ORIGINAL SCIENTIFIC PAPER

A Qualitative Case Study on Issues of Women's Empowerment in Malaysia's Corporate Landscape

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A B S T R A C T

This qualitative case study investigates the systemic barriers hindering women's empowerment within Malaysian corporations. The research identifies systemic barriers impacting women's professional progress, access to leadership roles, and overall job satisfaction. Using a qualitative research methodology, the study captures diverse subjective experiences through in-depth interviews with professional women across various industries in Malaysia. Through thematic analysis, the findings highlight key issues such as cultural stereotypes, unequal pay, limited leadership representation, and work-life balance challenges. By uncovering the nuanced dynamics of these barriers, the study enhances understanding of workplace gender disparities. It provides actionable insights that can inform policies, corporate strategies, and academic research aimed at dismantling barriers to gender equality. These insights provide valuable

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perspectives for policymakers, corporate leaders, and scholars aiming to dismantle barriers to gender equality.

KEYWORDS: *gender equality, barriers to empowerment, women's empowerment, corporate challenges, leadership disparities, cultural stereotypes, Malaysia, inclusive workplace*

Introduction

Malaysia is an intriguing example of a nation striving to balance economic growth with gender equality. Despite being a signatory to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 2022) and implementing the National Policy on Women, systemic challenges persist in its corporate landscape. These include unequal pay, limited access to leadership roles, and implicit cultural biases that hinder women's advancement (UN Women, 2022). The corporate environment remains challenging for women, with deep-seated cultural norms often dictating their roles at home and at work (Kapse et al., 2024). This results in a lack of equitable opportunities for women to reach their full professional potential. On top of that, the gender pay gap is a glaring issue, with Malaysian women earning 17% less than men compared to the global average of 16.2% (Komora, 2023). This wage disparity not only reflects unequal compensation but also contributes to broader systemic barriers, limiting women's career progression and access to leadership positions. As a result, underrepresentation in leadership roles persists, with women occupying only 24% of senior management positions despite making up a significant portion of the workforce (McKinsey & Company, 2022). Adding to these challenges are emerging trends such as the rise of freelance employment and the shifting dynamics of work-life balance, which disproportionately burden women due to the lack of job security, limited access to benefits like maternity leave and healthcare, and persistent societal expectations that place a greater share of caregiving responsibilities on them. As a result, women must juggle career aspirations with domestic duties, further limiting their opportunities for professional advancement (Kapse et al., 2024). These dynamics often exacerbate systemic inequities, leaving women at a disadvantage compared to their male counterparts (Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad, 2023).

Addressing these challenges is essential for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5), which calls for gender equality and the

empowerment of all women and girls. Gender equality is not just a moral imperative but also a critical driver of economic growth, as reducing the gender gap in labor force participation could boost Malaysia's GDP by an estimated 22% through increased workforce participation, enhanced productivity, and greater innovation driven by a more diverse talent pool (OECD, 2023).

Problem Statement

Despite progress, Malaysia's corporate sector remains marked by significant gender inequalities. Women comprise only 24% of senior leadership positions, with even lower representation in technology and STEM sectors at 20% and 12%, respectively (McKinsey & Company, 2022). The underrepresentation of women in these high-growth industries limits their access to lucrative career opportunities, leadership pipelines, and decision-making roles, further exacerbating gender disparities in corporate advancement.

The 30% gender quota for leadership roles is a commendable policy, but it has yet to be fully realized. For example, women accounted for only 13.5% of Malaysia's 15th General Election candidates despite outnumbering men in voter registration (Zainal, 2022). This underrepresentation in politics mirrors broader systemic barriers that limit women's access to leadership roles across various sectors, including corporate governance, where gender quotas have yet to translate into equitable representation at senior levels. Biases, insufficient networks, and flawed decision-making processes exacerbate the undervaluation of women's talents, creating a talent drain that stifles innovation and economic growth. Globally, the gender pay gap costs $1 trillion annually, with Malaysia mirroring this trend as women earn 17% less than men (MAHAVERA, 2023).

Societal expectations further complicate matters, particularly for working mothers. The lack of affordable childcare and flexible work arrangements forces many women to choose between family and career, leading to significant workforce attrition. Closing this gap could increase Malaysia's GDP by 22%, driven by higher female workforce participation, improved productivity, and greater innovation across key sectors such as technology, finance, and healthcare (Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad, 2023).

Additionally, deep-seated stereotypes and biases continue to pervade workplace culture, often limiting women's advancement opportunities despite policies aimed at promoting equality (UN Women, 2022). Gaps in implementing initiatives like the 30% quota further hinder meaningful progress, necessitating systemic reforms such as stricter policy enforcement, workplace inclusivity programs, and mentorship initiatives to support women's career advancement (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

Addressing these challenges requires dismantling barriers and creating inclusive environments that allow women to realize their full potential, contributing to a more equitable and innovative corporate landscape.

Research Objectives

This qualitative case study aims to explore the challenges faced by women in Malaysia's corporate sector. It will examine how barriers to leadership roles, wage inequality, and work-life balance are interconnected and reinforce one another. It will analyze how cultural, societal, and economic factors perpetuate gender biases, hindering women's career progression (UN Women, 2022). Additionally, the study will evaluate the effectiveness of existing strategies, from government policies to organizational practices, using criteria such as policy implementation rates, corporate adoption levels, and measurable outcomes for women's workforce participation and career progression. It will identify areas for improvement and actionable steps to enhance women's professional growth (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

Through narratives collected from women across industries, the research will provide insights into the real-world obstacles they face, offering a comprehensive understanding of gaps in support and opportunities for advancement (Talent Corporation Malaysia Berhad, 2023).

Significance of Study

This study highlights the moral and economic imperatives of closing the gender gap in Malaysia's corporate sector. Gender equality promotes social justice and enhances creativity, profitability, and innovation, with increased female leadership positively correlating with organizational performance (OECD, 2023). The research underscores systemic obstacles such as the gender pay gap, underrepresentation in leadership, and cultural stereotypes, while revealing pathways for addressing these disparities. By

examining lived experiences, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of Malaysia's unique challenges, particularly in addressing cultural stereotypes, workplace gender biases, and policy inefficiencies. These insights offer valuable lessons for similar developing countries with patriarchal corporate structures, wage disparities, and underrepresentation of women in leadership (UNESCO, 2023). Scholarly contributions include providing a theoretical framework for understanding gender biases and actionable recommendations for stakeholders, policymakers, and corporations. The study's findings aim to inspire structural changes that foster a more inclusive and equitable corporate landscape in Malaysia and beyond.

Literature Review

Empowering women in the workforce contributes positively to overall economic growth at all levels: individual, family and nation (Bhandari et al., 2024). Much research has focused on how psychological and structural empowerment affects business success. The complexity of women's empowerment in the corporate sector has drawn the attention of scholars and policymakers globally. In Malaysia, literature explores how societal norms and economic modernization challenge women's advancement in corporate leadership. Research from the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) laid the groundwork for addressing gender disparities, emphasizing the need for structural interventions to dismantle barriers limiting women's participation in decision-making. Since then, studies have evolved from highlighting gender inequities to focusing on systemic factors that sustain them. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed vulnerabilities in existing frameworks, emphasizing the need for sustainable policies that promote gender equality in corporate settings (Kabeer et al., 2021). Empirical research has revealed that despite policy interventions, such as the 30% quota for women on corporate boards, substantive gender parity remains elusive due to the persistence of implicit biases and workplace discrimination (OECD, 2023).

Theoretical perspectives offer critical insights into the mechanisms that enable or obstruct women's empowerment. Naila Kabeer's conceptualization of empowerment as a process involving resources, agency, and achievements underscores the necessity of dismantling patriarchal structures that limit women's career mobility (Kabeer et al.,

2021). Amartya Sen's capability approach highlights how empowerment should be assessed based on women's ability to achieve valued life outcomes despite socio-economic constraints (Chandra, 2024). Martha Nussbaum refines this approach by identifying key capabilities such as bodily integrity, imagination, and emotional attachment, which are essential for achieving genuine empowerment. Empirical studies reinforce these theories. Kamila's (2025) research reveals that economic participation alone does not guarantee empowerment unless accompanied by structural reforms to eliminate workplace discrimination. Retno Wulandari and Ahmad's (2025) study on Malaysian corporate leadership highlights that despite increased female workforce participation, deeply ingrained biases restrict women's access to executive roles. Additionally, recent studies (Russell, 2022; Ferdous et al., 2023) critique the enforcement of gender quotas, arguing that these policies often result in token representation rather than actual shifts in corporate leadership dynamics.

A summary of key scholars and their contributions to the discourse on women's empowerment is provided below:

Table 1: Summary of Scholarly Approaches to Women's Empowerment

Scholar	Main Concepts	Approach to Women's Empowerment
Naila Kabeer	Resources, Agency, Achievements	Identifies systemic barriers that prevent women from accessing resources, exercising agency, and achieving empowerment (Kabeer et al., 2021).
Amartya Sen	Capability Approach	Highlights the economic and social constraints limiting women's freedom to pursue valued lives (Chandra, 2024).
Martha Nussbaum	Central Capabilities	Critiques societal and legal structures that deny women essential capabilities for empowerment (Liu & Wang, 2024).
Michelle Bachelet	Political Empowerment	Points to systemic biases and limited representation of women in governance, which weaken democratic processes (Kamila, 2025).
Gita Sen and Caren Grown	Global and Intersectional Analysis	Examines how structural inequalities exacerbate disempowerment, particularly for marginalized women (Shaikh, 2024).

Sources: Synthesized by author based on Kabeer et al. (2021); Chandra (2024); Liu & Wang (2024); Kamila (2025); Shaikh (2024).

The barriers to women's empowerment in Malaysia's corporate sector are multifaceted. Cultural and societal norms remain significant impediments, with entrenched gender stereotypes dictating women's roles both in the workplace and at home. The study by Galizzi et al. (2023) indicates that professional ambitions often clash with domestic expectations, reinforcing gendered divisions of labor. This is further supported by Zhang et al. (2024), who emphasize the need for cultural evolution to facilitate gender equality. Socio-economic disparities exacerbate these challenges, particularly in STEM fields where women remain significantly underrepresented. A study by Moorthy et al. (2022) reports that only 6–7% of women enrolled in engineering and technology programs compared to 20–21% of men, highlighting persistent stereotypes that dissuade women from entering male-dominated industries. Fernández et al. (2021) and Bhandari et al. (2024) further note that women perform an overwhelming share of unpaid care work globally, limiting their capacity to participate fully in the workforce and ascend to leadership positions.

Despite Malaysia's commitment to gender equality through policy measures, significant gaps remain in enforcement and corporate accountability. Research by Barbar et al. (2023) highlights the inadequacy of existing maternity leave policies, childcare support, and workplace harassment protections. The glass ceiling effect, compounded by implicit biases embedded in corporate cultures, continues to obstruct women's career progression despite formal equal opportunity policies. Empirical evidence from Galsanjigmed and Sekiguchi (2023) indicates that leadership structures remain predominantly male-dominated, with limited mentorship and sponsorship opportunities for women aspiring to senior management roles.

Feminist theory provides a critical lens for analyzing the systemic barriers hindering women's empowerment in corporate Malaysia. Liberal feminism critiques policy shortcomings, arguing that legal reforms such as Malaysia's 30% board quota must be strengthened with meaningful enforcement mechanisms to ensure substantive change (Zainal Abidin et al., 2024). Socialist feminism links economic dependency to gender inequity, advocating for policies such as subsidized childcare and flexible work arrangements to support working women. Radical feminism examines patriarchal corporate cultures, calling for fundamentally re-evaluating leadership norms to challenge implicit biases that sustain male dominance (Lydia Majela, 2024). Intersectional feminism highlights the compounded discrimination faced by women due to overlapping identities, such as

ethnicity and socio-economic status, which create unique barriers to corporate advancement. Muhamad et al. (2023) emphasize that a singular approach to gender equality is insufficient, advocating for multi-dimensional strategies that address women's diverse challenges within corporate environments.

Comparative insights into ASEAN countries further illuminate Malaysia's gender equity challenges. In Singapore, gender diversity hiring mandates and flexible work arrangements have significantly improved women's leadership representation (Lee, 2024). Thailand has implemented gender equity targets and leadership mentorship programs, yielding higher participation rates of women in senior corporate roles (The World Bank Group, 2024). Research suggests that structured mentorship programs and comprehensive gender-sensitive corporate policies have fostered inclusivity in these countries. Indonesia has empowerment program efforts carried out by the government to assist women entrepreneurs in facing the challenges of building a business (Sugiyanto et al., 2024). By contrast, Malaysia's approach has been hindered by limited policy enforcement, a lack of corporate incentives, and deep-seated cultural biases that continue to restrict women's advancement (Moorthy et al., 2022). This comparative analysis highlights policy gaps and underscores the need for evidence-based interventions prioritizing workplace inclusivity and long-term structural reforms.

While existing literature provides valuable insights into the challenges of women's empowerment, research gaps remain, particularly in evaluating the long-term impact of policy interventions on gender parity in corporate leadership. Comparative studies assessing the effectiveness of global best practices in the Malaysian corporate sector are necessary to identify scalable solutions. Further research should explore how intersectional factors influence women's career trajectories, particularly in industries where gender disparities are most pronounced. Addressing the challenges of cultural bias, socio-economic constraints, and policy inefficiencies requires a multi-pronged approach integrating legal reforms, corporate restructuring, and educational initiatives (Moorthy et al., 2022). This study aims to contribute to a more profound, evidence-based discourse on women's empowerment, aligning with the journal's scholarly standards and academic expectations by synthesizing theoretical perspectives with empirical findings.

Methodology

This qualitative case study employs a constructivist and phenomenological approach to examine the systemic barriers to women's empowerment in Malaysia's corporate sector. By focusing on the lived experiences of professional women, this research aims to understand how cultural, socio-economic, and organizational structures contribute to gender inequalities. The constructivist paradigm allows for interpreting gender disparities through subjective experiences, while phenomenology ensures an in-depth exploration of individual perceptions and institutional constraints (Tirka Widanti, 2023). The combination of these approaches is particularly relevant to investigating gendered career trajectories in male-dominated industries and analyzing how social structures shape professional outcomes for women.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling to include women from underrepresen3ted industries such as technology, finance, and engineering. These sectors were deliberately chosen because they represent male-dominated environments where structural obstacles to women's career and professional growth are more pronounced. Recruitment was conducted through multiple channels, including professional networks, industry associations, corporate diversity initiatives, and targeted outreach via LinkedIn and organizational partnerships. This approach ensured diverse perspectives, capturing insights from women at various career stages, from entry-level positions to senior management (Ashraf et al., 2023). The study prioritized perspectives from women directly impacted by gender-focused policies or corporate initiatives, enabling a nuanced understanding of systemic barriers (Tirka Widanti, 2023). The sample size was determined by data saturation, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of recurring themes and patterns.

Data collection involved semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to discuss their experiences openly, yet guided while ensuring key themes are addressed (Hsu et al., 2024). This method provided flexibility, allowing participants to elaborate on their challenges, perceptions of corporate policies, and personal career trajectories. Interviews were conducted in person and virtually, depending on participant availability and preferences, ensuring a comfortable discussion environment. Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes and was audio-recorded with consent for accurate transcription. Document analysis was also used as a supplementary

data source rather than as an equally weighted method. Industry reports, corporate gender policies, and academic literature were reviewed to contextualize participant experiences within broader institutional frameworks (Hsu et al., 2024). This data triangulation helped strengthen the study's validity by providing an institutional context to personal narratives.

Data analysis followed a phenomenological approach, focusing on participants lived experiences within their socio-cultural and professional environments. The analysis process began with multiple readings of interview transcripts and document analysis findings to identify emerging themes. Manual coding was conducted without software such as NVivo or ATLAS.ti, ensuring a deep and direct engagement with the data. Thematic analysis was performed through an iterative process, where meaning units were manually categorized, compared, and refined. Key themes – such as career progression barriers, workplace policies, cultural stereotypes, and organizational bias—were identified and synthesized into a cohesive narrative aligning with SDG 5's objective of eliminating gender inequalities in professional settings (United Nations, 2022). To ensure rigor, peer debriefing sessions were conducted where coded data was cross-checked with research collaborators to reduce subjectivity.

This study acknowledges several methodological limitations. The phenomenological approach relies on subjective interpretations of lived experiences, making researchers bias a potential concern. To mitigate this, reflexivity was actively practiced through memo-writing and ongoing self-evaluation, ensuring that personal biases did not influence data interpretation (Dodgson, 2023). The reliance on self-reported experiences presents another challenge, as participants may filter or frame their responses based on social desirability. Findings from this study are specific to Malaysia's corporate sector and may not be generalizable to other national contexts due to unique socio-economic and cultural settings (Ahmad et al., 2023). However, insights from this research contribute to the broader discourse on gender inclusivity in professional environments.

Additionally, purposive sampling, while allowing in-depth exploration, has inherent limitations in diversity. To address this, participants were intentionally selected from various organizational levels, company sizes, and industry sectors to enhance representativeness. While the findings are not meant to be statistically generalizable, they offer valuable qualitative insights into gender barriers in Malaysia's corporate landscape.

By integrating research design, participant selection, data collection, data analysis, and study limitations into a unified narrative, this methodology ensures a clear and cohesive presentation of the research process in line with the journal's expectations. This structure enhances conceptual clarity and methodological transparency, strengthening the study's alignment with academic standards in qualitative research.

Research Design

The study employs a phenomenological framework, emphasizing subjective experiences and socially constructed realities (Hsu et al., 2024). This approach is particularly relevant to understanding women's barriers to leadership and workplace empowerment. Using semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method, supported by corporate policy reviews and industry reports, this design ensures a comprehensive understanding of systemic inequalities (Hsu et al., 2024). Nevertheless, semi-structured interviews are well-suited to the phenomenological approach due to their flexibility in exploring individual experiences while ensuring that key themes are addressed. Phenomenology's focus on lived experiences allows the study to highlight specific challenges, such as navigating corporate cultures shaped by traditional norms and balancing professional aspirations with societal expectations (Zhang et al., 2024).

Ethical Considerations

Written consent will be obtained, and copies will be given to participants for their records. This guarantees voluntary involvement and is consistent with ethical norms. Confidentiality will be maintained by storing identifiable information securely and restricting access to the research team. Pseudonyms will be used in publications to protect anonymity. Encryption and secure servers will safeguard electronic data, while physical documents will be stored securely (Singh & Engel-Hills, 2022). Given the sensitivity of topics like discrimination and workplace barriers, the researcher will handle interviews with care and respect. Participants will be offered support services if distress arises during discussions, ensuring their well-being is prioritized.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of this study are categorized under four key themes that emerged through thematic analysis:

1. Challenges of Women's Empowerment in Corporate Sectors
2. Main Barriers Preventing Women from Advancing
3. Work-Life Balance Struggles
4. Organizational and Policy Gaps

Theme 1: Challenges of Women's Empowerment in Corporate Sectors

A recurring challenge among participants was the bias in promotions, where male colleagues were frequently prioritized for advancement despite having similar or less experience. Women were often perceived as less capable of holding senior positions due to traditional gender norms associating leadership with masculinity.

"I worked for three years while my male colleague worked for two, yet he was promoted ahead of me."

This reflects systemic biases in promotion policies, which favor men over equally or more qualified female employees. Additionally, stereotypes regarding emotionality and leadership further limited women's opportunities for career progression. Many participants reported being perceived as "too emotional" to take on executive roles, reinforcing the belief that men are better suited for decision-making positions.

"Maybe they think I am too emotional for leadership roles."

Furthermore, proving competence remains an uphill battle for women seeking leadership roles. Many participants felt they had to work significantly harder than their male counterparts to be considered for promotions.

"A woman that wants to go up to a managerial level has to prove herself before she can get into a leadership position."

These findings align with prior research highlighting the persistence of gendered perceptions of leadership competency in corporate environments (Zhang et al., 2024).

Theme 2: Main Barriers Preventing Women from Advancing

Participants frequently cited economic disparities, particularly unequal pay and biased promotion practices, as barriers to career progression. Many expressed frustration over gender pay gaps, which negatively impact career motivation and financial security.

"Men get the higher pay than women just because they have bigger responsibilities in caring for the family."

Malaysia has introduced gender pay equity initiatives, yet the lack of salary transparency and collective bargaining mechanisms reduces their effectiveness. Studies suggest that companies with transparent salary structures experience reduced pay disparities, yet Malaysia has not mandated these policies nationally (United Nations, 2022).

Biased promotion practices also emerged as a significant challenge. Women were often overlooked for leadership roles due to perceptions of their "lack of leadership skills," reinforcing traditional stereotypes that men are natural leaders.

"Women often get passed on if there is any promotion because of their perceived lack of leadership skills."

Additionally, participants highlighted the impact of traditional gender roles and maternity leave policies. Some organizations view maternity leave as a loss, further discouraging the promotion of women to leadership positions.

"Companies consider maternity leave a loss because a person in a leadership role is absent for three months."

These findings emphasize the need for corporate reforms to ensure equitable hiring and promotion policies.

Theme 3: Work-Life Balance Struggles

Work-life balance remains a significant challenge, particularly for women in demanding professional roles. Long working hours and high workloads contribute to stress and burnout, negatively affecting career progression and personal well-being.

"High workloads and limited time contribute to stress and burnout."

This issue is particularly evident in academia and high-pressure corporate settings, where female professionals must balance multiple responsibilities, including caregiving roles.

"Managing research and teaching simultaneously leaves little time for personal life."

Women also highlighted gender-based workload distribution, where men and women are often assigned different responsibilities based on societal expectations.

"If you are a man, you are given different weightage, and if you are a woman, there is a difference in the responsibilities given."

"If you are a mother, you do not have much time for yourself because you have to take care of your kids and your husband, cook, and clean."

Studies from Singapore and Thailand indicate that implementing paid parental leave and hybrid work options significantly improves work-life balance, yet Malaysia's corporate sector has been slow to adopt these measures (Zhang et al., 2024). These findings underscore the need for workplace policies prioritizing flexibility to support female professionals.

Theme 4: Organizational and Policy Gaps

Several participants reported that weak enforcement of gender equality policies and inadequate maternity leave regulations restricted women's workforce participation.

"The lack of proper maternity leave and childcare options makes it hard to focus on my career after having children."

The absence of affordable childcare support forces many women to either take extended career breaks or leave the workforce entirely, affecting long-term career progression (Tirka Widanti, 2023). Workplace harassment remains a concern, as existing protective policies are often poorly enforced.

"Women do not know if they could tell their bosses or HR if they are harassed due to the lack of trust in words."

Participants also highlighted the glass ceiling effect, where women struggle to reach executive roles despite having equal or superior qualifications.

"Despite my qualifications and performance, I feel like there is an invisible barrier preventing me from advancing to senior roles."

Although some diversity and inclusion initiatives exist in Malaysia, many remain tokenistic rather than structural, with limited enforcement mechanisms. This highlights the urgent need for policy interventions, such as stronger employment protections, gender-inclusive hiring, and equitable leadership representation.

Aligning with SDG 5's goal of fostering inclusive decision-making, organizations must take concrete steps to address gender disparities in the workplace (McKinsey & Company, 2022).

Conclusion

The study identifies multiple challenges hindering women's empowerment in Malaysia's corporate sector, emphasizing how cultural norms, organizational biases, and weak policy enforcement create barriers to career advancement. Deep-rooted gender stereotypes and societal expectations remain significant obstacles, where women are often expected to prioritize domestic responsibilities over professional aspirations (Tirka Widanti, 2023). These ingrained norms contribute to the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles and slow the progression toward gender equality in the workforce.

Corporate and policy interventions must be implemented to address these challenges. Effective strategies include leadership development programs, mentorship initiatives, transparent salary structures, and stricter enforcement of anti-discrimination policies (Retno Wulandari & Ahmad, 2025). These measures can help bridge the gender gap in career advancement and foster equitable workplace environments.

To dismantle long-standing biases, a cultural shift within organizations is also necessary. Companies should implement unconscious bias training, diversity hiring initiatives, and flexible work arrangements to create a more inclusive corporate culture (OECD, 2023). Encouraging women's participation in leadership requires a collective effort from policymakers, corporate leaders, and society.

Future research should explore these challenges on a larger scale by conducting quantitative studies to validate the qualitative themes identified. Comparative research in other Southeast Asian countries could also provide broader regional insights into gender disparities in corporate environments. Expanding the research scope would enhance understanding the structural

and cultural factors affecting women's career progression, contributing to more targeted and effective policy recommendations.

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