

## Barriers To Career Progression Among Women In The Indian Hospitality Industry: The Influence Of Organizational, Socio-Cultural, And Work–Life Factors

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### ABSTRACT

The hospitality industry has emerged as one of the fastest-growing sectors worldwide and contributes significantly to economic development, tourism expansion, and employment generation. Within this industry, women constitute a substantial portion of the workforce and perform critical roles across operational, administrative, and managerial functions. In India, increasing educational opportunities, changing societal attitudes, and economic development have encouraged greater participation of women in hospitality education and employment. However, despite increasing entry-level representation, women remain underrepresented in senior leadership and managerial positions. This discrepancy raises concerns regarding equality, organizational efficiency, workforce diversity, and sustainable development.

The present study examines barriers affecting career progression among women in the Indian hospitality industry with particular emphasis on organizational factors, socio-cultural influences, and work–life challenges. Existing literature suggests that women's career advancement is often constrained by organizational structures, workplace practices, gender stereotypes, cultural expectations, and family responsibilities. The study integrates perspectives from Glass Ceiling Theory and Work–Family Conflict Theory to understand how these barriers influence professional advancement.

The paper adopts a conceptual approach and proposes a framework linking organizational barriers, socio-cultural influences, and work–life factors to career progression outcomes among women employees. The findings indicate that these factors do not function independently but interact in complex ways that create cumulative disadvantages. The study concludes that organizations, policymakers, and society must collectively develop inclusive strategies and workplace policies to improve women's advancement opportunities and create equitable professional environments

**Keywords:** Women employees, Hospitality industry, Career progression, Gender inequality, Glass ceiling, Work–life balance.

### INTRODUCTION:

The hospitality industry constitutes one of the most important components of the global service economy and contributes substantially to employment generation, tourism development, and economic growth. The industry includes hotels, restaurants, resorts, event management services, travel organizations, and tourism-related enterprises. Unlike manufacturing sectors that rely heavily on physical capital and technological infrastructure, hospitality organizations depend primarily on human resources for service quality and customer satisfaction.

Human interaction and emotional labor remain central to hospitality operations because customers evaluate service experiences based on employee behavior, communication, responsiveness, and professionalism. Consequently, the hospitality industry provides extensive employment opportunities and employs a significant number of women across various organizational functions.

Over the last few decades, women have increasingly entered professional sectors because of improvements in educational opportunities, economic independence, and changing social attitudes. Hospitality education institutions in India have also reported increased female participation in hotel management and tourism programs. These developments indicate changing aspirations among women and increasing acceptance of professional careers.

Despite these positive trends, women continue to encounter significant barriers regarding professional advancement and leadership representation. Although women are commonly employed at operational and middle-management levels, their presence in senior leadership positions remains disproportionately low.

This phenomenon has attracted considerable attention from researchers because it raises concerns regarding workplace equality, effective utilization of human resources, and organizational diversity.

The issue becomes particularly significant within hospitality organizations because of unique characteristics

associated with hospitality work. Hospitality jobs frequently involve:

Long working hours

Rotating shifts

Weekend duties

Emotional labor

High customer interaction

Irregular schedules

These work characteristics can create challenges for all employees but may impose additional difficulties on women because of existing social expectations and domestic responsibilities.

Within the Indian context, traditional gender norms continue to influence women's occupational experiences. Women are frequently expected to fulfill multiple responsibilities associated with household management, childcare, and family care. Such expectations may affect career choices, organizational perceptions, and professional opportunities

Understanding barriers affecting women's career progression therefore requires a multidimensional approach that simultaneously examines organizational structures, social expectations, and work–life factors.

The present study seeks to investigate these dimensions and understand their influence on women's advancement within the Indian hospitality industry.

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Women constitute a major component of the hospitality workforce across the world. Hospitality organizations frequently employ women in positions involving guest interaction, customer service, administration, housekeeping management, sales and marketing, and human resource management.

However, despite substantial representation in operational positions, women's participation gradually decreases as organizational hierarchy increases.

This pattern has frequently been referred to as the "leaky pipeline," where women either leave organizations or experience stagnation at various stages of professional growth.

Several explanations have been proposed to explain this phenomenon. Researchers suggest that women often encounter:

Limited advancement opportunities

Organizational biases

Family expectations

Social stereotypes

Work–life conflicts

The coexistence of modern professional environments and traditional social structures within India creates additional complexity in understanding women's professional experiences.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Women's participation in hospitality employment has increased substantially in recent decades. However, this increase has not resulted in proportional representation in leadership and senior managerial positions.

Research suggests that multiple factors contribute to this issue.

Organizational practices may create unequal opportunities for promotion and leadership development. Social norms may impose expectations concerning caregiving responsibilities and family priorities. Work demands associated with hospitality employment may create difficulties in balancing personal and professional responsibilities.

Therefore, understanding the combined influence of these barriers becomes important for creating equitable and inclusive workplaces.

The problem addressed in this study is:

**To investigate barriers affecting career progression among women in the Indian hospitality industry with particular focus on organizational, socio-cultural, and work–life factors.**

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Academic significance

The study contributes to existing literature concerning gender and hospitality management by integrating multiple dimensions influencing career progression.

Organizational significance

The study may assist hospitality organizations in developing:

Inclusive workplace policies

Diversity initiatives

Leadership development programs

Mentoring systems

Social significance

Promoting women's career progression contributes to:

Economic empowerment

Reduced inequality

Social development

Policy significance

Findings may support development of:

Gender-sensitive labor policies

Childcare initiatives

Workplace equality regulations

## **Objectives of the Study**

Primary Objective

To examine barriers affecting career progression among women employees within the Indian hospitality industry.

Specific Objectives

To identify organizational barriers affecting women's career progression.

To examine socio-cultural factors influencing women's advancement.

To analyse work–life factors affecting career progression.

To examine relationships among identified variables.

To recommend strategies for improving women's advancement opportunities.

### Research Questions

RQ1: What organizational barriers affect women's career progression?

RQ2: How do socio-cultural expectations influence women's professional growth? RQ3: How do work–life factors affect career progression?

RQ4: Which factors exert the strongest influence?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Research concerning women's career progression within the hospitality industry has gained considerable attention over the last decade due to increasing awareness regarding gender diversity, workplace equality, and leadership representation. Although women constitute a substantial proportion of the hospitality workforce globally, evidence consistently demonstrates that representation decreases considerably at managerial and executive levels. Contemporary literature suggests that barriers affecting women's advancement emerge through complex interactions among organizational systems, social expectations, and work–life pressures rather than through individual capability differences alone.

Recent hospitality literature indicates that the industry demonstrates a paradoxical pattern in workforce composition. Women participate extensively in operational, administrative, and customer-facing positions; however, their representation substantially declines at senior leadership levels. A systematic review conducted by Michelle Russen, Mary Dawson, and Juan Madera (2021) found that women continue to account for a minority of executive-level roles despite large workforce participation. Their review identified organizational support systems, role models, and structural factors as critical determinants influencing leadership representation within hospitality organizations.

Research by Y. A. D. R. Ranjith Kumara (2018) examined women's career development in hotel organizations and identified recurring barriers across different geographical contexts. The study reported that gender discrimination, networking limitations, occupational segregation, work–family conflict, and long or irregular working hours consistently affected women's advancement regardless of national setting. The study additionally noted that although economic development and legal equality frameworks varied across countries, the problem of underrepresentation of women in leadership positions remained common.

Organizational barriers continue to emerge as one of the most significant themes within recent literature. Studies increasingly suggest that formal equality policies alone

are insufficient because informal organizational structures frequently influence advancement opportunities. Promotion processes may involve subjective evaluations and leadership perceptions that unintentionally favor traditional leadership expectations. Recent research indicates that leadership opportunities, visibility, and participation in strategic decision-making processes are often unequally distributed.

Within hospitality organizations, access to mentorship and sponsorship has emerged as another important determinant of career progression. Contemporary studies indicate that women frequently experience reduced access to influential mentors and sponsors compared with male employees. Sponsorship differs from mentorship because sponsors actively advocate for employees regarding promotions and leadership opportunities. Kumara's review highlighted that the absence of sponsorship and networking opportunities may significantly restrict women's progression into higher managerial positions.

Recent studies have additionally emphasized the influence of organizational culture on women's advancement. Hospitality organizations often emphasize continuous availability, flexibility, and mobility. Such expectations may unintentionally disadvantage employees who simultaneously manage substantial family responsibilities. Research on gender-diverse top management teams suggests that organizations demonstrating stronger institutional support and diversity-oriented cultures frequently experience better gender representation at leadership levels.

Socio-cultural influences remain another important dimension within contemporary literature, particularly in contexts characterized by traditional social structures. Recent research increasingly recognizes that women's career experiences cannot be separated from broader social expectations and cultural environments. Studies conducted within hospitality settings indicate that women frequently experience pressures associated with family obligations, caregiving expectations, and social perceptions concerning professional roles.

Research examining women's workplace experiences in the Indian hotel sector by Sajid Hussain (2024) emphasized that socio-cultural expectations continue to shape professional experiences and advancement opportunities. The study suggested that women frequently encounter expectations regarding family responsibilities and role performance outside organizational environments, which subsequently influence workplace experiences and career progression.

Marriage and family obligations continue to receive considerable attention within recent research. Contemporary studies suggest that women frequently encounter greater expectations regarding childcare and household management responsibilities compared with men. Such responsibilities may influence mobility, willingness to accept promotions requiring additional responsibilities, and participation in developmental opportunities.

Safety concerns and perceptions regarding hospitality employment have also emerged within recent discussions. Hospitality work frequently requires night shifts, customer

interactions, and travel-related responsibilities. In some contexts, these characteristics may generate concerns among families and society regarding women's employment environments. Such perceptions may indirectly affect career choices and organizational participation.

Work–life factors have become increasingly important within hospitality research during the last decade because of the demanding nature of hospitality work. Hospitality employment frequently involves rotating shifts, weekend schedules, emotional labor, and extended working hours. These characteristics may create difficulties in balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

A study by Tingting Liu and colleagues (2021) examining women employees within hospitality organizations found that work–life balance significantly influenced organizational commitment and professional experiences among women employees. The study suggested that work–life conflict represents one of the major obstacles affecting women's career development because competing responsibilities may create stress and emotional exhaustion.

Contemporary literature further indicates that prolonged work–life conflict may contribute to reduced organizational commitment, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions. Women may therefore experience interruptions in career continuity or may intentionally limit advancement aspirations to achieve greater balance between professional and personal responsibilities. Research increasingly suggests that organizational support systems including flexible scheduling, supportive work environments, and family-friendly policies may reduce such conflicts and improve career outcomes.

Recent systematic literature reviews have emphasized that research concerning women's career progression in hospitality still demonstrates important gaps. A recent systematic review by Sorcha O'Neill and colleagues (2025) concluded that factors influencing women's career development could broadly be classified into personal, organizational, and converged dimensions. The review additionally identified insufficient attention toward socio-cultural contexts and inconsistent theoretical integration across studies.

Although recent research has significantly improved understanding regarding women's experiences in hospitality organizations, several limitations remain. Existing studies frequently focus on individual dimensions such as work–life balance or organizational barriers independently rather than examining their combined effects. Additionally, relatively limited empirical studies investigate these dimensions specifically within the Delhi NCR hospitality context.

Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by developing an integrated understanding of how organizational factors, socio-cultural influences, and work–life challenges collectively affect career progression among women in the hospitality industry within Delhi NCR.

#### Research Gap

Existing studies often investigate organizational, socio-cultural, and work–life factors independently.

Limited research simultaneously examines these dimensions within the Indian hospitality context.

The present study addresses this gap

#### Theoretical Framework

##### Glass Ceiling Theory

Glass Ceiling Theory explains invisible barriers limiting advancement opportunities despite qualifications.

Major barriers include:

Organizational culture

Leadership assumptions

Informal networks

Stereotypes

##### Work–Family Conflict Theory

The theory proposes that incompatible demands from professional and personal domains create conflict.

Types include:

Time-based conflict Strain-based conflict Behavior-based conflict

#### **Conceptual Framework**

Independent Variables:

Organizational Factors

Promotion opportunities

Mentorship

Organizational culture

Socio-Cultural Factors

Gender stereotypes

Family expectations

Social norms

Work–Life Factors

Working hours

Shift duties

Family responsibilities Dependent Variable:

Career Progression

Indicators:

Promotion

Leadership opportunities

Salary growth

Career satisfaction

#### **RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

H1: Organizational barriers negatively affect career progression. H2: Socio-cultural factors negatively affect career progression. H3: Work–life conflict negatively affects career progression.

H4: Organizational barriers significantly predict career progression.

H5: Work–life factors mediate relationships between socio-cultural expectations and career progression.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology represents the systematic framework adopted to collect, analyze, and interpret data in order to answer research questions and achieve study objectives. It provides a structured approach for conducting research and ensures reliability, validity, and scientific rigor in the investigation process. The present study seeks to examine barriers affecting career progression among women in the Indian hospitality industry with specific focus on organizational, socio-cultural, and work–life factors. Since the study aims to understand relationships among multiple variables and assess their influence on women's career advancement, an appropriate methodological framework is required.

The methodology for the present study has been designed based on the objectives and nature of the research problem.

### Research Design

Research design refers to the overall plan or blueprint that guides the process of collecting, measuring, and analyzing data. According to John Creswell, research design provides a framework for integrating different components of research in a coherent and logical manner

The present study adopts a **quantitative descriptive research design**.

A descriptive research design is considered appropriate because the study seeks to describe and examine existing conditions relating to barriers affecting women's career progression in hospitality organizations.

The quantitative approach has been selected because it enables:

Systematic measurement of variables

Statistical examination of relationships

Hypothesis testing

Generalization of findings

The study intends to identify and analyze relationships among organizational barriers, socio-cultural factors, work–life factors, and career progression outcomes.

The use of quantitative methods allows objective measurement and statistical interpretation of collected data.

### Nature of Research

The present study is **descriptive and explanatory in nature**.

The descriptive component seeks to identify and describe various barriers experienced by women employees.

The explanatory component attempts to investigate relationships between independent and dependent variables and explain how these variables influence career progression.

### Research Approach

The present study adopts a **deductive research approach**.

According to deductive reasoning, researchers begin with existing theories and concepts and then formulate hypotheses that are empirically tested using collected data.

The present study utilizes:

Glass Ceiling Theory

Work–Family Conflict Theory

Based on these theoretical perspectives, hypotheses are developed and tested through statistical analysis.

### Research Area

The present study is geographically limited to the **Delhi National Capital Region (Delhi NCR), India**. Delhi NCR includes Delhi and surrounding urban regions such as Gurugram, Noida, Ghaziabad, Faridabad, and Greater Noida. The region has been selected because it represents one of India's major hospitality hubs and contains a large concentration of hospitality establishments including luxury hotels, business hotels, resorts, tourism organizations, restaurants, and multinational hospitality chains.

Delhi NCR has experienced rapid growth in tourism and hospitality activities due to increasing urbanization, business expansion, international tourism, and development of commercial infrastructure. The presence of both national and international hotel chains within the region provides a diverse organizational environment for studying women's career progression.

The region contains hospitality organizations operating at multiple levels, including:

Luxury hotels

Business hotels

Budget hotels

Resorts

Restaurant chains

Tourism service organizations

Hospitality management institutions

The selection of Delhi NCR for the study is justified for several reasons:

Availability of diverse hospitality organizations

Delhi NCR hosts major hotel brands and hospitality establishments, creating opportunities to obtain responses from women employees working in different organizational settings.

Large workforce concentration

The region employs a substantial number of hospitality professionals across operational, supervisory, managerial, and executive positions.

Variation in organizational structures

Organizations within Delhi NCR vary in terms of size, ownership patterns, work culture, and management

systems, allowing broader understanding of workplace barriers.

Accessibility for data collection

Limiting the study to Delhi NCR improves feasibility of data collection and ensures efficient access to respondents.

Relevance to the research problem

Delhi NCR represents a social environment where modernization coexists with traditional cultural values. This characteristic makes the region particularly suitable for investigating the interaction among organizational, socio-cultural, and work–life factors affecting women's career progression.

### Population of the Study

The target population for the present study consists of **women employees working in hospitality organizations located within Delhi NCR.**

The study includes women employees across different organizational levels including:

Operational Level

Front office staff

Housekeeping staff

Food and beverage staff

Guest service associates

Supervisory Level

Shift supervisors

Team leaders

Middle Management Level

Department managers

Assistant managers

Senior Management Level

Senior executives

General managers

Including respondents across different organizational levels is important because perceptions and experiences regarding career barriers may vary according to organizational hierarchy and responsibilities.

Sampling Technique

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a subset of individuals from a larger population for investigation.

The present study proposes the use of **stratified random sampling.**

Stratified sampling involves dividing the population into homogeneous groups known as strata and selecting respondents from each group

The strata in the present study may include:

Operational employees

Supervisory employees

Middle management employees

Senior management employees

The use of stratified sampling is advantageous because:

It improves representativeness

Reduces sampling error

Ensures participation from different organizational levels

Sample Size

Sample size refers to the number of respondents selected for the study.

According to methodological recommendations by Uma Sekaran and Roger Bougie, larger sample sizes generally improve reliability and representativeness.

For the present study, a proposed sample size of: 300–400 respondents

is considered appropriate because it provides:

Adequate statistical power

Better representation

Improved reliability of findings

Sources of Data Collection

The study utilizes both primary and secondary sources of data.

Primary Data

Primary data refers to original information collected directly from respondents. Primary data for the study may be collected using:

Structured questionnaire survey

Questionnaires are appropriate because they:

Allow collection of large amounts of data

Reduce researcher bias

Facilitate quantitative analysis

Provide standardized response

Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to previously published information collected from various sources. Secondary data sources include:

Research journals

Books

Government reports

Ministry of Tourism publications

International Labour Organization reports

UN Women reports

Hospitality industry reports

Conference proceedings

Secondary data supports development of literature review and theoretical understanding.

Research Instrument

The primary instrument proposed for the study is a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire may be divided into five sections:

**Section A: Demographic Information**

This section collects respondent characteristics such as:

- Age
- Education level
- Marital status
- Work experience
- Income level
- Organizational position

**Section B: Organizational Factors**

Sample items:

- Promotion opportunities are equally available for men and women.
- I receive adequate mentoring support.
- Leadership opportunities are fairly distributed.
- Organizational culture supports women's advancement.

**Section C: Socio-Cultural Factors**

Sample items:

- Family expectations affect my career decisions.
- Marriage responsibilities influence my professional growth
- Gender stereotypes affect advancement opportunities.
- Social expectations influence workplace experiences.

**Section D: Work–Life Factors**

Sample items:

- Work schedules affect family responsibilities.
- I find it difficult to maintain work–life balance.
- Long working hours increase stress.
- Work demands interfere with personal responsibilities.

**Section E: Career Progression**

Sample items:

- I am satisfied with my career growth.
- I receive adequate advancement opportunities.
- I am confident regarding future promotion opportunities.

I believe my career is progressing effectively.

**Measurement Scale**

The present study proposes the use of a **five-point Likert scale**. Response categories include:

Scale	Interpretation
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Likert scales are widely used because they facilitate quantitative measurement of attitudes and perceptions.

**Pilot Study**

Before final data collection, a pilot study may be conducted using approximately:

30–50 respondents

The purpose of the pilot study includes:

- Identifying ambiguities
- Improving questionnaire clarity
- Assessing reliability
- Detecting measurement errors

**Reliability and Validity**

**Reliability**

Reliability refers to consistency of measurement.

The present study proposes using **Cronbach's Alpha** to assess reliability. According to Lee Cronbach:

- $\alpha \geq 0.70$  indicates acceptable reliability
- $\alpha \geq 0.80$  indicates good reliability
- $\alpha \geq 0.90$  indicates excellent reliability

**Validity**

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures intended concepts. The study may establish:

- Content validity
- by consulting:

Subject experts

Hospitality academics

Research professionals

Construct validity

Through factor analysis.

Data Analysis Techniques

After data collection, responses may be analysed using software such as:

SPSS

R

Python

AMOS

The proposed statistical techniques include:

Descriptive Statistics

Used to summarize:

Means

Frequencies

Percentages

Standard deviations

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis examines relationships among variables. Pearson correlation coefficients may be used.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression analysis examines influence of independent variables on career progression. The regression model may be expressed as:

$$CP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 OF + \beta_2 SF + \beta_3 WF + \epsilon$$

Where:

CP = Career progression OF = Organizational factors SF = Socio-cultural factors WF = Work–life factors

$\beta_0$  = Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$  = Regression coefficients  $\epsilon$  = Error term

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis may identify underlying dimensions among questionnaire items.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles will be maintained throughout the study. The following measures may be adopted:

Respondent participation will remain voluntary.

Informed consent will be obtained.

Respondent anonymity will be maintained.

Confidentiality of responses will be ensured.

Information will be used solely for academic purposes.

Chapter Summary

The present chapter described the methodological framework adopted for investigating barriers affecting career progression among women in the Indian hospitality industry. The methodology includes research design, sampling procedures, data collection methods, questionnaire design, reliability and validity measures, and statistical techniques. The proposed approach provides a systematic framework for examining relationships among organizational, socio-cultural, and work–life factors affecting women's career progression.

## CONCLUSION

The hospitality industry has emerged as one of the most important sectors contributing to economic growth, tourism development, and employment generation. Within this rapidly expanding industry, women have increasingly become an integral component of the workforce and contribute significantly across various operational, administrative, and managerial functions. Increased educational opportunities, changing societal attitudes, and expanding employment prospects have enabled more women to pursue careers within hospitality organizations. Despite these positive developments, substantial disparities continue to exist regarding career progression and leadership representation.

The present study aimed to examine barriers affecting career progression among women in the hospitality industry by focusing specifically on organizational, socio-cultural, and work–life factors within the Delhi NCR context. Based on an extensive review of literature and theoretical understanding, the study indicates that women's career advancement is influenced by a combination of interconnected factors rather than isolated individual circumstances. Organizational structures, societal expectations, and personal responsibilities collectively shape women's professional experiences and opportunities for advancement.

The findings from the literature suggest that organizational barriers continue to play a major role in restricting women's career progression. Although formal equality policies may exist within many organizations, invisible barriers frequently persist through promotion practices, leadership perceptions, workplace culture, and access to professional opportunities. Women may encounter difficulties in obtaining mentorship support,

participating in influential networks, and accessing leadership development opportunities. Such barriers can reduce visibility and limit progression into managerial and executive positions.

The study also highlights the influence of socio-cultural factors on women's career trajectories. Within the Indian context, traditional beliefs and social expectations continue to shape perceptions regarding gender roles and responsibilities. Women frequently experience expectations related to household management, childcare, caregiving responsibilities, and family obligations. Such expectations may affect professional decisions, mobility, leadership aspirations, and career continuity. Furthermore, societal perceptions regarding hospitality work, especially involving shift duties and late working hours, may create additional constraints for women pursuing long-term careers in the industry.

Work–life factors emerged as another significant dimension influencing career progression. Hospitality organizations often require extended working hours, shift-based schedules, weekend duties, and emotional labor, creating challenges in balancing personal and professional responsibilities. Work–family conflict may lead to increased stress, burnout, reduced job satisfaction, and interruptions in career development. The inability to effectively manage competing responsibilities may ultimately affect advancement opportunities and long-term career satisfaction.

The study further suggests that these barriers do not operate independently. Organizational expectations may reinforce socio-cultural assumptions, while family responsibilities may intensify work–life conflicts. Consequently, women may experience cumulative disadvantages arising from simultaneous pressures originating from multiple domains. Therefore, addressing a single factor in isolation may not be sufficient for achieving meaningful improvements in women's career progression.

To create more inclusive and equitable workplaces, hospitality organizations should adopt comprehensive strategies aimed at reducing barriers and promoting equal opportunities. Such initiatives may include transparent promotion systems, mentoring programs, leadership development initiatives, diversity training, flexible work arrangements, and family-friendly workplace policies. Organizations should also encourage supportive work cultures that recognize and value diversity within leadership structures.

From a broader perspective, policymakers and educational institutions also have important roles in promoting gender equality. Policies supporting workplace flexibility, childcare services, safety measures, and equal employment opportunities can create environments that encourage women's participation and advancement. Educational institutions may contribute by providing leadership training, career guidance, and awareness regarding workplace equality.

In conclusion, women's participation in hospitality employment has increased significantly over time; however, professional advancement continues to be

constrained by organizational barriers, socio-cultural expectations, and work–life challenges. Addressing these issues requires collaborative efforts from organizations, policymakers, educational institutions, and society as a whole. Enhancing women's career progression is not only essential from the perspective of social justice and equality but also represents a strategic necessity for organizational effectiveness, workforce sustainability, and long-term growth of the hospitality industry.

Future research may empirically examine the proposed relationships among organizational, socio-cultural, and work–life factors and investigate intervention strategies capable of improving women's advancement opportunities within hospitality organizations across different regions of India.

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