







Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland



Gender Equality at the Executive Level of the Northern Ireland Public Sector

Professor Joan Ballantine (Ulster University)

Dr Graeme Banks (formerly Ulster University)

Tony Wall (Ulster University)

Professor Kathryn Haynes (Newcastle University)

Dr Melina Manochin (Aston University)

Context for the Research

- The issue of gender equality at senior levels within organisations is receiving increasing attention
- Some limited data is available for specific segments of the Northern Ireland public sector
- A significant gap in data exists regarding gender equality at executive level across the Northern Ireland public sector
- The research project addresses this important gap and in doing so aims to advance our understanding of the effectiveness of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1988









Objectives of the Research

- Establish a baseline for gender equality at executive level within organisations which comprise the Northern Ireland Public Sector
- Investigate barriers and enablers for achieving gender equality at executive level of the Northern Ireland public sector
- Identify examples of best practice re gender equality in the Northern Ireland public sector









Research Project

- Stage 1 collection and statistical analysis of secondary data (143 organisations)
- Stage 2 survey of male and female executives/senior managers in public sector organisations (3,186 usable responses)
- Stage 3 interviews with a sample of current and aspiring executives in public sector organisations (100+)



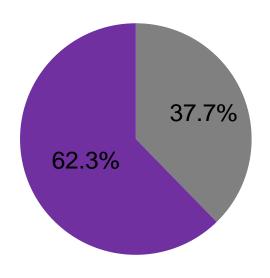




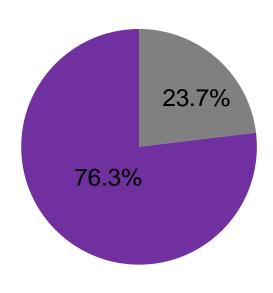


Monitored Northern Ireland Workforce, Public Sector - 2012





Part-time Employees















Key Findings: Stage 1

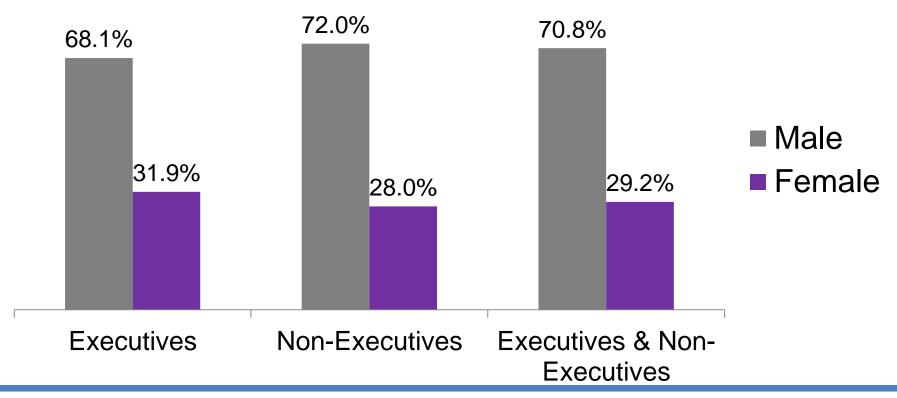








Overall Gender Composition of the Northern Ireland Public Sector (n=2,308)





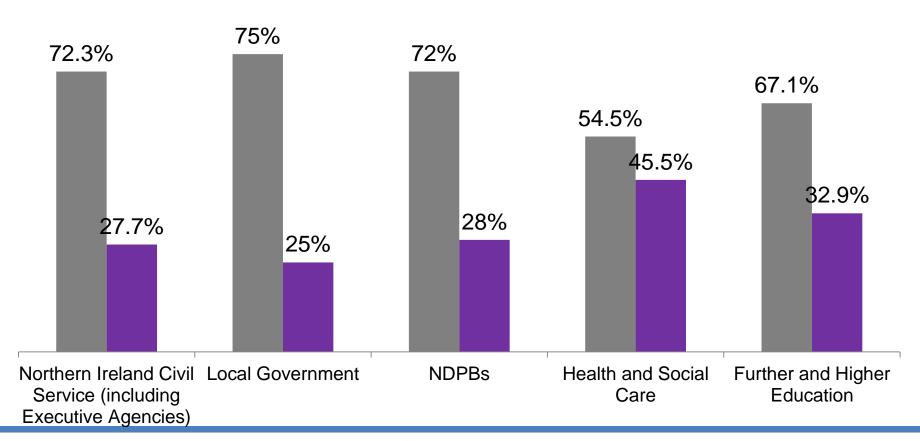






Gender Composition for all Executives by Organisational Type (n=2,308)

■ Male ■ Female



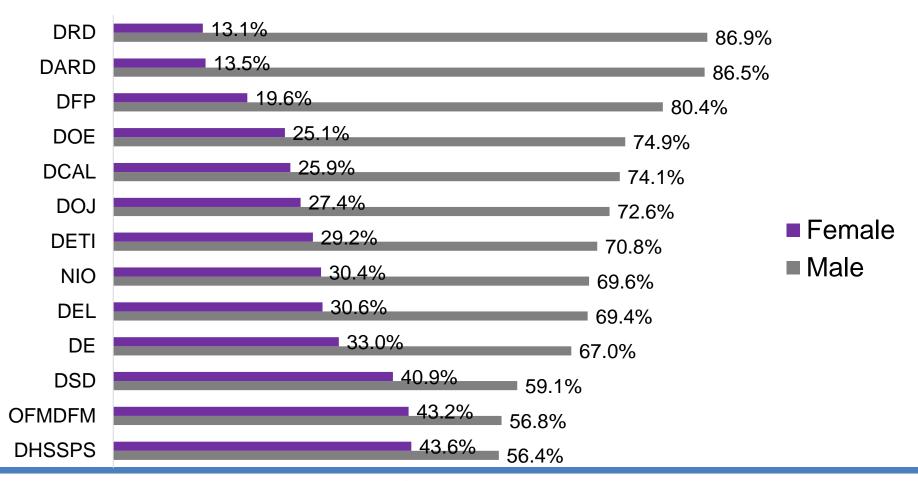








Gender Composition for all Executives by Sponsoring Government Department (n=2,308)



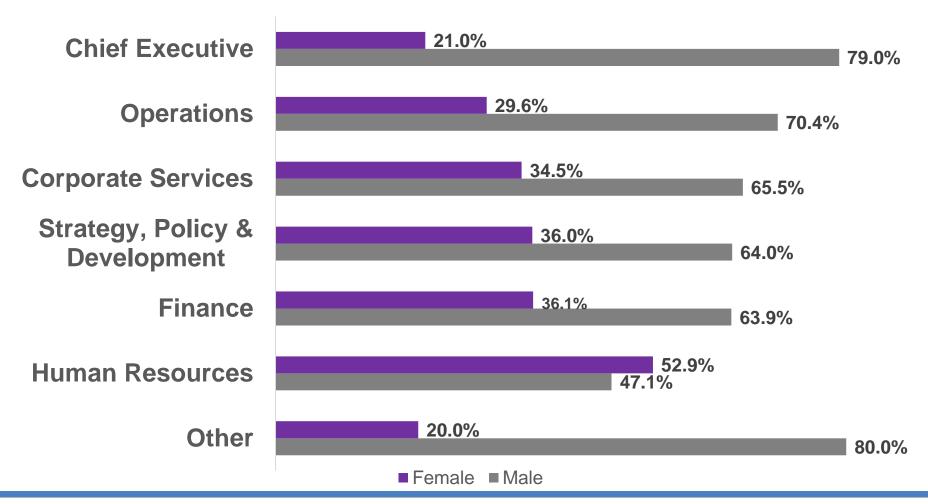








Gender Composition by Executive Role (n=722)











Key Findings: Stage 2



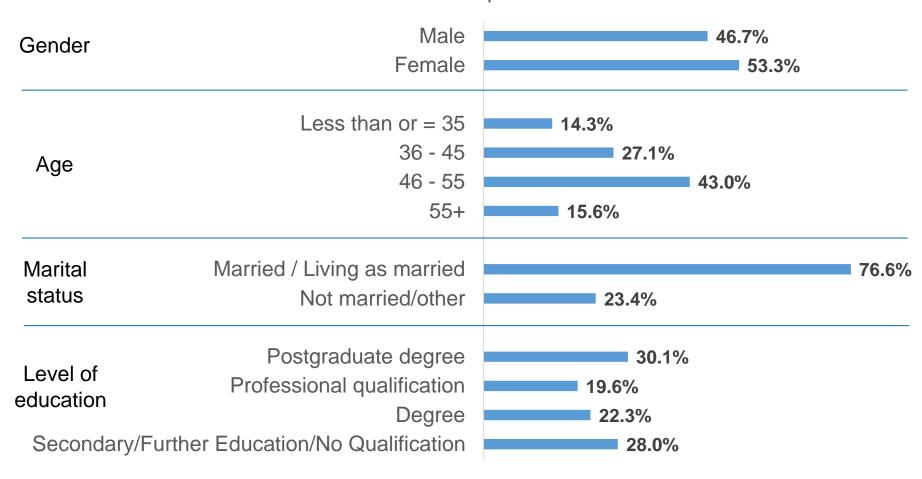






Demographics of Respondents (n=3,186)

■ % of Respondents



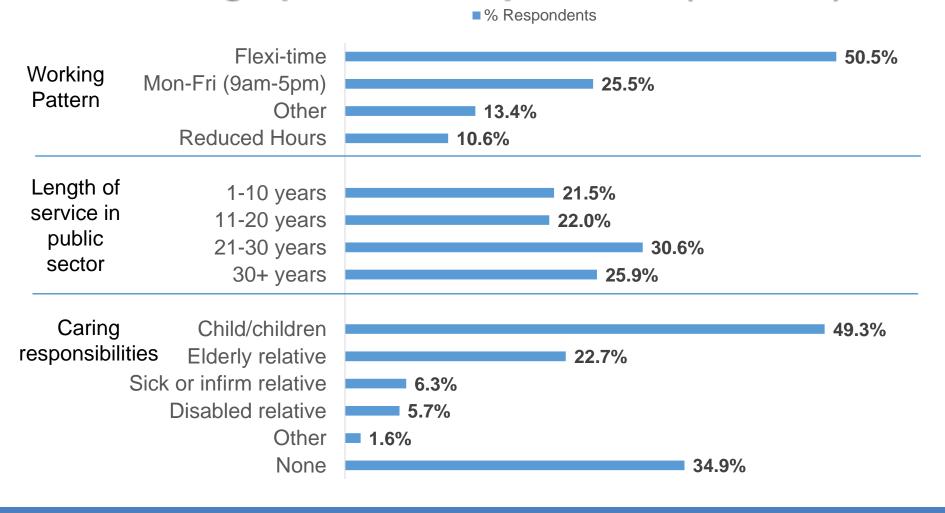








Demographics of Respondents (n=3,186)





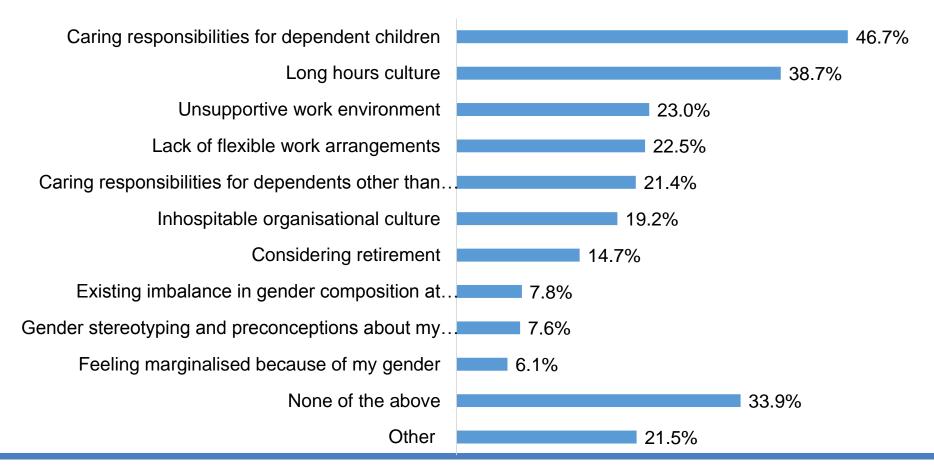






Reasons for opting out of career progression (n=1,058)

% Respondents opting out





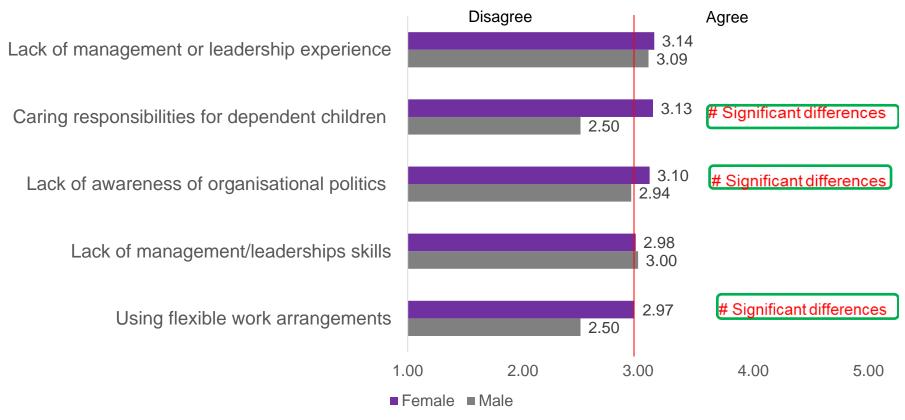






Top Five Barriers to Career Progression Related to Me as an Individual

Mean score for male and female respondents (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)







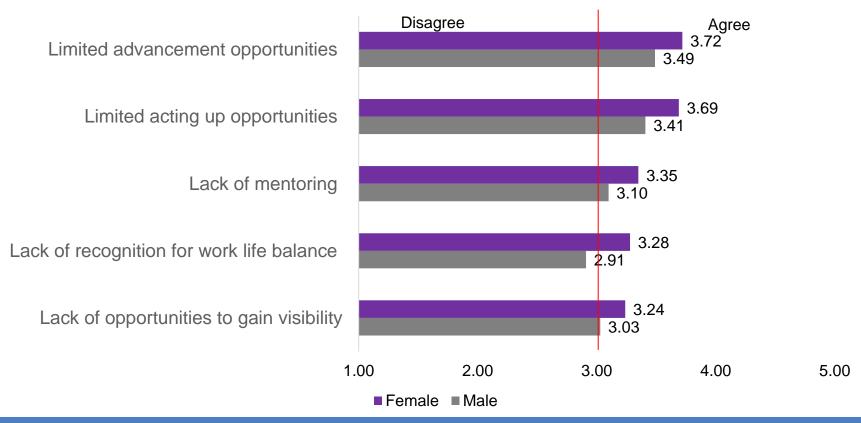




Significant differences in perceptions between Males and Females

Top Five Barriers to Career Progression at an Organisational Level

Mean score for male and female respondents (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)







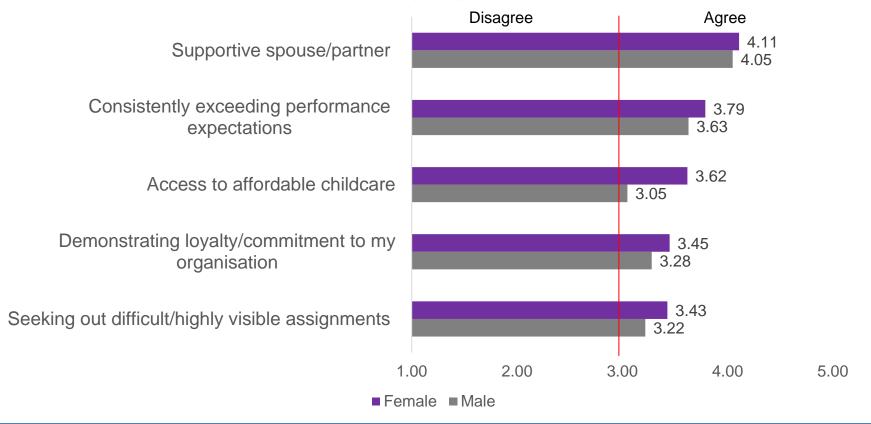




All of the above differences in perceptions are significant

Top Five Enablers/Facilitators of Career Progression: Individual Strategies

Mean score for male and female respondents (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)







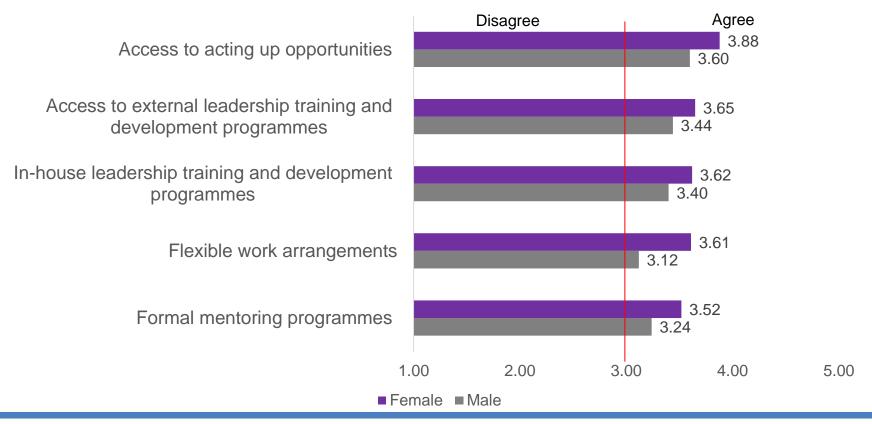




All differences in perceptions (with the exception of supportive spouse/partner) are significant

Top Five Enablers/Facilitators of Career Progression: Organisational Strategies

Mean score for male and female respondents (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)



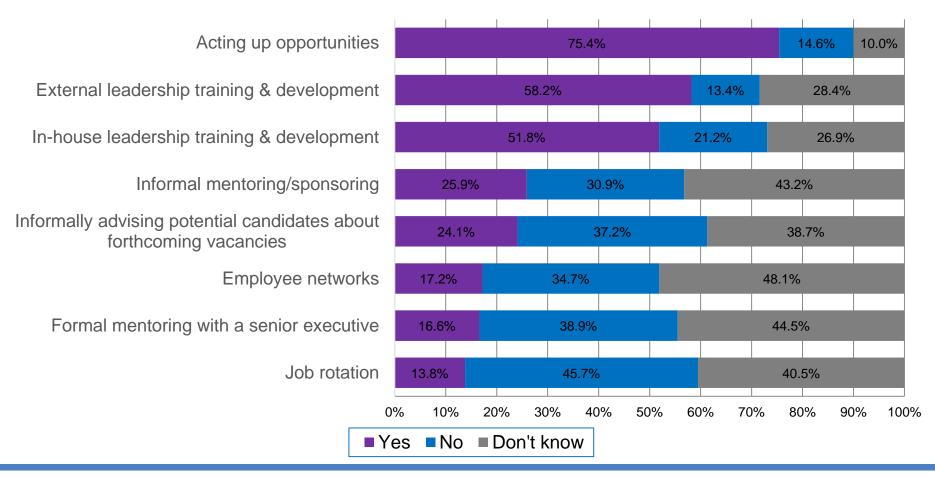








Career Progression Opportunities Offered for Aspiring Executives





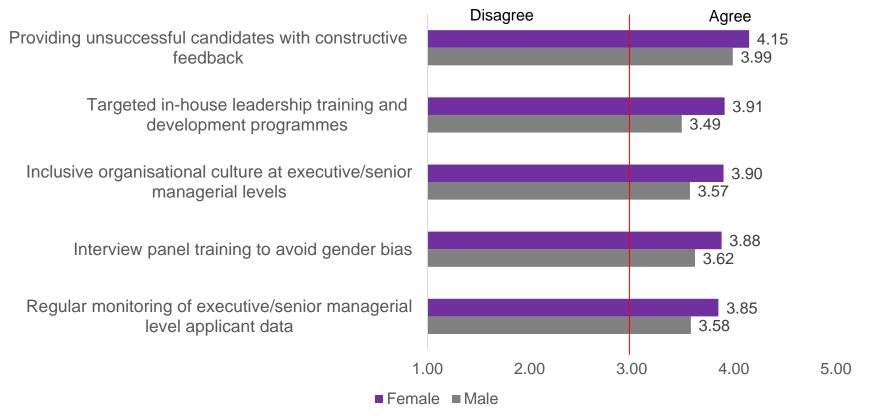






Top Five Policies and Practices to Increase Gender Equality at Executive Level

Mean score for male and female respondents (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)











Top Five General Statements about Gender Equality/Stereotyping

Mean score for male and female respondents (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Agree Disagree Women bring a unique perspective to decision-3.78 making and problem solving at executive/senior 2.97 managerial levels Women managers have to perform much better than 3.48 2.22 male managers to succeed Compared to male managers, female managers are 3.36 2.09 often uncomfortable taking credit for their success Compared to male managers females must 3.35 2.15 continually prove themselves Holding senior management to account for the 3.32 2.77 advancement of females is important 1.00 2.00 3.00 4.00 5.00 ■ Female ■ Male









Views about Gender Culture in the Northern Ireland Public Sector

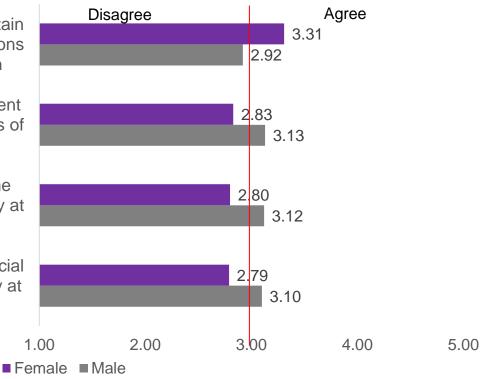
Mean score for male and female respondents (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree)

Cronyism (showing favourable treatment to certain individuals, especially appointing them to positions of authority) is still rife within my organisation

My organisation has a balanced management board/corporate management team in terms of gender

My organisation has allocated sufficient time resources towards promoting gender equality at executive level

My organisation has allocated sufficient financial resources towards promoting gender equality at executive level











Conclusions

- Gender imbalances exist at executive level in the Northern Ireland public sector
- Large numbers opting out of career progression
- Low take-up of flexible work arrangements
- Different perceptions exist between males and females regarding some barriers, facilitators and policies and practices to improve gender equality
- Career progression opportunities not provided/fully understood by respondents
- Negative attitudes regarding gender culture still exist within the Northern Ireland public sector

















Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series (KESS)

...is a forum that encourages debate on a wide range of research findings, with the overall aim of promoting evidence-based policy and law-making within Northern Ireland