) research with Indian manager found that being a woman made it easier to gain access to clients, get on better with clients, and that clients are more willing to talk to women than men, and are more willing to take bad news from women.

#### *Management style in project teams*

Different projects have different cultures, in which they will draw boundaries around what is included and what is not (IEAust 2000). A masculine cultures is likely to be

dominated by power relationships and a results-orientation while a feminine culture is likely to be more concerned with interpersonal relationships and a process-orientation (Gale and Cartwright 1995). The culture of project-based industries is inherently masculine (Gale and Cartwright: 1995), sometimes referred to as a “boy’s own culture”, fostered through language and behaviour.

There are a number of studies of women managers that suggest women should adopt male management styles for their survival in the *macho* environment (eg., Blackburn 1998). Studies in the UK, however, found that, on one hand women feel that they should join in with office-chat, lunch-time drinking, and socialising, but on the other hand, they find that they are not really welcome because they inhibit male colleagues and felt that such activities were a waste of time. This has led Craig (2000) and Day (1998), for example, to argue that women project managers do not need to try to be “one of the boys to fit into the clique, it won’t work”. To be successful, women project managers do not need to simply try to behave like men but rather use good and appropriate project management practices (Day, 1998). In recognition of this, the tendency for researchers today is to look for a mixed management style, called androgynous management style (DeMatteo, 1994) where excellent project managers use both traditional male and female behaviour to achieve project delivery (Blackburn 1998).

*Other issues relating to women in project base industries*

Although, in general, the opportunities for women in project-based industries (eg., construction) appear to be increasing, these are still extremely limited, and women continue to be in a significantly small minority in building environment professional bodies (Fielden *et al* 2000, p.115). This is not only because of the barriers that effect their entry to project-based industry careers (eg., recruitment selection criteria) but also because of a general lack of knowledge and information about the industry, the career opportunities it can offer and what qualifications are required. As a result, women have been entering the industry with a poor initial understanding of its culture and other inherent difficulties of working in a male-dominated and oriented environment. Moreover, women entrants in the UK, for example, tend to be ambitious and high academic achievers and so a lack of progress quickly leads to dissatisfaction (Dainty *et al.* 2000a).

Another explanation for why there are so few women project managers comes from Starke (1979) who argues that many “bad stereotypes towards women” have kept women away from entering the project management field. Dustin (1998) found the “jury is still out on women’s impact in the field of project management”. In addition, women’s career motivation tends to have declined in relation to their experience, as the salience of family issues becomes more significant, and as they realise the inherent difficulties of combining work and family life. As such, they are not likely to remain in site-based roles and reach high profile project management positions (Dainty *et al.* 2000b).

## Summary

Firstly, women project managers' challenges may include the *gender* issues:

- a The traditional stereotypes towards women.
- b The discrimination against women at the workplace. It results in the lack of career progress, inappropriate job assignment and training opportunities available for women.
- c The difficulties of combining work and family.
- d The difficulties of accessing informal networks, and mentoring relationships. This results in feelings of being isolated and alone.
- e The lack of support from male and female colleagues.
- f Low level of motivation, self-confidence, and career aspiration.
- g Building the relationship with clients. Women project manager may find it easier to do this than men do.

Secondly, the *organisational culture* of projects can disadvantage women project managers. The additional challenges to women that have been attributed to project culture are:

- a Organising under conflict, co-operative leadership, integrative thinking, ability to make quick decisions to adapt to the changing and group working dynamics.
- b Different management styles and adopting male styles to survive in a masculine environment
- c Insufficient initial understanding of the project team cultures.
- d Difficulty working with people onsite because of harassment and joking

- e Applying project management techniques

## **THE SURVEY**

### **Data collection**

A postal survey was conducted to examine the extent to which challenges in the workplace affect women project managers. In the absence of previous research, preliminary information was gathered by unstructured interviews with two women project directors in the Queensland construction industry during July 2001. The interviewees generally confirmed the literature, ie., that women project managers encounter more difficulties at work than their male counterparts. Particular issues of concern related to:

- a gender bias assessments in entry interviews,
- b lower position and salary at the first stage than males,
- c lack of encouragement by male bosses and counterparts, especially older male subordinates.
- d dressing style when going to the site,
- e being ignored when entering a meeting with a male,
- f different management styles between males and female,
- g difficulty entering informal networks (eg., old boy network), and
- h the influences of features of industries.

The results of the interviews were combined with the views expressed in the general literature into a questionnaire comprising a list of 21 possible experiences/influences. Respondents were requested to indicate the extent of their experiences (on a three point scale ranging 1- no experiences to 3-high level of experiences) and influential factors (on a three point scale from 1-negative influences to 3- positive influences).

After piloting, the questionnaires were mailed on 18 September 2001 to 180 people randomly selected from the list of Australian Institute of Project Managers (AIPM) members. These comprised 90 females (from a total of 98 members) and 90 males (from a total of 300 members). Because of the limited number of female project managers, an introductory letter from the President of the Queensland Chapter of AIPM was attached with the questionnaire to encourage a high response rate from this group. A period of three weeks was allowed for the replies to be returned by mail.

## **Results**

### *Participants' background*

A total of 57 (31.6% response rate) responses were received. Of these, 36 (63%) were women and 21 (37%) were males. Most respondents were aged between 26 and 55, with 31% and 53% of females and 43% and 38% of males belonging to the age group 26-36 and 37-55 respectively. While there were more married males (76%) than females (56%), more females (65%) than males (48%) had dependent children.



Nearly all respondents (96%) had at least a bachelor degree, from courses ranging over Construction, Information Technology (IT), Engineering, Business, Sciences, and Commerce. 70% of respondents were working in the construction and/or IT industries.

All respondents had worked in the project management field in some capacity although only 7 (of 36) females and 5 (of 21) males had undertaken project management related courses. Most (93%) respondents occupy project management positions, with 37% being senior project managers, 46% in middle managers and the remainder being junior project managers or in non-management positions. As expected, a greater proportion of women occupied middle, junior and non-management positions than males, while fewer women than males occupied senior project management positions. 90% of male and 83% of female participants were working fulltime.

The respondents had a wide range of experience, with 50% working in project management less than 5 years, 20% between 5 and 10 years, 14% between 11 and 14 years, and the remainder more than 14 years. 5% had experience of more than 20 years. For the ease of analysis later, these were placed in two groups - a lesser-experienced group for people with less than 5 years experience, and a greater experienced group for people with 5 or more year's experience. 58% of females and 76% of males had been involved in more than 10 projects. The males tended to work on larger size projects than the women, with one third of females (10% males) working on less than A\$500,000 projects and one third females (71% males) working on over A\$5,000,000 projects.

42% of respondents' work involves an equal mix of onsite and offsite activities, with 28%, 36% and 36% female respondents working offsite, onsite and both respectively while male participants spent 43% of their time offsite or in a mix of two activities (52%). Only 5% of male project managers worked onsite.

### *Experiences*

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Insert Table 1 about here.

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The female and male responses to the questions regarding the extent of experiences were averaged and compared by the *Student t-test* ( $p < 0.05$ ) for each question. Similarly, the two experience groups, senior-junior, IT-nonIT and on-off site groups were also compared. Table 1 provides the rank ordered results of the pooled ('overall') responses and separated group responses where significant, and banded by *Least Significant Differences* ( $p < 0.05$ ). This shows all responses to be positive (1.5 and over mean scores). The top band contains the most highly scored questions of *Organising under conflict* (by the non-IT respondents), *Ability to make quick decisions when the project environment changes* (senior respondents) and *Organising under conflict* (senior respondents), with mean scores of 2.89, 2.84 and 2.84 respectively. This indicates that higher levels of workplace demands are being experienced by non-IT and senior project managers. The second band shows the

second highest scores to be *Co-operative leadership* (overall), *Integrative thinking* (overall), *Differences of gendered management style in project* (Female) and *Ability to make quick decision when project environments changes* (Junior). This shows the female project managers (mean 2.52) to have felt gendered style much more than the males (mean 1.71), with the junior project managers also experiencing a relatively high need to make quick decisions albeit significantly less than their senior counterparts. The other female experiences that are significantly more than the males are *Discrimination against females in general* (Band 3 vs Band 5) and *Support from project managers not of your gender* (Band 3 vs Band 4), the latter, intriguingly, indicating that female project managers receive more support from their male counterparts than do the males from their female counterparts. The remaining differences are concerned with years of experience, with the greater experienced group experiencing significantly more *Difficulty to build relationship with clients* (Band 3 vs Band 5), *Difficulties to communicate with people onsite* (Band 3 vs Band 4) and *Difficulties in working with group dynamics* (Band 3 vs Band 4).

### *Influences*

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Insert Table 2 about here.

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Table 2 provides the banded results of the overall and separated group responses to the questions relating to the influences on careers. Again, all responses are positive (over 1.5 mean score). Surprisingly, the only significant differences between the groups is *Support from project managers not of your gender*, which varies according to the industry, and *Differences of gendered management style in project*, which is much higher in Construction than other industries. No differences between males and females were found.

## CONCLUSIONS

This being the first empirical comparison of the workplace challenges to male and female project managers, it is not possible generalise beyond the local sample investigated. However, the contrast with the literature is extraordinary. These are summarised as follows (*L*=literature, *S*=survey result, *C*=Conclusion):

*L*: One of the reasons why there are more male than females in managerial positions and project based industries is the exclusion of women from the *macho* environment and as such they have a feeling of being isolated and alone, facing difficulties accessing informal networks and mentoring relationships.

*S*: These issues are not caused by their gender - they could happen to anyone sitting in a managerial line regardless of what gender they were.

*C:* Attracting more women into project management through making the project environment “gender inclusive” also would attract more men!

*L:* Women find it difficult to work in group dynamics, communicate with people onsite, apply project management techniques, different management styles, organising under conflict, co-operative leadership, integrative thinking or quick decision making.

*S:* The survey results confirmed this as being correct for both women and men. There is no evidence, however, to indicate that women project managers were any less able than men to overcome these difficulties, as such, and they did not have a negative impact on their job performance.

*C:* These challenges exist but do not account for the shortage of women project managers.

*L:* Limited promotion prospects, inappropriate job assignments and difficulties accessing external management training prevent the upward movement of women.

*S:* The survey results confirmed these assumptions. However, these are problems for male project managers as well.

*C:* This suggests that these issues are not caused by gender discrimination but the situation could happen to any project managers regardless of their gender. Therefore, any promotion strategy should be open to both males and females. Doing this is to ensure that both male and female candidates are treated equally and fairly.

*L:* Women project managers face is the balance between work and family.

*S:* The survey results confirmed these assumptions. However, male project managers encounter this issue as well.

*C:* It is argued that working fathers today tend to spend more time for their family while mothers tend to spend more time at work. Thus, if there is any policy to support working mother, it should be extended to fathers as well. In addition, changing the structure of work is beneficial to women but also for men.

*L:* The project culture discriminates against women in general

*S:* The survey results confirmed these assumptions.

*C:* This suggest that the task for managers and future researchers is to identify what changes can be made.

*L:* Women managers may not be supported by their male counterparts because of the competition for limited opportunities.

*S:* Male project managers support their female counterparts more than female managers do

*C:* The existing discrimination does not lie in the working relationship between males and females. It may exist under another form of discrimination, such as attitudes towards women in domestic roles.

For the next phase of this work it would be appropriate to survey participants who have been working in project management functions without occupying project manager positions in order to identify what obstacles exist, if any, for their advancement. Then this issue could then be explored, comparing male and female participants.

Additional research needs to track the progress that women project managers have made in the field. Based on these results, future research clearly does not need to address the negatives of women in project management and in the work force in general, but it should determine fully how women project managers have been using what they have to great advantage over male counterparts and what roles in project management they are offered. In addition, how project management benefits for a diverse workforce by involving women project managers needs to be addressed. It is suggested that the following questions need to be answered in future research:

- a Do women manage projects differently from men? If so what are the differences and is it a typical reason for their success?
- b In terms of project human resource management, do women concentrate on team member development, team building or are they likely to operate independently
- c In terms of strategic management, are women project managers strong at thinking ‘outside the box’
- d How do women project managers make decisions at the work place? Do their emotions influence their decision-making processes?
- e Do women project managers need to adopt a predetermined management style to succeed
- f What do male team members feel about being managed by female project managers? And what aspects are women project managers able to contribute to gender relations in project culture.

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<b>Career Experiences</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>STD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Band</b>	<b>Group</b>
<i>Organising under conflict</i>	37	2.89	0.32		1	<i>Non IT</i>
<i>Ability to make quick decision when project environments changes</i>	45	2.84	0.37	0.65	1	<i>Senior</i>
<i>Organising under conflict</i>	44	2.84	0.37	0.65	1	<i>Senior</i>
<i>Co-operative leadership</i>	51	2.73	0.49	1.73	2	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Integrative thinking</i>	47	2.66	0.6	0.63	2	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Differences of gendered management style in project</i>	29	2.52	0.69	1.58	2	<i>Female</i>
<i>Ability to make quick decision when project environments changes</i>	10	2.5	0.53	1.34	2	<i>Junior</i>
<i>Combining work and family</i>	51	2.47	0.7	2.16	3	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Support from project managers not of your gender</i>	32	2.47	0.72	0	3	<i>Female</i>
<i>Organising under conflict</i>	17	2.47	0.62	0	3	<i>IT</i>
<i>Organising under conflict</i>	10	2.4	0.7	0.29	3	<i>Junior</i>
<i>Difficulties to communicate with people onsite</i>	26	2.38	0.7	0.53	3	<i>&gt; 5 years</i>
<i>Difficulties in working with group dynamics</i>	26	2.31	0.79	0.91	3	<i>&gt; 5 years</i>
<i>Difficulty to build relationship with clients</i>	26	2.31	0.74	0.93	3	<i>&gt; 5 years</i>
<i>Support from project managers of your gender</i>	49	2.22	0.85	1.61	3	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Discrimination against females in general</i>	30	2.2	0.76	1.62	3	<i>Female</i>
<i>Being isolated and alone</i>	54	2.11	0.74	2.55	4	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Difficulty to find a mentor</i>	54	2.09	0.71	0.14	4	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Limited Promotion prospects</i>	50	2.04	0.73	0.49	4	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Low paid fee</i>	48	2	0.85	0.7	4	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Difficulties in applying project management technique</i>	52	2	0.82	0.73	4	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Difficulty to join informal networks</i>	53	1.98	0.8	0.87	4	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Initial understanding of the culture of the industry before entering the career</i>	53	1.94	0.8	1.14	4	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Difficulties to communicate with people onsite</i>	27	1.89	0.64	1.31	4	<i>&lt; 5 years</i>
<i>Support from project managers not of your gender</i>	17	1.88	0.86	1.07	4	<i>Male</i>
<i>Difficulties in working with group dynamics</i>	28	1.86	0.71	1.47	4	<i>&lt; 5 years</i>
<i>Difficulties accessing external professional training</i>	54	1.81	0.75	2.08	5	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Difficulty to build relationship with clients</i>	28	1.75	0.7	0.35	5	<i>&lt; 5 years</i>
<i>Differences of gendered management style in project</i>	21	1.71	0.72	0.52	5	<i>Male</i>
<i>Inappropriate job assignment</i>	50	1.7	0.76	0.74	5	<i>Overall</i>
<i>Discrimination against females in general</i>	21	1.5		0.00	5	<i>Male</i>

Table 1: Extent of experiences

<b>Career Influencing factors</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>STD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>Band</b>	<b>Group</b>
<i>Co-operative leadership</i>	53	2.75	0.52			Overall
<i>Ability to make quick decision when project environments</i>	54	2.7	0.54	0.49	1	Overall
<i>Integrative thinking</i>	50	2.68	0.55	0.67	1	Overall
<i>Organising under conflict</i>	53	2.66	0.65	0.79	1	Overall
<i>Support from project managers not of your gender</i>	36	2.61	0.6	1.18	1	Identified industries
<i>Support from project managers of your gender</i>	46	2.35	0.71	3.25	2	Overall
<i>Differences of gendered management style in project</i>	19	2.32	0.58	0.16	2	Construction
<i>Difficulty to build relationship with clients</i>	55	2.18	0.7	1.22	2	Overall
<i>Difficulties in applying project management technique</i>	49	2.1	0.71	1.72	3	Overall
<i>Initial understanding of the culture of the industry before entering the career</i>	48	2.06	0.76	0.27	3	Overall
<i>Difficulties accessing external professional training</i>	49	2.02	0.56	0.62	3	Overall
<i>Difficulties to communicate with people onsite</i>	53	2.02	0.69	0.57	3	Overall
<i>Difficulties in working with group dynamics</i>	53	2	0.68	0.73	3	Overall
<i>Combining work and family</i>	48	1.94	0.78	1.05	3	Overall
<i>Difficulty to join informal networks</i>	48	1.92	0.77	1.2	3	Overall
<i>Support from project managers not of your gender</i>	9	1.89	0.78	0.8	3	Others
<i>Difficulty to find a mentor</i>	49	1.84	0.69	1.84	4	Overall
<i>Being isolated and alone</i>	50	1.84	0.65	0	4	Overall
<i>Limited Promotion prospects</i>	50	1.82	0.63	0.15	4	Overall
<i>Inappropriate job assignment</i>	45	1.8	0.66	0.29	4	Overall
<i>Low paid fee</i>	46	1.72	0.66	0.87	4	Overall
<i>Differences of gendered management style in project</i>	29	1.69	0.66	0.95	4	Non-construction
<i>Discrimination against females in general</i>	43	1.67	0.64	1.22	4	Overall

Table 2: Influential factors