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Managers Talk about Gender

What Managers in Large Transnational Corporations
Say about Gender Policies, Structures and Practices

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Managers Talk about Gender: What Managers in Large Transnational Corporations Say about Gender Policies, Structures and Practices

Key words: gender, managers, management, men, talk, transnationalization, women

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ABSTRACT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mainstream research on management generally continues to ignore gender relations. Even so, over recent years there has been a major growth of international research on gender relations in organizations. Yet, most of this research has focused on gender relations in lower or middle organizational levels rather than the apex of the organization. This book draws on research on gender policies, structures and practices of management in large Finnish corporations. Following initial gathering of annual reports, website and other public material, a questionnaire survey to the Human Resource managers of the largest 100 Finnish companies was conducted (Hearn et al., *Gender Divisions and Gender Policies in Top Finnish Corporations*, Hanken, 2002). This addressed: the gendered organization of the corporations; policies on gender; and gender divisions and processes of top management. Significant positive correlations were found between the presence of men on the boards and the lack of policies aimed at increasing gender equality in those corporations; and surprisingly, the number of men in middle management and gender equality policies.

This book builds on this earlier work, examining through qualitative interviews more detailed gendered processes in seven selected corporations. These represent corporations that could be described as 'relatively active', 'moderately active' and 'not active' in relation to gender equality. Methodological and substantive issues are examined. These include the views and assessments of the companies' gender policies and gender issues, especially as seen by the Chief HR managers. This involves contrasts between: formal policies and reported organizational practices; different corporate contexts and individual managers' positionings; the definition and scope of gender policy; and the relation of gender policies and diversity policy.

This focus on gender policies is understood and located within organizational structures, most obviously gendered corporate hierarchies. Other relevant structures and structural contexts include national context in relation to transnationalization, relations of headquarters and subsidiaries, and interrelations of management, policy development and policy implementation.

Gender relations in practice and gender practices are also considered in more detail. This entails attention not only to gender as meaning and indicating women, but also to the social construction of men, men's arenas and masculinities. These women and men managers operate at the intersections of gendered transnational managerial work, careers, family-type relations, including marriage and children, or lack thereof. Women and men managers may be part of the same management levels or management teams, but have totally different family-type situations and gendered experiences. Interconnections of management, domestic life and transnationalizations are crucial, intensely gendered matters. The debate on the public/private continues to be important for both gender relations and organizational relations, but now with a further emphasis and elaboration through transnationalizations. The modern transnational corporation is thus considered in terms of gender divisions and gender power, with particular reference to top management. A short concluding discussion, noting implications for research and policy, and a coda complete the text.

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1 PART 1: SETTING THE SCENE

1.1. Introduction

Although mainstream research on management generally continues to ignore gender relations, over recent years there has been major expansion of international research on gender relations in organizations. However, most such research has focused on gender relations in lower or middle organizational levels or lower management levels. It has also generally focused on studies of organizations in their specific and often taken-for-granted national contexts. Some studies do address gender relations in top level management in transnational corporations, but these are still limited.

There is a wide variety of explanations that can be offered for gender inequality in management, especially top management, such as the low proportion of available and competent women to be recruited into top positions; the lack of experience in line management needed in high-level decision-making by women; and voluntary 'opting out' of top manager women from their careers for family and other personal reasons.

On the other hand, gender researchers and feminist scholars in management and organization theory have brought up many other issues that impact on the scarcity of women in top management, for instance: 'tokenness' and structural discrimination (Kanter, 1977); male homosociality (Holgersson, 2003); gender structures and male dominance (Wahl, 1992; *Mansdominans i förändring*, 2003; Wahl and Holgersson, 2003; Wahl et al., 2005); 'glass ceilings' (Hymowitz and Schellhardt, 1986), 'glass walls' (Miller et al., 1999), and 'glass cliffs' (Ryan and Haslam, 2005); unbalanced and unequal work-family and care responsibilities between women and men (Lewis, 1994); the kaleidoscopic nature of some women's careers (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005); sex role stereotyping (Schein, 1973; Brenner et al., 1989); and various associations of men, masculinities and management (Hearn, 1994; Collinson and Hearn, 1996).

In this book we present and examine a qualitative interview study, part of multi-method research, on gender policies, structures and processes of top management in large Finnish corporations. Most of these corporations are involved in a variety of transnational activities, although not all would qualify as transnational corporations *per se*, according to Bartlett and Ghoshal's (2000: 512) definition, as that kind of corporation which:

... builds and legitimizes multiple diverse internal perspectives able to sense the complex environmental demands and opportunities; its physical assets and management capabilities are distributed internationally but are interdependent; and it has developed a robust and flexible internal integrative process.

In this research the term 'transnational' is used more broadly to refer to organizations and managements involved in activities across national boundaries (Hearn, 2004b).¹ These transnational gender issues take on special interest when examining large corporations in the Finnish context, a country with both a relatively well-developed ideology and politics of gender equality, and a high development of information and

¹ Portes (2001, cited in Vertovec 2001: 2-3) distinguishes 'international' concerning activities and programmes of nation-states, 'multinational' to large-scale institutions, such as corporations, and 'transnational' to activities initiated and sustained by non-institutional actors, networks or groups across borders.

communication technologies. Indeed large transnational corporations need to be understood in relation to their national location(s).

After reviewing the earlier phases of the research, we turn to the examination through qualitative interviews of more detailed *gender policies, gender structures and gender practices* in seven selected corporations. These companies represent corporations that are relatively active, moderately active and not active in relation to gender equality; these categorizations are discussed in more detail below. Both methodological and substantive issues are examined. Methodological issues include evaluation of mixed methods, snowballing in arranging interviews, and gender relations in the interviews. The latter include the views and assessments of the companies' Chief Human Resources (HR) managers in relation to gender policy and gender issues, contrasts between: formal policies and reported organizational practices; different corporate contexts and individual managers' agentic positionings on these matters; the definition and scope of gender policy; and the relation of gender policies and diversity policy.

1.2. Research aims

This research on transnational business corporations is part of a larger research study, entitled "Men, gender relations and organizing, organizations and management", that has formally been in process since 2000, funded through an Academy of Finland Fellowship 2000-2005. It has included the sub-projects:

The Transnational Business study: Gender Relations in Transnational Organizations and Managements; and

*The Comparative State and Welfare study: Men's Changing Organizational Practices in Europe.*²

The first of these sub-projects has investigated the gendering of transnational organizing, organizations and management through a focus on Finnish transnational corporations; the special features of the gendering of TNCs; and whether they are different to other gendered organizations. It contributes to the development of gender equality policy and practice into management in the private sector. The largest Finnish corporations are growing and extending their activities, with globalization processes and increasing, albeit unevenly, European integration. A focus on the dynamics of the gender relations of Finnish transnational corporations, especially their top managements, is thus of major contemporary interest.

The whole research has the following broad aims, to examine:

- i) changing forms and dynamics of gender relations within and beyond transnational organizing, organizations and management, with particular reference to business organizations;

² This has examined broader relations of gendered organizations and gendered societies across Europe. It was developed in collaboration with the European Research Network on Men in Europe, coordinated from Hanken and the Universities of Bielefeld, Łódz and Sunderland, with partners in NIKK (Oslo), University College Cork, University of St. Petersburg, University of Tallinn, University of Latvia, and the Universities of Camerino and Parma, Italy (Hearn and Pringle, 2006; Pringle et al., 2006).

- ii) the implications of the international research in the field of gender relations in organizations for transnational organizing, organizations and managements;
- iii) the implications of changing transnational organizing, organizations and management, and their forms and practices, for gender relations within those organizations and throughout society;
- iv) the implications of scholarship on men and masculinities for the analysis of changing transnational organizing, organizations and management; and
- v) how the modern transnational corporation looks in terms of gender divisions and power, with particular reference to top management.

This research raises many further issues. These range across questions of context, organizational structures, gender and related policies and identities, and include:

- What is the impact of national context? Is the national context naturalized?
- What is the impact of the intersection of the transnational, often increasingly transnational, character of large business corporations' operations and activities and the national context of such large business corporations, in this case in Finland?
- What are the effects of the relations of headquarters and subsidiaries, including whether the promotion of gender equality policies derives from Finnish national or multinational/international headquarters parts of the company?
- What is the corporate context of policy – including relations between headquarters, subsidiary, Human Resource departments, workgroups and individuals?
- What is the relation of the development of gender policies and the development of diversity policies?
- How gender policies are defined, including the extent to which gender policies are equated with family-friendly or reconciliation of home and work policies?
- What is the relation of corporate policies, top management, the Human Resource department and HR managers, middle management, and line managers?
- To what extent policies are discretionary or binding? To what extent do managers have room for manoeuvre in the creation, development, implementation of policy?
- The extent to which there is an orientation to past record, present performance or future expectations in the framing of policy?

- What are the difficulties, political and other, of producing and implementing corporate gender equality plans and policies?
- To what extent are individuals seeing themselves as one and the same as the corporation? What contradictions are there between these contexts?

1.3. The Finnish context

1.3.1. Societal context

Multinational corporations (MNCs) need to be understood in relation to the intersection of national and transnational contexts. Transnational gender issues take on special interest in examining large corporations in the Finnish context, a country with a relatively well-developed ideology and politics of gender equality, and a high development of information and communication technology. Large transnational corporations need to be understood in terms of both their national location and the transnational character of their operations and activities – as well as the interrelations between these national and transnational contexts.

Finland, like other Nordic societies, is characterized by relatively high gender equality in the formal arenas of societal life, such as politics, legislation and working life participation (UNDP, 2003, 2008), and yet the persistence of various gender inequalities emerging from both within and outside these formally equal structures and processes (European Commission, 1997; Miettinen, 1997). The main focus of gender politics, debate and intervention in Finland has been on the analysis and policy development of the gender equality agenda at the intersections of state, welfare, labour markets, education, family, community, civil society, and to some extent broad employment policy. It has been much less focused on business and business management. However, there has been a considerable expansion of Finnish research on gender, management and leadership in recent years (Lämsä et al., 2007).

In this case the Finnish context is especially interesting, with its relatively well-developed ideology and politics of gender equality, and yet contradictions between this ideology and, on the other hand, gender segregation in employment, gender inequalities and gendered management structures. The 2005 World Economic Forum Report (Lopez-Claros and Zahidi, 2005) concluded that the five Nordic countries lead in woman's empowerment by economic, political, educational, and health and well-being measures. Their latest Global Gender Gap Report placed Finland second, after Norway, in leading in 'closing the gender gap between men and women' (Hausmann et al., 2008). Finland can be characterized by relatively high gender equality in formal societal arenas, such as politics, law and working life participation. At the same time, there is a clear persistence in various gender inequalities, including in business management, especially top management. Gender equality agendas have generally not focused on business management.

Finland has a historical tradition of women working full-time, rather than a 'housewife' culture. While universal state-sponsored childcare is available, it is common for women to take up maternal leave when children are young. In 2005, 48.9% of women were in employment, and unusually for the EU, 82% were working full-time. A home care allowance system enables parents to stay at home until their children are three years old, and after that there is support by legislation and services for parents to return to

employment or education full-time.³ This possibility is, however, mainly used by mothers. Of all parental leave days only 5.5% are used by fathers (Miesten perhevapaiden... 2007). Therefore, the ethos of gender-neutrality tends to enhance the gendered practices of caring and working, and gender segregation in labour markets (Hearn and McKie, 2008). This combination of assumed gender equality and gender-neutrality seems to allow many policy-makers and business leaders to state that inequalities between women and men are overcome. However, for instance, the gender pay gap between women and men in Finland persists at approximately 20%, and thus is higher than the EU average (The Gender Pay Gap, 2006).

At the same time, there is strong gender segregation in the labour market, with in effect two labour markets: one for women, another for men. Finland has high levels of development of information and communication technology, higher education, international competitiveness, labour flexibility, and social and economic performance (Koistinen and Sengenberger, 2002). In political decision-making, women are well represented. In 2008 there were 83 women out of 200 Members of the Parliament, i.e. 41.5 % of the MPs. In the Finnish Government there are currently 12 women out of 20 Ministers, i.e. 60 %, which is itself an historical high.

The gender structuring of the private sector has remained quite distinct to that of the public sector. In 1998 the ratio of women to men was 1:1.6 in the private sector, in contrast to a ratio of 1:0.5 in the public sector (*Finns in Working Life*, 1999). By 2001 the figures had become even more divergent, with a ratio of women to men 1:1.65 in the private sector, and a ratio of 1:0.4 in the public sector (Giovannelli et al., 2004: 6). Recruiting for managerial positions, especially top management, takes place most often from the male sector of the labour market (Hänninen-Salmelin and Vanhala, 1994; Melkas and Anker, 1998), irrespective of women's high educational qualifications within management. Finnish women's high educational level combined with the welfare state system has not led to large numbers of women in top managerial positions. This societal feature has been clear at least since studies on women in management in the 1990s (for example, Vanhala, 1993; Hänninen-Salmelin and Petäjaniemi, 1994; Veikkola, 1997).

Major gender inequalities persist in Finland, not least in the gender structuring of corporations, with consequent implications for knowledge construction in and about large gendered corporations. For example, in 2005, the percentage of women directors on boards of 50 largest listed companies in Finland was 15% (European Commission 2005); recent figures indicate that in even in other Nordic countries the amount of women on boards varies: Sweden 18% (2007), and Denmark 22% (2005) up to Norway 40% (2008) (Baer, 2008). The exceptional situation of Norway follows from the legislation which obliges listed companies to have boards with women, and indeed men, as at least 40% of their membership.

Finland was in the 1990s top of the International Data Corporation's information society index (ISI) from its inception in 1996, and has had a high number of Internet servers per capita, and high level of mobile phone use (Castells and Himanen, 2001; *Socially responsible information society*, 2001; Karvonen, 2001). In 1999 Finland had the highest per capita of mobile phone (57.8/100) and internet subscriptions (107/1000) in Europe; even in 1998 nearly two-thirds of Finns had access to a computer, and in 1997 the same proportion of wage earners were using a computer in

³ http://www.stat.fi/tup/tietotrendit/tt_04_06_osa-aikatyo.html

their work (Parjo, 1999). In 2007 there were 1,145 mobile phone connections per 1,000 inhabitants, and 71% of households had internet connection.⁴

By 2001 the UN index of technological advancement (TAI) placed Finland as the most technologically advanced country in the world. ICT-based industries form a substantial business sector in Finland – ICTs are widely used in work-life and everyday contexts. Electronics has been a national success story for Finland, based mainly on mobile phones and telecommunication equipment. The information sector has grown considerably, and in 2000 its sales covered nearly half of all industrial sales in Finland. The ICT-industry constitutes a significant part of the country's return on capital as an innovation industry creating international competitiveness. While, in many respects Finland is at the forefront of the development of an "information society" (Heiskanen, 2004; Heiskanen and Hearn, 2004), this advantage is now less clearcut, with other Nordic countries at advanced level in this respect.

According to Castells (2000: 72),

The Finns have quietly established themselves as the first true information society, with one website per person, internet access in 100% of schools, a computer literacy campaign for adults, the largest diffusion of computer power and mobile telephony in the world, and a globally competitive information technology industry, spearheaded by Nokia.

Finland has also performed very highly on the comparative PISA studies of educational attainment (PISA, 2004). In the 2006 survey Finland was the highest-performing country on the PISA science scale (PISA, 2007). Its figures for the proportion of GDP invested in R&D (3.59%) are among the highest, well above that of, for example, the US (2.78%). However, the picture is more complicated than this: Finland is not an 'information society' in the sense of domination by the service sector or ICT-using services. Manufacturing still figures strongly in the industrial structure. In 1999 Finland had, after Ireland (34.1%), the second highest proportion of value added shares in manufacturing (27.7%), amongst the EU countries. While of the EU countries, Finland has the second highest proportion of value added shares in ICT-producing manufacturing (5.3%), again after Ireland (6.6%), and ICT-using manufacturing (7.2%), after Germany (8.4%), it has the lowest proportion in ICT-using services (17.1%), below Spain (19.1%) (Robinson et al., 2003, Table 11.7).

Unlike many countries, in Finland manufacturing did not decline from the mid-1980s to the late 1990s. From 1985 to 1998 "the "forest cluster" actually increased its share in value added, partly through complementary services and technology centres" (*European Competitiveness Report 2001*, 2001: 87). Of the EU-15 countries, the proportion of value added shares in high skill industries was the third lowest in Finland (27.9%) in 1999, after Greece (24.8%) and Spain (25.8%). Finland has also relatively low unit labour costs (third lowest in the EU-15) (Georgakopoulou, 2004), along with relatively high taxation levels.

1.3.2. Gender equality

Finnish society can be characterized by a specific, and rather unusual, combination of gender-neutrality and gender equality. An ideology of gender-neutrality has been coupled with a relatively wide acceptance of the principle, if not the practice, of gender

⁴ http://www.stat.fi/tup/suoluk/suoluk_tiede_en.html#equipment

equality across the political spectrum that operates at least at the rhetorical level, and to some extent through policies on work, education and welfare (Rantalaiho and Heiskanen, 1997; Ronkainen, 2001; Hearn et al., 2006).

As regards the question of gender equality, Finland has, along with other Nordic countries, been relatively active in its promotion. This has been led by governmental action and has had by far the greatest impact in the public sector, rather than the private business sector. The Finnish Act on Equality between Men and Women came into force in 1987 (amendments to the act have been made in 1992, 1995, 1997 and 2005). As with its Nordic predecessors, the Finnish Act is mostly a passive law to be used when it is alleged that someone is discriminated against. It does, however, include also active regulations for promoting equality between men and women (Bruun and Koskinen, 1997: 13-14). As such, it can be considered as a universal act, in contrast to gender equality legislation in most countries where regulation of equality is implied only to employment contracts.

The Amended Act of 1995 makes some new demands on employers. The Act states that employers with a regular payroll of at least thirty staff-members must incorporate effective equality-promoting measures into their annual personnel and training plan or labour protection action programmes. Active measures of promoting equality are required. If the staff is thirty or more in number, an annual personnel and training plan of workplace must include measures to further equality between men and women. These measures can also be presented in a separate equality plan. An employer is obliged to report on his or her procedures when discrimination is suspected. To this obligation a new aspect is added. An employee representative at workplace has got independent right of access to information on the wages and the employment relationship of employees. The inquiry can be carried out, if there is reason to suspect wage discrimination on the basis of sex. The Ombudsman for Equality has the right to conduct inspections in the workplace. As such, the Equality Act obliges workplaces to systematically promote gender equality. The 1992 amendment also bans discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and parenthood in both permanent and fixed-period contracts.

Sexual harassment at workplace was also included in the Amended 1995 Act. Employer's duty is to try to ensure that an employee is not subjected to sexual harassment. The Equality Act underlines the reconciliation of working life and family life for both women and men. Working conditions should be developed so that this reconciliation is facilitated. The Act on Equality also prescribes compensations in discrimination cases. An employer who has violated the prohibition on discrimination has to pay compensation of between 2820 and 9380 Euros to the affected person.

In 2005 the law on gender equality has been revised and strengthened. Employers with 30 or more employees that do not produce a gender equality plan may now face a fine, whereas previously there were no such sanctions. The plan should include a report on how women and men are distributed in different tasks and on wage differentials by gender. However, complaints on these issues need to go via the Ombudsman for Equality, which may slow the pace of their processing.

In addition, The 2004 Non-Discrimination (sometimes called Equality) ('Yhdenvertaisuuslaki') Act translated relevant EU directives on equal treatment into Finnish national law. This covers such grounds as disability, health, religion, belief, ethnic and national origin, nationality, age and sexual orientation. In addition the list of

possible discrimination grounds is open-ended. It prohibits direct and indirect discrimination as well as harassment and giving instructions or orders to discriminate.

In summary, Finland presents a complex case in terms of societal and social gender relations, and thus organizational gender relations, combining relative gender equality in some spheres with high gender segregation and the persistence of men's domination of management, especially in the private sector.

1.4. Global management, international human resource management and gender

The Finnish context in which the companies need to be located is only one important context. In addition, these corporations and their management have to be placed within a broader international, even global, contexts. Interestingly, the impact of such global contexts, and more specifically the relationship of globalization and management, is often couched in rather general, macro, indeed 'global', terms. Moreover, and crucially for this study, this is often, even characteristically, non-gendered. Later in this study we examine how globalization operates at the more micro level of managers' lives, albeit within transnational contexts, and how it translates into *gendered* daily practices in management, and indeed at home. Such micro-processes in turn have implications and impacts across meso (organizational) and macro (global) levels.

As multinational corporations expand globally, tasks and responsibilities become increasingly transnational. The operations of the firm as well as its personnel are geographically scattered across countries and time zones. The requirements to perform transnational work influence gender relations at the workplace and at home, and vice versa. Various approaches to global, multinational and transnational organizations and management have been developed both within organization and management studies, and other disciplines. Most of these are specifically ungendered. However, there is now a considerable set of literatures that gender global and transnational organizations and managements. These gendered approaches include those examining the international gender division of labour (Mies, 1986), international relations and world politics (Grant and Newland, 1991; Waylen 1996; Peterson and Runyan, 1999), militarism (Enloe, 1990), citizenship (Ong, 1999), local and global economic change (Fernández-Kelly, 1994), gendered perspectives in gender equality at work (Date-Bah, 1997), sustainable economic development (Harcourt, 1994; Mies, 1998), and global restructuring (Pyle and Ward, 2003).

There are many other gendered aspects of globalization, for example, gendered patterns of migration, the gendering and sexualing of global symbolic systems, and the emergence of gendered (men/male-dominated) transnational polities. Thus and in effect, multinational corporations are intensely gendered, even though the "gendered multinational corporation" is not a concept that figures in either the literature on multinational corporations or that on gender and organizations.

Similarly, most mainstream texts on international human resource management (IHRM) tend to remain silent, or almost so, on the question of gender (for example, Dowling and Welch, 2004; Harzing and Van Ruysseveldt, 2004; Punnett and Shenkar, 2004). The dominant approach here adopts a 'gender-neutral' or 'gender-absent' approach (Hanmer and Hearn, 1999) that in itself is a form of gendering.

When gender issues are explicitly discussed, they are interpreted as, first, only related to women, and, second, related to expatriates. In these contexts, women are candidates for expatriate assignments or they play the role of spouses, partners or family members of male expatriates. Research examining women expatriates often focuses on the under-representation of women in international assignments (for example, Fischlmayr, 2002; Harris, 2004). Reasons associated with dual career couples, women's unwillingness to relocate and women's own ingrained, self-reinforcing behaviour have been given as explanations. Other barriers encompass Human Resource or line managers' reluctance to select female candidates who are expected to experience problems during foreign assignments.

Within the field of global management, IHRM frequently focuses on transnational work, specifying various types of international foreign assignments as a solution to both career development and organizational and managerial imperatives. Expatriate assignments assist skill transfer and managerial control and development (Edström and Galbraith, 1977), and are commonly categorized by their purpose or duration. In long-term assignments the international manager and his/her family move to the host country for over a year. Alternative forms of expatriate assignment comprise commuters, rotational, virtual and short-term assignments (Tahvanainen et al., 2005). The family may accompany the expatriate but typically the family does not relocate abroad. The international traveler undertakes frequent international business trips but does not relocate.

Men, whether in international assignments or not, as managers or spouses, are a characteristically an "absent presence" (Collinson and Hearn, 1996; Hearn et al., 2006). Given the barriers that women are perceived to face when striving for international career opportunities, the typical expatriate tends to be male. An implicit assumption in much of the work in this field is that the spouse is female and will not work abroad in a career-related position (Punnett et al., 1992). The support of the (female) spouse and family, along with their adjustment to the new cultural environment, are often seen as and assumed to be crucial for the (male) expatriate's performance and success within IHRM. This taken-for-grantedness of gender arrangements deserves much closer, critical attention.

2 PART 2: THE RESEARCH AND ITS PHASES

2.1. Research phases I and II

2.1.1. Phase I: Public information phase

The first phase of this project involved gathering annual reports, website and public material for the 100 largest Finnish companies. The aim was to find general, background information on their personnel and examine the extent to which annual reports specifically mentioned personnel policies relating to gender. All 100 companies sent their annual reports. This was followed by contacting them by email, letter or telephone regarding corporate policies and practices relevant to gender (policies on equal opportunities; personnel; gender training programmes; promotion; sexual harassment etc.). The information forthcoming was highly variable, so it was decided to undertake a more systematic survey of the largest 100 companies.

2.1.2. Phase II: Questionnaire phase

In the second phase a questionnaire survey (The “Men and Women of the Corporation” Questionnaire) to the human resources managers of the largest 100 Finnish companies was conducted (Hearn et al., 2002, 2003).⁵ This addressed:

A. General Company Details:

Basic descriptions of companies in terms of turnover, sector, customer structure, start-up date, and so on.

B. The Gender Organization of the Corporation:

1. The gender division of jobs throughout the company at all levels and in all divisions.
2. The gender composition of the company board.
3. The gender composition of the senior management team.
4. In each case, changes over the last five years; how and why these have occurred.

C. Policies and Practices on Gender:

1. Corporate policies and practices relevant to the gender division of labour in the company.
2. When they have been introduced; if and how they have been monitored and/or evaluated.

⁵ This was as defined by Talouselämä (20/2000: 56-61). The first version of the questionnaire was produced in English by Jeff Hearn and Anne Kovalainen, and translated into Finnish by Anne Kovalainen with the assistance of Teemu Tallberg. A detailed discussion was had on the concepts of ‘policy’ and ‘politics’ and the difficulties of translating them into Finnish; the word ‘policies’ was mostly translated as ‘politiikat’ or ‘henkilöstöpolitiikat’.

3. Corporate policies and practices are planned for the future.
4. Policies' and practices' variation across corporate divisions, including variations in different countries, especially Nordic countries.
5.
 - i) Equal opportunity policies (EOP) and practices in recruitment, promotion and personnel rights (for example, maternity, paternity and family leave, family-friendly, childcare leave; at the legal minimum).
 - ii) EOP and practices in recruitment, promotion and personnel rights in excess of the legal minimum.
 - iii) Policies and practices on gender training - for women; for men.
 - iv) Policies and practices on gender in management - on women and men in management.
 - v) Policies and practices on sexual harassment, bullying, violence at work.
 - vi) Policies on alcohol and substance misuse.
 - vii) Policies and practices on workplace gender culture and interpersonal relations.

D. The Gender Organization of Top Management:

1. The gender structuring of top management.
2. How top management manages its own gender relations.
3. The gender processes of top management.

E. Open-ended Issues: such as questions relating to managerial change, managerial succession, networks.

The response rate in relation to questionnaire research with large corporations was relatively high, at 61 percent. Neither the size of the corporation in terms of turnover nor the question of private/state ownership was linked to the level of response. 'State ownership' refers both to state-owned and to state associated corporations. State-owned companies are those in which the state is the majority shareholder; in the case of associated companies, the state has a considerable minority shareholding. Information on this point refers to the situation in 2000.⁶ 'Private' or 'non-state' are here used in contrast to 'state-owned', and refer to the situation where the state is not the sole or major owner of the company, nor has it been actively involved in the formation of the business.

A slightly different pattern was found between Finnish and foreign-owned corporations: two-thirds of Finnish-owned corporations responded; 45% of corporations in foreign ownership. Whether the corporation is Finnish- or foreign-owned was not asked in the questionnaire. This information was taken from the *Talouselämä* 2001 listing. In the *Talouselämä* classification, corporations are listed as

⁶ This information was available on the Finnish Ministry of Trade and Industry website: http://www.reputation.fi/ktm/index_en.php3

'foreign', when they are subsidiaries to foreign companies (that is, owned more than 50% by such companies) and in some special cases that are owned by foreign private persons or consortia. However, stock market companies registered in Finland are classified as 'Finnish' and are not been classified as 'foreign' even when they are owned (more than 50%) by individual foreign shareholders. Because of the complexities of company ownership, this classification is thus not entirely without difficulties. The information for this classification by the journal is requested each spring in their survey of the 500 largest companies operating in Finland. Both these divisions (between 'private' and 'state-owned'; Finnish and foreign-owned corporations) are problematic, as clearcut distinctions cannot always be made.

All respondent corporations had men at all levels of the organization (as employees, middle and top managers and on the board), with a male majority of employees in 69 percent of corporations reporting on gender divisions. The proportion of women : men was about 1 : 9.4 on the boards, 1 : 9 for the top management, and 1 : 3 in middle management. Of the respondent corporations 13 had no women on the board or in the top management; 17 had women both on the board and in top management; 58% of the corporations had no women on their board. Only one corporation had as many women as men in the board; all the others had less women than men or no women; in 95% of the corporations there were at least twice as many men as women on the board.

As with board memberships, only one corporation had as many women as men in the top management; all the others had less women than men or no women. Thirty-seven percent of the corporations had no women in their top management. Fifty-four corporations had from zero to a maximum of three women in their top management with the mean number of top managers at 20 persons. In half of the corporations, at least nine out of ten top managers were men.

Corporations were asked whether they had a Gender Equality Plan (GEP), and also, if they did not have one, whether they had plans to develop one. What is meant or understood by a Gender Equality Plan varies between corporations. In some cases these were specific documents addressing gender equality matters in a focused way. In others they were part of more general policy on personnel management and human resource management. The length varied from a short statement to many pages. It is also possible that some corporations may have answered 'yes' to having a GEP, even though this was not a written document as such.

Seventy-nine percent (48 out of 61 corporations that answered at least partly the questions on the presence or absence of gender-related policies) reported having some of the gender related policies. Thirteen corporations reported that they have none of the identified gender policies; nine of these reported that they do not have "any other company and/or personnel policies that are relevant to the situation of men and women in the company" either. Nine corporations (out of 42 answering the question) reported having "other gender policies".

Table 1 Corporations with gender-related policies

Policy	'No'	(%)	'Yes'	(%)	Total
GEP	20	(33)	40	(67)	60
Equal recruitment policies	36	(61)	23	(39)	59
Equal promotion policies	39	(66)	20	(34)	59
Family policies	40	(69)	18	(31)	58
Gender training	53	(91)	5	(9)	58
Gender training for women	55	(98)	1	(2)	56
Harassment policies	34	(59)	24	(41)	58
Bullying/violence policies	32	(56)	25	(44)	57
Alcohol/substance policies	16	(27)	43	(73)	59

Source: Hearn et al., 2002. Table 9, p. 24.

Two-thirds of the corporations had gender equality plans while responses of all the other gender-related questions are significantly lower (Table 1). As regard the existence of GEPs, there were two significant correlations in relation to number of women and men in different levels of corporation.

First, the number of women on the board correlated positively to a significant extent with the existence of GEP; the more women on the board, the more probably corporation had a GEP (positive significant correlations were found between the presence of men on the boards and the lack of policies aimed at increasing gender equality). The number of women on the board is also the only variable of those referring to numbers of men and women in different levels of corporation that correlates significantly with the existence of gender policies.

Second, and surprisingly, the number of men in middle management correlated positively with the existence of gender equality policies. The more men in middle management, the more probably corporation has a GEP. Explaining this particular finding is not at all easy; as the overall size of corporation does not seem to be a determining factor, it may be that there is some relation here to the form of organizational structure. The greater presence of men in middle management might indicate a relatively less hierarchical structure and culture, and one more open to innovation in gender policy. This pattern might be linked to sectoral effects; however, this was difficult to discern from our data. These are areas that need further examination.

It may also be that there are quite different sources of influence at play here – in terms of the impact of women on the board, on the one hand, and the size of middle management, on the other. They cannot necessarily be understood as patterns working together, and certainly not so within particular corporations.

To summarise the Phase II results, gender relations operate in multiple ways within organizations and management (for example, Acker, 1990; Davies, 1996). It is suggested that there is not only a methodological multiplication of 'levels' of gender analysis in organizations, but also to a substantive dispersion. This may involve

dispersion of gender power, dispersion of “gender policy”/“equality activity”, and dispersion of gender in corporations, even if such multiple ways serve to maintain structured gender dominance and gender inequalities. The examination of these gendered phenomena in corporations within a relatively gender equal society such as Finland adds further weight to the ways in which such dispersions may reproduce structured gendered power relations. The combination of relevant social forces include: relative societal gender equality and relatively strong ideologies of gender equality by international standards; somewhat uneven existence and relative underdevelopment of corporate policies on gender equality; and continuing presence of men in corporate organizations and management, especially at the highest levels of boards and top management (see Hearn et al., 2002: 39).

2.2. Research phase III: Interviews in the case companies

The earlier two phases of this project led onto a further third interview phase. This aimed to supplement the quantitative data with a specific focus on gendered management and top management. The purpose of the interviews has been to find out more about gender relations, gender divisions, gender policies, and gender processes in the companies. This is in terms of both the organizational/corporate level, and individually, for the interviewees themselves and their immediate work context, colleagues and significant others. The interviews both build on and complement previous knowledge, but are to be understood separately in its own terms. Both the substance and the process of interviewing have been important. The interviews were semi-structured. In each company it was decided to approach the most senior and chief HR manager, other top managers, and middle managers, with at least half or more men interviewees, between four and eight interviews in each company, and an overall total of 40 interviews across the seven companies.

In each company the most senior HR manager was approached, then other top managers, and middle managers, with at least half or more men interviewees. Interviewees were nominated by the HR manager and/or by snowballing, thus perhaps introducing some bias towards managers who were more interested in gender and gender equality issues.

Categorizing and sampling the companies in relation to gender policies

The 62 respondent companies were initially considered in terms of the varying extent of their gender equality activity, especially presence or absence of Gender Equality Plan (GEP) and other gender policies. Three broad groupings were identified:

- *Respondent companies relatively active in gender equality activity (16);*
- *Respondent companies moderately active in gender equality activity (33);*
- *Respondent companies not active in gender equality activity (13).*

These three groups were then interrogated, according to these criteria:

- i. transnational company, or not;
- ii. existence/absence of gender equality plan (GEP);
- iii. presence/absence of women on boards; and

- iv. presence/absence of women in top management.

The broad groupings were then specified more precisely, as follows:

Group 1: Relatively active

Criterion 1. Transnational company

Criterion 2. Gender Equality Plan (GEP) and more than one other gender policy

Criterion 3. At least one woman on board

Criterion 4. At least one woman in top management

Group 2: Moderately active

Criterion 1. Transnational company

Criterion 2. GEP + one gender policy OR No GEP and two or more gender policies

Criterion 3. At least one woman on board

Group 3: Not Active

Criterion 1. Transnational company

Criterion 2. No GEP or other gender policies

Criterion 3. No women on board

More specifically, the listings thus formed were interrogated in more detail, by adding and annotating:

- i. percentage of women board members;
- ii. number of women board members;
- iii. percentage of women in top management;
- iv. number of women in top management;
- v. in addition to whether the company had a GEP, the number of other gender-related policies of the companies; and
- vi. relevant comments from the open questions in questionnaire.

On this basis seven case companies were selected (two in Group 1; two in Group 2; three in Group 3) that represented the clearest examples of the situation in each of the three groupings.

Following a formal letter approach to the company, and subsequent telephone contact, all agreed to participate.

Developing the interview pro forma

Developing the pro forma started by reviewing the survey questionnaires and reorganizing them for further development of the pro forma. It was decided that areas needing expansion included those on biography, family issues, and detailed company structure (for example, the form of management, payment methods, nature of work and structure of work).⁷ Rutherford's (1999) categorization of gendered cultures in organizations (gender awareness, management style, time management, public/private divide, informal socializing, sexuality) was a further important source of ideas.

In the early interviews the pro forma was followed rather closely but as the interviewer gained more experience she was confident to deviate from the pro forma to respond to emergent themes. The interviews produced information of several types: some information is descriptive in terms of the policies, structure and some statistics, while other information provides follow-up detail of how policies relate to each other and how policies work in practice. At the same time the interviews give an indication of how the persons themselves relate to gender issues. This depends partly on experiences and positions, and partly on the extent to which the interviewee speaks as an official corporate spokesperson or more personally in terms of her or his individual views and experiences. Contrasts can also be drawn between: formal policies and reported organizational practices; organizational policy contexts and agentic positions; women and men interviewees; and HR managers, in a staff position, and line managers, who implement policies. Before comparing the gender policy regimes and other matters in the three company groupings, some methodological issues are highlighted.

Some methodological issues in the interview process

In the course of the research and during the interviews various methodological issues have arisen. The snowball method was used in most, but not all cases, in arranging interviews. Interviewing the powerful, such as corporate elites, raises a number of methodological challenges (Kezar, 2003; Undheim, 2006; Stephens, 2007). As representatives of their corporations, and as members of corporate elites in transnational organizations, several interviewees demonstrated attempts to influence and control the interview situation. Some interrogated the researcher instead of directly answering the interview questions themselves. The researcher was also given advice as to how to conduct the present study. For example, one HR manager commented: "I'm not sure about ... the kind of questions you pose ... In this way, you will get very superficial answers."

Furthermore, elites and managers are often, even generally, used to being listened to; they are used to presenting themselves, adapting to different situations, and presenting the company and speaking on behalf of the company. Corporate elites frequently identify themselves with the company and it can be challenging for the researcher to distinguish between the company's and the interviewee's perspectives. This "front" should *not* be dismissed or assumed to "hide" a more complete picture. It is of interest in itself, even though the unofficial story is also of interest (Zuckerman, 1972; Odendahl and Shaw, 2002). For example, in answer to the question what the interviewee himself thought of the company gender policy, one senior manager replied: "I share this view completely, I think exactly the same. I have answered to all your questions as myself,

⁷ Hertta Niemi and Anne Kovalainen also participated in part of the development of the pro forma.

not as the company.” This interviewee used the term ‘we’ when describing gender policies and practices of the company.

Gender issues in the interviews

The interviews aimed to find out more about gender relations, gender divisions, gender policies, and gender processes in the companies – both organizationally and individually, for the interviewees and their immediate work context, colleagues and significant others. While the interview material covers a broad range of issues, we report only a part of it here.

The interviews provided a great deal of information on multiple forms of gendering and gendered processes in the case corporations. Organizations, managements and corporations are gendered in many, diverse, yet structured, ways: in public gender presentations (such as company reports and websites), formal and informal hierarchies, divisions of labour, cultures, interactions, formal policies, and so on. The combination and intersection of these various gendered elements may make for complex and contradictory forms of gendering of organizations and managements. Organizations and managements are not simply gendered in a uni-dimensional way.

There are clear gender divisions in management and on boards of directors. Gender divisions on the board and in management are characterized by men’s strong numerical domination over women. The Phase II survey showed that in the largest Finnish corporations the presence of women begets women, and at the same time the presence of men begets men even more so. Women’s presence in corporations increases women’s presence in management; and men’s presence begets men even more. This could be seen as an important context of the interviews themselves.

In Phase III of this research many gender issues were raised. The contexts of the interviews – large Finnish corporations – are gendered organizations; the subject topic has been on gender and gender policies and practices; the interviewees comprise both women and men in what is an arena dominated by men; and there have been further gender issues in the interview process itself.

A basic question in Phase III is the possible differences between the interviews with women and interviews with men. Gender did definitely appear as a significant factor in the conduct and content of most, perhaps all, the interviews. The women were generally more sympathetic and more understanding of the gender issues raised in the interviews. However, a significant number of women wished to distance themselves personally from gender policy or gender issues in their own career, as central or important.

Many of the interviews involve a woman interviewing men. This can raise the possibility of cross-gender dynamics in the interview, including gender power and hierarchy, politeness and gentlemanliness, flirting, and so on. The female gender of the researcher was picked up by some interviewees, generating personal questions about children and career stage. There may also be defensiveness around gender issues, especially for men and in companies with a ‘poor record’ on gender equality. When interviewing men, the man may also be thinking about: how does all this relate to ‘me and my private life’ (Schwalbe and Wolkomir, 2001, 2002; Hearn et al., 1993). At the same time, some women managers appeared defensive on gender issues, wanting to confirm they have advanced through competence not their gender.

There is a very strong social and societal tendency to naturalize gender relations, and indeed sexuality. The key here in interviewing on gender issues is to be aware of this. In general this involves not taking anything for granted; suspend belief in the way things 'are' or appear to be. At the same time one has to enter 'the world of the other', and imagine what their assumptions about the world are. This is especially so in relation to such issues as: top managers tending to be or assumed to be men; cultural and organizational assumptions of heterosexuality, even though that may not be the case; cultural and organizational assumptions around childcare; assumptions of what is a "feminine" or "masculine" style of management. To explore such issues may sometimes involve asking what may appear to be obvious or "stupid" questions.

In the initial access stage, the snowballing technique was used. When asking interviewees about additional informants at the end of the interview, they often started by mentioning names of women who had made it to the top of the organization. Perhaps this could be associated with the need to signal to the researcher that 'we, too, have a few of those top women who you should talk to' and improve the image of the company. This method has sometimes involved initial referral to top women managers rather than to top men managers (who remain less "visible", despite overwhelming numerical dominance), along with risks of selecting gender-positive interviewees. Some women interviewees sought to make it clear that they had advanced through their own competence rather than because of their gender.

Interviews with managers

On this basis, forty interviews were completed with managers in the seven companies during 2003 and 2004 (Table 2). These included the chief HR manager in each company together with a further thirteen top managers, and twenty middle managers. Overall, these interviews comprised twenty with women managers and twenty with men managers, of which eight were women top managers, 12 were women middle managers, 12 were men top managers, and eight were men middle managers (Table 3 and 4).⁸

Table 2 Distribution of interviews with managers in seven companies with relatively, moderately and non-active gender policies

Company	Relatively active		Moderately active		Not active			TOTAL
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Top managers	0 women 1 man	2 women 2 men	1 woman 2 men	2 women 2 men	1 woman 2 men	1 woman 1 man	1 woman 2 men	8 women 12 men
Middle managers	3 women 2 men	1 woman 1 man	2 women 1 man	3 women 1 man	1 woman 0 men	0 women 3 men	2 women 0 men	12 women 8 men
Total 40	6 3 women 3 men	6 3 women 3 men	6 3 women 3 men	8 5 women 3 men	4 2 women 2 men	5 1 woman 4 men	5 3 women 2 men	40 20 women 20 men

⁸ It should be noted that at times the differentiation of middle managers and top managers was very difficult. In general, we used the descriptions of interviewees themselves within their own company context to assign them to middle management or top management.

Table 3 Interviews by gender and top/middle level

	Top managers	Middle managers	Total
Women	8	12	20
Men	12	8	20
Total	20	20	40

Table 4 Interviews by gender and top/middle level

	Chief HR managers	Other top managers	Middle managers	Total
Women	4	4	12	20
Men	3	9	8	20
Total	7	13	20	40

In the data, there was a rather significant age difference between women and men – in general women managers interviewed were younger than the male informants. Average age of women managers was approximately 43 years (43.05) and men managers approximately 49 years (49.25).⁹ The youngest interviewee was a female of age 31 (middle manager), and the oldest interviewee a 59 years old male (middle manager). Most of the woman managers were between the age of 40 to 49 (n=10), and men managers between 50-59 years (n=13) (Table 5).

Table 5 Age distribution of the managers interviewed

	Women	Men
31-39 years	6	2
40-49 years	10	5
50-59 years	4	13
	20	20

In the data, there were more men who are in top management (12/20) than women (8/20) (see Table 6). This explains partly the age structure, i.e. the average age being higher for men than for women. On the other hand, this raises interesting questions on the age factor of management, and how it might even be reconstructed in a gendered way. This interview data reaffirms the pattern of management and leadership: older men are 'in power', and middle management is taken care of (increasingly) by women managers. In the data there was a rather large amount of women middle managers who were between the age of 40-49 (n=7). This corresponds to research on women in management in Finland and beyond: often women seem to acquire positions in particular in middle management, but not so often proceed from that into top management.

⁹ For a small number of interviewees it was not possible to ascertain their precise age, as this did not become clear in the interview, and their date of birth was not mentioned in their CVs. In those instances the best estimate was made.

Table 6 Age distributions and managerial positions

	Women	Men
31-39	(n=6) middle 2 top 4	(n=2) middle 2 top -
40-49	(n=10) middle 7 top 3	(n=5) middle 3 top 2
50-59	(n=4) middle 3 top 1	(n=13) middle 3 top 10
	middle 12 top 8	middle 8 top 12
Total	20	20

An interesting and important aspect for future research might be to focus on women in middle management in order to analyse if or to what extent their age and generational position has been a significant factor for them in proceeding to a middle managerial position. Women after their forties might be seen by some (male) superordinates and colleagues as 'less questionable', especially in terms of not getting pregnant and not being defined through sexuality or appearance, as well as having accumulated greater working life experience. Women in middle management also provide the pool from which those relatively few women advance to top management.

Analysis

The interviews were conducted mainly in the interviewees' mother tongue, which usually was Finnish, in a few cases Swedish or English. The interviews were taped, unless the interviewee opposed this, and transcribed verbatim. Immediately after the interview, a detailed summary of the interview was translated into English and sent to the respondent for validation immediately after the interview. The working language in these multinational companies is mostly English.

We used the English summaries as the initial basis for analysis, although the original transcripts, that in most cases were in Finnish, were returned to when necessary, for example, for detailed checking of quotes. During the phases of translating, transcribing and analysing the data we often crossed multiple language boundaries that made us pay particular attention to maintaining the original meaning of the interviewee (Marschan-Piekkari and Reis, 2004; Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Welch and Piekkari, 2006).

Further analysis was completed in a number of phases. First, a general review of all the interview data was conducted. After that, three main more detailed and accumulative

phases were completed, on *gender policies* (especially through the interviews of the Chief HR managers, who had acted as gatekeepers to the research); *gender structures* (questions of hierarchy and organizational structures throughout all the interviews); and *gender practices* (including the interrelations of transnational managerial work and domestic life). These latter three phases are the focus of Parts 3, 4 and 5 respectively. In the first of these three sections there is an attempt to see this data in terms of the perspective of key managers and the complexity of the interconnections between different elements of the organization, management and identity. Part 4 is more concerned with the representations of taken-for-granted structures across the interviews. The last of these three parts is an analysis of some important relations between women and men, between nationally based work in Finland and transnational work, and between managerial work and managers' domestic situations.

We used NVivo to enhance consistency and transparency of the thematic analysis (see Appendix 1). The emerging themes were frequently discussed between the authors and represented overarching issues raised by the interviewees. These included such issues as career paths, time management, type of foreign posting, existence of a supporting husband/boss, and gendered arrangements at home. We present here a large number of extracts from the interviews to convey some of the richness of the interviewees' accounts.

3 PART 3: GENDER AND GENDER POLICY

3.1. Chief HR managers: Gatekeepers and key policy actors

Initial access to the interview phase of the research in the companies was made through the office of their Chief Human Resources manager. As such, they acted as gatekeepers to the research. It is important to emphasize that this phase of the research was introduced to the companies under the broad theme of ‘gender equality’.

Chief HR managers were crucial not only for research access, but also in terms of their place in the development of human resources policies, including gender equality policies and practices, and their broad knowledge and leadership in this field. One issue of special interest is how the HR managers orientated themselves to the interview *in the context of* different scales of gender equality activity. The different corporate organizational conditions provided different possible orientations for individual interviewees and managers.

We present here some extensive and edited extracts from these interviews, to convey some of the richness of their accounts, and how they constructed gender relations, and gender policies and practices within the context of their respective companies. We see these as providing indications of the complexity of the accounts in these interviews focusing on gender relations and gender policies. They also point to the ways in which individual accounts need to be strongly located within their varying corporate contexts, that are themselves clearly gendered. The extracts presented here are organized in terms of the earlier distinctions between companies that are “more active”, “moderately active” and “non-active” in relation to gender equality policies.

More active companies

In the two “more active” group companies one could certainly say that the issue was on the agenda. Let us consider what we have found from the top HR managers of the two “active group” companies.

Company A was presented as relatively active in terms of gender equality; diversity programme including diversity policy among ‘immigrants’; family-friendly policies. This was even though the organization is part of a male dominated industry. The chief HR manager, a woman, with national rather than international experience, reported the pressure to develop policy from the global corporation of which the Finnish subsidiary is part:

Q: What kind of gender policies and practices do you have in your organization?

A: We have recently written a diversity and inclusiveness policy It represents a new approach to these questions. We want to attract people with different backgrounds and different views. This is not only limited to women or to our aim to recruit a local country manager where possible. It also means accepting different ways of thinking.¹⁰

A: Decision-making is global and we have to make sure that AA [the company’s name] in Finland is attuned with the global organization. ... Every year, our MD has to send to the AA group an assurance letter stating that AA in Finland has followed

¹⁰ Q indicates interviewer’s question, while A indicates interviewee’s answer.

according to the AA principles and practices. He also has to state what we have done to promote diversity and inclusiveness. There is a corporate-level plan which is then implemented at business unit level. We also have a plan concerning AA in Finland involving gender, nationality and numerical goals for each of them. ... Gender is also an issue in recruitment of new staff.

Q: What kind of challenges have you encountered when implementing gender policies in practice?

A: In the members of the management team ... there was a clear counter reaction. Why do we need these things? Is there really a need to talk about gender-related matters? We have an awareness day where issues related to diversity, inclusiveness, harassment, sexual and other, are discussed.

Q: How are gender issues then taken into account in promotion?

A: I think the decisive factor is competence.

Q: If you look at the career development of your colleagues, has gender had any influence?

A: Yes, I think it has. At that time, when some of my colleagues were younger, there weren't any good women available for the position. ... here in AA ... we estimate in each business line ... up to which category of salary can this individual reach. We have certain internal criteria for assessing individual achievement and it seems that within a couple of years or so the gender division will be fairly balanced.

A: At AA we talk about diversity including issues beyond gender such as age and nationality. ... In order to increase diversity and staff loyalty we are training immigrants and Finnish personnel to work together.

The interview then turned to the interviewee's own situation, on which she commented:

A: I was at some stage told that I was not offered a position in a cluster organization because it would have been too hard to combine with the small kids at home! That was the only instance where I was clearly told that having children was a handicap! ... Overall, however, AA is a very family-friendly organization. In our management team ... there are several of us who have small children. I am one of the few who has been a member since the early 1990s. Now we have several new members who have small children. I never experience anything negative if I am staying at home because of the children. Our Managing Director has several kids. He has made an international career within AA and his wife has accompanied him as a housewife.

A: ... a top female executive from AA was reflecting upon her career and gave various examples of situations where she had experienced uneasiness on the part of her male colleagues, not direct discrimination. She gave some advice to women and said 'don't start behaving like men!' And I realised how true her comment was. We should not lose our female characters because if we start behaving like men then the whole point of diversity policy is lost. We lose the richness of diverse viewpoints and ideas.

A: I used to be the only woman in the [management] group but I did not try to be 'a good chap', one of them. I accept the fact that a woman may have a different perspective, another viewpoint to add to the discussion. There is one member in the management team with whom I find it difficult to discuss. We are simply not on the same wavelength, our thoughts don't meet. I think it is a combination of gender and personality.

A: As a woman in YY [a company where she had worked earlier] and based on my experiences in a male-dominated industry in several untraditional female jobs I have never experienced discrimination or harassment. When I told you about the incident concerning harassment in the 1960s I spoke with our PR manager and lawyer, who are both women, and none of us had experienced anything similar. I think people generally respect others. Of course, you may find a calendar with pictures of naked girls in a public space but this is [part of] the general situation.

Company B is a more complex transnational company. As the chief HR manager said:

A: In all textbooks, you have this saying of balancing global and local requirements. I don't like these fine words such as corporate culture but my role is very much to optimize the global and local requirements. We need to take into account economies of scale and synergies, while simultaneously considering the importance of motivating local staff. If you maximize economies of scale you are likely to kill local motivation. The core issue here is to optimize, not maximize, in a balanced way.

He commented on the dominant mode of management as follows:

There is not anything like collective decision-making in companies. It is the one on the very top of the organization who obviously has most to say and who decides. The issue here is about the process, how it operates and how we arrive at decisions. I think it works pretty well.

The Phase II survey indicated that this was one of the more active companies. However, it transpired that there was no gender equality plan *for the whole corporate group*, few concrete measures, and gender issues were generally not much discussed. On the other hand, there has been a lively recent internal debate on gender issues among middle managers and others, and there were local gender equality plans in some company units. The chief HR manager, a man with transnational experience, emphasized competence, along with women's natural difference as 'added value'.

A: Our board made a policy decision that no form of discrimination should exist within our company. We were thinking about whether discrimination needed to be specified somehow but we decided to keep this decision in its general form. It is the basis for all our decisions. In countries like Finland for example discrimination is primarily about gender. In practice, it is the USA where discrimination also encompasses other factors such as race and ethnicity.

A: Regarding recruitment, I think the main issue is the level of competence of the potential recruit regardless of gender. It is fact of life that fewer women apply. There are few women who want to work in production and build up their career. Most of them prefer to work in research and development and from there it can be difficult to advance. They end up enjoying development work, have children and not much happens.

Q: What is the attitude among the executive team members towards gender issues?

A: I think they are uncomfortable about the fact that there are no female members, only old men.

A: ... gender issues have never been a problem in our company. About 5 years back we got our first female board member which perhaps started the debate about this. Unfortunately, our company is very conservative in this respect.

Q: Would you say that your personnel is aware of gender issues in the company?

A: Yes, today they are. I think in fact that particularly the representatives of the union are often men and they tend to be the ones who want to preserve the traditional roles and division of labour between male and women. I would like to argue that the lower you go in the organization, the more conservative attitudes you will find.

Q: What is your own opinion about BB's gender policy and practices?

A: I am aware that this cannot be the correct path in the long run. There will be a lack of competent staff and we cannot afford to ignore women. One negative issue ... is the following. It may be a little rough but I do want to say it. I think that if we look at those women who have made a career many of them transform into men. They become similar to men and therefore lose some of their added value, some of their particular characteristics and viewpoints that the female gender could offer. I think this is very unfortunate. Of course, there are exceptions to the rule but I don't think I am alone with this opinion. This is how I look at the situation from a business perspective, from a business planner's viewpoint. Was this too rough?

A: If we go deep into these questions what gender equality is, I think we should reassess the value of different type of work. I am not sure whether we should aim at a situation where everybody does the same. The key question is who takes care of our children? Today, it is often the teachers who do it. The work done at home is undervalued and I think we should reassess this situation. ... women and men should have equal professional opportunities regardless of what is in their trousers but there are many paths to follow to reach the same conclusion. ... I think something is terribly wrong if the company starts to arrange childcare for children who are sick. That is the moment when the child most needs their parents, don't they! At present, it is mostly mothers who take the largest responsibility and consequently, their professional input cannot be as large as if they did not have the responsibility for the children. This is a fact of life that companies cannot change but we should start valuing the work done at homes through for example tax measures.

In commenting on how gender issues figure in career paths of colleagues and career advancement, he said: "... I myself was competing with a woman for this position that I currently have. I won so I do know what you are talking about. The decision did not have to do with gender but rather personality."

In these two companies gender is on the corporate agenda, but while in Company B the development is rather ad hoc, emergent and derived from pressures from competitors, in Company A the pressure is top down and from its position within a global group. The female Company A HR manager spoke at much greater length on gender than the male Company B HR manager; she integrated issues of gender and diversity to some extent, was much more open and more challenging on the question of gender.¹¹ In contrast, elements of gender hierarchy, sexism and paternalism were used in the Company B interview.

¹¹ The female transcriber commented: "You know my really favourite interviews are from company A. Have you done already done all the interviews with them or will you still do a few more? The way each interviewee talks about gender equality is so positive. Moreover, they think that foreigners bring added value to the company that is very unusual in the Finnish context. It's like music to my ears to hear people at that level talking about these things so positively. I wouldn't mind working for this company!"

Moderately active companies

Company C consists of a combination of merged and acquired international units. Given such an international growth strategy, many of the issues associated with gender policies were originally dealt with at the country level. It is an international organization with a country-based approach to gender equality issues. The HR director explained, however, that due to competitive and cost pressures there is an increasing tendency to standardize and coordinate gender policies across the various units of the company.

The industry in which the company operates can be characterized as conservative and numerically dominated by women at the lower levels. At the time of the interviews, the company was facing an economic downturn; in such circumstances it was said to be difficult to change gender structures, with top management seen as having other, more pressing items on the agenda. The main financial aim of the company was presented as overriding gender matters.

In commenting on top management, the HR director, a non-Finnish man, suggested:

the pattern is strongly hierarchical and operational management is primarily involved, while other levels implement the top management decisions. It is conservative and little decision-making has been decentralized. Decisions are cascaded down to lower levels in steps.

He generally spoke negatively of how gender issues were currently handled in this very traditional company, with little corporate discussion. He himself wanted more change, including for market reasons too.

A: There are considerable differences though between Nordic countries. ... Given the national differences we have few attempts at group level to coordinate and standardize gender policies. I think we will work to an increasing degree at the group level to systematize gender practices [across the Nordic countries]. ... we should not ignore the other half of the potential recruits, the females. We should offer them equal opportunities and take them seriously. We aim to increase our staff's career opportunities and aim at a more balanced or even equal job division between genders. ... At the Nordic level, we also try to reach a balance between representatives of the different nationalities. Having this additional criteria ... in recruitment and career advancement makes it more difficult as it can be challenging to meet both gender and nationality requirements at the same time.

Q: ... how would you characterize the management style?

A: It is not an explicitly masculine style as in the heavy industry for example. We have a sophisticated, polite culture at the superficial level. When you take a deeper look, it is men who discuss with other men and particularly from the owners', shareholders' perspective. ... we get more orders than suggestions from the top. They use the entire hand to steer us, not only their fingers!

Q: ... is it common to discuss gender issues within CC?

A: I would say that to a very limited extent. ... It is not an issue of current interest, there are other more pressing issues that attract top management's attention.

A: At the last shareholders' meeting two women were appointed on the board which was an important step. When we have vacancies in top management we do make a special effort to include female candidates. We are trying to broaden the pool of

potential recruits and invest in competence development and career planning for young women. For example, we have noticed that a particular type of experience from a certain sector is needed for a top level job and we try to promote this among our female employees. In 2002-3 we started a mentor programme ... to facilitate career advancement of women within our company. ... The programme has been well received and we have been able to attain measurable results. Of course, the change takes place slowly. At the same time it is important to notice that our industry is going through an economic downturn and we are laying off people. Moreover, advances in information technology also reduce the head count. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to change gender divisions.

A: I would not say that CC is very family-friendly! We have the traditional practices but nothing in particular. We don't suggest various family-friendly practices but rather we assume that our personnel manage these issues themselves. The industry is rather conservative in this respect and one often sticks to the old ways of doing things.

Q: What is top management's attitude towards motherhood and childcare?

A: In our society it is of course important to have children but from the corporate perspective it is always problematic. It is not a very popular topic and our approach is such that we hope it affects work as little as possible.

Q: Do you offer some training where gender relations are considered?

A: In all our management education, gender issues are covered today. In Sweden, it is more formalized while in the other countries there are some limited, modest attempts to include such material in the programme.

Q: Why aren't there more gender practices at the group level?

A: I think top management does not fully appreciate the importance of this issue. They adopt a short term view and say 'let's do it, but not now'. We think in terms of quarters and personnel issues generally, including gender issues, often do not fit on the agenda. ... we have many private customers and more than half of them are females. They will not tolerate a company that is run by men and does not have practices that support gender equality. If top management wanted to take up this issue at group level, we would have done so. I think gender issues will be important in the future, also in Denmark, and it would be nice to lead this development rather than follow it with a time lag. But at present, other matters are more important for the top level.

Q: ... what about career advancement? ...

A: There is clearly a poor balance among top managers because we have very few female managers. We genuinely try to look for female candidates. Traditionally, men have selected other men and this is not necessarily conscious discrimination but rather more practical and less risky. We carry out annually a so called executive audit where we assess the successors of various persons and the pool of potential top managers. In this audit, gender issues play an important role. I would say that these questions are relatively important in CC but in practice improvements are made slowly.

A: I think I have given you a picture of CC which is not a very favourable one from the viewpoint of gender issues, but I think it is a correct one, unfortunately. I think that there is not enough pressure for change but I am sure it will come. In 5-10 years time the competition for competent staff will be very harsh and we need to do

our utmost to keep the good people in our organization. It seems that external factors very much determine what is important for our top management.

In these words we see here an interesting 'balancing' between gender awareness and sought 'neutrality', with the dilemma appearing to be resolved by faith in these challenges being solved in time or by time.

Company D is a large global company, with a diversity programme, designed for business reasons, along with the challenge of having non-Finns in top positions; gender is reported as not discussed or a problem, but rather 'coming naturally'.

The chief HR manager, a non-Finnish man with transnational experience, stressed competence and diversity as key, but not gender: "Needless to say, if you do your best, your competence evolves and you advance." He referred to "the alignment of people practices with business strategies. ... if we are entering a new business strategy, we need to make sure that we have people with appropriate competence"

Q: ... how many of the HR staff are females and how many males?

A: Ah, so now we are getting to diversity issues... I don't remember the gender division exactly but my guess is that close to 70% are women and 30% men.

A: Diversity means benefiting from differences. It is an important element when trying to create an environment where you can be relaxed ...

A: In the 1960s, it was commonly thought that for women to make it to the top of the organization they need to behave like men. Now what's the value added if I have five persons, four women and one man, and the four women behave like men? So this is really the bottom line of diversity.

A: We should aim at benefiting from diversity. There is not just the word 'diversity' but also the issue of gaining benefits. You are right that if we have total diversity it may lead nowhere, we will never arrive at the conclusion. One needs to have some realism here. ... To summarise the three main business reasons why we think diversity is important I would say that first, we want to encourage creativity in our organization. Second, we need to better understand our customers. And third, we want to have an inclusive working environment allowing us to expand our pool of potential recruits. Our staff should enjoy working for this company.

Q: What kind of gender policies do you have in your organization?

A: I'm tempted to say that this conversation will be very short if we discuss this issue. Let me rephrase the question. Why would you have gender policies in the first place?

Q: Well, what I'm asking is that...

A: Yes, yes, but in our culture, everyone is equal and there isn't a need for such policies. Whether this is the reality, whether the practices promote equality is then another story. [finger pointing] You shouldn't look at gender policies but practices. That's the real issue.

Q: Do you have a gender equality plan, for example?

A: No, not as such, we have a diversity programme. At this stage, it is very much an awareness programme to make people think about these issues through illustrative examples, like the one I gave you previously about the homosexual in the

workplace. People don't come to think about such issues. We are training our people how to behave in a diverse working environment.

Q: Whom are you targeting this programme at?

A: It is for everyone, all employees, but the managers are an important group to us. With the support of our HR people we educate them. We are now creating awareness among the HR staff first, what they need to know in order to help and support the managers.

Q: Do you have some family-friendly practices?

A: Yes, we do but not only for women but also for men. For example, flexible working hours and solutions. Of course, due to the traditional gender roles it is often the women who tend to use them.

Q: From the equality perspective, what principles do you follow in recruitment?

A: You will always get the right answer to such a question, that the best person is chosen for the job and that the candidates are treated equally. There is a lot of psychology involved. Research shows that people tend to select the person who is plus or minus five years their own age and reasonably similar to themselves. There is a sense of mutual understanding and the chemistry works. ... Research suggests that people have the very best intentions to select the best person for the job in an objective sense, but subjectivity always enters the picture. You feel that you could better work with this person than the other one etc.

A: Guys tend to be more aggressive in selling themselves, while females tend to be a little uncertain, modest and despite being reasonably good they request a dialogue with the other person to ensure they are on the right track. It is a different language altogether. As a male making the recruitment decision, how should I interpret this? If I am not aware of the gender differences I would recruit the man although the woman might in reality be far more competent.

A: What we are trying to do at this stage is to create awareness among line managers when they make decisions and judge candidates. We are not for quotas because they may backfire. I think that's taking it too far. Who would like to be promoted because of her gender? What some companies do right now is that they impose a requirement to have a diverse candidate among the final two or three potential recruits. In this way managers are forced to think through the potential traps and false assumptions implicit in recruitment decisions. In this way one can train them.

Q: Do you require such diverse candidates?

A: No, it is not a company policy but it is starting to happen also in our organization. Diversity is also part of our management training programme.

Q: If you consider recruitment to the board, do the same principles apply?

A: Yes, I would say there isn't any difference between organizational levels. What I think is noticeable is that top management have a broader view of these issues. They have strongly internalized diversity as a value and are strong supporters of it.

Q: Now recently new members have been recruited to the executive board. Would you like to comment on the persons selected?

A: I think it has already been covered that it is very good to have diversity also at the board level for business reasons. Moreover, it sends a clear signal that you don't need to be Finnish to make it in this organization. We need to have the best possible people and broaden our pool of recruits. In this way we develop an inclusive working environment.

Q: Do you provide gender training in your programmes?

A: We consider diversity broadly and we don't focus especially on any of its elements. We wouldn't pick up just gender issues. Not at least to my knowledge. Of course, I'm not aware of every single initiative. I don't have the full visibility.

Q: What are the attitudes towards motherhood and childcare?

A: It is a very simple and natural thing, we wouldn't exist without it as human beings! I have never heard in this organization that somebody would say 'oh shit' if they hear that somebody is pregnant. The comments are always very positive. We have lots of people who are on maternity leaves, and also on paternity leave.

A: Women tend to be able to focus on multiple things at the same time, while men tend to focus on one thing at a time, and then proceed to the next. The outcomes are the same but the path is different. This is of course a crude generalization but still there is some truth in it. I think I'm personally pretty aware of this kind of stuff.

The extent of development of activity on gender is limited in these two companies. Company C's HR manager adopts a critical attitude to the own company's situation and activity; the equivalent manager in Company D hardly engages with gender at all but rather adopts a move away from gender equality policy to diversity management more generally without engagement with possible points of intersection between the two approaches. This manager also adopts a somewhat condescending approach to the woman interviewer. These interviews can be seen as two contrasting ways for individual HR managers to manage the situation, in the interview and in their corporate work.

Non-active companies

In **Company E** the diversity issue was stressed, as was the discrepancy between policy and practice in a male dominated industry, as well as the challenges of being a female HR director, and the danger of others seeing gender equality as her sole mission. She generally took a critical approach without pretence, commenting on the myth of Finland being equal. Competence was noted, even while there was some evidence of recruiting women to top positions to improve the company image.

A: If you look at our top management, they are very much of WASP [white, Anglo-Saxon protestant] type.

A: There are ... traditions in this company, views that this is how things have always been done over here. It is indeed a male dominated environment. There was recently an event with many senior managers and among them there were only 5% women. The company is dominated by engineers and it is very much managed by numbers which is not necessarily a bad thing.

Q: If you look at the top management levels in the company, how would you categorize them and how many women are there?

A: There is nobody else in addition to me at this level. ... The women in our company can be found in the traditionally female functions, communications, HR and accounting. ... There are some [women] in sales and I recently heard somebody commenting that to his big surprise, 'the women in sales are doing really well!'. I think women could do well in service too. Many tend to work hard and their characteristics fit well with the requirements of the job.

A: I was recruited as HR director from outside the company and perhaps top management thought that I would change the company image of a very male dominated organization. I think people should be recruited based on their competence rather than gender, because otherwise you may end up recruiting people whose gender is 'right' but who may fail in their job because they aren't sufficiently competent. That's stupid. Sometimes we do see recruitment being carried out in order to make somebody into a trophy, a symbol of gender equality or something like that.

A: In Finnish public discourse, equality is often limited to gender issue, whether a person is a man or a woman and what are the possibilities of advancing in one's career. I would also like to include the aspect of competence, we should have equal possibilities of working depending on our competence.

Q: What has been done in the company to promote gender and equality issues? A: Very few concrete measures have been taken. It is an issue that has been discussed and we are now working on a gender equality plan for Finland, to get the figures and profile of the personnel in terms of gender division. Our main owner has on several occasions mentioned the importance of this issue and the need to have more female managers in top positions. He has commented: "Oh, isn't it nice that we have the company of a woman at our meeting!" It is hard to say whether his comments are nice or embarrassing, I guess they are on the borderline, but I have been able to refer to his comments in various occasions. I think it is important that if our main owner, who is very strong, says something like this, it adds value and importance to changing things in this direction. Women should have equal opportunities and it means developing our corporate culture in this direction. For example, when choosing summer trainees I have been able to fall back on comments like this when trying to make sure we select some girls [sic.], too. We need to increase the pool of competent and promising female employees and managers. In terms of implementation, we have to set numerical objectives since the company is very much managed by numbers. When we start measuring these things the change process is on its way.

A: I would like to emphasize that I regard equality as much broader than just gender issues. It is associated with diversity, meaning that we should be better at tolerating different people in terms of race, ethnicity, perhaps handicapped people etc. One may of course point to the fact that our leadership competence programme, a management training programme, generates people with a similar mindset, clones of each other. I would say it is important to have a common basis for doing certain things in this job but we do try to promote diversity and have people who have different backgrounds, education etc.

Q: Who is responsible for equality and gender issues in the company?

A: It is the responsibility of HR but nothing gets implemented without the collaboration of line management. HR has the role of a consultant and we create and develop policies but implementation takes place in the line organization. It does not help very much if we HR people keep chirping on about this.

Q: What is the attitude among line managers toward gender and equality issues?

A: In speeches it is considered a good thing but in practice we are still far away from it. I think that in a recruitment situation the female candidate has to be at least 2 to 3 times more competent than the male candidate. She has to be so much better so that the line manager dares to make the decision and recruit a woman. It is often difficult to find good candidates though. We do have now some women in R&D and in our TSP [talent spotting process] we have promising female employees. In our new leadership experience programme we also have mentoring activity going on and our top management is involved in it. For example, Rickard Jonsson, who is a member in the corporate executive committee and responsible for the construction side of the business, was very excited after he had met his tutor. These executives feel that they also gain something personally out of the mentoring process.

Q: In your leadership experience management training course do you teach issues concerning gender and equality?

A: There is something about diversity, about treating people as individuals but not about gender or equality per se.

Q: How do you see the future of gender and equality issues in the company? A: We will proceed by specifying numbers and measurable goals for these issues. We need to set a balance for in-house and external recruitment, as currently the guidelines about this are limited. In Sweden, they have followed the path of fixing percentages and things start changing. I think if you start measuring and reward or punish people accordingly a change process is on its way. This is of course a somewhat sensitive issue, because I am a female HR director and I don't want to make this into my sole mission. I think equality is far more comprehensive, encompassing a number of other issues than gender.

Company F operates in an industry dominated by male engineers. It was recently acquired by an Anglophone corporation which introduced the importance of gender issues into the Finnish subsidiary. Before that, gender issues were hardly discussed or paid attention to. The overall attitude towards gender equality was presented as fairly neutral. In the Anglophone corporation, gender equality was part of a wider diversity programme and one of the core values of the company. The acquisition and the subsequent restructuring also brought about a situation in which there were fewer open positions left, both for men and women. The woman HR Director, with national experience, perceived that women had gained in the new division of top positions compared to men. She herself had greater power, even though she was not familiar with gender issues, and there were not yet policies:

A: ... before the acquisition, I was very much used to working independently and autonomously, to implement basically what I considered important. During recent months when we have been part of FF think I have been given more power than what I can or would be willing to exercise. In FF, the role of HR is enormous.

Q: What does equality mean to you? How would you define it?

A: [long silence] In our organization, things have been fine and gender equality has not caused any problems. We haven't paid attention to it. In the Anglophone corporate culture, in FF, its importance will grow. ... In Finland, minority groups are being monitored. I remember very well that at some stage we had a message ... that there was a link on the website concerning women and other minority groups. I was horrified and the hairs on my neck stood up!

Q: What did they mean by minority groups?

A: For example, groups in minority due to religion, race, physical handicap etc. In FF, diversity management is important and in Finland we have not paid much attention to it previously. I have simply not come across it before. However, if one starts reflecting upon it, we used to have lots of women among our HR staff while all the managers were men. For some time, I was the only woman in our management team out of nine people. Today, the finance manager is also a woman. ... Now the situation is changing. I think FF offers huge possibilities for career advancement within the HR function and outside it. We also need to take care of our male employees when women start promoting their own careers!

A: My boss is from the US, a male HR director. When I told him that we have considerable pay differentials between male and female employees he took my concerns very seriously. Some of these pay differentials may be well founded, others perhaps less so, ... his attitude was very different from what I had expected. In the US, they take these matters very seriously. ... I don't think pay differentials between men and women have been an issue in the daily business, though. I think the question is about how one communicates and presents things that then affect career advancement. It really boils down to personality rather than whether you are a man or a woman. In short, how much noise you make about yourself! I guess I am often too nice, too kind in this respect.

Q: How would you describe top management's attitudes towards gender equality?

A: I don't think it has been much discussed here, or that there would have been a need to discuss it. As a recruitment manager, I don't remember any single case where gender would have been an issue. When you look at secretaries, personal assistants, we don't have any male secretaries! I guess that is the purest profession in terms of being so female-dominated. During YT-negotiations, for example, none of the employee representatives has ever brought gender issues to the fore. The gender division is fairly fifty-fifty in our organization. However, I think that with the incorporation into FF the importance of gender issues will grow. For example, diversity is very relevant in FF. They want us to collect statistical data about it and of course collecting and generating these data will make people aware of these questions.

Q: Has your own sex as female affected your career?

A: I don't think it has affected my career. I couldn't think of faster career advancement in any case! I have always been interested in HR jobs and I haven't applied for them actively. In terms of whether it has been an advantage, I don't really think so.

Q: Have you implemented any gender policies, for example?

A: No, not in our former organization but I expect that as part of FF we will do so. Diversity is one of FF's core values but I am not quite sure how it will translate into practical measures.

Company G appears to have had no discussion on gender issues, no policies and no apparent interest. The woman HR manager with transnational experience in this male-dominated manufacturing company had the most negative attitude among the chief HR manager interviewees, and was almost aggressive and hostile to gender issues.

A: It [the organization] is very male dominated, particularly at the top levels. This branch of industry seems to drive away women. In one of our factories though, I can't remember the technical details now, but in one special stage where ... a lot of handicraft is needed, there we see women working in production.

Q: The company has expanded internationally through ... mergers and acquisitions. Have local gender attitudes affected your way of looking at things?

A: No, not really. We acquire small companies or then companies that need a fresh outlook. Therefore, we largely introduce our own way of implementing things.

Q: How are gender issues discussed within the company?

A: There isn't any discussion. The key point is the competence of an individual which counts in career advancement and promotion. Gender as such is not an issue. There isn't any ongoing debate about gender issues.

Q: Do you have for example a gender equality plan?

A: No, we don't.

Q: What is the attitude among the members of the management team towards gender issues?

A: They are simply not of current interest, there is no need for considering gender issues. For example, the main legal adviser at the group level is a female member in the management team. Both men and women have the same possibilities to make a career here. It is the competence of the individual in question which matters.

Q: Do you consider gender in for example recruitment of new personnel or promotion?

A: This is a very male dominated industry and it is difficult to find appropriate female candidates. For example, we were looking for a female summer trainee in R&D but it was difficult. Obviously, gender should not be an end in itself. ... I think it is important not to make gender into a problem, it is completely unnecessary. It should not be imposed on the organization.

Q: So you see it as a problem?

A: No! On the contrary! It is these kind of investigations [referring to the interview guide with her hand] that make gender into a problem! The key issue is that the person is able to perform on the job. There are, of course, cultural differences related to this ...

Q: How have you been received in the organization as a woman? A positive surprise for the male colleagues?

A: Yes, I would say so. But you see I am doing an odd job here. I am not responsible for a specific business area, but rather doing a support job.

Q: Do you see any differences between female and male leadership styles?

A: No, I think the differences are largely due to individual differences rather than gender.

Q: Have you ever had a female boss?

A: Well, ... for a very short time when we returned from abroad, but that was very brief.

A: ... personal chemistry with the management group works well and family considerations are well understood.

A: Sometimes you need to be arrogant in your response to them [her male colleagues]. I noticed that in the beginning they took me into consideration because I was a woman but later on they simply forgot. You could hear and see them telling their stories and Elsa and I felt that we became one of the boys. We had been accepted to the gang.

These three companies are different again. All three have not been active in relation to gender equality policies. At best, Company E is just beginning the process in a slow “evolutionary” process; Company F is going through a massive “revolutionary” change initiated by a global group policy that has yet to produce changes in practice; and Company G is still not active at all, and probably not amenable to such innovation.

3.2. Corporate contexts and individual managers

These contingent, yet asymmetrically structured, organizational conditions produce a complex corporate context for both policy and individual managers. One aspect of this relation is the extent to which individual managers see themselves as one and the same as the corporation; and what contradictions there may be between these corporate contexts and individual (re)presentations.

It should also be noted that there is some arbitrariness both in the categorization of companies in terms of their extent of gender equality policy activity and even in the very definition of companies. Smaller companies, with say, several hundred employees, could actually constitute but one part of larger multi-unit global companies. Being part of top management of the former might mean being in the middle management of the latter. Having said that, it would seem that both the first two companies discussed above are rather more proactive in gender policies than most, and their categorization in the “active group” is reasonable.

Forms and relations of structure and agency – what the company is doing at the structural level, and what individual agents within it do – were useful in making sense of this material. It is possible to examine the variable relation of: i) the gender equality activity context of corporations, and ii) the gender positioning, actions and constructions of individuals.

Corporations with more gender equality activity may house individuals with differential positionings in relation to gender power and gender equality; similarly, corporations with less or absent gender equality activity may house individuals with differential positionings in relation to gender power and gender equality. A simple way of expressing this in the case of chief HR managers is shown in Table 7:

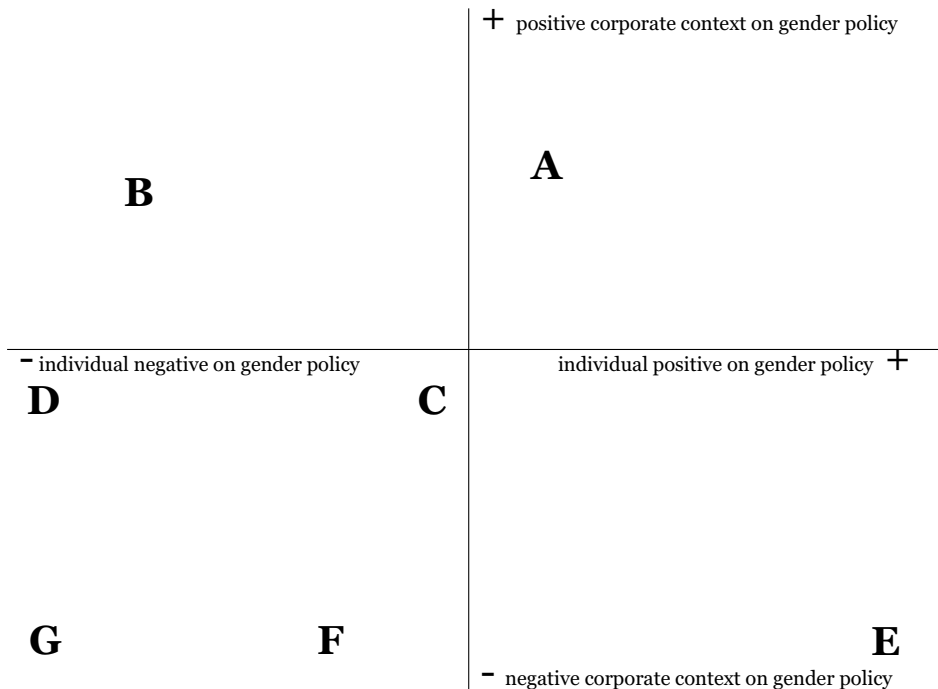
Table 7 Relations of corporate policy contexts and individual positionings

Corporate policy context	Individual positioning			
		Negative positioning on GE	Neutral positioning on GE	Positive positioning On GE
	Positive GE context	resistant (B)	in tension (A)	complementary
	Neutral GE context	in tension (D)	complementary (C)	in tension
Negative GE context	complementary (G)	in tension (F)	resistant (E)	

Note: GE = gender equality

‘Complementary’ is where individual positioning reinforces the dominant organizational context. ‘In tension’ is where there is some tension between the organizational context and individual positioning. ‘Resistant’ is where there is opposition (either way) between individual positioning and dominant organizational context. As with resistance generally, this can be more or less active or passive, more or less based on resistance through either persistence or distance (Collinson, 1994). This is a way of moving beyond the earlier three-way classification of companies towards a richer and more complex categorization, as in Figure 1:

Figure 1 Location of the Human Resource managers’ interviews of the seven selected companies in relation to corporate context



Thus both Company A and Company B could be said to have a broadly positive corporate policy orientation towards gender policy development, but the individual HR managers concerned take different positions: that in Company A is generally positioned, while that in Company B is more negatively disposed toward these matters. As noted, the female Company A HR manager spoke at much greater length on gender than the male Company B HR manager, integrated issues of gender and diversity to some extent, and was much more open and more challenging on the question of gender. In contrast, elements of gender hierarchy, sexism and paternalism were present in the interview with Company B's HR manager. The HR manager for Company E was an opposite case to that of Company B. Company E HR manager was operating in a corporate environment that was not active in relation to gender policy development, yet was herself strongly aware of these issues, and was in that sense at odds with the dominant policy context. Finally, the Company G HR manager was in a non-active corporate policy context and was also individually positioned negatively towards gender policy development. Thus, this case could be said to be an example of an agentic-organizational compatibility, albeit in a negative mode.

One way to describe the situation is variations in how managers make sense of the situations in which they find themselves. People try to make sense of the gender situation and the contradictions around it by reference to what may be called others' and their own "reasonable individual intentions" and "reasonable organizational policies" (corporate or unit-based). This does not highlight discrimination issues. Nor are processes of structural reproduction of gender, gender divisions and gender power highlighted. This includes the gendered conduct of men-men relations, the operation of homosociality and the conduct of gender (in)equality across formal boundaries, between those within and outside specific corporations, and between corporations. Corporations may have *policies* for the whole organization but these may not be reproduced in *practical conduct* of the (male-dominated) unit or the individual manager, male or female. In such practices, gendered structures are reproduced.

An important, and very frequently dominant, managerial discourse is that based around "individual competence". Within this individualist discourse, there is in effect a search for individual agency in understanding things in many of these accounts. Managers, or at least 'good managers', have agency, as do women, so this means that also women need to be responsible individual agents for change and for achieving change – for much of change it is up to women. There is an individualist response to structural problems. One way of understanding this is in terms of ideological dilemmas (Billig et al., 1988): how actors 'solve' the problem of everyday ideological dilemmas in face of contradictory themes, demands, elements.

3.3. Definition and scope of gender policies

A key question concerns how gender policies are defined and understood, including the extent to which gender policies are equated with family-friendly or reconciliation of home and work policies. In the interviews gender policy was often taken to mean home-work life reconciliation and family-friendly policies rather than the basic gendered structure and processes of the company.

In analysing the Phase II survey, it was noted that the difference in “equality activity”¹² between male- and female-majority corporations was quite small. In terms of the proportions of corporations having women in top management and on the board are on the same level in the male-majority corporations and in female-majority corporations that report the existence of women on these levels. In terms of the overall development of gender policies, there appears to be no considerable difference between the groups defined on the basis of general employment. If one formed two groups from the survey companies so that they are almost equal in size – 26 corporations with largest male majority; and 25 corporations with female majority or small male majority – the result is that there is a slightly larger difference: the mean of the sum is 1.73 for the 26 corporations with largest male majority, and 2.79 for the 25 corporations with female majority or small male majority.

The commentary written on the Phase II survey suggested:

Our analyses suggest that it is inaccurate to refer to “gender equality activity” or “gender policy development” in these top Finnish corporations as any kind of concerted or coherent phenomenon. This lack of concert and coherence applies both within and across corporations. Rather we would see the development of policies on gender a more fragmented set of structures and actions, that themselves are but a part of the overall gender patterns, dynamics and powers in and around corporations. The specific reasons for the extent of development of such policies may be more local and more contingent. (Hearn et al., 2002: 39).

The Phase III interviews in many ways add detail to that assessment. From these interviews it is important to note that the division of the companies into the three groupings in terms of gender equality activity may not be so clear cut. To some extent some similar themes and understandings around gender emerge across the three groups of companies. While some companies are active to some extent and have GEPs, and some are not active and do not have GEPs, the variation is still largely within the context of a relatively low level of activity and the relative overall predominance of men in top management and on the boards. For example, Company B’s chief HR manager noted that they do not have a gender equality plan at the group level, but rather at some individual unit and factory levels, and that in the executive team there are no women but there are some at the next level, even though he had previously reported the presence of women in top management. Much depends how both top management and gender policies are defined.

In the Phase II survey gender policies were reported to be monitored or evaluated by 31 corporations out of 46 reporting on monitoring; mostly monitoring is reported to be done in ways that can be described as regular or formal. Eleven corporations said they did not monitor their gender policies. The extent to which monitoring of gender policies is conducted systematically and what this means in detail remains very unclear in the seven companies whose managers were interviewed. This would appear to be an issue for further policy development. In the survey promotion policies of the corporations were often described in terms of choosing of the best person (14

¹² An important issue which we were keen to explore was to what extent it could be said that the development of policies around gender – what we call as a shorthand “gender equality activity” – is a coherent and unified set of activities. Accordingly, a sum variable (“gender equality activity”) was created from the corporations’ responses on the seven policies listed in the previous section on corporate policies, with the existence of each gender policy/practice listed given one point, up to a maximum of seven points. No points were given for each “No” answer and for each missing answers; the sum was calculated for 61 corporations.

corporations out of 47 answering the question) or as being based on formal qualifications (12 corporations). This was overwhelmingly confirmed as the dominant ideology in the interviews, as just noted in the discussion of “individual competence” in the previous section.

The meaning given to the concept of gender equality in the interviews was very varied. In five of the seven companies (anonymized as Companies A, B, D, E, F) gender equality was associated with diversity management and once also amongst these with corporate social responsibility. In three, gender equality was regarded as one dimension of diversity management (A, E, F). In only one case company was it considered a separate matter (B). Two of the companies (A and D) emphasized the importance of having diverse nationalities in the workplace (the proportion of Finns as against non-Finns). In Company C gender equality was discussed in its own right, without associating it with other HR policies. In Company G the concept was virtually absent.

These complexities raise the question of to what extent it is useful to talk of coherent gender regimes or gender policy regimes in these business organizations (Connell, 1987). This is especially so when there appears to be considerably room for manoeuvre in the extent to which policies are discretionary or binding, and in the extent to which managers have room for manoeuvre in the creation, development, implementation of policy. It may be more accurate to consider the seeming “flexibility” in policy around gender, albeit within structured gender asymmetries as a characteristic form of gender regime or gender policy regime in itself. It also emphasizes how gender policy may not be understood as separate but intermingled with equality policy, diversity management and HR policies more generally. For this reason, some brief comments on the relation of gender policy and diversity policy are in order.

3.4. Gender policy and diversity policy

The relation of the development of gender policies and the development of diversity management and diversity policies is an important aspect of this research. This also appears to be an area of relatively rapid change. There are clear pressures in a growing number of corporations to recast national and international corporate policy debates from gender equality to diversity management. What appears to be happening in some corporations is a shift from gender equality policies to diversity policies even before those policies are very well established. Diversity policies can be addressed to a wide range of issues and differences, such as age, ethnicity, physical attributes/abilities (including disabilities), “race”, sexuality, as well as gender (see Litvin, 1997). Other possible differences include class, language, nationality and religion.

As with multiculturalism, there are various ways of both promoting and conceptualizing diversity management, that are less or more challenging to existing power structures, including gender power (Prasad and Mills, 1997; Prasad et al., 1997). There is also a range of conceptual approaches to diversity, including those based on cognitive-functional, cultural, or social differences (Merrill-Sands et al., 2003). Variations in the theory and practice of diversity management overlap with variations in the theory and practice of gender and equality interventions. Thomas and Ely’s (1996) (three paradigms: discrimination-and-fairness; access-and-legitimacy; and learning-and-effectiveness) and Kirton and Greene’s (2005) (liberal [fair equal opportunity, positive action, or strong positive action], radical, and managing diversity equality initiatives) discussions of alternative, more or less radical approaches to

diversity. Their possible limitations resonate with Fletcher and Ely's (2003) and Kolb et al.'s (2003) four-fold framework of 'fixing the women', 'celebrating differences', 'creating equal opportunities', and 'revising work culture' that presents various forms of more or less fundamental engagements with gender arrangements (Ely and Foldy, 2003), building on earlier debates on the long and short agendas of equal opportunities (Jewson and Mason, 1986; Cockburn, 1989).

Just as Susan Moller Okin (1997) asked "Is multiculturalism bad for women?", so we might add or ask: "Is multiculturalism – or diversity - good for men?", that is, in obscuring men's power and promoting men's dominant interests. Crucially, in these various frameworks there are questions of who constructs "diversity"? Who defines diversity? Who decides? And which forms of diversity are legitimate (Cockburn, 1991). This can be seen as part of the interrogation of dominant organizational cultures as part of the long agenda of equal opportunities.

In one sense, diversity management and programmes might be seen as a contradictory gender project, both incorporating gender and other social divisions into mainstream agendas, and having the potential to be fundamentally deconstructive and threatening to men's hegemonic power. Yet, at the same time, in various complex ways, diversity management can be used to downplay gender and men's gender power, and a means of diversion from gender relations by focusing on a "diversity", that can mean everything, anything or nothing. Diversity management can also be implicated in such diverse ways of being men and women. Differences within and amongst management may be intertwined with other social differences, such as age, class, ethnicity, gender, locality, nationality and religion.

We may also ask which men and masculinities are favoured and disfavoured in diversity programmes – in their setting up, management and control, and their implementation, consumption and effects. These implications clearly affect both women and men in the organizations concerned. Diversity management and programmes may also provide space for the development of further paradoxes around differential forms of power. A focus on multiplicity, multiculturalism and diversity amongst men and masculinities, especially if seen only in terms of some men's disadvantage, can bring dangers of excluding other social divisions and power inequalities in organizations and failing to appreciate the interrelations of these divisions and inequalities. Indeed one of the most fundamental forms of diversity that exists within organizations arises from hierarchical power differences within organizations, and the diversities amongst men in those organizational hierarchies. These entrenched diversities are often missing from debates on diversity and diversity management.

More broadly, management is set within complex tensions between ownership and control, technological and social relations. Alongside antagonistic relations between capital and labour is a coexisting and contradictory interdependence limiting managerial power. Employers' contradictory demands for both dependable, yet disposable workers result in changing emphases, first, upon managerial prerogative and coercion (as in Scientific Management approaches), and, second, upon worker cooperation and consent (as in some Human Relations approaches) as product and labour market conditions shift. Diversity management is generally more easily understandable as part of the latter strategy. Yet neither of these two strategies can fully reconcile the contradiction between control and coordination in capital-labour relations. Management control is constrained by its contradictory relationship with labour, and is also highly gendered. Diversity management can thus be understood as

part of the gendered construction and operation of management, indeed increasingly mainstream management. This may involve diversity management being developed as part of (strategic) HRM, alongside and sometimes in distinction from the “main mission” of supposedly agendered strategic corporate management.

4 PART 4: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

4.1. Taken-for-granted gender hierarchy and gender power

Gender equality policies operate both at the national and international level, and at the level of the corporation. However, when we look at the impact of these gender equality policies (and their absence) on the gender structuring of the corporations, and vice versa, it is less clear how effective they are. All respondent corporations have men at all levels of the organization (as employees, middle and top managers and on the board), with a male majority of employees in 69% of corporations reporting on gender divisions.

These organizations can be understood as primarily men's arenas, with clear structural gendered hierarchies. Management overwhelmingly remains men's arenas. In the Phase II data top management and boards of directors both comprised about 90% men, and middle management about two-thirds men. Of the respondent corporations 13 have no women on the board or in the top management; 17 have women both on the board and in top management; 58% of the corporations had no women on their board. Only one corporation had as many women as men on the board; all others had less women than men or no women; in 95% of the corporations there were at least twice as many men as women on the board. Only one corporation had as many women as men in top management; all the others had less women than men or no women. Thirty-seven percent of the corporations had no women in top management. In half the corporations, at least 9 out of ten top managers are men. Hierarchy operates structurally from men to women, and also between men (Hearn et al., 2002).

In most of these interviews with middle and top managers in Phase III the basic hierarchical, male-dominated form of organization is taken-for-granted in the companies. Gendered hierarchy is normal. The significance of this cannot be overstated. Such taken-for-granted gendered hierarchy is explained by interviewees in a number of non-problematized, supposedly 'gender-neutral' ways:

Q: How would you define the different levels of management in your organization?

A: My bosses belong to the executive team [went to pick up the Annual Report of the company]. In our [name] division, we have two different product lines, [name of the division] for [product name] and [name of the division] for [product name]. [name of the company] organization is product line organization. The corporate Chief Executive Board manages the product lines, each product line has operative line management. So, I represent the second tier of managers if you like. (B02, man, middle)

Q: How many subordinates do you have?

A: About 400 if you look at it from an operative and functional perspective.

Q: How would you describe the decision-making process at the top management level? Are the divisional personnel involved?

A: I would say the pattern is strongly hierarchical and the operative management is primarily involved in it, while the other levels implement the top management decisions. It is conservative and little decision-making has been decentralized.

Decisions are cascaded down to lower levels in steps. (A02, man, top, human resources)

Q: What is the organization structure like in terms of levels of management? A: We don't have an existing organization structure, but I could draw you one (draws on the board of the meeting room). In Finland, we have four business units or tubes as we call them and then supporting functions such as HR, information systems etc. The business units encompass [division], [division], [division], and [division]. Each business unit manager reports to his/her respective boss in Europe or globally. The direct reporting line goes outside Finland. At the top here, you have a forum for discussing different issues. It does not make decisions. The MD's position is shared in a sense that he is the MD but also manager of one of the business units. The decision-making is global and we have to make sure that the national company is attuned with the global organization. For example, the performance management model is a global model that we are applying locally. (D01, woman, top)

Q: You have many different areas of responsibilities. How is your salary determined?

A: We have of course job descriptions and development discussions in which we set goals. We have ... GPAs [goals and performance agreements] which set quantitative and qualitative objectives. We also have targets and resources process at annual and 3-year periods. The targets are then cascaded down to the individual level. My GPA is defined together with my operational excellence boss. I have goals related to customers, products etc. where we have to do things right the first time. I also have goals concerning the motivation of my personnel, appropriate resource allocation, work hygiene etc. As the country chairman, I am responsible for the organization in Finland (D03, man, top)

A: In order for you to understand our reporting relationships, I should have brought the organizational structure a long. Well, I can send it afterwards [was emailed same morning by secretary]. We have three business units: [name], [name] and [name]. There is also a person who represents the three business units. We have a common platform for everybody for 'sourcing' that we call 'delivery operations'. Then there are the customer market operations: [list of geographical regional divisions of the company]. The staff functions include group controller, HR, quality, strategy, legal affairs, communication which is subordinate to strategy and also reports to the group communication director.

Q: How many females do you have among your direct subordinates?

A: Let me think... [female person] used to work for my organization, but she moved to the corporate level. [female person] is responsible for HR and [female person] for legal affairs. There aren't too many. (F04, woman, top)

Q: What is your position in [name of the company]'s new organization structure?

A: I am responsible for global R&D in what we call [name of the company] IT [section], on the business card his title is Vice President and General Manager, [functional division]. I have subordinates, who report directly to me, in Finland,

USA and Western Europe. Then there are about 1,500 people who are connected to me through a dotted line in the matrix. In my own budget I have about 100 people. This is a community of engineers but I also carry out human resource management issues and personnel planning. I think human resources and R&D are very closely connected. (GO2, man, top)

Such examples of gender-neutrality are interesting in that they seem to mundanely and even innocently reproduce the absence of a specific explicit gender discourse, even when and perhaps especially when the organizations and their management are highly and clearly gendered. There may be a paradox here: that the more clear-cut gender divisions in these organizations and management are, the more they (re)produce and are (re)produced by apparently 'gender-neutral' responses, assumptions, narratives, and discourses. Gendering and gender inequality is thus normalized.

In contrast to these non-gendered interpretations, the gendering of such arrangements are sometimes made more explicit, as already reported in Part 3:

A: It is not an explicitly masculine style as in the heavy industry for example. We have a sophisticated, polite culture at the superficial level. When you take a deeper look, it is men who discuss with other men and particularly from the owners', shareholders' perspective. As we are currently in an economic downturn and the financial result is not impressive, we get more orders than suggestions from the top. They use the entire hand to steer us, not only their fingers! (AO2, man, top, human resources)

Or ...

A: ... in the forestry industry ... it has tended to be more difficult for women to advance than in our field. I think a lot remains to be done, we are still in the early stages of the change. In terms of salary, for example, I have had to work twice as much as my male colleagues who are at the same hierarchical position, and probably at a salary that is lower than theirs. I have had to prove myself many times. I don't need to do that anymore. (DO2, woman, middle)

Or more bluntly still ...

Q: Was there a specific reason for it [gender policy issues] to be raised in [company name]

A: Perhaps one external trigger was the fact that [company name] had carried out an investigation about it that they made public, but gender issues have never been a problem in our company. About 5 years back we got our first female board member that perhaps started the debate about this. Unfortunately, our company is very conservative in this respect. (CO2, man, top, human resources)

On the other hand, there are a variety of ways in which such clear, and indeed gendered, hierarchies are mediated, ameliorated and interpreted as not so hierarchical, according to those who are senior within them. Most obviously, in several companies there was an emphasis on the relative lack of hierarchy.

Q: How would you describe the organization hierarchy? A: We have a very small headquarters. (BO1, woman, top)

A: Our organization is flat in terms of hierarchy and what I particularly enjoy over here is being close to decision-making. It is a dynamic organization ... (B02, man, middle)

Q: At what organizational level are you within the new structure?

A: In the world of [name of the company], we have different business areas. We belong to [name of a section of the company] and further to [name of a section of the company] IT (information technologies). Now, in [name of the company]'s code language I report to a manager at N-1 level. The head of [name of the company] IT is an N-level manager, what ever that means. This code language seems to be rather new even at [name of the company] and nobody appears to know from where these abbreviations originate. As HR manager, I have a dotted reporting line to a business manager (N-1) and a solid line to an HR manager in the matrix structure. I am at N-2 level in our organization. Overall, [the company] does not have many organizational levels, the hierarchy is low. I guess using the common terminology I would be in senior management in Finland. (G01, woman, top)

A: Another example of equality is our own workplace. We have an open space office where nobody owns his or her cubicle. As the Managing Director, I don't have a big corner office but rather I share the same office space with my subordinates and so do the other managers. You take the first empty desk which feels good in the morning! I think we wanted to get away from the formalization at headquarters and remove all external signs of hierarchy. The change involved being close to our customers. We have lunch and coffee together. We very much encourage our people to walk around the site operations and get an understanding of the joys and challenges associated with this work. To get a better view of the whole picture. (D05, man, top)

... or the operation of functionality rather than hierarchy, albeit amongst men ...

A: If I then look at my business units and how decisions are made, we have three different types of meetings that are not really distinguished based on hierarchical reasons but rather on pragmatic considerations. First, we have the extended meetings where all 16 or whatever the total number is participates. Both the customer as well as the global business organizations are represented. Decisions are made and we make short term and long term strategic plans. The short-term plan we make every 6 months, i.e. twice a year while the long term plan we make for three years. We have meetings every second month because it doesn't make sense to fly in the boys from different parts of the world. In addition to this, we have telephone meetings. (F04, woman, top)

A further positioning was in terms of gender-neutrality and the potential for change:

A: In our organization, you can access power and gain influence regardless of your gender. I think that many of our top female managers and male managers, too, have developed professional competence and gained the expert status and the associated power. By collaborating with people you can influence the way things are done even in large institutions like our organization. ... Some develop into change agents and I think our culture has become more open in this respect accepting also women to gain powerful positions. I think the issue of diversity challenges some of our old, traditional culture in which power was equalled to the person's hierarchical position. Since the mid-90s we have actively tried to establish a new culture and the diversity and inclusiveness programme is only one part of that. It takes generations

to change the organization and it is process involving small steps before we see more women in top positions. But I am personally positive about this change and optimistic. (D03, man, top)

A: How many females do you have among your subordinates?

A: I don't really now... I obviously have two female secretaries, one in Finland and one in the USA. In my management team, the key position is held by a woman. Traditionally, the gender division in the management team has been fifty-fifty. Now you should understand the tradition that [name of the company] represents, its Finnish heritage. Gender equality was never an issue there, it was never thought of in an active way. We consider people as individuals, not as women or men. And it shows. The key responsibilities are equally distributed. However, I think this is a very Finnish phenomenon. The following observations are my personal ones.

Q: You mentioned recruitment as an example previously. How is gender reflected in promotion for example?

A: Let me answer this by going back in time to the pre-[name of the company] period. A few years ago, or still in September 2003 I had more than 600 subordinates in Helsinki. Regarding promotion, gender does not have an effect. It is a neutral issue. For example, in my management team half of the team members are women - 3 out of 6. And in recruitment it is also 50-50. However, I made an observation about 10 years ago regarding pay differentials. We were preparing ourselves for discussions on gender equality and therefore ran some statistics concerning pay differentials based on gender. We did not find any significant differences. Of course, one or two women may find themselves in a situation where the salary is not up to the right level. For example, salary is seldom raised before a woman goes on maternity leave and when she returns the salary is adjusted to some acceptable level. Often, the new position is worse than the one she had before the baby. If a woman is on maternity leave twice it is likely to affect her salary in short term. However, in long term its effect is minimal compared to a person who has had a continuous career over a period of 5-10 years. I think this phenomenon is pretty normal. Men have a break during the military service but this often takes place before they start their career. (G02, man, top)

Hierarchy can also be seen as beneficial for downwards communication, including on gender issues ...

Q: Is there something else that you would like to add or emphasize concerning gender and equality issues?

A: I think it is important that we show good example here at headquarters. Like with raising children, the same applies in this context. A good example, even a simple one, can be very powerful and is better communicated down in the organizational hierarchy. (E02, man, top)

Q: Have you had cases of sexual harassment?

A: Not that I would know of. I think it rather uncommon in this industry as a whole due to the type of people that work here. The management style is conservative, we have certain hierarchical patterns in decision-making etc. so it has not become an issue. (A02, man, top)

Hierarchy can also be ameliorated by relatively close personal relations ...

Q: Do you share your private life with your boss?

A: Yes, with the Swedish-speaking bosses. I work with them closely and it is natural for me to share with them also private matters, like what did we do during the weekend etc.

Q: Is it due to the shared language?

A: Partly yes, and partly because we work so closely that personal bonds are created. (BO1, woman, top, human resources)

Q: Which factors have supported your career, on the one hand, and which, if any, have slowed it down, on the other?

A: I think one factor has been my personal wish to stay in this town. I have been offered jobs internally and externally, which would have involved moving to another place. These I have turned down. Another factor is related to my bosses who have been very open-minded and not prejudiced towards me being a woman. They have had faith in me despite my gender! In this sense, perhaps they did not follow the traditional division of labour between genders but rather gave me demanding jobs.

A: I think that a good work community consists of both men and women. If you have only women, as you may know, conflicts may arise and bonds between certain women etc. Or if you have only men, they tend to become lazy and untidy as my boss uses to say! He says that even if there is only one woman at the factory floor, the men around her try to behave themselves and keep the area tidy! [laughing] It is very refreshing to have at least one representative of the opposite sex in a group. I don't mean flirting here.¹³

Q: Do you share your private life with your boss and your colleagues in terms of telling them what you did during the weekend etc.?

A: Yes, we do that. But I guess I am fairly focused on business matters. I like to keep my colleagues separate from my private life. I think it is a positive thing. If you live in a little place like I do, 20 kilometres towards [name of the bigger city], nobody knows there what my job is. If I lived here in [name of the smaller city], I might have my boss or subordinate as my neighbour. And people would say 'she works as some kind of an accounting manager!' Now I can relax completely when I get home and I am just one of them in the little village.¹⁴

A: When I started my career here, I of course as a female new how to dress appropriately. But during my introduction period I was suppose to spend a day at the factory. I remember well that I had decided to wear a pair of jeans and a blouse instead of my normal business suit. In the morning, I told my boss that I would be

¹³ This comment represented what has been described as a 'complementary' or 'balancing' view of gender, with women and men, defined in terms of two halves of a probably heterosexual couple or coupling (see, for example, Cockburn, 1983).

¹⁴ This statement could be interpreted as an assertion of the public/private division, as often seen as characteristic of the "male breadwinner", but her reproduced by a woman middle manager. This raises the interesting question of to what extent such women managers live similar or different domestic lives to their male counterparts. This issue is addressed in more detail in section 5.

getting acquainted with the factory that day. He looked at me from head to toe and said: 'Yes, I can see that!' [laughing] I will always remember that comment whenever I consider wearing jeans at work! (C01, woman, middle)

A degree of international perspective can also "help" to account for the operation of hierarchy and its differential forms ...

A: We have a subsidiary in Sweden and we don't have any women up at the top. ... They discuss a lot but there is little action. We have a saying, "you talk about what you miss." In Western Europe, Germans are known for being very structural while the Netherlands is famous for being a very liberal democracy. A woman may work but once she gets married the likelihood of her becoming a housewife is about 90%. Money is very important in the Netherlands but it is seen as odd if you are a mother and you work. This is of course my subjective opinion. In the USA, motherhood leave does not affect a woman's career. They stay at home for 2 months and then they return to their job. It is like coming back from sick leave. I think the system is fairly cruel. The mechanisms to promote gender equality however don't seem to have an impact. Other barriers obviously prevent women from making a career. (G02, man, top)

A: One of my colleagues, [male person], has three small children. It is quite common for him to arrive late in a meeting because he has to take one of the kids to the day care centre. We have agreed that it is fine to give him a ring about work-related matters after 9 pm when the twins are in bed. Some of my male subordinates have been on a 3-month fatherhood leave. They are senior managers and I think this is real equality that both men and women can be on leave to spend time with their families. This is particularly useful for the men, it does them good. I have been on sabbatical myself so I know how much it can give ... (F04, woman, top)

Another way is by appeals to way corporations should be ...

Men and women should be more equally distributed across different jobs and hierarchical levels. We should have more women both as managers and specialists. We should also have more men in customer service. I have often asked the question what in the job contents of customer service makes it appealing only to women? I have not received a good answer yet. The career path looks good on paper, but the reality is very different. I would say that 'power runs away from women'. (A01, woman, middle)

What seems to be the situation in most of these interviews is that hierarchy, gendered hierarchy, the hierarchical world of men, is hegemonic; and that in relation to this there are a number of ways of making it less hierarchical, or even non-hierarchical. This is not an overriding or strong agenda in interviews but it is frequently present, and can be seen as a way of reflecting the complexities and contradictions in a very hierarchical, gendered corporate world experienced from within, less hierarchically.

4.2. National context and transnationalization

As already noted, another issue of special interest is the intersection between the national context of large business corporations, in this case of Finland, and the transnational, indeed increasingly transnational, character of their operations and activities.

The Phase II survey suggested Finnish national companies as opposed to multinational companies were somewhat more inclined to develop gender equality planning and promote gender equality in other ways. There was a significant negative correlation between the proportion of women in top management and corporations with foreign ownership. While Finnish ownership appears to be somewhat more favourable to the presence of women in top management and to the existence of gender equality policies, greater internationalization in corporate activities can produce pressures that may tend to either increase or decrease gender equality. The extent of the promotion of gender equality policies derives from the interaction of the Finnish national corporate context and multinational/international headquarters parts of the company.

All the face-to-face interviews in Phase III were conducted in Finland; a very few were telephone interviews to managers based outside Finland. A deliberate attempt was made to focus on multinational companies in the interview phase of the research. Most interviews were conducted with Finnish nationals and in the Finnish language, with a small number in Swedish. Those few non-Finns interviewed did note and comment on the national context. Both company C and D that have a foreign, i.e. non-Finnish, HR director belong to the group of moderately active companies. The HR director of C (a non-Finn) talked about nationality in terms of the Swedish versus the Finnish national context, and the Swedish subsidiary unit. He speaks less about nationality as a dimension of diversity. The HR director of company D, a non-Finn, spoke about nationality in terms of making the corporation more inclusive towards non-Finns ('you don't have to be a Finn to make a career here ...'). The national context was less of interest to him. The comparison between foreign interviewees and Finnish interviewees is hard to make as even these two foreigners approached the question of nationality differently.

However, in most interviews the Finnish national context was not problematized and could be said to have been taken as the taken-for-granted context of the interview. In that sense the national context was generally naturalized. This is even though all the companies were heavily involved in transnational transactions. The more reflective consideration of the national context and its variability between countries was mainly in relation to personal experiences of working in countries other than Finland. This raises interesting questions about the nature and impact of transnational corporate developments upon managers and other employees. The attachment to a home national context appears to remain strong from these interviews.

Thus the gender context and the national context are two key aspects of the framing of corporate managerial life, even with the growing impact of globalization, or more precisely transnationalization.

4.3. Managerial interrelationships, policy development and policy implementation

Related to the question of national and transnational framings is that of the relations of headquarters and subsidiaries. In the Phase II data, the answers to the questions concerning gender equality plan, equal opportunity policies in recruitment and equal opportunity policies in promotion have strong correlations with each other. Gender policies were usually reported to be the same in all parts of corporation. However, in the interview companies a more complex picture emerged.

It is apparent from the interviews with the seven case companies that there are a range of pressures or impetuses and indeed resistances that cut across both the national-multinational and the headquarters-subsidiary dimensions. Different kinds of corporate internal structures impact on gender policy and international HRM more generally, through more or less centralized control systems. IHRM operates at the intersections of international, national, regional and local, organization-specific HRM traditions and strategic international management, and as such is subject to contradictory gendered pressures. Internal corporate structures create differences in gender relations in management and policy implementation.

Relations between different units within multinational corporations depend on whether the corporations are highly integrated globally or locally responsive. Corporations with strong headquarters may contrast with polycentric corporations, where head office issues looser guidelines to local subsidiaries on, say, corporate equal opportunities policies (EOP). Centralized global corporations may develop some sort of EOP, even if these have insignificant impacts in some local areas and at high levels. Decentralized corporations may be more likely to respond to local conditions, with more autonomous, variable structures within local or functional unit (Hearn and Parkin, 2001; Hearn et al., 2006).

Local and national pressures to promote greater gender equality include those from trade unions, and even competition from competitor companies, as well as the general cultural and political climate. However, some of the strongest pressures appeared to be from the multinational headquarters, including whether the subsidiary had followed central directives to monitor diversity. This stood somewhat in contrast to the assumption that national climate of gender equality or gender-neutrality would be most influential. Furthermore, while gender equality plans and policies may exist at the general or strategic corporate level, how these are implemented locally or within particular divisions is clearly partly dependent on line management and specific individual line managers. This issue is important in terms of the devising, developing and implementing gender equality policies and practices.

National-transnational relations and headquarter-subsidiary relations are in turn mapped onto differential managerial relations. In this case, these included principally the relation of corporate policies, top management, the HR department and HR managers, middle management, and line managers.

There are also contradictions arising from the various divisions and differences within management itself, in terms of hierarchical, spatial and functional differentiations, and tensions between the formulation of corporate policy and its implementation. Strategic solutions to management's control problem may compete and be fragmented. Diversity management can itself be part of these internal divisions and contradictions.

In the Phase II survey gender policies were not in process of change in 30 out of 54 corporations reporting on the matter; 13 mentioned that the existing GEP will be developed or revised, 9 mentioned other changes. Out of 38 answering the question, 25 said they intend to develop their existing GEP. Out of 20 reporting that they do not have a GEP, 18 answered the question concerning developing a GEP: 9 reported not having such plans, 6 were planning to develop one. Just over half the respondent corporations reported that they do *not* have pressures for developing or changing their policies and practices on gender issues. This might be seen as somewhat surprising in view of the contemporary ideologies and practices of corporate responsiveness to social responsibilities and related matters. Some pressures were acknowledged from

management (3), from workers/elected officials/trade union(s) (3) and others, mentioning for example pressure from parts of corporation in other countries and from outside the corporation (14).

There is a relatively slow rate of change in these dominant features. This matches earlier work reporting on the lack of change during the early 1990s in the proportion of women in management in Finland (Veikkola et al., 1997: 83). In the Phase II survey during the last five years 39 corporations of the 62 studied had no significant changes in the number or proportion of men and women on the company board; 16 have had changes (56 corporations report on whether or not they had changes). During last five years 23 corporations reported no significant changes in the proportion of men and women in top management; 22 mentioned some changes, of which 8 specifically mentioned increases of women in management (46 corporations reported on whether or not there had been changes).

This suggests that there is a significant minority of human resources managers (or their equivalent) who consciously recognize the question of women's increased or potentially increasing presence in management as important in current change within their organization. Resistance, primarily from men, to change in gender relations and the introduction of greater gender equality in organizations is well documented (for example, Cockburn, 1991).

In the Phase III interviews some of the real concern around gender of some managers, especially some HR managers was apparent, even with the slow rate of change in gender relations in large corporations. A key aspect of this is the management of policy innovation and policy implementation, including the difficulties of producing and developing corporate policies on gender equality. The difficulties, political and other, of producing corporate gender equality plans – reporting on the current situation; problems solving themselves over time; danger of making promises that cannot be kept or that key persons do not want to keep; the challenge of senior and line managers “giving up” something or some autonomy.

A further and related aspect of policy development and implementation concerns time perspectives and frameworks. This entails the extent to which there is an orientation to past record, present performance or future expectations in the framing of policy. There is still, for example, a widespread notion that gender inequalities may be resolved by natural processes over time.

Another issue in policy development that has strong temporal and gender dimensions concerns corporate and line management policies on care and caring, both within the organization and beyond, in terms of managers' and employees' lives outside their corporate work. This aspect was not generally specifically highlighted by the interviews apart from around questions of childcare. Broader questions of care remains key for managers and employees alike, both in developing corporate cultures of care and other forms of care, such as for ageing parents (McKie et al., 2008).

5 PART 5: GENDER IN ACTION

5.1. Men, men's arenas and masculinities

We have already established how these organizations are very much men's arenas, with clear structural gendered hierarchies, and management overwhelmingly men's arenas. Examining transnational corporate top management means examining men (see Sklair, 2001; also see Rothkopf, 2008). Along with Connell's work on global processes of masculinity formation (Connell, 1993, 1998), there have been some attempts to examine men in transnational management from a critical gendered perspective (for example, McDowell, 1996; Woodward, 1996; Donaldson, 1998; Wajcman, 1999). These studies have begun to conceptualize broad transnational categories of men and masculinities, such as 'transnational business masculinity' (Connell, 1998) and 'men of the world' (Hearn, 1996). These observations apply even more with top management. Men comprise as much as 98 percent of 'top managers'; there is evidence that there may have been recent reductions in women there (Calás and Smircich, 1993; Institute of Management, 1995). In 2003 only one woman was CEO and only one woman chaired the board of a FTSE 100 companies (Singh and Vinnicombe, 2003).

In this research we have focused on gender structures and processes, and especially gender divisions and gender policies. These gendered organizations provide definite different hierarchical spaces and places for men and women. A very important overall context of these gendered elements in these organizations follows from the fact these particular organizations, these large Finnish corporations, are above all men's arenas. This is especially so in management, and even more so in top management. This persistent structural pattern was clear from the Phase II survey. All the respondent corporations had men at all levels of the organization (as employees, middle and top managers and on board). This contrasted with the much less and much more variable presence of women.

As a generalization, it has been shown, at least from the work of Kanter (1977) towards much previous research that the gender segregation of employees and management tends to be a key element in directing organizational and working cultures and policies of corporations (Hearn and Parkin, 2003). To say this is not to stereotype men or women, but to summarize a vast and complex collection of influences that tend to be affected by gender and gender power relations.

This basic structural situation of corporations as predominantly men's arenas applies in the case companies, and the interviews there. While an attempt was made to interview both women and men, the corporate worlds they inhabit are generally dominated by men. In many ways this is often wholly or very largely taken-for-granted. While the extent to which this is made explicit or made problematic varies, there are a variety of ways in which such domination of the managerial workplace is referred. These might include "top management", the "management team", "headquarters", and so on.

Furthermore, the focus of the research on gender issues often meant that HR managers and other company representatives assumed this would especially require women interviewees, or, to put this another way, that the researchers would prefer to interview women. While, access to women's experiences is vital to understanding gender relations, the assumption that women would be ones to interview on this topic is in itself probably a reflection of the taken-for-granted association of "women" and gender.

The gendering of men is much less realised even though men are just as implicated in gender relations.

In this organizational situation, men managers' (and the relatively few women top managers') power is partly maintained through their commonalities with each other. Typically, men managers are bound together, not necessarily consciously, by shared interests and meanings, socio-economic power, public representations of sexuality, and other representational privileging. Men managers' collective power often persists partly through the assumption of hegemonic forms of men and masculinities, often white, heterosexual, able-bodied, as the primary form, to the relative exclusion of subordinated other men and masculinities, and women. This necessitates attention to categories of white men, such as white, heterosexual able-bodied men (WHAM), in analysis, policy and practice.

At the same time, there are contradictions between different men and masculinities. Management differentiates men, both between managers and non-managers, and between different types of managers. Managerial masculinities might be understood as forms of hegemonic masculinity. Contradictions may exist between hegemonic managerial authority and diverse managerial masculinities, as well as between ambitious male managers seeking to purchase their career progress at others' cost.

These interwoven contradictions highlight the complex conditions, processes and consequences of managerial control in corporations. They may question conventional assumptions regarding managerial power and reveal the analytical importance of similarities and differences between men, masculinities and managements. Equally, the power of 'men as managers' and 'managers as men' (Collinson and Hearn, 1996) is circumscribed in various ways.

Men managers are not simply autonomous managers, even with their relatively privileged social situation. Despite the contradictory conditions and consequences of the exercise of gendered, hierarchical power, men managers' preoccupation with control over both women and labour continues to characterize many routine workplace and corporate practices. As such, this research adds further weight to the relatively small but growing literature on the intense relations between men, masculinities and management.

Moreover, hegemonic, subordinated and diverse masculinities change over time, can be shaped by ambiguities, differ by age, class, ethnicity and other social divisions, and be central in reproducing social divisions. Intersections of gender (men) and diversities of age, class, culture, disability, ethnicity, religion, language, race, sexuality are vital to analyse. Yet, an emphasis upon multiplicity in diversity management ought not to degenerate to a pluralism that gives insufficient attention to gendered power and inequality. While attention to diversity is certainly needed, this should not be at the expense of critiquing structured asymmetrical power relations between men and women. As Cockburn wrote, focusing upon multiple masculinities should not 'deflect attention from the consistency in men's domination of women at systemic and organizational levels, from the continuation of material, structured inequalities and power imbalances between the sexes.' (1991: 225). The challenge is to maintain this focus on difference without neglecting gender and other structural powers (Foldy and Creed, 1999; Holvino, 2001).

Mainstream (malestream) business and governmental organizations can be understood as places of men's organizing; they are often in effect 'men's organizations' themselves

full of unnoticed and unnamed ‘men’s groups’. Men routinely organize in these groups and organizations, without usually naming them as such. It is here that women’s demands may often be directed, and where men often respond, predominantly in a negative way, without explicitly calling or thinking of those responses as ‘men’s responses’, let alone ‘men’s relations to women’s demands’. On the other hand, men at the top of government and business organizations are gradually being required to respond to women’s demands, and ‘policy on men’.

Even groups or organizations, more or less dominated by men, that do not appear to have or operate with an explicit gender consciousness may articulate explicit statements on gender and men’s assumed place in society. This is perhaps clearest with religious institutions and far right political groups, which may present very dominating models of and for dominant group men, in contrast to women and dominated group men, for example, gay men.

5.2. Women’s gendered careers

It is well established, through a large amount of scholarly work, that women managers, though in positions of relative power and authority, are also often subject to relative subordination (for example, Wahl, 1992; Alimo-Metcalf, 1993; Davidson and Burke, 1994, 2000; Powell and Graves, 2003). In such structural and personal situations, women managers are likely to develop a range of responses and strategies to survive, and sometimes prosper, sometimes not, in the organization. In this study, we may ask: how are women’s and men’s careers and managerial locations gendered, and with what linkages to transnational managerial work? How are women’s careers and managerial locations gendered, and with what linkages to transnational managerial work? In the earlier survey of the largest 102 corporations in Finland, women made up one in ten of top managers, just under one in ten of those on the board, and about one third of middle managers. The earlier Phase II did not specifically address issues of career mobility and development.

Many women managers stated that gender has been a relevant factor in their career in various ways, and often it has been if not an obstacle, then at least a hindrance. They reported how they had needed to work very hard in order to succeed to proceed in their careers and in gaining proper salaries.

Q: Has your own gender affected your career path in this organization?

A: Of course it has! One could say that for 30 years I have been hitting my head against the wall! ... I think a lot remains to be done, we are still in the early stages of the change process. *In terms of salary, for example, I have had to work twice as much as my male colleagues who are at the same hierarchical position, and probably at a salary which is lower than theirs.* I have had to prove myself many times. I don’t need to do that anymore. (BO2, woman, middle) (our emphases)

A: I haven’t experienced discrimination but I think that this has been a demanding career path. *A woman has to be of a certain kind and they say at least as competent as the male colleague.* I wish this traditional way of thinking would be a fact of the past. ... I have been able to make it, advance in my career, it hasn’t always been easy. I guess it also requires that one is at the right time in the right place. (EO3, woman, middle) (our emphases)

On the other hand, there were a few women managers in the data who wanted to highlight that female gender is not necessarily a negative issue in their companies and career paths. This seem to be connected by some women to their perception of their quite favourable position as a sole woman in male-dominated managements – this can offer a particular status as a unique person and clearly ‘more competent than other women’ in the company.

Q: Has your own gender, being a female, affected your career?

A: No, I don't think so. Rather the contrary, in my case gender equality has been achieved. I have advanced well in the organization, so I think my gender has had a positive effect. Women are wanted in top management teams, whether this goal is achieved is another story. For example, quotas are being proposed to solve the problem. (Bo6, woman, top)

Interestingly, an important factor for many women managers in their career had been that they had had progressive and non-prejudiced bosses who had wanted to support them.

A: I think I have been lucky to have *clever and civilized persons as my managers*. I don't even remember having thought of getting a smaller salary than my male colleagues. (Do5, woman, middle) (our emphases)

A: Personally, I have not aggressively been promoting my own career. Rather the contrary, I have been offered interesting jobs. I very much think that the boss is responsible for the career progression but of course the right kind of attitude and competence are required. (--) They have been very supportive and encouraged me to advance. Some have been more like coaches and directly steered and supported me. As I have gained experience, I have also gained their confidence. I have been given space to act and they have trusted me. (Do7, woman, middle)

Such support points to some of the complexity and variation in experience for some women that may lie behind broad figures, for example, with women being only one in ten of top managers. This includes variation by function, career pattern and mobility. In particular, in these companies to have *different* kinds of jobs and job experiences seems to be crucial for career advancement. But it could be claimed that to do that is not necessarily as easy for women as it seem to be for men, partly because of family responsibilities.

Such possible (and potential) variation operates across several dimensions. One crucial realm of difference is in terms of ‘core’ and ‘periphery’ functions. In focusing on careers and career success in companies, it seems to be important to work in the ‘core’ areas of the company in order to make one's way to the top. Many women are situated in staff functions or other support functions in companies, and thus the job segregation inside businesses themselves often seem to create obstacles for career advancement of women. These areas are less valued, and to proceed from such positions is often harder.

Typically, women have been employed in staff functions here such as HR, finance, strategic planning and also legal affairs. When I entered the organization through strategic planning I was later asked to move to finance. (--) However, I didn't want to work in central administration for any longer! I wanted to experience the frontline and I explicitly said it aloud. I guess I had the determination and the desire to move closer to the real business. Nobody came to pick me up, I had to communicate my intentions. (Do4, woman, top)

Another realm of organizational and gender difference is in terms of transnationalization of managerial work. For instance, to take a position abroad was seen as quite natural and not so complicated for many men whose wives followed them and stayed at home taking care of the children. The same could be said for international travelling more generally. For women, such opportunities were seen as more problematic, even though the women managers had far less children than the men managers.

We now focus on transnational managerial work in more detail, as a precursor to examining links with managers' family-type lives. Range and depth of managerial experience may be seen as proof of worth for core functions, particularly for men, so linking with core-periphery differences. However, foreign assignments and working abroad can also be a way of people, particularly women, being 'out of sight, out of mind'.

5.3. Gendered transnational managerial work

There is much research and policy literature on work-life balance and reconciliation. However, most of this does not address the effects of globalization on women and men managers' lives, either in an explicitly gendered way or in terms of the complexity of transnational managerial work, including assignments, travel and commuting. This book seeks to contribute not only to the gendering of organizations, but also to the interconnections of transnational management and home-work relations. Thus we explore here the implications of transnational work for women managers' professional and private lives and compare them with those of men managers within the seven large corporations. In this, we draw on the Phase III interviews with women and men top and middle managers in the seven multinational corporations in Finland, so facilitating contextualized comparisons. Interestingly, most research on gender and organizations has focused on lower and middle organizational, rather than top management. Overall examining top management, especially transnational top management means examining men, that is, gendering men.

There is much research in IHRM that focuses on expatriate management and the long-term expatriate assignments that comprise the bulk of international postings (Dowling and Welch, 2004). Yet, given the increasing immobility of competent expatriate candidates and the costs of uprooting and relocating expatriates and their families, shorter assignments and commuting arrangements are attracting growing research attention (Harris, 2002; Tahvanainen et al., 2005). Surprisingly, the group of international business travellers, which does not relocate, has been relatively ignored in research although 'international travel remains the heart of international business' (Welch and Worm, 2006: 284).

Short-term assignments may seem to offer several advantages to both employers and managers, such as flexibility, simplicity and cost effectiveness. Tahvanainen et al. (2005: 668) argue that 'if the employee's personal situation does not favour a long-term foreign assignment, a short-term assignment might be acceptable'. They also suggest that short-term assignments are seen as 'easier from a family perspective' (p. 668) since the family does not relocate. Such work arrangements may require much foreign travel, even commuting, coupled with complex forms of distance work through information technology. Such technology may offer opportunities for women with a supportive partner and family to accept responsibility for transnational work.

However, short-term assignments may also generate negative ‘side effects’ such as disruptions in employees’ work/life balance. Employing organizations may increasingly prefer short-term assignments, particularly as these can be less costly; however, for spouses and children these might not be ideal. In practice, the spouse who stays in the home country becomes a single parent during the assignment. That probably has impacts on her or his own career, as well as family life and various less articulated social arenas.

In the light of these observations a broader analysis of transnational work and its implications for women and men managers’ personal lives from a gender perspective is necessary. More specifically, we focus on:

1. How is transnational managerial work done? How is that work gendered?
2. What is the relationship of transnational work to managers’ personal and family-type arrangements (including partnerships or not, with children or not)? How is this gendered? What does transnational work require and what makes it possible?

By transnational managerial work, we refer to, first, the responsibilities of managers who are based nationally (in this case, in Finland) but whose work for multinational corporations entails transnational elements, such as international communication and travel. Second, there is the work of managers who relocate on long-term or short-term assignments or who travel internationally in order to carry out their work responsibilities.

So, how is transnational managerial work actually done? And in what ways is that work gendered? In the following section working abroad and foreign assignments, international travel and commuting arrangements are analysed. These are themselves core elements of transnational managerial work. We then proceed in the following section to examine the reciprocal implications of and for managers’ private and family lives. Comparison between women and men managers is drawn throughout.

Working abroad and foreign assignments

Working abroad and foreign assignments take many different forms. Working abroad does not necessarily mean a specific foreign assignment from a home country base, in this case Finland. Even from detailed interviews one cannot always be sure of the exact nature of the work abroad or assignment. Of the 11 women who had worked abroad, it was clear for only five that they had had a specific foreign assignment from their present company. There is indeed considerable complexity in many of these arrangements. In some cases managers may move onwards to a third country, and may be partly abroad and partly ‘at home’. The foreign assignments were mainly traditional long-term assignments, mostly two-three years in length, but up to six years. There were only two short-term assignments, both of these by male managers (Table 8).

Table 8 Managers' work abroad

	<i>Women managers</i>		<i>Men managers</i>	
	<i>Top</i>	<i>Middle</i>	<i>Top</i>	<i>Middle</i>
Had worked abroad	4	7	9	4
Had not worked abroad	4	5	3	4
Total	8	12	12	8

Working abroad and foreign assignments had intimate implications for personal and family-type arrangements. The partners of the men managers who had been on foreign assignments had tended to join the men and be housewives there. Only one interviewee told that his wife had worked during the stay abroad. The couple did not have children at that time. In all the other cases the wife had been a housewife during the foreign assignment. Only in a few cases did the families not join men abroad.

Q: Did your wife work or stay at home while you were abroad?

A: She was at home for 10 years. When we returned to [Nordic country] and then later to Finland she was ready to start work again. ... She has the same education as I have. For us as a family, it was an excellent solution that she could stay at home and take care of the children and home. (B05, man, top) (our emphases)

A: We followed the normal, old-fashioned pattern me working and my wife staying at home when we were in the [non-European country]. My wife was left behind work-wise. (G05, man, top)

Women managers' partners were in an entirely different position. Some of the eleven women who had been on foreign assignments had been abroad due to their husband's work or they worked for the same company abroad.

A: My then husband was transferred to [Asia country 1] and I joined him. Our organization was starting its operations in [Asian country 2]. Given that my husband was travelling very much, I spent 2-3 weeks per month working for our organization in [Asian country 2] but my home base was in [Asian country 1]. This foreign assignment took about one year. (E03, woman, middle)

Some of the women managers were divorced or single, whereas all the male managers were married. One woman met her husband when working abroad. Four of the women managers who had been abroad did not have any children whereas all the men managers had at least one child. The average number of children of the women managers who had worked abroad was 1.1, and for the equivalent men managers 2.4. There were no men in the data that had moved abroad just because of their wife's work.

These findings suggest that if women move abroad they do it when they do not have family or they are following their husbands. The interviewees also seemed to assume that women with small children do not want to accept foreign assignments.

A: I mean that both males and females are being recruited. It may be of course that females do not want to be sent on overseas posting due to family reasons. ... [This] is often considered as a fact of life. (E03, woman, middle)

A: On the other hand, I think it is always more difficult for women to leave on a foreign assignments. It is rather unusual to see a man joining his wife on a foreign assignment and leaving his job. In this respect, it can be more difficult for Finnish women to advance in company's international organization. (Go4, woman, middle)

Again we see how working abroad and foreign assignments connect with managers' personal and family-type arrangements.

International travel

Women and men managers appeared to travel to a similar extent. The average number of travel days was 5.3 days per month. However, when men travel they take it for granted that their wives take care of the children and their homes meanwhile. For women managers it seemed to be more complicated as their husbands were often career-orientated.

A: When my husband and I were both traveling it was quite a puzzle to get the bits and pieces together. Sometimes my parents helped us out if we both had to travel at the same time. ... Once we had to switch parenting jobs at the airport. I met my husband at the airport gave him the boy and car keys and went off, but that was only once and we managed the situation! (Go3, woman, middle)

Some women had husbands who actively took part in the childcare, which made their traveling possible. Being able to travel is important for managers' career development, and this is facilitated or impeded by home and family arrangements.

A: My husband has taken part in childcare and allowed me to travel and work. It has always been possible for me to go on a trip despite having a family. This ... has had an impact on my career development. (Ao1, woman, middle)

Some men were aware of the difficulties for women as it comes to travelling and childcare but no one questioned a woman's role in being responsible for children. Thus the gender positions were very traditional, and in particular men managers seemed to highlight the obligations of women to be the main responsible parent of children.

A: Women tend to raise the children. We try to balance and facilitate this but particularly traveling abroad is hard to combine with small kids. (Bo3, man, top)

A: I think working young mothers face a tough equation when trying to balance work-life requirements. It isn't easy to fly on business trips while at the same time taking care of small children. They need to find time for kids who are still under three years old. (Fo4, man, top)

Not surprisingly, some women stressed that they very carefully considered whether each trip was absolutely necessity. Welch and Worm (2006) found from interviewing Australian and Danish international business travellers, frequent absences caused by international travel put strains on home and family life. Their data suggest that many consecutive short trips created more family problems than infrequent yet longer absences (e.g. 30-60 days).

In addition, women's and men's experiences of travel, especially international travel, are likely to be different, in terms of the hotels, eating out, and even airline lounge. Various forms of 'transnational business masculinity' (Connell, 1998) may be facilitated, for example, through availability of pornographic films in hotels and other aspects of the sex trade, in ways that are less institutionalized for women executives.

iii. National and international commuting

The requirements of transnational work, particularly extensive international travel, resulted in situations in which some interviewees ended up commuting between two cities in Finland and splitting up their private lives. None of the women managers were commuting long distance to work whereas three of the men managers lived in a different city during the week returning back to their families for the weekend. They had two apartments and seemed to be satisfied with the arrangement.

Q: So your family is in [Town], is that right?

A: I also live there. I have another apartment here in downtown [City] that I share with my son who studies at [Business School]. He can live there for free during his studies and arrange parties for his friends when I leave for [Town] for the weekend! (A04, man, top)

There were also two men and two women who commuted between countries.

A: The risk involved here is that one is 'out of sight, out of mind', the typical expatriate problem, that much of the decision-making takes place in this headquarter office and there is a danger that since I am not based here I will be excluded from these decision-making processes. I tend to spend a week here and a week there, but in a highly irregular manner. Perhaps I spend about 65% of my time in [European country] and the rest mainly in Finland and also in our various markets. (A02, woman, middle)

Some women managers, in turn, ended up commuting between countries in order to cope with reality of having a working husband and family in Finland. However, it was not only women who commuted and they did not stress any more than men that they did it because of the family.

5.4. Careers, family-type relations and transnational work

Continuing earlier discussions on work-family relations, our focus now turns specifically to managers' home and family life and its implications for and impacts on transnational work and careers. What is the relationship of transnational work to managers' personal and family-type arrangements? First, we need to clarify the very different home situation of women and men managers in terms of the job status of their partner (where they had one), and in terms of children and thus childcare responsibilities. There are clear differences between women and men in these terms, with women tending to have more career-orientated partners and less children (Tables 9 and 10).

Table 9 Managers' partners' work at time of interview

<i>Partners' work</i>	<i>Women managers</i>	<i>Men managers</i>
Housewife/househusband	0	9
Part-time work	1	4
Business/managerial career	10	1
Public sector	1	1
Small shop owner	0	1
Voluntary work/other	0	3
Single/divorced/no partner	3	0
No information	5	1

Table 10 Number of children of managers

<i>Number of children</i>	0	1	2	3	4	5	<i>Average</i>
All men managers	-	1	12	4	2	1	2.50
Men worked abroad	-	1	8	2	1	1	2.46
All women managers	8	3	9	-	-	-	1.05
Women worked abroad	4	2	5	-	-	-	1.10

Traditional men managers and their housewives

Many men managers' wives had stayed at home for long periods of time. Men often argued that this kind of solution was very good for the family, and that the decision was made together or that the wife herself had wanted that. Thus it was actually very 'natural' choice that the woman stayed at home.

A: When we were young, my wife did not have as good a job as I had so we didn't have to choose in that sense. (CO4, man, top)

A: We decided when we were young that one of us had to stay at home with the kids and she was the one who did it. ... My wife is 100 % responsible for the family. (A04, man, top)

For many women the period of staying at home as a housewife seem to have had been probably far longer time than she might had planned, much because of the lack of changes to get back to work after several years at home. The length of the expatriate time of the man clearly increased the probability that the women stayed as housewife. Some women married to the business managers had also dropped out from their education in order to take care of the family.

Q: Did your wife work during your overseas assignments?

A: No, when we met she studied at the [Business School] (--). She stopped working when we had our first children. She almost finished her studies but then we moved to [Nordic country] and she stopped. (B03, man, top)

Their education or careers were not interpreted as particularly important by the men compared to the men's own careers.

A: Given my wife's basic education, she didn't have an impressive career ahead of her. The wages are pretty low in the health sector. ... She left her career so that I could move on with mine. (E04, man, top)

A: My wife is happy. She has never been professionally that ambitious and she is active in the children's schooling. I am of course very pleased with this arrangement. (D02, man, middle)

Men managers' contributions at home

The gender distribution of work at home in many men managers' families was also often very traditional, and especially so amongst those who men had worked abroad (Table 11).

Table 11 Contribution at home by men managers and by the partner of the women managers

<i>Contribution at home</i>	<i>"No/none"</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Equal</i>	<i>No info/not applicable</i>
Men worked abroad (n=13)	10	1	-	2
Men not worked abroad (n=7)	3	2	2	-
All men managers (n=20)	13	3	2	2
Partner of woman who worked abroad (n=11)	4	5*	-	2
Partner of woman not worked abroad (n=9)	1	4	2	2
Partners of all women managers or not applicable (n=20)	5	9	2	4

* includes one case of minimal contribution

A: I've never stayed at home with the children when they were sick (--). I have had the complete freedom to do what I have had to do. I've never had to worry about how they manage at home. (F04, man, top)

A: My wife carries the main responsibility for our family life. But, for example, every Thursday night we play tennis with the kids which is a hobby shared by the entire family. (C05, man, middle)

In addition, some male interviewees even quite happily and openly stated that they 'had bought themselves out' of household duties.

A: We used to take care of the cleaning together at a weekly basis, but due to the fact that I was so exhausted on Friday nights *we agreed that I would compensate my share by paying for professional cleaner* to come twice a month. We are both pleased with the arrangement. *So through payment I took care of my share.* (Co4, man, top)

Q: What is the division of labour at your home?

A: Well, it is very simple. *My wife takes care of the household and the children and my role is to bring the money.* She is the MD at home, while I am in the office! I do help her during the weekend in cooking or to walk the dog. (Bo3, man, top) (our emphases)

If the men took any practical responsibilities of the family, they were often reported as 'helpers' rather than active adults responsible for everyday life. Such 'duties' were usually minor tasks and much connected to the so called 'quality time', for instance hobbies, rather than tiring and monotonous everyday family obligations. For most men, combining work-life and home seemed not to be problem, because the duties for home and family were 'naturally' those of the wife, with traditional heterosexual marriage taken-for-granted. Some men admitted that for women to proceed in their career is more difficult, because women, working or not, are responsible for children.

A: I think I had better career opportunities compared to a woman. When I performed well, I was offered more demanding jobs and I could advance. I could accept jobs that involved traveling or moving to another country. I think this would have been much more challenging had I been a woman with small children. (Bo3, man, top)

In fact, to have a wife and family seemed to be a self-evident issue for these successful managers. Nearly all of the male interviewees were married or at least cohabited. The situation of women managers varied more.

Home/work-life solutions of women managers

Many women managers were single or cohabited, and did not have children. Or, women who had children, also often had a husband who was relatively active in taking care of family responsibilities.

A: We [group of women managers] looked at ourselves and came to a conclusion that there are few of us who would have small children and whose partner would also make a career. For most women who had a successful career, the husband was at home or they did not have any children. And if you look at the male colleagues at the same organizational level or higher, they all have families and children. (Bo1, woman, top)

In addition, there were also in many cases a nanny or au pair in women manager's families, and they also asked for help from other people, such as grandparents.

A: We had a nanny working at home. We [the woman manager and her husband] shared very much the daily routines and of course always discussed who would go home to let the nanny off work. My husband's mother was a representative wife and I guess that he did not want me to be the same! I think he knew me from the beginning that it is not worth opposing me if I want to reach something. He knows me very well. (Ao2, woman, middle)

Work-life and home reconciliation is a far larger question for women managers compared to their male colleagues. Women were often very aware of the double burden that comes with work and children, and they struggled much harder with the obligations set by the work and, on the other, hand by home-life.

A: I attended a meeting with foreign colleagues. We were supposed to go out for dinner after the meeting but there were a couple of hours in-between. I rushed home to do the washing, grocery shopping, to make sausage soup for my son and to get changed for the dinner. When I turned up for the dinner, my colleague had had a massage in the meantime. Good for you, I replied! (E01, woman, top)

They tried to figure out different kind of innovative solutions to the situation, and often found themselves taking care of several issues at the same time, both related to home and work. But still, many expressed that there are also feelings of guilt for not investing enough time for either home or work.

A: When you don't have children like I do you avoid the constant feeling of bad consciousness which is often associated with the dual professional and private role. (D07, woman, middle)

Some women managers spoke of what we might be called companionate marriages, with supportive husbands or partners.

A: [My husband] has supported me, no problem at all. There is just two of us, no children, and both like to work a lot. I guess the situation would be different if we had a child. (D01, woman, middle)

A: Basically, my husband takes the morning shift and I take the evening shift. It has worked very well and particularly now when the kids are a little older. My husband has sometimes been prepared to cancel his business trip if mine has been too difficult to cancel. (G01, woman, top)

Overall, even though the women managers were successful in their careers, having children was sometimes noted as an explicit obstacle to their promotion:

A: I was at some stage told that I was not offered a position because it would have been too hard to combine with the small kids at home! (B01, woman, top)

Much research on IHRM and global management has been characteristically non-gendered, or at least not explicitly gendered. When gender has been addressed it has often been in terms of female expatriates and women as spouses of male expatriates. Men managers have often remained an absent presence. In this discussion we have sought to examine the interrelation of three main arenas in the gendering processes of transnational management, both within corporations and within women and men managers' own lives more broadly: corporate careers; transnational managerial work itself; and personal, family- and marriage-type relations. These are separate spheres, but interconnected arenas influencing each other. Research on work/home balance has tended to neglect global and transnational matters, just as mainstream research on IHRM and global management has neglected work/home relations. There are clear interconnections of management and family relations. In this study while the women managers are often innovative in solving double burden demands, sometimes assisted by supportive bosses and companionate marriages in their careers, the men managers appear strongly traditional.

A number of similarities and some significant, even drastic differences have been found. There were more traditional expatriate assignments for men than women managers. This blocked use of time appeared relevant to the development of varied, core-oriented careers for men. Many men managers had a housewife at home or a wife who worked part-time or had a far less career-orientated work history. Only one of the men managers had a wife or partner with anything like a comparable work career. In contrast, the women managers tended to be single or have a working – sometimes comparable work career, sometimes less career ambitious – husband or partner who participated more actively in home responsibilities. This fits closely with women's relative subordination (Wahl, 1992). The women managers often did significantly more time management and balancing of home and work requirements than the men managers. Expatriate assignments among the men managers appeared to reinforce traditional gender divisions, as wives tended to stay at home with the children whilst abroad. Some men emphasized that their wives “volunteered themselves” to give up their careers. Some women managers, in turn, ended up commuting between countries to cope with the reality of having a working husband and a family in Finland. Many women managers are in that sense ‘at home’, even when they are ‘away’. Contrary to some previous literature, short-term, commuting and international travel was not more popular with the women.

With growing moves towards globalization and transnationalization, the amount of transnational work, in its various forms, and the number of transnational workers are likely to increase. Previous research shows that traditional long-term expatriate assignments are not replaced by short-term or non-standard assignments; instead, they are all on the rise (Harris, 2002). An obvious question is who manages this growing group of employees? While the HR function or department has traditionally been responsible for policies and practices associated with long-term assignments, line management has become increasingly involved in short-term and non-standard international assignments often undertaken on an ad hoc, unofficial basis (Harris, 2002; Tahvanainen et al., 2005). Yet, there is evidence suggesting that considerable challenges and costs are associated with transnational work, such as burnout and maintenance of home/work balance. In response, some companies have started to tailor short-term assignments to suit a particular age group of employees or target only single employees, for example (Harris, 2002). Corporate responsibility for assisting employees in maintaining an appropriate home/work balance through formal policies and practices remains problematic for several reasons. For example, the boundary between private and public spheres may differ between the home country of the global corporation and other host countries where it operates.

There are clearly complex interrelations between personal, marriage and family-type relations, gendered careers, and transnational managerial work itself. Very different personal and social worlds are inhabited by senior women and men managers; transnational processes can make those differences even greater. A majority of men in very traditional social worlds may work alongside the few innovative women managers, sometimes with relatively supportive and companionate social worlds. The fact that this traditionalism persists in Finland, with its relatively strong record on gender equality, is all the more interesting. These complex relations show the intersections, and even blurrings, of two ‘homes’ and two ‘aways’ – the personal, ‘private’ home and the corporate ‘public’ ‘away’, and the national home country and corporate base and the transnational work away.

6 PART 6: CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Gendering large transnational companies

Gender issues remain important in large transnational companies operating in Finland, just as they are in most other kinds of organizations. This study has aimed to consider gender relations within and beyond transnational organizing, organizations and management in business organizations, the implications of research on gender relations in organizations for transnational organizing, organizations and managements, and the implications of transnational organizing, organizations and management for gender relations within those organizations and throughout society. It has also addressed the relevance of recent scholarship on men and masculinities for analysis of transnational organizing, organizations and management. The modern transnational corporation is considered in terms of gender divisions and power, with particular reference to top management.

Building on an earlier documentary and quantitative studies, and drawing on a more recent qualitative study, we have sought to address such gender issues in the context of both Finnish society and the broader contexts of global management and international human resource management, with their own gendering. The qualitative study focused on the analysis and results of semi-structured interviews with 40 women and men managers in seven case companies, selected according their different levels of gender policy development. The three main sections of the text have examined 'Gender and gender policy', 'Organizational structures', and 'Gender relations in practice'.

Gender policies

The first Part dealing with analysis focused on *gender policies* and gender issues in the companies, from the perspective of the key gatekeepers for the research sites, the companies' Chief HR managers. This shows some of contrasts between formal policies and reported organizational practices. These are understood partly in terms of differential, and indeed very different, interrelations, of corporate contexts and individual managers' agentic positionings on these matters. Moreover, variations within the companies also apply to the definition and scope of gender policy, and the relation of gender policies and diversity policy.

Gender structures

This specific focus on gender policies, and indeed key actors around them, needs to be understood and located within a variety of organizational *gender structures*. These may often be represented, merely descriptively and as gender-neutral, but different structures are themselves gendered and forms of gendering. This is clear in relation to corporate hierarchies, this being what is perhaps the most immediate manifestation of 'the organization', and how they are intensely gendered and frequently taken-for-granted as such. Other relevant structures and structural contexts include national context, albeit in relation to transnationalization, relations of headquarters and subsidiaries, and some more complex interrelations of management, policy development and policy implementation.

Gender practices

Finally, gender relations in practice and *gender practices*, and the differential experiences of women and men interviewees, are considered, with a special emphasis on the transnational nature of much of this managerial work and experience. The question of the social construction of men, men's arenas and masculinities is in some ways a theme throughout, but is returned to here more explicitly. It is not really possible to have an informed analysis the management of such companies, and especially their top management, without some attention to men's predominance there within these men's arenas. This in turn is necessary to understand the character and experience of women's gendered careers. This section thus engaged in a more detailed discussion of how gender relations for the women and men managers operate, in these companies at least, at the intersections of gendered transnational managerial work, careers, family-type relations, including marriage and children, or lack thereof. Particularly important here is the way in which women and men managers may be part of the same management levels or management teams, but have totally different family-type situations and thus gendered experiences. The interconnections of – first, managerial hierarchies and managerial work; second, domestic, family and personal life; and, third, transnationalizations – are crucial, intensely gendered matters, both for those concerned and for broader analysis. The long-established historical debate on the public/private continues to be important for both gender relations and organizational relations, but now with a further emphasis and elaboration in terms of transnationalizations. This research also highlights the complex interrelations of gender and other HR policies, gender structures and gender practices, all in their national and transnational contexts.

Implications for research and theory

This research raises many further research and theoretical questions and implications. One key set of issues concerns the relations of different material gendered contexts – transnational, national, capitalist, corporate – and the gendered practices, both individual and more collective, of managers and non-managers. This arena of study needs to be interrogated by a variety of conceptual contextualizations rather than seeking one way only. These relations are also likely to be subject to considerable change and tension, not least through the recent financial and corporate crisis. Thus a more specific aspect of this arena of change is the interrelations of identity work, individual rewards, corporate development and the corporate financial climate. While these matters are all strongly gendered, the relevance of social intersectionalities is also important, including intersections of gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, sexuality, and marital/familial status.

More theoretically, this research points to the need to move beyond a narrowly discursive approach to organizations and management, to appreciate the materiality of discourse, to examine the complex intertwinings of the material and the discursive, and to develop material discursive analysis. Without that, there are dangers of neglect of power relations, in this case intersectional gender power relations.

Implications for policy and practice

There also major policy and practice implications. The impact of gender equality and other equality legislation appears to remain limited, especially at the management levels. The extent and scope of national, and indeed transnational (such as the EU), gender legislation and policy has uneven effects, as is clear in the uneven interest in and

practice of monitoring and implementation of gender equality plans. For example, problems around gender inequality may be assumed by managers and others to ‘solve themselves naturally’ over time. On the other hand, in some equality policy there may also be a danger of managers making promises that cannot be kept or that key actors do not want to be kept. Senior and line managers, often men, may (need to) be severely challenged, in both senses, in terms of ‘giving up’ some power, authority or autonomy. This raises the broader question of whether gender change can be brought through greater state or trans-state interventions or whether more fundamental transformations in business structuring are a possible lever of change. This parallels the debates on the introduction of gender quotas on corporate boards of listed companies, as has become law in Norway. Again, the question of intersectionality is a key matter in policy and practice terms, with the need to recognize the variety of inequalities, but also the dangers of hiding, obscuring and diversion from gender inequality. The move to broad, multi-dimensional bases to equality law, in Finland, the EU and elsewhere, raises both potential for complex intersectional policy interventions and, at the same time, possible diversions from focused action on gender equality and instead facilitations of increasing men’s power and gender inequality. The translation of broad policy into practical actions remains a clear challenge, at the transnational, national, corporate and everyday working levels.

6.1. Coda

In making sense of all these complex interrelations, there is a need to deconstruct gender, hierarchy, organizing, organization, management, men (Hearn, 1996, 2004a). Within mainstream business organizing the process of organization and management is typically presented as gender-neutral (Hearn, 2000), as ‘gender-non-conscious’, however much they remain predominantly forms of men’s organizing. Organizing and policy development on ‘men’ needs to be contextualized within patriarchal and transpatriarchal social relations, including business, governmental (transnational; national; local), and civil society. Within each arena there are many ‘gender-non-conscious’ and some ‘gender conscious’ forms of organizing, organizations and management, or more precisely a continuum from ‘gender-non-conscious’ to ‘gender conscious’. Furthermore, men’s ‘gender consciousness’, even non-hierarchical homosociality, can take a variety of forms from reproducing and advancing men’s privilege (for example, men’s rights organizing) to opposing such privilege (for example, profeminist organizing) to emphasizing men’s differences from each other (for example, organizing by black and minority ethnic men).

Seeing or recognizing ‘men’ as a policy area and indeed developing specifically and explicitly men-related policy still seems a relatively rare phenomenon. The “Man problem” remains obscure(d), partly because so much policy is about men and yet is not recognized as such, and partly because *explicit* policy on men is still in uneven stages of formulation – sometimes as part of the gender equality project, sometimes furthering men’s interests still further. There may indeed be deep-seated contradictions in developing men’s involvement in gender equality, whether in governmentally or in civil society: first, to involve men to increase women’s power in relation to men; and, second, to reassert men’s power or ‘rights’ in relation to women. To analyse this involves examining challenges, resistances, responsibilities and reaching out to men in gender equality policy development (Hearn, 2001).

What is also of continuing interest is how most of men’s organizing in these kinds of ways, despite their variable substantive relation to feminism, has been, initially at least,

conducted outside the usual discourse of ‘economics’ and ‘the economy’. This has applied to both the politics of individual men’s personal economic relations and more general societal questions of economic value, distributions and rewards. Questions of class, work, wages, jobs, promotion, employment and unemployment have not been high on the agendas of men’s relations and responses to feminism. The economic has often been something to keep clear of in these discussions, perhaps because the global patterns of inequality in wealth, and the continuation of the gender wage gap, are well known. So, what is the substance of hierarchy, and non-hierarchy? ... the play with resources; the honouring of inequalities; the unevenness and predictability (sic.) of outcomes; the illusion and the realities of exchanges, of various forms; and the maintaining of dull deferences.

While the senior members of the corporate world struggle with ‘humanizing’, gender-neutralizing and de-hierarchicalizing the obviously hierarchical, gendered organizing of large business organizations, in the world of gender equality policy on men and men’s gender-conscious organizing it could be the seemingly elusive nature of these hierarchies (and non-hierarchies) that is of interest. The latter do not fit usual models of organizing; they are not very visible, yet they exist across social spheres: domestic, small group, networks, professionals, state, NGOs, INGOs, and other transnational workers and organizations. This transdomain characteristic may problematize the construct of hierarchy/non-hierarchy. In all these spheres, and business domains too, non-hierarchy (amongst men) can be used either patriarchally (and to exclude women) or profeministically, in seeking to be men differently and to deconstruct men.

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Appendix 1: Codings

Phase I codings

career;
change and resistance;
competence;
corporate context;
diversity and diversity management;
Finland;
gender;
gender policy;
headquarters-subsiidiary relations;
individual positioning;
international issues;
leisure time;
management and top management;
men and masculinities;
mentoring and mentoring programmes;
national contexts;
networks;
negative perceptions (of the research, anti-feminism);
own family;
positive perceptions (of the research);
sexual harassment.

Phase II codings

foreign assignments;
traveling;
commuting.

Appendix 2: Letter to the companies

Men and Women of the Corporation II

Dear NAME,

Personnel is today regarded as the most important resource of companies. This gives increasing importance to the personnel policies of companies. We have been engaged in a project over several years on gender questions in Finnish corporations, funded by the *Academy of Finland*. This has already involved a questionnaire survey of the 100 largest corporations in Finland which focused on relevant personnel policies. That phase of the project has now been analysed and a report *Gender Divisions and Gender Policies in Top Finnish Corporations* has been published. We value and thank you very much indeed for your cooperation in that phase of the project.

Gender Divisions and Gender Policies in Top Finnish Corporations, published by Hanken Research Reports, sets out the results of a survey of the largest 100 Finnish corporations on these questions. The chief human resources manager or their delegate of 62 corporations responded to the survey.

Professor Jeff Hearn (Hanken), Professor Anne Kovalainen (Turku School of Economics and Business Administration) and Teemu Tallberg (Hanken) have been investigating the distribution of women and men at different levels of these corporations, along with the development of gender-related policies in companies: *gender equality plans; equal opportunity policies in recruitment; equal opportunity policies in promotion; family-friendly policies, beyond legal requirements; gender training programmes; gender training programmes specifically for women; policies on sexual harassment.*

This research is part of a longer-term examination of gender relations in corporations.

Building on this, we are now continuing with the next stage of the project. As in phase 1 of the project, in this phase 2 we are interested in the general situation across companies rather than singling out particular companies. We wish to draw on the knowledge in companies and integrate that in examining such general patterns.

Accordingly, this phase is based on confidential research interviews with key personnel in selected companies. We would very much like to arrange an interview with you, and a very small number (4-5) of your company colleagues. All material will be analysed with strict attention to anonymity, and thus no identification of individuals or individual companies will be possible. We have extensive experience of conducting such confidential research. We envisage that the interview will take 1-1½ hours. The interview can be conducted in Finnish, Swedish or English. We would be grateful for your co-operation in taking part in this research. We would also be happy to provide anonymised feedback on the results of the research in due course.

Dr. Rebecca Piekkari or our research assistant, Hertta Niemi, will telephone in the near future on this matter.

Miehet ja naiset yrityksissä: Osa II

Arvoisa NIMI,

Henkilöstöä pidetään nykyisin yhtenä yritysten tärkeimmistä voimavaroista. Tämän johdosta henkilöstöpolitiikalla on yhä keskeisempi merkitys yritysten menestymiselle. Olemme jo vuosia tutkineet, miten sukupuoli vaikuttaa suomalaisyritysten henkilöstöpolitiikkaan. Tutkimuksemme on *Suomen Akatemian* rahoittama ja tähän mennessä olemme tehneet kyselytutkimuksen 100 suurimman suomalaisyrityksen parissa. Tämä osa projektiamme on nyt päättynyt ja raportoitu *Gender Divisions and Gender Policies in Top Finnish Corporations* -julkaisussa. Kiitämme teitä lämpimästi osallistumisestanne tutkimukseemme.

Gender Divisions and Gender Policies in Top Finnish Corporations julkaistiin Hankenin tutkimusraporttisarjassa. Raportti tarkastelee 100 suurimman suomalaisyrityksen henkilöstöpolitiikkaa. Kyselyymme vastasi henkilöstöpäällikkö tai hänen edustajansa 62 yrityksestä.

Professori Jeff Hearn (Hanken), Professori Anne Kovalainen (TUKKK) ja Teemu Tallberg (Hanken) ovat tutkineet miesten ja naisten jakautumista yrityksissä ja tasa-arvokysymysten kehittymistä yrityksissä. Tutkimuksessa kiinnitettiin erityistä huomiota seuraaviin asioihin: *tasa-arvosuunnitelmaan; tasa-arvon huomioimiseen rekrytoinnissa ja uralla etenemisessä; perhettä tukevaan henkilöstöpolitiikkaan lakisääteisten velvoitteiden lisäksi; sukupuolten asemaa käsittelevään koulutukseen (yleinen ja naisille suunnattu) ja sukupuolista häirintää käsittelevään henkilöstöpolitiikkaan.*

Tämä raportti on osa tutkimusprojektia, joka käsittelee sukupuolikäytäntöjä yrityksissä.

Olemme nyt siirtyneet tutkimuksemme seuraavaan vaiheeseen. Kuten vaiheessa 1 olemme edelleen kiinnostuneita yritysten henkilöstöpolitiikan yleisestä tilanteesta, emme yksittäisistä yrityksistä sinänsä. Haluamme hyödyntää teidän erityisosaamistanne henkilöstökysymyksissä ja kartoittaa valittujen suomalaisyritysten tilannetta.

Myös tämä tutkimus perustuu luottamuksellisiin haastatteluihin huolellisesti valittujen avainhenkilöiden kanssa. Haluaisimmekin sopia teidän ja 4-5 kolleganne kanssa haastatteluaian. Haastattelumateriaali analysoidaan kokonaisuudessaan ehdottoman luottamuksellisesti, jolloin yksittäisten henkilöiden ja yritysten tunnistaminen on mahdotonta. Meillä on pitkä kokemus tämänkaltaisesta tutkimuksesta.

Haastattelun kesto on noin 1-1 ½ tuntia ja se voidaan tehdä joko suomeksi, ruotsiksi tai englanniksi. Olisimme erittäin kiitollisia, mikäli voisitte ottaa osaa tutkimukseemme. Tutkimuksemme anonymisoidut tulokset ovat käytettävissänne tutkimuksen valmistuttua.

Tutkija Rebecca Piekkari tai tutkimusapulainen Hertta Niemi ottaa yhteyttä teihin lähiviikkoina asian tiimoilta.

Appendix 3: Interview pro formas

Appendix 3A
INTERVIEW PRO FORMA: HR MANAGER (ENGLISH)

Section I

- Part I Introduction
- Part II Themselves
- Part III The Nature of the Work

Section II

- Part IV Management
- Part V Gender Policies and Change

Section III

- Part VI Gender and Power
- Part VII Transnational Issues
- Part VIII Any Other Issues

Section I

Part I Introduction

Men and Women of the Corporation: Phase II

Thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed.

This interview is part of the above study financed by the Academy of Finland on changing personnel policies and practices in companies. The research involves the largest companies in Finland.

This is a strictly confidential research interview. Any information used will be strictly anonymized in terms of both your own and the company's identity. Any confidential company information will also be treated as such.

Signed _____

Date _____

I agree to taking part in this confidential research interview.

Signed _____

Date _____

Interview code: _____ **(if possible obtain a cv)**

Date: _____

Age: _____

Sex: _____

Email: _____

Position: _____

Educational History: _____

Work History: _____

Domestic Situation: _____

**Other
Comments:** _____

Part II Themselves

Can we start by talking about you and your background a little?

When did you start your working life? What did you do? When did you start working for this company?

How has your career in this company developed? How do you anticipate it will development from now on? What are the reasons for your career development (slowness)?

Looking back to when you began working - did you make specific plans for your career? Or was it the contents of the work that were more important to you? (Prompt: Were you, for example, ready to move abroad or move with the family?)

Can you tell me about your domestic situation? (Prompt: married, live with a partner, divorced/separated, widowed, single/live on own?) Do you have children? If yes, how many and what ages?

How would you describe the division of work at home? (Prompt: What about everyday activities such as shopping for food, cleaning, etc.?) How do you manage child care, getting children to school, and school holidays (if relevant) at home? (Prompt: paid help, help of parents etc.).

Time management. How many hours do you work each week? Do you take work home? Are there meetings outside usual working hours? Do the hours you work infringe on your home/personal life? (Prompt: Are there any particular areas of complication, difficulty, conflict, juggling etc?) If you have to travel abroad, have urgent deadlines or have to work overtime, can you compensate that with days off or any other flexible system? With whom in the company/unit/division do you negotiate your time-use?

Part III: The Nature of the Company Work – use ‘business’, ‘company’, ‘unit’, ‘division’, depending on the level in question.

What is your own particular title? When did you start in this particular position?

What do you do here? / What does your work entail? / What responsibilities do you have?

How is your work organized/structured? Does the organizing/structuring of the work shift and change? How is your payment organized? (fixed salary, by project, incentives etc.) Does it change according to the work in hand?

Do you report to a particular person? If so, who (title)? Do you always report to the same person? (Prompt: Does this change according to the work in hand or some other matter?)

Do you manage/oversee someone? If so, (who and) how many people?

Can you describe how your position is located within the general company structure?

(Prompt: What section, unit or department? What (managerial) level?)

How would you describe the relationship between you and the people you work with?

Section II

Part IV Management

How is your company/unit/division organized? How is management organized in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: With what levels? What are the main hierarchical divisions in management? Or, do you find it difficult to describe the management in terms of hierarchical divisions? (if the project based work is prevailing form))

Who do you think are the most important members of management here? Why do you think they are?

Can you think of a particular event when the power relations amongst management were clearly displayed?

Part V Gender Policies and Change

i. Human Resources Manager

Can you tell me about the gender policies in your organization? What policies, if any, are there?

(Prompt: Gender Equality Plan,

Equal opportunity policies in recruitment?

Recruitment in practice?

Recruitment to the Board?

Equal opportunity policies in promotion?

Promotion in practice?

Family-friendly policies, beyond legal requirements?

Attitudes towards motherhood and childcare responsibilities?

Gender training programmes?

Gender training programmes specifically for women?

Policies on sexual harassment?)

What do *you* think about them?

How are discussions and decisions about gender policies conducted in your company/unit/division?

Who does the work required regarding the development of GE policies in your company/unit/division?

How would you evaluate the current company and/or personnel policies from the point of view of gender equality?

Are there any particular aspects of current practice on gender issues and gender equality in your company that are in the process of change? (Prompt: in promotions or when planning new recruitment, do you actively consider gender issues as relevant?)

If your company has a Gender Equality Plan, do you intend to develop it in any way in

the future? If your company does not have a Gender Equality Plan, are there plans to develop one in the future, and if so when and in what form?

What are the most important issues for future policy development on gender issues? Are there any pressures to develop or change policies and practices on gender issues? If so, please describe them.

How does gender affect management in your company/unit/division? Can you think of a particular event that illustrates what you are saying/thinking? (Prompt: How would you describe the relations between the men and women in management? And between the men in management? And between women in management (if relevant))?

Section III

Part VI Gender and Power

Do you think gender issues are relevant in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: women, working life, home and work, career, men).

In what ways do you think that people are aware of gender issues in your company/unit/division?

Does the company/unit/division treat women and men differently? How? In what kind of situations? Why do you think it is so?

Do you think being a man or a woman affects (other) people's work and career here?

Do you think your own work and career would have been or be different if you were a woman/man (the other)?

Do you feel that you are or have been treated differently than your female/male (the other) colleagues in the company/unit/division? Would you like to describe any specific instances? Why do you think it is so?

Do you think that the way managing is done is linked to or affected by gender in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: anyone's style of management?).

Can we talk about informal socializing? Who are your close friends? (Prompt: Are they work-based? Where are they located?)

Do you mix with colleagues socially? If so, on what kind of occasions? How important is it to do this? (Prompt: How important is it to your career to mix socially with colleagues? How important is networking to your career?)

Do you mix with clients socially? If so, on what kind of occasions? How important is it to your career to mix socially with clients? (Prompt: Does your superior expect you to socialize with clients? Are there aspects of such socializing you dislike?) Do domestic responsibilities constrain the amount of socializing you can do?

Public / private divide. Can you discuss personal difficulties with your superiors? With your colleagues? With your subordinates?

Sexuality. Does humour in your company/unit/division have a sexual content? Is there a presumption of heterosexuality? Has there been any incidence of sexual harassment? Are comments made on people's appearance that cause irritation or offence?

Dress. What are the usual dress codes? How do people/women/ men dress here?

How do you understand 'power'? What does it mean to have power?

Part VII Transnational Issues

Have you worked outside Finland at all? If so, where and doing what? How do you think gender relations were different between there and Finland? Has working abroad had any implications for your everyday life? (Prompt: bringing up children, schooling, different languages, spouse, family, friends?)

Can you describe the main international contacts you have in your job? Do you see these as affecting gender equality policies in the company/unit/division? gender issues more generally?

Do you think of your company/unit/division as international? If so, why? If not, why not?

Do you think the international character of your company/unit/division has an impact on how gender issues are dealt with within it? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

Do you think that the international character of your company is changing gender relations in your company/unit/division at all? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

If necessary then:

Would it be ok for you if we now double check your personal details?

Thank you very much indeed for your time.

Appendix 3B
INTERVIEW PRO FORMA: TOP MANAGER (ENGLISH)

Section I

Part I Introduction

Part II Themselves

Part III The Nature of the Work

Section II

Part IV Management

Part V Gender Policies and Change

Section III

Part VI Gender and Power

Part VII Transnational Issues

Part VIII Any Other Issues

Section I

Part I Introduction

Men and Women of the Corporation: Phase II

Thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed.

This interview is part of the above study financed by the Academy of Finland on changing personnel policies and practices in companies. The research involves the largest companies in Finland.

This is a strictly confidential research interview. Any information used will be strictly anonymized in terms of both your own and the company's identity. Any confidential company information will also be treated as such.

Signed _____

Date _____

I agree to taking part in this confidential research interview.

Signed _____

Date _____

Interview code: _ _ _ _ _

(if possible obtain a cv)

Date: _____

Age: ____

Sex: ____

Email: _____

Position: _____

Educational History: _____

Work History: _____

Domestic Situation: _____

Other Comments: _____

Part II Themselves

Can we start by talking about you and your background a little?

When did you start your working life? What did you do? When did you start working for this company?

How has your career in this company developed? How do you anticipate it will development from now on? What are the reasons for your career development (slowness)?

Looking back to when you began working - did you make specific plans for your career? Or was it the contents of the work that were more important to you? (Prompt: Were you, for example, ready to move abroad or move with the family?)

Can you tell me about your domestic situation? (Prompt: married, live with a partner, divorced/separated, widowed, single/live on own?) Do you have children? If yes, how many and what ages?

How would you describe the division of work at home? (Prompt: What about everyday activities such as shopping for food, cleaning, etc.?) How do you manage child care, getting children to school, and school holidays (if relevant) at home? (Prompt: paid help, help of parents etc.).

Time management. How many hours do you work each week? Do you take work home? Are there meetings outside usual working hours? Do the hours you work infringe on your home/personal life? (Prompt: Are there any particular areas of complication, difficulty, conflict, juggling etc?) If you have to travel abroad, have urgent deadlines or have to work overtime, can you compensate that with days off or any other flexible system? With whom in the company/unit/division do you negotiate your time-use?

Part III: The Nature of the Company Work – use ‘business’, ‘company’, ‘unit’, ‘division’, depending on the level in question.

What is your own particular title? When did you start in this particular position?

What do you do here? / What does your work entail? / What responsibilities do you have?

How is your work organized/structured? Does the organizing/structuring of the work shift and change? How is your payment organized? (fixed salary, by project, incentives etc.) Does it change according to the work in hand?

Do you report to a particular person? If so, who (title)? Do you always report to the same person? (Prompt: Does this change according to the work in hand or some other matter?)

Do you manage/oversee someone? If so, (who and) how many people?

Can you describe how your position is located within the general company structure?
(Prompt: What section, unit or department? What (managerial) level?)

How would you describe the relationship between you and the people you work with?

Section II

Part IV Management

How is your company/unit/division organized? How is management organized in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: With what levels? What are the main hierarchical divisions in management? Or, do you find it difficult to describe the management in terms of hierarchical divisions? (if the project based work is prevailing form))

Who do you think are the most important members of management here? Why do you think they are?

Can you think of a particular event when the power relations amongst management were clearly displayed?

Part V Gender Policies and Change

ii. Top Manager, with strategic responsibility, e.g. marketing (as HRM but in relation to the strategic responsibility)

Can you tell me about the gender policies in your company/company/unit/division?

What policies, if any, are there?

(Prompt: Gender Equality Plan,

Equal opportunity policies in recruitment?

Recruitment in practice?

Recruitment to the Board?

Equal opportunity policies in promotion?

Promotion in practice?

Family-friendly policies, beyond legal requirements?

Attitudes towards motherhood and childcare responsibilities?

Gender training programmes ?

Gender training programmes specifically for women?

Policies on sexual harassment?)

What do *you* think about them? How are discussions and decisions about gender policies conducted in your company/unit/division?

Who does the work required regarding the development of GE policies in your company/unit/division?

How would you evaluate ... [your own area of responsibility] from the point of view of gender equality? Are there any particular aspects of current practice on gender issues and gender equality in ... [your own area of responsibility] that are in the process of

change? How would you describe current practices on gender issues and gender equality in ... [your own area of responsibility]?

If your company has a Gender Equality Plan, do you intend to develop it in ... [your own area of responsibility] in any way in the future? If your company does not have a Gender Equality Plan, are there plans to develop one in ... [your own area of responsibility] in the future, and if so when and in what form?

What are the most important issues for future policy development on gender issues in ... [your own area of responsibility]? Are there any pressures to develop or change policies and practices on gender issues in ... [your own area of responsibility]? If so, please describe them.

How does gender affect management in your company/unit/division? Can you give any examples of what you are saying/thinking) (Prompt: How would you describe the relations between the men and women in management? And between the men in management? And between women in management (if relevant))?

Section III

Part VI Gender and Power

Do you think gender issues are relevant in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: women, working life, home and work, career, men).

In what ways do you think that people are *aware of gender issues* in your company/unit/division?

Does the company/unit/division treat women and men differently? How? In what kind of situations? Why do you think it is so?

Do you think being a man or a woman affects (other) people's work and career here?

Do you think *your own* work and career would have been or be different if you were a woman/man (the other)?

Do you feel that you are or have been treated differently than your female/male (the other) colleagues in the company/unit/division? Would you like to describe any specific instances? Why do you think it is so?

Do you think that the way managing is done is linked to or affected by gender in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: anyone's style of management?).

Can we talk about *informal socializing*? Who are your close friends? (Prompt: Are they work-based? Where are they located?)

Do you mix with colleagues socially? If so, on what kind of occasions? How important is it to do this? (Prompt: How important is it to your career to mix socially with colleagues? How important is networking to your career?)

Do you mix with clients socially? If so, on what kind of occasions? How important is it to your career to mix socially with clients? (Prompt: Does your superior expect you to

socialize with clients? Are there aspects of such socializing you dislike?) Do domestic responsibilities constrain the amount of socializing you can do?

Public / private divide. Can you discuss personal difficulties with your superiors? With your colleagues? With your subordinates?

Sexuality. Does humour in your company/unit/division have a sexual content? Is there a presumption of heterosexuality? Has there been any incidence of sexual harassment? Are comments made on people's appearance that cause irritation or offence?

Dress. What are the usual dress codes? How do people/women/ men dress here?

How do you understand 'power'? What does it mean to have power?

Part VII Transnational Issues

Have you worked outside Finland at all? If so, where and doing what? How do you think gender relations were different between there and Finland? Has working abroad had any implications for your everyday life? (Prompt: bringing up children, schooling, different languages, spouse, family, friends?)

Can you describe the main international contacts you have in your job? Do you see these as affecting gender equality policies in the company/unit/division? gender issues more generally?

Do you think of your company/unit/division as international? If so, why? If not, why not?

Do you think the international character of your company/unit/division has an impact on how gender issues are dealt with within it? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

Do you think that the international character of your company is changing gender relations in your company/unit/division at all? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

If necessary then:

Would it be ok for you if we now double check your personal details?

Thank you very much indeed for your time.

Appendix 3C
INTERVIEW PRO FORMA: MIDDLE MANAGER
(ENGLISH)

Section I

Part I Introduction

Part II Themselves

Part III The Nature of the Work

Section II

Part IV Management

Part V Gender Policies and Change

Section III

Part VI Gender and Power

Part VII Transnational Issues

Part VIII Any Other Issues

Section I

Part I Introduction

Men and Women of the Corporation: Phase II

Thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed.

This interview is part of the above study financed by the Academy of Finland on changing personnel policies and practices in companies. The research involves the largest companies in Finland.

This is a strictly confidential research interview. Any information used will be strictly anonymized in terms of both your own and the company's identity. Any confidential company information will also be treated as such.

Signed

Date

I agree to taking part in this confidential research interview.

Signed

Date

Interview code: _ _ _ _ _

(if possible obtain a cv)

Date: _____

Age: ____

Sex: ____

Email: _____

Position: _____

Educational History: _____

Work History: _____

Domestic Situation: _____

**Other
Comments:** _____

Part II Themselves

Can we start by talking about you and your background a little?

When did you start your working life? What did you do? When did you start working for this company?

How has your career in this company developed? How do you anticipate it will development from now on? What are the reasons for your career development (slowness)?

Looking back to when you began working – did you make specific plans for your career? Or was it the contents of the work that were more important to you? (Prompt: Were you, for example, ready to move abroad or move with the family?)

Can you tell me about your domestic situation? (Prompt: married, live with a partner, divorced/separated, widowed, single/live on own?) Do you have children? If yes, how many and what ages?

How would you describe the division of work at home? (Prompt: What about everyday activities such as shopping for food, cleaning, etc.?) How do you manage child care, getting children to school, and school holidays (if relevant) at home? (Prompt: paid help, help of parents etc.).

Time management. How many hours do you work each week? Do you take work home? Are there meetings outside usual working hours? Do the hours you work infringe on your home/personal life? (Prompt: Are there any particular areas of complication, difficulty, conflict, juggling etc?) If you have to travel abroad, have urgent deadlines or have to work overtime, can you compensate that with days off or any other flexible system? With whom in the company/unit/division do you negotiate your time-use?

Part III: The Nature of the Company Work – use ‘business’, ‘company’, ‘unit’, ‘division’, depending on the level in question.

What is your own particular title? When did you start in this particular position?

What do you do here? / What does your work entail? / What responsibilities do you have?

How is your work organized/structured? Does the organizing/structuring of the work shift and change? How is your payment organized? (fixed salary, by project, incentives etc.) Does it change according to the work in hand?

Do you report to a particular person? If so, who (title)? Do you always report to the same person? (Prompt: Does this change according to the work in hand or some other matter?)

Do you manage/oversee someone? If so, (who and) how many people?

Can you describe how your position is located within the general company structure? (Prompt: What section, unit or department? What (managerial) level?)

How would you describe the relationship between you and the people you work with?

Section II

Part IV Management

How is your company/unit/division organized? How is management organized in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: With what levels? What are the main hierarchical divisions in management? Or, do you find it difficult to describe the management in terms of hierarchical divisions? (if the project based work is prevailing form))

Who do you think are the most important members of management here? Why do you think they are?

Can you think of a particular event when the power relations amongst management were clearly displayed?

Part V Gender Policies and Change

iii. Middle Manager, Personal Assistant or Secretary

Can you tell me about the gender policies in your organization? What policies, if any, are there?

(Prompt: Gender Equality Plan,

Equal opportunity policies in recruitment?

Recruitment in practice?

Equal opportunity policies in promotion?

Promotion in practice?

Family-friendly policies, beyond legal requirements?

Attitudes towards motherhood and childcare responsibilities?

Gender training programmes ?

Gender training programmes specifically for women?

Policies on sexual harassment?)

What do you think about them? What do you think about the general attitude towards them in your company/unit/division? Have you had a particular involvement with them or their development?

Section III

Part VI Gender and Power

Do you think gender issues are relevant in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: women, working life, home and work, career, men).

In what ways do you think that people are *aware of gender issues* in your company/unit/division?

Does the company/unit/division treat women and men differently? How? In what kind of situations? Why do you think it is so?

Do you think being a man or a woman affects (other) people's work and career here?

Do you think *your own* work and career would have been or be different if you were a woman/man (the other)?

Do you feel that you are or have been treated differently than your female/male (the other) colleagues in the company/unit/division? Would you like to describe any specific instances? Why do you think it is so?

Do you think that the way managing is done is linked to or affected by gender in your company/unit/division? (Prompt: anyone's style of management?).

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Dress. What are the usual dress codes? How do people/women/ men dress here?

How do you understand 'power'? What does it mean to have power?

Part VII Transnational Issues

Have you worked outside Finland at all? If so, where and doing what? How do you think gender relations were different between there and Finland? Has working abroad had any implications for your everyday life? (Prompt: bringing up children, schooling, different languages, spouse, family, friends?)

Can you describe the main international contacts you have in your job? Do you see these as affecting gender equality policies in the company/unit/division? Gender issues more generally?

Do you think of your company/unit/division as international? If so, why? If not, why not?

Do you think the international character of your company/unit/division has an impact on how gender issues are dealt with within it? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

Do you think that the international character of your company is changing gender relations in your company/unit/division at all? If so, how and why? If not, why not?

IF necessary then:

Would it be ok for you if we now double check your personal details?

Thank you very much indeed for your time.

APPENDIX 3D INTERVIEW PRO FORMA: MIDDLE MANAGER (FINNISH)

Ensimmäinen osio

Osa 1 Johdanto

Osa 2 Henkilökohtaiset taustat

Osa 3 Työn luonne

Toinen osio

Osa 4 Johto

Osa 5 Sukupuolipolitiikat ja muutos

Kolmas osio

Osa 6 Sukupuoli ja valta

Osa 7 Monikansallisuus

Osa 8 Muita esiin nousevia asioita

Ensimmäinen osio

OSA 1. Johdanto

Miehet ja naiset yrityksissä: vaihe II

Kiitos paljon, että annoitte suostumuksenne tutkimushaastattelua varten.

Tämä haastattelu on osa Suomen Akatemian rahoittamaa tutkimusta, joka käsittelee yritysten muuttuvia henkilöstökäytäntöjä ja politiikkoja. Tutkimukseen ottavat osaa Suomen suurimmat yritykset.

Tämä tutkimushaastattelu on täysin luottamuksellinen. Kaikki tieto, jota käytetään anonymisoidaan siten, että teidän nimenne ja yrityksenne nimi poistetaan. Kaikki yritystänne koskeva luottamuksellinen tieto myös käsitellään luottamuksellisena.

Allekirjoitus _____

Päiväys _____

Annan suostumukseni/otan osaa tähän luottamukselliseen tutkimushaastatteluun.

Allekirjoitus _____

Päiväys _____

Haastattelunumero: _____ (jos mahd. pyydä henkilön cv tms.)

Päiväys: _____

Ikä: ____

Sukupuoli: ____

E-mail: _____

Työtehtävä: _____

Koulutus:

Työhistoria:

Yksityiselämä:

Muuta: _____

OSA 2. Henkilökohtaiset taustatiedot

Voidaanko puhua sinusta ja taustoistasi aluksi?

Milloin alunperin astuit työelämään? Mikä oli ensimmäinen työsi? Entä milloin aloitit työskentelyn tässä yrityksessä?

Miten urasi on edennyt tässä yrityksessä? Miten arvelet sen jatkossa kehittyvän? Mitkä ovat pääsyyt urasi etenemiseen/ sen hitaaseen etenemiseen?

Kun aloitit työelämässä, oliko sinulla tarkkoja suunnitelmia urasi suhteen? Vai olivatko työsi luonne ja sisältö sinulle tärkeimpiä seikkoja? (Muuta: olitko esim. valmis muuttamaan ulkomaille tai muuttamaan perheesi kanssa työsi takia?)

Voitko kertoa kotielämästäsi? Oletko naimisissa, avoliitossa, eronnut/avoeronnut, leski, sinkku/yksinelävä?

Onko sinulla lapsia? Jos niin montako ja kuinka vanhoja?

Miten kuvailisit työnjakoa kotona? (jokapäiväiset aktiviteetit, kuten ostokset, siivous etc.) (Jos lapsia) Kuinka olette järjestäneet lastenhoidon, lasten kouluun viennin ja koulujen loma-ajat? (Muuta: lastenhoitaja, isovanhemmat?)

Ajankäyttö

Kuinka monta tuntia teet töitä viikossa? Otatko töitä mukaan kotiin? Onko työpaikallanne kokouksia normaalien työaikojen ulkopuolella? Teetkö niin pitkiä päiviä että se häiritsee henkilökohtaista elämääsi? (onko mitään erityisalueita joilla erityisesti on vaikeaa/konflikteja etc.)

Voitko ottaa vapaapäiviä tai muuten kompensoida jos joudut matkustamaan, sinulla on tiukkoja kiireisiä deadlineja tai joudut tekemään ylitöitä?

Kenen kanssa sovit/ neuvottelet ajankäytöstäsi töissä?

OSA 3. Työn luonne (bisnes, yritys, yksikkö, osasto riippuen haastateltavasta)

Mikä on sinun tittelisi? Entä milloin aloitit työskentelyn tässä nykyisessä positiossa?

Mitä toimenkuvaasi kuuluu täällä? Mitä kaikkea työhösi kuuluu? Minkälaisia velvollisuuksia sinulla on?

Miten toimenkuvasi organisoituu/rakentuu? Ovatko tehtäväsi muuttuvia vai säilyvätkö samanlaisina? Entä millä perusteilla saat palkkasi (kuukausittain, projekteista, bonuksia etc.) Muuttuuko palkkasi jos toimenkuvasi muuttuu?

Raportoitko jollekin tietylle henkilölle? Jos niin kenelle (titteli)? Raportoitko aina samalle henkilölle? (vai muuttuuko tilanne työnkuvan eläessä?)

Johdatko tai valvotko jotakuta/joitakuita? Jos niin ketä/keitä? Montako henkilöä?

Voitko kuvailla työtehtävääsi suhteessa koko organisaation rakenteisiin? Eli millä johtaja ”tasolla” olet? Mikä yksikkö/osasto/laitos?

Kuinka kuvailisit suhdettasi työtovereihisi?

Toinen osio

Osa 4. Johto

Miten yrityksenne/yksikkönne/osastonne on organisoitu? Entä kuinka johto on organisoitu yrityksessänne/yksikössänne/osastollanne? (mitä erilaisia hierarkian tasoja johdossa ja yleensä?) Tai onko sinusta vaikeaa kuvailla johtoa hierarkia jakojen mukaan? (jos työn luonne on koko ajan projektimaista)

Ketkä täällä ovat sinusta johtoryhmän tärkeimmät henkilöt? Miksi?

Tuleeko sinulle mieleen jotain tiettyä tilannetta jossa johtoryhmän keskinäiset valtasuhteet olisivat olleet selkeästi esillä?

Osa 5. Sukupuolipolitiikat ja muutos

i) Henkilöstöpäällikkö

Voitko kertoa minulle yrityksenne sukupuolipolitiikoista? Minkälaisia politiikkoja teillä on (jos mitään) ?

Esim.:

tasa-arvosuunnitelma, tasa-arvoa käsittelevä toimintasuunnitelma rekrytointin suhteen, rekrytointi käytännössä, johtokunnan rekrytointi, tasa-arvoa koskeva suunnitelma ylennysten suhteen, ylennykset käytännössä, perhe-ystävälliset politiikat yli lain vaatimusten, asenteet suhteessa äitiyteen ja lastenhoito velvollisuuksiin, sukupuolten asemaa käsittelevää koulutusta, suotupuolten asemaa koskevaa koulutusta naisille, sukupuolista häirintää koskevaa koulutusta

Mitä *sinä* ajattelet niistä?

Miten sukupuolipolitiikkoja koskevat keskustelut ja päätökset hoidetaan yrityksessänne/yksikössänne/osastollanne?

Kuka tekee käytännön työn kun sukupuolipolitiikkoja kehitetään yrityksessänne/yksikössänne/osastollanne?

Miten arvioisit nykyisiä yrityksenne henkilöstöpolitiikkoja tasa-arvo näkökulmasta?

Ovatko yrityksenne sukupuolipolitiikat/tai jotkut osat niistä tällä hetkellä muuttumassa millään lailla ja jos niin miksi? (esim. ylennyksiä tai uusia rekrytointeja suunniteltaessa, otatteko aktiivisesti huomioon sukupuolipolitiikat)

Jos yrityksessänne on tasa-arvosuunnitelma aiottako kehittää sitä jatkossa mitenkään? Jos yrityksellänne ei ole tasa-arvosuunnitelmaa onko teillä suunnitelmissa kehittää sellainen? Jos niin milloin ja minkälaisessa muodossa?

Mitkä ovat tärkeimmät aspektit tulevaisuudessa kun sukupuolipolitiikkoja kehitetään? Onko yrityksellänne paineita kehittää politiikkoja tai käytäntöjä tasa-arvon suhteen? Jos niin millaisia?

Miten sukupuoli vaikuttaa johtamiseen yrityksessänne/yksikössänne/osastollanne? Entä tuleeko sinulle mieleen mitään erityistä tilannetta joka kuvailisi edellä mainitsemiasi asioita? (suhteet mies- ja naisjohtajien välillä, miesjohtajien välillä ja naisjohtajien välillä)

Kolmas osio

Osa 6. Sukupuoli ja valta

Ovatko tasa-arvo kysymykset sinusta tärkeitä yrityksellenne / yksiköllenne / osastollenne? (esim. naiset, työelämä, koti ja työ, ura, miehet)

Millä tavoin ihmiset ovat sinusta *tietoisia* tasa-arvo kysymyksistä yrityksessänne / yksikössänne / osastollanne?

Kohteleeke yrityksenne/yksikkönne/osastonne miehiä ja naisia eri tavoin? Miten? Minkälaisissa tilanteissa? Miksi luulet että näin on?

Luuletko että sukupuoli vaikuttaa kollegoittesi työn kuvaan ja uran edistymiseen täällä?

Luuletko että oma sukupuolesi vaikuttaa työn kuvaasi tai/ja urasi edistymiseen?

Oletko mielestäsi saanut erilaista kohtelua osaksesi kuin mies/naiskollegasi yrityksessänne/yksikössänne/osastollanne? Miksi luulet että näin kävi? Voitko kuvailla tilanteita joissa kyseinen erilaistaminen näkyy?

Luuletko että yrityksenne/yksikkönne/osastonne johtamistavat liittyvät johtajien sukupuoleen? (esimerkki?)

Voidaanko puhua vapaa-ajanvietostasi? Keitä ovat läheiset ystäväsi? (liittyvätkö he työpaikkaasi? jos niin mihin osaan?)

Tapaatko kollegoitasi vapaa-ajalla? Jos niin millaisissa merkeissä? Onko se tärkeää henkilökohtaisista vaiko uraan liittyvistä syistä? (kuinka tärkeää on urasi kannalta että vietät myös vapaa-aikaasi kollegoittesi kanssa? Kuinka tärkeää on verkostoituminen urasi kannalta?)

Tapaatko asiakkaita vapaa-ajallasi? Jos niin millaisissa yhteyksissä? Kuinka tärkeää urasi kannalta on asiakkaiden tapaaminen vapaa-ajalla? (Odottaako esimiehesi että seurustelet asiakkaiden kanssa vapaa-ajalla? Onko tässä käytännössä puolia joista et pidä?) Vaikuttavatko yksityiselämäsi velvollisuudet rajoittavasti siihen miten paljon aikaa voit käyttää asiakkaiden kanssa seurusteluun?

Julkinen/Yksityinen jako. Voitko puhua yksityiselämästäsi vaikeuksista esimiehesi kanssa? Entä kollegoittesi kanssa? Entä alaistesi kanssa?

Seksuaalisuus Onko työpaikallanne seksuaalipainotteista huumoria? Oletetaanko kaikkien olevan heteroseksuaalisia? Onko siellä esiintynyt seksuaalista häirintää? Kommentoidaanko ihmisten ulkonäköä? Jos onko se aiheuttanut ärtymystä tai loukkaantumista?

Pukeutuminen Minkälainen pukeutumiskoodi työpaikallasi vallitsee? Miten naiset/miehet pukeutuvat täällä?

Mitä valta sinusta tarkoittaa? Mitä tarkoittaa omata valtaa?

Osa 7. Monikansallisuus

Oletko työskennellyt muualla kuin Suomessa? Jos niin missä ja mitä teit? Olivatko sukupuoleen työpaikalla liittyvät kysymykset erilaisia siellä kuin Suomessa? Onko ulkomailla työskentely vaikuttanut muuten jokapäiväiseen elämääsi? (lasten kasvatus, koulutus, erilaiset kielet, puoliso, perhe, ystävät?)

Voitko kuvailla toimenkuvaasi liittyviä tärkeimpiä kansainvälisiä kontakteja? Vaikuttavatko ne yrityksenne/yksikkönne/osastonne tasa-arvo politiikkoihin? Entä tasa-arvoasioihin yleensä?

Ajatteletko yritystänne/yksikköänne/osastoanne kansainvälisenä? Jos niin miksi, jos et niin miksi ei?

Luuletko että yrityksenne/yksikkönne/osastonne kansainvälinen luonne vaikuttaa siihen miten tasa-arvoasioihin suhtaudutaan/miten niihin puututaan? Jos niin miksi, jos ei niin miksi ei?

Entä luuletko että yrityksenne kansainvälinen profiili muuttaa sukupuolien välisiä suhteita yrityksessänne/yksikössänne/osastollanne? Jos niin miksi, jos ei niin miksi ei?

JOS tarpeellista niin:

Onko mahdollista vielä käydä läpi muutamia yksityiskohtia koskien teidän taustaanne?

KIITOS PALJON AJASTASI

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